# Définitions objective of socio-cultural competences

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The Context of Culture

◆ The attitudes, values and shared experiences of any group of people living in the one culture.

◆ Culturally evolved expectations of ways of behaving

◆ Culturally evolved ways of getting things done or of achieving common goals *(genre)*

- *buying and selling goods*
- *directing someone to the bank*
- *recounting recent events*
- *arguing a point of view*
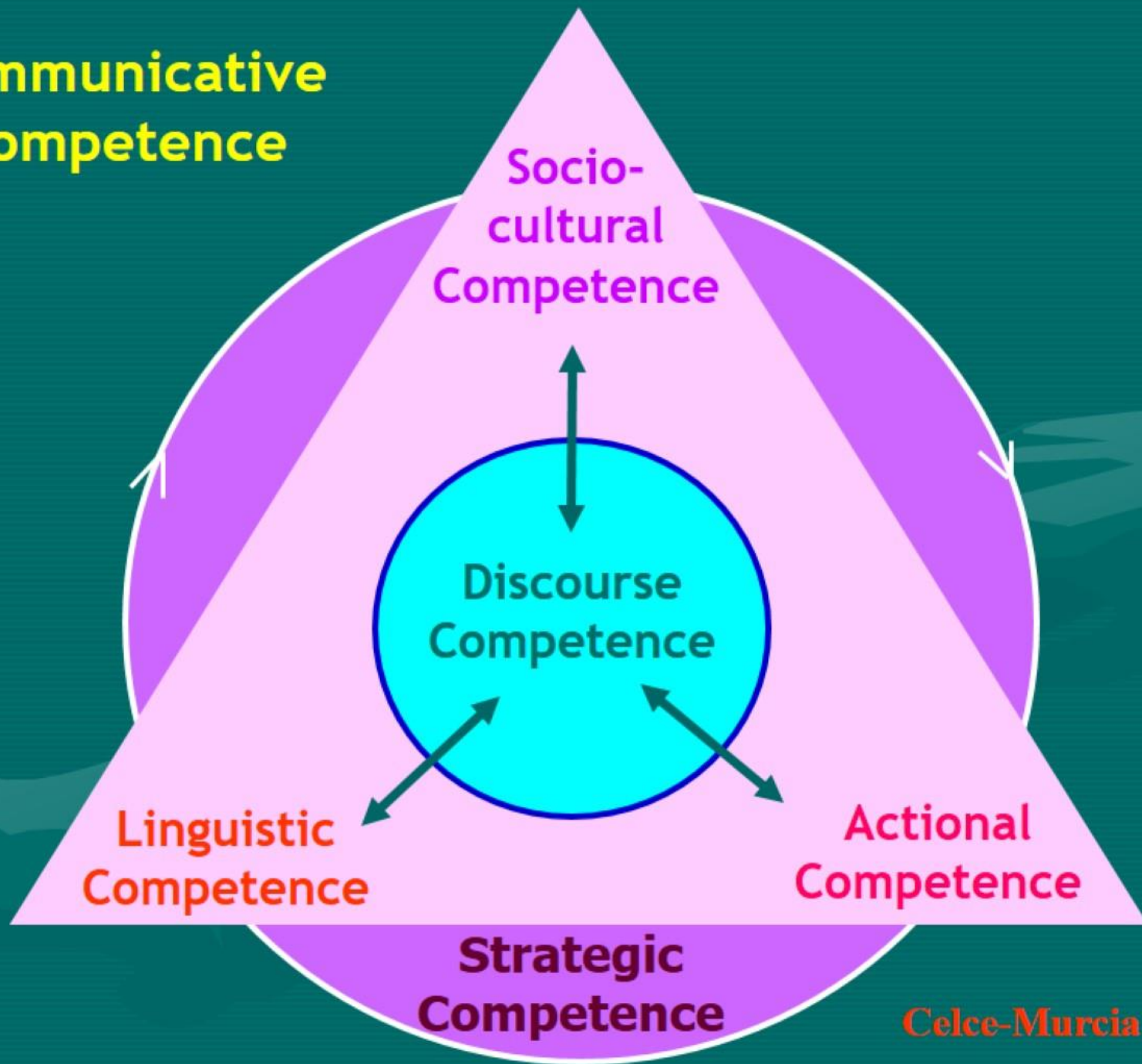
DISCOURSE COMPETENCE

◆ It concerns the *selection*, *sequencing*, and *arrangement* of words, structures and utterances to achieve a unified spoken or written text.

◆ The intersection of the lexicogrammar with the signals of the communicative intent and sociocultural context to express attitudes and messages, and to create texts.

◆ Sub-areas that contribute to discourse competence: *cohesion*, *deixis*, *coherence*, *genre structure*, and the *conversational structure* inherent to the turn-taking system in conversation.

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.

◆ **CONVERSTAIONAL 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 & closings*
- *Adjacency pairs* (related to actional competence)
  - ◆First and second pair parts (knowing preferred and dispreferred responses)

LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

◆ comprises the basic elements of communication:
- – sentence patterns and types,
- – the constituent structure,
- – the morphological inflection, and
- – the lexical resources, as well as
- – the phonological and orthographic systems needed to realize communication as speech or writing.

Components of Linguistic Competence

- ◆ **SYNTAX**
  - Constituent/phrase structure
  - Word order (cannonical 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)
  - Subordinations (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

- 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

SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCE

◆ the speaker's knowledge of how to express messages appropriately within the overall social & cultural context of communication, in accordance with the pragmatic factors related to variation in language use.

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

STRATEGIC COMPETENCE

◆ It is knowledge of communication strategies and how to use them.

◆ **Communication strategies are:**

a) 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.*
(Psycholinguistic perspective)

b) 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.
(Interactional perspective)

c) 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.
(communication continuity/maintenance perspective)

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, thingamajic*)
  - 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 expressions)
  - 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 (e.g., raised eyebrows, blank look)
- ◆**Interpretative 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