

## Communicative Competence

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Received: 26.03.2022

Published: 15.05.2022

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### **Abstract:**

The current study sheds the light on the notion 'communicative competence'. It provides definition of commutative competence conjointly with illustration of the different major models and frameworks proposed by several scholars. Furthermore, it defines the different components of the diversified models of communicative competence suggested by the cited researchers. Nonetheless, the existing paper annotates the common characteristics and components among the models presented. It correspondingly draws the attention to the significant importance of developing L2/FL learners' communicative competence in order to communicate effectively.

**Keywords:** Communicative Competence, Communication Strategies, Speaking-Tasks.

### **الكفاءة التواصلية**

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### **المخلص:**

تُلقى الدراسة الحالية الضوء على مفهوم "الكفاءة التواصلية"، حيث توفر تعريفاً للكفاءة التبادلية جنباً إلى جنب مع توضيح للنماذج والأطر الرئيسية المختلفة التي أقرتها العديد من العلماء. علاوة على ذلك؛ تقوم الدراسة بتحديد المكونات المختلفة للنماذج المتنوعة المتعلقة

بالكفاءة التواصلية التي أقترحها الباحثون المستشهد بهم. في المقابل؛ توضح الدراسة الخصائص والمكونات المشتركة بين النماذج المقدمة. وفقاً لذلك؛ تلفت الدراسة الانتباه إلى الأهمية الكبيرة لتطوير الكفاءة التواصلية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية/أجنبية من أجل التواصل فيما بينهم بشكل فعال.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الكفاءة الاتصالية، استراتيجيات الاتصال، مهام المحادثة.

### **Introduction:**

The concept communicative competence 'Cc' was first presented in the 1970s by Hymes referring to the speakers' ability of communication basically in their first language. The perception was assured as a complementary to Chomsky's 'linguistic competence'<sup>(1)</sup>. Considering the fact that linguistic competence is correlated with ability to recognize when and how to use specific utterances in specific situations and contexts, thus, the ability of using language appropriately is required for an effective communication to occur. Those bases became an aim to be achieved by L2/FL learners. However, the perception of communicative competence and the nature of its components was re-examined by several scholars in an attempt to reach an inclusive model of communicative competence that demonstrates deep investigations through this notion and its components<sup>(2)(3)(4)(5)</sup>.

### **Aims of the Study:**

The main aim of this study is the improvement in English language learners' learning process:

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- 1- L. D. Tarvin, Communicative Competence: Its Definition, Connection to Teaching, and Relationship with Interactional Competence, A paper Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Education Specialist, University of Missouri, 2014.
  - 2- Canale. Swain. Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing, In Applied Linguistics, 1, 1, 1980, p. 1-47.
  - 3- S. J. Savignon, Communicative Language Teaching: Linguistic Theory and Classroom Practice, In Interpreting communicative language teaching: Contexts and concerns in teacher education, New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2002.
  - 4- T. Royce, Multimodal communicative competence in second language contexts, In T. D. Royce & W. L. Bowcher (Eds.), New directions in the analysis of multimodal discourse, Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007, pp. 361-390.
  - 5- Hall & Pekarek Doehler, L2 Interactional Competence and Development, In J. K. Hall, J. Hellermann, & S. K. Doehler (Eds.), L2 interactional competence and development. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Maters, 2011, pp. 1-18.

- 1- Attempting to contribute towards the research of L2/FL teaching and communication competence use.
- 2- Helping English language learners to become self-directed and autonomous learners.
- 3- Providing an alternative to traditional ways of teaching speaking skills to language learners in Libya.

### **Literature Review:**

#### **A Theoretical Background to the Notion of Communicative Competence:**

Communicative competence is a major aspect in the discussion of second language acquisition (SLA) that was coined by Hymes in the 1970s. “[T]his form is offered as a deliberate [notion] to Chomsky’s linguistic competence”<sup>(6)</sup>. It is because, as Hymes proposes, the production of grammatically well-formed sentences unrelated to the situation in which they are produced would not result in a successful communication. Thus, Hymes suggests the notion of communicative competence. It is defined as the ability of using languages in communication; that is, what linguistic utterances in language that are communicatively appropriate for circumstances in which we are going to use them<sup>(7)</sup>. To clarify, it is the capacity of using a language in ways that are appropriate for the context, the situation, the participants and relationship between them. In other words, communicative competence is the linguistic competence, which refers to refer to the ability to create accurate sentences in a language linked to the pragmatic competence.

What’s more, Hymes reacts against Chomsky’s definition of ‘competence’ and ‘performance’ which related errors of production in many errors including competence-shared underlying linguistic knowledge, which affects performance-the process of applying knowledge to actual use. It was emphasized by Hymes that Chomsky neglected the role of socio-cultural elements, which Hymes considered as momentous issue. However, Canale and Swain<sup>(8)</sup> explained communicative competence as a synthesis of underlying system of knowledge and skills needed for communication.

#### **The difference between Communicative Competence and Linguistic Competence:**

It has been argued that in order to understand the term communicative competence researchers need to go back and look to another term that is widely

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6- G. Cook, *Applied Linguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 42.

7- Ibid,

8- Canale and Swain, 1980.

used i.e. linguistic competence<sup>(9)</sup>. According to them, teachers had traditionally thought of languages by focusing on grammar. Herein, the mastery of a language was placed on studying the rules of grammar and how sentences were formed in a language and that aspect of language knowledge is really, what linguistic competence emphasizes or refers to. Thus, the concept of linguistic competence is about teaching learners to create accurate sentences in a language.

However, the concept of ‘communicative competence’ focuses on enhancing individual’s ability to communicate with one another and interacting effectively in a given situation. In relation to this, Cook<sup>(10)</sup> recognizes communicative competence as the knowledge which enables the learner to use the target language appropriately in different contexts. Consequently, linguistic competence tells us what sentences in a language are grammatically accurate whereas communicative competence tells us what utterances in the language are communicatively appropriate.

#### **Definitions of Communicative Competence:**

Hymes<sup>(11)</sup> defined communicative competence as ‘the speakers’ ability of communication basically in their first language’.

Savignon<sup>(12)</sup> equates ‘communicative competence with language proficiency’.

Canale and Swain<sup>(13)</sup> and Canale<sup>(14)</sup> explicate communicative competence as ‘a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill needed for communication’.

Yule<sup>(15)</sup> states that communicative competence can be defined in terms of three components, ‘as the ability to use the L2 accurately, appropriately, and flexibly’.

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9- G. Rickheit & H. Strohner, Handbook of Communication Competence. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, eds, 2008.

10- Cook, 2003.

11- D. H. Hymes, On Communicative Competence, In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), Sociolinguistics: Selected Readings, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972, pp. 269-293.

12- S. J. Savignon, Communicative Competence: An Experiment in Foreign-Language Teaching. Philadelphia: Philadelphia: The Centre for Curriculum Development, Inc, 1972, p. 8.

13- Canale and Swain, 1980.

14- M. Canale, From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy, In R. W. Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, Ed, Language and Communication, London: Longman, 1983, pp. 20-27.

### **Empirical studies on developing learners' performance:**

Instructed CS is a growing area in ESL/EFL research. As suggested by Kasper and Rose<sup>(16)</sup>, CS can be successfully learned in a classroom setting if it is taught through explicit instruction. In other words, enabling students to use the target language appropriately is essential for an actual communication to take place.

In this respect, Corrales and Call<sup>(17)</sup> investigated communication strategies 'CSs' used by two Spanish-speaking groups (intermediate and advanced English learners). Students were asked to do two tasks: answering structured questions and a simulated communication situation. The data was elicited twice within an interval of five weeks (corresponding to pre and post periods). It was found that both groups of students used considerably more CSs in the unstructured task and that there was a significant relation between proficiency level and choice of strategies. In addition, the results showed that the advanced group employed a greater mean percentage of task-influenced strategies than the intermediate group in the pre-period process, whereas the intermediate group employed a greater mean percentage of these strategies in the post period.

In addition, Fernández Dobao<sup>(18)</sup> previously explored the influence of task on CSs use and language learning. Using three tasks, (a picture story, a photograph description and a conversation), he found that, task-related factors such as the type of the discourse, its cognitive complexity, and presence of an interlocutor had a significant effect on the use of CSs. For instance, achievement strategies were used more often in conversation and photograph description than in the picture story task.

Another investigation of task influence was made by Rabab'ah and Bulut<sup>(19)</sup> using second year learners studying Arabic as a second language. The CSs investigated were the reduction strategy, 'message abandonment', the achievement strategies, 'approximation', 'paraphrase', 'retrieval', 'coinage',

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15- Yule, G., *The Study of Language*, 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1996.

16- G. Kasper and K. R. Rose, *Pragmatic Development in a Second Language*, *Language Learning*, 52, 1, 2002.

17- O. Corrales and M. E. Call, *At a Loss for a Word: The Use of Communication Strategies to Convey Lexical Meaning*, *Foreign Language Annals*, 22, 3, 1998, p.227-240.

18- Fernández Dobao, *Communication Strategies in the Interlanguage of Galician Students of English: The Influence of Learners and Task-Based Factors*, *Atlantis*, 23 1, 2001, p. 39-61.

19- G. Rabab'ah, *Compensatory Strategies in Arabic as Second Language*, *Poznan Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, 43, 2, 2007, p. 83-106.

‘restructuring’, ‘repetition’, and the interactive strategies, ‘clarification request’, and ‘asking for repetition’. 24 male and female learners of eight different countries were involved. It was found that learners used more CSs (416 cases) in the interview task than in role-play task (63 cases).

### **Different models of communicative competence:**

#### **Hymes' model of communicative competence:**

In the discussion of communicative theory, Hymes<sup>(20)</sup> demonstrates several communicative 'parameters'; they are possibility, feasibility, appropriateness and occurrence. Possibility refers to the grammatical possibility of a locution in a language. The second parameter, feasibility, refers to the ability to make use of a locution. It can be affected by psycholinguistic factors, for example, memory limitation. Besides, it might be affected by the speakers' ability or inability to process longer sophisticated clauses and sentences. However, other features such as the material of the environment should be taken into account as well. Appropriateness refers to the judgment of sentences in relation to situations; that is whether an utterance meets the contextual expectations in a particular language. Nonetheless, "something might be may be possible, feasible and appropriate and not occur"<sup>(21)</sup>. Accordingly, occurrence refers to whether an utterance is used or not. In other words, the communication does not occur if it is controlled by any rule even though it might be possible, feasible and appropriate.

According to Brown<sup>(22)</sup> communicative competence is further defined with the distinction between 'cognitive/ academic language proficiency' (CALP) and 'basic interpersonal communicative skills' (BICS). These two elements are distinguished in that 'BICS' are larger because they are not limited to the academic environment. They are concerned with the capacity of interpersonal exchange in daily communication; on the other hand, 'CALP' is often manipulated by learners inside classrooms when learning a language.

#### **Canale and Swain's communicative model:**

There were several attempts by scholars to re-examine the notion and the nature of the different components of communicative competence. Canale and Swain<sup>(23)</sup> elucidated four components of communicative competence. They are; grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence.

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20- Hymes, 1972.

21- Ibid, p. 286.

22- H. Brown, Principles of Language Learning and Teaching, White Plains: Longman, 2000.

23- Canale and Swain, 1980.

Grammatical competence is the component of communicative competence which deals with the rules of a language. That is, it is the knowledge of the language rules, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation. It is concerned with the more detailed and specific conventions of a language. For example, the speaker's ability to determine what words mean and how to use them in phrases and sentences.

Discourse competence refers to the combination of language structures into different types of cohesive texts. More specifically, is the ability to understand conversations and interactions as well as specific words that are deliberately used in a conversation. Further, it is the capacity of understanding how ideas are connected through patterns of organization in addition to cohesive and transitional devices. In other words, it is the knowledge of how to produce and comprehend oral utterances or written texts of different genres. For example, the speaker puts phrases and sentences to make conversations and written texts; for instance, using formal greetings like 'Hello Sir!' when starting a conversation.

Sociolinguistic competence is the type of knowledge concerned with the appropriate use of the language in a specific situation. It encompasses the socio-cultural rules of language and discourse. Sociolinguistic competence requires a full understanding of the setting of the communication, the topic, the participants and the relationship among them in addition to other socio-cultural factors and principles such as politeness. To illustrate, this regards how the speaker for example, expresses authority or friendliness via linguistic utterances towards the listeners.

Strategic competence is the component of communicative competence which requires verbal and non-verbal communication strategies. Such strategies are utilized in the course of interaction in order to enhance the efficiency of communication or compensate for breakdowns in communication. That is to say, strategic competence enables learners recognize and repair communication breakdowns when they occur. For instance, if ambiguity or obscurity of an expression occurs, clarifications can be made to clarify the representation of a topic. For example, if the speaker does not know the name of something, how he/she shall express his/her idea.

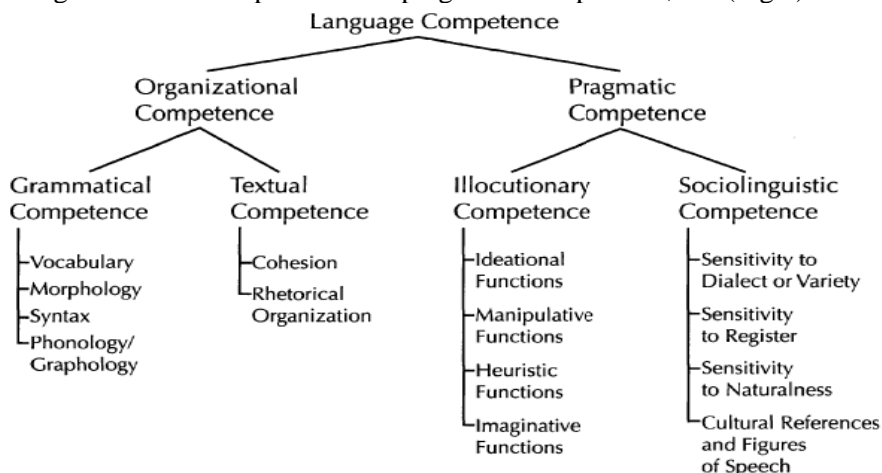
### **Bachman's framework:**

Another investigation into the notion of communicative competence was later proposed. Bachman<sup>(24)</sup> introduced a different classification of the communicative competence model referring to it as 'theoretical framework of

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24- L. Batchman, *Fundamental Considerations in Language Teaching*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

communicative competence ability'. Bachman's framework displays three components; they are; language competence, strategic competence and psycho-physiological mechanisms. In this framework, language competence is divided into organizational competence and pragmatic competence, see (Fig.1).



**Fig. (1): Bachman's (1990) components of language competence**

The organizational competence includes components of the norms of the structure of language, such as the ability to produce grammatically correct utterances. It is sub-divided into grammatical and textual competence; the textual competence is an equivalent of Canale and Swain's<sup>(25)</sup> discourse competence. These competencies are involved in the process of producing and comprehending language.

Pragmatic competence includes components of knowledge that enables participants to communicate meaning efficiently. It is concerned with "the relationship between utterances and the acts or functions that speakers (or writers) intend to perform through these utterances"<sup>(26)</sup>. Pragmatic competence is mainly comprised of the illocutionary competence and the sociolinguistic competence. Illocutionary competence deals with the intended meaning by the speaker. That is, the ability to understand the meaning behind the literal words which facilitate accurate communication. It includes four functions. They are; ideational, manipulative, heuristic and imaginative functions. Ideational function refers to the use of language in order to express ideas, thoughts, and information. Manipulative function refers to the use of language to affect the

25- Canale and Swain, 1980.

26- Bachman, 1990, p. 89.



attitude and behaviour of the listeners. Heuristic function refers to the use of language to gain knowledge about the world. Imaginative function refers to the use of language for the purpose of creation or expressing imaginary ideas.

However, according to Bachman<sup>(27)</sup>, the sociolinguistic competence enables language users to use language in an appropriate way in accordance with the socio-cultural context and the participants in that communication. This competence includes sensitivity to language varieties, to register, and to naturalness in addition to the capability of identifying cultural references and figures of speech.

Strategic competence is a vital component in Bachman's framework. Bachman<sup>(28)</sup> describes the strategic competence as a major component at the same level as language competence. Conforming to Bachman<sup>(29)</sup>, strategic competence is significant because it may include non-linguistic strategies and it is not merely a compensatory strategy in language.

### **Celece-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell's communicative competence model:**

Further investigations to re-examine the nature of communicative competence were launched in 1995 by Celece-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell. They developed a model of communicative competence which comprised five competences; they are linguistic competence, strategic competence, socio-cultural competence, actional competence and discourse competence. As stated in Celece-Murcia et al<sup>(30)</sup>, linguistic competence, which is parallel to the notion of Canale and Swain's<sup>(31)</sup> grammatical competence, refers to the principal elements of successful communication. For example, the syntactic knowledge, the morphological knowledge and all sorts of grammatical or lexical systems needed for oral or written communication.

The second aspect proposed by Celece-Murcia et al<sup>(32)</sup>. is the discourse competence, which involves the capability of using cohesion, well-structured sentences and words that are suitable for the generic structure as well as the conversational context. Further, this use should be coherent to achieve a unified effective oral or written communication. Discourse competence is considered as

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27- Ibid.

28- Ibid.

29- Ibid.

30- M. Celce-Murcia, Z. Dörnyei & S. Thunre,. Communicative Competence: A Pedagogically Motivated Model with Content Specifications, In Issues in Applied Linguistics, Los Angeles: University of California , 1995, vol.6 (2), pp. 6-35.

31- Canale and Swain, 1980.

32- M. Celce-Murcia, Z. Dörnyei & S. Thunrel 1995.

a highly important part in communicative competence, language learning and teaching as was explained by Celece-Murcia et al<sup>(33)</sup>.

The third component of communicative competence proposed by Celece-Murcia et al<sup>(34)</sup> is the actional competence. It is defined as the ability to relate the linguistic utterances to the actional intended meaning by the speakers. In other words, it is the competence that enables language users to understand the communicated meaning. As demonstrated by Celece-Murcia et al<sup>(35)</sup>, this competence involves the realization of speech acts, sets and their illocutionary force. It was also explained that actional competence is confined to oral communication; since in written communication rhetorical competence would be its equivalent.

Socio-cultural competence refers to the ability of manipulating communication appropriately within social and cultural contexts. This competence encompasses the knowledge of variation of language related to the different aspects of pragmatic context besides social and cultural factors. For example, a person would use a formal standard version of a language when giving a speech in a conference.

The strategic competence is also proposed by Celece-Murcia et al<sup>(36)</sup>. This aspect involves the strategies used in communication; for instance, when a speaker describes an entity which he/she cannot recall its name<sup>(37)</sup>. It follows the strategic competence in Canale and Swain's<sup>(38)</sup> communicative competence model, which maintains and emphasizes the importance of communication strategies. Such strategies, as manifested by Celece-Murcia et al<sup>(39)</sup>, are significant to be employed in the process of establishing an efficient successful exchange of meaning in a communication.

#### **Littlewoods's model of communicative competence:**

A more recent study revised the perception of communicative competence proposed by the previous studies. Littlewood<sup>(40)</sup> exploited Canale and

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33- Ibid.

34- Ibid.

35- Ibid.

36- Ibid.

37- Ibid.

38- Canale and Swain, 1980.

39- M. Celce-Murcia, Z. Dörnyei & S. Thunrrel 1995.

40- W. Littlewood, *Communicative Language Teaching: An Expanding Concept for a Changing World*, In E. Hinkel, Ed, *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, UK: Routledge, 2011, pp. 541-557.

Swain's<sup>(41)</sup> model. Littlewood's model is comprised of five aspects of competence; they are linguistic competence, discourse competence, pragmatic competence, sociolinguistic competence and socio-cultural competence.

Linguistic competence is a term used to refer to the grammatical knowledge of a language. That is, the knowledge of the rules of morphology, syntax, semantics and phonology. However, discourse competence in Littlewood's<sup>(42)</sup> model refers to the speakers' ability to comprehend complex ideas in spoken and written text and their capability of maintaining responses in interaction. The pragmatic competence is defined as the component of competence that enables speakers to communicate effectively as intended in everyday situations in addition to their abilities to overcome difficulties in interaction.

Parallel to the previously discussed models, sociolinguistic competence in Littlewood's<sup>(43)</sup> model deals with the appropriate use of language in accordance with social situations and factors. For example, it considers using more formal structures when talking or writing to strangers in formal situations, such as formal greetings like 'Hello/ Good morning Sir'. The fifth component proposed by Littlewood<sup>(44)</sup> is the socio-cultural competence. This competence is illustrated as a competence that possesses a prominent importance. It is because it utilizes the cultural knowledge awareness along with assumptions, which are of a significant importance in the intercultural communication. Through this fundamental competence, learners would avoid intercultural misunderstanding better in the process of exchanging meaning.

The models introduced are the major models of communicative competence proposed by several scholars. These models differ in the terminology but they all convey shared notions and perceptions. For example, the linguistic competence, which is referred to as grammatical competence in some models, involves the knowledge of morphology, phonology, syntax, semantics and other basic rules that govern the structure of a language. This shared use of this perception among the different models discussed indicates the importance of

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41- Canale and Swain, 1980.

42- W. Littlewood, 2011.

42- M. Celce-Murcia, Z. Dörnyei & S. Thunre., Communicative Competence: A Pedagogically Motivated Model with Content Specifications, In Issues in Applied Linguistics, Los Angeles: University of California, 1995, vol.6 2. pp. 6-35.

42- Canale and Swain, 1980.

42- M. Celce-Murcia, Z. Dörnyei & S. Thunrrel 1995.

43- Ibid.

44- Ibid.

learning a good linguistic knowledge when trying to acquire a second language (L2).

Moreover, scholars in their different proposed models emphasized the importance of the capability of comprehending written and oral communication in addition to producing comprehensive, coherent and cohesive contribution in an interaction. This entails the significance of developing such a discourse- or textual- competence among L2 learners. Consequently, L2 learners should enhance their abilities to comprehend better and produce unified oral or written contributions in communication. Possessing only grammatical knowledge would not result in L2 learners' ability of comprehending and producing coherent and cohesive oral or written communication. Learners should consider issues further than only producing grammatically well-formed sentences and they should relate their contribution to be comprehensive to the listener or reader.

Furthermore, social and cultural factors and their prominent role in communication and interaction have been discussed under the different models as socio-cultural competence concern. This implies the major role of social norms and that L2 learners should try to understand them in order to enhance their socio-cultural competence.

Another component of competence displayed in different ways in the models discussed is the strategic competence. Possessing good communicative strategies is essential in the course of interaction whether it is regarded as a crucial independent competence or as a compensatory strategy. It requires a good knowledge of all the components of communicative competence displayed by the scholars along with the ability of interaction and problem solving strategies.

According to Cook<sup>(45)</sup>, communicative competence has formed a fundamental basis of several issues in all the fields of applied linguistics. For example, in the first language education where it set the way towards developing a better ability to communicate. In translation, communicative competence provoked the attempts to veer away from finding literal equivalence towards trying to seek for an equivalent effect.

In applied linguistics, communicative competence stimulated researchers to investigate the possibilities and methods of developing learners' ability to communicate effectively. This led to the emergence of the 'communicative approach' to language teaching. This approach allowed teachers and learners to create a better understanding of what is a successful effective communication. Communicative competence evokes the idea that language is a lived experience

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45- Cook, 2003.

rather than an object of academic study<sup>(46)</sup>. "Communicative competence became a household word in SLA, and still stands as an appropriate term to capture current trends in teaching and research"<sup>(47)</sup>. Nonetheless, communicative competence also contributes to the analysis of language use emphasizing how successful language use differs in accordance with the context in which it occurs. It is an area of interest in discourse analysis and cross-cultural communication<sup>(48)</sup>. Communicative competence is a continuously developing perception with a wide influence on the fields of the language study.

### Methods

#### **Research questions:**

Does CSs have an influence on the development of speaking skills?

#### **Observation:**

Nunan<sup>(49)</sup> and Malderez<sup>(50)</sup> argue that observation is a 'tool' mainly used to deepen our understanding of language learning and teaching, which in turn, contributes to professional growth. A Naturalistic observation approach is used to answer research questions mentioned previously. This form of observation is commonly used in social science to directly record behaviour (e.g. what people do and say)<sup>(51)</sup>. It aims to obtain information about the behaviour of the participants in natural settings. To do this, eight students were audio recorded while doing group work. Recordings were conducted and analyzed by the researchers in the current study. Each recording lasted for some minutes. In addition, the researchers did not video record the observed activities for cultural reasons.

#### **Date Analysis:**

The researchers transcribed and coded the data from the learners' performance in the speaking tasks. The 'group discussions' were conducted during regular class hours.

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46- Ibid.

47- Brown, 2000, p. 245.

48- Cook, 2003.

49- D. Nunan, *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

50- A. Malderez, *Key Concepts in ELT: Observation*, *ELT Journal*, 57, 2, 2003, p. 179-181.

51- M. Denscombe, *The Good Research Guide for small-scale research project*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn, Open University Press: Maidenhead, 2010.

### Results and Conclusion:

The researcher adopted Thornbury's transcribing method in coding and analysing extracts from the discussions data<sup>(52)</sup>. The following codes were used to transcribe the conversations:

= Interruption. | Gesture/body language. # Pause. ^ Fillers. \* Repetition. << Responding. © Circumlocution. Ĩ paraphrasing. Ø Translation. β Repairing. Æ Clarification. × Seeking opinion. ∞ Facilitating.

### Some specific communication strategies:

#### Topic one: 'Conflict in Libya':

Generally speaking, students used in this topic some specific communication strategies, such as fillers, whenever time is needed. They also asked questions to facilitate the conversation and to clarify issues. For example, S1, who initiated the conversation and dominated the exchanges, used a facilitating strategy on different occasions. (*I will ah start with Wejdan 'S4' to talk about her experience*' and '*I will ask you if ah..?'*'). She also employed an information seeking strategy when she asked S2 '*in which month your brother was injured?'*' (See Exercise: 1 below).

#### Exercise: 1

S1: ^Well, I will ask Fatima if ^ah you want to add anything∞.

S2: ^Well, I will talk about my brother, he ^ah was^ ah fighting in Dafniah yeah, ^ ah he was injured in his arm and in his leg then he travelled to Tunisia.

S1: ×In which month your bother was injured?

S2: ×I can't ^ah remember, ¥ I don't know, but he ^ah he injured in Al-Dafniya umm.

S3: «Like my father |.

In addition, S1 utilized clarification request strategies, as when she asked:

#### Exercise: 2

S1: OK, Æ did you leave home during the war or ah?

S2: «No, we stayed in our area, it is safe place.

As in exercise, (1), the speaker used fillers in parts of the conversation where she was most likely to 'gain the floor' and to carry on in her conversation, such as '*my uncle was injured in the war and ah he*', '*I remember in the ah war ah I was preparing many things*' and '*ah my uncle was ah injured in his leg and in his ah*' (See Appendix A for more details).

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52- S. Thornbury, How to Teach Speaking, Pearson Education limited Longman, 2007.

In the case of S4, the speaker obviously had difficulties with sentence structure, and used fillers and repetition very often to have the time needed to complete her conversation. This is an example of the link between lack of linguistic competence and the use of these communication strategies. (See the exercise below).

### **Exercise: 3**

S1: ...∞I will ah start with Wejdan to talk about her experience in the ^ah war.

S4: ∥ Ok, ^um I will talk about my experience. It stated when ^ah my father run away from Sirt in ^ah the 19<sup>th</sup> of February. He was working with Gaddfi army, he came home I remember very \*very afraid he ^ah ^ah he ask us \*he asked us to not open the door because umm he was thinking that the army will be come and catch us...But, he didn't go ^um he stay with the rebels and fight with them, then he ^um... #

S3: ± Injured.

S4: «Yeah∥, he injured in ^ah Dafniya..

In exercise 3, repairing strategy is also evident, when Wejdan 'S4' corrected herself: '*..he ask us he asked us*'.

S2 'Fatama', was an active student who, as seen in exercise 1, employed strategies such as asking opinion i.e. '*I can't ah remember, I don't know, but.*'. In addition, in exercise 4 below, she employed clarification, facilitating, and asking opinion, when asking S2 'Malak' a direct question.

### **Exercise:4**

S2: ×What about ah your feeling? ....

S1: ^Yeah, sometimes I was very afraid about ^ah the people. Sometimes I cry ∥.... =.

S2: Æ Who died?

S1: ^Yeah, my uncle was injured =.

S2: ∞Even my uncle got injured in the war.

Here, the student also utilized a repetition strategy: '*Whatever I said I know that whatever I said about*' and '*..I don't have enough experience...ah much experience*' (See Appendix A).

Rabab'ah (2013) observes that learners sometimes resort to strategies such as repetition or translation to make themselves understood, as in the exercise below:

### **Exercise: 5**

S1: ∞I'll ask you if ah during the war if you prepared anything for the.. ^ah

S5: «Rebels.

S1: ^Yeah.

S2: ^Yes, ^ah sometimes my brother asked us to cook food for his ^ah friends  
^yeah in his Ø *Katiba* especially in ^ah in Ramadan †.

S5: Æ I will ask you, in which Ø *Katiba* your brother is?

S2: Ø *Fursan Misurata*.

The word '*Katiba*' is Arabic word which means brigade and '*Fursan*' is a noun meaning knights. In the exercise above, Hala 'S5' employed translation strategy 'language switch' unconsciously. Phan and Ting<sup>(53)</sup> observed that students sometimes use an item from their L1 i.e. 'language switch strategy' in the L2 without modification. Here again, the use of a language switch or translation strategy is probably due to the lack of knowledge of the target language identified by Rabab'ah<sup>(54)</sup>.

Although in this exercise S3 and S5 spoke less than the other participants in this conversation activity did, they attempted to assist other speakers and facilitate the conversation. This happens, for instance, when S1 spoke about her uncle and said:

**Exercise: 6**

S1: ^Yeah, ^ ah my uncle was ^ah injured in his leg and in his ^ah.. #

S5: ±In his arm.

S3 and S5 used a clarification request and a repairing strategy respectively in the exercise below:

**Exercise: 7**

S3: How did he travel to Tunisia? Æ Did he travel by sea in a small ship or..?

S4: «No, he travelled ^ah...=.

S5: In difficult circumstances †, still the army, †I mean that difficult..

S4: ^Yeah, still the army in the ^ah city and they ^ah fight us.

Overall, the conversation in topic one took about nine minutes. The number of words used by the participants was 1240. The strategies of fillers were used 66 times, repetition 4, facilitating 4, clarification 4, seeking opinion 4, repairing strategy 4, giving assistance 3 translation 2 and non-linguistic strategies 23 times (See table 1 in Appendix B). It was also observed that participants in this activity employed body language to encourage the continuity of the conversation. However, difficulties in sentence structure affected the whole conversation (See Appendix A).

**Topic Two: 'A western visitor to Libya':**

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53 S-H. Phan and G. Ting, Adjusting Communication Strategies to Language Proficiency, *ELT Journal*, 2008, 23, 1, p. 28-36.

54- Rabab'ah, 2013.



Three students participated in this speaking task activity. They spoke for only two minutes, thirty-one seconds and used only 250 words. Only a limited number of communication strategies were used by them (See table 2 in Appendix B).

### **Exercise: 1**

S1: *Fine, I am a visitor here, but ^actually I am so said because I did not have time to see the Libyan success. × Can you talk about it?*

S2: *Yes, I can help you †. Firstly, welcome to you here ^um I know many places ^ah in Libya for tourism ^ah like Sabrata... =.*

S3: *† Also, in Tripoli ^ah there is a nice hotels like ^ah 'Almahari' and hotel 'seven Moon'.*

S1: *^Actually, I hope to visit it.*

S3: *In Tripoli or somewhere else?*

S1: *^Actually, I wish to visit..*

The conversation above shows mainly one-word fillers such as 'ah', and 'um', used repeatedly. The one-word fillers were predominant possibly because they were easy to remember. A seeking opinion strategy was also present.

### **Exercise: 2**

S2: *Thank you. ^Actually, we can talk about Misurata!*

S1: *Yes, the most important, I heard a lot about Misurata.*

S2: *Yes, Misurata ^ah near Tripoli and ^ah have ^ah nice places..*

S1: *^Um ^ha †.*

S2: *And you can ^ah do some shopping for example, ^ah street in the \*street 'Abdulla Alghareeb'.*

S1: *Yes, thank you so much †.*

In the above exercise, S2 employed fillers and repetition strategies Also, S1 used fillers and body language such as smiling and nodding to signal interest. .

In the second topic, students in the control group used fewer strategies used fewer strategies than the first speaking activity. A potential reason for this could be the short length of the conversation they had, which itself may have been caused by the inappropriate expressions that they employed.

### **Conclusion:**

As it has been demonstrated in this paper, communicative competence is the capacity to use language in an appropriate way in accordance with the context in order to achieve a successful communication. It involves utilizing different skills in a correlated way in interaction. The term 'communicative competence' was first coined by Hymes in the 1970s as a reaction to Chomsky's 'linguistic competence. It was as consequence to Hymes perception that producing grammatically well-formed sentences would not result in a successful communication unless it was related to the context in which it occurs in addition

to some other factors. Hymes assumptions led to the creation of a framework of different components of communicative competence.

Several attempts to develop the perception of communicative competence and the nature of its components were proposed by different scholars. The first attempt was the rework of communicative competence by Canale and Swain<sup>(55)</sup>, and then the diverse model of communicative competence by Bachman<sup>(56)</sup> was proposed. Celce-Murcia et al. also presented a modified model in 1995<sup>(57)</sup>. Littlewood who produced a model basing on the previously mentioned ones launched a more recent study in 2011<sup>(58)</sup>. All the models proposed share some common terminology and perception. However, communicative competence has been a key component in first and L2/FL knowledge and it has influenced several areas of linguistic studies. Thus, it has been an area of interest for both FL learners and researches in first and FL fields.

Furthermore, some speaking tasks were used by the researchers to investigate the research question, which was about the impact of the use of CSs on the development and performance of learners. The findings in the current study revealed no significant use of CS in their speaking task activities. Interestingly, students in the two task activities used pause fillers and body language more than other CSs such as ‘facilitating’, ‘paraphrasing’ and ‘asking for clarification’ strategies (See tables 1 & 2 in Appendix B). This might be attributed to the fact that they have not had the opportunity to practice these strategies both inside and outside the classroom. Consequently, it is essential for language teachers not only to recognize the learning and teaching process in view of the notion of communicative competence, but also to make language learners aware of the importance of using CSs to develop speaking ability.

#### **List of Abbreviations:**

CC: Communicative Competence.

CS: Communicative Strategy.

CSs: Communication Strategies.

ESL: English as a Second Language.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

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55- Canale and Swain, 1980.

56- Bachman, 1990.

57- Celce-Murcia et al, 1995.

58- Littlewood, 2011.

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## Appendix A

### Speaking-task Activity One:

#### Conflict in Libya (Students experience of 2011 conflict).

**Malak:** Everyone had listened about Libyan revolution and *ah* also everyday had experience about in the revolution. So, I will *ah* start with Wejdan to talk about her experience in the *ah* war.

**Wejdan:** Ok, *umm* I will talk about my experience. It stated when *ah* my father run away from Sirt in *ah* the 19<sup>th</sup> of February. He was working with Gaddafi army, he came home I remember very very afraid he *ah ah* he ask us he asked us to not open the door because *umm* he was thinking that the army will be come and catch us. We *ah* stayed at home in that day and *ah* he goes with the rebels and *ah* he fight the army, he was picked their phone calling the *ah* government and *ah* they ask him to go back to Katiba [brigade] Hamza', {pause, Hamza ayah in Arabic}. But, he didn't go *umm* he stay with the rebels and fight with them. Then he *umm*.

**Asma:** {another student helped her} injured.

**Wejdan:** Yeah, he injured in *ah* Dafniya. He injured in his neck, then he travelled to Tunisia *ah* to do the *ah* operation and he came back. The doctor told him 'you will lose your sound, but now it is ok.

**Asma:** How did he travel to Tunisia? Did he travel by see in a small ship or?

**Wejdan:** No, he travelled *ah* ....[interruption].

**Hala:** In difficult circumstances, still the army, I mean that difficult..

**Wejdan:** Yeah still the army in the *ah* city and they *ah* fight us and *ah* yeah, he go to, he went to Tunisia and he came back. *Umm* he came *ah* I think he is ok now, he have a problem in *ah* his neck because he lose *ah* ... [stopped].

**Asma:** The sound!! {Suggest}.

**Wejdan:** Yeah, he lose *ah* a vocal cod, but *ah* yeah I think it is OK. They make they made the operation and he is ok now.

**Malak:** OK, *ah* well I will ask Fatima about *ah* about *ah* her experience in the war, well *ah* Fatima *ah* if you have anything to add!

**Fatima:** Whatever I said I know that whatever I said about the revolution won't describe how grateful [horrible] thing it was. I mean maybe I don't have enough experience to talk about *ah* much experience. I haven't lived as other people lived or something like that, but I know it was really great thing that *ah* changed the way we think and *ah* you can talk about *ah* some *ah*, {pause}, [interruption].

**Malak:** OK, did you leave home during the war or *ah*?

**Fatima:** No, we stated in our area, it is safe place and *ah* the people from other areas in Misurata *ah* came to this aria, yeah we did not leave our home,

but some people came to our home and stated with us *ah* because they were in *ah* dangerous places.

**Malak:** Yeah, Fatima like me ..pause... I was *ah* I remember during the war I stated at home and *ah* my uncle and *ahh* my father's friends was coming to us because *ah* as you said *ah* my area is *ah* the peace, the safe place in Misurata. So, *ah* I remember in the *ah* war *ah* I was *ah* preparing a lot of things.

**Fatima:** What about *ah* what about me about your feeling? I will ask you all of you about your feeling in the revolution? How did you feel, brave, crying or shouting?

**Malak:** Yeah, sometimes I was very afraid about *ah* the people. Sometimes I cry....[interruption].

**Fatima:** Who Died?

**Malak:** yeah, my uncle was injured [interruption].

**Fatima:** even my uncle got injured in the war. He is now, still to this moment *ah* get curing in Italy.

**Malak:** OK, as Fatima said that *ah* her uncle injured in the war also my uncle was injured in the war and *ah* he was go [went] to Germany and *ah* he *ah* still there until now ....[interruption].

Yeah, *ah* my uncle was *ah* injured in his leg and in his *ah*.

**Hala:** In his arm.

**Malak:** Yeah, in his arm and in his leg and in his *ah* stomach also in his *ah* ear. pause Well, I will ask Fatima if *ah* you want to add anything.

**Fatima:** Well. I will talk about my brother, he *ah* was with *ah* fighting in Dafniah yeah, *ah* he was injured in his arm and in his leg then he was travelled to Tunisia. He stayed about not actually maybe one week and he came back then he goes to Malisia and stayed for many months there and *ah* the doctors overthere didn't do any *ah* anything for him and *ah* he came back.

**Malak:** In which month your bother was injured?

**Fatima:** I can't *ah* remember, I don't know, but he *ah* he injured in Al-Dafniya umm.

**Asma:** like my father.

**Hala:** Did they offer him another place?

**Fatima:** Yes, even injured in Bani Walid in his eyes and *ah* neck and leg and he is now in Tunisia. Insha-Allah he will go to Spain, but we don't know when [laugh].

**Fatima:** Ask me ask me [laugh].

**Malak:** I'll ask you if *ah* during the war if you prepared anything for the aah

**Hala:** Rebels.

**Malak:** Yeah.

**Fatima:** Yes, *ah* sometimes my brother asked us to cook food for his *ah* friends yeah in his Katiba especially in *ah* in Ramadan [laugh].

**Hala:** I will ask you, in which Katiba your brother is?

**Fatima:** Fursan Misurata.

### **Speaking-task Activity Two:**

#### A western visitor to Libya.

**S1:** Hello everybody, how are you?

- Fine thank and you.

**S1:** Fine, I am a visitor here, but actually I am so said because I did not have time to see the Libyan success. Can you talk about it?

**S2:** Yes, I can help you. Firstly, welcome to you here umm I know many places *ah* in Libya for tourism *ah* like Sabrata. Sabrata *ah* has nice buildings like hotels and *ah* and nice beach and good accommodation and *ah* nice *ah* service so *ah* and *ah* has *ah* [interruption].

**S3:** Also, in Tripoli *ah* there is a nice hotels like *ah* ‘Almahari’ and hotel ‘seven Moon’ and there is a museum and old city in Tripoli and *ah* there is some restaurants so nice so beautiful fantastic like *ah* um *ah* ‘City moon’ and *ah* restaurant ‘Almuman’ and *ah* ‘Cook Door’ and..

**S1:** Actually, I hope to visit it.

**S3:** In Tripoli or somewhere else?

**S1:** Actually, I wish to visit because I do not have time, but honestly you are good people. Libyan people are amazing.

**S4:** Thank you. Actually, we can talk about Misurata!

**S1:** Yes, the most important, I heard a lot about Misurata.

**S4:** Yes, Misurata *ah* near Tripoli, and *ah* have *ah* nice places. For example you can visit *ah* Tripoli Street especially *ah* after the war.

**S1:** Umha [agreeing and moves her head].

**S4:** And you can *ah* do some shopping for example, *ah* street in the street ‘Abdulla Alghareeb’ and you can *ah* see a lot *ah* of places also the beach have a good *ah*.

**S1:** Yes, thank you so much.

**S2:** You are welcome.



### Appendix B

Frequency and percentage distribution were employed to determine how often the students use each identified communication strategies.

*Note: only the strategies which were used by the students are presented in the tables below.*

**Table (1): CSs used in the first topic**

N	Name of CSs used	How many times use in a task	Total words used in a task	100%
1	Filler	66	1240	5.32
2	Repetition	4	=	0.32
3	Facilitating	4	=	0.32
4	Asking for clarification	4	=	0.32
5	Seeking opinion	4	=	0.32
6	Repairing	4	=	0.30
7	Giving assistance	3	=	0.24
8	Translation	2	=	0.16
9	Body language	23	=	1.85

**Table (2): CSs used in the second topic**

N	Name of CSs used	How many times use in a task	Total words used in a task	100%
1	Filler	25	250	10
2	Asking for clarification	1	=	0.4
3	Seeking opinion	1	=	0.4
4	Repetition	1	=	0.4