

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIOLINGUISTIC AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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**Abstract:** Sociolinguistic competence and communicative competence are essential concepts in the field of second language acquisition. This article explores how sociolinguistic competence functions as an integral part of communicative competence. By analyzing foundational theories and recent research, it highlights their interconnection and offers insights for language teaching practices.

**Key words:** sociolinguistic competence, integral, communicative competence, concept, grammatical knowledge

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of communicative competence was first introduced by Hymes [1], who emphasized that language proficiency includes more than grammatical knowledge it requires the ability to use language appropriately in social settings. Canale and Swain [2] expanded this concept into four components: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. Among these, sociolinguistic competence refers to the ability to understand and use language in a socially and culturally appropriate manner, taking into account norms, register, and politeness.

### METHODOLOGY

This study is based on a qualitative review of key scholarly works published between 1972 and 2023. Sources were selected from academic databases such as JSTOR, ERIC, and Google Scholar, focusing on those with theoretical and empirical significance in language acquisition. The review centers on models that explain

communicative competence and highlight the function of sociolinguistic awareness in real-world communication.

The literature consistently recognizes sociolinguistic competence as a core element of communicative competence:

- Theoretical Frameworks: Canale and Swain [2] explicitly identify sociolinguistic competence as one of the fundamental components of communicative competence, crucial for interpreting social meaning and adapting language accordingly.
- Pragmatic Language Use: Sociolinguistic competence ensures contextually appropriate language use. Without it, learners may produce grammatically correct but socially inappropriate expressions .
- Cultural and Intercultural Importance: Researchers like Kramsch [3] and Byram [4] stress that effective communication in multicultural settings depends on understanding both native and target cultures. Many intercultural misunderstandings arise from a lack of sociolinguistic awareness.

## DISCUSSION

These findings underscore the inseparability of sociolinguistic and communicative competence. Learners who neglect the social context of language may miscommunicate or inadvertently cause offense. Hence, communicative competence remains incomplete without sociolinguistic understanding. Language instruction should incorporate sociolinguistic training alongside grammar. Practical strategies include role-playing, immersion in authentic materials, and intercultural activities. Educators must guide students not only in linguistic accuracy but also in the appropriate and respectful use of language in various social contexts.

## CONCLUSION

Sociolinguistic competence plays a foundational role in communicative competence, equipping learners to navigate the social norms of language use. Their

interplay is vital for achieving effective and appropriate communication. Therefore, language education must address both structural and sociocultural aspects to foster holistic communicative skills.

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