

Foreign Scholars' Views on the Issue of the Competency- Based Approach in Teaching Arabic to Uzbek Students

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Abstract: This article analyzes foreign scholars' views on the competency-based approach in teaching Arabic to Uzbek students. The competency-based approach is considered one of the most effective directions in modern foreign language education because it focuses not only on linguistic knowledge but also on the learner's ability to use the language in real communicative, academic, cultural, and professional contexts. In teaching Arabic, this approach is especially important due to the complex grammatical structure of Arabic, its rich lexical system, stylistic diversity, and close connection with Arab-Islamic culture. The article discusses the theoretical foundations of competency-based language teaching through the views of foreign scholars such as N. Chomsky, D. Hymes, M. Canale, M. Swain, H. Widdowson, C. Kramersch, J. C. Richards, D. Nunan, and S. Savignon. The study also explains the relevance of these theories to Arabic language education for Uzbek students. The article concludes that the competency-based approach can improve students' linguistic, communicative, sociocultural, intercultural, discourse, strategic, and translation competencies.

Key words: competency-based approach, Arabic language teaching, Uzbek students, communicative competence, intercultural competence, foreign scholars, foreign language education.

Introduction

In contemporary foreign language education, the main aim of teaching is not limited to the memorization of grammar rules, vocabulary, and ready-made expressions. Modern methodology requires the formation of a learner who can use the target language independently and effectively in different communicative situations. This requirement has increased the importance of the competency-based approach in language teaching.

The competency-based approach is based on the idea that learners should not only know a language but also be able to use it appropriately in social, cultural, academic, and professional contexts. In this regard, teaching Arabic to Uzbek students requires a special methodological approach. Arabic differs significantly from Uzbek in terms of phonetics, morphology, syntax, word formation, and stylistic norms. At the same time, Arabic has historical and cultural significance for Uzbek learners because many Arabic words entered the Uzbek language through religion, science, literature, and culture.

Therefore, Arabic language teaching in Uzbekistan should not be organized only around grammatical explanation and translation exercises. It should develop a system of competencies that allow students to understand Arabic texts, communicate in Arabic, translate accurately, analyze cultural meanings, and use digital language resources. Foreign scholars' views on

communicative competence, language use, intercultural communication, and learner-centered teaching provide a strong theoretical basis for improving Arabic language education.

The roots of the competency-based approach in language education are connected with the concept of competence. N. Chomsky introduced the distinction between linguistic competence and performance. According to Chomsky, linguistic competence refers to the speaker's internal knowledge of the language system, while performance refers to the actual use of language in speech situations (Chomsky, 1965). This idea played an important role in the development of linguistic theory.

However, Chomsky's concept was mainly focused on grammatical knowledge. Later, D. Hymes expanded this idea and introduced the concept of communicative competence. Hymes argued that knowing a language means not only producing grammatically correct sentences but also using them appropriately in a social context (Hymes, 1972). This view became a turning point in foreign language teaching methodology.

For teaching Arabic to Uzbek students, Hymes' idea is highly relevant. A student may know Arabic grammar rules but still be unable to communicate naturally, understand cultural expressions, or choose the appropriate speech form in a particular situation. Therefore, Arabic language teaching should develop both grammatical accuracy and communicative appropriateness.

M. Canale and M. Swain further developed the theory of communicative competence. They identified several important components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). These components are directly applicable to Arabic language teaching. Grammatical competence helps students master Arabic morphology and syntax. Sociolinguistic competence helps them use Arabic according to social and cultural norms. Discourse competence develops the ability to understand and produce coherent oral and written texts. Strategic competence helps learners overcome difficulties in communication.

Thus, the competency-based approach in Arabic teaching should be understood as a multidimensional process that includes linguistic knowledge, communicative ability, cultural awareness, discourse skills, and independent learning strategies.

Foreign scholars have made a significant contribution to the development of competency-based language teaching. Their views show that language learning should be connected with real communication and practical use.

H. Widdowson emphasized the difference between language usage and language use. According to him, language usage refers to knowledge of linguistic forms, while language use refers to the ability to apply those forms in meaningful communication (Widdowson, 1978). This distinction is important for Arabic teaching because many learners can memorize grammatical rules but cannot use them effectively in speech, writing, translation, or text analysis.

J.C. Richards also supported the communicative orientation of language teaching. He stated that communicative language teaching should develop learners' ability to communicate meaningfully and appropriately rather than simply repeat language structures (Richards, 2006). In the context of Arabic education, this means that teachers should use dialogues, role-plays, authentic texts, listening activities, presentations, and translation tasks.

D. Nunan emphasized learner-centered and task-based language teaching. He argued that students learn more effectively when they are involved in meaningful tasks that reflect real-life language use (Nunan, 1989). For Uzbek students learning Arabic, task-based learning may include reading Arabic news texts, translating short passages, preparing dialogues, analyzing cultural expressions, writing formal letters, and presenting information in Arabic.

S. Savignon viewed communicative competence as a dynamic ability that develops through interaction and negotiation of meaning (Savignon, 2002). This idea is useful for Arabic classes because students should be encouraged to speak, ask questions, clarify meaning, express opinions, and participate in discussions.

C. Kramersch paid special attention to the relationship between language and culture. She argued that language cannot be separated from cultural context because meaning is formed through cultural experience and social interaction (Kramersch, 1993). This view is particularly important in

teaching Arabic because Arabic is closely connected with Arab culture, Islamic civilization, religious terminology, etiquette, literature, and historical traditions.

Based on the views of foreign scholars, several main competencies should be developed in teaching Arabic to Uzbek students.

Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence includes knowledge of Arabic phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, morphology, and syntax. Arabic has a root-based word formation system, specific verb patterns, case endings, gender agreement, and complex sentence structures. Uzbek students need systematic training to understand these features.

Chomsky's idea of linguistic competence remains important here because students must first acquire the structural basis of the Arabic language (Chomsky, 1965). However, linguistic competence alone is not enough. It should become the foundation for practical communication.

Communicative Competence

Communicative competence is the ability to use Arabic in real-life situations. Hymes' theory shows that language learning should include both correctness and appropriateness (Hymes, 1972). In Arabic teaching, students should learn how to greet people, introduce themselves, ask questions, give opinions, explain ideas, and communicate in formal and informal contexts.

For Uzbek students, communicative competence is especially necessary because Arabic may be used in translation, international relations, tourism, religious studies, academic research, and intercultural communication.

Sociocultural and Intercultural Competence

Arabic language learning requires an understanding of cultural meanings. Kramersch's theory of language and culture proves that foreign language education should include cultural interpretation and intercultural awareness (Kramersch, 1993). Uzbek students should learn Arabic speech etiquette, forms of politeness, religious expressions, idioms, cultural values, and social norms.

For example, many Arabic expressions are connected with religion, respect, hospitality, and social hierarchy. Without cultural knowledge, students may understand the literal meaning of words but miss their pragmatic and cultural meaning.

Discourse Competence

Discourse competence refers to the ability to understand and produce coherent texts. Canale and Swain included discourse competence as an essential component of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). In Arabic education, this competence is needed for reading articles, understanding academic texts, analyzing literary works, and producing written compositions.

Students should learn how Arabic texts are organized, how ideas are connected, and how cohesive devices are used. This is especially important for future translators and Arabic language specialists.

Strategic Competence

Strategic competence helps learners continue communication even when they face difficulties. Canale and Swain emphasized that learners should be able to use communication strategies such as paraphrasing, asking for clarification, guessing meaning from context, and using non-verbal support (Canale & Swain, 1980).

For Uzbek students, this competence is very useful because Arabic vocabulary and grammar can be challenging. Strategic competence allows learners to become more independent and confident.

Translation Competence

For students of Arabic translation theory and practice, translation competence is one of the most important competencies. It includes the ability to understand the source text, analyze context, identify cultural meanings, choose appropriate equivalents, and transfer meaning accurately into Uzbek or another language.

Although translation competence was not the central focus of early communicative competence theories, it can be connected with discourse, sociocultural, and strategic competencies. A good translator must know not only words and grammar but also context, style, culture, and communicative purpose.

Digital Competence

Modern Arabic teaching also requires digital competence. Students should be able to use electronic dictionaries, online corpora, Arabic learning platforms, digital libraries, translation tools, and educational applications. Digital competence supports independent learning and gives students access to authentic Arabic materials.

In the competency-based approach, digital tools should not replace the teacher but should support language practice, vocabulary development, listening skills, reading comprehension, and translation training.

The ideas of foreign scholars can be effectively adapted to Arabic language education in Uzbekistan. Uzbek students have specific linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The Uzbek language belongs to the Turkic language family, while Arabic belongs to the Semitic language family. This creates difficulties in pronunciation, grammar, word order, and word formation.

At the same time, Uzbek students may have some advantages because many Arabic loanwords exist in Uzbek. These words are often related to religion, education, science, ethics, and culture. However, teachers should explain that the meanings of Arabic loanwords in Uzbek may differ from their original meanings in Arabic.

The competency-based approach helps teachers organize Arabic lessons more effectively. Instead of teaching grammar as isolated rules, teachers can connect grammar with communication, reading, writing, translation, and cultural analysis. For example, when teaching Arabic verb forms, the teacher can combine grammatical explanation with sentence building, dialogue practice, text reading, and translation activities.

Foreign scholars' ideas also support the use of interactive teaching methods. Pair work, group work, project-based learning, role-play, problem-solving tasks, and authentic materials can increase students' motivation and practical skills. Such methods help students see Arabic not as a difficult system of abstract rules but as a living language used for communication, knowledge, and culture.

Methodological Recommendations

The competency-based approach in teaching Arabic to Uzbek students can be implemented through the following methodological principles.

First, learning objectives should be formulated according to competencies. For example, instead of stating that students "learn Arabic nouns," the objective should be: "students can use Arabic nouns correctly in oral and written communication."

Second, grammar should be taught functionally. This means that grammar rules should be connected with practical communication and text analysis. Students should understand not only the form of a grammatical structure but also its function in speech.

Third, authentic materials should be used in the classroom. These may include Arabic dialogues, news texts, short stories, official documents, videos, audio recordings, and religious or cultural texts selected according to students' level.

Fourth, assessment should evaluate practical ability, not only theoretical knowledge. Oral presentations, written assignments, listening tasks, translation exercises, role-plays, portfolios, and project work can be used to assess students' competencies.

Fifth, intercultural content should be integrated into the learning process. Students should compare Uzbek and Arab cultural norms, analyze culturally marked expressions, and learn how to avoid misunderstanding in intercultural communication.

Sixth, independent learning should be encouraged. Students should be taught how to use dictionaries, digital resources, corpora, online courses, and self-assessment tools.

Discussion

The analysis of foreign scholars' views shows that the competency-based approach is not a narrow method but a broad educational framework. It requires the integration of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practical performance. In teaching Arabic to Uzbek students, this approach is especially valuable because Arabic requires not only grammatical knowledge but also cultural, communicative, and interpretive skills.

The views of Hymes, Canale, Swain, Widdowson, Krashinsky, Richards, Nunan, and Savignon show that effective language teaching should prepare students for real communication. For Arabic

learners, this means being able to understand spoken and written Arabic, communicate appropriately, translate accurately, and interpret cultural meanings.

However, the successful implementation of this approach depends on several factors. Teachers should be methodologically prepared, textbooks should be competency-oriented, digital resources should be available, and assessment criteria should measure real language performance. Without these conditions, the competency-based approach may remain only a theoretical concept.

Conclusion

Foreign scholars' views on the competency-based approach provide an important theoretical and methodological basis for teaching Arabic to Uzbek students. Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence, Hymes' theory of communicative competence, Canale and Swain's model of communicative competence, Widdowson's distinction between usage and use, Kramsch's theory of language and culture, Richards' communicative language teaching, Nunan's task-based approach, and Savignon's interactional view of communication all contribute to the development of modern Arabic language education.

In the context of Uzbekistan, the competency-based approach helps connect Arabic grammar, vocabulary, communication, translation, culture, and independent learning. It allows students to use Arabic not only as an academic subject but also as a practical means of communication and professional activity.

Therefore, teaching Arabic to Uzbek students should be organized as a competency-oriented process. Such an approach can improve the quality of Arabic language education and prepare competitive specialists in Arabic translation, linguistics, intercultural communication, and related fields.

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