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Title
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Permalink
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Journal
Issues in Applied Linguistics, 6(2)

ISSN
1050-4273

Authors
Celce-Murcia, Marianne
Dornyei, Zoltan
Thurrell, Sarah

Publication Date
1995-12-31

DOI
10.5070/L462005216

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Communicative Competence: A Pedagogically Motivated Model with Content Specifications

Marianne Celce-Murcia
University of California, Los Angeles

Zoltán Dörnyei
Sarah Thurrell
Eötvös University, Budapest

This paper argues the need for an updated and explicit description of language teaching areas generated with reference to a detailed model of communicative competence. We describe two existing models of communicative competence and then propose our own pedagogically motivated construct, which includes five components: (1) discourse competence, (2) linguistic competence, (3) actional competence, (4) sociocultural competence, and (5) strategic competence. We discuss these competencies in as much detail as is currently feasible, provide content specifications for each component, and touch on remaining issues and possible future developments.

INTRODUCTION

It is reasonable to assume that communicative language teaching (CLT) (Widdowson, 1978; Savignon, 1983, 1990) should be based implicitly or explicitly on some model of *communicative competence* (e.g., Hymes, 1967, 1972). However, with the exception of the work of Canale & Swain (1980) and Canale (1983), there has been no serious endeavor to generate detailed content specifications for CLT that relate directly to an articulated model of communicative competence. Several attempts have, of course, been made to catalogue the content that should be part of a communicative language syllabus (e.g., Wilkins, 1976; van Ek, 1977; Dubin & Olshtain, 1986; van Ek & Trim, 1991), but such content specifications, while being very valuable and influential in the language teaching profession, have not been carried out systematically with reference to any well-defined and comprehensive communicative competence construct. As a result, they have tended to be slightly intuitive and *ad hoc*. Among applied linguists there have been some notable attempts to recast the construct of communicative competence within the context of language assessment (e.g., Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, in preparation), but such

Issues in Applied Linguistics
ISSN 1050-4273
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Vol. 6 No. 2 1995 5-35

model-building has been carried out with reference to tests of language proficiency rather than to objectives of language instruction.

Given the immediate practical need that many applied linguists and language teachers are experiencing in connection with designing language syllabi and instructional materials as well as assessment instruments in accordance with CLT principles (cf. Savignon, 1990), another attempt to look at models of communicative competence and their content specifications from a pedagogical perspective seems warranted. Our current effort has been motivated by our belief in the potential of a direct, explicit approach to the teaching of communicative skills,[1] which would require a detailed description of what communicative competence entails in order to use the sub-components as a content base in syllabus design.[2] However, we believe, an *informed* approach concerning the objectives of CLT will be conducive to the teaching of communicative language abilities regardless of whether one's philosophy of language teaching/learning favors implicit, indirect language acquisition (e.g., Krashen, 1982) or more explicit, focused language instruction (e.g., Rutherford & Sharwood Smith, 1985; Spada & Lightbown, 1993; Schmidt, 1990, 1993). A model of communicative competence such as ours does not directly imply anything about *how* teaching should proceed. However, whatever teaching approach one selects, the content must at some point undergo a "pedagogic conversion."

Linguists and applied linguists have not always used the term "competence" in the same way, so a brief discussion of this matter is useful as a preliminary. Taylor (1988) points out that among applied linguists, Stern (1983) equated "competence" with "proficiency" while Savignon (1983) viewed competence as dynamic. In contrast, Taylor notes that linguists like Chomsky (1965 and subsequent work) use "competence" to refer only to rather static knowledge, which excludes any notion of "capacity" or "ability." Like Chomsky, Taylor views "competence" as a state or product, not a process; he distinguishes between "competence" and "proficiency," saying that the latter, which he describes as the ability to make use of competence, is dynamic and relates to process and function. This distinction appears to be similar to that of "declarative" and "procedural knowledge," two terms that applied linguists such as Kasper (1989) and O'Malley & Chamot (1990) have borrowed from cognitive psychology. Taylor further claims that "performance" is what occurs when proficiency is put to use. While we agree that Taylor's distinctions are useful in the abstract, they have proved to be difficult to apply practically in a consistent manner. In spelling out our content specifications for communicative competence, we found that certain competencies (e.g., linguistic competence) are more static, whereas others are more dynamic (e.g., strategic competence). This is a matter we shall return to later.

In this paper we first discuss existing models of communicative competence and then present our own framework containing pedagogically relevant components. In line with the practical purpose of our model, our emphasis has been to provide detailed content specifications for the constituent components.

We are well aware that it is impossible at present to catalogue comprehensively everything known about language that is relevant to language teaching; nor is it possible with such a comprehensive enterprise to claim that we have presented the most up-to-date results in every area, particularly because cutting edge results are often controversial and not tested sufficiently to be able use them confidently as bases for pedagogical exploitation. Thus, a pedagogically motivated model is, in a way, necessarily selective and dated. However, from a practical perspective, we feel that it is worth making this effort in spite of the above reservations in order to inform work currently being done in language teaching curriculum design, materials development and communicative language testing.

There are two further comments we would like to make at the outset. First, our model was developed from an L2 perspective but a great deal of it is assumed to have validity for describing L1 use as well. Second, we acknowledge the seminal work of the late Michael Canale, done in collaboration with Merrill Swain (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983). They did much to focus the attention of applied linguists on developing pedagogically relevant and assessment relevant models of communicative competence. We view this paper as our attempt to continue their work.

EXISTING MODELS OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

The first comprehensive model of communicative competence, which was intended to serve both instructional and assessment purposes, is that of Canale & Swain (1980), further elaborated by Canale (1983). This model posited four components of communicative competence:

1. *Grammatical competence* - the knowledge of the language code (grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.).
2. *Sociolinguistic competence* - the mastery of the sociocultural code of language use (appropriate application of vocabulary, register, politeness and style in a given situation).
3. *Discourse competence* - the ability to combine language structures into different types of cohesive texts (e.g., political speech, poetry).
4. *Strategic competence* - the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies which enhance the efficiency of communication and, where necessary, enable the learner to overcome difficulties when communication breakdowns occur.

In a critical analysis of the model, Schachter (1990) questioned the validity of the constituent components, and particularly the separation of discourse and sociolinguistic competencies, as the "unity of the text involves appropriateness and depends on contextual factors such as status of the participants, purpose of

the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction" (Schachter, 1990, p. 43). A second, related issue Schachter pointed out concerned the fact that the major components of the communicative competence model were not sufficiently defined, which resulted in an ambiguous operationalization of the theoretical constructs for assessment purposes. This problem was not unique to the particular test (see Harley, Allen, Cummins, & Swain, 1990) Schachter had analyzed; educational testing research has found that 'objectives-based tests' in general fall short of the mark in that the domain specifications, based on behavioral objectives, tend to result in ill-defined domains (Popham, 1990). Thus, in order to achieve content relevance, we need to have a well-defined target domain based on an explicit theoretical construct (cf. also McNamara, in press). Our attempt to provide detailed content specifications of the constituents of communicative competence was motivated partly by similar concerns. However, in spite of criticisms leveled at the Canale & Swain model by Schachter and others, the model has been extremely influential in defining major facets of communicative language use. It has broadened the scope of language instruction and language testing, and has been used as a starting point for many subsequent studies on the issue.

Another model of communicative language abilities has been proposed by Bachman (1990) and Bachman & Palmer (in preparation), as an elaboration of the Canale & Swain model, based on results in language testing research. The latest version of the Bachman & Palmer model (in preparation) divides language knowledge into two main categories, both broken down into subcategories:

Language Knowledge

1. *Organizational knowledge*—the knowledge of the "components involved in controlling the formal structure of language for producing or recognizing grammatically correct sentences and for ordering these to form texts" (MS. p. 3/13).
   (a) *Grammatical knowledge*—similar to Canale & Swain's grammatical competence.
   (b) *Textual knowledge*—similar to but more elaborate than Canale and Swain's discourse competence.
2. *Pragmatic knowledge*—the knowledge of the "components that enable us to relate words and utterances to their meanings, to the intentions of language users and to relevant characteristics of the language use contexts" (MS. p. 3/14).
   (a) *Lexical knowledge*—the knowledge of the meanings of words and the ability to use figurative language.
   (b) *Functional knowledge*—the knowledge of the "relationships between utterances and the intentions, or communicative purposes of language users" (MS. p. 3/14).

(c) *Sociolinguistic knowledge*—similar to Canale & Swain's sociolinguistic competence.

In situational language use *language knowledge* (as described above) interacts with *metacognitive strategies*, which are of three kinds, (a) *assessment*, (b) *goal-setting* and (c) *planning*. Traditionally conceived 'communication strategies' (such as paraphrase or approximation) belong to the third category (planning), which is consistent with the cognitive approach of Færch & Kasper (1984a), who defined these strategies as a subclass of verbal plans.

As McNamara (in press) observes, Bachman (1990) and Bachman & Palmer (in preparation) separate knowledge of/about language from the general cognitive skills involved in language use (referred to by Bachman as "strategic competence" and by Bachman & Palmer as "metacognitive strategies"), which are better understood as ability, or capacity, rather than as knowledge. While McNamara rates Bachman & Palmer's model superior to Canale & Swain's for language testing purposes, partly because of this attempt to distinguish between knowledge and skills—or in Taylor's (1988) terminology, competence and proficiency—he notes that there is still some overlap between Bachman & Palmer's illocutionary/functional component (which is conceived as knowledge) and their strategic component (which is considered to be a kind of processing ability/skill). This issue of the separation of the knowledge and skill dimensions of communicative competence, which also applies to our model, will need to be addressed explicitly in the future.

PROPOSED MODEL OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

We represent our model of communicative competence as a pyramid enclosing a circle and surrounded by another circle (see Figure 1). The circle within the pyramid is *discourse competence*, and the three points of the triangle are *sociocultural competence*, *linguistic competence*, and *actional competence*. This latter competence, an addition to the Canale and Swain model, is conceptualized as competence in conveying and understanding communicative intent by performing and interpreting speech acts and speech act sets (see later for a more detailed discussion). Thus our construct places the discourse component in a position where the lexico-grammatical building blocks, the actional organizing skills of communicative intent, and the sociocultural context come together and shape the discourse, which, in turn, also shapes each of the other three components. The circle surrounding the pyramid represents *strategic competence*, an ever-present, potentially usable inventory of skills that allows a strategically competent speaker to negotiate messages and resolve problems or to compensate for deficiencies in any of the other underlying competencies.

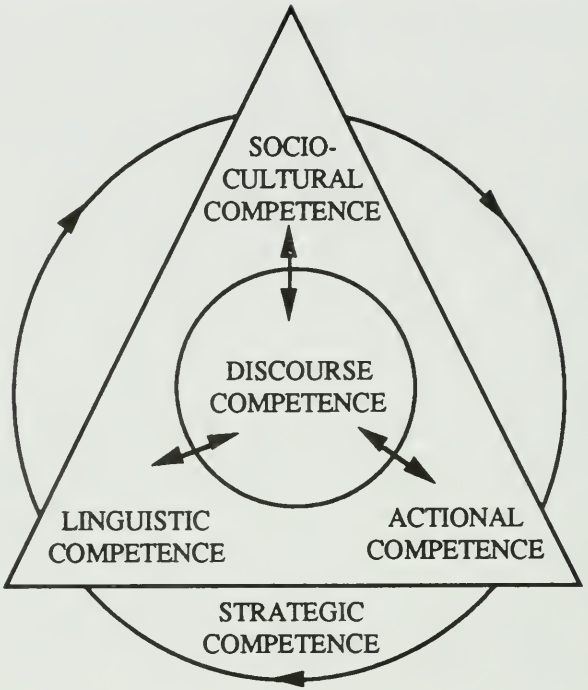

Figure 1. Schematic Representation of Communicative Competence

Figure 2 presents the chronological evolution of our model from the Canale and Swain (1980) construct. The figure shows clearly that the main tendency underlying the model's progress has been to elaborate *sociolinguistic competence*. First Canale (1983) separated *discourse competence* from it, and our model further narrows sociolinguistic competence by specifying *actional competence* in its own right. This tendency is understandable from a historical perspective. The term "communicative competence" stems from Hymes' (1967, 1972) challenge to Chomsky's (1965) notion of "linguistic competence" from a sociolinguistic perspective, and therefore originally the sociolinguistic dimension of language proficiency was associated with everything that was missing from linguistic competence. In fact, Canale & Swain (1980) had already begun the process of narrowing down the broad sociolinguistic dimension by separating *strategic competence* from *sociolinguistic competence*.

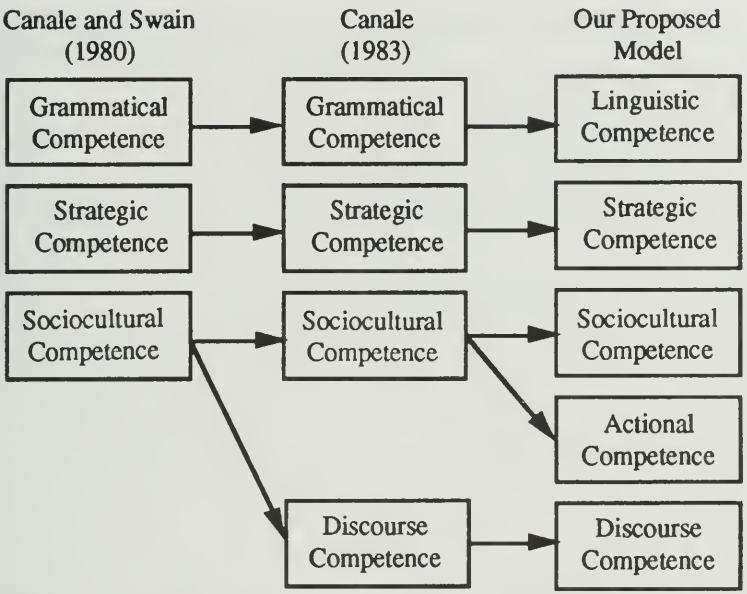

Figure 2. Chronological Evolution of the Proposed Model

Two minor, terminological differences between our model and Canale and Swain's is first that we have decided to use the term "linguistic competence" rather than "grammatical competence" in order to indicate unambiguously that this component also includes lexis and phonology in addition to morphology and syntax. Second, we use the term "sociocultural competence" rather than "sociolinguistic competence" to better distinguish it from actional competence (since the sociolinguistic dimension of communicative competence has traditionally included contextualized language functions), and also to highlight the fact that language resources are in the linguistic, actional, and discourse components while sociocultural knowledge is necessary for the appropriate deployment of the resources in other components.

Figure 3 provides a schematic comparison of our construct to Bachman & Palmer's (in preparation). Even though their proposal conceptualizes communicative language abilities in a hierarchical, multi-level form, the basic components share many similarities with the five competencies in our construct. The linguistic, discourse and strategic competencies have their more or less straightforward equivalents, even though "metacognitive strategies" in the Bachman & Palmer model entail a broader scope than our strategic component. It is in the pragmatic-sociolinguistic dimension, again, where the differences occur.

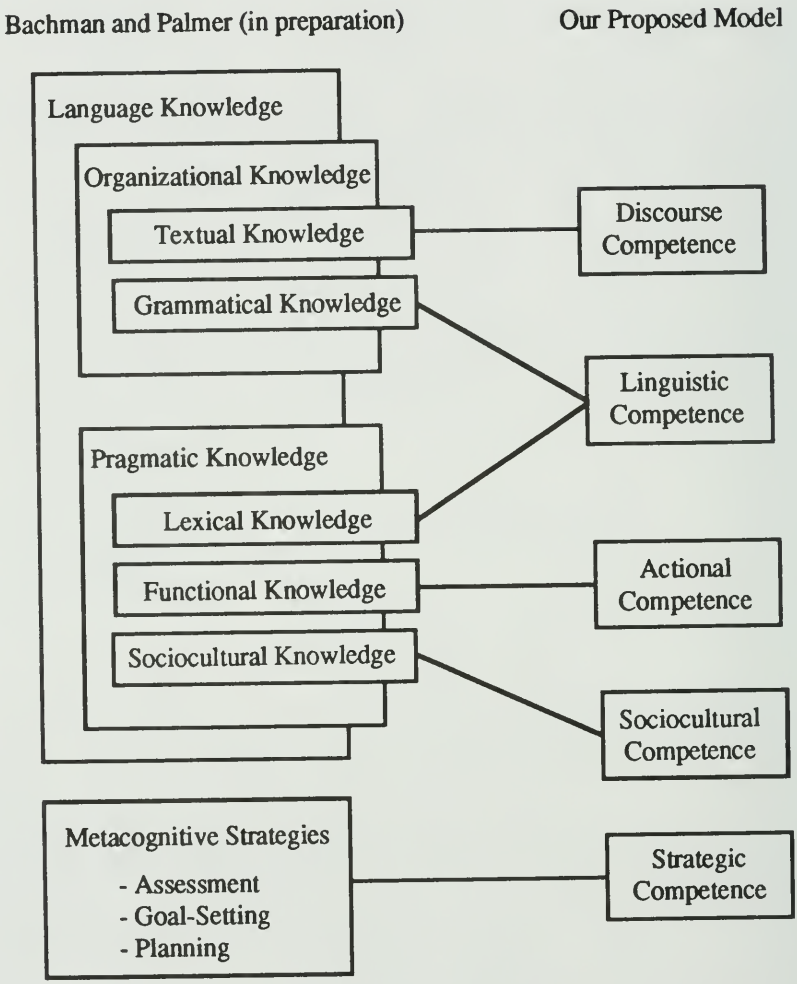

Figure 3. Comparison of the Proposed Model with Bachman and Palmer's (in Preparation) Model of Communicative Language Abilities

Bachman & Palmer also consider it necessary to define a separate component centered around communicative purposes and intentions; they call this component "functional knowledge," and it is similar to our actional competence. The difference in labeling reflects our somewhat different perspectives: Bachman & Palmer follow Halliday's (1973) theoretical conception of functional language use (see also Bachman, 1990), whereas our pedagogical approach involves a

more detailed description of speech acts and language functions in the way they were defined by Wilkins (1976) and van Ek (1977).

We also differ from Bachman and Palmer in that our model places "lexical knowledge" within linguistic competence, following Halliday (1985), who, among others, believes that the line between lexicon and grammar cannot be neatly drawn, and that this results in a "lexico-grammar" that is part of linguistic competence (see Larsen-Freeman, 1993; and Celce-Murcia, 1993 for further discussion). In Bachman's (1990) earlier model, vocabulary belonged to grammatical competence, whereas Bachman & Palmer (in preparation) decided to shift lexical knowledge into the pragmatic dimension, highlighting the interdependence of meaning and the sociocultural context (as is displayed prominently in the use of connotations and figurative language). Their current view of lexical knowledge as the realization and interpretation of meaning in context shows similarities to our actional competence, which concerns getting one's (illocutionary) meaning across in actual language use, and is typically associated with a repertoire of conventionalized phrases and routines. The question of lexis, and of formulaic speech in particular, will be discussed in more detail under linguistic competence.

In the following we outline the main components of each of the five competencies in our model in order to make it more applicable to pedagogy. The discussion begins with discourse competence, the core; we then move on to linguistic competence, the most familiar of the five, before treating the actional, sociolinguistic, and strategic competencies.

Discourse Competence

Discourse competence concerns the selection, sequencing, and arrangement of words, structures, sentences and utterances to achieve a unified spoken or written text. This is where the bottom-up lexico-grammatical microlevel intersects with the top-down signals of the macrolevel of communicative intent and sociocultural context to express attitudes and messages, and to create texts.

There are many sub-areas that contribute to discourse competence: *cohesion*, *deixis*, *coherence*, *generic structure*, and the *conversational structure* inherent to the turn-taking system in conversation (see Table 1).

Table 1. Suggested Components of Discourse Competence

COHESION
- Reference (anaphora, cataphora)
- Substitution/ellipsis
- Conjunction
- Lexical chains (related to content schemata), parallel structure

DEIXIS
- Personal (pronouns)
- Spatial (*here*, *there*; *this*, *that*)
- Temporal (*now*, *then*; *before*, *after*)
- Textual (*the following chart*; *the example above*)

COHERENCE
- Organized expression and interpretation of content and purpose (content schemata)
- Thematization and staging (theme-rheme development)
- Management of old and new information
- Propositional structures and their organizational sequences
  - temporal, spatial, cause-effect, condition-result, etc.
- Temporal continuity/shift (sequence of tenses)

GENRE/GENERIC STRUCTURE (formal schemata)
- narrative, interview, service encounter, research report, sermon, etc.

CONVERSATIONAL STRUCTURE (inherent to the turn-taking system in conversation but may extend to a variety of oral genres)
- How to perform openings & reopenings
- Topic establishment & change
- How to hold & relinquish the floor
- How to interrupt
- How to collaborate & backchannel
- How to do preclosings and closings
- Adjacency pairs (related to actional competence)
  - first and second pair parts (knowing preferred and dispreferred responses)

Cohesion is the area of discourse competence most closely associated with linguistic competence (see Halliday & Hasan 1976, 1989). It deals with the bottom-up elements that help generate texts, accounting for how pronouns, demonstratives, articles and other markers signal textual *co-reference* in written and oral discourse. Cohesion also accounts for how conventions of *substitution* and *ellipsis* allow speakers/writers to indicate *co-classification* and to avoid unnecessary repetition. The use of *conjunction* (e.g., 'and', 'but', 'however') to make explicit links between propositions in discourse is another important cohesive device. *Lexical chains* and *lexical repetitions*, which relate to derivational morphology, semantics, and content schemata, are a part of cohesion

and also coherence, which we discuss below. Finally, the conventions related to the use of *parallel structure* (also an aspect of both cohesion and coherence) make it easier for listeners/readers to process a piece of text such as 'I like swimming and hiking' than to process an unparallel counterpart such as 'I like swimming and to hike'.

According to Hatch (1992), the *deixis system* is an important aspect of discourse competence in that it links the situational context with the discourse, thus making it possible to interpret deictic personal pronouns ('I', 'you'); spatial references ('here', 'there'); temporal references ('now', 'then'); and certain textual references (e.g., 'the following example', 'the chart above').

The most difficult-to-describe area of discourse competence appears to be *coherence*, i.e., the degree to which sentences or utterances in a discourse sequence are felt to be interrelated rather than unrelated. It is typically easier to describe coherence in written than in oral discourse. There is obviously some interaction with cohesion; however, as Enkvist (1978) and Halliday & Hasan (1989) point out, it is possible for a text to have elements of cohesion without being coherent.[3] Likewise, as Morgan & Sellner (1980) and Carrell (1982) have demonstrated, it is also possible for short texts to be coherent without having any cohesive ties.[4] In general, however, we agree with Halliday & Hasan (1989) that coherent texts consisting of more than two or three clauses will almost always exhibit some cohesive ties.

Coherence is concerned with *macrostructure* in that its major focus is the expression of content and purpose in terms of *top-down organization of propositions*. It is concerned with what is *thematic* (i.e., what the point of departure of a speaker/writer's message is). The speaker (and even more so the writer) must use linguistic signals that make discourse cohere, which means not only using cohesive devices such as reference markers and lexical or semantic repetition or entailment but also a *sequencing* or *ordering of propositional structures* which takes into account social relationships, shared knowledge, and genre, and which generally follows certain *preferred organizational patterns*: temporal/chronological ordering, spatial organization, cause-effect, condition-result, etc. *Temporal sequencing* has its own conventions in that tense continuity or shift relate to topic or to speaker/writer affect; also, violations of natural chronological order typically must be marked using special adverbial signals and/or marked tenses such as the past perfect in English.

For listeners or readers, coherence relates to ease of interpretation as they use their linguistic knowledge, sociocultural knowledge, and situational clues to relate a piece of discourse to *objects* and *events* (real or imagined) beyond the text itself. As Grice (1975) has pointed out, discourse is assumed to be coherent unless it is impossible to infer a function and generate a possible interpretation.

The *generic structure* of various types of spoken and written texts is an object of concern in discourse analysis (Halliday & Hasan, 1989; Swales, 1990). Every language has its formal schemata (Carrell 1984), which relate to the development of a variety of genres. Certain written genres have a more highly

definable structure than others, e.g., research reports (introduction, methods, results, discussion). Likewise, certain spoken genres, such as the sermon, tend to be more highly structured than oral narrative, which is a more open-ended genre but with a set of expected features nonetheless (opening/setting, complication, resolution—all within a unified framework regarding time and participants). There is currently a variety of approaches to the analysis of genre (see Swales, 1990), including Biber's (1988) informative and valuable computational approach.

Conversational structure, which is inherent to the turn-taking system in oral conversation (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974), is the final aspect of discourse competence as we have outlined it. This area is highly relevant for communicative competence and language teaching (see Richards, 1990), since conversation is the most fundamental means of conducting human affairs. While usually associated with conversation, it is important to realize that these turn-taking conventions may also extend to other oral genres such as narratives, interviews, or lectures. The turn-taking system deals with how people *open* and *reopen* conversation, how they *establish* and *change topics*, how they *hold* and *relinquish the floor*, how they *backchannel* (i.e., give short verbal or non-verbal "carry-on" feedback), how they *interrupt*, how they *collaborate* (i.e., complete utterances with or for the interlocutor), and how they *perform preclosings* and *closings*. These interactive procedures are very often performed by means of "discourse regulating gambits" (Kasper, 1989:190) and conversational routines. Polished conversationalists are in command of hundreds, if not thousands, of such phrases.[5]

The turn-taking system is closely associated with the notion of *repair*, e.g., how speakers correct themselves or others in conversation, which we include under strategic competence; and with *adjacency pairs*, which are also related to actional competence. Adjacency pairs form discourse "chunks" where one speaker initiates (e.g., 'Hi, how are you?') and the other responds (e.g., 'Fine, thanks. And you?') in ways that are describable and often quite predictable. Some adjacency pairs involve giving a *preferred* response to a first-pair part (e.g., accepting an invitation that has just been extended); such responses are usually direct and structurally simple. However, other responses are viewed as *dispreferred* and will require more effort and follow-up work on the part of participants than a preferred response (e.g., when declining an invitation). Dispreferred responses occur less frequently than the preferred ones, and tend to pose more difficulties for learners.

Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence is historically the most thoroughly discussed component of our model and, for this reason, our discussion of it will be very brief. It comprises the basic elements of communication: the sentence patterns and types, the constituent structure, the morphological inflections, and the

lexical resources, as well as the phonological and orthographic systems needed to realize communication as speech or writing (cf. Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1983; Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin, in press) (see Table 2).

We do, however, wish to emphasize the importance of lexico-grammatical building blocks, that is, "lexicalized sentence stems" (Pawley & Syder, 1983) or "formulaic constructions" (Pawley, 1992). This area has received increasing recognition and importance over the past decade[6]; Widdowson (1989, p.135), for example, claims that

> communicative competence is not a matter of knowing rules for the composition of sentences and being able to employ such rules to assemble expressions from scratch as and when occasion requires. It is much more a matter of knowing a stock of partially pre-assembled patterns, formulaic frameworks, and a kit of rules, so to speak, and being able to apply the rules to make whatever adjustments are necessary according to contextual standards.

Nattinger & DeCarrico's (1992, 1994) discussion of formulaic speech offers a potentially very useful approach to dealing with the complexity of conventionalized forms. They define "lexical phrases" as "form/function composites," that is, "collocations ... that *have* been assigned pragmatic functions" (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992, p. 36). Thus they consider lexical phrases to be separate from idioms, clichés, and other types of collocations that are purely lexical and thus belong to linguistic competence. Lexical phrases, categorized according to their functional roles, would fall under either actional competence (e.g., conventionalized forms expressing language functions) or discourse competence (e.g., temporal connectors, relators, and phrases related to conversational structure and turn-taking). Thus, we feel, lexical knowledge appropriately belongs to more than one area: its systematic aspects (including meanings, word-building processes) to linguistic competence, and lexical phrases to actional and discourse competencies.

Actional Competence

Actional competence is defined as competence in conveying and understanding communicative intent, that is, matching actional intent with linguistic form based on the knowledge of an inventory of verbal schemata that carry illocutionary force (speech acts and speech act sets). Thus, actional competence is closely related to "interlanguage pragmatics," which has been defined by Kasper & Blum-Kulka (1993a) as "the study of nonnative speakers' use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language" (p. 3). It must be noted that our conceptualization of actional competence is mainly restricted to

Table 2. Suggested Components of Linguistic Competence

SYNTAX
- Constituent/phrase structure
- Word order (canonical and marked)
- Sentence types
  - statements, negatives, questions, imperatives, exclamations
- Special constructions
  - existentials (*there* + *BE*...)
  - clefts (*It's X that/who*...; *What* + sub. + verb + *BE*)
  - question tags, etc.
- Modifiers/intensifiers
  - quantifiers, comparing and equating
- Coordination (and, or, etc.) and correlation (*both X and Y*; *either X or Y*)
- Subordination (e.g., adverbial clauses, conditionals)
- Embedding
  - noun clauses, relative clauses (e.g., restrictive and non-restrictive)
  - reported speech

MORPHOLOGY
- Parts of speech
- Inflections (e.g., agreement and concord)
- Derivational processes (productive ones)
  - compounding, affixation, conversion/incorporation

LEXICON (receptive and productive)
- Words
  - content words (Ns, Vs, ADJs)
  - function words (pronouns, prepositions, verbal auxiliaries, etc.)
- Routines
  - word-like fixed phrases (e.g., *of course*, *all of a sudden*)
  - formulaic and semi-formulaic chunks (e.g., *how do you do?*)
- Collocations
  - V-Obj (e.g., *spend money*), Adv-Adj (e.g., *mutually intelligible*), Adj-N (e.g., *tall building*)
- Idioms (e.g., *kick the bucket*)

PHONOLOGY (for pronunciation)
- Segmentals
  - vowels, consonants, syllable types, sandhi variation (changes and reductions between adjacent sounds in the stream of speech)
- Suprasegmentals
  - prominence, stress, intonation, rhythm

ORTHOGRAPHY (for spelling)
- Letters (if writing system is alphabetic)
- Phoneme-grapheme correspondences
- Rules of spelling
- Conventions for mechanics and punctuation

oral communication; a close parallel to actional competence in written communication would be "rhetorical competence," which includes analysis of the "moves" and "lexical routines" typical of any given written genre (see Swales, 1990; Hoey, 1991; Bachman, 1990; & Vande Kopple, 1989, 1991).

While we are critical of any "functions only" approach to CLT and, indeed, there are some indications that speech act theory is gradually losing favor in pragmatics and applied linguistics (Levinson, 1983; Tarone & Yule, 1989), this does not mean that we do not consider actional competence an important part of L2 interactional knowledge from a pedagogical perspective. Speech acts and language functions have traditionally formed the "linguistic" base for CLT theory, and several elaborate taxonomies of the various functions language learners need to master have been developed (the most famous of which has been *The Threshold Level* by van Ek, 1977). Indeed, our addition of actional competence to the Canale & Swain model was originally motivated by the fact that we were unable to include the functional taxonomies developed by CLT theoreticians logically under any of the four traditional constituent competencies. The recent increase in emphasis on language learning tasks and task-based syllabi in language teaching theory (Long & Crookes, 1992) provides another reason for our featuring language functions and speech act sets in a pedagogically motivated model, because these units are expected to have an important role in task analysis.

Speech acts have traditionally been discussed in applied linguistics under sociolinguistic competence (see, for example, Tarone & Yule, 1989) because the linguistic verbalization of language functions shows considerable contextual variation as a function of cross-cultural and sociolinguistic variables. However, similar to Bachman (1990) and Bachman & Palmer (in preparation), we felt that within a broadly conceived pragmatic/sociolinguistic complex it was useful to separate the dimension associated with actional intent from that associated with sociocultural factors. The frequency of language functions in real-life communication has resulted in a wide range of conventionalized forms, sentence stems, formulaic expressions and strategies in every language, and thus a speaker with a developed sense of actional competence is in command of a wide repertoire of such chunks as well as rules of how to combine and sequence these to form complex actional patterns. This knowledge of linguistic resources is distinct from the knowledge of sociocultural rules and norms that are associated with an awareness of contextual variables. This is evidenced in cases when learners exercise efficient actional behavior *without* being contextually appropriate, or when a stylistically appropriate speech act does *not* achieve the intended illocutionary intent. An example of the former case is a non-native speaker saying upon leaving 'It's nice to have met you,' to someone he had met many times before; 'It was nice seeing you again,' would have been more appropriate. An example of the second case can occur when a non-native speaker simply does not understand the illocutionary intent of an indirect speech act like 'you want to close the window?' uttered in an appropriately informal context.

It should be noted that in educational applications, the system of language functions has indeed often been treated separately from contextual and stylistic variables. In their communicative syllabus model, Dubin & Olshtain (1986), for example, conceptualized an inventory of functions and an independent sociocultural content component involving rules of appropriateness. Similarly, *The Threshold Level* (van Ek, 1977) separates functional categories from settings, speaker roles, and style (which are all components of our sociocultural competence), and this tendency is even stronger in the revised version (van Ek and Trim, 1991), which contains, for example, separate sections on politeness conventions and sociocultural background knowledge as well.

The main problem with providing component specifications for actional competence is that one cannot easily give an explicit and precise definition of what "language functions" are (Berns, 1990). They are often described either very broadly or in a manner which is too situation-specific. Flowerdew (1990) argues that any attempt to categorize functions with the aim of producing a comprehensive, all-purpose system is likely to come under criticism for being somewhat ad-hoc and subjective. Nonetheless, for practical, pedagogical purposes it is possible to draw up a list of the most common language functions which have sufficiently clear face and content validity, and indeed several such lists have been compiled and used in language instruction to good effect (e.g., van Ek, 1977; Blundell, Higgens & Middlemiss, 1982; Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983; van Ek & Trim, 1991).

Table 3 outlines our conception of the domain of actional competence, divided into two main components, *knowledge of language functions* and *knowledge of speech act sets*. Based partly on Finocchiaro & Brumfit's (1983) and van Ek & Trim's (1991) work, the table categorizes language functions according to seven key areas: *interpersonal exchange*, *information*, *opinions*, *feelings*, *suasion*, *problems*, and *future scenarios*. We do not claim, however, that this is a completely comprehensive list nor that the categorization has unshakable validity. Rather, we intend it to serve as a helpful organizational construct and a practical guide for teachers, materials writers, and those designing classroom language tests; therefore, our concern in compiling this list was to achieve a clear and simple presentation.

There is one general point we would like to emphasize with regard to language functions, and this concerns indirect speech acts (e.g., knowing that 'You want to be back here by 4 o'clock' means 'Be back by 4!'). Indirect speech acts are rarely covered in foreign language teaching syllabi, which might suggest to learners that "the most common realization forms for all speech acts are the most direct, and [yet] ... the majority of speech acts are most frequently realized indirectly" (Levinson, 1983, p. 264). Some indirect speech acts have become so conventionalized as a result of their frequency that they no longer strike native speakers as indirect. This, however, does not hold true for non-native speakers, who often have problems understanding such conventions and therefore tend to underutilize them even at advanced levels (Preston, 1989).

How do native speakers cope with indirect speech acts? According to Olshtain and Cohen (1991), they "recognize the illocutionary force of an utterance by pairing up the situational information within which the utterance has been produced with the context of that utterance" (p. 155). Cook (1985) points out that the functions and realizations of speech acts interact with participant characteristics and individual perception of the situation, which is further complicated by the fact that "speech act functions may overlap or a speaker may have several intentions in mind; thus a simple utterance can have more than one function" (Hatch, 1992, p. 135). The key, then, to developing student awareness of language functions and speech acts is to present them in larger pragmatic contexts for interpretation and to emphasize their situational constraints. Unless we do this, learners will repeatedly fail to convey or comprehend the intended illocutionary force or politeness value of these communicative acts (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989a).

Following from this, the second main component of actional competence concerns the *knowledge of speech act sets*. Most often the patterns of interaction surrounding a particular speech act are themselves highly conventionalized and many of these larger units have been studied and referred to as "speech act sets" (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991, p. 155), "verbal exchange patterns" (van Ek & Trim, 1991, p. 93), or "speech events" (Hatch, 1992, p. 136). One example is Olshtain & Cohen's (1991, p. 156) "apology speech act set," which consists of five realization elements; two are obligatory: *expressing an apology* and *expressing responsibility*, and three are situation-specific and optional: *offering an explanation*, *offering repair*, and *promising nonrecurrence*. Thus in order to be able to use language functions in context, language learners need to be familiar with how individual speech acts are integrated into the higher levels of the communication system. Therefore, actional competence also involves knowledge of how speech acts and language functions can be patterned and sequenced in real-life situations.

At this point we would like to emphasize that while much of the existing research on speech act sets is interesting and potentially useful, it is also problematic in that almost all the descriptive data are elicited rather than naturalistic. The interactional dynamics of such speech acts have thus not been adequately examined and described. Until authentic spontaneous speech acts are collected and analyzed it would be premature to apply the existing research findings uncritically. However, the existing work does provide useful guidelines in the absence of more definitive research. In particular, much of the research points out cases where the inventory or the order of realization of a speech act set is different in the learners' L1 and the L2. In such cases, the contrastive information can be useful.

Table 3. Suggested Components of Actional Competence

KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS
- INTERPERSONAL EXCHANGE
  - Greeting and leavetaking
  - Making introductions, identifying oneself
  - Extending, accepting and declining invitations and offers
  - Making and breaking engagements
  - Expressing and acknowledging gratitude
  - Complimenting and congratulating
  - Reacting to the interlocutor's speech
    - showing attention, interest, surprise, sympathy, happiness, disbelief, disappointment
- INFORMATION
  - Asking for and giving information
  - Reporting (describing and narrating)
  - Remembering
  - Explaining and discussing
- OPINIONS
  - Expressing and finding out about opinions and attitudes
  - Agreeing and disagreeing
  - Approving and disapproving
  - Showing satisfaction and dissatisfaction
- FEELINGS
  - Expressing and finding out about feelings
    - love, happiness, sadness, pleasure, anxiety, anger, embarrassment, pain, relief, fear,
    - annoyance, surprise, etc.
- SUASION
  - Suggesting, requesting and instructing
  - Giving orders, advising and warning
  - Persuading, encouraging and discouraging
  - Asking for, granting and withholding permission
- PROBLEMS
  - Complaining and criticizing
  - Blaming and accusing
  - Admitting and denying
  - Regretting
  - Apologizing and forgiving
- FUTURE SCENARIOS
  - Expressing and finding out about wishes, hopes, and desires
  - Expressing and eliciting plans, goals, and intentions
  - Promising
  - Predicting and speculating
  - Discussing possibilities and capabilities of doing something

KNOWLEDGE OF SPEECH ACT SETS

Note: This table is for oral language; a parallel list of specifications is needed for written language—perhaps labeled 'rhetorical competence.'

Sociocultural Competence

Sociocultural competence refers to the speaker's knowledge of how to express messages appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication, in accordance with the pragmatic factors related to variation in language use. These factors are complex and interrelated, which stems from the fact that language is not simply a communication coding system but also an integral part of the individual's identity and the most important channel of social organization, embedded in the culture of the communities where it is used. As Nunan (1992) states, "Only by studying language in its social and cultural contexts, will we come to appreciate the apparent paradox of language acquisition: that it is at once a deeply personal and yet highly social process" (p. 23).

Language learners face this complexity as soon as they first try to apply the L2 knowledge they have learned to real-life communication, and these first attempts can be disastrous: the "culture-free," "out-of-context," and very often even "meaning-free" L2 instruction (Damen, 1987, p. xvii), which is still too typical of foreign language classes around the world, simply does not prepare learners to cope with the complexity of real-life language use efficiently. L2 learners should be made aware of the fact that making a social or cultural blunder is likely to lead to far more serious communication breakdowns than a linguistic error or the lack of a particular word. Raising sociocultural awareness, however, is not an easy task, because sociocultural rules and normative patterns of expected or acceptable behavior have not yet been adequately analyzed and described (Savignon, 1983; Wolfson, 1989). Even when good descriptions are available, sociocultural rules and norms are so ingrained in our own identity (and that of the learner) that it is difficult to change behavior based on a new set of assumptions.

We have divided the relevant sociocultural variables into four main categories (see Table 4). The first set of variables, *social contextual factors*, concerns the participants in the interaction and the communicative situation. The participants' *age*, *gender*, *office* (profession, rank and public position), *status* (social standing), *social distance* from and *relations* to each other (both in terms of power and affect) are known to determine how they talk and are talked to (cf. Preston, 1989; Brown & Levinson, 1987). Situational variables involve the *temporal* and *physical* aspects of the interaction (time and duration, location) as well as the social dimension of the *situation* (e.g., a formal reception).

The second category in Table 4, *stylistic appropriateness factors*, includes variables that lend themselves to explicit instruction. The most important *politeness strategies* can readily be presented as language teaching input (van Ek & Trim, 1991; Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1992) and the main characteristics of various *styles* and *registers* can also be summarized and presented for the students.

Table 4. Suggested Components of Sociocultural Competence

SOCIAL CONTEXTUAL FACTORS
- Participant variables
  - age, gender, office and status, social distance, relations (power and affective)
- Situational variables
  - time, place, social situation

STYLISTIC APPROPRIATENESS FACTORS
- Politeness conventions and strategies
- Stylistic variation
  - degrees of formality
  - field-specific registers

CULTURAL FACTORS
- Sociocultural background knowledge of the target language community
  - living conditions (way of living, living standards); social and institutional structure; social conventions and rituals; major values, beliefs, and norms; taboo topics; historical background; cultural aspects including literature and arts
- Awareness of major dialect or regional differences
- Cross-cultural awareness
  - differences; similarities; strategies for cross-cultural communication

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATIVE FACTORS
- Kinesic factors (body language)
  - discourse controlling behaviors (non-verbal turn-taking signals)
  - backchannel behaviors
  - affective markers (facial expressions), gestures, eye contact
- Proxemic factors (use of space)
- Haptic factors (touching)
- Paralinguistic factors
  - acoustical sounds, nonvocal noises
- Silence

Cultural factors involve three main components: *sociocultural background knowledge of the target language community*, *awareness of major dialect or regional differences*, and *cross-cultural awareness*. Widdowson (1990) refers to these areas of knowledge as "schematic knowledge," which complements the "systemic knowledge" of the language code; he argues that in real-life communication, the systemic knowledge is subservient to the schematic. The *sociocultural background knowledge of the target language community* is also given its due importance by van Ek & Trim (1991), who assign a separate category to such issues in their revised *Threshold Level* objectives. We share their belief that some knowledge of the life and traditions, as well as the history

and literature of the target speaker community is extremely useful to completely successful and comprehensive communication with its members.[7] The *awareness of major dialect and regional differences* is particularly important with languages like English, where several considerably different standard regional varieties exist. As for *crosscultural awareness*, there are so many culture-specific *do's* and *don't's* that without any knowledge of these, a language learner is constantly walking through a cultural minefield. Second language acquisition and "second culture acquisition" (Robinson, 1991) are inextricably bound.

The fourth main component of sociocultural competence involves *non-verbal communicative factors*. As Pennycook (1985) reiterates, "actions speak louder than words," with non-verbal communication carrying a significant proportion of social meaning. Because nonverbal actions operate largely on an unconscious level, L2 speakers may not even realize that some miscommunication can be fostered by inappropriate non-verbal signals.

Non-verbal communication in our model is divided into five components. The first is *kinesic behavior* or *body language*, involving nonverbal signals to regulate turn-taking (e.g., intake of breath, tensing the body and leaning forward) or to indicate to the interlocutor that what he/she says is being understood, as well as affective markers (such as facial expressions), gestures (especially the ones with conventionalized meanings) and eye contact (Kellerman, 1992). The second component, *proxemic factors*, concerns the speakers' use of space (e.g., physical distance between people), and the third, *haptic factors*, concerns the role of touching in the target language community; both factors can be the source of serious cross-cultural tension. The fourth component involves *paralinguistic factors* such as acoustical sounds (e.g., grunts) and nonvocal noises (e.g., hisses), but it does not include intonation, which we consider to be part of the basic linguistic code and thus part of linguistic competence. Paralinguistic factors give the message affective depth and function as backchannel signals. The final component, *silence*, often carries socially and culturally determined meaning, as is expressed by phrases like "pregnant pause" or "eloquent silence."

The aspects of sociocultural competence that will be particularly problematic for learners are the function of the differences between the communicative styles of the L1 and L2 communities. Marsch (1990) proposes that teachers should conduct a "cultural needs analysis" among their students using a questionnaire format to select the relevant "cultural rules" to be taught. Table 4 could serve as a guideline and a checklist of issues for designing such a questionnaire, and the whole area can be a matter for investigation and negotiation between teachers and students. However, we should bear in mind Kramsch's (1993, p. 49) caution about the pedagogy of sociocultural competence:

> Teaching how to shape contexts of interaction cannot be done directly by a well-dosed administration of facts ... Pragmatic knowledge ... can only be acquired through observation and analysis and a feel for the

whole social context. It is not an 'if-then' affair. It requires, therefore, a totally different pedagogic approach.

There are several limitations to our description of sociocultural competence. First, this part of our model is highly tentative in nature; we are under no illusion that we have the background to catalogue this vast area comprehensively. Second, people can always choose to conform or not conform to the norms presented to them; however, the basis of making an explicit choice is knowledge. Third, non-native speakers are often very vulnerable in terms of both power relations in the L2 community and their understanding of the consequences of nonconformity. Thus, whenever possible, the teacher should present not only the target norms—being very careful in the process not to present his/her own values or preferences as absolutes—but also the choices and the consequences of these choices to learners.

Strategic Competence

We conceptualize strategic competence as knowledge of communication strategies and how to use them. This conceptualization follows that of Canale & Swain (1980); however, research in the 1980s has identified several other types of strategies relevant to language learning, language processing, and language production.[8] In our pedagogically oriented framework, we have limited our focus to communication strategies because these have been described most explicitly and also because we consider these the strategies most relevant to communicative language use and CLT. We recognize that this part of our model could be greatly expanded.

Work on communication strategies has typically highlighted three functions of strategy use from three different perspectives:

(a) *Psycholinguistic perspective*: Communication strategies are verbal plans used by speakers to overcome problems in the planning and execution stages of reaching a communicative goal; e.g., avoiding trouble spots or compensating for not knowing a vocabulary item (cf. Færch & Kasper, 1984a).
(b) *Interactional perspective*: Communication strategies involve appeals for help as well as other cooperative problem-solving behaviors which occur *after* some problem has surfaced during the course of communication, that is, various types of negotiation of meaning and repair mechanisms (cf. Tarone, 1980; Varonis & Gass, 1985; Gass & Varonis, 1991).
(c) *Communication continuity/maintenance perspective*: Communication strategies are means of keeping the communication channel open in the face of communication difficulties, and playing for time to think and to make (alternative) speech plans (cf. Dörnyei, in press).

It is important to note that all the above functions are related to communication *problems* and *difficulties*, following traditional conceptualizations which posited problem-orientedness as a central feature of communication strategies. It is possible, however, to conceptualize communication strategies in a broader sense by also including attempts to "enhance the effectiveness of communication" (Canale, 1983, p. 11); however, cognitive strategies falling under this latter category (referred to by Tarone, 1980 as "production strategies") have received less attention in past research and will not be discussed in this paper. Based on the three functions above, our description of strategic competence (see Table 5) consists of five main parts:

Avoidance or reduction strategies involve tailoring one's message to one's resources by either *replacing messages*, *avoiding topics*, or, as an extreme case, *abandoning one's message* altogether.

Achievement or compensatory strategies involve manipulating available language to reach a communicative goal and this may entail compensating for linguistic deficiencies. These strategies have been the traditional concern of communication strategy research, and in Table 5 we have listed the ten types (with examples) we consider most common and important (for more detailed reviews, see Bialystok, 1990; Cook, 1993).

Stalling or time-gaining strategies include *fillers, hesitation devices and gambits* as well as *repetitions* (e.g., repeating what the other has said while thinking).[9] We should note here that several authors draw attention to the danger of L2 learners using taught fillers/gambits inappropriately if the presentation has been superficial and not adequately contextualized (cf. Færch & Kasper, 1984b; Edmondson & House, 1981; Wildner-Basset, 1994).

Self-monitoring strategies involve correcting or changing something in one's own speech (*self-repair*) as well as *rephrasing* (and often over-elaborating) one's message to further ensure that it gets through.

The last category in Table 5, *interactional strategies*, highlights the cooperative aspect of strategy use. *Appeals for help* are similar to achievement strategies in function but through using them the learner exploits his/her interlocutor's knowledge rather than manipulating his/her own language resources. *Meaning negotiation strategies* are of various types; applying Varonis & Gass's (1985) system, we have divided them into ways of *indicating a problem*, *responding* to such an indication, and making *comprehension checks*. These categories are further broken down into subcategories, listed in Table 5 with examples.

Table 5. Suggested Components of Strategic Competence

AVOIDANCE or REDUCTION STRATEGIES
- Message replacement
- Topic avoidance
- Message abandonment

ACHIEVEMENT or COMPENSATORY STRATEGIES
- Circumlocution (e.g., *the thing you open bottles with* for *corkscrew*)
- Approximation (e.g., *fish* for *carp*)
- All-purpose words (e.g., *thingy, thingamajig*)
- Non-linguistic means (mime, pointing, gestures, drawing pictures)
- Restructuring (e.g., *The bus was very... there were a lot of people on it*)
- Word-coinage (e.g., *vegetarianist*)
- Literal translation from L1
- Foreignizing (e.g., L1 word with L2 pronunciation)
- Code switching to L1 or L3
- Retrieval (e.g., *bro... bron... bronze*)

STALLING or TIME-GAINING STRATEGIES
- Fillers, hesitation devices and gambits (e.g., *well, actually..., where was I...?*)
- Self and other-repetition

SELF-MONITORING STRATEGIES
- Self-initiated repair (e.g., *I mean...*)
- Self-rephrasing (over-elaboration) (e.g., *This is for students... pupils... when you're at school...*)

INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES
- Appeals for help
  - direct (e.g., *What do you call...?*)
  - indirect (e.g., *I don't know the word in English...* or puzzled expression)
- Meaning negotiation strategies

  Indicators of non/mis-understanding
  - requests
    - repetition requests (e.g., *Pardon?* or *Could you say that again please?*)
    - clarification requests (e.g., *What do you mean by...?*)
    - confirmation requests (e.g., *Did you say...?*)
  - expressions of non-understanding
    - verbal (e.g., *Sorry, I'm not sure I understand...*)
    - non-verbal (raised eyebrows, blank look)

  interpretive summary (e.g., *You mean...?/So what you're saying is...?*)

  Responses
  - repetition, rephrasing, expansion, reduction, confirmation, rejection, repair

  Comprehension checks
  - whether the interlocutor can follow you (e.g., *Am I making sense?*)
  - whether what you said was correct or grammatical (e.g., *Can I/you say that?*)
  - whether the interlocutor is listening (e.g., on the phone: *Are you still there?*)
  - whether the interlocutor can hear you

We believe that communication strategy training—some of which will overlap with training in actional competence objectives such as apologies and requests—can have a place in language teaching syllabi (cf. Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991, 1992; Dörnyei, in press). Such strategy instruction might involve (a) raising learner awareness about the nature and communicative potential of communication strategies; (b) encouraging students to be willing to take risks and use communication strategies; (c) providing L2 models of the use of certain communication strategies; (d) highlighting crosscultural differences in strategy use; (e) teaching communication strategies directly by presenting learners with linguistic devices to verbalize them; (f) providing opportunities for learners to practice strategy use.[10] In other words, many of the techniques now used to explicitly teach structures, vocabulary, speech act sets, etc. can also be used to teach communication strategies.

CONCLUSION

Our main argument echoes an observation made by Canale more than ten years ago:

> The current disarray in conceptualization, research and application in the area of communicative language pedagogy results in large part from failure to consider and develop an adequate theoretical framework (Canale, 1983, p. 2).

In the past decade much research related to communicative competence and communicative language use has emerged in various fields, research which now allows us to develop a model with more detailed content specifications than was possible in the early 1980s. Our construct is motivated by practical considerations reflecting our interests in language teaching, language analysis, and teacher training; our aim therefore has been to organize the knowledge available about language use in a way that is consumable for classroom practice. This knowledge is still fragmentary, but we believe that a great deal more of it is relevant and potentially applicable than is currently exploited in language pedagogy. Language teaching methodologists, materials writers and language testers badly need a comprehensive and accessible description of the components of communicative competence in order to have more concrete pieces of language to work with at the fine-tuning stage. One obvious purpose of any model of this sort is to serve as an elaborated "checklist" that practitioners can refer to.

A second purpose of models such as ours is to draw together a wide range of issues in an attempt to synthesize them and form a basis for further research. We are aware that our model—like all the others proposed to date—has certain

inconsistencies and limitations, and that it is therefore likely to raise several questions. One such question concerns where *lexis*, particularly formulaic chunks, is to be placed in a model of communicative competence and how important the role of formulaic language is. Secondly, even though our summary of communication strategies is broader than those of some previous taxonomies such as Canale & Swain's (i.e., it includes a list of interactional strategies), our restricting of strategic competence to communication strategies only is likely to be considered too narrow an interpretation of strategic competence. Our current conceptualization of sociocultural competence, on the other hand, might still be too broad, and the past tendency to redefine some of the sub-components of sociolinguistic or sociocultural competence as independent competencies in their own right may well continue. There exist, for example, plausible arguments for separating a "non-verbal" dimension from the sociocultural component we have presented.

In addition, the sub-components of the five competencies will need to be further elaborated, and the extent of their teachability (or learnability) assessed in order to make them optimally relevant to language pedagogy. In their present form our components contain a mixture of categories: knowledge, rules, skills, abilities, conditions, conventions, maxims, strategies, lexical items, etc. Eventually these will have to be more systematically specified, based on a psycholinguistic model of language processing (e.g., Levelt, 1989; de Bot, 1992). An explicit language processing basis would also make it possible to indicate underlying relationships between the sub-components of the constituent competencies of the model rather than simply listing them as we did. We thus view our paper as part of an ongoing discussion and call for further research and contributions toward the creation of a better model and a more comprehensive set of guidelines for curriculum design, language analysis, materials development, teacher training, classroom research, and language assessment.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that the application of any theoretical model of communicative competence is relative rather than absolute. As McGroarty (1984) points out, "communicative competence" can have different meanings depending on the learners and learning objectives inherent in a given context. Some components (or sub-components) may be more heavily weighted in some teaching-learning situations than in others. Therefore, during the course of a thorough needs analysis, a model such as ours may be adapted and/or reinterpreted according to the communicative needs of the specific learner group to which it is being applied. This is in essence what Hoekje & Williams (1992) had to do when they applied Canale & Swain's framework to the program development and assessment phases of their course for training international teaching assistants. Despite the problems they encountered and the modifications they had to make, they concluded that the communicative competence framework provided an integrated and principled basis for designing a language program. Given our own experiences, we certainly agree.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to the anonymous *Issues in Applied Linguistics* readers for their very thorough and insightful comments on earlier drafts, which contributed significantly to the preparation of the final version of this paper.

NOTES

[1] Along the lines of Richards' (1990) "direct approach" to the teaching of conversation as involving "planning a conversational program around the specific microskills, strategies, and processes that are involved in fluent conversation" (pp. 76-77).

[2] We do not propose a return to traditional synthetic, structural syllabuses; instead, *pedagogic tasks* combined with a systematic *focus on form*, as outlined by Long & Crookes (1992), could well function as the primary organizational units in a "direct" communicative syllabus. This would be in accordance with Ellis' argument that a structural syllabus has a substantial role in fostering second language acquisition if it is "used alongside some kind of meaning-based syllabus" (Ellis, 1993, p. 91).

[3] Enkvist's example is: "A week has seven *days*. Every *day* I feed my *cat*. *Cats* have four legs. The *cat* is on the *mat*. *'Mat'* has three letters."

[4] E.g., 'The picnic was a complete failure. No one remembered to bring a corkscrew.'

[5] Lists for teaching purposes of such gambits and phrases in English can be found, for example, in Keller & Warner (1988), and Dörnyei & Thurrell (1992).

[6] The linguist Dwight Bolinger (1976) was one of the first to argue for lexical phrases when he wrote, "...our language...provides us with an incredibly large number of prefabs, which have the magical property of persisting..." (p. 1).

[7] Under some circumstances, such as when illiterate immigrants come to a new country and begin to learn the new language, they are not necessarily doomed to unsuccessful communication with the natives; however, the range of topics and their purposes for communication cannot be as broad, elevated, and comprehensive as can that of learners who share knowledge of the life, traditions, literature, and history of the L2 community.

[8] Oxford (1990), O'Malley & Chamot (1990), and Wenden (1991) provide a detailed discussion of *learning strategies*. Bachman, Purpura & Cushing (1993) propose a comprehensive system of strategies that contains three main components, *cognitive strategies*, *metacognitive strategies*, and *communication* or *language use strategies* (see also Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer in preparation).

[9] These strategies are functionally different from achievement or interactional strategies and have not been included in the traditionally best-known taxonomies (e.g., Tarone, 1980; Færch & Kasper, 1984a, Bialystok, 1990). Other researchers, however, highlighted the significance of fillers as a conscious means to sustain communication (e.g., Savignon, 1983) and included them in their lists of communication strategies (e.g., Canale, 1983). For a detailed discussion of this issue, see Dörnyei (in press).

[10] It should be mentioned, however, that there has been considerable controversy over the explicit teachability of communication strategies (see, for example, Bialystok, 1990; Kellerman, 1991; Dörnyei, in press).

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Marianne Celce-Murcia is Professor of TESL and Applied Linguistics at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is interested in how a discourse perspective on language analysis can inform language methodology, including teacher training and materials development.

Zoltán Dörnyei is Associate Professor in the Department of English Applied Linguistics at Eötvös University, Budapest, Hungary. His interests involve the study of the role of affective variables, and motivation in particular, in second language acquisition, as well as interlanguage analysis with a special focus on communication strategies.

Sarah Thurrell is Assistant Professor in the Centre for English Teacher Training at Eötvös University, Budapest, Hungary. She is interested in issues related to communicative language teaching and communicative syllabus design as well as their practical application in teacher education and materials development.