

Pragmatic Thinking in Foreign Language Teaching: Teacher Roles and Classroom Practices

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the importance of pragmatic thinking in foreign language teaching and the impact of teachers who adopt this approach on classroom dynamics. While traditional methods largely rely on grammar and rote-based practices, the pragmatic approach prioritizes students' ability to use the language naturally and effectively.

Teachers with a pragmatic mindset aim to ensure that students use the language not only according to grammatical rules but also in appropriate and effective contexts. Therefore, authentic materials, digital tools, communication-focused activities, and creative tasks are utilized in lessons. Students are encouraged to learn the language through use rather than memorizing rules alone.

The study addresses key principles of teaching practices such as a student-centered approach, integration of technology, teaching of cultural differences, development of communication skills, and enrichment of lessons with real-life examples. Furthermore, it emphasizes that teachers should not merely be conveyors of information but rather act as guides who inspire and direct learners.

However, several challenges arise in practice. These include students' familiarity with traditional methods, lack of adequate teaching materials, deficiencies in digital literacy, and limited collaboration among teachers. Additionally, it is noted that current assessment systems are insufficient in measuring the practical use of language.

In this context, the pragmatic approach introduces an innovative perspective to foreign language education; however, in order for this approach to be implemented effectively, teacher training programs must be strengthened, digital technologies should be utilized more efficiently for pedagogical purposes, and educational policies must be restructured accordingly.

KEYWORDS: Pragmatic competence; Language education; Foreign language; Teacher roles; Student; Teaching; Digital tools.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional foreign language teaching approaches have largely focused on the instruction of grammatical rules and the application of rote-based exercises. These methods treat language as a static field of knowledge and aim to develop learners' foreign language proficiency independently of real-life contexts. However, recent theories of second language acquisition emphasize that language learning cannot be limited to the transfer of structural knowledge alone; it is essential that learners acquire the ability to use the language functionally and meaningfully (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Lightbown & Spada, 2013). In this regard, moving beyond rule-based language competence and fostering communicative competence has become increasingly important. At this point, a teaching approach grounded in pragmatic thinking comes to the forefront.

Teachers who adopt a pragmatic approach to foreign language instruction focus not only on the structural aspects of language but also on its social functions, aiming to help students use the target language effectively in real-life contexts. This teaching perspective supports learners in developing an awareness of contextual language use in both spoken and written communication. In oral

communication, pragmatic elements such as the relationship between speakers, the setting, purpose, body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, and level of formality play a key role. In written communication, factors such as text type, the writer's purpose, target audience, and publication medium become significant. Accordingly, students are guided to understand discourse forms and cultural codes in communication as well.

Role-play activities, scenario-based practices, authentic materials, and communication-oriented tasks are among the core pedagogical tools that encourage students' active participation in meaning-making processes. In this way, learners experience a multidimensional language acquisition process that encompasses cognitive, affective, and sociocultural dimensions. Effective foreign language instruction should not solely focus on grammatical rules; it must also foster pragmatic awareness related to the functional, contextual, and cultural aspects of language use (Basturkmen & Nguyen, 2017; Martínez-Flor et al., 2003).

2. PRAGMATIC THINKING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

2.1. The Meaning and Historical Background of the Term "Pragmatic"

The vocabulary of languages has been continuously enriched throughout history through cultural, philosophical, and scientific interactions. This process involves not only the transmission of concepts but also the transfer of ways of thinking from one language to another. In this context, the origin and historical journey of the word "pragmatic" serve as a remarkable example. The term pragmatic spread into other languages via Latin and French. In French, *pragmatique* represents a practical and application-oriented mode of thought, especially within the philosophical movement known as pragmatism.

The word's earliest roots trace back to Ancient Greek, appearing as *πραγματικός* (*pragmatikos*). This term means "related to action, concerning matters, practical" and is derived from the root *πράγμα* (*pragma*), meaning "deed, action, situation." *Pragma*, in turn, comes from the Ancient Greek verb *πράσσω* (*prassō*), which means "to do, to act, to implement." This etymological chain clearly highlights the term's emphasis on practicality, action, and applicability at its core. After passing into Latin as *pragmaticus*, the word maintained its meaning and was later transferred into French as *pragmatique* throughout the Middle Ages and the modern era. It gained prominence especially in the 19th century with the rise of pragmatism as a philosophical system (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.).

This etymological development reflects not only the historical origin of a word but also the transformations of a way of thinking across different eras and cultures. The conceptual journey of pragmatic from antiquity to the present day reveals that the term has acquired a multi-layered structure in both linguistic and philosophical senses. Therefore, this process represents not only a linguistic transmission but also the intercultural transfer of thought systems centered on practicality, usefulness, and applicability. Today, with its rich historical and conceptual background, the term pragmatic continues to hold a significant place in both linguistic analyses and philosophical discussions (Doğan, 2003).

2.2. Definition of Pragmatic Thinking

In his 1878 article "How to Make Our Ideas Clear," Charles Sanders Peirce laid the foundation for pragmatic thinking by asserting that the meaning of a concept can be understood through its practical consequences. This idea later became known as the "pragmatic maxim," which stands as a core principle of pragmatism. Peirce's view is considered the first systematic articulation of pragmatism (Peirce, 2011, pp. 50–65).

William James, in his work "Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking" (1907), introduced pragmatism as a method of thinking and emphasized the following key notion: "The truth of an idea, theory, or belief should be evaluated based on its practical outcomes and usefulness in life." (James, 2019). This demonstrates that pragmatism emerged in the United States in the late 19th century and was developed by thinkers such as Charles Sanders Peirce and William James.

Pragmatic thinking represents a realistic, functional, and results-oriented approach that emphasizes application over theoretical knowledge. It is a philosophical perspective that relates knowledge to practical experience and grounds learning in the lived experiences of the individual. Foreign language teachers who adopt this intellectual framework do not limit themselves to conveying grammatical rules but rather aim to enable students to use the target language effectively and appropriately in real-life contexts. In this framework, foreign language teaching becomes more than a purely cognitive activity—it evolves into a multidimensional process aimed at developing communicative competence.

Pragmatic foreign language instruction focuses on the functional aspects of language and seeks to make the teaching process authentic, meaningful, and open to social interaction. Within classroom activities, the teacher goes beyond mere structural knowledge transmission by designing tasks that encourage students to use language appropriately in various social situations and roles. This approach supports learners in developing context-sensitive communication skills. For example, elements such as politeness strategies, forms of address, and indirect expressions are explored within their cultural context, supporting the development of pragmatic competence beyond linguistic proficiency. In doing so, students internalize both the linguistic and cultural codes of the target language, gaining the ability to communicate more effectively and successfully in real-life situations (Kasper & Rose, 2002; Bardovi-Harlig, 1996).

3. THE PRAGMATIC APPROACH IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

For many years, foreign language teaching was grounded in traditional methods, which primarily focused on memorizing grammatical rules and employing translation techniques. In such approaches, the structural aspects of language were prioritized, while its communicative and functional dimensions were often overlooked. However, contemporary foreign language teaching theories emphasize that language is not merely a set of rules but also a tool that conveys meaning and performs functions within social contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990). In this context, the importance of the pragmatic approach is increasingly recognized. This holistic perspective goes beyond traditional understandings that focus solely on linguistic structures, instead centering on how language is used in real-life situations, the meanings it gains within discourse, and the speaker's communicative intentions, incorporating the contextual, cultural, and interactional dimensions of language use (Kasper, 1997).

A foreign language teacher who adopts a pragmatic mindset prioritizes the following principles in the teaching process:

- Supports students in using the target language in authentic and meaningful contexts so that language ceases to be an abstract body of knowledge and becomes a purposeful communication tool directly connected to the learner's experiences (Taguchi, 2011).
- Creates a student-centered learning environment by taking into account learners' individual differences, and adapting lesson content to meet their needs, learning styles, and areas of interest.
- Encourages classroom interaction and social language use through activities that foster communicative competence, such as role-plays, dialogues, and group work (Celce-Murcia, 2008).
- Integrates digital tools for pedagogical purposes by incorporating technological advancements (e.g., interactive platforms, video materials, simulations), thereby making the learning process multidimensional and sustainable.

For instance, instead of merely explaining the rules of the "Simple Past Tense," an English teacher may encourage students to share personal stories about past events. This allows learners to use the target language naturally and meaningfully.

The pragmatic approach not only helps students achieve linguistic proficiency but also equips them with intercultural communication skills and enhances their motivation—an especially valuable outcome in today's globalized world. Therefore, it is crucial that the theoretical framework of the pragmatic approach is well understood and effectively integrated into classroom practices within modern foreign language education.

3.1. Pragmatic Competence in Foreign Language Teaching

Pragmatic competence refers to an individual's ability to use language appropriately, accurately, and effectively within a given context. This competence goes beyond the correct use of linguistic structures, encompassing sensitivity to the social, cultural, and situational norms that shape communication (Rose & Kasper, 2001).

The communicative competence model developed by Canale and Swain (1980) includes pragmatic competence as one of its core components. According to this model, communicative competence consists of four main components:

- Grammatical competence
- Discourse competence
- Sociolinguistic competence
- Strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980)

Within this framework, pragmatic competence is particularly concentrated in the areas of discourse and sociolinguistic competence. It involves an awareness of when, how, to whom, and in what manner to speak, as well as the appropriate use of speech acts such as offering, requesting, apologizing, or refusing (Kasper, 1997; Thomas, 1983).

3.2. The Importance of Pragmatic Competence in Foreign Language Teaching

Pragmatic competence determines not only what language learners say, but also how they say it. Grammatically correct statements can still lead to communicative failure if they are pragmatically inappropriate. For example, a learner may say "Shut up!" to a friend with humorous or casual intent, but the phrase is often perceived as rude or aggressive. Another example is the direct use of "You are wrong," which, while linguistically accurate, may be interpreted as confrontational or disrespectful in formal or sensitive situations. A more appropriate alternative like "I see your point, but I think there might be another way to look at it" softens the message and contributes to more successful communication (Nordquist, 2025; Thomas, 1983).

When foreign language instruction focuses solely on linguistic structure without addressing pragmatic competence, learners may struggle to engage in meaningful and effective communication. This can lead to frequent communication breakdowns due to improper language use. For this reason, pragmatic elements should not be confined to brief textbook exercises. Instead, they should be holistically integrated into teaching materials, classroom interactions, and assessment practices.

In assessment, it is crucial to evaluate not only grammatical accuracy but also pragmatic criteria such as context-appropriateness, use of politeness strategies, and the effectiveness of speech acts (Taguchi, 2011; Kasper & Rose, 2002).

3.3. Core Pedagogical Principles for Foreign Language Teachers with Pragmatic Competence

In pragmatic language teaching, the role of the teacher goes beyond merely transferring knowledge; the teacher must act as a guide who encourages students to communicate effectively, appropriately, and sensitively in the target language. This requires a pedagogical approach that is flexible, culturally aware, and communication-oriented. A teacher competent in pragmatics should adhere to the following core principles:

1. **Emphasize a communicative approach**, highlighting that language is primarily a tool for communication. Teachers should engage students in practical activities using vocabulary that is relevant and useful in real-life situations.
2. **Teach how meaning shifts across different social contexts**, even when the same word is used.

For example:

- “I’m terribly sorry for the inconvenience” expresses a formal and sincere apology.
- “Sorry, may I ask you something?” introduces a request politely.
- “Oops, sorry!” is used casually to seek forgiveness for a minor mistake.
- “Oh, sorry I didn’t read your mind!” conveys sarcasm or frustration.

Raising awareness of such nuances is critical in pragmatic language instruction, and teachers should present these variations within contextualized, real-life situations.

3. **Promote intercultural awareness** by teaching politeness strategies, forms of address, cultural customs, and communication norms of the target language. Understanding these aspects helps students interact respectfully and effectively across cultures.
4. **Use role-playing and scenario-based activities** to provide learners with hands-on experiences in using the target language. Situations such as shopkeeper-customer, teacher-student, or driver-passenger interactions allow learners to experiment with language use in varying social roles and status levels.
5. **Draw attention to context-appropriateness**, not just grammatical correctness. Teachers should guide students to evaluate whether their expressions are suitable for specific contexts and relationships.
6. **Encourage learners to think in the target language** through collaborative activities such as group work, discussions, presentations, and reflective journals. These tasks foster deeper cognitive engagement with the language.
7. **Incorporate authentic, original, and real-world materials** into lessons. Teachers might analyze film dialogues to explore meaning in context, or use real examples from social media posts, email exchanges, or public signage to discuss pragmatic features.

An illustrative example of the importance of pragmatic awareness can be found in a historical case. It is claimed that the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II were partially influenced by a mistranslation of the Japanese word 黙殺 (mokusatsu). The term can mean both “to ignore” or “to remain silent” and “to dismiss with contempt.” Journalists translated Japanese Prime Minister Kantaro Suzuki’s statement as “with silent contempt” or “to treat with silent disdain,” possibly conveying a hostile rejection instead of a neutral non-response—allegedly contributing to the catastrophic decision that led to massive loss of life (Walsh, 2025, pp. 1–35).

3.4. Implementation of Pragmatically Minded Teachers in the Classroom

a. Teacher Training and Professional Development

For foreign language teachers with pragmatic thinking to function effectively in the classroom, they must first receive strong foundational training and engage in ongoing professional development (Dewey, 1916). The following recommended practices serve the pragmatic educational approach directly, ensuring that teachers can create communicatively rich and context-sensitive learning environments. Key actions include:

1. In-service training to enhance teachers’ communication-based competence in developing students’ critical and creative thinking skills. These trainings should empower teachers to facilitate classroom environments that encourage problem-solving, inquiry, and reflective dialogue.
2. Systematic workshops on integrating digital tools and technologies into teaching processes. For instance, foreign language teachers can harness rapidly evolving artificial intelligence tools—such as chatbots and virtual reality platforms—to simulate authentic communication scenarios and support students in practicing language skills interactively.
3. Training in real-life scenario-based and problem-solving teaching strategies, which equip teachers to design meaningful and pragmatic language activities closely aligned with everyday experiences and challenges.
4. Differentiated instruction training based on multiple intelligences and diverse learning styles. As each learner absorbs information differently, teachers must be equipped with strategies that cater to varied cognitive preferences, ensuring inclusive and effective learning outcomes.
5. Assessment literacy focusing on student-centered evaluation methods, such as rubrics, self-assessment, and peer assessment. This shift from traditional testing toward reflective and formative assessment practices enhances not only language performance but also learner autonomy.

6. Training in trauma-informed pedagogical approaches is essential, especially in contexts affected by conflict, migration, or personal loss. Given that language learning also involves emotional and psychological dimensions, teachers must be prepared to support students in navigating crises with sensitivity and empathy.
7. Workshops on inclusive education and effective communication with students with special needs, aimed at promoting equitable access to quality education. Teachers should be aware of and responsive to individual learners' needs, ensuring classroom environments are supportive and adaptive.
8. Fostering professional learning communities (PLCs) among teachers encourages collaboration and ongoing growth. These communities support the sharing of best practices, reduce professional isolation, and nurture collective problem-solving.
9. Development of leadership skills among language teachers, enabling them to create positive classroom cultures, establish high expectations, and sustain student motivation. A pragmatic teacher must also be a facilitator, motivator, and community builder.
10. Structuring language classrooms as multidimensional learning spaces—not merely centers of linguistic instruction but also environments where students develop cultural understanding and social interaction skills. Language learning, in this sense, becomes a holistic process involving cognitive, emotional, and social engagement (Biesta & Burbules, 2003; Schiro, 2013; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018; Lieberman & Miller, 2008).

b. Student-Centered Teaching Approaches

Student-centered approaches that can be implemented in the classroom by a teacher with a pragmatic mindset are exemplified below:

1. Role-play activities, which encourage students to use the language interactively and within context, are an effective method for creating meaningful communication environments, especially in foreign language learning.
2. The problem-based learning approach contributes to the functional development of students' language skills by requiring them to solve specific problems through communication in the target language.
3. The project-based learning approach in foreign language teaching aims to enhance both linguistic competence and skills such as problem-solving and collaboration by enabling students to create original projects through group work. In project-based tasks, for example, a Russian language teacher may ask students to prepare a guidebook for tourists traveling to Russia. This allows students to use their grammatical and vocabulary knowledge in a contextualized and productive manner.

c. Use of Digital Tools

Technology offers significant opportunities for teachers who adopt a pragmatic teaching approach to make classroom learning processes more effective and interactive. In this context, various digital tools and methods can be utilized to enrich the learning environment. Some examples of digital applications and methods that can be used in educational settings are listed below:

1. Mobile-based applications such as Duolingo and Memrise support users in reinforcing the target language through regular vocabulary practice and help develop language skills through interactive learning methods.
2. Online platforms like Zoom and Google Meet are effective tools, especially for foreign language learners, to improve their speaking skills in synchronous communication environments.
3. Game-based digital tools such as Kahoot and Quizlet stand out as effective methods for capturing students' attention, increasing their level of engagement, and making learning more enjoyable. For example, short quizzes conducted at the end of a lesson using Kahoot help students consolidate what they have learned while also encouraging active participation in the process.

3.5. The Main Challenges Faced by Teachers with a Pragmatic Mindset

Unlike traditional language teaching, the pragmatic approach offers a holistic instructional perspective that not only focuses on the structural features of language but also emphasizes its social, cultural, and contextual dimensions. Teachers who adopt this approach are expected to design learning environments that support students in using the language meaningfully, effectively, and appropriately within context. However, in the process of implementing this approach in classroom practices, teachers may encounter challenges at various levels, such as individual competence gaps, institutional infrastructure deficiencies, systemic limitations, and resistance in pedagogical practices. These challenges highlight the need for the development of multifaceted support mechanisms to effectively translate the theoretical principles of the pragmatic approach into practice.

3.5.1. Student Expectations and Habits

The pragmatic approach is based on the principle that students should learn a language through use and interaction rather than memorizing fixed patterns. As such, it requires active participation in the learning process. However, individuals who have been educated for many years within traditional, test-oriented, and drill-based systems may struggle to adapt to the learner-centered activities required by this new approach. These students, having grown accustomed to passive learning, may hesitate to participate in pragmatic activities and may even perceive such practices as unnecessary, inefficient, or unfamiliar. Therefore, in instructional processes based on the pragmatic approach, it is important to take students' previous learning habits and attitudes into account and to develop pedagogical transition strategies that facilitate their adaptation to the process.

In exam-oriented education systems, academic success is largely reduced to test results, which can lead to the perception that pragmatic gains in language teaching—those not directly measurable by exams—are insignificant or unnecessary details. Such a

perception lowers students' motivation for communication-based activities and causes them to view language as merely a technical skill learned for the sake of passing exams. At the same time, teachers' pedagogical practice is constrained by the narrow boundaries of the exam curriculum, leaving little room to address pragmatic goals such as communicative and contextual language use. This situation paves the way for the neglect of the functional, real-life dimension of language and contributes to the mechanization of the teaching process.

3.5.2. Institutional Resources and Teaching Materials

The effective implementation of the pragmatic approach in classroom practices requires the use of diverse and flexible teaching materials. Dialogues that reflect real-life situations, interaction-based games, role-playing activities, videos, multimedia content, and digital platforms are among the primary tools that support the pedagogical foundations of this approach. However, access to such materials and the necessary technological infrastructure may not be available in every educational institution, leading to significant limitations in practice. Additionally, existing curricula are largely focused on traditional components such as grammar, vocabulary, and structural competence, which forces teachers either to follow this structure or to develop original materials aligned with pragmatic goals. This process poses a considerable burden in terms of both time and effort for teachers, potentially making it difficult to sustain the pragmatic approach over time.

3.5.3. Lack of Collegial Support

A teacher employing a pragmatic approach in an educational institution may find themselves professionally isolated, particularly in environments dominated by traditional methods, and may even face criticism from colleagues. In such contexts, pragmatic activities are often perceived by traditionally oriented teachers as mere “games” or as deviations from the teaching process, which limits the pedagogical autonomy of teachers implementing innovative methods. This perception can weaken the teacher's professional commitment and negatively impact their motivation toward the teaching process. Furthermore, if school administrators and management staff lack sufficient knowledge and understanding of the pragmatic approach, not only is institutional support often absent, but in some cases, active obstruction may occur. These types of negative institutional dynamics can diminish a teacher's confidence and willingness to employ innovative methods, ultimately harming classroom interaction and the overall quality of instruction.

3.5.4. Challenges in Assessment and Evaluation

Since pragmatic competence largely depends on oral and social interaction skills, it is inherently difficult to assess objectively and comprehensively using traditional testing methods. Therefore, objectively evaluating this competence requires performance-based, observational, and interaction-oriented assessment tools. However, conventional examination systems are inadequate in addressing such multidimensional assessment needs. Even when a teacher conducts high-quality activities aimed at developing pragmatic competence, if the evaluation process is reduced solely to written exams, these efforts are systematically overlooked, and the holistic impact of the instructional process cannot be accurately reflected (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996).

3.5.5. Cultural Sensitivity and Adaptation

The pragmatic teaching approach, which encompasses the social norms, value systems, forms of address, and both verbal and non-verbal communication elements of the target language, necessitates a student-centered and culturally sensitive pedagogical perspective grounded in intercultural awareness. In this context, a word or expression style that may be perceived positively in one culture might be seen as rude in another. Becoming aware of such cultural differences can take time for both teachers and students (Hinkel, 1999). Additionally, teachers may struggle to overcome their own cultural biases, while students may resist pragmatic usages that conflict with their own values. This situation can lead to unconscious cultural conflicts during the instructional process (Thomas, 1983). Therefore, for an effective pragmatic teaching process, it is essential that both teachers and students increase their cultural awareness and develop mutual understanding.

4. METHOD

In this article, a literature-based review was conducted within the framework of a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is a widely used approach, especially in the social sciences, and across various disciplines (Baltacı, 2019, pp. 368-388). A literature review is defined as a method in which the researcher systematically analyzes both printed and digital sources (Demirci, 2014, p. 76). This study aims to examine the impact of foreign language teachers with a pragmatic mindset on methodological issues that arise in foreign language teaching within classroom settings.

Traditional methods, which have long dominated foreign language education globally-characterized by memorization and grammar-focused instruction-have been widely criticized. Instead, experience-based, real-life-related, practice-oriented, and problem-solving-focused methods, which align with the pragmatic language approach, are argued to be more effective.

A comparative analysis of traditional and pragmatic teaching methods provides significant insights into how teaching materials used in foreign language education can be applied in real-life contexts and how these methods can help students acquire communicative competence, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

Accordingly, this study explores the role of pragmatic thinking in the foreign language teaching process and examines students' experiences in this regard. By presenting translation errors that occurred in real-life situations across various times and places, the study aims to draw instructive conclusions.

Furthermore, the study highlights the decisive role of the pragmatic approach in motivating students in foreign language education (Ünal, 2023). In contrast to the often monotonous and participation-limiting nature of traditional teaching methods, the flexibility and interactivity offered by contemporary instructional practices and techniques-particularly those supported by artificial intelligence-were also evaluated. A comparative synthesis of these two approaches in terms of functionality was conducted. The pragmatic methods presented under specific headings were examined based on cause-and-effect relationships.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that foreign language teachers who adopt a pragmatic mindset significantly enhance both students' language proficiency and their intercultural communication skills. The collected data demonstrate that not only the theoretical foundations but also the classroom practices are closely intertwined with pragmatic instruction.

Interpretation and Commentary

Taguchi (2019) emphasized that contemporary pragmatic language teaching should equip students not only with linguistic structures but also with contextual appropriateness. In this study, it was observed that teachers with a pragmatic mindset tend to create authentic contexts in the classroom, use digital tools effectively, and integrate cultural elements into their teaching materials. These practices support Taguchi's proposed "practice-oriented" and "context-sensitive" instructional model.

Research supports the views of Hall and Looney (2019), who argue that language should be considered not as a fixed and unchanging structure, but as a social practice. In line with this perspective, instructional practices aimed at developing pragmatic competence focus not only on the formal accuracy of language, but also on contextual appropriateness and meaning-making. Teachers contribute to the development of students' situational awareness and functional language use skills that go beyond communicative competence by encouraging them to use language appropriately within relevant social and cultural contexts.

According to Freeman and Johnson (1998), traditional approaches to the knowledge base of foreign language teacher education should be questioned, as teacher education is not merely about transmitting theoretical knowledge but is also shaped by teachers' classroom experiences and social contexts. The authors emphasize that bridging the gap between theory and practice is of critical importance for enhancing the quality of teacher education. Similarly, this study has shown that teachers with a pragmatic mindset directly shape their classroom instructional strategies. While the pragmatic approach encourages students' active participation, the development of multidimensional thinking skills, and meaningful communication, traditional teaching methods provide only limited opportunities for such higher-order cognitive and interactional processes.

Ishihara and Cohen (2014) argue that most pragmatic failures stem from a lack of intercultural awareness. This highlights the need for language instruction to effectively convey not only linguistic structures but also cultural norms and implicit social codes. In this context, teachers taking on the role of cultural mediators supports students in forming a deeper and more meaningful connection with the target language. Indeed, the cultural and pedagogical awareness demonstrated by the teachers examined in this study has contributed to students acquiring the language not only at a formal level but also within a holistic sociocultural framework.

LIMITATIONS

Although the contributions of pragmatic teaching strategies to language instruction have been clearly demonstrated in the literature, teachers' lack of knowledge regarding digital technologies and the institutional shortage of instructional materials often limit the widespread implementation of these strategies in classroom settings. Moreover, as Freeman and Johnson (1998) emphasize, there is frequently a noticeable mismatch between the classroom realities that teachers face and the educational theories presented during their training. This disconnect can create significant challenges in translating theoretical knowledge into practice, negatively affecting teaching processes.

Future Research

Taguchi (2019) and Sykes & Reinhardt (2013) highlight the potential of digital games and technologies to support the development of pragmatic skills. Studies conducted in this direction have shown that digital tools play a significant role in effective teaching processes. However, there remains a need for detailed and context-specific analyses regarding which digital tools yield the most effective outcomes for different student profiles.

Furthermore, more qualitative data needs to be collected regarding how teachers integrate cultural content into their teaching processes. In this context, it is important to systematically investigate the impact of such practices on student achievement. Within the framework of the culture-language interaction proposed by Ishihara and Cohen (2014), there is a need for more case studies that examine this relationship across different contexts.

Gelecekte gerçekleştirilecek araştırmalarda, karma yöntem yaklaşımı (nicel ve nitel verilerin birlikte kullanımı) benimsenerek, öğrenci başarı düzeyleri ile pragmatik öğretim yaklaşımları arasındaki olası nedensel ilişkilerin daha derinlemesine ortaya konması

mümkün gözükmetedir (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Buna ek olarak, sahada yürütülecek uygulamalı çalışmalar, öğretmenlerin öğretim sürecinde karşılaştıkları pedagojik ve teknik güçlükleri somut veriler aracılığıyla belgeleyerek, kuramsal çerçevelerin pratik bağlamlarla ne ölçüde örtüştüğüne dair önemli içgörüler sunacak ve öğretim tasarımlarının daha işlevsel hâle getirilmesine yönelik kanıta dayalı öneriler geliştirilmesine zemin hazırlayacaktır (McCrudden, Marchand, & Schutz, 2019).

Practical and Social Implications

The findings of this study suggest that pragmatic teaching approaches not only enhance language proficiency but also play a supportive role in promoting social cohesion in multicultural classroom settings. In particular, students' development of sensitivity to different cultural codes, improved empathetic communication skills, and acquisition of more functional communication strategies in social contexts strengthen not only the cognitive dimension of education but also its socio-emotional aspect. These results align with previous studies that emphasize language as a form of social action and highlight the potential of pragmatic instruction in fostering intercultural competence.

The findings obtained in this study indicate that restructuring is needed not only at the level of classroom teaching practices but also at the macro level of educational policy. In this context, it is of great importance to enrich teacher training programs with pragmatic teaching techniques, to promote materials and practices that enhance intercultural sensitivity, and to support teachers' professional development in this area at an institutional level. As emphasized by Ishihara and Cohen (2014) and Hall and Looney (2019), such a transformation should not be viewed solely as teacher-centered but as a holistic and structural change process that encompasses all components of the education system.

In this regard, the national curriculum policies of countries such as Finland and Canada stand out as exemplary models in which intercultural communication skills and pragmatic competence are integrated into the education system. In these countries, language teaching is considered not only a cognitive skill but also a process linked to social participation and democratic citizenship. This perspective highlights that pragmatic competence is recognized not just as an individual asset but also as a societal value (Larzén-Östermark, 2009; Waugh, 2013).

6. FINDINGS

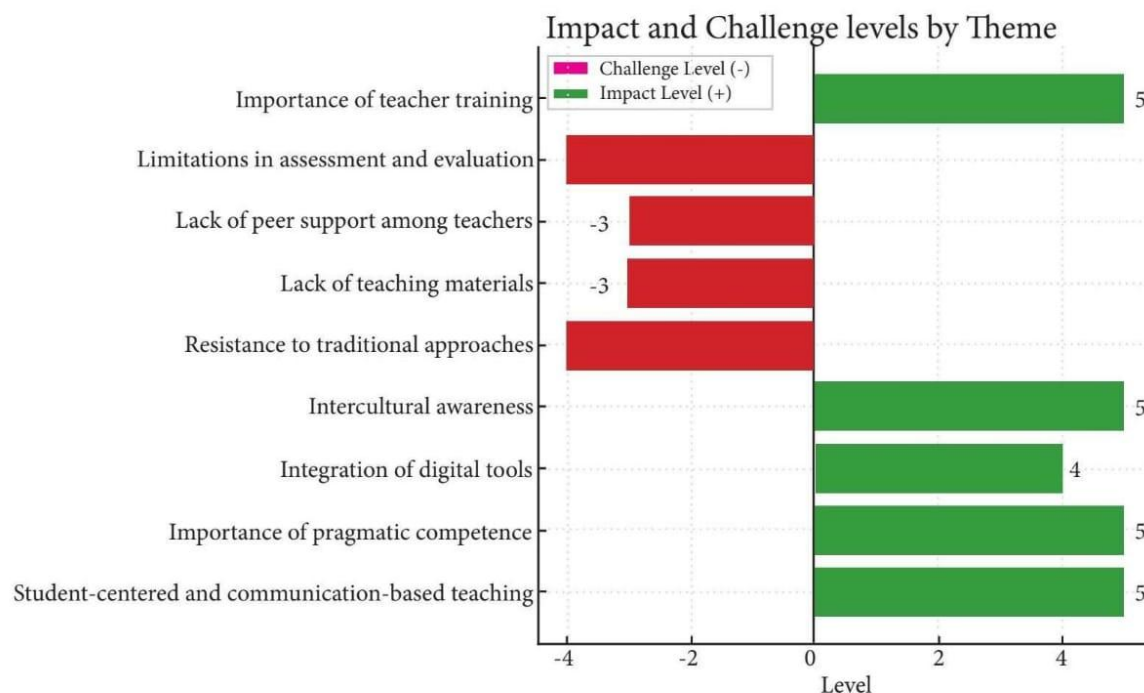
The findings obtained within the scope of the research revealed that teachers with a pragmatic mindset tend to employ more functional and student-centered methods in their classroom practices compared to traditional teaching approaches. The participant teachers stated that, in language teaching, they adopt a holistic approach that goes beyond conveying only structural elements, incorporating contextual, cultural, and communicative dimensions as well.

Within this framework, it was indicated that through the active use of digital tools, practice-based activities, and content linked to real life, students develop multifaceted skills such as pragmatic competence, intercultural communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving. On the other hand, some challenges in implementing this teaching approach were also observed. Participants pointed out that students' attachment to traditional teaching patterns, lack of appropriate materials, limited interaction among colleagues, and inadequacy of assessment and evaluation tools were the main factors hindering effective implementation.

The findings obtained within the scope of the research can be summarized as follows:

No	Findings	Explanations
1	Student-centered and communication-based instruction	Students learn to use the foreign language in real-life contexts through student-centered and communication-based teaching.
2	Importance of pragmatic competence	Pragmatic competence enables students to express themselves effectively and appropriately to the context.
3	Integration of digital tools	Educational technologies (Zoom, Kahoot, Duolingo) enrich the learning experience.
4	Intercultural awareness	The pragmatic approach helps students develop not only linguistic but also social and cultural awareness.
5	Resistance to traditional approaches	Students trained with rote learning and test-based methods may show reluctance to participate in pragmatic activities, which negatively affects the teaching process.
6	Lack of teaching materials	Authentic materials and digital tools necessary for pragmatic instruction are not sufficiently available in every institution.
7	Lack of peer support	Teachers adopting a pragmatic approach may feel isolated and unable to sustain innovative practices when they do not receive adequate support from colleagues.
8	Assessment limitations	Traditional tests are inadequate for measuring pragmatic skills. Therefore, there is a need for performance-based assessment tools.
9	Importance of teacher training	In order for teachers to effectively implement the pragmatic approach in the classroom, continuous professional development in critical thinking, digital tool usage, intercultural awareness, and student-centered pedagogical strategies is essential.

In Figure 1, the positive impacts (+) created by pragmatically-minded teachers in the classroom and the structural and pedagogical challenges (−) they face are presented comparatively within a thematic framework. Positive impacts are visualized with green bars, while challenges are represented with red bars. Each theme is rated on a scale ranging from −4 to +5 based on the participating teachers' perspectives.



According to the findings, teachers demonstrated a high level of effectiveness in student-centered and communication-based instructional practices (+5), as well as in integrating digital tools into the classroom (+4) and fostering intercultural awareness (+5). These findings indicate that pragmatic thinking provides a strong foundation for teaching processes, both pedagogically and socially. On the other hand, the main challenges faced by teachers include limitations in assessment and evaluation practices (−4), lack of teaching materials (−3), and insufficient peer support among teachers (−3). Furthermore, resistance to traditional approaches (−4) hinders the adoption of innovative methods in teaching, posing a threat to the sustainability of pragmatic practices. In this context, it is believed that structural transformations at the systemic level could further enhance teachers' impact in classroom settings.

Table of Impact and Challenges

Theme / Findings	Impact Level (+)	Challenge Level (−)
Importance of teacher training	+5	-
Limitations in assessment and evaluation	-	-4
Lack of peer support among teachers	-	-3
Lack of teaching materials	-	-3
Resistance to traditional approaches	-	-4
Intercultural awareness	+5	-
Integration of digital tools	+4	-
Importance of pragmatic competence	+5	-
Student-centered and communication-based teaching	+5	-

7. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that teachers with a pragmatic mindset support not only grammatical competence in foreign language teaching but also help students acquire the social and cultural dimensions of language. This approach, which transcends traditional teaching methods, enables students to use the language in a more natural, effective, and meaningful way. However, fully integrating this potential into the education system requires long-term planning and fundamental structural reforms.

Teacher Education

The research findings indicate that teachers' levels of knowledge, skills, and awareness are crucial in effectively implementing pragmatic language teaching in the classroom. Therefore, teacher education programs should not be limited to theoretical content; they must also focus on practical teaching techniques, intercultural communication skills, and the social use of language. Teachers

need support in conveying verbal nuances, developing pedagogical strategies within authentic interaction contexts, and creating student-centered learning environments. In addition, their professional development should be promoted through in-service training, and sufficient resources must be provided to help them build sustainable learning environments.

Assessment and Evaluation Reform

The findings of the study reveal that pragmatic competence can be assessed not only through linguistic accuracy but also through contextual appropriateness and communicative effectiveness. However, current examination systems, which largely emphasize structural knowledge and rote memorization, limit the evaluation of this competence. Therefore, there is a need for alternative assessment approaches that can observe student performance in authentic communicative situations and focus on interaction and meaning-making. Tools such as rubrics, student journals, role-play activities, oral presentations, and digital portfolios offer more comprehensive means to evaluate the pragmatic dimension of language. Integrating these tools into the educational system will strengthen the sustainability of the pragmatic teaching approach.

Digitalization

Contemporary foreign language teaching necessitates the integration of technological opportunities into pedagogical processes. Purposeful use of digital tools by teachers with a pragmatic mindset enhances classroom interaction and supports students in using the language effectively across various contexts. Audiovisual materials, interactive platforms, online applications, and AI-assisted language activities play a significant role in developing students' pragmatic awareness. In this regard, teachers need to be supported in areas such as digital pedagogical formation and technological literacy, enabling them to view technology not merely as an instrumental tool but as an integral component of effective instruction.

Conclusion, foreign language teaching based on a pragmatic approach fosters a type of language use that is communicatively competent, culturally aware, and closely linked to real-life contexts. The sustainable integration of this approach into the education system depends on enhancing the quality of teacher education, transforming assessment systems, and adopting digital technologies at a pedagogical level. This study clearly demonstrates that if meaningful and multidimensional transformation is to be achieved in education, teachers must be trained not merely as transmitters of knowledge, but as innovative, culturally sensitive, and digitally competent professionals.

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