

AN EVALUATION OF PREP CLASS STUDENTS' ORAL PRESENTATIONS WITH REGARD TO THEIR FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT

Communicative competence as well as linguistic competence is important in foreign language learning. Foreign language learners' linguistic competence is reflected by their communicative competence in a foreign language. They try to display it through their performative competence which is based on their communicative skills. Group work or pair work can be considered as indispensable for language studies. Students from diverse background, different multiple intelligences and learning styles may help one another in this type of formation. This study aims at discussing how well prep class foreign language learners reflect their communicative competence. This study will discuss the following questions: 1) To what extent do prep-class English language learners use their communicative competence? 2) What are the strategies they refer to their communicative competence? 3) What is the role of prep-class English language learners' intrinsic motivation to use their communicative competence effectively? Prep-class English language learners have asked to choose a topic they are interested in first. Then they are asked to form their groups of at least two or at most five. They presented them. To gather the data, video presentation have been analyzed. This study will help prep class students to improve their communicative competence, suggesting some handy strategies for their performative competence.

Keywords: prep class students, communicative competence, performative competence, foreign language oral performance

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on discussing how well prep-class English language learners reflect their **communicative competence** in oral presentations. It focuses not only on learners' knowledge of language, but also to what extent learners are able to use language in communicative situations to reflect their **communicative competence**. They try to display it through their performative competence which is based on their communicative skills. Group work or pair work can be considered as indispensable for language studies. Students from diverse background, different multiple intelligences and learning styles may help one another in this type of formation.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is know to what extent the prep-class English language learners are competent enough in expressing their ideas in oral presentations.

Research Questions

This study will discuss the following questions:

- 1) To what extent do prep-class English language learners use their communicative competence?

- 2) What are the strategies they refer to their communicative competence?
- 3) What is the role of prep-class English language learners' intrinsic motivation to use their communicative competence effectively?

Theoretical Background of the Study

As Hymes (1972) states, the goal of language teaching is to teach learners to use their communicative competence. It is because language teaching 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.

Hymes also presents communicative competence not only as an inherent grammatical competence, but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations, bringing the sociolinguistic perspective into Chomsky's linguistic view of competence.

The concept was first introduced by Noam Chomsky as part of the foundations for his generative grammar, but it has since been adopted and developed by other linguists, particularly those working in the generativist tradition. Therefore, Competence is shared knowledge of ideal speaker-listener set in a completely homogenous speech community, whereas performance is the process of applying underlying knowledge to actual language.

Linguistic competence is the system of linguistic knowledge possessed by native speakers of a language. It differs from linguistic performance, which is used in communication. Linguistic competence is also the unconscious knowledge of grammar that allows speakers to use in understanding a language. Therefore, Linguistic competence is an ideal language system that enables the learner to produce and understand the target language. To attain linguistic competence the learner should be motivated to learn the language and focus on its systems so that he or she would be at least aware of the grammatical errors.

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

Components of Communicative Competence:

Linguistic competence is knowing the language code, i.e. how to use the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary of a language. Linguistic competence asks: What words do I use? How do I put them into phrases and sentences?

Sociolinguistic competence is knowing how to use and respond to language appropriately, given the setting, the topic, and the relationships among the people communicating. Sociolinguistic competence asks: Which words and phrases fit this setting and this topic? How can I express a specific attitude (courtesy, authority, friendliness, respect) when I need to? How do I know what attitude another person is expressing?

Discourse competence is knowing how to interpret the larger context and how to construct longer stretches of language so that the parts make up a coherent whole. Discourse competence asks: How are words, phrases and sentences put together to create conversations, speeches, email messages, newspaper articles?

Strategic competence is knowing how to recognize and repair communication breakdowns, how to work around gaps in one's knowledge of the language, and how to learn more about the language and in the context. Strategic competence asks: How do I know when I've misunderstood or when someone has misunderstood me? What do I say then? How can I express my ideas if I don't know the name of something or the right verb form to use? Strategic competence is used when other competences fail to cope with the situations such as lack of words or structures in communication. This consists of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies used to compensate when communication is broken down. Apart from the components of the Communicative Competence, SPEAKING Model and the Linguistic and Communicative contexts; along with textual and pragmatic competence are elements that must be taken into account.

SPEAKING Model

Along with the components of the communicative Competence, Hymes developed a valuable model to assist the identification and labeling of components of linguistic interaction that was driven by his view that, in order to speak a language correctly, one needs not only to learn its vocabulary and grammar, but also the context in which words are used.

Hymes constructed the acronym SPEAKING, under which he grouped the sixteen components within eight divisions:

S – Setting: physical circumstances

Scene: psychological setting or cultural definition

P – Participants: Speaker and audience as addressees and other hearers

E – Ends: Purposes, goals, and outcomes

A - Act Sequence: Form and order of the event

K – Key: Clues that establish the "tone, manner, or spirit" of the speech act

I – Instrumentalities: Forms and styles of speech:

N – Norms: Social rules governing the event and the participants' actions and reaction.

G – Genre: The kind of speech act or event; for the example used here, the kind of story.

Linguistic and Communicative Contexts

In addition, Widdowson (1978) takes almost the same side with Hymes (1972), considering the fact that knowing a language is more than knowing how to understand, speak, read, and write sentences; it is knowing how sentences are used to communicate. He also says that communicative abilities have to be developed at the same time as the linguistic skills; otherwise the mere acquisition of the linguistic skills may inhibit the development of communicative abilities. Teachers should provide linguistic and communicative contexts.

- **Linguistic** context focuses on **usage** to enable the students to select which form of sentence is contextually appropriate

- **Communicative** context focuses on **use** to enable the students to recognize the type of communicative function their sentences fulfill

Besides, Canale and Swain (1980: p. 160) strongly believe that the study of **grammatical competence** is as essential to the study of **communicative competence** as is the study of **sociolinguistic competence** which are almost the same as those suggested by Hymes (1972). They use **grammatical competence** instead of **linguistic competence**.

On the other hand, Bachman (1990) discusses grammatical competence within the organizational competence. According to his view, the organizational competence is divided into grammatical competence and textual competence.

Bachman's **grammatical competence** is consonant with Canale and Swain's **grammatical competence**.

Textual competence and Pragmatic competence

The **textual competence**, pertains to the knowledge of conventions for cohesion and coherence and rhetorical organization. It also includes conventions for language use in conversations, involving starting, maintaining, and closing conversations. Bachman's **textual competence** have both the part of Canale and Swain's **discourse competence** and the part of their **strategic competence**.

Bachman's **pragmatic competence**, mainly focuses on the relationship between what one says in his or her communicative acts and what functions he or she intends to perform through his or her utterances.

Along with the communicative competence and related with Maxim's pragmatic competence, Maxim's conversation are taken into account in communication. Grice (1975) proposes them as:

The maxim of quantity, where one tries to be as informative as one possibly can, and gives as much information as is needed, and no more. Say only as much as necessary

The maxim of quality, where one tries to be truthful, and does not give information that is false or that is not supported by evidence. Say only what is true.

The maxims of relevance, where one tries to be relevant, and says things that are pertinent to the discussion. Say only what is relevant.

The maxim of manner, when one tries to be as clear, as brief, and as orderly as one can in what one says, and where one avoids obscurity and ambiguity. Be clear.

METHOD

Totally, 93 prep class students (55 medicine and 38 ELT) have been involved in oral presentations through which their foreign language communicative competence has been evaluated.

In order to see their communicative competence level, prep-class students were asked to create videos. It is known that student-created videos require more preparation than a typical in-class presentation. For example, the student needs to synthesize various sources on the subject content, the student must also write it down as a script, read it, recite it and then create a video. Each of these steps repeatedly exposes and reinforces the subject content for the students.

From a social media perspective, student-created videos place students on display because the student would make a greater effort to master the subject content so as to avoid being embarrassed in front of their peers and anyone else who may view the video.

A second and important consequence to be expected of student-created video is that while students are actively engaged in the activity, they are actively learning, as compared to passively sitting in a traditional lecture, and will, thus, enjoy the project, providing a greater degree of satisfaction with the course, subject content, the professor, and peers.

Researchers suggest potential benefits for student-created videos. They, for instance, describe motivation and student enjoyment, how videos support authentic learning, how videos encourage student engagement, and videos support students' creativity.

The positive comments support the notions that students appreciate:

- having an opportunity to exercise personal creativity;
- having educational activities that are: experiential, active, and entertaining;
- having an opportunity to engage in social learning and
- having an opportunity to gain familiarity and comfort with classmates.

Although not mentioned directly, all students had an opportunity to develop some level of video technology expertise which is expected to increase in relevance as they go forward in their education and their work experience.

Prep-class students worked in groups of at least of five and at most in groups of ten. They were assigned a task to present 10-minute long video presentations and were given some possible choices ranging from public service announcement or preparing a documentary, or any topic the students chose as long as it complied with a 10-minute-long presentation. For each class, a lecturer was assigned to supervise the project and the students prepared 10 videos. The videos were about Amasya, News, Diabetes, Classroom, Syndromes, Down Syndromes, The Closest Prediction, Samsun, and Violence against Women. Their presentations were analyzed by a rubric which was developed to see the prep-class students' communicative competence with regard to the individual components such as linguistic, strategic, socio-pragmatic, and discourse along with the evaluation scale as Very Good, Good, Satisfactory, and Poor.

Oral Communicative Competence Rubrics

Students Male / Female	Very Good				Good				Satisfactory				Poor			
	L	S	So-Pr	D	L	S	So-Pr	D	L	S	So-Pr	D	L	S	So-Pr	D
Student 1																
Student 92																
Student 93																

■ L= Linguistic

■ S= Strategic

■ So-Pr= Socio-pragmatic

■ D= Discourse

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After each video show has been analyzed by the rubric, there were 13 tables given according to the department and gender.

Table 1: AMASYA

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	6									6
ELT										
Female										
Male	6									6
L				2	33.33	4	66.66			6
S						6	100			6
So Pr				5	83.33			1	16.66	6
D						1	16.66	5	83.33	6

This study indicates that male students seem socio-pragmatically more communicative than the other components of communicative competence. They may be from Amasya or they may have seen Amasya before, or are familiar with Amasya. Intrinsic motivation seems effective in this video presentation.

Table 2: NEWS I

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	9									9
ELT	2									2
Female	8									8
Male	3									3
L		2	18.18	5	45.45	4	36.36			11
S		2	18.18	5	45.45	4	36.36			11
So Pr		2	18.18	5	45.45	4	36.36			11
D		2	18.18	5	45.45	4	36.36			11

This study indicates that although most of the students in this group are females, their level is Good and Satisfactory with regard to the four components of communicative competence. Very few students were Very Good may be because they are still unable to express their thoughts and opinions well. Gender does not seem to be a significant factor to students' communicative competence.

Table 3: NEWS II

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	6									6
ELT	4									4
Female	6									6
Male	4									4
L		3	30	5	50	2	20			10
S		3	30	5	50	2	20			10
So Pr		3	30	5	50	2	20			10
D		3	30	5	50	2	20			10

In this study, the students' intrinsic motivation seems to be triggered for using their communicative competence more effectively. This is shown by the high percentage of Good and Very Good compared to Table 2.

Table 4: NEWS III

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	4									4
ELT	1									1
Female	2									2
Male	3									3
L		2	40	2	40	1	20			5
S		2	40	2	40	1	20			5
So Pr		2	40	2	40	1	20			5
D		2	40	2	40	1	20			5

In this study, the students seem to be more able to use their communicative competence effectively and express their thoughts and opinions slightly better maybe because the topics for this group are common and familiar to the students. This is clear from the similar number of the students and percentage of Very Good and Good.

Table 5: NEWS IV

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine										
ELT	11									11
Female	6									6
Male	5									5
L		1	9.09	6	54.54	4	36.36			11
S		1	9.09	6	54.54	4	36.36			11
So Pr		1	9.09	6	54.54	4	36.36			11
D		1	9.09	6	54.54	4	36.36			11

Similar to the results in Table 2, this study indicates that most of the students' communicative competence is acceptable to some extent with regard to the four components, since the topics appeal to their immediate environment to trigger their intrinsic motivation.

Table 6: DIABETES

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine										
ELT	3									3
Female	2									2
Male	1									1
L				2	66.66	1	33.33			3
S				2	66.66	1	33.33			3
So Pr				2	66.66	1	33.33			3
D				2	66.66	1	33.33			3

This study indicates that students' level is Good and Satisfactory with regard to the four components of communicative competence. Intrinsic motivation is effective in this study maybe because the topic is common and related with a universal problem for all ages and genders.

Table 7: CLASSROOM

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine										
ELT	4									4
Female	4									4
Male										
L						4	100			4
S						4	100			4
So Pr						4	100			4
D						4	100			4

As is shown in this study, the four students' communicative competence is Satisfactory with regard to the four components. These results show that the students are unable to show effective management for their communicative competence and, therefore, their intrinsic motivation is still inadequately effective. Another reason might be the excessive use of the students' mother tongue to English in and outside the classroom.

Table 8: SYNDROMES

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	8									8
ELT										
Female	8									8
Male										
L		4	50	1	12.5	3	37.5			8
S		4	50	1	12.5	3	37.5			8
So Pr		4	50	1	12.5	3	37.5			8
D		4	50	1	12.5	3	37.5			8

This study shows a gap between the students in this group: 4 students were Very Good with regard to the four components of communicative competence, and the other students' level were Satisfactory, one was Good. This shows, that although the topic of the video might not be familiar to most students, they still do not have the unconscious mastery of the components of communicative competence, and as a result they are unable to communicate effectively.

Table 9: DOWN SYNDROMES

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	2									2
ELT	1									1
Female	3									3
Male										
L				1	33.33	2	66.66			3
S				1	33.33	2	66.66			3

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So Pr				1	33.33	2	66.66			3
D				1	33.33	2	66.66			3

Similar to the results in Table 8, this study is also an indicator that students do not have the unconscious mastery of the components of communicative competence. The topic of the video may not be familiar to the students and, hence, they are not able to communicate effectively. Another reason might be the excessive use of the students' mother tongue to English in and outside the classroom, as well.

Table 10: THE CLOSEST PREDICTION I

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	9									9
ELT	2									2
Female	6									6
Male	5									5
L		4	36.36	5	45.45			2	18.18	11
S		4	36.36	5	45.45			2	18.18	11
So Pr		4	36.36	5	45.45			2	18.18	11
D		4	36.36	5	45.45			2	18.18	11

In this study, four students seem to be more able to use their communicative competence effectively and express their thoughts and opinions slightly better than the other two students in the group. This study is also an indicator that students do not have the unconscious mastery of the components of communicative competence.

Table 11: THE CLOSEST PREDICTION II

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	7									7
ELT	1									1
Female	5									5
Male	3									3
L				3	37.5	5	62.5			8
S				3	37.5	5	62.5			8
So Pr				3	37.5	5	62.5			8
D				3	37.5	5	62.5			8

As is shown in this study, most students in this group are unable to use their communicative competence unconsciously and express their thoughts and opinions effectively.

Table 12: SAMSUN

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	3									3
ELT										
Female										
Male	3									3
L						3	100			3
S						3	100			3

So Pr						3	100			3
D						3	100			3

This study indicates that the students' communicative competence level seems to be satisfactory. Although the topic of the video must be familiar to the presenters, they are not able to use their communicative competence unconsciously and express their thoughts and opinions effectively.

Table 13: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

	Number	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	Total
Medicine	1									1
ELT	5									5
Female	6									6
Male										
L						6	100			6
S						6	100			6
So Pr						6	100			6
D						6	100			6

Since almost all the presenters were females, the level of their communicative competence seems satisfactory. It is because the females were directly related with a universal problem for female population. Besides, it increases the role of the intrinsic type of motivation in using communicative competence effectively.

Table 14: The Distribution of the Answers according to the Components of Communicative Competence

Communicative Competence	Very Good	%	Good	%	Satisfactory	%	Poor	%	N
L	16	17.20	36	38.70	39	41.93	2	2.15	93
S	16	17.20	34	36.55	41	44.08	2	2.15	93
So Pr	16	17.20	39	41.93	35	37.63	3	3.22	93
D	16	17.20	34	36.55	36	38.70	7	7.52	93
N	64		143		151		14		372
Total (Answers)		17.20		38.44		40.60		3.76	

As is seen above, most of the prep-class students seem satisfactorily competent in almost four components. Unfortunately, prep-class students are not good at using their communicative competence effectively. It may be because they do not know how to use strategies in communication. That is to say they do not know how to recognize and repair communication breakdowns, how to work around gaps in one's knowledge of the language, and how to learn more about the language and in the context.

CONCLUSION

Communicative competence as well as linguistic competence is important in foreign language learning. Foreign language learners' linguistic competence is reflected by their communicative competence in a foreign language. They try to display it through their performative competence, which is based on their communicative skills.

Group work or pair work can be considered as indispensable for language studies. Students from diverse background, different multiple intelligences and learning styles may help one another in this type of formation.

Prep-class students do not seem communicatively competent enough, since they are not able to use communication strategies effectively. Through group video presentations, they have shared their communicative skills, and they have indicated achievement in communication.

There are also several positive aspects about student-created videos that should be considered in language classrooms.

The positive aspects of student-created videos are: deeper learning; more engaging learning; more active learning; experiential learning; more personal involvement – students must take ownership of their ability to acquire knowledge; and, a more entertaining and engaging experience.

In addition, students have an opportunity to bond with peers outside of the classroom in a more meaningful and profound manner.

SUGGESTIONS

Prep-class students should be prepared for using a foreign language communicatively. In order to develop their communicative competence and to fill in the gap in communication some activities, such as presentations in groups should be assigned.

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