English, Multiculturalism, Communicative Competence

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Introduction

No exact statistics exist concerning the number of people using English worldwide. However, as a rough approximation, it is said that more than one billion people – according to some, nearly "2 billion people" – use English in one way or another, of which the 4 hundred millions use it as their native language, while the remaining 6 hundred millions or more use the language as a second or foreign language. This figure of "one billion people" itself is not particularly surprising with Chinese and Arabic taken into consideration. However, the fact that of 3,000 or even 5,000 languages supposedly existing on the earth, English is the only language labeled "an international language" is worth mentioning; at present, the positioning of English in the map of world languages is surprisingly unique (Ammon 2001, Crystal 2003, Talbot, Atkinson and Atkinson 2003)).

English as an International Language

The concept of "English as an international language" – or "English as a global language" (Crystal 2003) – assumes a situation in which English is virtually used by the people all over the world, and this assumption implies that the "English as an international language" situation surpasses a line of demarcation between the "English as a second language" situation and the "English as a foreign language" situation.　In other words, the concept of English as an international language naturally brings us to consider possible changes in our way of thinking about the English language and English language education, changes due to situational changes.

　There is a tendency among us to consider a language within the schema of "the nation, the national people, and the national language" (Talbot, Atkinson and Atkinson 2003). It is, indeed, a naïve idea entertained by most of us that people belong to a nation as the national people, and speak the national language officially used in the nation-state. This view takes it for granted that if you are, for example, a Japanese, you naturally speak Japanese, the national language in Japan. If a policy of linguistic purification is

promoted within this schema, the idea of "standard language" emerges, and the superiority of it tends to be assumed as a social fact, and educational systems and mass communication spur the spread of this tendency across the nation. In educational contexts, most teachers of English feel obliged to teach "correct English," and most learners are obsessed by "correct English" as well.

The psychology of both teachers and learners here is primarily a product of linguistic standardization. However, the "English as an international language" situation urges us to reconsider the schema of "the nation, the national people, and the national language" and, eventually, the norms of Standard English—the source of correct English.

For example, in Japan, one unconsciously acquires Japanese and naturally uses it on a daily basis, whether one likes it or not. Yet, the sense of being a Japanese is hard to surface as long as one is communicating with another Japanese, because for them, the nationality is too obvious to think about. The same goes for the concept of Japanese culture. One simply takes it for granted that Japanese culture is a way of life. When one is, however, in a situation where one uses English as a means of international communication, the concept of "the national language" is discarded first, and conversely, the sense of being a Japanese comes to one's consciousness through the practice of labeling one's partner "a Thai," "an Indonesian," "a Canadian," and so forth.

In correspondence to the relationship between a Japanese and a Thai, for instance, the concept of Japanese culture emerges within one's mind, being placed in a comparative and contrastive position with Thai culture. That is a situation in which you use English not as a national language, but as an international language, becoming aware of being a Japanese – a situation in which the nation and the national language do not match. In such cases, the question of how to define the norms of English becomes a big issue.

Quite obviously, the "English as an international language" situation requires us to be tolerant of the norms of English. To be more precise, English can function as "an international language" in the true sense of the term, if and only if nobody possesses the right to decide on the norms. With this point in mind, the term "world Englishes" has been introduced in the literature of English language education (Kachru 1976, 1987, Smith 1987, Kingsley and Kachru 2004).

It is worth mentioning that the proper noun "English" receives a plural –s, thus being "Englishes." Semantically, uniqueness or singleness is a distinctive feature of a proper noun, which tends to induce a connection of certain norms with a linguistic entity, called "English" or "Standard English." The term "world Englishes" functions as a collective noun such as animals and fruits. The set of World Englishes includes Japanese English,

American English, Spanish English, Korean English, and so forth, as its members. The basic tenet of world Englishes is that English is no longer the property of native speakers but a global property of people all over the world, and that the English norms must be pluralized, thus permitting linguistic diversities (Smith 1987).

However, we must note that Japanese English or American English, as a member of world Englishes, is still an idealized, abstract concept. Thus, in principle, no one can use either Japanese English or American English. It is our claim here that in order to make the argument about English as an international language more realistic and authentic, we should turn to the concept of "my English," a common noun which can refer to an individual object.

As we discuss later, "my English" is a language which belongs to an individual; thus, it is a personalized language serving as the medium of communication in interpersonal interactions. An English user uses his or her own English, without exception. Global communication in English assumes interactions with people with different national and ethnic backgrounds; communication of any kind, however, reduces to person-to- person interaction, and the perspective of "my English" becomes imperative in discussing the nature of English in practical use.

Thus, the purpose here is (1) to examine the relationship between "my English" and "English" in more detail, (2) then to discuss the context in which "my English is used" – the context of multiculturalism, and (3) to address the main issue here, that is, the question of how to operationally define "communicative English competence" in the context of multiculturalism.

What is "English"? : Its Referential Object

An individual teaching English has a professional obligation to know about the English language, and hence, to study the language itself. A discipline dealing with the English language is called "English linguistics," and most teacher training programs in universities require trainees to take courses in English linguistics.

English linguistics, needless to say, assumes English as the target of investigation. However, in reality, English does not exist nowhere in the world as tangible objects such as "cars" and "bananas" do. There is no way of pointing at the bounded object called "English." We can only observe a flow of English sounds, a chain of English letters, a cluster of English words, or English texts of different kinds. A text is but a sample product spoken or written in English, but it is not English per se, or English in general (cf. for a theoretical discussion of this kind, see Rorty 1979, 1991).

In order to pursue studies in English linguistics, however, it is prerequisite to stop the flow of English and "recover" the whole English language as a bounded concept, or the static object of investigation. There is no point of investigating unless there is the object to investigate. If the object is static and bounded, it becomes possible to analyze it to "discover" structures and patterns. In fact, most people think that the task of English linguistics lies in analyzing the English language, and yet, in fact, researchers are not "discovering" structures underlying English, but "assigning" structures to the target of analysis. In order to give structures to the target object, we need to select a theory or a way of talking about the object. This selection results in producing different theories or theoretical discourses in English linguistics.

In English linguistics, English is treated as a proper noun of which the referent is a single object. In other words, "Language" in linguistics and "English" in English linguistics are both equally proper names, and their referential object is called "*la langue*" or an idealized entity.

In standard textbooks of linguistics, *la langue* provides a set of norms or rules governing language in use (i.e., *la parole*), and it is a social entity people in the same speech community inter-subjectively share in common. *La langue* as a whole is a self-sufficient system, which is subject to structural analyses by linguists. Linguistics teaches us – wrongly, of course—that a language as an idealized entity is recoverable when structural analyses "detect" a set of elements constituting *la langue* and identify a set of rules of combining elements, which generate utterances or sentences (*la parole*). A language (*la langue*) is, for example, described as a composite of phonological rules, lexical inventories, and syntactic rules.

Now, how is the target of "English" being understood in the field of English language teaching? We take it quite natural to say, "We teach English" and "We learn English" These phrases reveal that both language teachers and learners take it quite natural that English is the target object of learning and teaching, thus being a tacit understanding among them that the object named "English" exists.

In other words, in the field of English teaching as well, "English" is perceived to be a proper name of which the referential object is an idealized entity. This perception leads teachers and learners to believe that there is a single set of English norms "out there"— norms they must abide by. We can even consider this perception about English "a root metaphor" underlying English language education.

This root metaphor is operating even in the field of second language acquisition, of which the goal is to construct a theory of second language acquisition [learning] on empirical grounds. The basic design of second language acquisition research assumes a

developmental process from the native language (i.e., the initial stage [state]) to the target language (i.e., the final stage [state]); researchers are concerned with tracing the process of a learner(s) by means of empirical research. A learner's language is called "interlanguage" (Selinker 1972), a language somewhere in between the initial stage and the final stage [state], and a learner's language remains to be an "interlanguage," which intrinsically contain some deviations from the norms of the target language (TL), until it comes to match the TL systems.

We must admit that *la langue* as an idealized entity has been "a common thread" guiding a way of practicing English language education. The whole object of English as *la langue* has been broken down into "parts," and the parts, which are called "teaching materials," are *linearly* presented in such a way as to produce pedagogical effects. Just like the task of building blocks, teaching materials are presented incrementally step by step until learners have "complete whole English."

It is common knowledge among language teachers and learners that language learning is a developmental process towards the final stage (i.e., acquisition of the TL norms), and language teaching facilitates the process. However, we point out that this common view has two possible problems, if the goal of teaching English is facilitating learners to develop the ability to use English functionally.

First, a learner finds it difficult to escape from a feeling of inadequacy or a sense of incompleteness until he or she reaches the final stage. The final stage here is simply a "mirage," never to be attained, because we are assuming an idealized entity there. A learner remains to be a learner, his / her interlanguage remains to be an interlanguage, and a feeling of inadequacy always stays there. Secondly, English as the target language must be strict in its norms; since it is an idealized language, it must be all correct English, and it must be perfectly appropriate English. Attention to such English can foster over-sensitivity to the norms within the learner's psychology. As a result, a learner becomes overtly conscious of the norms, feeling that he or she must speak good English. This feeling often constrains a learner's willingness to use English autonomously and adventurously.

In other words, we must notice that even the legitimate view of learning and using good English has negative effects on language learners, who label their own English "incorrect English" or "poor English," and keep affective and linguistic "handicap" when it comes to using English for practical purposes.

English in Use: "My English"

It is worth questioning whether "English" as in "I learn English" and "English" as in "I use English" refer to the same referential object. The answer is undoubtedly "no." Simply put, "English" we learn is English in general, and yet, "English" we use is necessarily a kind of English which belongs to the user, or what we call "my English." Nobody, in principle, can use English in general. English lacking a possessive pronoun –either *my, your, his,* or *her*—can be the target of learning, but never be the English to be used in the context of "here and now." Let us note here that "my English" is a term chosen from a speaker's / user's perspective in relation to "your English"; depending on a perspective one takes, it can be "his" English or "her" English. In this paper, we often use the term "my English" as a technical jargon as contrasted with "English" or "core English," which we will explain later.

A failure in distinguishing "English I learn / teach" and "English I use" is a case of "category mistake" (Ryle 1949). "English I learn / teach" is "a language out there," and "English I use" must be "a language in my mind," thus these two Englishes representing different things.

We must note here that terminological confusion of "my English" and "English" is not simply the matter of terminology, but can cause psychological burden on the part of a language user. The greater is the distance of the two Englishes being perceived, the greater does a learner's feeling of inadequacy become. It is a form of alienation, alienation between idealized English and "my English." In order to use English (i.e., my English) naturally and casually, a user needs to get over the feeling of inadequacy, brushing aside the self-critical labeling of "incorrect or poor English." For that, one should consciously make a clear distinction between "English to learn" and "English to use." And on the basis of this distinction, one should accept one's English as "a fully-functioning person" (Rogers 1961), and "manage"—that is, start, maintain, and change —on-going communication as a joint action. Otherwise, in the very act of using one's English, the norms of "English" capture the user's concern, with a sense of inferiority being induced. As a result, a language user can end up with experiencing alienation between the critical me and the performing me (Stevick 1976).

"My English" is my personal English; it is a language of dialogue with the other. The personal possessive pronoun "my" makes sense, only in the context where a person interacts with "the other," who can be called by the pronoun "you." In other words, "my English," a concept which takes a perspective of an individual, is a language which works only in relation to "your English – or another "my English" from the partner's point of

view.

This relation between "my English" and "your English" is typically observable in verbal interaction (i.e., dialogue); the same relation applies even to literacy in that the writer using his own English – "my English" from the writer's perspective—assumes the reader using his or her own English—"your English" from the readers' perspective.

We suggest that what is required in the verbal interaction between my English and your English is a communication strategy called "negotiation of meaning," suggesting that the models of linguistic norms should vary between the case of learning English and the case of using my English (cf. Farch and Kasper for communication strategies). In the case of learning English, the adaptation model seems reasonable; learners attempt to adapt their English to the norms of idealized English or Standard English. On the other hand, in the case of using my English, the accommodation model for mutual understanding is more realistic; language users go through negotiations of meaning for successful communication. The accommodation model is a model typically used between people using different dialects.

It is our claim that "communicative competence," the commonly stated goal of English language education, should be operationally defined within a theoretical framework admitting the difference between "English" and "my English," if the definition has practical and functional implications. Before getting down to the task of defining communicative competence, let us consider the perspective of what we call "living multiculturalism", a perspective naturally drawn from the situation in which English is used as a medium of international communication.

The Perspective of "Living multiculturalism"

In recent years, the concept of "cultural awareness" – understanding of different cultures – has been emphasized as essential part of English learning and teaching. In fact, the phrase "cross-cultural communication" is on the lips of English teachers. No one will question the proposition that learning a second language necessarily accompanies understanding a different culture (cf. Nieto 2002, Goldstein 2003). However, to make this proposition substantial and pedagogically significant, we must ask the question of what it means by "culture" or "cultural differences" and give our own answers. If the phrase "understanding different cultures" is used without qualifying the term, it can follow the usual cycle of spreading out and soon disappearing as a hackneyed expression.

The perspective of "living multiculturalism" here accords with the notion of "culture one faces [experiences]," and assumes transactions between the self and the other in the

context of "here and now"; I, as a person living here and now, faces the other, or what I call "you," who is not reachable to the full, and somehow establishes interpersonal relations—amicable or hostile—through verbal interaction. In other words, "culture" in "living multiculturalism" is not something out there (i.e., "culture out there"), but something one faces (i.e., "culture one faces"). As a natural consequence, the general concept of "culture" has to be defined in terms of "the otherness of the other." In the below, we will discuss some problems related to the perspective of "living multiculturalism," or the problems you face when you try to interact with culturally different others, using "your English."

Differences in Value

Interpersonal interaction in the context of multiculturalism requires one to abide by two practical lessons: "Don't take anything for granted" and "Accept differences." These two lessons are easy to agree with and difficult to practice. The lesson "Don't take anything for granted" implies that you forsake your common sense that guides your daily life; as a result, it is possible that you are disoriented. It sounds comfortable to say, "People are different, and you have to accept them." But the lesson "Accept differences" demands that you should not only understand differences, but also change your frame of reference. Otherwise, the statement "I accept differences" can be no more than a lip service. Accepting differences inevitably leads to restructuring one's conventional semantic world.

According to a study on Japanese perceptions of Thai people (Iwaki 1986), Japanese subjects are prone to give the following responses as their negative opinions about Thai people's behavior: "they are loose in terms of time" and "they easily give up and do not show perseverance." Semantically, these are extremely negative statements, and on the basis of these statements, people might label Thai people as "loose and undisciplined." But if you read these statements with the concept of value being considered, you will have different interpretations. These seemingly negative statements about Thai people come from values entertained by Japanese, which claim to the effect that "time is money and you should abide by it," and "you should do your best and stick to your goal; don't give up easily." This is, however, just one way of interpreting Thai people's behaviors. There is a possibility that their behaviors are reflections of their own values, which stress that "you should enjoy your life (what is called "*sanuk*" and "s*abai*" in Thai), and "it is absurd to be a slave of your time."

If you value the statement "you should do your best and stick to your goal; don't give up easily" highly, then you may consider that Thai people have tendency to give up easily

lacking perseverance. However, if you understand that their behaviors are guided by a fundamental principle of "transcending uncomfortable things flexibly rather than sticking to them (i.e., the spirit of "*mai pen rai*" in Thai), you will be willing to take back your former interpretation.

Thus, it is easy to claim that we tend to judge the other on the basis of our own frame of reference, with the other's being brushed aside. But what does it mean by taking into consideration the other's frame of reference? "A sense of values," though among daily vocabulary, is an abstract concept, which challenges a straightforward comprehension. One often says, "My sense of values differs from yours" as an explanation of why "one cannot get along with the other." But the point here is how we approach what is called "the differences in value." "My sense of values differs from yours" is a statement that often functions as an excuse of avoiding further negotiation of meaning, yet their substantial differences are unlikely to be identified.

In this regard, we would like to suggest that metaphor is a powerful tool for understanding the content of a value (cf. Ortony 1979, Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Lakoff 1987, Johnson 1987, Boers and Littlemore 2002, Colston and Katz 2003). "Metaphor" is defined here not simply as a rhetorical device, but as a cognitive device – the process of "regarding A as B." Unconsciously, we employ metaphors in describing intangible entities as in "love is (regarded as) a journey," "a theory is a building," and "argument is a war." Take the metaphor "argument is a war," for example. It provides not only a set of expressions (i.e., "discourse") to talk about "argument," but also conventional ways of doing argument (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). In other words, we talk about effective "strategies" in argument, the way of "attacking" our opponent's opinions, and "winning and losing," thus using terms commonly used to describe war, and follow a script of argument thus described when we actually have an argument with others.

We naturally accept the view that time is something moving like an arrow. And we have conventional expressions such as "time is up," "ahead of [behind] time," "time goes by," and "time and tide wait for no man." These expressions give us evidence to claim that time is conceptualized as something moving linearly; this is a metaphor. Time can be conceptualized in different metaphors: time is something that cycles and recycles; time does not move, but humans move within it, and so on.

Thus, metaphor can be an effective tool for "understanding cultural differences" or "differences in the value system" (Boers and Littlemore 2003). Both of these terms are often used in the context of multiculturalism, but often vaguely, because neither "cultural differences" nor "differences in the value system" does not tell much about the differences themselves. The hypothesis "A sense of values can be translated into a metaphor(s)"

becomes significant here. This working hypothesis helps us understand the substantial content of a value. More importantly, "metaphorical differences" can easily turn into an issue of discussion. One introduces "differences in the value system" as the last resort when one finds it impossible to attain mutual understanding. "Values" are something you never give up easily; sometimes, you fight for your value, or you even give your life to your value. In other words, differences in the value system do not open the door for constructive dialogue. But if you find that differences here, in fact, reduce to differences in metaphor, you will be more open-minded and willing to discuss the differences and possible ways of overcoming differences, thus inviting constructive dialogues.

"The difference in value" is not the end point; if you use the concept of "the difference in metaphor," you can go beyond that. This has significant implications for anyone who faces difficulty in intercultural communication settings. As a premise, one should avoid saying "my sense of values differs from yours" as an excuse for not being able to communicate. Interpersonal problems can be solved only through communication. For that, one should understand that differences in the value system can be often made explicit through metaphorical interpretations. In other words, if we understand metaphors behind the differences in value, we are able to identify the points of differences [disputes], and start creating a new value (i.e., a new metaphor) jointly that can be shared in common between the parties concerned.

Metaphor gives a perspective of organizing our frame of reference; a new metaphor gives a new way of looking at things. Metaphorical shift has big potentials of restructuring one's semantic space even drastically; this restructuring is, as mentioned earlier, a prerequisite to "accept differences" in the true sense of the term.

The problem of stereotyping

The problem of stereotyping is a big issue when we consider interactions across cultures (Goffman 1963, Berry 1970, Brislin 1981). A stereotype, the product of stereotyping, is an oversimplified and yet relatively fixed view or statement of a social group— "Americans are casual and friendly" is an example. It is often called "a cultural stereotype"; it can be positive or negative in its content. Cultural stereotypes are not intrinsically problematic, because some can be considered apt and valid generalizations about a given culture, explaining the people's presuppositions and expectations. Stereotyping becomes problematic when it works in a way to efface the uniqueness of an individual person, view members of a group similarly, and as a result, cause prejudice and discrimination on the part of the viewer.

It is very unlikely among Japanese, for example, to say that he or she is such and such because he or she is Japanese. In a situation of cross-cultural encounters, you tend to describe your partners in terms of their nationality, and see them through the lens of national and cultural backgrounds. It happens that when a misunderstanding occurs between you and your interlocutor, you introduce the notion of "cultural differences" in order to interpret the situation in your own way. In this case, you are, in fact, using cultural stereotypes about the social group of which your partner is a member.

Cultural stereotypes are always perceived to be problems to communication across cultures, but one cannot escape from them, in that stereotypes are outcomes of learning. "Overgeneralization" is an opt-cited cognitive process that accounts for the formation of stereotypes (Brislin 1981; Hamilton 1981). To be more accurate, however, it is not so much a single operation of overgeneralization as the interactive operation of "differentiating," "generalizing" and "typicalizing" that should account for the formation of stereotypes.

Suppose a person A meets a person B and they converse with each other. B introduces himself as an NA [the name of a nationality]. Also suppose that A hears the word "NA" for the first time. The word "NA" has a differentiating function, differentiating NAs from non-NAs. That is why NA serves to be a distinctive feature of a person B, when he says, "I'm an NA." Some days later, A sees her friend, R, and reports that she met a person B, who is an NA. Notice that at this moment, the word "NA" does not carry a connotation of cultural stereotypes. However, the word "NA" can be used for any member of the NA. As the number of NAs the person A meets increases, the cognitive process of generalizing operates, which enables the speaker to use the same word to refer to different persons. On the basis of generalized uses of the word, the person A picks on typical features that characterize the concept "NA," thus the cognitive process of typicalization being under operation. Simply put, typicalization is the principle of concept formation; however, it operates not singly, but jointly along with differentiating and generalizing. The concept thus formed is called "prototype" (Rosch 1973), which includes a set of prototypical features about NAs. The concept, which emerges within an individual, is a collective concept, but when it comes to applying it to a given individual, it turns out be a stereotype, which inevitably "leaks" – failing to capture the person's uniqueness.

A note should be made here that not all prototypes are stereotypes, and that not all stereotypes are problematic. We are here concerned with stereotypes, that is, the prototypes that describe a social group. As a description of a group, nothing is intrinsically wrong with those stereotypes. Communication problems take place when one is trying to use a stereotype to describe an individual.

Positive stereotypes can be a problem, in that a positive one is likely to produce certain expectations on the part of a stereotype-holder, and the induced expectations can be readily betrayed in real-life interaction between people. On the other hand, negative stereotypes present more obvious and serious problems when applied to an individual, because they can induce "prejudice" at the attitudinal level and "discrimination" at the behavioral level (Hofsteade 1980). As mentioned above, a stereotype is a collective concept; thus, by nature, it always has a possibility of eliciting problems when applied to an individual. In principle, a collective concept never refers to an individual entity. It may describe "an average," but the average is an abstraction of individual differences, thus essentially being a fiction. This is why stereotypes become stumbling blocks to mutual understanding between people.

On the basis of the discussion above, we suggest that keeping the attitude of seeing an individual as an individual is an effective measure of minimizing the negative effects of stereotypes upon interpersonal communication. However, a stereotype is the output of learning, as stated above, and hence, there is no way of escaping from stereotyping (Hamilton 1981). If so, the only way of minimizing the effect of stereotyping is to consciously keep stereotypes undecided, temporary concepts about groups, not individuals. In dialogic interactions, one should treat the otherness of the other as "bare differences"— differences without judgment—and "practice" flexible attitudes of enjoying the differences.

Sharable Value Creation

Understanding the other's sense of values and sharing common values are the key to human communication in general, and this is particularly so in participating in dialogues between people of different backgrounds. In order to establish human relations through communication, it is not just adequate to understand the other's sense of values, while maintaining one's own. What is required is to share common values to be created by a collaborative joint action. In other words, one is required to see one's sense of values from a different perspective, and try to create mutually sharable values through a joint action of constant dialogue. What, then, are the conditions that make it feasible to carry out this challenging collaboration?

We mentioned that metaphor is a key to this problem. In addition, we may note that humans are sense-making animals. Anything within and around us becomes the target of sense-making, through which an action is taken. Sense-making often entails value-making; in the making of sense, we make a value judgment. Normally, the critical

criterion for value judgment would be the principle of relevance. If an action is perceived to be relevant in a certain context, it will be taken. We should, however, go beyond the concept of relevance, and propose the notion of "individual expectations" as a concept that is indeed responsible for a person's judgment to determine if an action is relevant or irrelevant. If we get to the level of "individual expectations," we are able to discard a troublesome concept of "cultural differences," in that each individual has different expectations irrespective of the same cultural background.

If such is the case, we can claim that the principle of relevance is not a principle based on the demands of universal truth, but rather on something highly individual, thus being adjustable interactively. This gives us a hint to answer the above question. That is, the challenging collaboration becomes feasible depending on the extent to which the principle of relevance for each is adjustable in human interactions. To put it differently, the extent to which you accept the other's behavior—or the degree of "tolerance" – becomes the key. The other's behavior may appear deviated from your norms, yet the very notion of "deviation" should be abandoned, and a new notion of "stretching" should be introduced in its stead. "Stretching the norm" implies a flexible application of the principle of relevance.

Behind the concept of "deviation" always lies the concept of "norm"; thus, it is a widely accepted view that something normative is good, and something non-normative is wrong. "Deviation" always carries a negative connotation, while "stretching" a positive one. This is why we use the word "stretch."

In cross-cultural encounters, we experience stretches of different kinds in different situations with respect to religion, marriage, toileting, expletives, eating, and greetings. To some, people can show a high degree of tolerance; to others, however, their level of tolerance becomes very low. We can be tolerant of different ways of greeting, and easily accept them. We, however, experience cross-cultural conflicts, when "stretching" goes beyond our capacity of tolerance.

We suggest that cross-cultural dialogues can be constructive and productive, when the different senses of values find a point of compromise, and newly created values are shared by the participants. For that, one should flexibly stretch the range of relevance, without insisting on one's own criteria for relevance—criteria coming from one's personal expectations, which are used to evaluate behaviors. And as long as one is conscious of "stretching," one's tolerance maintains a high level, and as a consequence, possibilities increase for sharing newly created values as common ground even in dealing with differences which are not easily acceptable.

To sum up, what has been discussed in this section reduces to an obvious and common

but "difficult-to-practice" proposition: One should not take your sense of values for granted. If you confine yourself to a set of values in the form of "you should," you will be labeled "a stubborn person." A debate-like position game, in which each stands for his or her own position, does not foster co-creation of mutually sharable values. What we need is a "collaboration game," in which the participants present their "stocks" on the table of discussion, and search for a new way of looking at things, and produce a context of situation in which they can play the game. To play the game, one needs to be 'tough'—independent and responsible, and 'soft' – flexible and empathic.

Within the context of using English as a lingua franca, the interaction of "my English" and "your English" takes place on the assumption that mutual understanding is indeed possible. Intuitively, however, we all know that communication for mutual understanding always accompanies some form of "anxiety." Surely, we believe in mutual understanding; at the same time, we wonder whether or not our intended meaning is interpreted correctly. This is an anxiety coming from "semantic indeterminacy," or a sense of uncertainty (Cheng 2003). This problem of anxiety becomes acute in the context of living multiculturalism because we cannot naively assume that our basic assumptions work. In other words, a sense of losing common ground for mutual understanding fosters a sense of semantic uncertainty, which causes aggravated anxiety for mutual understanding.

When we encounter an event which is not properly interpretable within our frame of reference, we convince ourselves by bringing in conceptual devices such as "cultural differences" and "cross-cultural barriers." However, from the perspective of "living multiculturalism," the introduction of the concept "cross-cultural barriers" has an effect of psyching ourselves into believing that a different culture is an insurmountable barrier, which diverts one's attention from the target individual person. For this reason, we suggest that a distinction should be made between "culture out there" and "culture one faces," and that a different culture in interpersonal communication should be reinterpreted as part of "the uniqueness (or otherness) of the other."

On the basis of the preceding discussion, we will now move on to the main theme of this paper: that is, defining "communicative language competence."

Defining Communicative Competence: Re-conceptualization

The purpose of learning and teaching English as a second language lies in attaining the ability to use the language for communicative purposes. And now, "communicative competence" ——or "communicative language competence" to be more exact—is a

"household word" (Brown 1989: 198) in second language learning and teaching.

The term "communicative competence" was introduced by Dell Hymes (1967, 1971) to emphasize the social and functional aspect of language. The term was contrasted with Noam Chomsky's "linguistic competence" (Chomsky 1965, 1981), which was then a dominant concern in the field of linguistics.

Chomsky makes a careful distinction between "linguistic competence" and "linguistic performance" and shows three fundamental questions guiding the study of language:

1. What constitutes knowledge of a language?
2. How does such knowledge develop?
3. How is such knowledge put to use?

Questions 1 and 2 require a theory of language and a theory of language acquisition, respectively; question 3 requires a theory of pragmatics or a theory of performance, which is concerned with linguistic performance. Chomsky's central concern is with the first question always in relation to the second one, or with linguistic competence. It is assumed that grammar is the core of linguistic competence; hence, the study of grammar has been central to Chomsky's work.

For Chomsky, grammar is the mentally represented system that constitutes the state of knowledge attained by a given individual, and the study of grammar attempts to capture and make explicit the properties of the internalized grammar or what is called "LAD [language acquisition device]".

Chomsky (1972:11) says that "a person who has learned a language has acquired a system of rules," which permits the creative use of language. He believes that there must be something innate which accounts for the rapidity and uniformity of language learning, and the remarkable complexity and range of grammars that are the product of language learning. Thus, he proposes the innateness hypothesis. Hornstein and Lightfoot (1981: 9) state the reasoning behind this hypothesis as follows:

(1) The creative aspect of language use is a fact about human language. This suggests the remarkable complexity of human language.
(2) The speech the child hears does not consist uniformly of complete grammatical sentences, but also of utterances with pauses, slips of the tongue, incomplete thought.
(3) The available data are finite, but the child comes to be able to deal with an infinite range of novel sentences, going beyond the utterances actually heard during childhood.
(4) Despite variation in background and intelligence, this complex but fairly uniform

capacity is attained in a remarkably short time, without much apparent effort or difficulty.

(5) Therefore, we cannot explain the rapidity and uniformity of language acquisition unless we posit some innate language faculty genetically preprogrammed with a highly specific set of linguistic universals (i.e., LAD).

Thus, Chomsky is concerned with the general principles of language as a biologically given system that underlies the acquisition of language. Thus, the goal of his linguistic theory is to explicate a set of principles that characterizes the knowledge the child may bring to language learning as part of his natural human endowment.

In other words, Chomsky focuses on "internal language," rather than a language to be used externally. And his approach requires logical coherence and rigidity; thus, abstraction of the context of language use becomes a natural consequence. The social aspect of language use or the semantics of human communication dynamics does not become the target of investigation.

For others outside the Chomskyan circle, his approach looks extremely abstract and logical, which has no direct bearing on what is going on in real world. Dell Hymes was one of those people who had that kind of impression about a Chomskyan way.

Thus, in contrast with linguistic competence as conceptualized by Chomsky, Hymes (1972) coined the term "communicative competence," which has been widely accepted by researchers interested in how a language works in real world. Social factors such as a context of situation, the social functions of language, and the participant's roles are all incorporated into the holistic concept of communicative competence. A Hyme's way has had a lot to do with developments of sociolinguistics and ethnography of speaking.

Hyme's communicative competence was soon adopted in the field of second language teaching. The concept gained substantial and pedagogically applicable contents along with a spread of speech act theory, first introduced by John Austin, and further developed by John Searle. Both Austin and Searle showed their main interest in "ordinary languages," viewed as a set of actual utterances in actual situations.

With the development of speech act theory, the field of second language teaching gained jargons such as "functions" and "functional formula / expressions," and a new perspective of developing syllabi, that is, the functional syllabus as contrasted with the grammatical syllabus (Wilkins 1974). In fact, since the mid 70's, communicative competence has become the overtly spoken goal of second language learning and teaching, and syllabi emphasizing the functional aspect of language has become dominant over grammatical or structural syllabi; the method of needs analysis has been elaborated to

capture the needs of learners (Munby 1978), and a communicative way of teaching, or generally "communicative approach," has been on widespread (van Ek 1976, Littlewood 1982, Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983). Even today, as a guideline of second language teaching, few question the validity and potentials of communicative approach.

In this paper, we basically follow the mainstream of communicative approach. At the same time, we feel that there remains plenty of room for improvement; by making explicit what to teach, how to teach it, and how to assess the outcome—or the questions of what, how, and assessment, we make the approach more feasible and practical. At present, it is our understanding that the concept "communicative competence," though understandable in terms of what it means, still leaves a lot to be desired when it comes to using a guiding principle of the questions of what, how, and assessment. This understanding has given us an impetus to the development of our own English curriculum framework in this paper.

Problems with Current Definitions

The current way of capturing communicative competence sees the concept as an idealized competence, and tries to define it as comprising multiple components or sub-competences, each component being defined with abstract technical concepts. As a general characterization, one will define it as the ability to use the target language naturally and appropriately in cross-cultural settings, and add a note of qualifications that it is "relative, not absolute, and depends on the cooperation of all the participants involved" (Savignon 1983: 9). This is a generally acceptable statement. However, in order to explain what communicative competence is, one gives a set of components such as linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, and so on, and explains what each component is. This is the standard procedure of defining the concept.

M. Canale and M. Swain (1980) identified four different components that make up the concept of communicative competence: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. For example, sociolinguistic competence was defined as the knowledge of the socio-cultural rules of language and of discourse; strategic competence, as "the verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables" (Canale and Swain 1980: 30).

Backman (1987) reorganized Canale & Swain's four categories in his attempt at defining communicative competence or what he calls "communicative language proficiency." According to his taxonomy, communicative competence consists of three

main parts: language competence, strategic competence, and psychomotor skills. Language competence comprises organizational competence, which is divided into grammatical competence (including lexis, morphology, syntax, phonology/graphology), textual competence (including cohesion and rhetorical organization) , and pragmatic competence, which is divided into illocutionary competence (including ideational functions, manipulative functions, heuristic functions, imaginative functions) and sociolinguistic competence (including register and dialect, cultural references and figures of speech, and naturalness). Strategic competence is defined as a set of general abilities to be used in the process of negotiating meaning. The section "psychomotor skills" has two parts: productive (oral [speaking] and visual [writing]) and receptive (aural [listening] and visual [reading)).

Defining a concept always involves identifying the components that comprise the concept itself; thus, sub-categorization is an inevitable part of defining something. However, this approach, when applied to the definition of communicative competence, often fails to capture "the context of language in use." In other words, by abstracting the context of language in use, definitions such as the ones by Canale and Swain and Backman fail to incorporate into their definition the part "cross-cultural settings" in the general definition above: i.e., the ability to use the target language naturally and appropriately in cross-cultural settings. Thus, "abstraction of the context of language use" is one problem inherent in the current definitions of communicative competence.

Another problem comes from the very process of showing a hierarchical picture of communicative competence, and explaining each component separately, as shown in a Backman's way. In other words, we are told of the components of communicative competence and of what each component is separately, and yet, we are unable to recover "an organic whole" of what is called "communicative competence." We understand that linguistic competence is part of communicative competence, and that grammatical competence is part of linguistic competence. However, we don't understand how grammatical competence contributes to communicative competence. Each separate definition may be fine on its own, but when one tries to put separate definitions together, they don't fit well. This is the problem of "lack of organic interplay of components."

Originally, the notion of competence was introduced as contrasted with the notion of performance. Hymes himself chose the term "communicative competence," not "communicative performance," probably because he was interested in constructing a theory of human linguistic ability, not simply observing how language is being used in actual contexts. This theoretical stance of Hyme's contributed to the emergence of new academic disciplines such as sociolinguistics and ethnography of speaking, as mentioned

above.

However, in order to use the term in the field of second language learning and teaching, we should pay due attention to "practical contexts" in which to use the target language. In other words, we are still left with the task of re-defining the concept of communicative competence with contextual factors taken into consideration. It is true that a model of language in use cannot be at the same level of abstraction as specific instances of language in use, but the point here is that we should take into serious consideration "the ability to use the target language naturally and appropriately in a cross-cultural setting." A static classification of the components of communicative competence does not account for the dynamic nature of language in use in cross-cultural contexts.

Before moving on to our attempt at defining communicative competence, let us briefly review how the concept is viewed within the "Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)," which "provides a common basis for the elaboration of the language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textpapers, etc. across Europe" (CEFR, p.1). It is probably the most comprehensive and attractive framework at present. In fact, the presence of CEFR has become a strong motivation for us to write this paper; the readers will consider our attempt significant and valid only when they are convinced that our framework (ECF) has its own merits over CEFR.

According to CEFR, communicative language competence is characterized as consisting of linguistic competences, pragmatic competences, and sociolinguistic competences, as shown in figure 1-1. Each component has its subcategories. It is true that the authors of CEFR realize the limitation of the taxonomic nature of their framework, as the following comment shows:

"The taxonomic nature of the Framework inevitably means trying to handle the great complexity of human language by breaking language competence down into separate components. This confronts us with psychological and pedagogical problems of some depth. Communication calls upon the whole human being. The competences separated and classified … interact in complex ways in the development of each unique human personality." (p. 1)

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Linguistic Competences                              │
│                                                      │
│  lexical competence/ grammatical competence         │
│ semantic competence / phonological competence       │
│ orthographic competence/ orthoepic competence       │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────┐
│ Communicative    │
│ Language         │    ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Competence       │    │ Sociolinguistic Competences                     │
└──────────────────┘    │ linguistic markers of social relations / politeness │
                        │ register differences / dialect and accent       │
                        └─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Pragmatic Competences                               │
│ discourse competence/ functional competence         │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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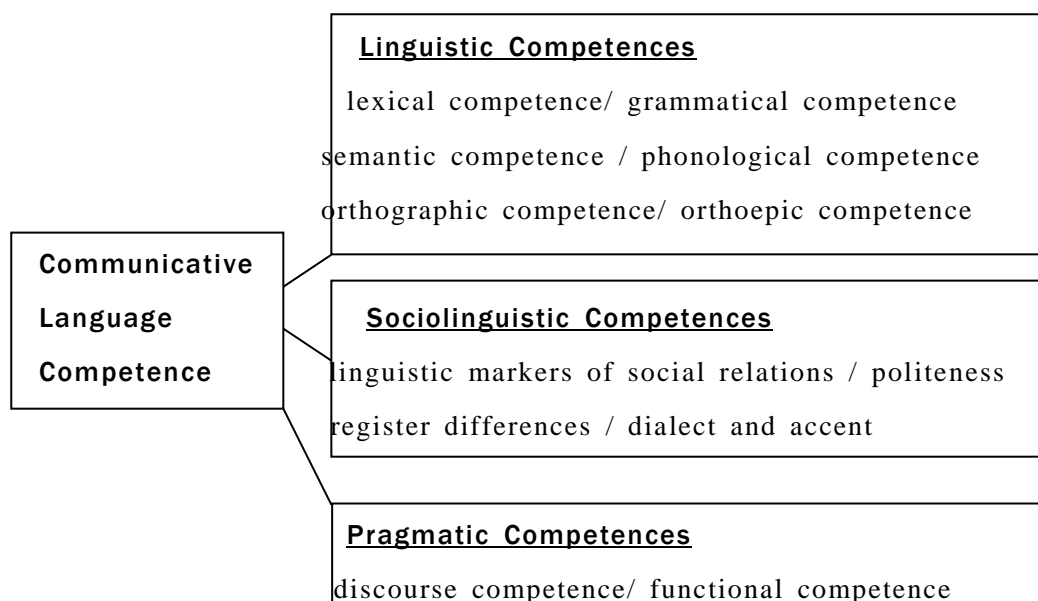
Figure 1: Components of Communicative Competence based on CEFR

However, in order for the Framework to be valid both theoretically and pedagogically, something more should be suggested to explain how the competences "interact in complex ways" in actual communication. It seems that CEFR also suffers from the two fundamental problems: "abstraction of context of language use" and "lack of organic interplay of components." And here again, each component is defined abstractly using technical terms, thus losing a touch of social reality. For example, according to CEFR, "sociolinguistic competences" refer to "the socio-cultural conditions of language use" (p. 13), or people's sensitivity to "social conventions" that include "rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes and social groups, linguistic codification of certain fundamental rituals in the functioning of a community" (p. 13). On the other hand, the description of "pragmatic competences" goes as follows:

"Pragmatic competences are concerned with "the functional use of linguistic resources (production of language functions, speech acts), drawing on scenarios or scripts of interactional exchanges. It also concerns the mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence, the identification of text types and forms, irony, and parody." (CEFR, p. 13)

Linguistic competences are described as covering "lexical, phonological and syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of language as system, independently of the sociolinguistic value of its variations and the pragmatic functions of its realizations"

(CEFR, p. 13).

If this way of characterizing communicative language competence is applied to developments of syllabi, tests, teaching materials in English, what outcomes are likely to be envisioned? In this connection, let us consider the problem of "abstraction of context of language use." According to the Common European Framework, both sociolinguistic competences and pragmatic competences imply adaptation to culture-specific or community-specific norms that govern the "appropriate" use of language. With the context of language use being considered, we must realize that English is used as a means of international communication in the context of multiculturalism. If so, "culture-specific norms" are not only hard to obtain, but also unrealistic to assume. That is, is it possible to obtain "rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes and social groups, linguistic codification of certain fundamental rituals in the functioning of a community"? If it turned out to be possible, are the competences really useful when one uses English as a medium of international communication? The answers to these questions are of course in the negative, suggesting that communicative competence as explicated in CEFR has limitations.

The problem of "lack of organic interplay of components" is concerned with the explanatory adequacy of characterizing each component. If sociolinguistic competences and pragmatic competences are equally concerned with the appropriateness of language use, is the distinction between the two components necessary? Linguistic competences in CEFR include semantic competence, and yet, the uptaking of the speaker's intention is separately treated within pragmatic competences. Thus, the construction of the content of an utterance and the uptaking of the utterer's intention are differentiated. However, in actual utterances in actual contexts, the content of an utterance and the utterer's intention are inseparable and subject to simultaneous sense-making. If the components are explained without considering their "organic interplay," we face the case in which each component may be described in great detail, and the sum of the components still fails to capture the dynamics of communicative competence.

Thus, in sum, CEFR does not succeed in dealing with the two problems in defining communicative competence: abstraction of context of language use and lack of organic interplay of components. This is not the problem uniquely of CEFR, but the problem of most prevailing attempts at defining communicative competence.

Defining Communicative Competence on the Action Plane

In order to minimize the problems mentioned above, we attempt to define communicative (language) competence within a context of language use, and emphasize the interaction of linguistic performance and linguistic knowledge. In order to treat "context of language use" as a theoretical construct, we cannot overemphasize the importance of the perspective of "living multiculturalism." In this connection, we may note that CEFR assumes "a culture out there" when defining sociolinguistic competences; we assume "a culture we face" or the otherness of the other.

The perspective of "living multiculturalism" invalidates the adaptation model in language use, which states that you should adapt yourself to the norms of the target language and culture. Even a "super international person" who knows what's what about the target culture would find it impossible to handle limitless diversities brought by the others s/he faces, and even her or his vast amount of knowledge about the target customs, conventions, and value systems could easily turn into cultural stereotypes, which might eventually hinder interpersonal communication across cultures. The situation does not change much even if s/he had a huge database about different countries, because what really matters is whether or not s/he can carry out sense-sharing activities through the process of negotiating meaning.

Underlying the descriptions of CEFR, we find culture-specific social norms relevant to the target language. From an assessor's viewpoint, those social norms have to be made explicit to assess the language learner's level of competence; from a learner's standpoint, those social norms are something to be acquired. However, in the case of English as an international language, no one can judge on a priori grounds which social norms determine the appropriateness of English use. This suggests that we should shift from the adaptation model to the accommodation model, the latter emphasizing the negotiation of meaning.

With the perspective of "living multiculturalism," the central theme is how we face and handle diversities and different persons. To discuss this theme, we employ two concepts: "empathy" and "conviviality." Empathy makes it possible to understand the partner's positions and ways of thinking beyond mutual differences, and to use the differences as a moment of restructuring one's meaning space. Thus, the practice of empathy requires a high degree of "flexibility" in relation to the other. On the other hand, "conviviality" is a sociological concept referring to a state in which persons having different frames of reference are somehow finding a way of co-living in competitive, and often conflicting situations. Thus, the practice of conviviality requires "toughness" to live

in the context of multiculturalism.

Thus, consideration of the perspective of living multiculturalism becomes a prerequisite of defining communicative competence on the action plane. This suggests a shift from the adaptation model to the accommodation model. And we also suggest that "toughness" and "flexibility" —or being tough and flexible—be the conditions for a good communicator in the 21st century.

The afore-mentioned description sounds idealistic, and one may think that it has nothing to do with, for example, young learners of English in elementary schools. However, we suggest that as long as English language education has the goal of helping learners to develop abilities to verbally interact with others, a learner, irrespective of the stage of language development, has to be "tough" and "soft." Being tough will be translated here into "being independent and adventurous, functioning as an autonomous person." Likewise, to be soft, one needs to be flexible and empathic, being able to participate in a constructive dialogue as a collaborative person, enjoying differences while interacting with the other, being able to accommodate semantic differences and interpersonal relations. For this reason, we claim that the conditions of toughness and softness apply to every stage of English language education.

At this moment, let us give a general definition of communicative competence, which emphasizes practical actions:

Communicative Competence in the context of language use
Communicative English competence refers to the ability to use English functionally in relation to the other, and to use it functionally, one needs to be tough and flexible.

From the phrase "the ability to use English in relation to the other," we envision the interaction of "my English" and "your English," and the only criterion to be used here is "functionality."

My English $\Longleftrightarrow$ Your English

Functionality
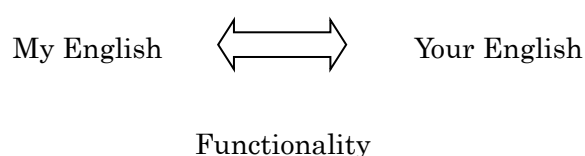
As stated earlier, both "my English" and "your English" are Englishes as a medium of communication. The point to be emphasized here is that given cultural norms are not assumed in the interaction between "my English" and "your English." This means that

sociolinguistic norms that determine the appropriateness of a linguistic behavior do not work, and hence, "functionality" becomes the criterion that overrides all the other criteria for assessing a given interaction inter-subjectively. If certain cultural norms do not work, no cultural norms predominate over the others. Under these circumstances, it becomes quite natural to accept the view that people are all different, and it also becomes necessary to try to understand each other empathically. Here, an accommodation strategy is required to make semantic adjustments in the process of negotiating meaning. We call the ability to effectively employ the accommodation strategy "adjustability," and claim that adjustability is the foundation of functionality.

Returning to the general definition of communicative competence in the context of language use, we find the phrase "tough and flexible." "Tough" and "flexible" are adjectives of describing attitudinal attributes of a person. The phrase here suggests that one should practice the attitudes of being tough and soft in a communication scene. Let us elaborate on this point a little more.

In the context of living multiculturalism, we suffer a high degree of uncertainty. One cannot simply take anything for granted; one finds it difficult to tell what is shared from what is not. Hence, one needs to construct a sharable meaning space using English, the medium of communication which one finds still uncomfortable to use. In order to use English for this purpose, one needs to be "tough" to bring about a dialogue. The concept of "being tough" here is associated with what W. Rivers calls "the adventurous spirit." On the role of adventurous spirit in second language learning, Rivers (1981) notes:

"Where we have been failing may well be in not encouraging this adventurous spirit from an early stage, with the result that our students find it difficult to move from structured security to the insecurity of reliance on their own resources … just as young would-be swimmers cling to their mother's hand or insist on having gone foot on the bottom of the pool … We must not feel that interaction is somehow wasting time when there is so much to learn. Unless this adventurous spirit is given time to establish itself as a constant attitude, most of what is learned will be stored unused and we will produce learned individuals who are inhibited and fearful in situations requiring language use."(p. 138)

In learning a second language, a learner tends to think that s/he would use the target language "somewhere and sometime to someone." As long as a learner takes this anonymous stance, s/he will remain to be a learner. River's notion of "adventurous spirit" suggests that a learner should become a person who is fully functioning "here and now" using the target language from the very early stage of language learning.

Thus, having an adventurous spirit is an element of being "tough." We also use the term "toughness" as an expression of "independence, autonomy, and responsibility." In other words, to be tough, one has to be an independent, autonomous, and responsible person who can think, judge, and act by himself or herself. Translating this toughness into communication skills, we will have "the power of self-expression"; presentation skills are a prototypical case—making a speech, describing and explaining something are another—and originality and creativity are required qualities of a good presentation.

In order to accommodate semantic differences through negotiation of meaning, the points of conflict or misunderstanding have to be made explicit verbally. For this, one has to express her / his own opinions and feelings openly, with the adventurous spirit. In other words, one has to be tough in order not to evade linguistically difficult situations. A successful semantic adjustment or accommodation requires not only toughness but also softness. One has to be soft so as to understand the other's situation flexibly and empathically and attempt to get over the points of conflict in a mutually acceptable way. Translating "flexibility" or "softness" into communication skills, we have "the power of making a dialogue"; discussion skills are a prime exemplar and collaboration and co-creativity are required qualities of a good discussion.

Thus, "toughness" and "flexibility," which are characterized not only from the attitudinal side but also from the practical side, are indispensable factors in defining communicative competence in the context of living multiculturalism.

Toughness
Attitudinal Side: Being adventurous, independent and responsible
Practical Side: Originality & Creativity, the power of self-expression

Flexibility
Attitudinal Side: Being flexible, Empathic understanding
Practical Side: Collaboration & co-creativity, the power of making a dialogue

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Above, we put "functionality" on the first priority in our attempt at defining communicative competence in the context of language use. Later, we will discuss the ability to use English with respect to task handling competences, of which the target of assessment would be the degree of task achievement. The most important criterion to be used here is "functionality."

In order to be functional in language use, 'mutual intelligibility' becomes the key criterion; unless you make your utterance intelligible, verbal communication is hard to

be functional. With intelligibility being the condition of functionality, we should also consider two important well-known criteria: 'well-formedness' and 'appropriateness.' Intelligibility, well-formedness and appropriateness are generally considered the 'standard' criteria for determining the linguistic norms.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│            functionality             │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
              adjustability

              ( intelligibility )

    ( appropriateness )    ( well-formedness )
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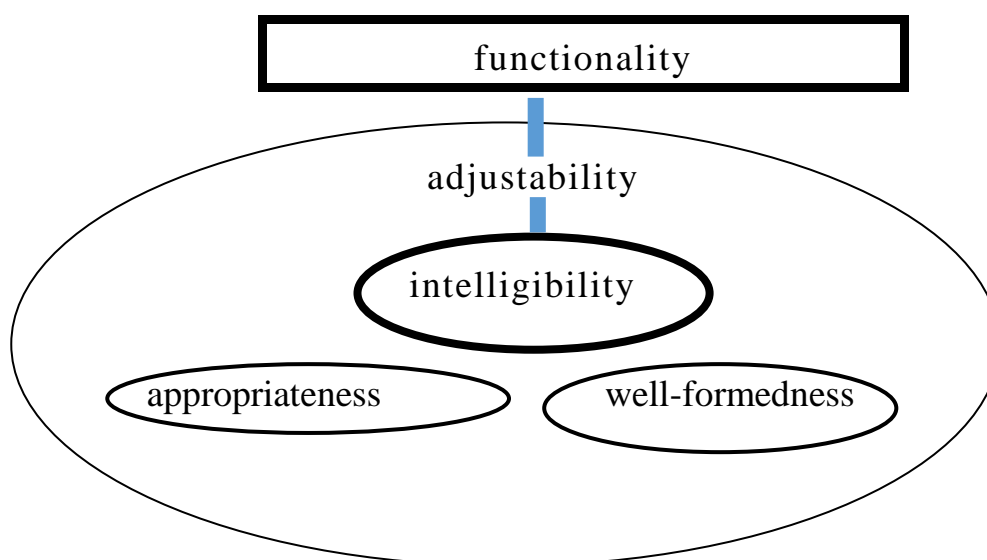
Figure 2: Interrelationships of defining criteria of communicative competence

As the figure shows, in addition to intelligibility, we admit that well-formedness and appropriateness are the major criteria to be considered in an attempt to define communicative language competence. The term 'well-formedness' basically refers to grammatical accuracy, plus acceptable written forms / formats in the case of writing. On the other hand, the criterion of appropriateness here is concerned with both 'pragmatic appropriateness' of choosing a language and 'organizational appropriateness' of structuring information. The former is related to style and register, while the latter to logic and coherence. For example, stylistic sensitivity to the choice of words is a language user's competence that influences pragmatic appropriateness. Organizational appropriateness, particularly important in the case of writing, becomes a relevant criterion for functionality even in speaking—for example, when one is making a formal presentation.

However, we argue that these three criteria do not determine functionality, because in real-life communication, semantic accommodation or negotiation of meaning is a requirement; this, in turn, motivates us to introduce the criterion of 'adjustability,' which schematically governs the three criteria of intelligibility, well-formedness, and appropriateness. It is our claim that the three criteria mentioned above are all adjustable. The objective of negotiating meaning in communication is, needless to say, to increase

mutual intelligibility. It is a widely accepted view that grammatical accuracy (syntactic well-formedness) should be a condition for functionality of language use. However, orality and literacy follow different grammatical constraints (Ong 1982). The basic unit of written discourse may be a sentence; thus, sentences to be produced in writing should be well-formed grammatically. However, if you insist on grammatically correct sentences when you casually interact with others, you may sound too rigid and unnatural. This suggests that the unit of grammar in interaction is not a sentence, but a fragmentary chunk. In oral communication, chunks are chained in the process of chunking, permitting false starts, repairs, repetitions, changes, avoidance, and the like, within flexible grammatical limits (Schiffrin 1987). Turn-takings and interruptions can always occur because a conversation is but a joint action; conversational discourse is produced jointly.

Thus, even a seemingly robust criterion of well-formedness can be subject to adjustment or accommodation to increase functionality. The social norm of appropriateness is also adjustable; in fact, one cannot determine on a priori grounds what is appropriate when one is using English as an international language within the context of living multiculturalism. Appropriateness is determined situationally, not by certain cultural norms. Certainly there are some ground rules which apply regardless of cultural differences, such as 'Try to avoid using casual expressions in formal situations' and 'Try to be polite when you ask someone to do something.' Be that as it may, however, in an actual communication situation, one interprets the given situation in her or his own way and behaves in an appropriate way—a way as perceived to be 'appropriate.'

One will make adjustments to the subjectively perceived appropriateness, whenever necessary. To put it differently, one cannot generally rely on a given rule of appropriateness, because it can always happen that a pragmatic rule which may work, for example, in a given situation in the U.S. does not work in another situation in Thailand. It is always important to behave appropriately in a situation, but appropriate behavior is a consequence of being functional in that situation.

Functionality cannot be reduced to a set of pre-determined rules of well-formedness and appropriateness. The condition of adjustability has to intervene, with well-formedness and appropriateness being the targets of adjustment. In other words, functionality always overrides the other criteria. As suggested above, in a natural discourse of casual conversation, the degree of grammaticality can be even reduced in order to obtain higher functionality.

It should be noted that functionality of language use is determined by the context in question. Thus, the demands for functionality varies according to the situations in question; for example, the functionality demands for making a presentation at an

international conference and for bargaining the price at a Thai shop can be different, even if using the same language, that is, English. In the case of oral communication, the degree of goal-orientation, and the presence of expected procedures in carrying out communication are among the factors that influence the demands for functionality. If one is expected to conduct a formal negotiation, one has to be careful about both pragmatic appropriateness (e.g., choice of words) and organizational appropriateness (e.g., accepted procedures of negotiation) in order for the interaction to be functional.

Likewise, in written communication, the variable "types of writing" is most critical. Yet, in general, written communication is printed as a record, and one can self-edit the draft as needed. Thus, grammatical well-formedness, pragmatic appropriateness, and organizational appropriateness are all considered important indices for functional English. To meet these demands becomes a requirement for communicative competence in this case.

Thus, we suggest that in order to define communicative competence in 'English as an international language to be used in the context of living multiculturalism,' we should introduce the notions of 'functionality' and 'adjustablity,' together with the standardly employed concepts of intelligibility, well-formedness, and appropriateness, so that we should be able to overcome the way of defining solely by culture-specific linguistic norms.

The Integration of Knowledge and Performance

As shown above, communicative competence, if defined within the context of language use, has to focus on the functional aspect of "my English." However, to give a more holistic definition, we need to take into account the knowledge about English, without which "my English" cannot be functional. In order to avoid cultural biases, we would use the term "core English," to refer to a kind of English which serves the target of learning and teaching. "Core English" contains linguistic knowledge about English, and social knowledge about the use of English. More specifically, it consists of three domains: the lexical domain, the grammatical domain, and the functional domain. In the preceding discussion, we called the ability to use my English "task handling competences." So-called "the four skills" —speaking, writing, reading, listening—are incorporated into the concept of task handling. In the same vein, we call the content of core English "language resources." Now, communicative competence is fully defined as a dynamic interplay of task handling [performance] and language resources [knowledge], as shown below:

```
        TASK  HANDLING
           (can  do)

     ┌─────────────────────┐
     │ LANGUAGE  RESOURCES │
     │     (can  say)      │
     └─────────────────────┘
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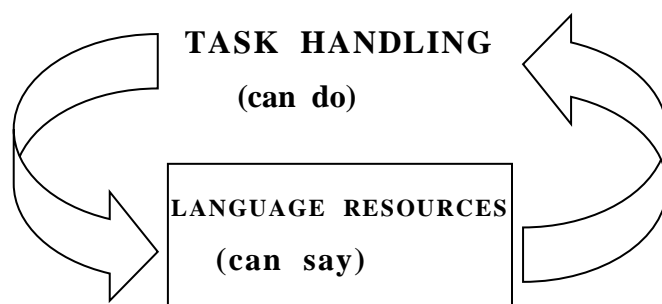
Figure 4. Communicative competence in English

Communicative competence within the context of language use is defined as the functionality of my English; more adequately, however, it is defined as a dynamic interaction of knowledge and performance. Thus, when we discuss an individual's English, we must be concerned with the inseparable relation of "can do" and "can say." Thus, communicative competence is a composite of task handling and language resources; task handling competences are to be assessed in terms of task achievement or the functionality of "my English," whereas language resources competences are to be assessed in terms of a different set of criteria (lexicon, grammar, and formulas).

It is our contention that the definition of communicative competence should take into account the use of "can do" and "can say" as the foundation of the learner's English. This is our basic theoretical stance.