

Sociolinguistic, Discourse, and Literary Competences in English Language Studies: A Critical Review of Barro-Punzalan's Study on Enhancing Communicative Competence

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Abstract

This article review critically examines Sweetzel B. Barro-Punzalan's study, Sociolinguistics, Discourse, and Literary Competences among English Language Studies Students, which investigates three essential aspects of communicative competence: sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and literary competence. The study employs a quantitative descriptive methodology to assess the proficiency of English Language Studies (ELS) students, surveying 146 participants on their language attitudes, social experience, coherence, cohesion, and literary text recognition. The findings indicate that while students exhibit strong attitudes toward the importance of English as a global language, their ability to apply sociolinguistic knowledge in social contexts remains moderate. In terms of discourse competence, students demonstrate proficiency in coherence and cohesion but face challenges in maintaining logical flow across extended texts. Literary competence reveals a gap, as students show moderate ability to critically engage with literary texts, suggesting the need for deeper analytical skills. The study's reliance on self-reported data and its focus on a single institution introduce limitations regarding bias and generalizability. Despite these limitations, Barro-Punzalan's study contributes significantly to the field of language education by highlighting areas of strength and weakness in communicative competence. The review offers practical recommendations, including immersive learning experiences, AI-mediated tools for feedback, and interdisciplinary approaches to literary analysis. Additionally, it outlines future research directions, advocating for mixed-method studies, longitudinal tracking, and cross-institutional research. This review underscores the importance of integrating sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences into language curricula to enhance students' ability to communicate effectively in diverse contexts.

Keywords: Communicative Competence, Sociolinguistic Competence, Discourse Competence, Literary Competence, Language Education, Immersive Learning

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, proficiency in the English language has become more than just an academic skill; it is an essential tool for communication across diverse social, professional, and academic contexts. Traditionally, language teaching focused primarily on grammatical accuracy and vocabulary acquisition. However, as perspectives on language learning have evolved, there has been a shift towards a more comprehensive understanding of language competence. The concept of communicative competence, first introduced by Dell Hymes (1972) and later refined by Canale and Swain (1980), emphasizes that effective communication transcends the mastery of syntax and semantics. It incorporates a range of skills that allow individuals to navigate the social, cultural, and contextual nuances of language use, making communication both meaningful and effective in various settings.

Communicative competence is multidimensional, encompassing sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and literary competence—three critical areas that play a vital role in understanding language use in both academic and real-world contexts. Sociolinguistic competence refers to the ability to use language appropriately across diverse social settings, recognizing the social rules that govern communication. This includes an understanding of cultural norms, power dynamics, and contextual influences on language use. Discourse competence involves the ability to produce and interpret coherent, cohesive speech or writing, ensuring that ideas flow logically and connect effectively. Literary competence emphasizes the ability to critically engage with literary texts, recognizing literary devices, interpreting meanings, and understanding cultural and historical contexts. Together, these competencies provide the foundation for effective communication, equipping students with the skills necessary for success in academic, professional, and personal spheres.

Sweetzel B. Barro-Punzalan's study, *Sociolinguistics, Discourse, and Literary Competences among English Language Studies Students*, examines these three components of communicative competence among students enrolled in an English Language Studies (ELS) program. Using a quantitative descriptive methodology, the study assesses the proficiency of 146 students in these key areas. The findings offer valuable insights into how well ELS students are prepared to apply their language skills in real-world contexts. While the study highlights students' strengths, such as their understanding of sociolinguistic attitudes and discourse cohesion, it also identifies significant weaknesses, particularly in the practical application of sociolinguistic knowledge and in their ability to engage critically with literary texts.

This review critically evaluates Barro-Punzalan's study, positioning its findings within the broader field of communicative competence. The primary aim of this review is to assess the relevance and significance of the study in enhancing language education programs, with a particular focus on the strengths and limitations of its methodology and results. Additionally, the review will draw connections between Barro-Punzalan's findings and existing literature on communicative competence, incorporating influential works by Hymes (1972), Celce-Murcia (2007), and others. In doing so, this review seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on how language education can be improved to better prepare students for effective communication in today's globalized world. Ultimately, the review will offer recommendations for refining educational strategies and curricula, particularly within English language studies, to ensure that students develop a holistic and applicable mastery of communicative competence.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study critically evaluates the communicative competence of English Language Studies (ELS) students, addressing three interconnected dimensions: sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences. Building on Hymes' (1972) concept of communicative competence and Canale and Swain's (1980) expanded framework, the research investigates the interplay of these competences and their collective impact on effective communication. By assessing 146 students from a single academic institution through validated survey instruments (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.7$), the study provides a comprehensive view of the students' proficiency in language attitudes, social experience, textual coherence, cohesion, and engagement with literary texts.

The findings reveal that students demonstrate strong language attitudes, appreciating English as a global lingua franca and a tool for professional and academic advancement. However, their sociolinguistic competence is moderate, reflecting challenges in adapting language to diverse cultural norms, social contexts, and power dynamics. Discourse competence is a relative strength, as students exhibit proficiency in constructing coherent and cohesive communication. Nevertheless, they face difficulties sustaining logical flow in extended discourse, such as argumentative essays and structured presentations. Literary competence, the weakest domain, highlights a superficial engagement with texts, as students struggle to critically analyze literary devices, interpret themes, and contextualize works within cultural and historical frameworks.

This study makes a significant contribution to language education by emphasizing the holistic and interdependent nature of sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences. It identifies critical gaps that impede students' ability to navigate complex linguistic and cultural landscapes and proposes actionable interventions. Immersive learning experiences, including cultural exchanges, internships, and community-based projects, are recommended to enhance sociolinguistic skills. Writing workshops and oral communication training can support the development of advanced discourse strategies, while structured literary analysis workshops and interdisciplinary approaches can deepen students' critical engagement with texts. Additionally, the integration of AI-mediated tools, such as automated writing assistants, is proposed to provide personalized feedback and improve learning outcomes.

The study's recommendations are grounded in a competency-based approach to language education, emphasizing practical application alongside theoretical understanding. Future research should explore longitudinal and cross-institutional studies to track the evolution of competences over time and assess the effectiveness of these interventions across diverse educational contexts. By situating its findings within established theoretical frameworks and addressing a critical gap in language education, this research offers a novel and practical roadmap for equipping students with the skills necessary for effective communication in an increasingly interconnected world.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

Barro-Punzalan's study, *Sociolinguistics, Discourse, and Literary Competences among English Language Studies Students*, provides a comprehensive analysis of communicative competence. While the study demonstrates methodological rigor and significant contributions to language education, it also has notable limitations. The following discussion critically evaluates the study's methodology, data analysis, conclusions, and broader impact on the field.

Methodology and Research Design

The study employs a quantitative descriptive research design, using validated survey instruments with high reliability scores (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.7$). This methodological rigor ensures internal consistency and robust findings. By

dividing communicative competence into sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary dimensions, the study offers a detailed and structured analysis, enabling a multifaceted understanding of the students' skills. This approach aligns with established frameworks by Hymes (1972) and Canale and Swain (1980), reinforcing its theoretical validity.

The survey-based methodology employed allowed for the systematic collection of data from a relatively large sample (146 participants), making the results robust and statistically meaningful. The study uses validated survey instruments to assess sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences, which enhances the credibility of the findings. George and Mallery (2003) emphasize the importance of using reliable, validated instruments to ensure the accuracy and reproducibility of research results. In this study, the high Cronbach's alpha values reported for the survey scales demonstrate strong internal consistency, further supporting the reliability of the data collected.

Moreover, the clear conceptualization of the three components of communicative competence—language attitude, social experience, coherence, cohesion, and literary competence—ensures that the study is comprehensive in scope while maintaining a strong focus on specific variables that can be measured effectively. The use of these specific dimensions of competence allows for a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and strengths of students in relation to communicative competence.

Limitations in Methodology

Despite its strengths, the study's reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases. Students may overestimate their abilities due to social desirability effects, which can skew results and compromise the accuracy of the findings. As Van de Mortel (2008) points out, self-reported data are prone to social desirability bias, which can impact the validity of research outcomes. Integrating objective assessments—such as performance-based tasks or direct observation—would provide a more reliable measure of students' competences. For instance, discourse competence could be assessed through structured writing tasks, as suggested by Hyland (2002), while sociolinguistic competence might benefit from simulated real-world interactions (Byram, 1997).

Another limitation is the sample size and demographic scope. With 146 participants from a single institution, the study's findings lack external validity. This homogeneous sample limits the ability to generalize results to broader populations, including students from different cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds. Creswell (2014) emphasizes the importance of diverse samples in enhancing the representativeness of research findings. Future studies should include cross-institutional and cross-cultural samples to enhance representativeness and applicability. Expanding the research to include diverse educational contexts would provide a more comprehensive picture of communicative competence across varying environments.

In addition, Barro-Punzalan's study would have been better if he used longitudinal research design to track the development of students' competences over time. Ellis (2008) suggests that longitudinal studies are essential for understanding how language proficiency evolves and how educational interventions impact student learning. By following students across multiple semesters or academic years, researchers could gain a better understanding of how sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences develop as students gain more exposure to language and culture. Additionally, longitudinal data would provide insights into the long-term effects of immersive learning experiences, such as study-abroad programs, on students' communicative competence.

Data Analysis and Interconnections

One of the significant strengths of Barro-Punzalan's study is its thorough investigation of the three fundamental dimensions of communicative competence: sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences. This multi-dimensional approach provides a holistic understanding of language proficiency, acknowledging the complexity of real-world communication. Hymes (1972), who introduced the concept of communicative competence, emphasized that effective communication encompasses more than grammatical precision. It requires a nuanced grasp of social and cultural contexts as well as the ability to effectively navigate different discourse settings. Barro-Punzalan's work supports this perspective by extending its analysis beyond linguistic competence to include sociolinguistic and discourse-related factors that critically shape communicative success.

Additionally, the study draws on Canale and Swain's (1980) model, which expanded Hymes' framework to include sociolinguistic competence (appropriate language use across social contexts) and discourse competence (the ability to maintain cohesion and coherence in communication). By grounding its analysis in these well-established theoretical foundations, Barro-Punzalan's research demonstrates academic rigor and offers a robust framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of language proficiency.

Despite the study's comprehensive scope, a notable limitation is its lack of exploration into the correlations among the three dimensions of communicative competence. Understanding these interconnections is critical for grasping the interdependence of these competences and their combined impact on overall language proficiency.

For instance, Tejada (2021) highlights the role of sociolinguistic competence in discourse coherence, emphasizing that difficulties in adapting language to various social contexts can hinder a speaker's ability to construct contextually appropriate and coherent discourse. Similarly, Schrijvers et al. (2017) argue that literary competence, which includes the ability to interpret and analyze complex texts, plays a pivotal role in shaping learners' capacity to construct nuanced arguments in both written and oral communication. Such interdependencies suggest that weaknesses in one area could impede development or performance in others, underscoring the need for integrated approaches to language education.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study's recommendations for immersive learning experiences, writing workshops, and interdisciplinary approaches are well-founded and align with existing literature. Immersive learning—through internships, cultural exchanges, or community-based projects—has been shown to enhance sociolinguistic competence by providing real-world practice opportunities (Tejada, 2021). Writing workshops can address gaps in discourse competence by helping students develop structured arguments and coherent texts (Hyland, 2002). Similarly, interdisciplinary approaches that integrate literature with history, sociology, and cultural studies can foster deeper engagement and critical analysis, addressing weaknesses in literary competence (Kramsch, 1993).

However, the study's conclusions could be further strengthened by explicitly linking these proposed interventions to empirical evidence of their effectiveness in similar contexts. For instance, research demonstrating the impact of cultural immersion on sociolinguistic skills (Byram, 1997) or AI-mediated tools on discourse competence (Fathi et al., 2024) would bolster the study's practical implications.

Bias and Objectivity

While the study's analysis appears impartial, the reliance on self-reported data and a single academic setting introduces potential biases. Including perspectives from multiple institutions and cultural contexts would mitigate these limitations and provide a more balanced perspective. For instance, contrasting findings from institutions with different language policies or pedagogical practices could illuminate broader trends and contextual differences in communicative competence (Gardner, 1985). Furthermore, Van de Mortel (2008) warns that students may overestimate their abilities or present themselves in a more favorable light when completing surveys. This could affect the accuracy of the results, particularly when measuring sociolinguistic and literary competences. Incorporating objective assessments, such as observational data or performance-based tasks, could provide a more accurate representation of students' competences. Moreover, Creswell (2014) suggests that combining quantitative methods with qualitative data, such as interviews or focus groups, would provide a deeper understanding of students' language learning experiences and the factors that influence their performance.

Flaws in Sample Representation

The homogeneous nature of the sample significantly reduces the study's generalizability. Participants are drawn from a single institution, limiting the applicability of findings to other contexts. This narrow scope fails to capture the diverse factors that influence language competence, such as regional linguistic variations, cultural attitudes toward English, or differences in curriculum design (Creswell, 2014).

While the study effectively assesses students' sociolinguistic competence, it lacks a thorough exploration of the sociocultural dynamics that shape language learning. Byram (1997) and Kramsch (1993) argue that sociocultural factors, such as cultural values, social norms, and language attitudes, play a significant role in shaping students' sociolinguistic competence. Barro-Punzalan's reliance on quantitative methods limits the study's ability to explore these sociocultural dynamics in depth. A more qualitative approach, incorporating interviews or ethnographic observations, could shed light on how students' personal experiences and cultural backgrounds influence their development of sociolinguistic competence.

To address this issue, future research should incorporate diverse samples that include students from various educational settings, linguistic backgrounds, and cultural contexts. Cross-institutional studies could reveal how institutional policies and resources affect language learning outcomes (Byram, 1997). Additionally, cross-cultural research could explore how sociocultural dynamics influence the development of communicative competence, providing insights into the global applicability of the study's findings. Such an approach aligns with calls for more inclusive and representative research practices in language education (Celce-Murcia, 2007).

Connections to Related Research

Barro-Punzalan's study builds extensively on foundational theories and contemporary research, positioning its exploration of sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences within a broader academic context. The integration of these dimensions reflects a progressive approach to communicative competence, building on Hymes' (1972)

seminal work, which emphasized the interplay between linguistic knowledge and its use in social and cultural contexts. Canale and Swain (1980) expanded this model to formalize the roles of sociolinguistic and discourse competences, while Celce-Murcia (2007) refined these ideas by advocating for integrative and interactive teaching methods. Barro-Punzalan situates its findings within these theoretical frameworks, emphasizing a holistic perspective on language learning.

The study's findings align with empirical research emphasizing the importance of cultural immersion for developing sociolinguistic competence. Tejada (2021) demonstrated that exposure to diverse cultural environments enhances learners' ability to adapt their language use to social norms, a finding that resonates with Barro-Punzalan's identification of moderate performance in this area. Byram (1997) similarly underscores the necessity of intercultural interaction in building skills to navigate complex social dynamics, further supporting Barro-Punzalan's recommendation for providing students with greater opportunities for authentic cultural engagement.

In addition to sociolinguistic competence, Barro-Punzalan highlights the role of technology in enhancing discourse competence, aligning with Fathi et al. (2024), who emphasize the potential of AI tools to provide personalized feedback for improving coherence and cohesion. Automated writing assistants and speech analysis platforms enable students to refine their communication strategies through iterative practice. This approach complements Hyland's (2002) findings, which highlight the importance of explicit instruction and feedback in helping students organize and articulate their ideas effectively.

The inclusion of literary competence adds a unique dimension to Barro-Punzalan's study, connecting it to ongoing discussions about the role of literature in language education. Research by Schrijvers et al. (2017) shows that engaging with literary texts fosters critical thinking, empathy, and cultural understanding, while Nussbaum (1997) emphasizes literature's potential for cultivating ethical reflection and global citizenship. The study's identification of gaps in students' ability to analyze and interpret complex texts mirrors broader challenges in promoting critical engagement with literature. Recommendations for interdisciplinary approaches, as suggested by Kramsch (1993) and Rosenblatt (1978), offer practical strategies for addressing these gaps by connecting literature to historical, cultural, and philosophical contexts.

Barro-Punzalan also emphasizes the interconnectedness of sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences, aligning with Celce-Murcia's (2007) integrative model and Bachman and Palmer's (1996) conceptualization of communicative language ability. Limited sociolinguistic competence can hinder students' ability to adapt discourse strategies to diverse audiences, while challenges in literary competence may affect their ability to construct complex arguments. These findings resonate with Byram and Zarate's (1997) advocacy for a holistic approach to language education that integrates linguistic, cultural, and analytical dimensions.

Study's Impact on the Field

The study makes significant novel contributions by expanding the traditional scope of communicative competence to include literary competence alongside sociolinguistic and discourse competences. This integration acknowledges the multifaceted nature of communication, bridging cognitive, cultural, and communicative domains. By placing literature at the core of language education, the study aligns with Kramsch's (1993) argument for an interdisciplinary approach that situates language learning within its cultural and historical contexts. Literature fosters critical thinking, cultural empathy, and ethical reflection, which are essential skills for navigating complex social and professional environments. Schrijvers et al. (2017) highlight that engaging with literary texts allows students to explore diverse perspectives and develop a deeper understanding of both themselves and others. This broader framework contributes to the evolving landscape of language education, emphasizing the importance of integrating cognitive and cultural dimensions into communicative competence.

The study's recommendations for interdisciplinary and technology-enhanced learning strategies have transformative implications for curriculum design and instructional practices. The integration of AI-mediated feedback tools, as highlighted by Fathi et al. (2024), offers a practical solution to address gaps in discourse competence. These tools provide real-time, personalized evaluations of coherence, cohesion, and overall textual organization. By offering immediate feedback, AI tools empower students to refine their writing skills iteratively. Moreover, the adaptive nature of these technologies allows them to cater to diverse learner needs, making them an invaluable resource in large and heterogeneous classrooms. The study's emphasis on interdisciplinary workshops—combining literature with history, sociology, and cultural studies—resonates with Kramsch's (1993) advocacy for contextualized language learning. Such workshops enable students to situate literary texts within broader social and historical frameworks, fostering a deeper engagement with the material. For example, analyzing a novel through the lens of its historical context not only enriches students' understanding of the text but also enhances their critical thinking and analytical skills. Schrijvers et al. (2017) further emphasize that interdisciplinary approaches encourage students to draw connections between academic disciplines, promoting a more holistic learning experience.

Immersive learning experiences, such as cultural exchanges, internships, and community-based projects, are another key recommendation of the study. These experiences align with Tejada's (2021) findings that cultural immersion significantly enhances sociolinguistic competence. By engaging with diverse cultural settings, students practice adapting their language use to various social norms, power dynamics, and contexts. This hands-on approach bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, preparing students for real-world communicative challenges. The study's findings advocate for the integration of these strategies into existing curricula to address gaps in communicative competence comprehensively. For instance, embedding AI tools within writing modules can systematically improve discourse skills, while interdisciplinary projects can be incorporated into literature courses to foster critical analysis. Additionally, study-abroad programs or local community engagement initiatives can be integrated into sociolinguistics courses, providing students with opportunities to develop sociolinguistic competence in authentic contexts.

Validity Assessment

The study's reliance on validated instruments ensures high internal validity, with high Cronbach's alpha values (> 0.7) indicating strong reliability, as noted by George and Mallery (2003). This statistical reliability underscores the robustness of the survey instruments used to measure sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences. However, the absence of longitudinal data limits understanding of how competences develop over time. Ellis (2008) emphasizes that longitudinal studies are critical for capturing the dynamic nature of language acquisition and for evaluating the long-term impact of educational interventions. For instance, tracking students across multiple semesters would provide insights into how immersive and interdisciplinary learning strategies influence competence development over time. Additionally, longitudinal research could reveal the progression and interconnection of sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences, as suggested by Flowerdew and Miller (2005).

The study's findings are constrained by its single-institution sample, limiting their generalizability. Creswell (2014) argues that including diverse educational and cultural settings enhances external validity, making findings more applicable across different contexts. For example, cross-institutional research could reveal variations in communicative competence based on institutional policies, curricular frameworks, and resource availability. Byram (1997) highlights the importance of cross-cultural studies in understanding how sociolinguistic competence develops in diverse linguistic environments. Such research could compare how students in multilingual settings versus monolingual settings navigate sociolinguistic and discourse challenges. Additionally, including students from varying socio-economic and regional backgrounds could offer a more comprehensive picture of the factors influencing communicative competence, as supported by Tejada (2021). By addressing these limitations through broader sampling and longitudinal designs, future studies could significantly enhance the validity and applicability of findings in language education research.

Applicability to Other Contexts

While the study centers on English Language Studies (ELS) students, its findings and recommendations extend beyond academic contexts, highlighting the potential for application in multilingual, professional, and community-based settings. The emphasis on immersive and interdisciplinary approaches aligns with broader language education strategies. For example, Reinders and White (2011) emphasize the role of technology in facilitating language learning across varied environments, suggesting its adaptability for workplace training or informal community programs. Similarly, Tejada (2021) advocates for cultural immersion as a means to enhance practical communication skills, particularly in settings requiring cross-cultural engagement.

By anchoring its findings within established theoretical frameworks and connecting them to broader research, Barro-Punzalan's study illustrates the value of a holistic approach to language education. This perspective resonates with the work of Hymes (1972) on communicative competence and Canagarajah (2018), who advocates for context-sensitive pedagogical practices. For practitioners and policymakers, these insights support the development of language education initiatives tailored to diverse learner needs—whether professionals aiming to enhance workplace communication or community members participating in intercultural exchanges.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Barro-Punzalan's study provides significant insights that have important practical implications for language education. The findings highlight key areas where language programs can be enhanced to foster more well-rounded communicative competence among students. The study's emphasis on sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences presents opportunities for curriculum developers, teachers, and educational institutions to refine and innovate language teaching strategies.

1. Enhancing Sociolinguistic Competence

The finding that students demonstrated high proficiency in language attitudes but moderate ability in social experience reveals an opportunity for integrating immersive learning experiences into language education. While students understand the importance of English in a global context, they lack sufficient opportunities to apply their knowledge in diverse social settings. The study recommends incorporating intercultural communication workshops, community-based learning programs, and study-abroad opportunities to bridge this gap. These experiences would allow students to engage with different social contexts and practice their sociolinguistic skills in real-world situations. Research by Tejada (2021) supports this approach, emphasizing the critical role of exposure to diverse cultural and linguistic environments in developing sociolinguistic competence.

Teachers could also implement role-playing activities in the classroom to simulate real-world scenarios where students practice adjusting their language use according to social roles, power dynamics, and formal/informal settings. This active engagement with sociolinguistic norms in a controlled environment would help students develop practical communication skills beyond theoretical knowledge.

2. Developing Advanced Discourse Skills

In terms of discourse competence, the study found that while students performed well in coherence and cohesion, they struggled with maintaining logical flow across extended discourse. This presents an opportunity for educators to focus on developing students' skills in argumentation and textual organization. Barro-Punzalan recommends the use of writing workshops and oral communication training to help students craft structured, logically organized arguments in essays and presentations. These workshops can include exercises in outlining arguments, crafting thesis statements, and linking ideas effectively.

Additionally, integrating AI-mediated tools for personalized feedback, such as automated writing assistants and speaking simulators, can support students in refining their discourse competence. Studies like Fathi et al. (2024) show the efficacy of AI tools in providing real-time feedback on coherence, cohesion, and argumentation. These tools can help students identify gaps in their discourse structure and suggest improvements. Teachers can also encourage peer reviews and collaborative writing activities, as these provide opportunities for students to give and receive feedback, deepening their understanding of effective discourse strategies.

3. Strengthening Literary Competence

Barro-Punzalan's findings highlight a gap in students' ability to critically engage with literary texts, which suggests a need for structured literary analysis workshops in language programs. These workshops can focus on developing students' skills in identifying literary devices such as metaphors, symbolism, and narrative structure, as well as teaching students how to interpret texts within their historical and cultural contexts. By focusing on these areas, educators can help students transition from basic comprehension to more sophisticated levels of analysis.

Incorporating interdisciplinary approaches is another effective strategy for enhancing literary competence. Kramsch (1993) advocates for integrating literature with cultural studies, history, and sociology to deepen students' understanding of texts. This approach would enable students to engage with literature from multiple perspectives, fostering critical thinking and cultural empathy. Barro-Punzalan's recommendation to include these interdisciplinary methods in the curriculum can help students make connections between literature, society, and culture, enriching their academic experience.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Barro-Punzalan's study opens several avenues for future research, which could expand upon the findings and further refine language education practices. One of the primary areas for future research is to explore longitudinal studies that track students' development of sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences over time. Ellis (2008) argues that longitudinal research is essential to understanding how language proficiency evolves and how educational interventions impact student learning. Such studies could assess how students' communicative competence develops as they progress through their language studies, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of various teaching strategies.

Moreover, future research could incorporate mixed-method approaches that combine quantitative surveys with qualitative data, such as interviews and classroom observations. This would allow researchers to gain a deeper understanding of how students apply their competences in real-world contexts, as well as their perceptions of language use. Creswell (2014) suggests that combining both qualitative and quantitative methods provides a more holistic view of the educational process, especially in complex fields such as language learning. By integrating self-reports with observational data, researchers can triangulate findings and ensure that the results reflect both students' subjective experiences and their actual performance.

Cross-institutional research is another valuable direction for future studies. Barro-Punzalan's study focused on a single institution, which limits the generalizability of the findings. By expanding the sample to include students from diverse academic institutions and cultural backgrounds, future research can provide a more comprehensive

understanding of how sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences vary across different educational contexts. Byram (1997) emphasizes the importance of cross-cultural and cross-institutional studies in understanding the broader factors that influence language learning. Such studies could help identify universal trends and contextual differences in language acquisition, enriching the field of language education.

Finally, future research could investigate the impact of technology on language competences. Barro-Punzalan's study touches on the potential role of AI-mediated tools in improving discourse competence, but further research is needed to explore how technology can enhance sociolinguistic and literary competences. Reinders and White (2011) argue that digital tools can empower students by providing personalized, interactive learning experiences. Future studies could examine the effectiveness of AI tools, virtual reality platforms, and gamification in language education, particularly in the development of real-world communication skills. Additionally, research could explore how technology can support interdisciplinary learning, particularly in literature, by offering new ways for students to engage with texts and cultural contexts.

CONCLUSION

Barro-Punzalan's study, Sociolinguistics, Discourse, and Literary Competences among English Language Studies Students, provides an insightful analysis of three key aspects of communicative competence: sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences. This review focuses on evaluating the study's contributions, highlighting its strengths, weaknesses, and implications for language education.

Key findings of the study include:

- **Strengths:** Students show strong language attitudes and proficiency in coherence and cohesion within discourse. They value English as a global language and demonstrate the ability to produce well-organized and cohesive texts.
- **Weaknesses:** There are clear gaps in students' practical use of sociolinguistic knowledge in real-world settings and their critical engagement with literary texts. These gaps call for immersive, interdisciplinary, and technology-enhanced learning interventions.
- **Implications:** The study emphasizes the interrelation of sociolinguistic, discourse, and literary competences, showing how weaknesses in one area can impact others. This highlights the need for a well-rounded, integrated approach to language education.

To address these issues, the study recommends:

- Immersive learning opportunities like cultural exchanges and community-based projects to enhance sociolinguistic competence.
- Writing workshops, oral communication training, and AI-driven tools to strengthen discourse skills.
- Interdisciplinary methods combining literature with history, sociology, and cultural studies to foster critical thinking and deeper literary engagement.

Future research should expand on these findings through longitudinal and mixed-method studies to track competence development over time and across diverse contexts. Broader, cross-institutional research would improve generalizability and explore how these competences evolve in varied educational settings. Additionally, investigating how technology can support these competences could uncover innovative solutions.

In conclusion, Barro-Punzalan's study makes a meaningful contribution to language education by offering a comprehensive framework for understanding communicative competence. Its practical recommendations guide educators in preparing students for effective communication in today's interconnected world. Addressing the identified gaps with the suggested strategies will help equip students with the skills needed for success in academic, professional, and social environments.

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