# COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: A FACTOR TO EFFECTIVE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE FOR EFL LEARNERS IN THE MEDICAL PEDAGOGY

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**Abstract:** *Communicative competency of Medicine students is one of the requirements of Medicine education, especially during the Clinical Clerkship period where students is in the third and final year of the Course curriculum for the degree of Doctor of Medicine.*

*As a skilled clinician, they are expected to acquire competencies in verbal communication/ collaboration and written communication apart from other skills a medical expert must obtain such as critical thinking, knowledge acquisition and interpretation, manager of self, lifelong learner, community contributor, professionalism and overall ability. Hence, this study investigated the communicative competence as a factor to intercultural communicative competence for English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners in the medical pedagogy.*

*Testing their four (4) macro skills, it made use of a standardized scale by Danao (1986) perusing their levels of competence in three categories: Linguistic, Sociolinguistic and Discourse. The respondents were foreign students in the field of Medicine wherein English is considered a Foreign Language. Findings revealed that most of the participants excelled in subtests B, C, D, G, and H with provision of choices. However, discretionary attention if not ample consideration must be addressed on their writing and listening skills as reflected in the result of their dictation test, business correspondence and cloze test. The need to address their actual writing skills specifically on the technical aspects of writing, grammar structure, diction and basic and optional parts and how to write effective business correspondence must also be taken into account.*

*It is therefore essential to note the weaknesses of the students in their listening and writing skills where they need to be developed while it is equally necessary to note the sustainability of their skills where they excel. Eventually, the concept of teaching and learning may come from knowing their level of communicative competence paying attention on their strengths as well as their weaknesses where both the teacher and the learner can sustain and obtain. Embracing the idea of Allan and Stoller that, to best facilitate language learning, content*

*and real-life skills, projects/ programs require "a combination of teacher guidance, teacher feedback, student engagement and elaborated tasks with some degree of challenge".*

***Keywords:*** *communicative competence, linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, skills integrating, culture-based learning, teaching and learning strategies, healthcare, medical field, English proficiency, degree preparation and career advancement, lifelong learning*

## INTRODUCTION

Communicative competency of Medicine students is one of the requirements of Medicine education, especially during the Clinical Clerkship period where students is in the third and final year of the Course curriculum for the degree of Doctor of Medicine.

As a skilled clinician, they are expected to acquire competencies in verbal communication/ collaboration and written communication apart from other skills a medical expert must obtain such as critical thinking, knowledge acquisition and interpretation, manager of self, lifelong learner, community contributor, professionalism and overall ability. As such, a medical clerk must have the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and written to concerned people with whom the physician must exchange information in carrying out their responsibilities.

The realization of their strengths and weaknesses in their communicative competence necessitates in identifying the factors to aid them to become competent communicator and collaborator in their future profession as doctors as well as to acquire better communication skills and acceptance to the healthcare team.

With these competencies and lifelong learning, a degree of preparation must then be implemented and observed as early as their first year in Medicine where the foundation must be strong and empowering.

Communicative Competence is one factor believed to be one of the aspects of Intercultural Communicative Competence as modelled by the European Language Competence where three aspects of Testing Intercultural Communicative Competence in English (Granada, 2014) context were suggested – Linguistic Competence and Communicative Competence, Intercultural Knowledge and Features of Personality. Byram and colleagues (Byram 1997, 2003; Byram et.al. 2001) have developed an influential model that involves several commonalities with co-orientational models although it is more concerned with negotiating

identity in the "space" within and across cultures. Using Byram's Intercultural Competence Model (2009), Sociolinguistics, Discourse and Linguistic Competence are the three aspects of Communicative Competence to make up most of the Intercultural Communicative Competence. Deardorff (2006) on the other hand, mentioned in her Pyramid Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence, skills to be developed are listening, evaluating, analysing to name a few. In many parts of the world Sandel (2012) argues that we do not merely have a market of economy but becoming a market of society. Hence, the participants' communicative competence was verified in three categories in specific areas - Linguistic, Discourse and Sociolinguistics Competence.

An inspiration taken from the philosophies of Chomsky, Hymes and Canale and Swain, Communicative Competence is a term in linguistics which refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately where knowledge in the appropriacy of the mechanical rules of the language, knowledge of the meaning system of the language and appropriacy in terms of settings and relationship are measured.

Canale and Swain structuralized four categories in Communicative Competence. However, three categories – Linguistic, Discourse and Sociolinguistic have been considered quantifiably since Strategic Competence Test must be given full attention and it has to be observed interactively. Otherwise, the judgement of one's level of Strategic Competence is compromised and is subjective and insufficient. Yet, Strategic Competence must almost always be a part of a communication situation.

The investigation of a student's level of communicative competence is indispensable in classroom setting as it aids in the use of bringing-out and maximizing the student's full potentials using integrated skills. Integrated skills bring about receptive and productive skills of students. Receptive skills are reading and listening while productive skills are speaking and writing. The interpretation of skills integrating pertains not only to linguistic skills but also to skills in manipulating information in an integrative manner or notion which includes quasi or similar operation of both language skills and information (Zahedi, 2012). Ashcraft (1994), Atkinson and Shiffrin (1968) stated that in independent tasks measuring test takers' productive skills such as speaking and writing, the long-term memory that includes topical knowledge and linguistic knowledge, according to the information processing theory in L2

speech performance and the model of writing process (Hayes & Flower, 1980), is an influential factor for the speaker's/writer's performance. Planning, drafting, revising and editing permeate the whole process in writing tasks, particularly, such long-term memory and internal content knowledge (Hyland, 2002:25). However, from the perspective of test fairness, topical knowledge is regarded as one of the construct-irrelevant factors that may threaten test validity (Kunnan, 2000: 3). Situational type of writing must then be provided so as for the examinees to have a common point while being evaluated in their writing skills. In this sense, integrated tasks can to a large extent improve test fairness in that the input information saves test takers' efforts to generate the topical content from long-term memory and organize the logic sequence of a discourse (Plakans, 2008). Since topical knowledge or content for task completion is made accessible in integrated tasks, chances become low that test validity would be reduced by construct-irrelevant factors such as lacking topical knowledge (Jin and Zhang 2014).

Communicative Testing as a learning tool provides evaluative information for both the learner and teacher. The purpose of communicative testing is to measure one's ability to translate their competence (or lack of it) into actual performance in ordinary situations. The Communicative Competence Test must be communicative as well.

In Communicative Language Test (CL Test), a test has to measure the CC realized in four macro skills as listening, reading, speaking and writing each of which is led to other skill to make the test integrative is necessary in language teaching (Richards and Schmidt, 2012) because this may develop and create the student's critical thinking ability (other than linguistic ability) which is non-linguistic benefit.

Communicative Teaching must use authentic texts (real-life/ realia) tasks to generate authentic communication and so the competence of a learner must also be measured by it. In an article on Communicative Test: Speaking, Writing, and Reading Skill (2013), Gapping, Dictation, Role Play, Problem Solving and Business Letter Writing are some of the ways to check a learner's Communicative Competence.

Kitao and Kitao (1996) said, "Testing language has conventionally taken the form of testing knowledge about language, usually the testing of knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. However, there is much more to being able to use language than knowledge about it. Dell Hymes proposed the concept of communicative competence where he argued that a

speaker can be able to produce grammatical sentences that are completely inappropriate. In communicative competence, he included not only the ability to form correct sentences but to use them at appropriate times. Since Hymes proposed the idea in the early 1970s, it has been expanded considerably, and various types of competencies have been proposed. However, the basic idea of communicative competence remains the ability to use language appropriately, both receptively and productively, in real situations."

To strengthen that communicative competence must be examined basing on the knowledge in an integrated skills and quantifiably allowable, Pillar (2011) in his work, "A Framework for Testing Communicative Competence" stated that the underlying supposition in conjunction with discrete-point testing, which seems to have subjugated and dominated classroom assessment, is that breaking a language down into different elements and testing them separately affords greater objectivity, and is therefore a more reliable evaluation of a learner's proficiency than a subjective evaluation of performance in the integrated skill. This perspective is epitomised in the work of Lado (1961) and Cooper (1972) who promote the concept of proficiency as being the result of the additive proficiency of all the skills and sub skills of an L2 learner. This "analytic" approach has been rigorously challenged by researchers and teachers who see proficiency testing as a means of assessing a learner's speaking skills used in real-life situations, and not just a measure of his or her skills of listening comprehension and grammatical knowledge (Oller, 1975; Day, 1981; Lapkin, 1985).

In addition, Pilar (2011) concretized that Discrete-point tests are categorized as indirect tests, in that they seek to measure one aspect (i.e. knowledge of grammar) in order to make a judgement on something else (i.e. the ability to communicate). Also, they are used as a means to rank order learners and measure a learner's proficiency in relation to other learners. As such, discrete-point tests are seen as norm-referenced tests designed to produce readily quantifiable data suitable for psychometric or statistical analysis. In contrast, integrated proficiency testing, as the term suggests, seeks to assess proficiency in terms of a learner's total language behaviour by bringing together all the components of the language, both linguistic and paralinguistic. Integrated proficiency tests are classed as direct tests in that they center directly on learners' proficiency and are rated against a set of criteria that are indicative of their language performance. In Ingram's (1985) words:

> . . . direct tests focus directly on the learner's proficiency as demonstrated in the way he carries out actual communication tasks and proficiency statements are made in terms of the learner's actual language behaviour. Learners are rated by being matched against the level on a scale consisting of a series of proficiency descriptions that best describe their language behaviour. In other words, direct tests are criterion-referenced or edumetric tests. (247)

Integrated testing is mainly connected with oral proficiency or with measuring conversational ability, and as such, involves linguistic and paralinguistic interaction. Cummins (1983) maintains that discrete-point and integrative models of testing are equated with assessing cognitive/ academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) respectively.

In recognition of the important differences between CALP and BICS, Hatch (1992) identifies the CALP with listening, comprehension, reading and writing, and BICS with interaction, which typically involves productive skills. This is also acknowledged by Rea (1985) and Brindley (1989) who equate the former with assessing ability to use linguistic forms accurately and focusing on non-communicative performance, and the latter with assessing the ability to use language for communicative purposes and focusing on communicative performance. Non-communicative performance is thus linked to comprehension testing which is relatively easy to construct, whereas communicative performance typically involves interactive tasks and requires the establishment of a complex testing system to observe and assess real-life communicative ability in relation to clearly defined criteria. As such, the subtests contain knowledge in mechanical rules of the language; knowledge of the meaning system of the language; appropriacy in terms of settings and relationships

Thus, as an integrating of the skills, three criteria have been investigated to explore the communicative competence of the foreign students as one of the factors to recognize their level of intercultural communicative competence. These three are Linguistic, Discourse and Sociolinguistics.

## METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a standardized scale in Communicative Competence by Dagasuan-Danao (1986) titled, "A Communicative Competence Test In English" suitable for the participants

and for the analysis of the intercultural communicative competence of the foreign students enrolled in the College of Medicine, Cagayan State University.

Quantitatively, the 35 foreign student-participants enrolled in the College of Medicine were measured in terms of their competence from five descriptive values as Very High, High, Competent, Modest, Fair and Limited Competence. Specifically, the scale measured the level of competence in English in three criteria: 1.) Knowledge in mechanical rules of the language; 2.) Knowledge of the meaning system of the language; and 3.) Appropriacy in terms of settings and relationships. The standardized test used to examine the participants was composed of 140 items classified in three categories and divided into subtests. It has an over-all reliability of .90 which was determined by Kuder-Richardson Formula 21.

The administration of the Communicative Competence Examination lasted for 1 hour and 30 minutes exclusive of dictation in a fully-furnished, adequately ventilated and lighted CICS Conference Hall (13x20 sqm/s.) on a weekend where students are free from their academic and other obligations. The examiner made sure that the exam venue is free from noise and distractions. The testing area is equipped with necessary amenities for the examinees which included tables, executive chairs and testing materials. The venue is also provided with comfort rooms which are located within. Necessary adaptation to address the examinees' comfort and to assure an examination free from irregularities was considered. Such are the sitting arrangement which is positioned one table apart and the test was documented throughout the entire duration. Likewise, the students were provided candies and meals.

Questionnaires were all set on the tables including other exam materials such as pens and answer sheets. Preliminaries were made before the examination proper. The examiner explained the general instructions and presented how the answer sheets were used. Strictly, questions were only entertained by the examiner. No questions were asked during the examination proper. Time started and time ended was recorded and the timekeeper, who is the examiner, was to decide when to start and when to stop.

## COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE STANDARDIZED TEST

The Standardized Communicative Competence Test contains the following Criterion and subtests:

**Criterion 1: Knowledge in the Appropriacy of the Mechanical Rules of the Language tested the following:**

### Subtest A: Dictation

This is a test that asks the examinee to reproduce a material heard over an audiotape. It is composed of four paragraphs.

The recorded audio was played three times. The first play was in normal reading speed. The second play was adjusted into a slow speed. The third reading was played in a normal speed to review their written material. No request for repetition was entertained.

This is not a speedwriting test since sufficient time will be given to the examinee to write down the sentences during the second reading. However, the examiner made sure that the examinees started at the same time in Subtest B.

### Subtest B: Context Clue

The student is asked to identify the meaning of a difficult word in context. Clues/ hints can be found within the sentence.

### Subtest C: Error Detection

From a group of words, the examinee is asked to identify the error in the given as to tense, subject and verb concordance and other sentence errors – in terms of form and function. If there is no error in the given sentence, the examinee is to indicate the answer as **no mistake/s**, alternative **E**.

**Criterion 2: Knowledge of the Meaning System of the Language tested the following:**

### Subtest D: Idioms and Their Meanings

This test makes use of idioms in utterances. The idiom is underlined as it is used in the sentence. The examinee is asked to choose from four alternatives which one gives the meaning similar to the idiom in the item stem.

### Subtest E: Vocabulary: Choosing Appropriate Word

The examinee is expected to use the appropriate term in the given sentence. In this case, the concept of diction in written communication is investigated.

### Subtest F: Cloze Test

This test asks the examinee to restore the mutilated text by replacing the exact word or giving a word that is contextually appropriate for the portion left out in the material.

In this cloze test, every seventh word was deleted leaving the first paragraph and the last paragraph intact to provide context for the examinee to restore the words to complete the essay.

**Criterion 3: Appropriacy in Terms of Settings and Relationships tested the following:**

### Subtest G: Initiating A Talk and Responding to Talk

*This test describes situations in which the examinee is to be one of the participants in the communicative event. He is asked to show his skill in initiating a speech event or to respond to an interlocutor as described in the situation. The choice of the examinee of what to say in that event is chosen from four alternatives.*

### Subtest H: Features of a Communicative Situation

*This test measures what the examinee knows regarding variables that enter into a communication event. The test provides what a speaker is supposed to have said which is enclosed in a box on the text booklet. The examinee is then asked to answer questions on the variable that is focused in the speaker's message.*

### Subtest I: Writing an Application Letter

*The examinee is asked in this test to write a complete letter of application that may be use upon graduation. A case is presented and from the case is where their letter should be based on.*

All subtests except dictation, cloze test and letter writing were given choices (multiple choices). The Dictation Test Criterion 1 Subtest A was scored in the basis of deletions, intrusions, distortions and phonological and lexical errors while the Letter Writing Test Criterion 3 Subtest I was scored using Brendan Caroll's Academic Writing Scale with nine bands – Expert Writer, Very Good Writer, Good Writer, Competent Writer, Modest Write, Marginal Writer, Extremely Limited Writer, Intermittent Writer and Non-writer while the participants provided their own answers in the Criterion 2 Subtest F Cloze Test

The Standardized Communicative Competence Subtests presented earlier on got high, positive coefficients as follows: Criterion 1 is .83, Criterion 2 is .79, and Criterion 3 is .92. The predictive validity of each subtest was computed using grade point average (GPA) in English correlated with a reliability of r=64 for Criterion 1, r=.67 for Criterion 2 and r=.53 FOR Criterion 3 and in the intersubtest correlation also showed high positive correlations.

## SCORING/ EVALUATION

Kitao and Kitao (1996) in Testing Communicative Competence published in International TESL professed that:

> ... There is necessarily a subjective element to the evaluation of communicative tests.
> Real life situations don't always have objectively right or wrong answers, and so

band scales need to be developed to evaluate the results. Each band has a description of the quality (and sometimes quantity) of the receptive or productive performance of the testee.

**For all subtests except Dictation, Cloze Test and Letter Writing,** each correct response was given a weight of one point. The examiner strictly followed the Answer Key in marking the examinees' papers and followed the procedure in scoring the dictation test as well as rating the Application Letter with the provision of the Academic Writing Scale/ Rubric. Moreover, the literature given for Cloze Test was the basis in checking this subtest.

The score was computed through the number of points earned for each subtest as well as for the total test. This was the raw score earned by the examinee.

## INTERPRETATION OF RESULT

To interpret the results of the marked papers, the examiner used the Competence Levels for each criterion. This contains ranges of scores and the descriptors for each competence level. Specifically, the Dictation Test (Criterion 1, Subtest 1) was scored by evaluating the reproduced text through the following errors on deletions, intrusions, distortion and phonological and lexical errors (non-spelling errors).

*Deletions* – words in the original or dictated material that are omitted in the examinee's reproduced form.

*Intrusions* – words not in the original or dictated material and which are added in the examinee's reproduced form.

*Distortions* – words that are substituted for the original, such as rains for reigns.

*Phonological and Lexical errors* – non-spelling errors, showing the examinee's lack of control of the phonological and lexical systems of English. Example: press for please and wear for were.

The application letter was rated using the Brendan Caroll's Academic Writing Scale. The descriptors have nine bands in the scale with corresponding scores from expert writer, very good writer, good writer, competent writer, modest writer, marginal writer, extremely limited writer, intermittent writer and non-writer.

Other subtests were formulated in a multiple-choice form of examination.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

It is important to note that the respondents are Medicine students who come from diverse cultures.

**For Linguistic Competence**

**Criterion 1: Knowledge in the Appropriacy of the Mechanical Rules of the Language tested the following:**

*Subtest A: Dictation*

*Subtest B: Context Clue*

*Subtest C: Error Detection*

**Table 1. Linguistic Competence of the foreign students**

| Category | Frequency (n=35) | Percent |
|----------|------------------|---------|
| Limited | 1 | 2.9 |
| Fair | 26 | 74.3 |
| Modest | 7 | 20.0 |
| Competent | 1 | 2.9 |

*Table 2* shows that the 26 (74.3%) out of n=35 participants obtained fair in their competency level which is the second lowest among the six levels. 7 participants are in the modest level with 20.0%. 1 (2.9%) participant has a limited competence. There was only 1 (2.9%) participant who is competent.

The graph below is a presentation of the Level of Linguistic Competence of the participants. This is to see the disparity in the number of students belonging to this type of level of competence.
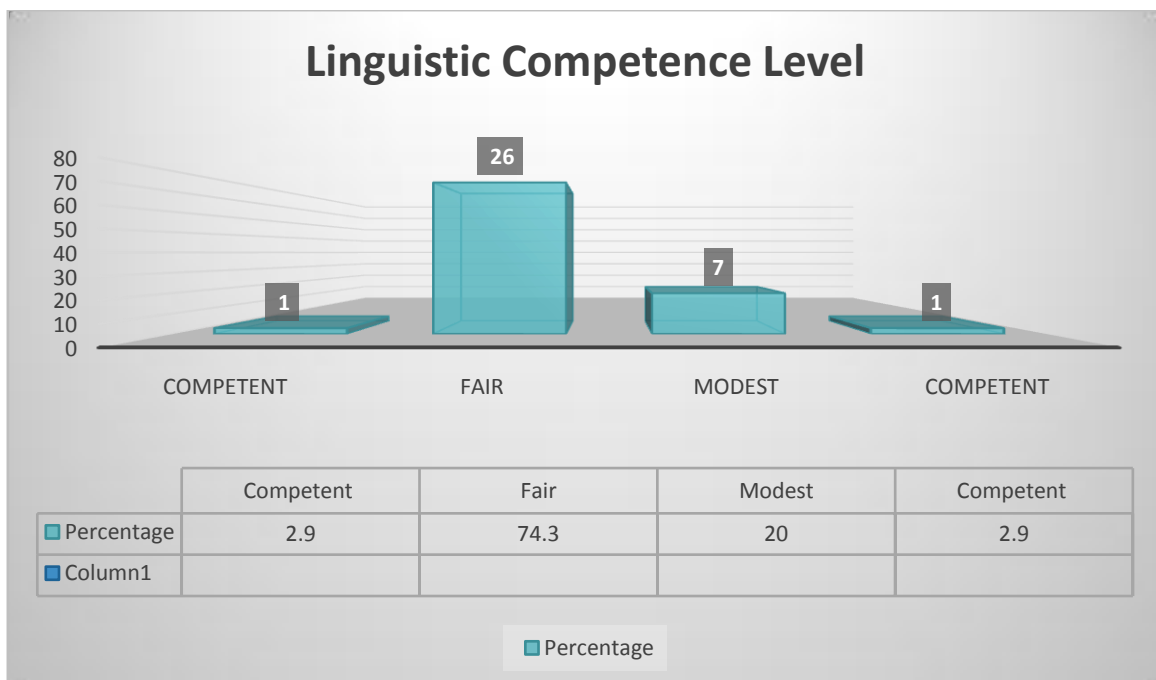


**Graph 1. Level of Linguistic Competence of the Participants**

The level of competence of the participants were measured through dictation, context clue and error detection. From the test, observations proved that the participants worked best in subtests where multiple choices were provided. Most of the errors were reflected in the dictation part where listening skills is needed. Deletions, Distortions and Phonological and Lexical Errors were most of the errors committed by the participants. Some errors committed were on Intrusions.

**Table 2. Presentation of Distortions and Phonological and Lexical Errors**

| DISTORTIONS AND PHONOLOGICAL AND LEXICAL ERRORS | |
| --- | --- |
| Original Text | Participant's Version |
| Reigns | *reins* |
| Soul | *sole* |
| Jewelries | *jewelleries* |
| Land | *clan* |
| Began | *becomes* |
| Pictures | *preachers* |
| Weep | *we* |
| Meant | *ment* |
| Vowel | *bowel* |
| Tombs | *pombs* |
| Lines | *life's* |
| Called | *recalled* |
| Writing | *writing* |
| On | *all* |
| Dish | *fish* |
| prehistoric men | *priest argument* |
| Painted | *they invented* |
| clever race | *level raise* |
| Nile | *nhail* |
| Pictures | *teachers* |
| Duck | *dog* |
| Then | *they* |
| afterworld | *After world* |
| prehistoric | *Pre-historic* |
| Vowel a | *Vowel r* |
| Two eyes | *2 eyes* |
| Weep | *wie* |
| Pictures | *creatures* |

Most of the participants in 1st year totally missed their paragraphs in Dictation where listening skills is being tested. Deletions were made in almost the entire paragraph and intrusions were likewise added.

As shown in the table1, most of the participants placed fair in the category of Linguistic Competence.

**For Discourse Competence**

**Criterion 2: Knowledge of the Meaning System of the Language tested the following:**

*Subtest D: Idioms and Their Meanings*

*Subtest E: Vocabulary: Choosing Appropriate Word*

*Subtest F: Cloze Test*

**Table 3. Discourse Competence of the foreign students**

| Category | Frequency(n=35) | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Limited | 1 | 2.9 |
| Fair | 10 | 28.6 |
| Modest | 1 | 2.9 |
| Competent | 11 | 31.4 |
| Very competent | 12 | 34.3 |

In Discourse Competence 12 (34.3%) out of n=35 examinees are very competent, 11 (31.4%) are competent, 10 (28.6%) are fair, 1 (2.9%) is modest and 1 (2.9%) is limited.

The graph below is a presentation of the Level of Discourse Competence of the participants. This is to see the disparity in the number of students belonging to this type of level of competence.
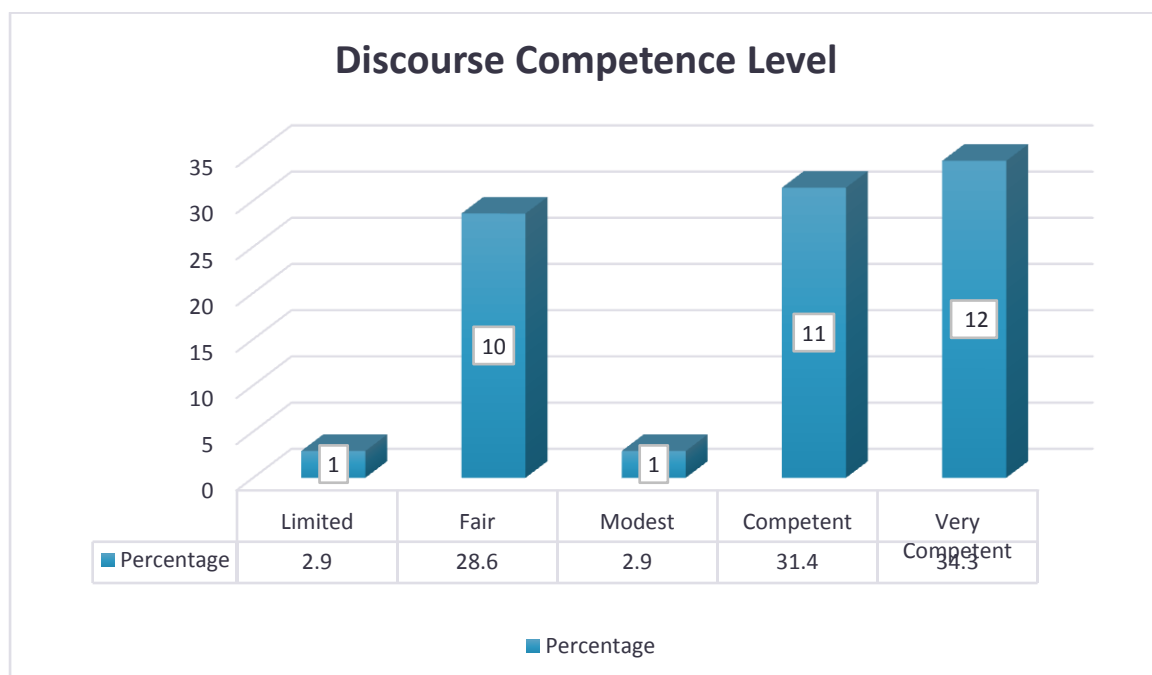


**Graph 2. Level of Discourse Competence of the Participants**

In Criterion 2, most of the participants made it in Subtest D. However, in Subtest E Choosing the Appropriate Word and Subtest F Cloze Test, some errors were found. Most of the participants misused the terms in Subtest E Choosing the Appropriate Word as shown in the table below:

**Table 4. Goofs Committed Along Choosing Appropriate Words**

| CRITERION 2 SUBTEST E CHOOSING THE APPROPRIATE WORDS | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Given Statement* | *Participant's Answer* | *Correct Answer* |
| *In her essay he made an _____ to the 1987 Constitution.* | illusion | allusion |
| *The students _____ the Chair for her organizational skills.* | complemented | complimented |
| *There was a _____ laughter from the audience during the show.* | continuous | continual |
| *Jeffrey _____ a plan to motivate teachers to do more research.* | deviced | |
| *Several families _____ from the Southern region due to deteriorating peace and order situation in the area.* | immigrated | Emigrate |
| *A coup d'etat _____ because of the current political crisis.* | eminent | Imminent |
| *Writers of academic papers should _____ sources of information.* | site | cite |

In subtest F Cloze Test, most participants use/ substituted terms other than the given answer as shown in the table below.

**Table 5**. **Goofs Committed Along Choosing Appropriate Words**

| CRITERION 2 SUBTEST F CLOZE TEST | |
|---|---|
| *Given Answer* | *Participant's Substituted/ Used Word* |
| 1.human/man | realize, linguistic, in, speak, understand, survive, successful, understood, communicable, skilled, themselves, is, valued, a man, social, communicate, the, teacher and complete |
| 2. do | use, are, can, don't, could, would, valuable, express, will |
| 3. is | communicate or express, to us, |
| 4. if | to, it, when, deprived |
| 5. of | from, without, the, by, in, their, with, suddenly, to |
| 6. no | songs, or, TV, even, communication, material, no television for, in |
| 7.car/bus/ automobile | plane, road, vehicle/motor, and, read, land, train, |
| 8. would | will, may, to, complete |
| 9. than | be, eventually, never, ultimately, only, just, ever, not, suddenly, also, obviously, definitely, have, just, never, likely, |
| 10. have | not, give, hear, know, be, like, here, section |

| 11. you | even, we, when, that, he, but |
|---------|-------------------------------|
| 12. not | even, you |
| 13. even | not, also, just, |
| 14. soon | eventually, will, be, only, no, really, definitely, pathetically, forever, then, naturally, have, not, also, totally, now, easily, surely, just, who, have, certainly, |
| 15. a | being, just, creature, an, a linguist, the, every, his, the, dark, like, a small |
| 16. less | as, have, the, be, same, more, an, like, one, subject to, higher, dump, appreciate, lackadaisical, most, more |
| 17. it | word, that, speech, heritage, if, love, there, will, does, the, rule, this, which |
| 18. progress | communication, longer, speech, words, life, living, meaning, thoughts, sense, more, denied, importance, thinks, word/ speech, more, man, not |
| 19. what | thinking, urbanization, all, religion, development, everything, socialization, communication, innovation, industrialization, freedom, ability, culture, could, everything |
| 20. power | man, ability, human, importance, people, way, mind, man, expression, reason, means, medium, following, recreate |

Although not quantifiably calculated, data shows that there are numerous items that were left unanswered while others substituted/ misused diction in Criterion 2 Subtest F Cloze Test.

**For Sociolinguistic Competence Criterion 3 Appropriacy in Terms of Settings and Relationships tested the following:**

*Subtest G Initiating A Talk and Responding to Talk*

*Subtest H Features of a Communicative Situation*
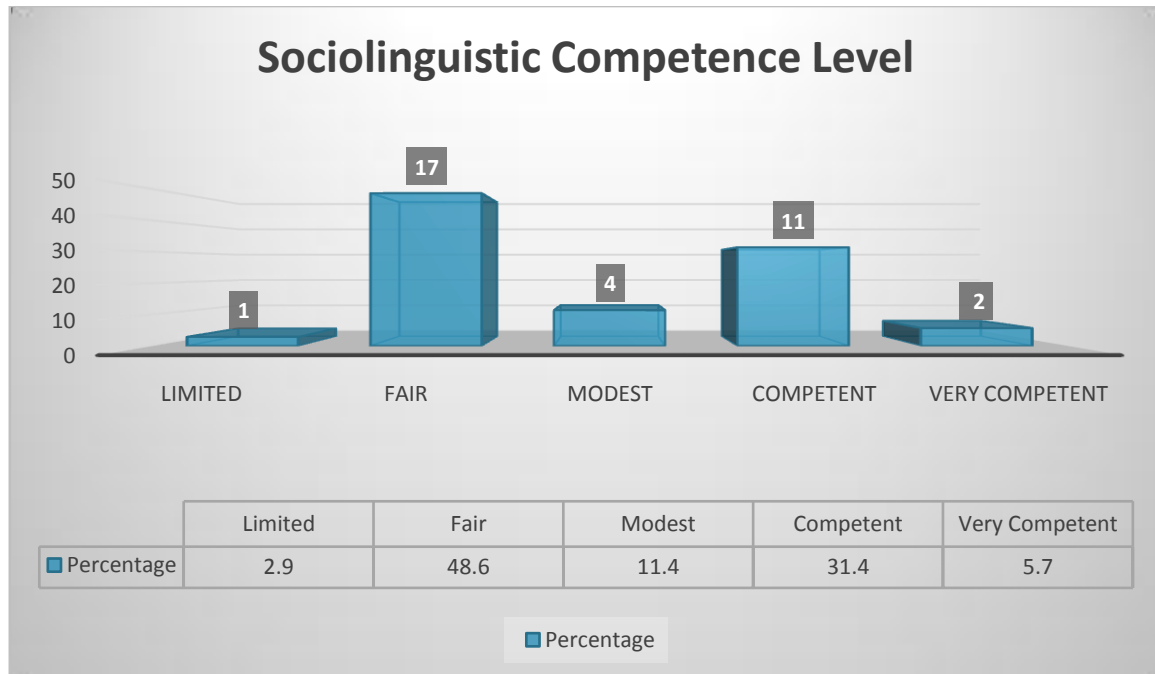
*Subtest I Writing an Application Letter*

**Table 6. Sociolinguistic Competence of the foreign students**

| Category | Frequency (n=35) | Percent |
|----------|-------------------|---------|
| Limited | 1 | 2.9 |
| Fair | 17 | 48.6 |
| Modest | 4 | 11.4 |
| Competent | 11 | 31.4 |
| Very competent | 2 | 5.7 |

Lastly, in Sociolinguistic Competence 17 (48.6%) out of n=35 examinees are fair, 11 (31.4%) are competent, 4 (11.4%) are modest, 2 (5.7%) are very competent and 1 (2.9) is limited.

The graph below is a presentation of the Level of Sociolinguistic Competence of the participants. This is to see the disparity in the number of students belonging to this type of level of competence.



## Sociolinguistic Competence Level

|  | Limited | Fair | Modest | Competent | Very Competent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percentage | 2.9 | 48.6 | 11.4 | 31.4 | 5.7 |

**Graph 3 Level of Sociolinguistic Competence of the Participants**

In Subtest I Writing an Application Letter, the following observations were noted.

**Common Goofs Committed By the Participants in Writing Application Letters**

Sentence Errors, Lexis, Basic and Optional Parts Presentation, Format/Mechanical Neatness/ Punctuation Marks, String of Sentences rather than Essay were the errors committed by most of the participants in this study. Writing which is one of the two productive skills were compromised and must be given attention.

Errors along tenses, subject and verb concordance, fragments, run-on, comma splice, fused sentence, faulty modification, faulty parallelism and redundancy were the common goofs committed by the participants along Sentence Errors.

In addition, Lexical Aspect such as diction or word choice and spelling were prominently seen in the output of the participants.

Moreover, basic and optional parts were misplaced, misrepresented, altered or missing. Others parts came first after the conventional part is supposedly presented.

Sentences were chopped or stringed sentences rather than interrelated, topic sentence was missing, direct address was compromised. The main idea was not seen right on the first paragraph neither in the conclusion.

No specific format was followed. Mechanical neatness was not considered, punctuation marks were misused and abbreviations were utilized without introducing the word first. Margins, pagination and spacing were missed.

Some participants were unable to write their application letter.

Records show that most of the participants excelled in subtests B, C, D, G, and H with provision of choices. However, discretionary attention if not ample consideration must be addressed on their writing and listening skills as reflected in the result of their dictation test, business correspondence and cloze test. The need to address their actual writing skills specifically on the technical aspects of writing, grammar structure, diction and basic and optional parts and how to write effective business correspondence must also be taken into account

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Medical and Health Care parlance is indeed an environment where cognitive and conative qualities are integrated. Medical practitioners must be competent in both aspects of learning. The monopoly of one facet of competence is ill in the development of a medical practitioner's full potentials. Therefore, an intense preparation of multiple skills must be developed among the medical students to prepare them for a much higher responsibility whereby communicative competence is indispensable.

While it is remarkable to note that the level of discourse competence of most of the participants are good, there is still a need to address other aspects of communicative competence learning aside from the ability to follow instructions. Skills must be integrated and the result must be eclectic. Communicative language tests and Communicative test administrators and professors must make an effort to test language in a way that reflects the way that language is used in real communication and to test the learner in eclectic and integrated skills. It is, of course, not always possible to make language tests communicative, but it may often be possible to give them communicative elements. This can have beneficial backwash effects. If students are encouraged to study for more communicative tasks, this can only have a positive effect on their language learning. The task given in Medical classrooms must be integrative and task-based; involving the students in real world activities will expose them to a large amount of authentic language such as meaningful communication, authentic situation, unpredictable language input, creative language output and integrated language skills. As part of language learning, it is likewise indispensable to

integrate culture-based activities in classrooms not only to develop student's confidence and language skills but also to expand their sense of awareness of intercultural concerns. Integrating all these aspects apart from the course focus (content) will strengthen/ develop not only their knowledge in the Medical field but also their communicative and intercultural competence as Medical and Health Care practitioners.

It is therefore essential to note the weaknesses of the students in their listening and writing skills where they need to be developed while it is equally necessary to note the *sustainability* of their skills where they excel. Eventually, the concept of teaching and learning may come from knowing their level of communicative competence paying attention on their *strengths* as well as their *weaknesses* where both the teacher and the learner can *sustain and obtain*. Embracing the idea of Allan and Stoller that, to best facilitate language learning, content and real-life skills, projects/ programs require "a combination of teacher guidance, teacher feedback, student engagement and elaborated tasks with some degree of challenge".

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