DEVELOPING THE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF SECOND-LANGUAGE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH THROUGH LITERATURE

A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (MA) IN ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES

BY

UGWUANYI, KINGSLEY O.
PG/MA/09/51963

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA

JULY 2012
Developing the Communicative Competence of Second-language Speakers of English through Literature
APPROVAL PAGE

This work has been read and approved as having met the standard required for the award of Master of Arts (MA) degree in the Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

____________________  _________________________
Head of Department    Date
CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project is an independent study carried out by Ugwuanyi, Kingsley Oluchi with the registration number PG/MA/09/51963 of the Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and that this work has not been presented in part or full for the award of any diploma or degree in this or any other university.

__________________________
Prof. Sam Onuigbo
Supervisor

__________________________
Prof. A. N. Akwanya
Head of Department

__________________________
External Examiner
DEDICATION

To the Trinity: God the Father, my Creator and Provider; God the Son – Jesus Christ – my Saviour and Sanctifier; and God the Holy Spirit, my Teacher and Inspirer.

And

To my parents and all my siblings.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is no success without stories of ups and downs. Perhaps I would have had more ‘downs’ without the crop of helpers that God sent my way in the course of doing this research. My ‘thank list’ is so long that I do not know where and how to start. Prof. Sam Maduabuchi Onuigbo, who doubles as my supervisor and the HOD at the inception of this work, was a huge source of encouragement. He is not only my mentor, but the deepest academic well from ‘whom’ I have always drunken having supervised my undergraduate project also. I have benefitted immensely from his intellectual prowess and geniality.

At some points or the other, I had course to run to some of the professors in the department for their privileged scholarly opinions on this work. Prof. A. N. Akwanya and Prof. E. J. Otagburuagu stand out in this regard. The lectures I had with Prof. Otagburuagu on ‘The Teaching of English as a Second Language’ were an eye-opener in the area of applied linguistics. That course sparked off the zeal that gave birth to this work. Other colleagues in the Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, whose ingenious insights shaped my thinking in the course of this work include Prof. D. U. Opata, Prof. N. F. Inyama, Dr P. A. Ezema, Mr F. U. Okoro, Mr Kanenechukwu Amoke and Mr Moses Melefa. I also enjoyed the unalloyed support and encouragement of the rest of my colleagues in the department: Prof. I. Dieke, Dr F. O. Orabueze, Dr Mike Ezugu, Mrs R. Udaba, Mrs S. Okoye-ugwu, Mr C. Onunkwo, Mr C. Nwankwo, Rev. Sr E. A. Igwedibia, Ms E. Nweze, Mrs B. Amihere and Mr O. Ejesu.

The ideas I exchanged with Matthias Chukwu helped me a lot. He and Hyginus Eze have been unquantifiably resourceful academic help to me since our undergraduate days. Working with them as mates this time gave me the spurring challenge to move on. Basil Agu always asked me, ‘Nnam Ugwuanyi, how far have you gone?’ These words put me on my toes till I finished
this work. I think that the best thing to say about John Kelechi Ugwuanyi is that he ‘pestered’ me until I finished the work. Mr Ekwueme of the Department of Mass Communication, University of Nigeria is a father and an inspirer. He always reminded me the importance of completing this work. Obed Chijioke Nwakego is my academic mentor. Though he was far from me, he always called me on the phone to know how far I had gone. These were the people who ‘followed me up’ to make sure I completed my work in record time. I am indebted to you all.

In the course of this work when all roads seemed blocked, a word from Ruth Ginika Agboeze (my Pearl) would invigorate me. Her words were like drops of cold water on a thirsty tongue. My other friends who were great sources of encouragement include Onyedika (Levite), Onyedika Ugwu, Steve, Precious, Chizurum (Rum-rum), Solomon, Isaiah, Nelly, Nazo and Ben. You are heartily appreciated. I thank very specially Chinonso Agu (Nono) who helped me with the statistical analysis. Chika (Chychy) also helped me in typesetting some parts of this work. I am grateful to you.

This work got a great boost when I stumbled on the works of Stephen Krashen, Marianne Celce-Murcia, Geoff Hall, Michael Canale and Merrill Swain. I may not have met them in person, but their works formed the larger chunk of my argument. I can’t appreciate them enough. Other authors whose works also contributed to this work are well appreciated.

To all these people and all others whose names have not been mentioned here in the interest of space, but who have contributed to the success of this work in one way or the other, I say, thank you!
ABSTRACT

This work x-rays the place of literature in the development of the communicative competence of second language speakers. With the understanding that effective communication is the central thing in any second language situation, the work examines how best to achieve this. But the way the English language is taught at all the levels of education in Nigeria leaves a lot to be desired, and therefore does not hold a promise of actualising the very end of language teaching and learning, which is the development of learners’ communicative competence. The teaching and learning of English in Nigeria today is largely grammar-based; so that learners only take grammar lessons, leaving out the colour of language, which is literature. If literature is the colour of its language, teaching any language without its literature is bleaching that language. Any teaching method that adopts this antiseptic learning of the target language may not achieve much as literature presents the best examples or manifestations of language use, and would serve as a veritable point of encounter with the language, or what Stephen Krashen calls ‘comprehensible input’ (87). The position of this work is that the divorce between ‘language’ and ‘literature’ in the educational curriculum is an anathema. This study was premised on the theoretical frame of communicative language teaching (CLT) as it describes a set of ‘principles grounded in the notion of communicative competence as the goal of second and foreign language teaching, and a communicative syllabus and methodology as the way of achieving this goal’ (Jack Richards 23). While Chapter one is the general introductory overview, chapter two gives the conceptual account of communicative competence and reviews the literature in this area till date. Being a linguistic study, chapter three presents the nature of the data involved in this study and shows how the data were collected and the method and processes involved in their analysis. Chapter four presents the results and analyses them. The summary and the conclusions of the study are made in chapter five. In all, the results of the two groups studied show that reading literature has
significant impact on the learners of a second language. The work concludes that second language teaching and learning would be made more effective if the literature of the language being taught and learned is built into the curriculum at all levels of education, unlike the present situation in Nigeria where the English language is seen as one thing and its literature another.
LIST OF FIGURE AND TABLES

1. Figure 1: Schematic Representation of Communicative Competence………26
2. Table 1: A Summary of the Performance of Group One……………………60
3. Table 2: A summary of the performance of Group Two……………………61
4. Table 3: A summary of Tables 1 and 2……………………………………63
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page..............................................................................................................ii
Approval Page.....................................................................................................iii
Certification Page...............................................................................................iv
Dedication............................................................................................................v
Acknowledgements...........................................................................................vi
Abstract...............................................................................................................viii
List of Figure and Tables.....................................................................................xi
Table of Contents...............................................................................................x

**Chapter One: Introduction................................................................................1**
1.1 Background to the Study.............................................................................1
1.2 Statement of the Problem............................................................................4
1.3 Purpose of the Study...................................................................................8
1.4 Aims and Objectives...................................................................................9
1.5 Significance of the Study...........................................................................9
1.6 Scope of the Study.....................................................................................10

**Chapter Two: Literature Review....................................................................12**
2.1 Conceptual Framework..............................................................................12
2.1.1 Components of Communicative Competence......................................18
2.1.2 Grammar and Communicative Competence........................................27
2.1.3 Exploring the Communicative Values of Literature............................32
2.2 Theoretical Framework.............................................................................37
2.3 Related Studies.........................................................................................49

**Chapter Three: Research Methodology.......................................................55**
3.1 Research Design

3.2 Research Population and Instrument

3.3 Method of Sampling

3.4 Method of Analysis

Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 Presentation

4.2 Analysis

Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusion

5.1 Summary

5.2 Conclusion

5.3 Recommendations

5.4 Limitations

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

Works Cited
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In every second-language environment, the issue of communicative competence is always a central one. The reasons for this are obvious. The second-language speaker has inhibitions and limitations as to the extent to which his abilities in the target language can be developed. Part of the argument for this is that a second language is always acquired only later in life after the properties of a first language may have been internalized. If this is the case, it means that levels of attainment of proficiency would not be the same for the first and second language speakers.

One may not need to bother so much about the argument as to what constitutes first language (L₁) and second language (L₂). But it may just be pertinent to state that when it comes to the model to be followed here, the difference between a first language and a second language is simply functional. While native (or first) language speakers have such knowledge or competence of their language that is ‘…spontaneous and unconscious, involving rapid automatic responses to familiar kinds of stimuli’ (H.L.B. Moody 3), the second language speakers have the ‘…kind of linguistic competence that ranks second to that which a speaker has in his native language’ (Sam Onuigbo and Joy Eyisi 39). But as Moody rightly points out, it is the aim of second-language teaching to assist the development of the same or similar kind of ability or proficiency in the language being learned (3). There is no doubt that this is what second language teachers strive to develop in their students, who are learners. From the foregoing, there is therefore no reason not to believe that the English language is a second language in Nigeria. For obvious reasons, the second language speaker finds it difficult to attain the same level of competence the native speakers have of their language. This makes the task of the teachers of a second language much more herculean. They have the responsibilities of equipping the learners
with the linguistic knowledge (and behaviour) that will enable them to communicate fluently with the native speakers. This level of knowledge is especially important in this age when English has assumed the status of a world language. Many agree that the world’s lingua franca is English with an estimated two billion people trying to learn it as their linguistic passport to business success and global access. This makes the development of the communicative competence in L2 much more imperative if international intelligibility must be achieved.

There are four language skills for which certain levels of proficiency are required before one would be able to manipulate them competently. While listening and reading are receptive, speaking and writing are productive. It may be fairly possible to measure one’s competence in a language by one’s reading abilities, but the same is not always the case for listening. There is a general limitation as to how much we can observe of a learner’s competence through the receptive skills of listening and reading. Therefore, the productive skills of speaking and writing are better analysed in terms of determining the level of competence of users. But none of them will be neglected because deficiency in one affects proficiency in the other – the four make up a connected web. The second-language teacher’s attention must be geared towards the development of these four language skills because our ‘… knowledge of a language is incomplete until we can recognize, interpret and originate all the more subtle and complex signals it permits, in relation to the varying needs of our personal, social, political and professional involvements (Moody 2 - 3).

If this must be achieved, then the issue of developing the communicative competence of those who are learning a second language must be given primary attention. It is particularly important to develop a near-native competence in English because of its place in international relations. It is to this end that this study is to be done – to explore one of the ways to enhance the communicative competence of second language speakers of English.
Attempts to measure what the level or amount of linguistic knowledge a speaker must possess to be able to communicate competently have not been very successful. But scholars like Savignon and Schulz have written about the minimum level of what would enable a learner or speaker of a second language to get his meaning across, to do the things he wishes to do in the second language, and to say what he really wants to say (qtd. in Michael Canale and Merrill Swain 9). Van Ek proposes what he called ‘threshold level’ (24). But this is still very controversial, because, according to many, it is difficult to measure such a level. But what is important in his proposition is that the general objective for the ‘threshold level’ for second language is ‘that learners will be able to survive (linguistically speaking) … in everyday conversations, …and to establish and maintain social contacts’ (24-25). This appears to be concerned only with oral proficiency alone – but it should entail writing proficiency also. Any learner or speaker of a second language whose level of proficiency is below this is not properly equipped to survive linguistically. The speech and writings of the speakers of English in Nigeria, for example, show that there is deficiency in their competence level; hence the need for improvement.

Aliyu Mohammed has argued that the present structural, grammar-based approach to language teaching promises little in terms of helping the learners to achieve the desired proficiency in the target language as it seeks to impart ‘decontextualised global competence’ (143). This is not practically achievable in that purely grammar-based approaches to language teaching are not linguistically and functionally realistic (Kachru 15). To lend credence to the pragmatic approach proposed by Mohammed, A.N. Akwanya says that

…the acceptable approach to language teaching and learning has got to be the one which can ensure mastery, awaken all the individual’s energies, and lay open before
the learner the full resources of this language for exploitation in the task of self-
construction, in the project of living, of selfhood (*Enabling Principle* 26).

The advantages inherent in any language teaching approach that is based on the above philosophy are obvious. This is the central idea of this work. How then does literature connect to this? On this, Geoff Hall writes that the movement which emphasises language learners doing things with the language in authentic contexts has ‘led to an important revival of the fortunes of literature’ in second language learning (51). In other words, Hall proposes that the reading of literary texts can offer L2 learners that rare authentic context. The task this work sets out to examine, therefore, is the impact the reading of literature has on learners of a second language using two groups of students, who have varying degrees of exposure to literature.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Effective communication is essential in every language situation – be it first or second language environment. What guarantees this, of course, is effective proficiency in the use of the language in question. When effective communication fails to be realized, the intended message may be misconstrued. This is what Confucius, the legendary philosopher, wants to emphasize when he wrote that

\[ \text{If the language is not correct, then what is said is not what is meant; if what is said is not what is meant, then what ought to be done remains undone; if this remains undone, morals and arts deteriorate;… Hence there must be no arbitrariness in what is said. This matters above everything (qtd. in Joy Eyisi xi).} \]

This underscores the importance of effective communication in human society. For this to be achieved, certain linguistic abilities have to be internalised by the learners of a given language.
The end of language learning is to achieve a level of proficiency that would guarantee effective oral and written communication in the language being learned. All the resources in any language learning environment are geared towards achieving this. But it is noteworthy that the conditions for learning a first language and those of a second or foreign language differ quite significantly. Applied linguists, especially psycholinguists, have tried to distinguish between language learning and language acquisition. Many appear to agree that a child acquires his native language, but someone exposed to a second language is involved in language learning, and not acquisition. Stephen D. Krashen has shown this difference more succinctly:

Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication. The result of language acquisition, acquired competence, is also subconscious. We are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages we have acquired. Instead, we have a "feel" for correctness. Grammatical sentences "sound" right, or "feel" right, and errors feel wrong, even if we do not consciously know what rule was violated. Other ways of describing acquisition include implicit learning, informal learning, and natural learning. In non-technical language, acquisition is "picking-up" a language. We will use the term "learning" henceforth to refer to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. In non-technical terms, learning is "knowing about" a language, known to most people as "grammar", or "rules". Some synonyms include formal knowledge of a language, or explicit learning. Some second language theorists have assumed that children acquire, while adults can only learn (10).
Recently though, this difference is no longer widely held. A popular view among linguists now is that the two terms can be used interchangeably (Victoria Fromkin and Robert Rodman 348). Even Krashen argues later in his book that

\[ T \]he acquisition-learning hypothesis claims, however, that adults also acquire, that the ability to "pick-up" languages does not disappear [completely] at puberty. This does not mean that adults will always be able to achieve native-like levels in a second language (10).

But this does not do away with the difficulties involved in learning a second language. The factors that make second language learning difficult are psychological, physical as well as sociological. When all these are considered, it makes second language learning painstaking. This also implies that second language teachers ought to understand this, and consciously employ all the resources and strategies within their reach to subdue these difficulties – and achieve the needed communicative competence of the learners.

It is in this regard that the strategies and methods of doing this become important. Some have argued that the method of teaching a second language may not matter as much as the proficiency of the teachers who teach the language. While one would not reject this outright, one would not play ignorance to W. A. Mackey’s point that ‘…a good teacher can be ineffectual with a poor method’ (329), because ‘…it is ultimately the method that determines the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of language instruction’ (138). From the above, it is learned that ‘how’ something is done is always as important as doing that thing. The aim here is not to blacklist some teaching methods and eulogise the others, but to re-examine the way the English language has been taught in our country over the years. By doing this, therefore, we cannot avoid talking about teaching methods.
Teachers of English at various levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) complain passionately that the standard of English has fallen drastically in Nigeria. The undeniable evidence for this is the current performance of students who write English in WAEC, NECO and JAMB examinations. Year in, year out, these examining bodies decry the abysmally poor performance of students in English. Even at the university level, almost the same challenges are encountered. There is no doubt that this is attributable to many other factors; but according to Akwanya, these factors ‘weigh differently in the equation’ (*Enabling Principle* 2). This work seeks to examine the way these students are taught to see if the larger chunk of the problem emanate from there.

Fodeh Baldeh has argued in his *Better English Language Learning and Teaching* that ‘…the purpose of language learning [in the sense of L2] is the development of the learner’s communicative competence…’ (59). Till now, language teaching and learning in Nigeria has remained grammar-based. Teachers strive to make their students learn the grammar of English with a view to making students communicate competently in both the spoken and written media of the language. But the question is: since English language teaching and learning became grammar-based in Nigeria, has the standard remained the same? If the present threat facing the learning of the English language in Nigeria is to be properly addressed, then we must have a rethink of the present approaches and make recourse to communicative approaches, for in the final analysis, the important thing is whether the learner has acquired the necessary tools of the language which will enable him to perform his expected multifarious roles effectively in the community of the speakers of the target language (Baldeh 52).

Summarily, many scholars have made general theoretical statements without matching their statements with verifiable empirical data for credibility. Again researches have been conducted on other areas of communicative competence, but not much in the area of written
discourse competence and the place of literature in acquiring it. Even where such has been done, they have not been validly tested. This is the academic gap that this work sets out to fill.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This research is necessitated by a perceived downwardness in the teaching and learning of English as a second language in Nigeria. There is a general agreement that the standard of both written and spoken English has fallen drastically in Nigeria (Nzebunachi Oji, 2001; Joy Eyisi, 2004; Fodeh Baldeh, 1990; and A. N. Akwanya in *English Language Learning in Nigeria: In Search of an Enabling Principle*, 2007). Many others have attributed this decline in standard to some linguistic problems and have done enormous researches on those problems. Some of them include Ayo Banjo, 1969; Benson Oluikpe, 1974; and Ayo Bamgbose, 1969. Adding a voice to this menace, Chinua Achebe laments that ‘the quality of the English language spoken and written in Nigeria has been falling rapidly and will fall more dramatically in the next few years’ (qtd. in Baldeh 18). If everybody says that the standard and quality of English is falling nowadays, it goes without saying that the standard was very high in the past.

The aim of this work, therefore, is to critically examine the situation and look backwards to the way the language was taught to see if the problem is that of teaching method. This study is also significant because, according to Baldeh, the complex business of teaching and learning a foreign language has been trivialized. And until the business of teaching and learning a second or foreign language is taken seriously and the right approaches and methods adopted in this process, Achebe’s prophecy in the quotation above may not be avoided.

There should therefore be serious concern on the part of those who teach English as a second or foreign language. This is particularly needed today when the varieties known as New Englishes are springing forth the world over. More people are learning English by the day. And
if mutual intelligibility is to be achieved, attention must be paid to acquiring the correct standard and communicating effectively. To achieve this therefore a teaching and learning approach that is communication-based is helpful.

1.4 Aims and Objectives
The main interest of this work is to find out the role of literature in second-language teaching and learning. Many teaching approaches adopt procedures that emphasise the teaching and learning of grammar alone for second language learning purposes; so this work sets out to examine (and possibly critique) them and proffer better approach(es) to L2 teaching and learning. Summarily, this study aims to achieve the following objectives:

i) to know exactly what the roles of grammar in second language teaching and learning are;

ii) to know if second language teaching and learning can be successful without the literature of and in that language;

iii) to see how literature can serve as ‘comprehensible input’ for second language learning;

iv) to examine the present teaching approaches to ESL in Nigeria and possibly proffer solutions to the challenges; and

v) to see what pedagogic implications literature has for second language teaching and learning.

1.5 Significance of the Study
As a language researcher and teacher, the researcher considers it worrisome that the communicative competence of the learners of English as a second language is waning, especially in our own environment. The present worrisome state of the general performance of the speakers
of English in Nigeria is the overriding motivation for this study. The problem, as far as the present writer is concerned, is two-edged – it is both a problem of learning and of teaching. So the results of this research will be relevant to the teaching and learning of English as a second language, both in our situation and elsewhere.

Whenever language learning is mentioned, teaching is implicated. Language acquisition may be possible without formal teaching. But opinions are divided on this. The acquisition-learning dichotomy will be revisited later in this work. For now, the model that accounts for second language learning as always involving formal teaching and learning shall be taken. This study will therefore be significant in two important ways – to the teachers and speakers of English as a second language. Not only will the best learning strategies be examined, those of teaching will equally be highlighted because the two are always simultaneous. When this is done, the teachers may be better placed to choose the strategies or methods that would help them achieve their teaching objectives better and faster. Also, this will in turn give the learners the holistic knowledge they need to acquire to build their communicative competence and perhaps enhance their communicative performance.

Very importantly, this research will particularly be relevant to curriculum developers in that it may help in suggesting the relevant activities, lessons and exercises to be built into syllabuses to ensure that the set objectives are achieved.

1.6 The Scope of the Study

In Nigeria where most children are exposed to at least two languages (mother tongue and English) at an early stage, learning and teaching English start quite early. As early as pre-school age, children are already exposed to learning English. Some children today even acquire English
first before the other(s). The processes of learning the language run through primary to secondary and down to tertiary stages, and at each stage, the challenges relating to teaching and learning abound. The outcome of this research will be relevant to the teaching and learning of English almost at every level of educational development, but this study will cover university students.

At earlier stages of educational development (say primary and junior secondary), students may not be well equipped to be able to ‘agitate the text[s]’ of literature (Akwanya Enabling Principle 44). For them, reading is only about ‘skimming over the surface of the text in search of where the message is hidden’ (44). Even though learning a language through exercises in reading good works of literature has enormous impacts on children, it is much more purposeful and conscious with advanced learners. To this end, therefore, this study will be validated using a selection of students from the Department of English and Literary studies, University of Nigeria.

The scope of this work covers the aspect of communicative competence of speakers of English as a second language, which emphasises written discourse competence. Chapter three of this work will show more succinctly how the study will be conducted.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, the concept of communicative competence is accounted for and the theoretical framework for the study fully developed. A review of the studies relating to the work is also attempted to see how this study breaks away from what has been done already in this area.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The attempt to explore the level of knowledge which the speakers of a language have and exhibit is as old as linguistics as a discipline. Such earlier attempts include the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, which was published in 1916 where he used the terms ‘langue’ and ‘parole’ in his description. Later, Chomsky investigated this further and published two works: *Syntactic Structures* in 1957 and *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* in 1965, which were apparently the vanguards of Generative Grammar. It is in these works that Chomsky highlighted the notion of competence and performance. Since Chomsky, linguists apparently have come to agree that competence refers to ‘…speakers’ knowledge of their language, the system of rules which they have mastered so that they are able to produce and understand an indefinite number of sentences, and to recognize grammatical mistakes and ambiguities’ (David Crystal 92).

Even though the term ‘competence’ is traceable to Chomskyan linguistics, the concept ‘communicative competence’ has a different origin and understanding. The term as explored by Chomsky was largely linguistic (C. B. Paulston 39) because it fails to recognize the sociolinguistic aspects of language use. It is, therefore, on this note that the Chomskyan notion of competence has been seen as inadequate. Consequently, the term ‘communicative competence’ was coined by the anthropological linguist, Dell Hymes, first in his *Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Setting* and in a later work, ‘On Communicative Competence’. Hymes’
works were in response to the inadequacies he observed in Chomsky’s conceptualization of the term:

Hymes considered Chomsky’s monolithic, idealized notion of linguistic competence inadequate and he introduced the broader, more elaborated and extensive concept of communicative competence, which includes both linguistic competence or implicit and explicit knowledge of the rules of grammar, and contextual or sociolinguistic knowledge of the rules of language use in context. Hymes viewed communicative competence as having the following four types: what is formally possible, what is feasible, what is the social meaning or value of a given utterance, and what actually occurs (Yasukata Yano 30).

Since the introduction of this concept, there have been different models. What Hymes did was to expand what Chomsky had done. And this is exactly what the later models do – building on the earlier ones and elaborating them to take in new meanings and developments within language use. Before the other models of communicative competence (CC) are explained, the work of Michael Canale and Merrill Swain deserve special mention. Their model was the first to explore communicative competence in second language teaching and learning.

Communicative competence, therefore, has to do with how a language user is able to pass judgements of grammaticality as well as recognize acceptable speech acts in a social situation (Bell 111). To defend the point he wanted to prove and further shade light on what CC means, Hymes gives the following example:

We have then to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires
competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others. This competence, moreover, is integral with attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language, its features and uses, and integral with competence for, attitudes towards, the interrelation of language with the other code[s] of communicative conduct (‘On Communicative Competence’ 277-278)

Hymes gives this in defence of his argument that a child develops not just the grammatical, but also the sociolinguistic elements of his language. In the literature, there are divergent opinions as to whether our understanding of communicative competence should include grammatical competence. A few people like Allen (1978), Palmer (1978) and Jakobovits (1970) believe that there should be a difference between the two. But that has been countered by Morrow (1977), Savignon (1972) and Munby (1978). Munby argues that the view which includes grammatical competence as a component of communicative competence is to be preferred. In response to Hymes’ point that there are rules of grammar that would be useless without rules of language use, Canale and Swain add that there are rules of language use that would be useless when considered without rules of grammar (5). So, the two are important.

As has been said earlier, our understanding of communicative competence should have the meaning of grammatical competence embedded in it. This appears to be a more general opinion among linguists. If this is taken, therefore, communicative competence should be understood as
...the knowledge and ability which speakers need to possess in order to use language appropriately in communicative situations. If I know English, it means that I can use the resources of English (sounds, words, phrases, sentences, rhetorical devices) correctly and appropriately in given contexts and situation. Not only that, I must have other kinds of knowledge which are socio-linguistic in nature. These include knowledge of social and conversational rules as well as one’s own and outer world which speakers are presumed to have to enable them to use and interpret sentences meaningfully (M. A. Alo 116).

This clearly shows that our understanding of communicative competence should include not only linguistic and sociolinguistic competencies, but such other components as pragmatic competence and many others. These components and many more will be discussed fully in the next sub-heading. It is also in the light of the above understanding that communicative competence is seen as ‘...the sum of all the techniques a person employs to communicate effectively with another person in communication event’ (E. J. Otagburoagu Business Communication 7). When one is said to be a competent speaker of a language, one should be able to manipulate the resources of that language to achieve his communicative needs. Communicative competence involves the general linguistic behaviour and ability which enables one to be a good user of a language in terms of productivity (speaking and writing) and receptibility (listening and reading). This proves that communicative competence involves much more than internalizing the grammar of a language, which is just the first step into developing communicative competence. But it goes quite beyond it because as Widdowson says, native speakers would focus more on language use than on grammar in normal conversation (qtd. in Canale and Swain 5). It is not that grammar should be ignored, but that acceptable language use does not completely hinge on it. This will be explored more fully in the subsequent headings.
As hinted earlier, the work of Canale and Swain is of special interest and central to this study. Their ‘Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing’ is inaugural in that it was the first to clearly discuss communicative competence in the light of second language acquisition (SLA). Another remarkable thing in their work is that it helped to bring the competence-performance dichotomy to the fore in the discussion of communicative competence in SLA. Most Chomskyan linguists like R. M. Kempson adopt the position that competence should be used to refer exclusively to rules of grammar, and that communicative competence should be identified with the theory performance:

A theory which characterizes the regularities of language is a competence theory; a theory which characterizes the interaction between that linguistic characterization and all other factors which determine the full gamut of regularities of communication is a theory of performance… A theory characterizing a speaker’s ability to use his language appropriately in context, a theory of communicative competence, is, simply a performance theory (Kempson 54-55).

Other argument she pursues quite doggedly is that the study of competence should logically precede the study of performance. This may not be pursued so far as research has shown that this order does not necessarily need to be followed (Canale and Swain 5-6). For them,

Communicative competence is to be distinguished from communicative performance, which is the realization of these competencies and their interaction in the actual production and comprehension of utterances under general psychological constraints that are unique to performance (6).
They immediately add that such distinction is important in a second language environment so that teaching methods and instruments would be designed to address not only communicative competence, but also communicative performance. They further argue that communicative performance should include factors such as volition, motivation, memory, perceptual strategies, etc, and that the notion of ability for use should not be incorporated into the definition of communicative competence because such inclusion would not have any practical applications for communicative syllabus design (7). Again, they consider such factors mentioned above, which are germane to the understanding of communicative performance, as ‘general psychological constraints on, among other things, the actual production and comprehension of sentences’, and therefore there is no compelling reason to include them in a model of communicative competence (8).

The little distinction made between communicative competence and communicative performance above appears to serve a more significant purpose in Second Language Learning (SLL) for the reason stated above. But in general terms, the concept of communicative competence (in this and many other models) is not thought of as including such factors that characterize performance. Canale and Swain sums this up by saying that communicative competence should be understood to mean the interaction or relationships between the knowledge of the rules of a language (grammar) and the knowledge of the rules of language use. Bringing the notion of CC into SLL, they say that since there is no agreement among scholars as to what is the minimum level of skills necessary to communicate in a given language (even with what Van EK and Cummins call ‘threshold level’), ‘…it is quite reasonable to assume that since in acquiring a first language the child seems to focus more on being understood than on speaking grammatically, then second language acquisition might be allowed to proceed in this manner’ (10). What this implies is that the goal of SLT should be on internalizing the full package of the
linguistic knowledge that would enable one to get one’s meaning across without impediments (10). By and large, this could be understood as the model of C.C. proposed by Canale and Swain. Other models will be discussed in what follows.

2.1.1 Components of Communicative Competence

The idea of the inherent knowledge the speakers of language have of their language started off simply as linguistic competence. As hinted earlier, many applied linguists have embarked on researches on this, thereby expanding the scope of the concept. Today, we not only talk about linguistic or grammatical competence, but also about sociolinguistic (or even sociocultural) competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, pragmatic competence, interactional competence, among others. Formulaic competence and actional competence were added in recent studies in 2007 by Marianne Celce-Mercia. We shall carefully explore these types to see how one differs (and where possible, relates) to another. Before discussing the models, let us know the components.

A. Grammatical or Linguistic Competence

Discussing grammatical competence would entail going back to Hymes. This is because he was the first to introduce communicative competence and to distinguish it from Chomsky’s ‘competence’. Chomsky, the scholar to whom we credit the term ‘competence’ in linguistics, simply used the term as a generic name for the totality of the knowledge the native speakers have of their language. It is therefore Hymes who says that the term could have several components within it; hence communicative competence. He says that what Chomsky defined was only grammatical competence, while leaving out the other components.
Yano says that grammatical competence means the acquisition of phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and lexical rules in a language (31). He further adds that ‘Today it is usually called linguistic competence (31). Throughout this study, linguistic competence and grammatical competence shall be used interchangeably. From the foregoing, it is obvious that grammatical competence is simply interested in the rules of grammar the users of language posses. This is simply the mastery of the language code – the knowledge of abstract language system. There is no gainsaying that the knowledge of grammar of a language is essential, as any deviation from the rules results in unacceptable utterances. When, for instance, a learner says: ‘I am grateful for the informations you gave me’, it is the knowledge of the rules that will make a competent user frown at it. Even though there are these rules, there is also room for one to express one’s linguistic ingenuity. This happens in a first language environment as much as in an L2 situation:

Linguistic innovations do occur in ESL. Such innovations which can be observed to deviate from the norms in English are created to reflect the new linguistic and cultural setting. They include such processes as lexical innovations, neologisms (coinage), semantic extension, use of local idioms and proverbs (Alo 118)

This situation is what gives birth to new varieties of English, popularly known as new Englishes. But even in this, the basic structures and rules of the language are always maintained. This underscores the place of grammatical competence in any communicative situations. But in as much as this is true, Canale and Swain have remarked that ‘it is not clear… in what ways a theory of grammar is directly relevant for second language pedagogy’ (30). Grammatical competence, according to them, is only important for any approach ‘whose goals include providing learners with the knowledge of how to determine and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances’ (30). At any rate, it would be premature to dwell on this point in detail at
this point since another section of this work is devoted to it. But what should remain undoubtedly clear is that grammatical competence has to do with the knowledge of ‘sounds, grammar patterns and vocabulary items in the traditional skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing (Paulston 50), and that it has a place in SLL and forms part of communicative competence.

**B. Discourse Competence**

There is no better reason to give for discussing grammatical competence before the others than to say that it is the ‘basic’ of all the components. It is not basic in the sense that it is always the first to be learned, otherwise the argument about which of the competencies is to be learned or taught first would surface. Because such argument is not consequential to this work, it has been avoided. So the ordering of these competencies in the present section should not be associated with how important they are. In the opinion of the present writer, they are equally important for effective communication. That apart, discourse competence was added to the theory of communicative competence by Canale, and he says that it is the ability to produce and interpret language beyond the sentence level (3). In the words of J. Richards and R. Schmidt, discourse competence

…concerns the mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve unified spoken and written texts in different genres. By genres, is meant, the type of text for example, oral and written narrative, an argumentative essay, a scientific report, a business letter, etc (qtd. in Canale 9).

While grammatical competence is the knowledge of codes, discourse competence concerns itself with combining these grammatical structures to achieve meaning, cohesion and coherence in both written and oral discourse. But it has to be remarked here that the conditions of oral
discourse is quite dissimilar from those of written discourse. The chief reason is that oral discourse, for example, is tied to the moment (and other factors) of its production. This is what Emile Benveniste calls the ‘instance of discourse’ (134). This distinction is not of interest here. However, it remains at the centre of any conceptualisation of discourse competence.

Celce-Murcia argues that

Discourse competence refers to the selection, sequencing, and arrangement of words, structures, and utterances to achieve a unified spoken message. This is where the top-down communicative intent and sociocultural knowledge intersect with the lexical resources to express messages and attitudes and to create coherent [oral and written] texts (46).

What is obvious in the definitions above is that discourse competence seeks to achieve coherence in discourse by the proper ordering of the structures of the language. This knowledge is relevant, without which communication may break down. Celce-Murcia et al. discuss several sub-areas of discourse competence which include:

a) **cohesion**: conventions regarding the use of reference, lexical chains, conjunction, etc;

b) **deixis**: those features of language which refer directly to the personal, temporal or locational characteristics of the situation within which an utterance takes place, whose meaning is thus relative to that situation (Crystal 133); this Adrian Akmajian et al. classify into two: indexicals and demonstratives (255);

c) **coherence**: expressing intent through appropriate content schema and conventionally recognized means; and
d) **generic structure:** formal schemata that allow the user to identify an oral discourse segment according to their genres (Celce-Murcia *et al.* 47).

It is obvious that discourse competence in achieving all of the above makes oral and written discourse coherent and cohesive – and this is needed for understanding to take place.

**C. Sociolinguistic Competence**

This is actually the component added by Dell Hymes as what distinguishes his model from Chomsky’s. Canale and Swain call this sociocultural competence, quoting Hymes as saying that it is ‘the basis for judgements as to the appropriateness of a given utterance in a particular social context’, that is, the rules that make up the structure of speaking or communication in a group and are the basis for the social meaning of any utterance (16). Celce-Murcia’s treatise helps to highlight the importance of this kind of competence, especially in second language learning. She says that sociocultural or sociolinguistic competence refers to

…how to express messages appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication. This includes knowledge of language variation with reference to sociocultural norms of the target language. In fact a social or cultural blunder can be far more serious than a linguistic error when one is engaged in oral communication. The pedagogical challenge lies in the fact that second and foreign language teachers typically have far greater awareness and knowledge of linguistic rules than they do of the sociocultural behaviours and expectations that accompany [the] use of the target language (46).

And this is a very great challenge to language teaching and learning in L2 situations like ours. This very readily gives credence to the hypothetical statement of this study: that linguistic
knowledge alone is inadequate if communicative competence is to be achieved. Celce-Murcia rightly proffers a solution which is very germane to this study. She says that such competence ‘…can be acquired in part through some knowledge of the life and traditions as well as knowledge of the history and literature of the target language community’ (46). This is actually what this work seeks to highlight – that through the reading of the literature of the target language and in the target language, communicative (not just sociocultural) competence can be developed or enhanced.

An elaborate example by Brown and Ford clearly depicts what sociolinguistic competence means. There is a man called Chris Ugwu. Now depending on the context, he might be addressed variously as Ichie, Sir, Mr Ugwu, boy, daddy’s boy, dad, sweetheart, workaholic, etc. Some of these forms of address specify social relationships like parenthood, friendship, marriage or courtship, and insulting remarks like walk about. Other forms reflect the relative status of interlocutors such as ‘sir’ which is for use by Ugwu’s social inferiors, and ‘Ugwu’ for use by his peers or superiors. Other forms reflect degrees of intimacy between participants. Thus in the list above, one sees a continuum from Mr Ugwu (title plus name) through the emotive Ugwu’s baby, to the others. So, sociolinguistic competence includes the knowledge of what address forms go with what social relationships, what situation and what attitude. It also includes what communicative purpose these forms carry out (qtd. in Ephraim Nwofor 17-18). From the above illustration, it is obvious that sociolinguistic competence has to do with the knowledge of how to use language codes in a way that is socially or socioculturally acceptable.

D. Pragmatic Competence

This is also called actional competence (Jasone Cenoz 125). Some researchers (Leech 1983, Thomas 1983 and Kasper 2001) distinguish between two components of pragmatic
competence: pragmalinguistic competence (knowledge for ‘mappings of form, meaning, force and context’ (Kasper 51) and sociopragmatic competence (‘the link between action-relevant context factors and communicative action’ (Cenoz 126). When these two components are put together, pragmatic competence is understood as ‘the competence in conveying and understanding communicative intent, that is matching actional intent with linguistic form based on the knowledge of an inventory of verbal schemata that carry illocutionary force’ (Celce-Murcia et al. 17). Cenoz writes that ‘pragmatic competence is one of the components of communicative competence and it is included as such in the most important models of communicative competence (127). Pragmatic competence was considered as part of sociolinguistic competence by Canale and Swain. Bachman considers sociolinguistic competence as part of pragmatic competence. This disagreement is not as important as the fact that the two have obvious relationship. And the classification by Leech, Thomas and Kasper above supports this. However, Celce-Murcia et al. think that pragmatic competence should be independent of the others.

E. Strategic Competence

Some scholars call this ‘strategies for language use’. Basically, it has to do with the knowledge of how to overcome communication problems. Celce-Murcia says it is the ability to compensate for problems or deficits or defects or challenges in communication and do various types of planning (42). R. Oxford who sees it as strategies for language use, says it is the ‘specific behaviours or thought processes that students use to enhance their own L2 learning’ (362). According to Canale, strategic competence is the

…mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action for two main reasons: (a) to compensate for breakdown in
communication due to limiting conditions in actual communication (e.g. momentary inability to recall an idea of grammatical form) or for insufficient competence in one or more of the other areas of competence; and (b) to enhance effectiveness of communication (e.g. deliberately slow and soft speech for rhetorical effect) (qtd. in Alo 119).

It is seen from this that to achieve effective communication, certain strategies need to be internalized should there be communication breakdown. Any speaker without strategic competence would always find him/herself stuck between speeches. Celce-Murcia illustrates this by saying that ‘…we know that learners who can make effective use of strategies (i.e. who have strategic competence) tend to learn language better and faster than those who are strategically inept’ (50). She further outlines what she calls ‘crucial strategies’ to include:

a) Achievement: Strategies of approximation, circumlocution, code-switching, miming, etc.

b) Stalling or time-gaining: using phrases like ‘Where was I?’, ‘Could you repeat that?’ etc.

c) Self-monitoring: Using phrases that allow for self repair like ‘I mean that…’, etc.

d) Interacting: these are strategies that include appeals for help/clarification, that involve meaning negotiation, or that involve comprehension and confirmation checks, etc.

e) Social: these strategies involve seeking out native speakers to practice with, actively looking for opportunities to use the target language (50).

What she outlines in the first strategy aptly relates to what Alo says when he writes that ‘One example of communicative strategy in an ESL setting is the use of code switching and code mixing’ (119). All the linguistic aids, strategies and resorts one adopts when one encounters breakdown or any other challenge during communication underscore the individual’s strategic competence. There are other competencies like interactional, formulaic, organisational and
textual as the model to be discussed below will show. But any of these can fit into one or two of the above.

A very important contribution of this newest model by Celce-Murcia is that it proves that the ‘…various components of communicative competence are interrelated and that it is very important to properly describe the nature of these interrelationships in order to fully understand the construct of communicative competence’ (44). The octagon below can be used to illustrate this.

**Figure 1**: Schematic representation of communicative competence (Source: Celce-Murcia 45).
The block inside the octagon is discourse competence, the core or central competence. The four points of the octagon are the sociocultural, formulaic, linguistic and interactional competence. The arrows indicate that the various components are constantly interacting with each other and with the discourse, which is the core competence. This construct shows that all of the sociocultural knowledge, formulaic resources, interactional skills and linguistic codes come together to shape the discourse. The circle surrounding the octagon is strategic competence, an available inventory of communicative, cognitive, and metacognitive strategies that allow a skilled speaker to negotiate meanings, resolve ambiguities and to compensate for deficiencies in any of the other competencies (Celce-Murcia 44).

2.1.2 Grammar and Communicative Competence

… most language learners taught by methods that emphasize mastery of grammar [alone] do not achieve an acceptable level of competency in the target language. Language learning in the classroom is usually based on the belief that language is a system of wordings governed by a grammar and a lexicon (Ali Shehadeh 13).

It may just be proper to say that the first statement in the above quotation touches the heart of this study. The reasons are obvious. Even in the very formulation of the concept of communicative competence, Hymes has remarked that he was introducing the concept because the notion of competence expounded by Chomsky was notoriously inadequate. In the same vein, grammar and/or its study are insufficient to instil in the learner the needed knowledge for him/her to communicate competently in the target language. The present researcher is not alone in this opinion – Goeffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik have shown why the teaching of grammar alone is now being frowned at, especially within any communicative approach:
The examples given in grammars have often been made up by grammarians rather than taken from real language in actual use. A made-up example may well serve to illustrate a particular grammatical point, but it can appear stilted or ‘wooden’, distancing the learning of grammar from real live usage. This is no doubt one reason why grammar is often considered to be less important part of language in the communicative approach (4).

M. A. K. Halliday also criticises the kind of sentences grammarians analyse. He argues that most times grammarians are much more interested in the grammaticalness of the sentences they use than on their communicative values in context, or ‘real-life discourse’ in his words. He says that such sentences are always ‘idealised’ and ‘isolated’ (310). Using the analogy of a building, he points out that analysing just such abstract sentences without due considerations of other ‘several important aspects of the meaning involved’ is ‘like describing a house as a construction of bricks, without recognising the walls and the rooms as immediate structural units’ (310).

This has been one of the major criticisms levelled against grammar-based approaches in second language learning. This argument notwithstanding, many scholars still think that the study of grammatical rules and codes is second to nothing in any language learning environment. Examples of such works whose presentation sees grammar in this light include those of Quirk and Greenbaum, 2004; Hodges and Whitten, 1982; A.S. Hornby, 1975; and Waldhorn and Zeiger, 2001. But the stance that the study of the grammatical rules is all that is important to achieve the needed competence has been widely criticised. Melinda Edwards and Kata Csizer have written that ‘…language learning exceeds the limits of memorizing vocabulary items and grammar rules’ (16); and for them, such textbooks and materials listed above ‘usually fail to provide the necessary and appropriate input in speech acts, and the material they do present often
differs from real life speech’ (7). This is what Paulston refers to as what happens in ‘the artificial world of language classrooms’ (40).

It is in the light of the above that this study seeks to investigate the view (which is now prominent in recent researches) that the grammar taught students in classrooms is rather too artificial to give the students what linguistic knowledge they need to communicate effectively. Within this approach, linguists and language teachers are concerned with rules which the language system permits. To give a preliminary stance, at no point would this study argue that these rules are unnecessary. But if

…it is only within the system that the rules are to be found: what rule can there be to guide the actualization of the possible, since there is no limit to the actualization, since the infinite is by that reason not subject to systemic rules?

(Akwanya Semantics and Discourse 1-2)

The disturbing question following up the above is: how are these ‘systemic rules’ sufficient in our teaching of language use, especially to L₂ speakers?

It is known that the processes and conditions of acquiring a first (or native) language are quite different from those of a second language. Even where two languages have equal status, Jean Aitchison has admonished that ‘[I]t is unthinkable to judge one language by the standards of another’ (7). But this notwithstanding, before an L₂ speaker achieves a near-native competence, some ways of acquisition in an L₁ environment may be adopted. To this end, Canale and Swain argue that

…effective second language learning takes place if emphasis is put from the beginning on getting one’s meaning across, and not on the grammaticalness and
appropriateness of one’s utterances…. It is quite reasonable to assume that since in acquiring a first language the child seems to focus more on being understood than on speaking grammatically, then second language acquisition might be allowed to proceed in this manner (10).

Well, this is not as much the central argument here. The issue at stake here is whether the grammar taught in class is sufficient in giving second language learners what they need to become effective and mature users of the language. If it is not, what then is the place of grammar in L2 teaching and learning? Should it be completely discarded or be assigned its rightful role? Providing the answers to these questions is the chief crux of this segment of the study. Krashen has conducted enormous research on the relevance of grammar in second language teaching; he says that grammar (a term he uses as a synonym for ‘conscious learning’) has two possible roles in the second language teaching program. First, it can be used with some profit as a monitor; and second, it can be used as a subject matter (89). Before explaining these important roles assigned grammar, it is necessary to make some points on what he said about learning and acquisition. These two concepts are central in language teaching and learning. Mention had been made of them in Chapter One, where it was argued that the two can be used for both first and second language situations. While that is not refuted, it does appear safer to follow Krashen to believe that these two processes involve different conditions and also yield different results. Following that, he argues that learning is conscious, while acquisition takes ‘a fairly predictable natural order, and this occurs when we receive comprehensive input’ (86-87). It is against this background that many scholars have argued that children acquire their mother tongue, while second language users learn the language. One can only agree with this proposition if this difference is established along the line of the way competence is developed, rather than on the status of the language. What the above proposes is that acquisition is impossible in a second
language environment. From Krashen’s treatise, there is enough evidence to believe otherwise. It has been seen therefore that what engenders acquisition is that conscious learning is de-emphasised, and that learning always takes place by way of learning the rules of a language. But he says that ‘[A] very important point that also needs to be stated is that learning does not ‘turn into’ acquisition’ (83). He says that language learners can learn a rule without acquiring that rule. Most of the usage errors in L2 situations do not emanate from problems in learning, but in acquisition. This is because ‘learning a rule does not always mean being able to use it in performance’ (115); and those who utilize conscious rules during conversation always take too much time to speak and have a hesitant style which is often too boring to listen to (89). This is a major drawback of the learning process.

The roles that grammar performs in second language learning shall then be examined. The first is that ‘conscious learning can act as an editor… correcting the errors, or rather what the performer perceives to be errors, in the output of the acquired system’ (Krashen 83). He quickly adds that this can happen before or after the sentence is spoken, implying that this correction is not as important as acquiring the structure of the language. The place for monitor use is always in writing and prepared speech; but when it is often used in normal conversations, the result is always the hesitant style mentioned above. Again, one must also know when rules can be used, which rules should be used and what effects monitor use have (89). Second, teaching grammar as subject-matter can result in acquisition when and because the target language is used as a medium of instruction. This therefore helps to provide ‘comprehensible input for acquisition’ (121).

By way of conclusion, the issue has been whether rules should be given directly (deductive), or whether students should be asked or made to figure out the rules for themselves
(inductive). In any academic endeavour, it has always been advised to avoid extremes. But from the argument presented so far, there are compelling reasons to argue that the teaching and learning of grammar is not enough, and does not lead to acquisition, the only condition that guarantees deep communicative competence. This does not mean, however, that ‘there is no room at all for conscious learning. Conscious learning does have a role, but it is no longer the lead actor in the play’ (83). This point is already implied in the model of communicative competence adopted for this study. This is because it includes grammatical competence, which is by and large the general knowledge of grammar. In fact, there is no model of C.C. that neglects the place of grammar completely. W. Littlewood says that ‘[C]ommunicative language use is only possible… by virtue of the grammatical system and its creative potential’ (40). To lend credence to this still, H. G. Widdowson adds that ‘a proper understanding of the concept of C.C. would have revealed that it gives no endorsement for the neglect of grammar’ (40).

2.1.3 Exploring the Communicative Values of Literature

There is enough evidence to believe that every language (especially those already codified and with written form) has its literature. And the literature of any language is part of and emanates from that language. In fact, literature cannot take place, except through language or as language. Aristotle has said that the art form that ‘…imitates by means of language alone’ is literature (32). It is therefore baffling why some even attempt to understand literature as being different from language. If this is so, it is difficult, if not impossible, to divorce literature from language. Even in language teaching and learning, literature should be given a central role because of its communicative values. On this, Akwanya says that

…the divorce between ‘language’ and ‘literature’ in the educational curriculum seems to undermine all the efforts of teaching and learning
English; it undermines the learning not only of the foreign languages, but also of the vernacular itself (*Habits of Thought* iv).

Any language teaching which undermines the role of literature may not achieve much. Meanwhile, this issue will be revisited later. At the moment, it is pertinent to say what one means by exploring the communicative values of literature in language teaching. By no means is one trying to reduce the literary work to a means of communication. Literature is always ‘...unburdened of the signaling function’ (*Akwanya Semantics and Discourse* 248). As this preliminary stance has been noted and because this argument is not central to this research, much of this shall be left for another discourse.

The point we want to establish here is that works of literature can expose second language learners to some kind of linguistic structures, which would in turn serve as ‘comprehensible input’ in the learning process. On this, Ray Williams writes:

> [L]iterature in a first or a second language confronts the student with various operations of language and the need to elucidate its meaning. Since literature organises language in the most exemplary fashion, the second language learner must be aware of the importance of applying the language of literature as a model for his own use. The teaching of literature has the practical value of enabling the student to learn about the second language as well as use it (qtd. in Otagbaruagu ‘Literature in Language Education’ 195-196).

The reading of literary texts not only enables students to learn about the language, but also to learn the language itself. Otagbaruagu then says that ‘literature is language in action’ (194). So many scholars have written that literature demonstrates classic models of language which
learners of a language can draw from. Thus Akwanya posits that ‘literature is unique among the works of language to the extent that it may be studied simply as language’ (Habits of Thought 28). It is in literature that one can see all the possible structures and linguistic patterns that a given language permits. One of the reasons for this is that to be efficient in a language, one needs to acquire much more than the knowledge of the structures of the language. Language use entails some knowledge of the social milieu of the language community. In acquiring a language, one ‘imbibes the value system of the culture, its world view and way of relating to and describing the environment’ (Akwanya Semantics and Discourse 46). It is not probable that the learners of a second or foreign language can acquire all of these simply by the study of grammar in classrooms. A lot of scholars have condemned the grammar taught in classrooms as too abstract to achieve this. If an effort must be made to imbibe such elements of the value system embedded in the target language, recourse must be made to literature, which has the potential of exposing the reader to those elements inscribed in them. In studying literature in order to tap these communicative values inherent in them, emphasis should not only be placed on literariness, but on such communicative or linguistic features. In fact, some have suggested that where the reading of literature is for the purpose of language learning, literariness should be sacrificed at the altar of discovering the linguistic features being sought for. While one may not completely agree with that, it has to be emphasised here that reading literary texts with the mind of developing some level of communicative competence has proved helpful.

Most scholars agree that for language learning to take place, there must be direct encounter with the language. J. D. O’Connor says that one must listen to English on the radio, on tapes and other records to be able to have some kind of direct access to [or encounter with] the language (3). Though he said this in reference to acquiring the sound patterns of language, it is indubitable that direct encounter with the language is essential for acquisition to take place. This
is the argument advanced by Krashen. Attentiveness to more advanced users has also been suggested. But beside all these noble practices and efforts, some exposure to the language through the reading of literary texts remains essential. In a foreword to a book, Akwanya has remarked that ‘awareness of… linguistic practices [like making good compositions] can only come from sustained contact with language, especially through reading’ (viii). In his words,

… close attention as much to the information content as to the clause structure and word order, the variety of vocabulary, the behaviour patterns specific to some kinds of words, and the punctuation practices of the material one is reading is bound to pay off when one is faced with one’s own essay writing tasks (viii).

Such other structures like idiomatic collocations, phrasal verbs, vocabulary development, grammatical structures and parts of speech, reading skills, discourse strategies, etc can be acquired through the reading of literature. Very importantly, the reading of dramatic literature helps one to develop discourse competence (Otagburogu ‘Literature in Language Teaching’ 196). Much more communicative features abound in literature, if it is critically linguistically read.

Each of the genres of literature has something we can learn from. Apart from the example above, it is obvious that one can learn economy of words by reading poems. Akindele and Adegbite rightly observe that the development of the four basic language skills of speaking, reading, listening and writing is enhanced by the components of the three academic components of literature – prose, drama and poetry (50). So all the genres of literature are resourceful in the business of helping to develop communicative competence, even if they do not do so equally.
The point that to expose the learner to the situations that enable acquisition to take place is more effective was made in the previous sub-chapter. For acquisition (which is the condition needed for deep competence to develop) to take place, SLT has got to move beyond the first phase of language teaching. On this, Akwanya says that ‘[L]anguage teaching in the school system is one phase of language leaning. Probably the more important phase is the non-formal aspect of language learning by direct encounter with the language’ (Habits of Thought 327). And this encounter should ideally take place by reading literature, for literature is where one reads language in one of its purest forms (147).

In a second language environment like ours, another issue would definitely arise. What kind of literary material is to be read? Kachru and Ngugi Wa Thiong’o have argued that local literatures can be used, while some others believe that for English to be learnt from its natural habit, recourse should be made to literary texts published in the UK and the US. In whichever side of the coin one follows, it should be remembered that to

…achieve results, the teacher must ensure that he recommends and uses only standard works of literature in the language programme. The work of literature must contain the right samples of language which the teacher wants to teach and which is of interest to the class (Otagburiagu ‘Literature in Language Education’ 197).

The works to be selected for use for situations like this should be such that can be used to illustrate grammatical rules and enrich reader’s vocabulary and the general knowledge of the target language (Kramsch 326).

In summary, Akwanya’s assertion is unavoidable:
Reading… is a real encounter with language and undoubtedly a real learning experience, as it both calls forth and trains the power of observation and forms and sharpens the critical intelligence. It was part of the educational practice which had to be forsaken in the 1960s in Nigeria for a new one which has gradually turned out to be a matter of getting the answer right, no matter if by guesswork (Enabling Principle 46).

Until Nigeria’s educational curriculum changes and returns to the practice of teaching English through literature at all levels, the lost glory may be difficult to be restored.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

In second-language teaching (SLT) situations, the issues of how the language is taught and learned are always very central. This issue is not just central but controversial. Of course, Atchison has already remarked that ‘[L]inguistics is a field torn apart by controversies’ (vii). The interest is not in these controversies though. Much of second language research (SLR) has dwelt so much on better ways of making teaching and learning more effective. This desire has given rise to lots of propositions and models suggesting as well as prescribing ways of making teaching and learning more effective. It is obvious that this study is an exercise in teaching methods, and efforts should be made here in getting a theoretical orientation on which the research will be premised.

As was hinted in Chapter One, a myriad of problems face the teaching and learning of English, not just in Nigeria, but in every second or foreign language environment. One of the very outstanding problems is the problem of teaching methods. There is a slight controversy as to
whether teaching methods and teaching approaches are the same. Scholarly opinions are divided on this. Fromkin and Rodman call it approach and use the two interchangeably (349). Krashen’s work, *Principles and Practices in Second Language Acquisition*, also uses the two terms in the same sense (125-26). It doesn’t appear pertinent to dwell on this controversy. In this study, therefore, a model that integrates the two would be adopted, but preference would still be made to the term ‘method’.

Scholars have tried to classify language teaching methods into groups of those with similar features. To that end, they have broadly classified approaches into two – structure-based and function-based approaches. Structure-based approaches, which include Grammar Translation, Audio-lingual, Direct Method, are interested in the analysis of the structure of the language – its lexis, phonology, morphology and syntax, while the functional approaches (CLT, Task-based Teaching, ESP, etc) focus on the functions of language for purposes of social interaction (Angela Igbeyi 24; Williams 69). Jack Richards rather chooses different terms for his classification. For him, there are three phases: traditional approaches, classic CLT and current CLT (9). But because what he calls current CLT does not differ significantly from his classic CLT, but draws heavily from it, they would be collapsed into one as simply CLT. To that effect, one would draw from his model to say that language teaching approaches can be broadly classified into two – traditional and CLT approaches. While his traditional approaches approximate to the structural approaches expounded above, CLT approaches can be likened to the functional approaches in the first model presented.

There is hardly any second language teaching (SLT) handbook or discourse which does not make reference to teaching methods. The reasons are obvious. However, the issue of *how* the language is taught or acquired (method) is consequential in both L1 and L2. Even though this is
the case, language teaching methods (LTM) is much more discussed in SLT discourses. The reason is that even when native speakers are not formally taught their language, acquisition is still very possible. So LTM is more of learning than acquisition in terms of relevance.

David Wilkins has defined method in language teaching as ‘a set of materials organized into a fixed pedagogic sequence, requiring the use of classroom activities which embody a certain view of language learning’ (57). As has been observed in the literature, all methods are informed or inspired by a certain theory of language. But a method entails more than materials; it includes the way of presentation of linguistic data, the general attitudes towards the learners, and even systems of testing competence in the language being learned. But what is obvious is that LTM is pedagogic tools – material and immaterial – used especially in second or foreign language teaching. Many scholars have argued about the usefulness of methods in language teaching. Mackay quotes a school of thought as saying that ‘a good method can be useless in the hands of a teacher who does not know how to use it’ (329). It has to be stressed here that method is not all that is needed in SLT. There are lots of other requirements that enable learning to take place. On this, Fromkin and Rodman write:

[M]ost individual methods have serious limitations: probably a combination of many methods is required as well as motivation on the part of the student, intensive and extensive exposure, native or near-native speaking teachers who can serve as models, and instruction and instructional material that is based on linguistic analysis of all aspects of the language (349).

According to Akwanya, these factors ‘weight differently in the equation’ (Enabling Principle 2). In the opinion of the present writer, method weighs higher than the other factors in the equation – partly because the other factors listed above are, in some degree, implied in most methods. To
lend credence to this, Mackay has written that method is ‘the cause of success or failure in language learning; for it is ultimately the method that determines the what and the how of language instruction’ (138) (emphasis, mine), and that ‘a good teacher can be ineffectual with a poor method’ (329). Again, poor teaching methods have been identified as a major factor that has led to the low performance of Nigerian students in English (Akwanya Enabling Principle 2)

One can go on and on to cite quotations which underscore the place and relevance of teaching methods in language teaching situations.

It may be difficult to say precisely how many methods that have been hypothesised by researchers. In Wilkins’ work cited above, he outlines about fifteen different methods. Some scholars have given more than that. A few others discuss less than that. New methods are developed every day; and as is usually the case, the new ones derive insights from the old ones and usually emphasise their weaknesses. There is no doubt that every method has its advantage, but some have been proved to be more effective than the others. No researcher known to the present writer has made claim to have documented all the methods that have ever been canvassed in LT. It therefore goes without saying that this study would not outline all of them. A model which would enjoy the credit of simplicity and precision may have to be adopted here. To that end, therefore, the approaches or method to be discussed here would be classified into grammar-or structure-based approaches or methods and communicative approaches to language teaching. This classification is not without its attendant problems – it may be difficult to say exactly if some methods belong to any of them. But for the reasons given above, this classification will be adopted.

**Structural/Traditional Methods:** Naturally, the first to be included here is the Grammar Translation Method (GTM). This method has been described by many scholars as the earliest. It
actually pioneered the teaching of most of the classical languages. In this method, the central thing is the teaching and learning of grammatical rules. The grammar of the target language is taught by translating it to the learners’ first language. This approach takes it for granted that once these rules are taught, learning has taken place. David Williams said that the activities of this method ‘are all a matter of training the mental faculties – just like solving problems in mathematics’ (35). It presents a mechanistic view of the human mind in the learning process. But we know that learning a human language does not follow such mathematical automation. Summarily, GTM ‘does not help learners acquire language for effective communication’ (Uche Azikiwe 72) because it pays no attention to ‘activities for developing communicative competence in the language class’ (Williams 35).

It is due to the various criticisms levelled against GTM that led to the introduction of other methods like Direct Method, Audio-lingual, etc. As said earlier, every method is informed by a given language theory. Audio-lingual method is informed by the principles of structuralism or behaviourism. The view of this method is that language is behaviour, and that is it primarily speech. To that end, it has bias for the teaching and learning of listening and speaking, neglecting the other two language skills. Every behaviourist learning method relies heavily on response to stimuli and repetition. Akwanya says that this model has ‘mechanistic view of man’ (Semantics and Discourse 18). Writing on the shortcoming of this method, W.M. Rivers says that critics have questioned whether

…real learning can take place when students are given automatic responses in drill, without understanding the crucial element they are practicing or its relationship to other features of the language system. It was found that students who could use with facility language materials in the exact form in which it has
been practised in dialogues or drills were at a loss to adapt this material for the expression of multitude of personal meanings in communication with others (49).

Spolksy writes that ‘a theory of language learning must go beyond the establishment of a number of language-like behaviours to the establishment of linguistic competence similar to that of a native speaker’ (qtd. in Lennart Levin 35).

A few other scholars came up to say that language learning is not behaviour-formation, but rule-formation. What this gave rise to was called Cognitive Code-learning Method (CCLM). Like the Grammar Translation Method, it is rule-based and the same criticisms against GTM also apply here. The CCLM was also called the Silent Way Method.

An attempt to discuss all the methods is not only difficult, but appears impossible. There are numerous other methods and approaches that language researchers and teachers have adopted or proposed in teaching second or foreign language. These include the Functional Notional Approach, Total Physical Response Method, Audio-Visual Method, The Play Method, the Oral method, Test-teach-test Approach, Task-based approach(es), and many others. There are many teaching methods as there are teachers. Many of these methods preach almost the same thing, but in different ways. One has to acknowledge again that they have their merits and demerits alike.

One thing that must be emphasised is that all the methods enumerated above are useful for specific goals and in specific conditions. Delivering a lecture on ‘Modern Methods of Teaching in the University’, Prof. Chris Garforth of the University of Reading, UK said, ‘[W]e do not use new methods simply because they are fashionable, but because they can be used to achieve certain learning objectives.’ So the first task before a teacher of English as a second language is to determine the objectives of learning that language. When this is done, he can go
ahead to choose the method that would enable him to achieve them. Outlining the reasons (objectives) of learning English as a second language in Nigeria, Azikiwe says that Nigerians learn English to

- communicate with native and non-native speakers; and to
- learn and understand the culture of the owners of the language; among others (21).

Almost every scholar of Second Language Teaching and Learning (SLTL) known to the writer agree that the purpose of teaching and learning of a second language is to develop the communicative competence of the learners (Baldeh 1990; Brumfit, 1995; Aguilar 2007; Williams 1990; and Krashen 2009).

Again, Garforth added that any good teaching method should have the following characteristics:

- it should match the learning objectives;
- it should be based on good theory and evidence;
- it should be able to engage the students in active learning and participation; and
- it should be able to develop transferrable skills as well as subject knowledge.

If all of the above characteristics are taken seriously and the essential goal of learning a second language (developing communicative competence) is to be achieved, recourse must be made to a method that has the potentiality of rendering all these. Because the central concern of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the development of the communicative competence of the learners, it has to be considered here.
Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Xiaoqing Liao has argued that in many ESL and EFL countries, the teaching objectives have continued to be on the general goal of developing communicative abilities (290). Language could be learned for several other reasons, but in most ESL situations, the goal is always to make learners achieve competence which will enable them to speak and write effectively. The idea that the development of communicative abilities is the central goal of second or foreign language teaching is not really new (Williams 62-63). Williams argued that the proponents of the methods that existed before CLT would be shocked if they were told that their aim was not to develop communicative ability among their students. He continues, ‘[W]hat is really new is the shift in emphasis; the idea that communication is not only the aim but also the method in language teaching’ (63). What then is CLT?

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) describes ‘a set of very general principles grounded in the notion of communicative competence as the goal of second and foreign language teaching, and a communicative syllabus and methodology as the way of achieving this goal’ (Richards 23). He continues to argue that since CLT came to displace the more traditional approaches in the 1970’s, it has shaped and reshaped language teaching in a radical way. And since then, several other new methods and approaches have sprung up drawing their principles from CLT. This shows how influential it has been in language teaching. Sandra Savignon has said that the focus of CLT has been ‘the elaboration and implementation of programs and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through learners’ participation in communicative events’ (4). SLT researchers seem to agree that CLT starts with the analysis of the needs or goals or objectives of learning, which then dictates the pace and direction for teaching and learning. The language ability or competence (which is the goal)
should be functional because the learners are expected to be involved in communicative activities. Such activities as role playing, asking questions, seeking clarifications, among others are important in a learning environment because according to Jack Richards and Theodore Rodgers, ‘[A]ctivities that involve real communication promote learning’ (72). They continue to argue that

...Learning activities are consequently selected according to how well they engage the learner in meaningful and authentic language use (rather than merely mechanical practice of language patterns). These principles, we suggest, can be inferred from CLT practices (72).

Part of these activities is the exposure of the learners to an engaging encounter with the language. This encounter will serve as veritable input and model of appropriate use. These are the principles that underline CLT. Berns has outlined what he calls the eight principles of CLT:

1) Language teaching is based on a view of language as communication. That is language is seen as a social tool that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose, either orally or in writing.

2) Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users.

3) A learner’s competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms.

4) More than one variety of a language is recognized as a viable model for learning and teaching.
5) Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speakers’ communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages.

6) No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed.

7) Language is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and is related to the development of learners’ competence in each.

8) It is essential that learners be engaged in doing things with language – that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning (qtd. in Savignon 6)

There appear to be other subtle principles implied in CLT are not listed above. We shall soon see that. In the same text, Savignon has added that ‘[T]he basic principle is that learners should engage texts and meaning through the process of use and discovery’ (22). This could be likened to what A. P. R. Howatt calls ‘using English to learn it’ (279). Krashen proposed an approach which has been called Natural Approach (Richards 15) and which is said to be ‘compatible with the principles of CLT’ (Richards and Rodgers 72), but which in this study is actually considered an aspect of CLT, and is to be adopted because it properly highlights the place of literature in CLT as a veritable input needed for acquisition to take place. In this model, any activity which encourages learning, and not acquisition, is not to be adopted, be it in first or second or foreign language situations. Krashen believes that similar processes and activities that enable native speakers to acquire their language quite competently can also be adopted in other language situations if acquisition is the goal. On this, Richards and Rodgers write that

[K]rashen sees acquisition as the basic process involved in developing language proficiency and distinguishes this process from learning. Acquisition refers to the
unconscious development of the target language system as a result of using the language for real communication. Learning is the conscious representation of grammatical knowledge that has resulted from instruction, and it cannot lead to acquisition. It is the acquired system that we call upon to create utterances during spontaneous language use. The learned system can serve only as a monitor of the output of the acquired system (72).

To make ‘real communication’ possible, the language learner must be exposed to enough linguistic data, which, in the words of Krashen, will serve as the input for effective acquisition.

Hall has pointed out that even in the traditional approaches, literature is already seen as ‘material’ but that ‘literariness’ was always emphasized, thereby failing to ‘coordinate the literary and the linguistic’ (Hall 47). This imbalance he corrects by showing how literature can be explored in CLT. Hall continues to write that a ‘crucial development for the role of literature in second language teaching programmes was the burgeoning of the ‘communicative’ language teaching (CLT) approach’ (48). In the traditional approaches, literature was an end of language learning in that the ‘aim was to enable the student to read successfully the classic literature of the language’ (48); but in CLT, literature is a means of learning the language because here, literature is viewed as discourse. Literary texts become seen as repositories of linguistic information which could be retrieved by readers (53). He writes that it was from the 1970’s (the period of the rise of CLT) that literature came to be valued as ‘authentic text’ in the context of CLT (54). Kramsch and Kramsch call this ‘the proficiency movement’, and say that this movement ‘saw in literature the opportunity for vocabulary acquisition, the development of reading strategies, and the training of critical thinking, that is, reasoning skills’ (567). More linguistic opportunities than presented above abound in a good literary text. In every sense, literature is a linguistic
construction. Language structures and patterns are deducible by careful readers. To lend credence to this, Hall writes that

[A] communicative approach argues for the importance of meaning and personalization for learners, for affective values in learning, for the use of authentic materials and ‘real’ language and communication. For all of this literature was seen as an ideal resource (italics not mine, 55).

This is because, in the words of Wordsworth, it is “real language of men”. Moody summarises this by simply saying that ‘[L]iterature is language’ (2).

If the model of communicative competence which was proposed earlier in this chapter is to be achieved, then recourse to literature is unavoidably helpful. That model (and of course every other known to the writer) emphasizes socio-cultural (some models call it sociolinguistic) competence. This brings in an aspect of culture to the learning of language. And this is expected because language is a social phenomenon. On this note, therefore, literature offers that access to the culture of the people of the target language. Language (be it its learning or its being as a phenomenon) has a habit of thought as shown in Akwanya’s Language and Habits of Thought. All of these aspects of language and more can be ‘picked’ up as one engages a literary text. This kind of sociocultural competence has become increasingly relevant today when there is a move towards building intercultural perspectives into various disciplines.

CLT (or even its aspect that emphasizes the place of literature in language learning and teaching) is not without some shortcomings. Richards and Rodgers write that it is arguable ‘whether a communicative approach can be applied at all levels in a language program… and how it can be adopted in situations where students must continue to take grammar based tests’
The latter worry should be of crucial interest here, especially because language teaching in Nigeria has remained largely grammar-based. In the same vein, Canale and Swain say that they do to not know of any ‘clear research results on the advantages or disadvantages of communicative approaches for students in elementary and secondary school second language’ (37). Hall also argues that if literature is not well thought out in SLT, it could be unsystematic and not well integrated (58). From all these, it does appear therefore that CLT is best suitable for literate learners.

2.3 RELATED STUDIES

Without doubt, enormous researches have been carried out on CLT since its birth in the seventies. This section is to examine a selection of these studies, with special attention to the role of literature. Teachers and researchers within this field have directed their efforts in various ways and aspects trying to propose the best ways of teaching language to enhance communicative competence. This becomes especially important in the environment where the language in question is not a native language.

Gu Weiping and Liu Juan on a study titled ‘Test Analysis of College Students’ Communicative Competence in English’ examined College English Tests (CET-4), a test-oriented teaching of English vis-à-vis its ability in enhancing students’ development of communicative competence. In this study experimental tests were carried out using two groups – the control class and the treatment class. From the findings of this research, it was obvious that CET-4 ‘cannot objectively reflect students’ communicative competence (n. p) because it does not test students’ productive abilities. These scholars conclude that the reason for multiple-choice nature of the test is its convenience for machine grading. This is similar to what we find
in the university entrance examination in Nigeria, where all the papers are multiple-choice questions. Weiping and Juan decry that ‘if this convenience is to be kept at the sacrifice of the test validity, which in turn misleads the college English teaching, it breaches the original purpose of the test – and that of language teaching in general. What this research concludes is that ways of teaching language for total development of C.C. of the learners should be adopted before one can assume that effective teaching and/or learning has taken place.

Writing on ‘Communicative Competence in Children: Spanish-English Bilinguality’, Laura Renart raises very interesting points about aspects of CC in bilingual situations. She monitored kids who are exposed to both Spanish and English and observed their conversational competence. From the study, it is observed that the

…various components of communicative competence, such as phonological, pragmatic, semantic and lexical level[s], are said to start in the pre-linguistic period of the child, while the morphological and syntactic aspect, though unobserved in this period, emerge noticeably in the production data (1937).

She continues to say that in foreign or second language situations, the two aspects of human development – nature (innate predispositions) and nurture (experience) are involved. She says that the acquisition of conversational or pragmatic competence is largely based on nurture since the student is encouraged by the teacher (1937). This study also shows that one of the best ways of having such linguistic experience is by reading works of literature. The kids used for the experiment are taught using a short story entitled ‘The Tin Soldier’. From the story, they began to ‘recreate it with their own utterances within their reach, unique and adapted to the context’ (1937). The research arrives at the following conclusion:
Children transfer the patterns of their first language, no matter how difficult they might be: it is their maturity that will allow them to expand what they want to say…. This neglected aspect of language [communicative competence] relies more on the fostering than on the actual teaching of the notion. What needs to be reviewed is whether the assessment tools teachers have are appropriate for the development of the skill. The significance of this growth will help us construct our pupil’s communicative competence with an aim at creating an independent speaker of English (1942-43).

It is not only the assessment tools that need be reviewed; the teaching tools should also be critically looked into.

In a research on CLT in China, Xiaoqing Liao argues that since in most EFL and ESL countries, the teaching objectives have been on the general goal of developing communicative competence, the reasons for the adoption of CLT are not arguable (270). Liao quotes his doctoral research which he conducted on Chinese secondary school EFL teachers attitudes towards Communicative Language Teaching and their classroom practice. In that study, he observed and interviewed teachers who used CLT and the students drilled with it to find out that most teachers successfully apply the principles of CLT (271). Very importantly too, that study shows that students taught based on the principles of CLT developed communicative abilities faster than those taught based on the principles of grammar-translation, for example. To prove the widespread acceptability of CLT in most countries, he cites the teaching objectives of English in Taiwan and Japan. Kuo writes that in Taiwan, the objective ‘calls for the ability to communicate in English. Therefore, adopting the communicative approach seems to be desperately needed in order for these objectives to be met (qtd. in Liao 271). Also, J. Lamie writes that the Ministry of
Education in Japan proposed a curriculum innovation in 1987. According to him, ‘[T]he proposal was for a shift away from long established grammar-translation curriculum content and classroom practices, towards teaching for communication and communicative competence (qtd. in Liao 271). From what is happening in very many EFL and ESL countries coupled with the results of the above research, it does appear that CLT stands out as a reliable and valid teaching method.

Studies have also shown that bilinguals achieve a higher level of competence faster than monolinguals. The reason appears obvious – the bilinguals have already developed a certain ability to acquire an additional language and are expected to have internalized more linguistic codes, for universal grammar (UG) argues that all languages share certain features. In one of such studies, Sanfot selected 160 monolingual and bilingual students who were learning English in his school to test their pragmatic competence. After employing such activities and principles of CC, he used an open discourse completion test and a discourse evaluation test to examine the students. The results of the study show that not just did the bilinguals show higher level of pragmatic competence, they also showed higher degree of pragmalinguistic awareness. What is of more importance here is not that the test was between monolinguals and bilinguals but that it also suggests that such activities of CLT can be employed to improve the CC of learners of English in particular and of course any other language.

In the work of Vipond and Hunt (273-4), three types of literature reading are listed: information-driven reading, story-driven reading and point-driven reading. For language instruction, they proposed point-driven reading. In their argument, point-driven reading may be in search of such points as coherence, narrative surface markers and transactional strategies. In an empirical investigation conducted in 1984, they prove that a successful reader looks for a
‘point’. What is more central and germane to the present study is the point that the reading of literature is an ‘interactive event’ between the reader and the writer (Hall 170). And this is particularly important for discourse awareness. Commenting on the study by Vipond and Hunt, Hall says that

…the linguistic features are likely to be expected to be of more importance by the point-driven reader. A story-driven reader, for example, is unlikely to find significance in non-standard speech, because only events are of interest, where the point-driven reader expects there to be reason for deviance (171).

What the above point proves is that point-driven reading (which is preferred for language education) can be adopted where such ‘points’ as grammatical structures and other issues of discourse competence like coherence, cohesion and those of pragmatic/conversational competence like conditions of speech acts (how to open and close conversations, for instance) can be picked up. Hall clearly points out that the way of reading suggested here should be of particular interest to language educators who want their students to notice and retain precise linguistic forms, as well as to develop strategies for successful meaning making in difficult circumstances’ (172). Without doubt, this touches the very essence of communicative competence.

From the review presented so far, it is obvious that researchers have shown interest in classroom activities that can enhance the CC of not just L2 speakers, but of all learners of language. This review cannot make claim to having documented a comprehensive list of studies within this field. The present research concentrates on the area of discourse competence. Two reasons stand out as justification for the selection of this component. Discourse competence is ‘where the top-down communicative intent and sociocultural knowledge intersect with the
lexical and grammatical resources to express messages and attitudes and to create coherent texts’ (Celce-Murcia 46). Second, it is the component which appears to have not been well explored in terms of empirical investigation. Discourse competence entails much more than this; and since it is the interception of many competencies, it will be more involving. It has to be said however that a single study like this may not be able to cover all there is to discourse competence.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Every research adopts a method which would best fit its purposes and give it an objective direction. A research of this nature is expected to be as qualitative as possible. But G. Payne and J. Payne remarked that qualitative research ‘…often draws on some of the stock-in-trade of what are normally regarded as quantitative techniques’ (179). To support this, Pawson says that ‘nowadays it is much more accurate to describe the relationship between those who do qualitative research and those who do quantitative research as one of truce’ (qtd. in M. Haralambos and M. Holborn 804). What this portends is that this study drew from the strengths of the two, as methodological pluralism (otherwise known as triangulation) makes the findings of a research more objective. Many scholars have argued that triangulation has many benefits in researches. It gives the researcher the privilege of drawing the strengths of multiple designs as far as they are relevant to the research.

3.1 Research Design

From the foregoing, it is evident that the design for this study was descriptive survey because as every other research based on descriptive survey, this study aimed at ‘…collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a give population’ (B. G. Nworgu 58 – 9). This was triangulated with what Nworgu calls causal-comparative design, where ‘groups differentiated in terms of some independent variables are compared on a given dependent variable’ (62). Again, a study of this nature has been described elsewhere by G. Hall as case study. Hall reports a study carried out by Norton and Vanderheyden on learners of English who were taught largely through literary texts. At the end of the study, the students confessed that the literary texts they read ‘taught them useful English language’ (203 – 4). This is why it has been remarked that approaching researches like this from different methodological
perspectives would appear helpful; hence triangulation. The justification for this is obvious. The study examined the written discourse of two groups of students. This kind of comparison is believed to help to highlight the effect of literature in the development of communicative competence, particularly discourse competence. This was based on the magnitude of the exposure of the members of each group to literature. As should be noted, discourse (competence) connotes both the written and the spoken forms of the language. But as the scope of this work reveals and as the instrument permits, the study was concerned with the written discourse only. This is by no means suggesting that written discourse ranks higher that the spoken. If there must be ranking, spoken discourse should rank first in the sense that language is essentially speech.

3.2 Research Population and Instrument
Part of the motivation for this research was the relative poor performance of the students the researcher has taught in composition courses like Advanced Prose Composition offered at the Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Nigeria – and of course in almost every other department of English in Nigeria. So these students constituted the population for this study. The first group, students of Combined Arts, took mostly grammar lessons; while the second group, students of English and Literary Studies, took more than fifteen literature courses. But the two groups took equal number of grammar courses. So the direction of the study was to examine the written compositions of the members of these groups to see whether greater exposure to literature could enhance discourse competence. The examination scripts of these students were examined to test for this. For each group, fifty (50) essays were analysed.

3.3 Method of Sampling
Another relevant issue here is how the samples were collected. Every researcher looks for a sampling technique that would be representative of the population. To achieve this and because
of the nature of the variables involved in this research, systemic sampling technique was chosen here. The instruments were documents, examination scripts. Unlike the other instruments, this avoids the tendency of the research being controlled. Hall has pointed out that in any analysis of documents, there must be taken into consideration what he calls the ‘history of production of the documents’ (220). Knowing this entails knowing why, how and under what circumstances the documents were produced. All this were taken into account in Chapter Four where the analysis is made.

Writing about data collection in this kind of research, Hall says that

Textual analysis of documents can be assisted increasingly easily by corpus studies, especially to establish questions concerning vocabulary to be found in the texts to be studied, or recurrent linguistic patterns or stylistic tendencies (222).

In this case, it was not only vocabulary that was emphasised or looked for, but discourse markers. He adds that ‘[A]ssessment investigation will benefit from looking at answer papers of candidates in relation to the questions set…’ (222). This was exactly what was done here.

3.4 Method of Analysis

The method of analysis of a research of this nature is always problematic. The analysis here was largely qualitative because it is within the world of discourse analysis. But elements of quantitative analysis were also used as it involved descriptive statistics. There are four criteria for the measurement of performance in compositions based on the marking scheme of many examination bodies, especially West African Examination Council (WAEC). These are content, expression, organisation and mechanical accuracy. A composition is adjudged good if it scores high in all of the above. So the essays analysed were graded based on these criteria; but because
this study tested for written discourse competence, organisation and expression were emphasised.
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 PRESENTATION

Textual analysis falls within the purview of discourse analysis; and if it is true that discourse is the production of language beyond the sentence level, then the essays analysed here are discourse in every sense of the word. It has been said that the area of written discourse analysis is quite a complex field in linguistics. So the first task is to delineate what and what make or qualify a piece of writing as a coherent and effective writing. In his model, Soti Vogli gives four criteria that can be used to judge a composition like student essays. These criteria are discourse patterning, clausal relations, genre analysis and cohesive devices (1). According to the above, a text is said to be good when it is tested based on the above items.

The West African Examination Council (WAEC) gives another model for examining compositions. And in the interest of simplicity and widespread acceptance, this should be preferred. WAEC has four criteria as well. In this, a good written discourse or composition should

a) have its ideas relevant to the central theme (content);

b) have suitable opening, adequate development, good paragraphing, balance, coherence and a suitable conclusion in such a way that it would engender the intended discourse genre (organisation);

c) have such qualities as clarity and general appropriateness of style, and judicious and competent use of figurative language and punctuation (expression); and

d) be free of grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors (mechanical accuracy).
A critical examination of these criteria reveals that some elements overlap. But this is not as important as the fact that they cover the essential ingredients of good writing. Apart from the reasons given above for adopting this later format, much – if not all – of what Vogli’s model embodies is already contained in the WAEC model.

The causal-comparative design mentioned in Chapter Three is unavoidable because this study examines the written discourse of two groups of students. Henceforth, these groups shall be called Group One and Group Two. In each, fifty essays are examined. Group One comprises the essays of students exposed to much literature, with each student having read at least eighty literary texts including novels, plays and poems. Effort was made to make sure that these students read these texts because they were expected to discuss them. Group Two read only a few texts, with much of the emphasis on the elements of grammar. It has to be said also that Group One also received the same grammar lessons that were taught Group Two. So it may not be untenable to say the two groups had equal exposure to grammar lessons.

So each of the essays was analysed and judged using the criteria of content, organisation, expression and mechanical accuracy. Essays in WAEC are graded to score 50 marks; that is, 10 marks for content, 10 for organisation, 10 for mechanical accuracy and 20 for expression. Obviously, expression should get the highest for it tests the students’ ability to mobilise the entire linguistic repertoire at his disposal to make acceptable structures. Even though a different mark point was used in the analysis here, more were allotted to expression owing to the above reason. Here, the essays were graded with the highest point of 25: expression receiving 10, while the rest receive 5 apiece.

For clarity of reading and interpretation, a simple framework was used in collating the results of the findings of this study. This framework used three tables: one presents the
performance of Group One, the second presents that of Group Two, while the last presents a summary of the two.

**Group One**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>CONTENT (5%)</th>
<th>ORGANISATION (5%)</th>
<th>MECHANICAL ACCURACY (5%)</th>
<th>EXPRESSION (10%)</th>
<th>TOTAL (25%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 1: A Summary of the Performance of Group One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>CONTENT (5%)</th>
<th>ORGANISATION (5%)</th>
<th>MECHANICAL ACCURACY (5%)</th>
<th>EXPRESSION (10%)</th>
<th>TOTAL (25%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>146</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>717</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Group Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>CONTENT (5%)</th>
<th>ORGANISATION (5%)</th>
<th>MECHANICAL ACCURACY (5%)</th>
<th>EXPRESSION (10%)</th>
<th>TOTAL (25%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2: A summary of the performance of Group Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group One</th>
<th>Group Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Accuracy</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### A summary of the two groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group One</th>
<th>Group Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Accuracy</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: A summary of Table 1 and Table 2
Before one delves fully into detailed analysis of the above results, it may be pertinent to note that the students’ sociolinguistic and pragmatic knowledge was factored into the grading of the essays. Because of the obvious overlapping among the factors or criteria used for analysis, it was difficult to determine where exactly the above knowledge should be considered. But for the marks allotted to expression and also considering that style is central in expression, it was necessary to factor the concerns of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence into expression.

4.2 Analysis

As stated in Chapter Three, this study entails descriptive statistics. So a brief statistical analysis of the tables above appears necessary. And the analysis is done using a simple statistical method from SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences).

H₀: Reading literature has no effect on the written discourse competence of students.

H₁: Reading literature has effect on the written discourse competence of students.

\[ N = 100 \quad ; \quad \alpha = 0.05 \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( N_1 = 50 )</td>
<td>( N_2 = 50 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \delta_1 = 2111.22 )</td>
<td>( \delta_2 = 988.12 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \mu_1 = 221 )</td>
<td>( \mu_2 = 154.2 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Test Statistics:

\[
Z = \frac{\mu_1 - \mu_2}{\sqrt{\frac{\delta_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{\delta_2^2}{n_2}}}
\]
\[
N_1 \quad N_2
\]

\[
= \frac{221 - 154.2}{\sqrt{2111.22 + 988.12}} \quad 50 \quad 50
\]

\[
= \frac{66.8}{\sqrt{42.22 - 19.76}} = 14.1
\]

\[
Z = 14.1 \quad \alpha_2 (0.025) = 1.96
\]

Decision Rule: Reject \( H_0 \) if \( Z > \alpha_2 \). Accept if otherwise.

Conclusion: Since \( Z = 14.1 \), we do not accept \( H_0 \) and therefore conclude that reading literature has effect on the written discourse competence of students.

INTERPRETATION:

The analysis above shows that the reading of literature has an effect on the communicative competence of the learners of a language. The null hypothesis \( (H_0) \) states that the reading of literary texts has no effect on the written discourse of students, while the alternative hypothesis \( (H_1) \) states that the reading of literature has an effect on the competence of the students. Group 1 are the number of students who read literature, while group 2 are the number of students who read less literature. The sample size is \( N = 100 \), showing the total number of observations taken. \( \alpha \) shows the level of significance which is also the critical region. \( \delta_1 \) is the standard deviation of the means for group 1 and \( \delta_2 \) is the standard deviation of the means for group 2. \( \mu_1 \) is the average of population 1 (group 1) and \( \mu_2 \) is the average of population 2 (group 2). The test
statistic shows the statistical formula that was applied which is the comparison of two independent samples. The data is assumed to follow the normal distribution.

The decision rule says that Ho should be accepted if \( Z > \alpha/2 \) since the data follows the standardized normal distribution with mean zero and variance 1. The critical value for the test is obtained from the standard normal table at \( \alpha = 0.05 \).

In conclusion, the analysis shows that since \( Z = 14.1 \) is greater than \( \alpha/2 (0.025) = 1.96 \), we do not accept the null hypothesis \( (H_0) \) and can say that the reading of literature can help to improve the discourse competence of the learners of a language. We can therefore accept the alternative hypothesis \( (H_1) \) but at \( \alpha \) level of significance which is 0.05.

Without losing sight of the central focus of this work, an attempt shall be made here to reiterate what is the research question of this work. This work set out to investigate the relevance of the reading of literary texts among learners of English. Because of the number of students or scripts involved (which is necessary for a proper coverage or representation of the learners involved), a script-by-script description here appears cumbersome. But each of the hundred scripts representing the two groups was properly analysed using the criteria presented above with the results of that analysis presented above. The average score for Group One is 14.35 (which is above average), while that of Group Two is 10.04. From all these, it is obvious that Group One, whose members were made to read very many literary texts as part of their language learning exercises scored higher than Group Two, whose members read less literature. The general conclusion of this study, therefore, is that the reading of the literature of and in the target language can enhance the development of communicative competence.

But this conclusion raises other questions, and this work would not play ignorance to them. Now it is known that individual performance and abilities may come in here especially as
not all students are equally exposed to the environment. So there may be other sociolinguistic factors that could affect the competence of speakers individually. But it is the position of this work that even when such factors are taken into account, it is not clear that they will so pull together to affect a group of fifty students. This was largely one of the reasons for taking up to that number. Again, it should also be noted that apart from the literature that the members of Group One read in the course of their study, a credit in Literature-in-English is a compulsory requirement for admission. Apart from that, all the students constituting Group One also took Literature in the Universities Matriculation Examination, UME (now Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination, UTME). What this means is that most – if not all – of them have had the opportunity of reading literature since their junior secondary school days till now. But those who constitute the membership of Group Two did not have all of the above opportunities. So this study does not see any other aspect of sociolinguistics that could have influenced the entire group as much as their extra exposure to the language through the vehicle of literature. After all the above considerations, which are hugely premised on the results of the analysis, it is concluded that the reading of literature could serve as adequate exposure (or comprehensible input in the words of Krashen) for second language speakers of English, and of course any other second language user.

The results of this study have enormous implications for second language teaching and learning (SLTL). Very obviously, one of the things it shows is that for SLTL to be successful, a communicative approach like the one adopted for this research should be used. Communicative language teaching has varying, but closely related, procedures it adopts for its methods. As has been indicated in Chapter Two, one of such procedures believes that one way of teaching and learning a second language is through the instrumentality of the literature written in that
language. More of the pedagogic implications of the findings of this work are giving in the recommendations and conclusion of the study in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

This study has taken an examination of an area of linguistics considered to be more or less the most central as far as second language learning is concerned. It may not be an overstatement to say that everything done in every language teaching and learning situation is targeted towards making the learners acquire adequate knowledge that would enable them to communicate effectively in both the written and spoken forms of the language. Even in a first language situation, the linguistic (or in a broader sense, communicative) competence of those acquiring the language is not played with. This is so important that formal teaching of the language takes place in L1 environment, even though there are many other informal means of acquiring the language. All this is to make certain that the speakers of the language acquire the highest possible competence in their language, especially in its practical use. If this level of importance is attached to the development of communicative competence even in first language situations, greater attention should be paid to it in every second language environment, especially in a linguistically plural country like ours.

This work examined the place of communicative competence in second language situations with the aim of finding out one of the best ways of developing it. It is therefore obvious that a research of this kind would touch the heart of language teaching methods. This work also shows that the concept of communicative competence was developed to include those aspects of language use that Chomsky’s competence fails to capture. Having done a historical development of the concept, it is seen that the concept has grown to include virtually all aspects of language use. The most recent model developed by Celce-Murcia discusses six components (44). Language must guard against the conceptualization of these components as separate things.
Communicative competence is one ‘capsule’ of knowledge that takes into account language users’ knowledge of all aspects of language use. This may be why Canale and Swain write that

[T]he primary goal of a communicative approach [which emphasizes communicative competence] must be to facilitate the integration of these types [components of C.C.] of knowledge for the learner, an outcome that is not likely to result from overemphasis on one form of competence over the others throughout a second language programme (27).

This study has only talked about discourse competence in the understanding that discourse competence is, according to Celce-Murcia, the meeting point of all the competencies (44) because this is where all aspects of communicative competence are put to functional use.

This study has also shown that one of the best tools of sharpening speakers’ communicative competence is through the instrumentality of literature. Also it sees that the teaching approach that incorporates what is being proposed here is communicative language teaching (clt), where the chief goal is to build the communicative competence of the speakers of the language in question. From the study, therefore, it is obvious that the reading of literary texts has significant impact on the learners of a language.

5.2 Conclusion

One of the central points this study has established is that the learning of a second language should not be left at an abstract level. This study has proved that second language learning can be enhanced if the learners are given adequate exposure to the language being learned. It has been remarked that it is adequate exposure to or encounter with the language that makes the native speakers to acquire the intuitive knowledge of the language which gives them the psychological disposition to communicate competently with little or no inhibitions (Onuigbo and Eyisi 41).
What Krashen suggests – and that is what this study has come to establish – is that second language learning can be allowed to follow some of the steps of first language acquisition (23). What he proposes is called the Natural Approach. If his model is to be followed in language teaching and learning, then the dichotomy between the terms ‘learning’ and ‘acquisition’ may no longer stand firm. And it has been proved that the conscious learning of a language inhibits performance because the speakers in this situation would be so conscious of not breaking the rules that they often break the rules. This is the irony of the situation. But when one has been so exposed to a language, the rules would be automatically ‘picked’ without making the speakers so rule-conscious. The argument here is not to say that these rules are to be neglected. Every language is of course rule-governed. What is being posited is that the teaching of grammar alone is not enough and that it is also possible to ‘pick’ those rules when one is adequately exposed to the language. The result of this study has shown that students who are given the opportunity of encountering the language through literature have the capacity of communicating better in the target language.

5.3 Recommendations

This segments seeks to proffer some recommendations that the researcher deems useful to different stakeholders within the language enterprise. The recommendations are given below.

a) Language teachers at all levels of language teaching should know that it is not possible to teach a second language effectively without the introduction of literary texts. The colour of language is literature, and to teach or learn a language without its literature is to bleach that language of its colour. So any attempt to divorce language (or its teaching and learning) from literature is an anathema. In Nigerian secondary school (especially at the senior level), only arts students take literature. And many teachers would agree that the
arts students perform better in English. This may not be unconnected to the literature that they are exposed to. Whether the curriculum permits it or not, teachers of English at this level should make provision for the reading of literature, bearing in mind that it would improve students’ competence and effectiveness in communication.

b) Curriculum developers and planners should follow the findings of this study by introducing literary texts at every level of language learning. Some of the nursery rhymes that kids internalise early in their education have a huge linguistic impact on them. At the present, the reading of literature is abysmally low at the primary school level in Nigeria. This is so that even when efforts are made at the junior secondary level to introduce literature, it would take time to kindle their interest in it. Soon after, many of them leave the reading of literature completely. Even though no other subject is given the amount of attention which English receives in secondary schools, it is still the subject that records the poorest results. It is the belief of this study that the competence of the students would improve when they are made to read literature starting from the primary to the secondary and tertiary levels of education. Curriculum planners would be careful to select texts that would match the reading abilities of the students at each level, and should also be careful enough to select the texts that are rich in the use of language. Very tragically, most of the texts that those in junior secondary schools read are not even literary art in the first instance. Education stakeholders in Nigeria include poorly written texts in the curriculum. This kind of trend should be stopped if the desired end must be achieved.

c) If literature must continue to be studies as a separate subject from English, then it should be a compulsory subject for all.

d) Second language learners themselves should know the relevance of reading literary texts in their general language development. Whether their formal school curricula recognise
this or not, they should take great interest in reading literature as a way of improving their language competence.

It is the position of this work that the present ugly state of the teaching and learning of English in Nigeria will be made better when these and other recommendations have been implemented.

5.4 Limitations to the Study

First, this study only took the aspect of written discourse competence. The primacy of speech has been noted in the earlier chapters. It perhaps would have been broader and more revealing to take up both aspects because writing may not represent competence as much as speech would. This is due largely to the fact that writing offers one the opportunity of modifications. There is also room for modifications in speech (of course that is what strategic competence underscores), but it does not permit modifications as much as writing does.

Again, other minor limitations like unavailability of all the material needed for this research were experienced. For example, there were online books that would have helped the work, but they could not be accessed owing mainly to cost. It is possible that this research work would have been richer in the absence of these and other limitations too minor to be mentioned here.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

Research in the area of competence has enjoyed privileged attention since Chomsky. Several scholars have carried out both theoretical and practical researches on how best to develop language speakers’ knowledge of their language, be it first or second language. In the course of reviewing the literature in this area, it was discovered that more attention has been given to the
spoken medium of the language than the written aspect and that was part of what informed the choice of written discourse here. So it is suggested that researchers interested in this area of applied linguistics should give more attention to the written form of the language.

Second, the aspect of communicative performance is not well covered here. According to Canale and Swain, communicative performance is the realization of these competencies and their interaction in the actual production and comprehension of utterances under general psychological constraints that are unique to performance (6). Even though the texts analysed here constitute performance, such other psychological constraints are not accounted for here. Again, communicative competence or performance entails not only the production of utterances, but their comprehension. This latter part can be of interest to scholars interested in the communicative competence discourse.

As stated in chapter four, there could be other sociolinguistic factors that can contribute to one’s competence. Further studies may investigate this properly. Lastly, although this study has proved that a holistic approach or the integrative approach to communicative competence is more functional, some scholars have argued that studying these competencies singly may also help to bring out the aspect(s) where learners are deficient so that greater attention would be given to that or those aspects.
Works Cited


Yano, Yasukata. ‘Communicative Competence and English as an International Language’.