Appendix B: Glossary

Actional competence: See "communicative competence."

Cohesion and coherence: Cohesion and coherence are two important elements of discourse competence—see below. Cohesion in a discourse sequence is created by many words or phrases that link one part of the text to another. Coherence is more concerned with the large structure of texts: a single theme or topic, the sequencing or ordering of the sentences, and the organizational pattern (e.g., temporal sequencing, cause and effect, condition and result). Texts that are cohesive and coherent are easier to interpret.

Communicative competence: The model of communicative competence adopted in this document is roughly based on the models of Canale and Swain, and Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell, but it includes insights from a number of other researchers including Byram, Bachman, and Cohen. It includes the following components:

Grammatical competence is defined by Savignon as "mastery of the linguistic code, the ability to recognize the *lexical, morphological, syntactic, and phonological* features of a language and to manipulate these features to form words and sentences" (37). These elements of communicative competence are developed in the Language Competence component under the cluster heading "attend to form." Following Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell, orthography has been added in the *Framework*.

Discourse competence "is the ability to interpret a series of sentences or utterances in order to form a meaningful whole and to achieve coherent texts that are relevant to a given context" (Savignon 40). It involves understanding and being able to use words and grammatical functions to make connections between elements of a text so that the text forms a meaningful whole.

Some examples of these words and grammatical functions are noun-pronoun references; relative pronouns; conjunctions, such as *but, and, so*; and words and phrases, such as *therefore, afterward, on the other hand, besides, for example*. Discourse competence is developed in the Language Competence component under the cluster heading "apply knowledge of how text is organized, structured and sequenced in German."

Sociolinguistic or sociocultural competence has to do with the appropriateness of language in relation to the context or situation. It includes such elements as sensitivity to differences in register or variations in language, nonverbal communication, and idiomatic expressions. Sociocultural competence is developed in the Language Competence component under the cluster heading "apply knowledge of the sociocultural context."

Functional or **actional competence** covers the purposes of language users, the contexts in which they can operate, and the functions that they can carry out using the language. This competence is defined in the Applications component of the Framework.

Intercultural competence is a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enables individuals to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries. It includes the skills of finding information about a culture; interpreting this information in order to understand the beliefs, meanings and behaviours of members of that culture; relating one's own culture to the target culture; and interacting with members of that culture. In the process of developing these skills, language learners will acquire knowledge of the other culture, a heightened awareness of their own, as well as knowledge of the processes of interaction between two cultures. A precondition for successful intercultural interaction is an attitude of openness and curiosity, as well as a willingness to look at the world from the point of view of the other culture. Intercultural competence is developed in the Global Citizenship component of the *Framework*.

Strategic competence, in early models of communicative competence, was defined as "ways to avoid potential [difficulties], or repair actual difficulties in communication, coping with communication breakdown, using affective devices" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 13). The concept was later expanded to include any strategies used to enhance communication and language learning. See the entries for "language learning strategies" and "language use strategies" in this glossary. Strategic competence is developed in the Strategies component of the *Framework*.

Content-based language learning: In content-based language learning, students learn a second language while they are learning content from another subject area. This is the approach taken in French immersion and bilingual programming.

Culture: The members of the culture task force of the *National Core French Study* (LeBlanc) have defined culture as "the general context and way of life. It is the behaviours and beliefs of a community of people whose history, geography, institutions, and commonalities are distinct and distinguish them to a greater or lesser degree from all other groups" (44). An important element of a people's way of life is their means of communicating amongst themselves, that is, their language.

Historical and contemporary elements of the culture may include historical and contemporary events; significant individuals; emblems or markers of national identity (myths, cultural products, significant sites, events in the collective memory); public institutions; geographical space (regions, landmarks, borders, frontiers); social distinctions; conventions of behaviour; and beliefs, taboos, perceptions, and perspectives. Choices about which elements to include should reflect the importance of the element within the culture, and the interests and developmental level of the students.

Discourse: Discourse is connected speech or writing that extends beyond a single sentence or utterance.

Discourse competence: See "communicative competence."

Diverse, diversity: Within most cultures, there are groups of people who have cultural beliefs, values, and practices that are different from the majority or mainstream culture. These differences may be based on religion, national, or ethnic origin, social class, race, or colour.

Functional competence: See "communicative competence."

Grammatical competence: See "communicative competence."

Guided situations: This term is used to describe all the methods teachers and other helpful conversational partners use to help language learners understand and produce language.

Oral language is more easily understood if speech is slow and clearly articulated, with pauses to assimilate meaning, and if it is accompanied by gestures, facial expressions, body language, or visuals that help to express the meaning. Language learners will have less difficulty understanding a familiar speaker—one whose voice, accent, and speech habits are well known to them—speaking about a topic that they know well and are interested in.

Written language is more easily understood if, for example, there are illustrations to support the text, there are titles and subtitles to guide the reader, and the topic is a familiar one.

Both **oral and written production** can be guided by providing students with language models (e.g., sample sentence structures, text forms, and patterns of social interaction), and by providing a language-rich environment (e.g., illustrated thematic vocabulary lists on classroom walls, labels on classroom objects, correction guides, illustrated dictionaries).

As students become more proficient, these supports can gradually be removed until the language they are exposed to closely resembles language in authentic situations.

Idiomatic expression: An idiom or an idiomatic expression is a word or group of words that has a commonly accepted meaning that is different from the literal meaning. Some examples include the following: *he passed away* (he died), *happy as a lark* (very happy), *I'm fed up* (I've had enough, I'm disgusted, I'm bored).

Intercultural competence: See "communicative competence."

Kinaesthetic ability: This is the ability to use the body to express ideas and feelings, and to use the hands to produce or transform things.

Language learning strategies: These are actions taken by learners to enhance their language learning.

Cognitive strategies operate directly on the language and include such things as using different techniques for remembering new words and phrases, deducing grammar rules or applying rules already learned, guessing at the meaning of unknown words, or using different ways to organize new information and link it to previously learned language.

Metacognitive strategies are higher order skills that students use to manage their own learning. They include planning for, monitoring, and evaluating the success of language learning.

Social strategies are actions learners take in order to interact with other learners or with speakers of the target language.

Affective strategies are methods learners use to regulate their emotions, motivation, and attitudes to make them more conducive to learning.

Language use strategies: These are actions taken to enhance communication. In early conceptual models of communicative competence (Canale and Swain), strategic competence was one component. It was defined as the strategies used "to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence" (30). Subsequent models have broadened the definition to include non-compensatory strategies. The term "language use strategies" is being used, rather than "communication strategies" to reflect this broader range. The strategies in the *Framework* are organized according to the three communicative modes: interactive, interpretive, and productive.

Language use strategies can be seen as a subcategory of language learning strategies, since any action taken to enhance communication or to avoid communication breakdown can be seen as increasing the chances that language learning will take place. Language use strategies can, however, be used with no intention of trying to improve learning of the language.

Lexical phrase: A group of words that functions like a single word (e.g., *all of a sudden, lie down, well done*).

Lexicon: Lexicon covers all kinds of words, both content words (e.g., *dog, run, happy*) and function words (e.g., *him, from, but*). It also includes lexical phrases, which are groups of words that function like single words (e.g., *all of a sudden*).

Mechanical conventions: These are the conventions used to make written text easier to read. They include such things as capitalization, punctuation, paragraphs, titles, or headings.

Morphology: Morphology is the part of grammar that deals with changes in words that mark their function in the sentence (e.g., changes in verb endings or adjectives to mark agreement).

Non-verbal communication: A large part of what we communicate is done without the use of words. Meaning can be communicated by gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, body language, physical distance, touching, sounds, noises, and silence.

Orthography: Orthography describes the writing system of the language: the correlation between the sounds and the spelling where the writing system is alphabetic, the rules of spelling, as well as mechanical conventions, such as capitalization and punctuation.

Patterns of social interaction: Social interaction often follows fairly predictable patterns. Very simple patterns are made up of two or three exchanges (e.g., greeting– response). More complex patterns may have some compulsory elements and some optional elements that depend on the situation (e.g., express an apology, accept responsibility, offer an explanation, offer repair, promise nonrecurrence). Lengthy interactions and transactions can be carried out by combining simpler ones to suit the situation.

Phonology: Phonology describes the sound system of the language, including pronunciation of vowels and consonants, intonation, rhythm, and stress.

Proficiency: *Canadian Language Benchmarks* (Citizenship and Immigration Canada) defines proficiency as "communicative competence, demonstrated through the ability to communicate and negotiate meaning and through the ability to interact meaningfully with other speakers, discourse, texts and the environment in a variety of situations" (10).

Register: Register is the level of formality of speech or writing, based on the social context in which the language is used. Casual conversation uses an informal register, while situations like a public lecture or a radio broadcast demand a more formal register. The language used in a personal letter to a good friend or a close family member differs considerably from that in a formal letter in the business world.

Social conventions: These are the customs that accompany speech in social situations. They include actions, such as bowing, shaking hands, or kissing; topics that are taboo in conversation; conventions for turn taking, interrupting, or refusing politely; and appropriate amounts of silence before responding.

Sociocultural competence: See "communicative competence."

Sociolinguistic competence: See "communicative competence."

Spatial ability: This is the ability to perceive the visual-spatial world accurately and to work with these perceptions. It includes sensitivity to colour, line, shape, form, space, and the relationships among them.

Strategic competence: See "language use strategies."

Syntax: Syntax is the part of grammar that deals with language at the sentence level (e.g., word order, types of sentences, the way sentences are constructed).

Task: Task is used in the Framework to mean "a piece of work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form" (adapted from Nunan *Designing Tasks*).

Task-based language learning: In task-based language learning, classes are structured around meaningful tasks rather than around elements of the language itself, such as grammar structures, vocabulary themes, or language functions.

Text: Any connected piece of language, whether a spoken utterance or a piece of writing, that language users/ learners interpret, produce, or exchange. There cannot, therefore, be an act of communication through language without a text.

Text forms: Different kinds of texts have typical structures. A letter, for example, has a different form or structure than a report or a poem. An oral interview is different from an announcement or an oral presentation. A sample list of text forms can be found in Appendix A.

Variations in language: Within any language, there are variations in the way people speak and write. Language can vary with the age, gender, social class, level of education and occupation of the speaker or writer. It can also vary from region to region within a country. Variations include differences in accent, vocabulary, and sometimes syntax, as well as differences in social conventions.