

## ACQUIRING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

Most of the research works are conducted and compiled in English. Anything written and recorded in this language is read and listened to, in wider circles. As a result, English is being taught and learned around the world as a second language today. Language is a tool for communication. We communicate with others, to express our ideas, and to know others' ideas as well. Communication takes place, where there is speech. Without speech we cannot communicate with one another.

The importance of speaking skills, hence is enormous for the learners of any language. Without speech, a language is reduced to a mere script. The use of language is an activity which takes place within the confines of our community. We use language in a variety of situations. Any gap in communication results in misunderstandings and problems.

**Key words:** *use, lexical, expressions, linguistically, associate, accent, significant*

### INTRODUCTION

The way people communicate, as well as what they communicate, is, of course, a matter of choice. But it is restricted by the conventions of the speech community and the language itself. The external factors governing usage play their part in decreeing what is appropriate to different circumstances. But it would be naive to think that the speaker is somehow linguistically at the mercy of the physical situation in which he finds himself. What the individual says is what he has chosen to say. It is a matter of his intentions and purposes. Different languages have different techniques for indicating social status for example. It can be done by special terms like 'Sir', or the use or avoidance of first names, or by special pronouns or verb forms. In English itself, speakers in Southern England may signal the social class they wish to be associated with by using certain accent features in their speech, while in Australia accent is less significant than the vocabulary used.

### ACQUIRING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

The fact that there are some situations in which certain intentions are regularly expressed, certain linguistic transactions regularly carried out, does not mean that this is typical of our language use.... I may have gone to the post office, not to buy stamps, but to complain about the non-arrival of a parcel, to change some money so that I can make a telephone call, or to ask a friend of mine who works behind the counter whether he wants to come to a football match on Saturday afternoon. And further, I can choose to be vague, definite, rude, pleading, aggressive or irritatingly polite. Given the freedom to choose the mood he wishes to convey as well as what he wants to say, the speaker is constrained by the available resources of the language to fulfil his aims. It is in this area that foreign language teaching has been of too little help in the past, and attempts are now being made to correct the imbalance in teaching syllabuses. Terms like 'functional syllabus' and 'notional syllabus' reflect concern with aspects of language indicating, on the one hand, certainty, conjecture, disbelief, etc.—all of which relate to the mood or modality of the utterance, and, on the other hand, valuation, approval, tolerance, emotional relationship, etc.—all of which relate to the function of the communication. Thus, whereas some languages use verb forms to indicate speakers' degree of certainty, English can also use lexical expressions like 'It is beyond doubt that...', or special intonation and stress patterns, or grammatical forms of verbs ('If you heated it, it would

melt'). The learner must select not only a correct expression but one which is appropriate to his intentions and possibly very different from the equivalent in his native language. Regarding the function of the communication, there are five general functions which can usefully be isolated: Personal. The speaker will be open to interpretation as polite, aggressive, in a hurry, angry, pleased, etc., according to how he speaks. Directive. The speaker attempts to control or influence the listener in some way. Establishing relationship. The speaker establishes and maintains (or cuts off!) contact with the listener, often by speaking in a virtualized way in which what is said is not as important as the fact that it is said at all, e.g. comments on the weather, questions about the health of the family, etc. This is often called phatic communication, and is certainly a vital part of language use. Referential. The speaker is conveying information to the listener. Enjoyment. The speaker is using language 'for its own sake' in poetry, rhymes, songs, etc. Of course, these functions overlap and intertwine, but they are useful guidelines for distinguishing among utterances like, 'Thank goodness there's a moon tonight', 'The moon is our first objective', 'Lovely night isn't it', 'The moon is in the ascendant', 'The man in the moon came tumbling down.' Learning to use a language thus involves a great deal more than acquiring some grammar and vocabulary and a reasonable pronunciation. It involves the competence to suit the language to the situation, the participant and the basic purpose. Conversely, and equally important, it involves the competence to interpret other speakers to the full. Using our mother tongue, most of us have very little awareness of how we alter our behaviour and language to suit the occasion. We learned what we know either subconsciously while emulating the models around us, or slightly more consciously when feedback indicated that we were successful, or unsuccessful—in which case we might have been taught and corrected by admonitions like 'Say "please"!', or 'Don't talk to me like that!' As far as the foreign learner is concerned, the history of language teaching shows emphasis on a very limited range of competence which has been called 'classroom English' or 'textbook English', and has often proved less than useful for any 'real' communicative purpose.

## CONCLUSION

That is to say, as long as the use of English as a foreign language was confined largely to academic purposes, or to restricted areas like commerce or administration, a limited command of the language, chiefly in the written form, was found reasonable and adequate. But in modern times, the world has shrunk and, in many cases, interpersonal communication is now more vital than academic usage. It is now important for the learner to be equipped with the command of English which allows him to express himself in speech or in writing in a much greater variety of contexts. Designers of syllabuses and writers of EFL texts are now concentrating on techniques of combining the teaching of traditionally necessary aspects of the language—grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation—with greater emphasis on the meaningful use of the language. Their aims go well beyond 'situational' teaching because this is merely an attempt to contextualize grammatical structures while still retaining as its objective the acquisition of linguistic forms per se in an order dictated by grammatical considerations. Now, the need is recognized for greater emphasis in the selection and ordering of what is to be taught, on the communicative needs of the learners, and it has become the task of everyone concerned to provide teaching materials rich enough to satisfy these needs.

## LITERATURE

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