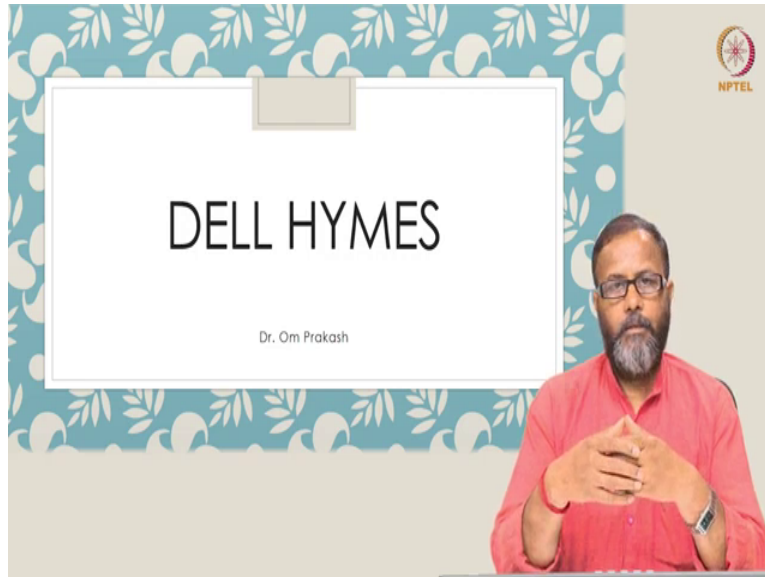


Fundamental Concepts in Sociolinguistics
Professor Om Prakash
School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida
Dell Hymes and His Work

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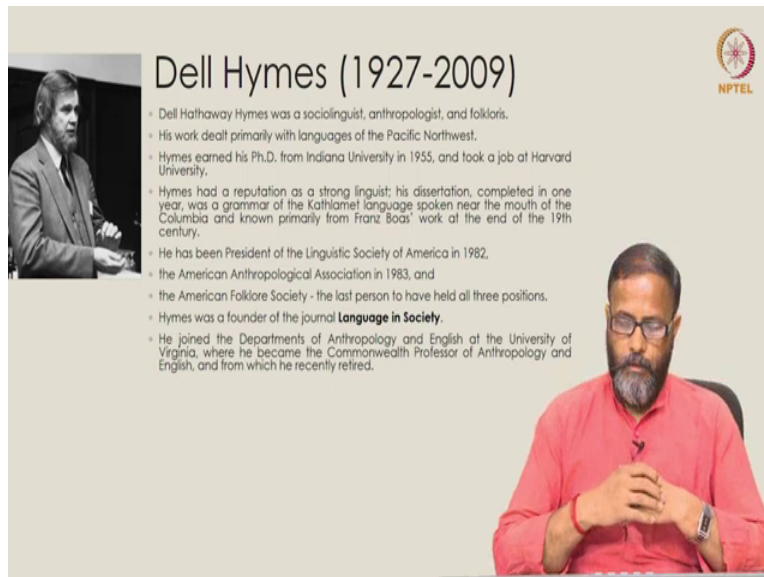
Welcome to class. In the continuation to what we have been doing in the series of founding fathers of sociolinguistics, modern sociolinguistics, today we are going to talk about another important and very great scholar called Dell Hymes, who is also considered as among the founding fathers of modern sociolinguistics. Dell Hymes became popular for taking Chomsky head on and for coining the term ‘communicative competence’.

For details on communicative competence, you can watch our video on communicative competence and his major influential work on ethnography of communication that is referred to as the ‘speaking model’ where in this word S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G, the letters, each letter stands for a particular definition, a setting of the communication. So, he created this acronym called speaking model. He was a young bright scholar and a linguist who worked on a language that Franz Boas worked on in the 19th century and he completed his dissertation in one year.

So, today we are going to talk about Dell Hymes, a major contributor in the emergence of sociolinguistics as a discipline and a founding father of modern sociolinguistics. He was also credited for an alternation in the terminology of anthropological linguistics to linguistic

anthropology. So, we will talk about all these things in detail in this lecture today. So, we are going to talk about Dell Hymes.

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Dell Hymes (1927-2009)

- Dell Hathaway Hymes was a sociolinguist, anthropologist, and folklorist.
- His work dealt primarily with languages of the Pacific Northwest.
- Hymes earned his Ph.D. from Indiana University in 1955, and took a job at Harvard University.
- Hymes had a reputation as a strong linguist; his dissertation, completed in one year, was a grammar of the Kathlamet language spoken near the mouth of the Columbia and known primarily from Franz Boas' work at the end of the 19th century.
- He has been President of the Linguistic Society of America in 1982.
- the American Anthropological Association in 1983, and
- the American Folklore Society - the last person to have held all three positions.
- Hymes was a founder of the journal **Language in Society**.
- He joined the Departments of Anthropology and English at the University of Virginia, where he became the Commonwealth Professor of Anthropology and English, and from which he recently retired.


The slide also features a small black and white photograph of Dell Hymes on the left and a video inset on the right showing a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a red shirt, speaking.

I will just go through the brief bio note of this sociolinguist and we will get to see his major work, his contribution, his influence and his theory of communicative competence that had long lasting impact in language teaching as well and two of the perspectives: one by the Dell Hymes, his communicative competence, and one by MAK Halliday, on the systematic, systemic grammar and functions of language, shaped the language teaching method called communicative competence, communicative language teaching. So, this approach in language teaching, communicative language teaching derives majorly from the works of these two linguists.

So Dell Hymes was born in 1927 and he died in 2007. He was a sociolinguist, anthropologist and folklorist. His work primarily dealt with languages of the Pacific Northwest in America. Hymes earned his PhD from Indiana University in 1955 and took a job at Harvard University. Hymes had a very great reputation as a very bright and a strong linguist, and his dissertation was completed in one year. He worked on a language called Kathlamet spoken near the mouth of the Columbia. And this language is primarily known because Franz Boas worked on this language in the end of the 19th century.


He became President of the Linguistic Society of America in 1982. Then he became President of the American Anthropological Association in 1983 and the President of American Folklore Society, and he was the last person to be the president of all three prestigious bodies. Hymes was also a founder of the journal named Language and Society and he brought out a number of very significant issues of the journal. He joined the Department of Anthropology and English at the University of Virginia, where he became the Commonwealth professor of anthropology and English and this was from where he retired.

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Career and Work


- Hymes' first joined the Harvard University where he remained five years.
- In 1960, he joined the faculty of the University of California, Berkeley and served there for five years.
- Later he joined the University of Pennsylvania faculty in 1965 as professor of folklore and linguistics and of anthropology.
- From 1975 to 1987, he served as the dean of the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education.
- He left Pennsylvania in 1987 to serve on the faculty at the University of Virginia in both the anthropology and English departments.
- He retired from Pennsylvania in 1998 as an emeritus professor.



He first joined Harvard University and remained there for five years. In 1960, he joined the faculty of University of California, Berkeley, and served there for five years. Later he joined the University of Pennsylvania in 1965 as a professor of folklore and linguistics and of anthropology.

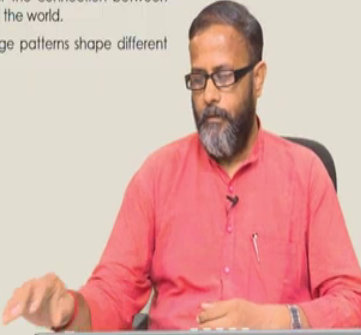
From 1975 to 1987, he served as the Dean of the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education. He left Pennsylvania in 1987 to serve on the faculty at the University of Virginia in both the Anthropology and English departments. He retired from Pennsylvania in 1998 as an Emeritus Professor. So, this is the very illustrious career of Dell Hymes.

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Contribution to Linguistics

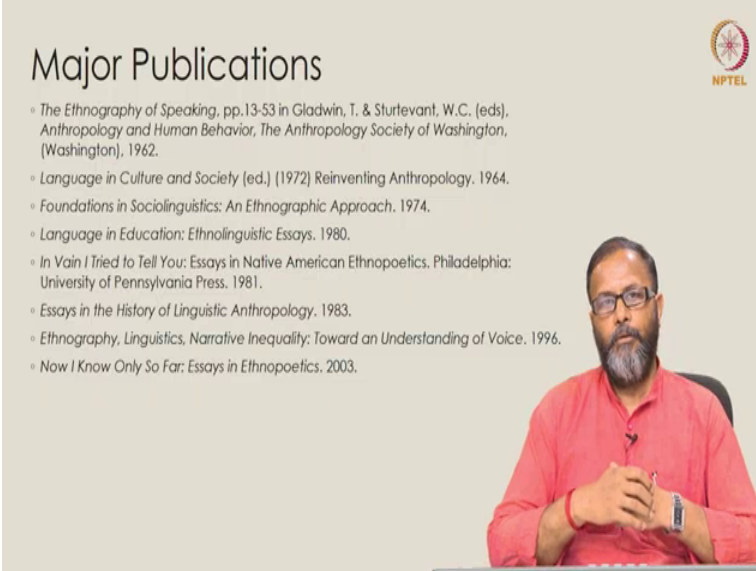
- He was one of the first to call the fourth subfield of anthropology "linguistic anthropology" instead of "anthropological linguistics."
- The terminological shift draws attention to the field's grounding in anthropology rather than in what by that time was already become an autonomous discipline (linguistics).
- As one of the first sociolinguists, Hymes helped to pioneer the connection between speech and human relations and human understandings of the world.
- Hymes was particularly interested in how different language patterns shape different patterns of thought.



His contribution to linguistics is immense and the impact is still very much visible in all other works by a variety of scholars all over the world. He was one of the first people who made alterations in terminology and started to use linguistic anthropology instead of anthropological linguistics. And this was not simply a cosmetic alteration. But the terminology shift drew attention to the fields grounding in anthropology rather than in what by the time had already become an autonomous discipline called linguistics.

As one of the first sociolinguists, Hymes helped to pioneer the connection between speech and human behavior, human relations and human understanding of the world. Hymes was particularly interested in how different languages and language patterns shape different patterns of thought possibly closer to Sapir–Whorf hypothesis which is popularly known as linguistic determinism and linguistic relativity.

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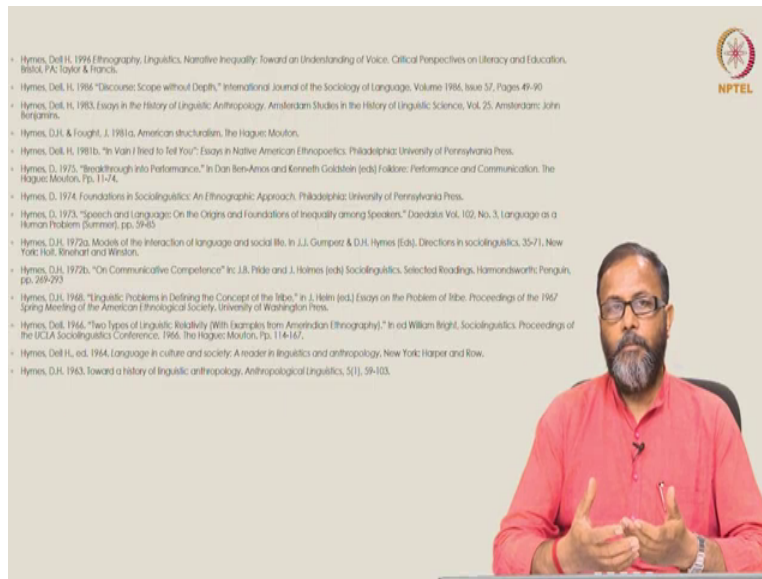


Major Publications

- *The Ethnography of Speaking*, pp.13-53 in Gladwin, T. & Sturtevant, W.C. (eds), *Anthropology and Human Behavior*, The Anthropology Society of Washington, (Washington), 1962.
- *Language in Culture and Society* (ed.) (1972) *Reinventing Anthropology*. 1964.
- *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. 1974.
- *Language in Education: Ethnolinguistic Essays*. 1980.
- *In Vain I Tried to Tell You: Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1981.
- *Essays in the History of Linguistic Anthropology*. 1983.
- *Ethnography, Linguistics, Narrative Inequality: Toward an Understanding of Voice*. 1996.
- *Now I Know Only So Far: Essays in Ethnopoetics*. 2003.

If you look at the major publication by Dell Hymes, they include *The Ethnography of Speaking*, the *Language in Culture and Society* in 1972, *Reinventing Anthropology* 1964, *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach* 1974, *Language in Education: Ethnolinguistic Essays* in 1980, *In Vain I Tried to Tell You: Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics* published in Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press in 1981, *Essays in the History of Linguistic Anthropology* published in 1983, *Ethnography, Linguistics, Narrative Inequality: Toward an Understanding of Voice* published in 1996, and *Now I Know Only So Far: Essays in Ethnopoetics* published in 2003. These are major contributions of Dell Hymes in the field.

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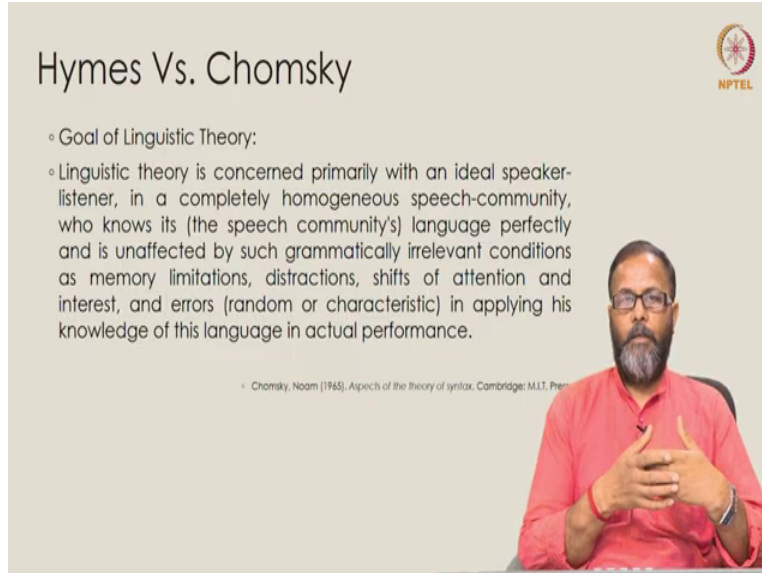
But it is not an exhaustive list, he has published prolifically in all reputed journals. And here you can see a list of these: this is a very selective list, otherwise the list is very long, like in '63 *Towards the History of Linguistic Anthropology*, in '64 *Language in Culture and Society*, in '66 *Two Types of Linguistic Relativity*, in '68 *Linguistic Problems in Defining the Concept of the Tribe*, in '72 *On Communicative Competence* which remains a major work and a major contribution challenging Chomsky's idea of linguistic competence. We will talk about that very soon.

Then, *Models of Interaction of Language and Social Life* published in 1972. *The Speech and Language on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality Among the Speakers* published in 1973. In 1974, *Foundations in Sociolinguistics*, '75, *Breakthrough into Performance*, '81, *In Vain I Tried to Tell You*, we just mentioned. In '81 again another publication *American Structuralism* which remains a very core reference document to understand American structuralism. And then in 1983, *Essays in the History of Linguistic Anthropology*, in '86 *Discourse: Scope without Depth*, and in '96 *Ethnography, Linguistics and Narrative Inequality*.

So, these are the major publications and major contributions which had a deep impact on all kinds of scholars working in anthropology, sociology and linguistics. And he almost continued with a unique school of thought where the language, people's behavior, use of it and the social

environment and how they understand the world and see the world through their experiences became a core concern and thrust in research.

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The slide is titled "Hymes Vs. Chomsky" and features the NPTEL logo in the top right corner. The main text on the slide reads: "Goal of Linguistic Theory: Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its (the speech community's) language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of this language in actual performance." Below this text is a small citation: "Chomsky, Noam (1965), Aspects of the theory of syntax, Cambridge: M.I.T. Press." In the bottom right corner of the slide, there is a video inset showing a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a red shirt, speaking and gesturing with his hands.

Now, a very celebrated and debated issue about the Chomskyan enterprise, the Chomskyan linguistics enterprise is the idea of 'competence'. Dell Hymes took Chomsky head on, countering Chomsky's idea of a homogeneous speech community and an ideal speaker/hearer, where he talks about linguistic competence and linguistic performance. Chomsky puts linguistic theory, the goal of linguistic theory to understand the abstractness and computation aspect of human language and the tacit understanding and he talks about universal grammar.

So, this abstractness was challenged by Dell Hymes and he merged these two levels, linguistic competence and linguistic performance and coined a new term 'communicative competence' in 1966. So, before that, let us look at what Chomsky meant and what Chomsky said.

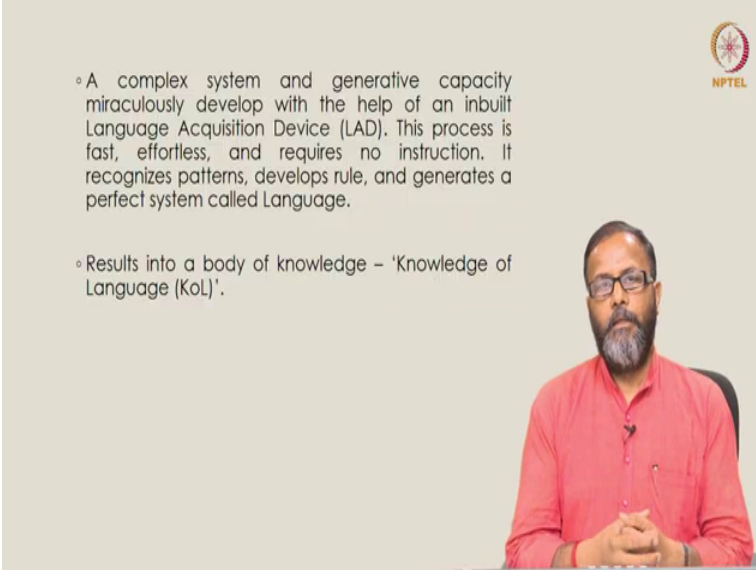
I quote from Chomsky's 1965 Aspects of the theory of syntax published by Cambridge University Press, published at Cambridge MIT Press. I quote Chomsky, when he talks about the goal of linguistic theory. Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its, the speech community's, language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory

limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest and errors, or random characteristics, in applying his knowledge of his language in actual performance.

So, if you look at the quote by Chomsky, he imagines, he talks about an ideal speaker-listener in a homogeneous speech community. And the goal of linguistic theory is to predict and understand the efficacy or competence of the speaker. Performance has many restrictions. So, if you look at Chomskyan theory of generative grammar, it starts with three epistemological questions: what is knowledge of language, how this knowledge of language is acquired, and how this knowledge of language is put into practice?

But Chomskyan theory focuses more on the first two questions. What is knowledge of language that he adequately defines in this quote as well, and the second question is how this knowledge of language is acquired? So, the whole idea of innateness hypothesis, linguistic nativism, the idea or hypothesis of language acquisition device, universal grammar or tacit apparatus available to human children at the time of birth so this abstractness was challenged by Dell Hymes.

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- A complex system and generative capacity miraculously develop with the help of an inbuilt Language Acquisition Device (LAD). This process is fast, effortless, and requires no instruction. It recognizes patterns, develops rule, and generates a perfect system called Language.
- Results into a body of knowledge - 'Knowledge of Language (KoL)'.


And if you look at the, if you paraphrase the Chomskyan idea what he means by that? He says a complex system and generative capacity miraculously develop with the help of an inbuilt language acquisition device. So, he imagines a tacit apparatus so LAD contains that tacit knowledge and language is believed to be innate to human beings and this process is fast,

effortless and requires no instruction. It recognizes patterns, develops rules and generates a perfect system called language.


This is how he defines the language acquisition process. The tacit knowledge of the speaker who acquires the language because of the innate nature of it which is already available, the tacit knowledge is already available at the time of birth, and that he refers to as LAD, language acquisition device.

In Steven Pinker's words we are hardwired, a human child is hardwired to learn a language. And it results in a body of knowledge. And he talks about universal grammar, which is a set of principles available to the child at the time of birth and in the environment the child is set the parameters. So, this is what the Chomskyan position is in generative grammar.

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- Dell Hymes coined the term Communicative Competence in 1966 as a response to the perceived inadequacy of Noam Chomsky's (1965) distinction between Linguistic Competence and Linguistic Performance.
- To counter Chomsky's abstract notion of competence, Hymes explained Ethnographic Details of communicative competence that included "communicative form and function in integral relation to each other".
- Communicative competence is the intuitive functional knowledge and control of the principles of language usage.




Dell Hymes opposes this idea of distinction of linguistic competence and linguistic performance, this binary distinction. And he comes up with a new concept, a new term which he calls 'communicative competence'. So, he merges the two and as a response to Chomskyan abstractness, Dell Hymes came up with communicative competence in 1966. And he underlines the inadequacy of Chomskyan theory and distinction between competence and performance.

To counter Chomsky's abstract notion of competence, Hymes explained ethnographic details of communicative competence that included communicative form and function in integral relation to each other. Functions cannot, he argued, be separated from the form.

The role of language is communicability, to communicate. So, performance cannot be detached from competence. So, the function of language cannot be detached and separated from the form of language; this is what he argued.

So, communicative competence is the intuitive functional knowledge and control of the principles of language usage. So, he is making a minor shift, where Chomsky segregated the two aspects competence and performance, he is saying that the functions cannot be separated from the form. And as far as acquisition is concerned, we acquire the structures along with their functions.

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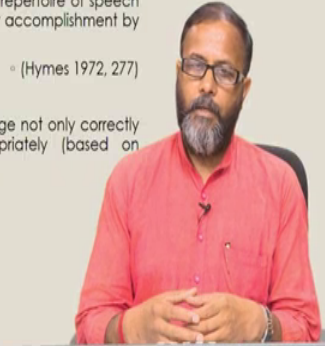


As Hymes observes:

- "...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."

◦ (Hymes 1972, 277)

- In other words, a language user needs to use the language not only correctly (based on linguistic competence), but also appropriately (based on communicative competence).




So, he observes, I quote from Hymes 1972, page 277. He says, 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 to 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.

So, clearly, he is emphasizing that the form of a structure and functions of a structure are not two separate entities. And when we talk about competence, it implicitly includes performance as well, the ability to perform as well. So, the functions cannot be set apart from the competence. In other words, a language user needs to use the language not only correctly based on linguistic competence, but also appropriately based on communicative competence.

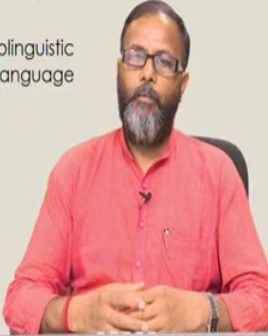
So, when Chomsky talks about the tacit knowledge and the computational aspect of language, he talks about the functions of language embedded in the form of language. So, they are not two separate entities.

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◦ Both Chomsky (1965) and Hymes (1972) use the notion of competence however, where Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence refers to the tacit knowledge of language (that subsumes formal linguistic subsystems such as phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic); and

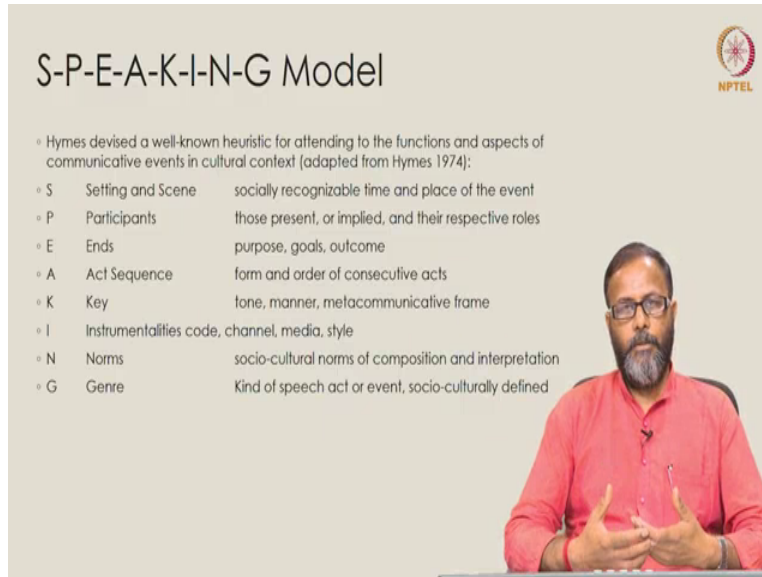
◦ Hymes' position extends beyond and includes in it sociolinguistic competence, the actual knowledge and ability of the language user that govern successful communication.



Both Chomsky in 1965 and Dell Hymes in 1972 use the term 'competence'. Their approaches are different. Where Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence refers to the tacit knowledge of language that subsumes formal linguistics and linguistics of systems such as phonological, morphological, syntactic, Hymes's position extends beyond and includes in it sociolinguistic competence, the actual knowledge and the ability of the language user that govern successful use in an appropriate sociocultural context.

So, the function of language and the form of language merged into one and this is what we acquire when we say acquisition of language. This is what Dell Hymes argues.

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The slide displays the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G Model, a heuristic for analyzing communicative events. It lists eight components: S (Setting and Scene), P (Participants), E (Ends), A (Act Sequence), K (Key), I (Instrumentalities code), N (Norms), and G (Genre). Each component is paired with a brief description of its function. In the bottom right corner, there is a video inset showing a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a red shirt, speaking and gesturing with his hands.

S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G Model

◦ Hymes devised a well-known heuristic for attending to the functions and aspects of communicative events in cultural context (adapted from Hymes 1974):

◦ S	Setting and Scene	socially recognizable time and place of the event
◦ P	Participants	those present, or implied, and their respective roles
◦ E	Ends	purpose, goals, outcome
◦ A	Act Sequence	form and order of consecutive acts
◦ K	Key	tone, manner, metacommunicative frame
◦ I	Instrumentalities code, channel, media, style	
◦ N	Norms	socio-cultural norms of composition and interpretation
◦ G	Genre	Kind of speech act or event, socio-culturally defined

Dell Hymes's contribution to modern sociolinguistics remains his speaking model. We have done a separate video, so watch the lecture on communicative competence to know more about it and we have also done a separate lecture on the speaking model. So, you can go through that. But in the speaking model, the word 'speaking' is an acronym, where each letter used in the word stands for something. What is that?

So, *S* stands for setting and scene, *P* stands for participants, *E* stands for ends, *A* stands for act sequence, *K* stands for key, *I* stands for instrumentalities, *N* stands for norms, and *G* stands for genre. So, he came up with this speaking model. He came up with this acronym. Earlier in the ethnography of communication he had 16 elements, such elements which were compressed into these eight and he coined this term 'speaking module', which became the guideline and a set of instructions for people or the scholars working in the field and collecting data.

So, he devised a well known heuristic for attending the functions of the aspects of communicative events in cultural context and this model remains very important for the researchers and the field workers who are working into anthropology and sociology and linguistics. So, if you look at the contribution of Dell Hymes in shaping the discipline of sociolinguistics, it is very deep and highly influential.

During his illustrious career, I keep on repeating the 1960s. The decade is so fertile, dynamic and productive in terms of linguistics and that this entire decade saw a galaxy of scholars and intellectuals working to understand the language phenomenon. Of course, Chomsky was one of them. But the technique, procedure and approaches adopted by these scholars are somewhat complementary, though it looks that they are opposed, but it is somewhat complementary, because as a third person when we look at these works, it gives us a clear understanding of the discipline.

As far as sociolinguistics is concerned, Dell Hymes's work grounds the understanding of language in a sociocultural context. He is the one who brought anthropology and linguistics together. And he maintained a symbiotic relationship between linguistics and anthropology. He is the one who gave this term called communicative competence, which merges the two levels, linguistic competence and linguistic performance into one.

And he argues against the abstractness of the Chomskyan idea and approach and advocates the merging of the two levels and on acquisition, he redefines acquisition of language in terms of acquiring the grammatical structure, at the same time, the function of it as well, the knowledge of where to use it. So, the form and the function are merged into one and he calls it communicative competence. He talks about socio-cultural appropriation of the use of these structures.

So, they are not learned separately. They are learned together. So, Chomsky calls these 'I language' and 'E language', I mean, if you remember, we did innateness hypothesis in a separate video, 'E language', 'I language', 'internalized language' which is the tacit knowledge of language and 'E language', the performance, external language, the performance. Such a binary distinction is not tenable when we look at Dell Hymes's work on communicative competence.

His major work, the speaking model, remains a very influential contribution in understanding language in action, language in its social context. He brought language, human understanding and the worldview all at one place. They have a symbiotic relationship and he was the one who underlined this fact. So, he remains one of the important pillars and an influential scholar, which gave shape to sociolinguistics and that is why we call him the founding father of, he is one of the founding fathers of sociolinguistics.

For a detailed understanding of communicative competence, you can watch the video on communicative competence. For a detailed understanding of the speaking model, you can watch the video on speaking model. And this lecture tells you the journey of Dell Hymes as a sociolinguist and anthropological linguist or folklorist all combined into one and a major influencer whose theories and approaches influenced the other works that followed after him. So, this is it for now. Thank you very much.