

## Issues on Developing Discursive Competence of Students

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**Abstract:** *The article deals with the issues related to developing discourse competence of students and theoretical views of scientists on this problem.*

*As it's known that, discourse competence is the ability of the student to understand and create logical and coherent speech statements, presented orally or in writing. Discourse is a complex concept. This is the unity of the process of language activity and its result, that is, the text. But the discourse is not just a text, but a text immersed in real life, that is, a "living" text. It is as a rule, is not reproduced, but is created in speech.*

**Key words:** communication, competence, discourse, discourse competence, foreign language, communicative competence, ability, cohesion, coherence, logic, text interpretation.

At the moment, the education reform is aimed at overcoming the traditionalism of educational systems, at overcoming the gap between the level of training and the needs of society.

The process of learning a foreign language is also based on the concept of

developmental learning and is aimed at developing the personality of the student. In methodology the term "competence" is used as characteristics of the achieved level of the language proficiency. This term was introduced by N. Chomsky<sup>1</sup> to define an ability to fulfill some activity. D. Hymes introduced the concept of communicative competence as the ability to use the language they are learning appropriately in a given social encounter<sup>2</sup>. This idea was taken by M. Canale and M. Swain, who develop and elaborate a model of communicative competence<sup>3</sup>. Then Van Ek applied it to FL acquisition and turned it into a fundamental concept in the development of communicative language teaching. In

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<sup>1</sup> Chomsky N. Syntactic Structures. -Mouton: The Hague, 1957; Chomsky N. Aspects of Theory of Syntax. - Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1965.

<sup>2</sup> Hymes D. Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Setting.// Journal of Social Issues. 1967, 23 (2). - Pp.8-38; Hymes D. On Communicative Competence./ In Pride J.B., Holmes J. (eds.). Sociolinguistics: Selected Readings. -Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972. -Pp.269-293.

<sup>3</sup> Canale M., Swain M. Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing// Applied Linguistics. 1980, 1 (1). - Pp. 1-48.

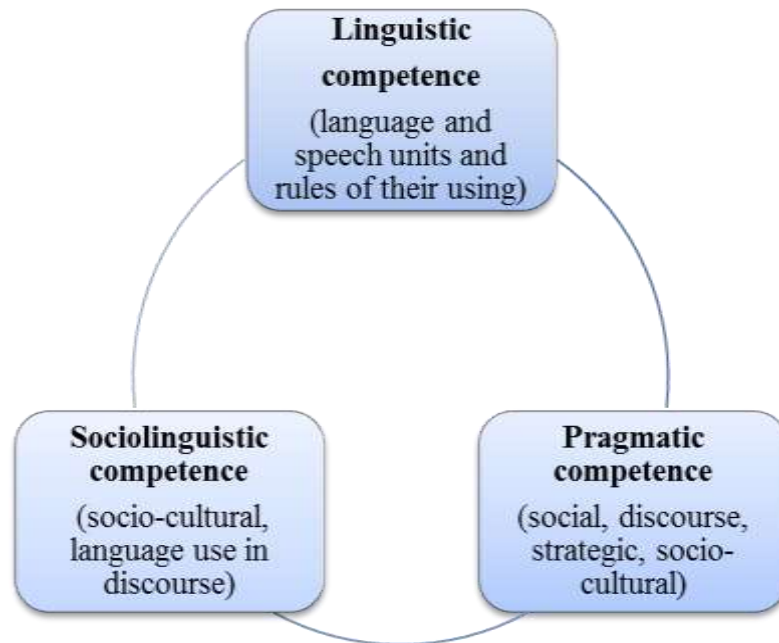
other words, with regard to FLT the term “competence” was developed in the frame of the researches done by the Council of Europe to ascertainment of the level of language proficiency. It was defined as ability for fulfillment some activity with the help of acquired knowledge, skills and experience. In the CEFR we can see models and domains of general and communicative competences the learner must acquire. Communicative competence (proficiency) is a result of FLT so these components are refracted towards the six Reference levels in CEFR.

In our model the linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences are given (See Figure 1).

Sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences envelop the other ones (discourse, socio-cultural, strategic, social competences) interrelated between each other. Pragmatic competence concerns the knowledge of the functions or illocutionary forces imply in the utterance/discourse that are intended to be understood and produced, as well as the socio-contextual factors, strategies of communication that effect its appropriateness. It involves knowledge of cultural factors such as the rules of behavior that exist in the target language community as well as cross-cultural awareness, including differences and similarities in intercultural communication.

*Figure 1.*

*The model of the Communicative competence*



This model of communicative competence emphasizes the importance of four language skills since they are viewed as a manifestation of interpreting and producing a spoken or written piece of discourse

The aim of communicative methodology is to acquire the necessary sub-skills and skills to communicate in socially and culturally appropriate ways, that demands to focus on functions, role playing and real situations and other aspects in the learning process. That's why a communicative competence breaks down into major components of knowledge: 1) knowledge of the

language and 2) knowledge of how to use the language. To be able to communicate, people need communicative skills. But for this purpose a learner must acquire language sub-skills (vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar) which can be appropriately used during representation of language (communicative) skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing (see Figure 1). H.G. Widdowson states that "Someone knowing a language knows more than how to understand, speak, read and write sentences. He also knows how sentences are used to communicative effect" and "the learning of a language

involves acquiring the ability to compose correct sentences”<sup>4</sup>. In the scientific literature on methodology various models of communicative competence<sup>5</sup> have been presented. But in the current interpretation the communicative competence includes linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic, socio-cultural, and social competences<sup>6</sup>.

Among them *discourse competence* is the ability to use appropriate strategies in the construction and interpretation of texts. It refers to selection, sequencing, and arrangement of words, structures, and utterances to achieve a unified spoken message. This is where the top-down communicative intent and socio-cultural knowledge intersect with the lexical and grammatical resources to express messages and attitudes and to create coherent texts.

The development of discursive competence is of particular importance in the modern process of learning a foreign language, which is characterized by a transition to the personal paradigm as a higher degree of integrity in the design of educational processes. The term “discourse” is long and serious speech or piece of writing on a particular subject, also written or spoken language, especially when it is studied in order to understand how people use language.<sup>7</sup> Pay attention to this point again “*written or spoken language, especially when it is studied in order to understand how people use language*” this point means how it’s important to develop discourse competence of students’, as they are future teachers and as it is connected with the text interpretation and logic. Discursive competence is studied by many researchers, such as M. Swain, M. Canale, S. Moirand, N. P. Golovina, I. F. Ukhvanova-Shmygova, L. P. Kaplich, and O. I. Kucherenko, quite widely.

<sup>4</sup> Widdowson H.G. Teaching Language and Communication. -OUP, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Celce-Murcia M. Rethinking the role of Communicative Competence in language Teaching/ Soler E.A., Safond Jorda M.P. (eds.). Intercultural language Use and Language Learning. -Springer, 2007. -Pp.41-58.

<sup>6</sup> Van Ek J. Objectives for Foreign languages learning. Council of Europe. - Strasbourg, 1986. -Pp.33-65.

<sup>7</sup> CD-ROM © Macmillan Publishers Limited 2007. Text © A&C Black Publishers Ltd 2007.

Discursive competence is not only the creation of complete and coherent texts, but also knowledge of different types of discourse and their construction rules, the ability to interpret them in accordance with the communicative situation and produce these discourses taking into account the extra-linguistic features of the communication situation, the roles of the communication participants and the ways of communication of communicants within a single procession.<sup>8</sup>

According to E.V. Schumann<sup>9</sup> discursive competence is a student's ability to understand and create logical and coherent speech statements presented orally or in writing. Students with a sufficiently developed level of discursive competence know how the pragmatic, grammatical, lexical and phonological correctness of speech affects the result of a communicative action; they are aware

of the possibilities of learning a language through its direct use and how compensatory strategies can help them cope with texts containing unfamiliar elements. By direct contact with the speakers of the foreign language being studied, such students are able to enter into communicative interaction using the resources and strategies at their disposal.

Also in the following table we can see what we can gain and create by forming discourse competence of students:

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<sup>8</sup> Shadursky V. G., Intercultural communication and professionally oriented teaching of foreign languages. - Minsk, 2009. P 252

<sup>9</sup> Shuman E.V. Opportunities and prospects of intercultural communication in German at school / WEB-journal / Issue No. 5, 2006. - "Inter-cultur @ 1-net" p. 5

**Table 1**

Communicative Competence	Tasks	Topics	Results
<p><b>Discourse Competence</b></p>	<p>Combining grammatical forms and meanings to achieve texts in different genres in the form of different text types.</p>	<p>Texts in Different Genres:            - Procedures,            - Descriptions,            - Reports,            - News Items,            - Narratives,            - Recounts,            - Spoofs,            - Discussions,            - Expositions,            - Argumentative,            - Reports,            - Letters,            - Announcements, etc.</p>	<p>The students are able to create texts in different genres: procedures, descriptions, reports, news items, narratives, recounts, spoofs, discussions, expositions, argumentative, reports, letters, etc.</p>

In connection with the above, the following skills can be formed in the composition of discursive competence:

- the ability to use the lexical resources of a foreign language to create text and use them to interpret the text;
- the ability to predict the course of the communicative situation and the communicative relevance of the means of speech in accordance with the style of the text;
- the ability to describe and explain the facts using a foreign language;
- the ability to logically build statements in a foreign language;
- the ability to build communicative behavior in accordance with the main theme of communication;
- the ability to build their speech and nonverbal behavior adequately to the sociocultural specificity of the country of the language being studied;
- the ability to identify the topic and problem in the text;

Based on these it may be noted that the discursive aspect of communicative competence means quality using language skills in speech activity, correctness and accuracy in speaking and writing in a foreign language, logic and the information richness of expression, which also means respect for and understanding of another culture. Educational opportunities for the development of discursive competence in forming students' professional skills is determined by its universal character of discursive skills are applicable to all fields of human activity.

Discourse competence is an important element in the overall educational competence, which is the unity of theoretical and practical preparedness and students' ability to implement educational activities, enthusiasm and ability to learn throughout life.

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