

**STUDY OF THE THEORY OF GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE**

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**Abstract:** *Chomsky's interpretative-semantic theory of grammar does not explain language acquisition and performance, and indeed is not an empirical theory. Chomsky's treatment of competence contains a logistical fallacy: he assumes, without empirical testing, that a formally adequate grammar would correspond to a speaker's knowledge of linguistic rules. Chomsky; interpretive semantic grammar; linguistic competence and performance;*

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Linguistic competence is the system of linguistic knowledge that native speakers of a language have. How a language system is used in communication differ from language performance? Noam Chomsky introduced this concept in his elaboration of generative grammar, where it has been widely accepted and competence is the only level of the language studied. Competency, according to Chomsky, is the ideal language system that enables speakers to produce and understand an infinite number of sentences in their language and to distinguish grammatical sentences from ungrammatical sentences. This is unaffected by grammatically irrelevant conditions such as language errors. Competence, in Chomsky's view, can be tested independently of the language use covered by performance, such as through introspection and grammaticality assessments by native speakers. Many other linguists, functionalists, cognitive linguists, psycholinguists, sociolinguists, and others have rejected this distinction, criticizing it as a concept that considers empirical work irrelevant and omits many important aspects of language usage. It has also been argued that the distinction is often used to exclude real-world data, which, in the words of William Labov, is impractical to handle in generative theory.

Many linguists have sharply criticized this distinction between competence and achievement, arguing that it distorts or ignores data and privileges, certain groups, over others. For example, linguist William Labov said in a 1971 article: Many linguists now recognize that the main purpose of the distinction [performance/competence] was to help the linguist exclude data they were uncomfortable with. ... If performance involves limitations in memory, attention, and articulation, then we must consider all of the English grammar as a matter of performance. Other critics argue that the distinction makes other linguistic concepts difficult to explain or categorize, while others argue that a meaningful distinction is not possible because the two processes are inextricably linked.



The theory of language is primarily concerned with an ideal speaker-hearer in a perfectly homogeneous speech community, perfectly proficient in his (the speech communities') language and freed from grammatically irrelevant conditions such as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention, and interests (accidental or accidental characteristic). failure to apply knowledge of that language to actual performance. - Chomsky, 1965

In [Noam] Chomsky's theory, our linguistic competence is our unconscious knowledge of languages and is somewhat similar to [Ferdinand de] Saussure's concept of language, the organizational principles of a language. What we produce as utterances is similar to Saussure's slogan and are called linguistic output. The difference between language competence and language performance can be illustrated by slips of the tongue, e.g. B. noble tons of earth for noble sons of work. Saying such a slip of the tongue doesn't mean we don't know English, it just means we made a mistake because we were tired, distracted, or whatever. Also, such mistakes are not proof that you (assuming you are a native speaker) speak poor English or that you are not as good at English as someone else. This means that language performance differs from language competence. When we say that someone is a better speaker than someone else (Martin Luther King, Jr., for example, was a great speaker, much better than you might be), those judgments are telling us about achievement, not competence.

A person's linguistic competence should therefore be identified with the production and recognition program that they internalize. While many linguists would equate studying this program with learning achievement rather than learner competency, it should be clear that this identification is incorrect, as we have purposely abstracted from any consideration of what happens when a language user attempts to use it the program. A major goal of language psychology is to construct a viable hypothesis about the structure of this program (Michael B. Kac, Grammars and Grammaticality. John Benjamins, 1992).

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