LINGUISTIC AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH

MACHHINDRA GOVIND VARPE

Mula Education Society’s Arts, Commerce & Science College, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, India

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the terms and meanings of linguistic and communicative competence in English. The paper incorporates the status of English in India types of competence, components of linguistic and communicative competence, problems of teaching communicative competence and suggestions for effective communicative competence.

KEYWORDS: Linguistic Competence, Communicative Competence, Acquisition, Language Learning, Teaching, Interference

INTRODUCTION

Language is used for self-expression, verbal thinking, problem-solving and creative writing, but it is used essentially for communication. The capability of individuals to interact with others through language is a unique quality and a universal human quality. Successful language use for communication presupposes the development of communicative competence in the use of that language and the use of language is constrained by the socio-cultural norms of the society where the language is used. The use of English in Britain is influenced by the British Socio-cultural norms which underlie individual differences. So are American English, Indian English, Nigerian English, and Singaporean English. Language teaching in the United States is based on the idea that the goal of language acquisition is Communicative competence: the ability to use the language correctly and appropriately to accomplish communication goals. The desired outcome of the language learning process is the ability to communicate competently, not the ability to use the language exactly as a native speaker does.

Communicative competence is made up of four competence areas: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic.

- Linguistic competence means to use the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary of language. Linguistic competence asks: What words do I use? How do I put them into phrases and sentences?
- Sociolinguistic competence means how to use and respond to language appropriately in the society. Sociolinguistic competence asks: Which words and phrases fit the setting and the topic? How can I express a specific attitude (courtesy, authority, friendliness, respect) When I need to?
- Discourse competence means to interpret the larger context. Discourse competence asks: How are words, phrases and sentences put together to create conversations speeches, email, messages, newspaper articles.
- Strategic competence is how to recognize and repair communication breakdowns.

STATUS OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

English education was introduced in India in the middle of the 19th century. Three Universities were established one each at Kolkata, Bombay and Madras in 1857. The Senate of the University of Kolkata adopted a resolution in 1861 that all examinations should be conducted in English. The teaching of English in the Indian Universities, however,
followed a set of pattern. The then University of London provided the model. In 1971, the Kolkata University Commission took note of the decline in academic standards in all subjects especially English stressed the importance of the study of English as part of general education in India. The Commission considered English indispensable to the higher education at that time. According to the Commission, some of the causes of the deterioration in the quality of the teaching of English were lack of contact with teachers who spoke English as their mother tongue, unsuitability of the lecture method and a lack of systematic instruction in spoken English During the 1930’s, the regional languages were made the medium of instruction which resulted in an alarming deterioration in the standards of the teaching and learning of English. The regional medium of instruction at the University level resulted in an inadequate exposure to the English language.

A number of Commissions and Study Groups stressed the need for the rationale English curricula, text books and examinations:

- The Radhakrishnan Commission (1948) “English should be studied in High Schools and in the Universities in order that we might keep ourselves in touch with the living stream of ever-growing knowledge”.
- The Official Language Commission (1956)
- “English should be taught as a language of comprehension rather than as a literary language so as to develop in the students learning it a faculty of comprehending and writing in the English language ”.
- Kothari Commission (1964) “emphasized the role of English as a library language ”.

English is a language of the latest knowledge in every field. It is a means of international communication. In the age of computer and IT, one has got to learn English with the fastest means of communication; the world has turned to be a global village. In the changing Indian context of liberalization and globalization, there is a great need to know English.

**TYPES OF COMPETENCE**

Learning is something that happens inside the mind of the learner. Learning is the result of planned instructions in schools and colleges. Language learning is divided into two categories-informal language learning and formal language learning. The informal language is not taught or learnt for grammar but for communication A child growing up learns to use languages functionally. The formal learning is very different learning English for most Indians involves Second Language (L2) or Foreign Language (FL). Language learning takes place at two levels- linguistic competence and communicative competence.

**LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE**

Linguistic competence allows one to form and interpret words and sentences of one's language.

**Major Components**

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Phonetics</td>
<td>The articulation and perception of speech sounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Phonology</td>
<td>The patterning of speech sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Morphology</td>
<td>Formation of words</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Syntax</td>
<td>Formation of phrases and sentences</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Semantics</td>
<td>Interpretation words and phrases</td>
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**COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE**

Communicative competence is a term in linguistics which refers to a language user’s grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology as well as social knowledge. Chomsky (1965) made a distinction between ‘grammatical
competence ‘and ‘performance’. The former is the linguistic knowledge of the idealized native speaker and the latter is the actual use of language in concrete situations.

Hymes (1972) was the first anthropologist to point out that Chomsky’s linguistic competence lacks consideration of the most important linguistic ability of being able to produce and comprehend utterances which are appropriate to the context in which they are made.

Canale and Swain (1980)

Defined communicative competence in the context of second language teaching. Their views of communicative competence are: a ’synthesis of knowledge of basic grammatical principles, knowledge of how language is used in social settings to perform communicative functions and knowledge of how utterances and communicative functions can be combined according to the principles of discourse.”


- Grammar and Vocabulary of the language.
- Rules of speaking.
- How to use and respond to different types of speech- acts such as request, apologies, thanks and invitation.
- How to use language appropriately.

Having investigated the problems of students in achieving competence in English, we come across are as follows:

- Interference of the learners mother tongue.
- Ignorance of rules restriction.
- Incomplete application of rules.
- Overgeneralization of rules.
- False concepts hypothesized.
- Ignorance on the part of the learners.
- Teacher-fronted class-rooms.

PROBLEMS OF TEACHING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

- Enormously large classes,
- Teaching reading does not take place in large classes.
- Teachers are unable to give feedback to students.
- Problems in promoting group discussion.
- Instead of teaching communicative competence, teachers involve in preparing students for exams.
- Textbooks prepared but rural population neglected.
- Students do not bring textbooks to class, no discipline.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH

- English should be taught as a medium of communication.
- Linguistic competence and language skills LSRW to be developed.
- Remedial teaching.
• Need of gradation and analysis of students.
• Learner-centered and motivated classes.
• Exposure to basic English grammar.
• Creation of opportunities for students to develop speaking and listening skills.
• Facial and body language to be used while speaking.

To sum up, today, everyone is aware of the importance of English in the modern technical era. In order to succeed in one's life, one has to be acquainted with English very well. English covers maximum importance in the competitive exams such as UPSC, MPSC, Banking, Management and corporate sectors. Day by day, along with the linguistic competence, the importance of communicative competence in English is increasing. Undergraduate and post-graduate students commit many errors in the areas of linguistic and communicative competence in English.

There is a great need of investigating the problems of learning communicative competence in English and making them to achieve the expected linguistic and communicative competence in English. If the students don't achieve the target English at undergraduate level, it will be a severe national loss and need to be seriously taken care of.

REFERENCES