

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL AND CUMULATIVE-FUNCTION-BASED APPROACHES IN DEVELOPING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

Ochilova Maftuna Doniyor qizi

English Teacher, SamSIFL

Abstract: This study investigates the effectiveness of traditional teaching methods and cumulative-function-based approaches in developing the pragmatic competence of future foreign language teachers. While traditional approaches often emphasize grammatical accuracy and structural knowledge, they may address pragmatic aspects of communication. In contrast, the cumulative function of language highlights the integration and accumulation of linguistic, cultural, and contextual knowledge over time. This research employs a comparative experimental design involving pre-service teachers to evaluate the impact of both approaches on learners' pragmatic development. The findings demonstrate that the cumulative-function-based approach significantly enhances learners' pragmatic awareness, speech act realization, and sociocultural appropriateness. The study concludes with pedagogical implications for foreign language teacher education.

Keywords: pragmatic competence, cumulative function, foreign language teaching, teacher education.

Introduction

In modern foreign language education, the ability to communicate effectively extends beyond grammatical accuracy and lexical knowledge. It involves the appropriate use of language in context, which is referred to as pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence, as an essential component of communicative competence, enables learners to use language appropriately in various sociocultural contexts. Within this framework, pragmatic competence plays a crucial role, particularly for future foreign language teachers who must not only use language effectively but also teach it in contextually appropriate ways.

Traditional language teaching methods, such as grammar-translation and audio-lingual approaches, have historically focused on linguistic forms rather than communicative functions. As a result, learners often struggle to apply language appropriately in real-life situations. In contrast, contemporary approaches emphasize communicative and pragmatic aspects of language use.

One such perspective is the cumulative function of language, which views language learning as a gradual accumulation of linguistic, sociocultural, and pragmatic knowledge. This function enables learners to build meaning progressively through exposure, interaction, and reflection.

The purpose of this study is to compare traditional and cumulative-function-based approaches in developing the pragmatic competence of future foreign language teachers and to determine which approach yields more effective outcomes.

Literature Review

Pragmatic competence has been widely discussed in the field of applied linguistics as a key component of communicative competence. It includes the ability to perform speech acts, interpret meaning in context, and adhere to sociocultural norms. Researchers argue that without pragmatic competence, communication may lead to misunderstanding even if grammatical structures are correct.

Traditional teaching approaches have been criticized for their limited focus on pragmatics. These methods often prioritize accuracy over appropriateness and fail to expose learners to authentic communicative situations. Consequently, learners may produce grammatically correct but pragmatically inappropriate utterances.

The cumulative function of language, however, emphasizes the integrative nature of language learning. It suggests that knowledge is not acquired in isolation but is accumulated through meaningful interaction and contextualized practice. This approach aligns with constructivist theories of learning, where learners actively construct knowledge based on prior experience.

Recent studies highlight the importance of incorporating authentic materials, discourse-based activities, and reflective practices to develop pragmatic awareness. However, there is still a lack of comparative research examining the effectiveness of cumulative-function-based approaches versus traditional methods in teacher education contexts. This study aims to fill that gap.

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quasi-experimental design with two groups: a control group receiving traditional instruction and an experimental group exposed to a cumulative-function-based approach.

3.2 Participants

The participants consisted of 60 pre-service foreign language teachers enrolled in a teacher education program. They were divided into two equal groups based on their proficiency level.

3.3 Instruments

Data were collected using:

- Pragmatic competence tests (pre-test and post-test)
- Discourse completion tasks (DCTs)
- Role-play activities
- Observation checklists

3.4 Procedure

The study was conducted over a 12-week period. The control group received instruction based on traditional methods, focusing on grammar, vocabulary, and controlled practice. The experimental group engaged in activities designed around the cumulative function of language, including:

- Authentic dialogues
- Contextualized speaking tasks
- Reflection on language use
- Sociocultural analysis

3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical methods to compare pre- and post-test results, while qualitative data from observations and role-plays were analyzed thematically.

Results

The results indicate a significant difference between the two groups. While both groups showed improvement, the experimental group demonstrated a higher level of development in pragmatic competence.

Participants in the cumulative-function-based group were better able to:

- Use appropriate speech acts in different contexts
- Interpret implied meanings and indirect language
- Adjust their language according to social norms

In contrast, the control group showed improvement mainly in grammatical accuracy but struggled with contextual appropriateness.

Discussion

The findings suggest that the cumulative-function-based approach is more effective in developing pragmatic competence than traditional methods. This can be explained by the integrative nature of the approach, which allows learners to connect linguistic forms with their communicative functions.

The results support the idea that pragmatic competence cannot be developed through isolated grammar instruction alone. Instead, it requires exposure to authentic language use and opportunities for meaningful interaction.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of preparing future teachers to understand and teach pragmatics, as they will play a key role in shaping learners' communicative abilities.

Conclusion

This study confirms that the cumulative function of language provides a more effective framework for developing pragmatic competence in future foreign language teachers compared to traditional approaches. By integrating linguistic, cultural, and contextual elements, this approach enhances learners' ability to use language appropriately in real-life situations.

Implications:

- Teacher education programs should incorporate pragmatic-focused instruction
- Curriculum designers should include cumulative-function-based activities
- Further research should explore long-term effects and broader contexts

REFERENCES

1. Bachman L. F. Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. – 408 p.
2. Canale M., Swain M. Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing // *Applied Linguistics*. – 1980. – Vol. 1, No. 1. – P. 1–47.
3. Hymes D. On communicative competence // Pride J. B., Holmes J. (eds.). *Sociolinguistics*. – Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972. – P. 269–293.
4. Ishihara N., Cohen A. D. Teaching and Learning Pragmatics: Where Language and Culture Meet. – Harlow: Pearson Education, 2010. – 374 p.
5. Kasper G., Rose K. R. Pragmatic Development in a Second Language. – Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002. – 300 p.
6. Leech G. Principles of Pragmatics. – London: Longman, 1983. – 250 p.
7. Richards J. C. Communicative Language Teaching Today. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. – 52 p.
8. Taguchi N. Instructed pragmatics at a glance: Where instructional studies were, are, and should be going // *Language Teaching*. – 2015. – Vol. 48, No. 1. – P. 1–50.
9. Thomas J. Cross-cultural pragmatic failure // *Applied Linguistics*. – 1983. – Vol. 4, No. 2. – P. 91–112.