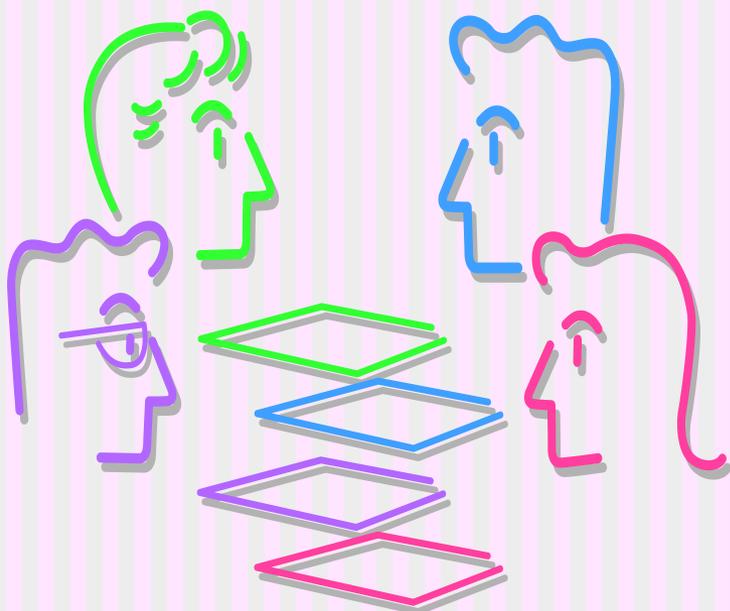


# Correctness Scales in Evaluating Learners' English:

## Why is an error an error?



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# 1. Introduction

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Error = deviation from a STANDARD

- Grammaticality

→ The **grammar**

- Acceptability

→ The judges' **intuition**

- Intelligibility

→ The **linguistic** meaning

- Understandability

→ The **intended** meaning

# 2-1. Grammaticality

Chomsky (2004)

“a measure of the **remoteness** of an utterance from the generated set of perfectly well-formed sentences”

(1a) **colorless green ideas sleep furiously**

(1b) **furiously sleep ideas green colorless**

(1c) **revolutionary new ideas appear infrequently**

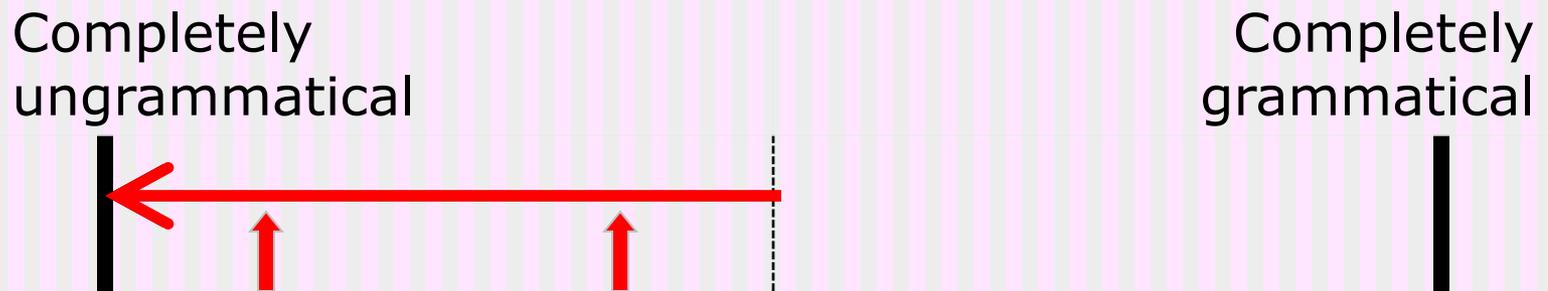


Figure 1: Degrees and extremes of grammaticality.

# 2-2. Acceptability

Haegeman (1994)

“the term which characterizes **the native speaker’s intuitions** about the linguistic data”

- (2a) **Once that it was clear that Bill had left, we gave up.**
- (2b) **Once that that Bill had left was clear, we gave up.**
- (2c) **Am. English is different than Br. English.**

Completely  
unacceptable

Completely  
acceptable

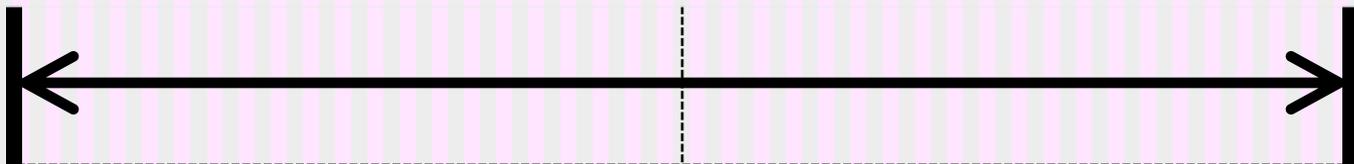


Figure 2: Degrees and extremes of acceptability.

# 2-3. Intelligibility

McKay (2002)

- intelligibility --- “**recognizing** an expression”
- comprehensibility---“**knowing the meaning** of the expression”
- (interpretability --- “knowing what the expression signifies”)  
(3a) **She kena sabo by them.**  
(3b) **Do you have any salt?**

Completely  
unintelligible

Completely  
intelligible

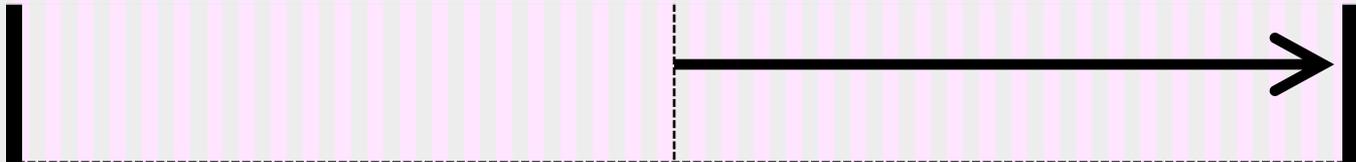


Figure 3: Degrees and extremes of intelligibility.

# 2-4. Understandability

A scale to evaluate the perception of **intended meaning** expressed or **implied** in an utterance.

⇒ Interpretability (McKay)

(4a) **Do you have something to drink?**

(4b) **Are you have ... Uh... I am thirst.**

(4c) **Mr. Arimoto will be in 505, too.**

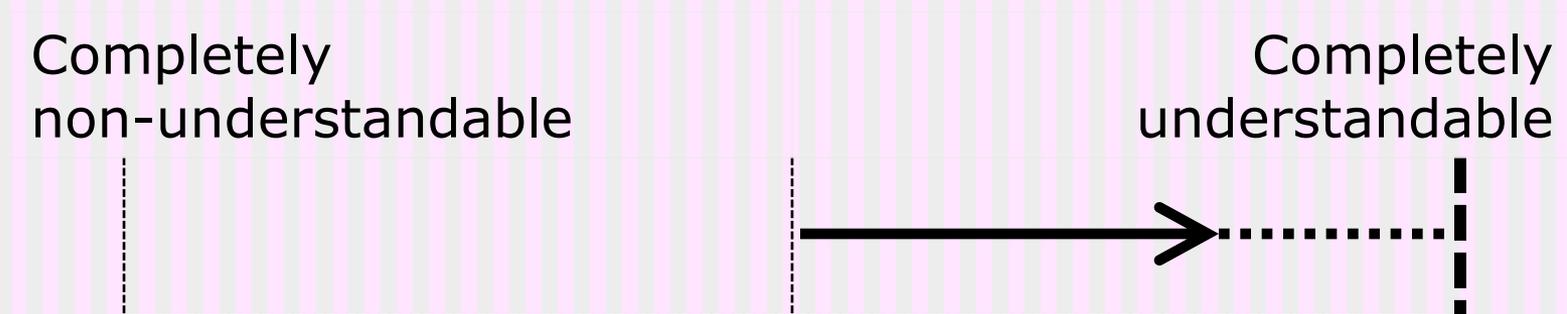
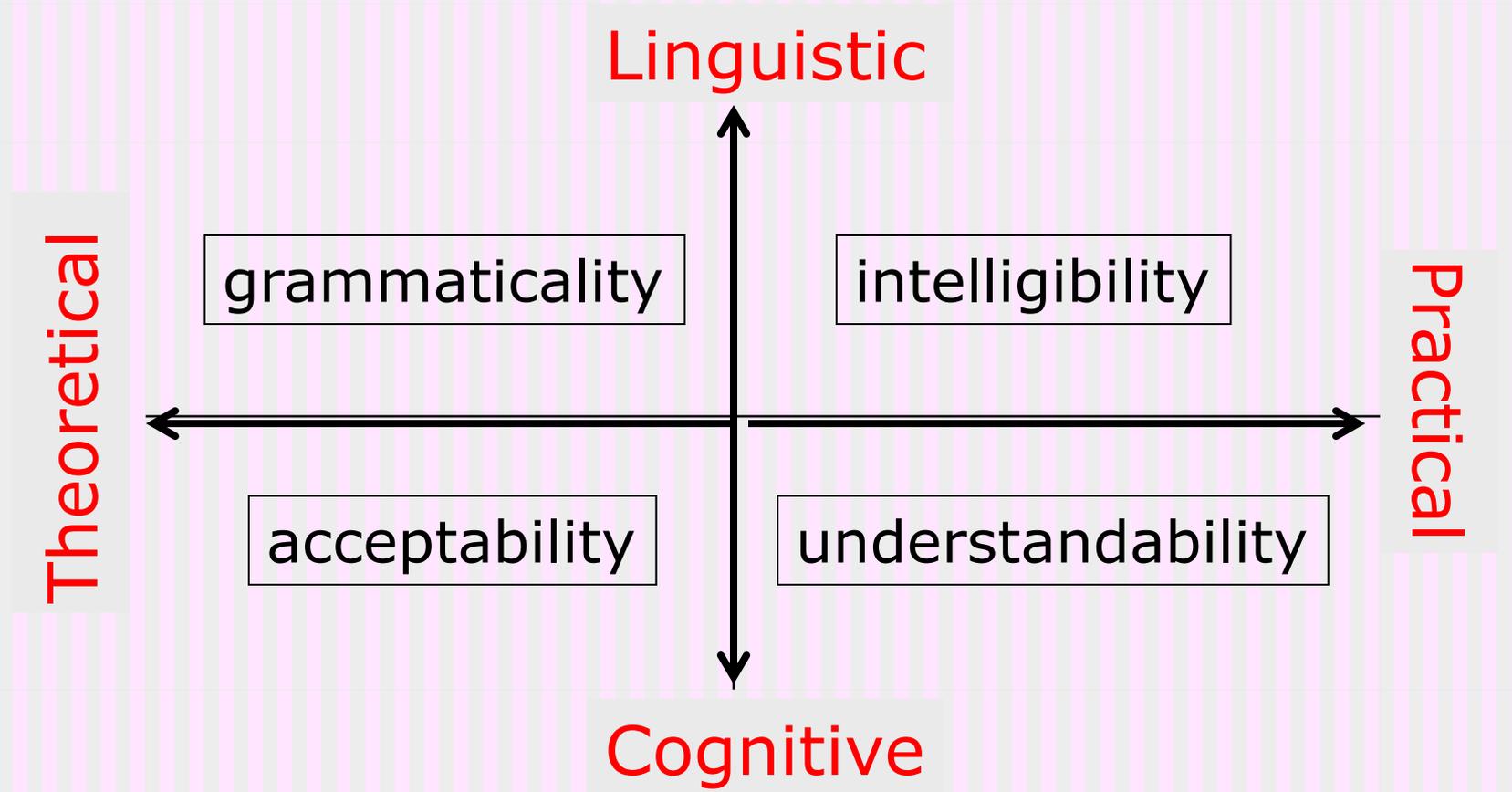


Figure 4: Degrees and extremes of understandability.

# 3. Features of each scale



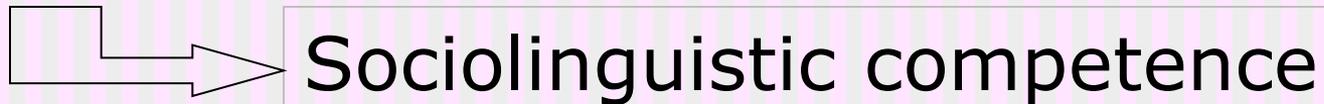
# 4. Conclusion

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- Grammaticality

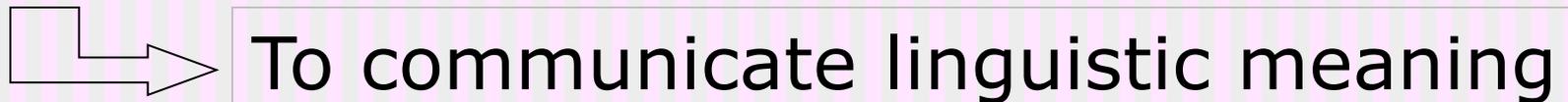


- Acceptability



Canale and Swain (1980) Communicative Competence

- Intelligibility



- Understandability

