

ELF Communicative Competence: Transforming from L2 English Learners into ELF Users

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Abstract: The current paper defines the ELF communicative competence while considering the global use of English and the diversification of its users. First, I will review the major definitions of ‘competence’ provided by influential scholars such as Chomsky, Hymes, and Canale & Swain, followed by an alternative view of L2 communicative ability that accommodates the relationship between language and society. Then, the conceptual map of ELF (English as a lingua franca) communicative competence will be presented by adapting ‘a view of language as a dynamic complex adaptive system’ (Larsen-Freeman, 2006, p.195) Finally, emphasizing the social nature of language learning, the paper challenges the norm-conformity authorized in the Japanese ELT context and argues for the necessity of conceptual reform rather than curriculum change.

1. Introduction

English is often classified in terms of its function in a society. Kachru’s (1985) well-known model divided countries into three circles of English based on their historical and social backgrounds: Inner (e.g., the UK and the US, in which English is the predominant L1); Outer (e.g., India, in which English is an L2); and, Expanding (e.g., Japan, in which English is a foreign language). English varieties in the Inner Circle have been considered as native-speaker (NS) English, and those in the

Outer and Expanding Circles as non-native-speaker (NNS) English.

However, such classification does not match current English usage in reality. Globalization has helped spread English worldwide and establish its status as a common language among people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (e.g., Seidlhofer, 2004). Accordingly, English is used by a greater number of NNSs than NSs, and English variants in the Expanding Circle have become recognized as linguistically and functionally unique (e.g., Seidlhofer, 2011). Considering such global use and diversified users, English is referred to as English as a lingua franca (ELF) – a common language among people from various linguacultures who do not share a language other than English (Jenkins, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2011), which does not fit the traditional classification of English.

This approach to globalization has enhanced international competition. This has influenced the English education policy in many countries: the development of English communicative competence is the primary pedagogical goal in ELT (English language teaching), leading to the advance of communicative language teaching (CLT) approaches (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Based on the Interaction Hypothesis claiming that interaction is one of the most effective avenues toward promoting second language (L2) acquisition (Long, 1996), communication activities and tasks are

designed to increase the opportunity for learners to use their target language.

Such emphasis on communicative competence in English education is observed in Japan. With an assumption that advanced English proficiency is critical for Japanese youth to contribute to a global society and improve Japan's international competitiveness, in 2003 the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) issued an action plan regarding the need to develop English communication skills domestically. *The Course of Study* (teaching guidelines) issued by MEXT proposes the need 'to develop secondary level students' communication abilities such as accurately understanding and appropriately conveying information, ideas, etc., deepening their understanding of language and culture, and fostering a positive attitude toward communication through foreign languages' (MEXT, 2010). Consequently, teachers have strived to develop students' English communicative competence by implementing CLT approaches and interaction-oriented activities. In addition, MEXT encourages Japanese teachers of English to conduct classes in English in order to increase opportunities for students to be exposed to English and, ideally, communicate in English.

Despite emphasis on interaction, grammatical accuracy still takes priority over meaning in Japan, although admittedly teachers are fully aware that they are responsible for developing students' English communication abilities (Gottlieb, 2005; Sakui, 2004). The discrepancy might be ascribed to impediments such as grammar-oriented entrance exams. In addition to such practical accounts, the current paper argues for the lack of a uniformed notion of 'communicative competence' by way of a further causal factor for inadequate implementation of CLT in the Japanese ELT context. Apparently, the Course of Study does not provide any (working) definition of the term while presumably assuming that teachers and learners mutually understand

what communicative competence refers to. Despite extensive arguments on theorizing the notion of 'communicative competence' in Applied Linguistics, the fundamental principles still appear disputable.

Another potential critical issue is the neglect of learner identity and language attitudes, which have tremendous impact on the autonomy of L2 English users. To the author's knowledge, these L2 learner psychological aspects have scarcely been emphasized or investigated in Japanese ELT contexts, although learning anxiety and motivation have been extensively researched with JLEs (Japanese learners of English) (e. g., Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004). Such seemingly insufficient discussion on learner identity and language attitudes is likely to impede the instructional effect of any teaching approaches aiming at cultivating the ELF users as long as norm conformity is prioritized (i.e., achieving NS competence).

Thus, the current paper argues that communicative competence needs to be more accurately appreciated when considering the global use of English. First, I review the major definitions of 'competence' provided by influential scholars such as Chomsky, Hymes, and Canale & Swain, followed by an alternative view of L2 communicative ability that accommodates the relationship between language and society. Then, the conceptual map of ELF (English as a lingua franca) communicative competence is presented by adapting 'a view of language as a dynamic complex adaptive system' (Larsen-Freeman, 2006, p. 195). Finally, emphasizing the social nature of language learning, pedagogical implications are discussed while challenging the norm-conformity authorized in the Japanese ELT context.

2. A definition of 'competence'

Shifting from grammar-translation to

communication-centered classroom instruction, assessment measures need to reflect learners' communicative competence. Consequently, definitions of communicative competence have been argued extensively in various areas of Applied Linguistics, including ELT. However, as Taylor (1988) pointed out, the term 'competence' has been used controversially among scholars in both Linguistics and Applied Linguistics. In ELT, in particular, the term appears to be often used interchangeably with 'abilities,' 'skills,' and 'proficiency.' In order to explore its semantic changes over time, Chomsky's original ideas about competence will be reviewed first.

2.1 Accuracy and appropriateness

We cannot speak and write in a language unless we have linguistic knowledge of it. In other words, language use reflects our linguistic knowledge, which are referred to as performance and competence respectively in Chomsky (1965). He originally defined 'competence' and 'performance' as "the speaker-hearer's knowledge of the language (rules of grammar)" and as "the actual use of language in concrete situations" (1965, p. 4). However, this definition does not adequately account for the actual use of language, since it emphasizes grammaticality but fails to recognize the appropriateness to the situational and contextual conditions in which an utterance is performed (Taylor, 1988). Pointing out that Chomsky's definition neglected sociocultural factors influencing language use, Hymes (1972) claimed that performance is still systematic and rule-governed. That is, a speaker-hearer follows socially accepted rules of appropriate language use. Accordingly, he used the term 'communicative competence' to conclude contextual or sociolinguistic competence (knowledge of the rules of language use) along with grammatical competence (system of rules).¹ Subsequently, Canale and Swain (1980) proposed a theoretical

framework of communicative competence with three components: grammatical competence (knowledge of phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic rules), sociolinguistic competence (sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse), and strategic competence (any actions to compensate for breakdowns in both verbal and non-verbal modes).

2.2 L2 communicative competence

Chomsky's (1965) original 'competence' refers to an idealized individual native speaker's grammatical rules that obtain in a completely homogeneous speech community. In this sense, competence is an absolute conception and static knowledge, and further should be identical among the (ideal) users in the community. Such conceptualization excludes L2 learners who start from zero knowledge of the target language, with the ultimate goal of developing linguistic competence towards a native speaker level. Accordingly, L2 competence is fluid and dynamic, and individual differences are realized in L2 performance. The fluctuating and unidentifiable nature of the L2 [i.e., interlanguage (Selinker, 1972)] has made it difficult for researchers and practitioners in the ELT field to define and theorize L2 communicative competence.

Noting the complexity and diversity of its definition, Yanase (2008) provides a comprehensive summary of 'communicative competence' appearing in the literature (see Appendix A). As described above, Hymes (1972) expanded Chomsky's 'competence' to communicative competence that covers both tacit knowledge of language and the ability to use it. Such succeeding theoretical frameworks as Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983), and Bachman (1990) used 'competence' until Bachman and Palmer (1996) replaced it with 'knowledge.' However, Yanase's model employs 'linguistic ability' to refer to the knowledge of the language system. His notion

of linguistic ability consists of two components: linguistic conventions and competence. The former applies to conventionally used expressions in a speech community, including grammatical conventions, textual conventions, sociolinguistic conventions, and functional conventions. In order for L2 English learners to be understood by other English speakers and to understand their utterances, they need to know them. However, linguistic conventions do not account for a creativity of language in understanding and producing an infinite number of sentences. Thus, competence in terms of Chomsky's notion is necessary for linguistic conventions to be combined and used in a creative way.²

It is noteworthy that Yanase argued the communicative L2 ability in terms of not only linguistic resource but also mental and physical functions that are innate in humans. The former is referred to as a 'mindreading' ability that allows one to predict another's state of mind. This ability enables us to maximize and presume the relevance of our utterances to a hearer.³ The third component, physical ability, includes linguistic abilities (e.g., movement of mouth and hand to produce utterances and written work) and non-linguistic physical abilities (e.g., paralanguage, prosody, kinesics, eye contact, and indexical behavior).

Operating these three abilities together allows humans to communicate by means of language. In the case of L2 communication, linguistic ability may not be as sufficient as that of competent speakers of English. Yet, presumably adolescent and adult L2 learners have fully developed their mindreading and non-linguistic physical abilities while acquiring their L1. Consequently, they can compensate for their language disadvantages with such abilities.

As indicated in the appendix, Yanase's mindreading corresponds to the strategic competence framed in other definitions. Strategic competence

refers to such abilities as how to paraphrase when learners cannot encode their messages due to a lack of a target grammar, and how to address their interlocutors using appropriate linguistic forms while considering their social status and age (Canale & Swain, 1980). As Canale and Swain (1980) suggest, L2 learners are likely to have better chances to acquire such strategies through real-life communication situations. Conversely, some scholars (e.g., Dörnyei, 1995) indicate that the communication strategies are learnable and teachable. In particular, oral communication strategies have been extensively researched in the ELT field, assuming that explicit instruction should enhance L2 learners' awareness and use of communication strategies (Nakatani, 2005, 2010).

Yanase, however, does not claim any specific strategies to promote interaction and cope with communicative failure. Presumably he considers mindreading as a fundamental force enabling learners to judge and accommodate what their interlocutors already know regarding language systems and topics, leading them to determine an adequate amount of information and appropriate ways to convey their message. His argument is based on the presumption of relevance from Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986/1995, cited in Yanase) (see note 3 for further explanation): communication is an inferential process which requires participants the ability to attribute mental states to others (i.e., mindreading ability).

A most inspiring aspect of Yanase's model is that it accommodates conventionality of language. The conventional usage of language indicates a presence of speech communities where L1 or NS users of a language share and follow the socially conventionalized language system and use. Given this, starting with the words of others (i.e., L1 speakers), L2 learners change them into their own expressions with their own prosodic features and eventually use them as their own words (Bakhtin,

1986; Hopper, 1998; Lensmire & Beals, 1994). Applying this view to grammar acquisition, Hoppe (1998) conceives such adapting of someone else's words for one's own speech as a process of constructing grammar. According to his 'Emergent Grammar,' grammar is "an open-ended collection of forms that are constantly being restructured and resemanticized during actual use" (Hopper, 1998, p.159). Repetitions at the different levels (e.g., phonological, morphological, and lexical) are recognized as grammatical "when enough of them can be identified that they are seen to form a subsystem" (Hoppe, 1998, p.158-159).⁴

Apparently, Hopper's 'Emergent Grammar' contradicts the traditional view of language: the former does not perceive a system of structure as precondition for interaction, whereas the latter does. Moreover, while the traditional view claims that the linguistic system is identical among its users and equally available to each user, the Emergent Grammar view accounts for learner differences in terms of ability to control the forms of a language, of personality, and of previous exposure to language varieties (Hopper, 1998, p.163). Such factors also relate to linguistic inequalities among individuals: that is, some struggle to accomplish successful communication to a lesser degree than others, and users face communication difficulties at different stages (e.g., hard time to retrieve a target word).

Critically, however, such aforementioned definitions of (communicative) competence deal with individuals' intra-psychological aspects, which might lead to the wrong conceptualization that competence develops internally and autonomously without consideration of contextual and social conditions. On the contrary, the gain of L2 communicative competence mostly happens in social settings (i.e., classroom). In this sense, its process should be argued as an inter-psychological phenomenon.

3. L2 learning as social activity

From a socio-cultural perspective, L2 learning is not a mere accumulation of language knowledge, but is a process that is influenced by external conditions such as power relations between interlocutors, which often impede the development of L2 competence. Considering the claim in Cargile, Giles, Ryan, and Bradac (1994, p.211), that is, "[I]anguage is a powerful social force that does more than convey intended referential information," L2 learning can be viewed as a social activity: L2 learners evaluate their positions through relating themselves to others (e.g., interlocutors in their presence or third parties remotely) in an interactional context including classroom interactions (e.g., Kayi-Aydar, 2014; Martin-Bertrán, 2010).

The Douglas Fir Group (2016) comprehensively describes the complex process of L2 learning on three social levels: at the micro level, individuals gain semiotic resources (linguistic, prosodic, interactional, nonverbal, graphic, pictorial, auditory, and artifactual) through social interactions in which the learner engages with others. Semiotic resources which include "a wide array of conventionalized form-meaning constructions" (2016, p. 27) form language competences. L2 learners develop conventionalized form-meaning combinations through repetitions in regularly recurring contexts. Such language use occurs at the meso level of sociocultural institutions and communities (e.g., family, schools, neighbors, places of work, and religious institutions). Through interaction in particular communities, learners establish social identities relevant to sociocultural institutions and communities through particular experiences, the availability of which is controlled by pervasive social conditions, such as economic, political, religious, and cultural power. L2 learners construct social identities while relating themselves to others and the world in L2 learning. In addition

to multiple group member identities such as nationality, religion, and social class, L2 learning enables them to identify new social identities (e.g., language learner and non-native speaker). At the macro level, learners are exposed to ideological structures that carry particular belief systems and values towards language use and language learning. The social and educational ideology often influences learners' language attitudes towards a target language, its speakers, and language learning. For instance, JLEs' favoritism for NS English and negative attitudes towards their own accented English are ascribable to a monolithic view of English and its speakers (i.e., native speakers of English) prevailing in the Japanese ELT context and society (Kachru, 2005; Lummis, 1976).

The sociocultural perspective on L2 learning acknowledges that social conditions have a substantial impact on L2 learners as they situate themselves in a particular context and relate themselves to others to identify their position in a particular speech community.

4. ELF communicative competence

In an era of globalization, the number of people who use English has increased. Under such circumstances, distinct varieties of English have been recognized in different speech communities through a dynamic system of language (Schneider, 2003). The diversity and fluidity of current English use in the global speech community and the social nature of language learning should be considered in order to further advance definitions of communicative competence. In order to prepare L2 English learners to participate in interaction as the ELF users outside the classroom, an ELF communicative competence needs to be defined.

In ELF communication, we have more chances to encounter L2 English users with different language and cultural backgrounds.⁵ 'Language

background' refers to not only their L1 but also to individual learners' English proficiency. 'Cultural background' usually refers to world views, values, and beliefs that the learners have established. On the other hand, identity and language attitudes are often neglected, although they play a significant role in constructing learners' language behaviours. Their performance is not necessarily identical to others when encountering the same context of action. Once they judge their interlocutors with their stereotypical knowledge and trigger particular language attitudes, their performance will be influenced and they may behave differently depending on their psychological states. Accordingly, the ELF communicative competence model will be proposed with five components: language knowledge, knowledge and thoughts, mindreading ability, the notion of communication, and language attitudes (see Appendix B).

4.1 Language knowledge

The ELF model proposed here has adopted Yanase's (2008) conventionality since it accounts for L2 linguistic knowledge that presumably ELF users share. As for NS of English, they have been exposed since their birth to language systems inherited from generation to generation in their speech community. In this sense, the ELF communicative competence model can accommodate NSs as participants in ELF interaction settings. In addition to conventionality, an additional component of Yanase's 'linguistic ability' is 'competence,' which notion appears to refer to Chomsky's original sense, or a language acquisition device (see note 2). In the ELF model, on the other hand, the linguistic competence is composed of multiple resources including L2 learners' L1 systems, interlanguage, and any other language systems they have learned and/or been exposed to. ELF users retrieve such language resources to encode their thoughts into linguistic representation (i.e., an utterance) in a creative way,

with conventional resources they have learned and/or acquired.

4.2 Knowledge and thoughts

Presumably, a wide range of knowledge from different fields (e.g., current affairs intra- and internationally, history, politics, literature, technology, etc.) should help enhance ELF communication. The wider the knowledge participants have, the more they can get involved in interaction.

4.3 Mindreading ability

The model has adopted Yanase's notion by assuming that individuals utilize different strategies to compensate for their language difficulties and more successful meaning negotiation with their interlocutors. In this sense, the ELF model does not deny explicit instruction of communication strategies.

4.4 Language attitudes

While learning and utilizing conventionalized form-meaning, L2 learners have been exposed to particular language varieties and given instructions reflecting pedagogical beliefs and choices. Consequently, they are likely to have developed and assigned particular indexical values to a target language and its speakers (Bohner & Wänke, 2002; Garrett, 2010). These particular values lead to their language attitudes, which function as biased social and stereotypical filters when people judge others by inferences made from linguistic variations emerging in pronunciation, lexical use, and grammatical patterns (Giles, 2006; Munro et al., 2006; Riney Takagi, & Inutsuka, 2005). The language attitudes individuals have play a critical role in ELF communication settings, since they often determine how a speaker-hearer participates in interaction and how much he or she is willing to be involved in the meaning-negotiation process. In this sense, language attitudes should count as part of communicative competence.

4.5 The notion of communication

The term 'communication' has been widely used in the ELT context without clarification on precisely what it refers to or how it is reflected in language use. Its interpretation and conceptualization appear to be mutually understood among teachers and learners. This is potentially because communication is an innate human ability and such a commonplace activity that the term needs neither to be questioned nor clarified. The notion of 'communication' adopted follows NS values and belief systems (LoCastro, 1998; Seargeant, 2009). Consequently, idioms and phrases that JLEs learn in the classroom may be perceived to be contextually fixed and conventional by NSs. Such a perception can push them to strive to memorize expressions in order to carry out successful English communication. Indeed, learners become adept at building conversations using a series of conventional phrases prescribed in textbooks. Although learners appear able to mimic native-like phrases in individual utterances, interaction sounds unnatural because utterances do not overlap and lack reactive interruption.⁶

Similarly, Legenhausen (1999) reported question patterns observed in interaction between learners who follow a more traditional textbook-based communicative approach: since they could ask the questions memorized from the textbook, their utterances were well-formed and error-free. However, as shown in the interaction below, since they simply activated memorized chunks of knowledge, they asked reciprocal questions (the first interaction A and B in the interaction below) and irrelevant questions (A's second question):

A: How old are you?

B: I'm twelve. How old are you?

A: I'm eleven. What are your foreign languages?

Legenhausen claimed that such exchanges indicated their mechanical application of what they had memorized, which was the simplest strategy

to maintain a conversation. The interaction patterns in both JLEs and Legenhausen's students illustrate that they prioritize norm conformity of conventionalized form-meaning patterns and may not realize that communication is a collaborative effort through meaning-negotiation. They might not have been given any chance to introspect what communication is and how it should develop. Thus, learners' notion of communication needs to be considered as one component of ELF communicative competence.

5. Language choice and learner identity in the Japanese ELT context

This section addresses the pedagogical issues which have been neglected and require urgent attention in the Japanese ELT context: I argue that English variety as a pedagogical model is shifting from forever-L2-learner identity to ELF user identity.

Acceptance of a concept of diversity and plurality of English and users has been enthusiastically argued for in the field of Applied Linguistics (e.g. Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2004), while criticising Inner Circle (NS)-oriented instruction. Although English is chosen as a common language in intercultural communication, it does not remain neutral and cannot be deculturated. Apparently, English varieties developed in the Outer Circle carry distinctive cultural as well as linguistic features, and are recognized as legitimate varieties of English. In a same vein, the varieties from the Expanding Circle are culturally unique besides having distinctive linguistic features. Such uniqueness indicates that regardless of L1 or L2, participants' cultural values and views determine their language choices and performative behaviours. However, this reality offers a pedagogical challenge to teachers in term of the choice of which specific instructional English variety to use. *The Course of*

Study states that 'contemporary standard English' should be used and consideration should also be given to the reality that different varieties of English are used to communicate around the world. However, it provides explanation neither for what contemporary standard English refers to nor what different varieties of English are appropriate to be taught in the Japanese ELT context.

Admitting that language is a dynamic system and constantly changes through language use in a speech community (see the Dynamic Model for language changes in the Outer Circle and the Expanding Circle in in Schneider, 2003, 2014 respectively), L2 English learners need linguistic references as a model of reference for comprehension and production (Naka, 2018). The linguistic systems often referred to as pedagogical grammars are seemingly prescribed and presumed to be based on the descriptive grammar that NSs (e.g., American and British English speakers) obtain; however, they should neither be equated with nor instructed as NS English, a variety likely to promote a monolithic view of the language. Teaching a particular linguistic system as a reference does not mean presenting it as a single legitimate (standard) variety.

Moreover, teaching a model variety as a linguistic reference does not mean that learners must produce the same variety. Once the model variety of English is adapted, it will change to meet the social and cultural needs used in a speech community. Thus, people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds use different varieties of English. Note that such English diversity relates to linking nation and language, as with Australian English, Indian English, and Singaporean English. In this sense, Japanese English should count as one variety. However, such a notion of one-nation one-language blinds one to the reality that individual speakers have adopted a particular variety and continuously modify it to meet their needs and desires. Eventually, they come to use 'My English'

(Naka, 2018; Shiozawa, 2016). Keeping in mind that language changes socially and even intra-personally, obtaining 'My English' should be set as an ultimate goal in English education. The process in achieving this goal starts with learning conventionalized language or borrow L1 speakers' words; gradually L2 learners develop their own words along with establishing their social identities in classroom and the speech community; and eventually they identify themselves as ELF users who speak 'My English.'

In order to cultivate such attitudes, learner identity is critical. English does not exist as a prior system but is produced and sedimented through acts of identity. Similar to the way that we perform identity with words (rather than reflect identities in language), we also perform languages with words (Pennycook, 2007, p. 73). Language and identity are produced in performance: identity is constructed through language use, but not prescribed and reflected in language use. Note that although social identity is not prefixed, social category is normatively assigned, which determines what and how to say and how to behave in a language (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). In the case of L2 learning, a NS-NNS dichotomy influences learner identity. Such binary logic creates power inequality between the two groups. Often L2 English users with limited proficiency are considered a linguistic and cultural minority compared to L1 English users (i.e., NSs). This is because NS linguistic features (e.g., phonological, lexical, and syntactic patterns) have permeated into the global society as ideology and perceived as norms and conventions of 'good communication' (Vasseur, Broeder, & Roberts, 1996).

Constant exposure to such social ideology, as reflected in teaching approaches and materials is very likely to lead L2 English learners to consider themselves inferior to L1 English users and deficient in language competence. Such an

ideological notion, further, plausibly cultivates L2 English users' 'forever-L2-learner' identity with inferior and ineffective powers of communication, which leaves them dominated with low status and low communicative power in interaction with L1 English users. On this basis, as long as L2 English learners are treated as learners and NNSs, without realizing such unequal power relations with L1 speakers or NSs, they will continuously adapt their roles (i.e., NNS and forever-L2-learner) not only in the classroom but also in intercultural communication settings. Even if CLT approaches and meaning-oriented activities are implemented, learners simply speak and act primarily with a pedagogical purpose (Legenhausen, 1999). With such attitudes towards learning, JLEs simply mimic conventional use of language systems (i.e., borrowing L1 users' words) and do not internalize them as their own words.

Education should be a 'systematic, intentional, goal-oriented instruction' for learners' real life (Johnson, 2018). Teachers cannot assume that their students can eventually transfer 'do-as-if' activities to the real world unless they understand the issues of learner identity and language attitudes. Similarly, teachers must be aware that everything happening in the classroom, including choice of teaching materials, instructions, and utterances, will have a tremendous impact on constructing identity and language attitudes. Learners will not be ready to participate in interaction as ELF users merely through the practice of pseudo-communication activities.

6. Conclusion

The current paper has aimed to redefine the term 'communicative competence' and described a conceptual map of ELF communicative competence: language knowledge, knowledge and thoughts, mindreading ability, the notion of communication, and language attitudes. In order

to cultivate this competence, which MEXT has been aiming at, policy makers and practitioners need to shift their view of language learning (i.e., NS norm-conformity) to the alternative view that language changes through discursive practices in a speech community. Such a notion allows JLEs to modify the model variety taught in the classroom with comfort and confidence. Also, not only practitioners, but also learners, should be aware of their identity and language attitudes towards English users and use, which have both been constructed through their English learning experiences. As stated in the Douglas Fir Group (2016, p.19), L2 learning is happening in conjunction with a variety of socioemotional, sociocultural, sociopolitical, and ideological factors. Furthermore, as claimed in Norton (2000, p.165), ‘when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world.’ Most critically, conceptual reform is the most urgent business among the ELT professionals in Japan, but not curriculum reformation (i.e., teaching guidelines).

Notes

1. Chomsky (1980) proposed ‘pragmatic competence’ as the knowledge of appropriate use of grammatical knowledge.
2. Yanase gives a simple account that competence grows implicitly, while citing Chomsky’s original definition of competence. Thus, it is not clear that competence in his model is innate and works in the same way as it does for L1 acquisition.
3. Yanase follows Sperber & Wilson’s Relevance Theory to account for mindreading. More specifically, he adapted two principles; Cognitive and Communicative. The first principle explains that when we get more cognitive benefit without less effort we make, we perceive utterances more relevant. The second principle refers to an assumption that humans make an utterance relevant to the previous speaker’s intention.
4. Hopper (1998) claimed that the subsystems are not clearly divided as modules such as phonological, lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic systems, but rather blurred.
5. Originally, ELF scholars (e.g., Jenkins, Seidlehofer) did not include L1 English speakers or NSs in ELF communication.
6. This view is based on the author’s extensive personal teaching experience.

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Appendix A. Reconceptualization of communicative competence in L2 English context (adapted from Yanase, 2008)

	linguistic ability						mindreading ability		physical ability	
	linguistic conventions			competence			theory of mind + relevance theory	linguistic	non-linguistic	
	grammatical conventions	textual conventions	sociolinguistic conventions	functional conventions						
Yanase (2007)	language knowledge			pragmatic knowledge			topical knowledge	×	×	
Bachman & Palmer (1996)	organizational knowledge		pragmatic knowledge				world knowledge	strategic competence	×	
	grammatical knowledge	textual knowledge	sociolinguistic knowledge	functional knowledge						
Bachman (1990)	language competence						world knowledge	strategic competence	×	
organizational competence		pragmatic competence								
grammatical competence	textual competence	sociolinguistic competence	illocutionary competence							
Canale (1983)	grammatical competence	discourse competence	sociolinguistic competence			×	strategic competence	×	×	
Canale & Swain (1980)	grammatical competence	sociolinguistic competence				×	strategic competence	×	×	
Hymes (1972)	communicative competence						ability for use			
Chomsky (1965)	tacit knowledge						×	×	×	
	competence	×	×	×	×	performance				×

Appendix B: ELF communicative competence

Knowledge-base				Intra-psychological aspect		
Language knowledge		knowledge & thoughts		mindreading ability	language attitudes	the notion of communication
textual conventions	sociolinguistics conventions	functional conventions				
grammatical conventions	textual conventions	sociolinguistics conventions	functional conventions			