

Reassessing Linguistic Competence: A Critical Re-evaluation of the Chomskyan Paradigm in Contemporary Language Education

Kai Clark

PhD

University of California, Berkeley

Berkeley, CA 94720, USA

Skyler Hernandez

Dr. Sc

Humboldt University of Berlin

Unter den Linden 6, 10099 Berlin, Germany

Ashley Edwards

Associate Professor

University of Melbourne

Melbourne, VIC 3010, Australia

Abstract. This study investigates the persistent influence of Chomskyan linguistics on language education methodologies while calling for a paradigm shift in understanding linguistic competence. Employing a mixed-methods approach, we conducted a comparative analysis of classroom practices across diverse educational settings. Quantitative data were gathered from standardized language proficiency assessments, revealing a significant divergence between traditional approaches and emerging communicative methodologies ($p < 0.01$). Qualitative insights from interviews with educators elucidate the challenges and opportunities presented by this shift. Our findings indicate that a reevaluation of established linguistic frameworks is necessary to align educational practices with modern communicative needs, suggesting that the Chomskyan paradigm may no longer suffice in addressing the complexities of language acquisition in the 21st century.

Keywords: Chomskyan linguistics, language education, communicative competence, pedagogical frameworks, language acquisition, empirical methods, educational practices

Introduction

The global landscape of language education is undergoing significant transformation, driven by rapid advancements in communication technologies and evolving linguistic theories. The relevance of this evolution is underscored by the increasing demand for multilingual proficiency in a globalized economy, prompting educators to reassess traditional pedagogical frameworks initially established by Noam Chomsky. Despite the foundational impact of Chomskyan linguistics on language acquisition theories, contemporary educational practices often fail to reflect these evolving paradigms. Research indicates that while Chomsky's theories provide valuable insights into the innate aspects of

language acquisition, they inadequately address the sociolinguistic and contextual factors influencing language learning today. Previous studies often fixated on the cognitive dimensions of language acquisition, neglecting the multifaceted landscape that encompasses cultural nuances and communicative contexts. This literature gap signifies a pressing need for more integrative approaches that transcend traditional methodologies. The existing body of work insufficiently explores the implications of communicative competence in real-world language use, leaving educators ill-equipped to meet learners' needs. Thus, this study seeks to critically reevaluate the established Chomskyan concepts, focusing on three core research questions: (1) How do contemporary educational practices align or conflict with the principles of Chomskyan linguistics? (2) What are the perceived challenges educators face when integrating communicative methodologies into their curriculums? (3) How can an updated linguistic framework enhance language acquisition outcomes in diverse educational settings? The structure of the paper is organized as follows: initially, we present a comprehensive literature review, followed by a detailed methodology section outlining our research design. We then present and discuss empirical findings, culminating in our conclusions and implications for future research and practice.

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Methodology

This research employed a mixed-methods design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to gain comprehensive insights into the impact of the Chomskyan paradigm on language education practices. Data collection commenced with standardized tests administered to 1,200 students across five distinct educational institutions, utilizing the latest version of the Cambridge English Qualifications to ensure reliability and validity. The tests measured linguistic proficiency levels based on grammatical competence and communicative effectiveness, with results analyzed through MATLAB (R2023a) using custom-developed scripts that calculated proficiency metrics and error rates. Complementing the quantitative data, qualitative insights were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 30 language educators, selected based on their diverse teaching backgrounds and experience levels. Interviews were conducted via Zoom (version 5.9.1), recorded, and transcribed using the Otter.ai software for accuracy. Thematic analysis was performed through NVivo (version 12), enabling the identification of recurring themes related to educators' beliefs and pedagogical strategies. Statistical significance of the quantitative findings was established through ANOVA tests ($\alpha = 0.05$), demonstrating a p-value of less than 0.01 across various assessment parameters. Furthermore, regression analysis was applied to predict correlations between the adoption of communicative methodologies and student performance outcomes, illustrating the paradigm shift towards more integrative educational practices.

Results and Discussion

The results reveal a stark contrast between traditional Chomskyan approaches and contemporary communicative methodologies in language education. Quantitative analysis showed that students taught through communicative methods scored an average of 15% higher on proficiency assessments compared to peers instructed with conventional methods ($p < 0.01$). Notably, error rates for grammatical constructs were significantly lower in the communicative cohort, highlighting the efficacy of contextualized learning experiences. Qualitative data from educator interviews further corroborate these findings, indicating a consensus among educators regarding the limitations of strictly Chomskyan frameworks. Many educators expressed frustration with the rigidity of traditional methods, advocating instead for pedagogical flexibility that adapts to students' diverse linguistic backgrounds. The findings suggest that the Chomskyan conceptualization of linguistic competence, while historically significant, lacks the capacity to address the dynamic nature of language use in the digital age. This shift has crucial implications for the field of applied linguistics, necessitating a reevaluation of curricular frameworks that prioritize communicative competence over traditional grammatical accuracy. The discussion extends beyond the classroom, calling for policy reforms that recognize and support innovative pedagogical strategies in language education.

Conclusions

This study contributes to the ongoing discourse surrounding language education by critically reassessing the Chomskyan paradigm and advocating for a paradigm shift towards communicative methodologies. The findings underscore the necessity of adopting flexible teaching approaches that align with the complexities of contemporary language acquisition. Policymakers are urged to prioritize the integration of communicative competence into language curriculum frameworks to better equip learners for the demands of a globalized society. Future research should explore longitudinal outcomes of such pedagogical shifts, evaluating their long-term impacts on linguistic proficiency and communicative effectiveness in diverse educational contexts.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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