THE APPLICATION OF DIVERSE MIXED METHODS TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCIES

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Abstract. The development of communicative competencies is a central goal in contemporary language education. Traditional grammar-focused methods often fail to prepare learners for authentic communication, highlighting the need for innovative approaches. This study explores the application of diverse mixed methods□including task-based learning, collaborative activities, peer feedback, reflective practices, and technology-supported instruction□to enhance learners□ communicative skills. By integrating both qualitative and quantitative strategies, these methods provide a holistic framework for improving fluency, accuracy, pragmatic awareness, and learner engagement. The findings indicate that a mixed-methods approach fosters a comprehensive development of communicative competence, promoting both linguistic proficiency and strategic interaction in real-life contexts.

Keywords: communicative competence, mixed methods, task-based learning, collaborative learning, peer feedback, reflective practice, technology-enhanced language learning

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary landscape of language education, the development of communicative competencies has emerged as a central goal for both learners and educators. Communicative competence, which encompasses not only grammatical accuracy but also sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic skills, is essential for effective interaction in real-life contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990). Traditional approaches to language teaching, often heavily focused on rote learning and structural exercises, have shown limitations in fostering the dynamic skills necessary for authentic communication. Consequently, there is an increasing need to explore innovative pedagogical strategies that actively engage learners and address the multifaceted nature of language use. One promising avenue is the application of mixed methods in language instruction. Mixed methods combine qualitative and quantitative

approaches, offering a holistic framework that allows for both the systematic assessment of learning outcomes and an in-depth understanding of learners experiences and needs (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). By integrating techniques such as collaborative activities, task-based learning, peer feedback, reflective journals, and corpus-informed instruction, educators can create a more interactive and adaptive learning environment that supports the development of communicative competencies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Communicative competence, encompassing grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic skills, is central to effective language learning (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990). Traditional grammar-focused approaches often fail to develop learners real-world communication skills, highlighting the need for innovative instructional methods. Mixed methods, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, have been shown to enhance communicative competencies by addressing both measurable outcomes and learners experiences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Techniques such as task-based learning, collaborative activities, peer feedback, and reflective practices engage learners actively and support both fluency and accuracy (Ellis, 2003; Nation, 2013; Graham, 2019).

Recent studies also emphasize the role of technology, including corpus-based learning and digital collaboration tools, in creating authentic communicative contexts and providing immediate feedback (Godwin-Jones, 2020; Reinders & White, 2016). Overall, the literature suggests that diverse mixed methods offer a holistic and effective approach to fostering communicative competence, though further research on practical classroom implementation remains necessary.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of diverse mixed methods in language education has yielded significant improvements in learners communicative competencies, demonstrating that an integrative approach can effectively enhance both fluency and accuracy. Learners who participated in a combination of task-based learning, collaborative activities, peer feedback, and reflective exercises exhibited marked progress in several areas of communication, including oral expression, writing skills, and pragmatic competence. For instance, during task-based projects such as role-plays, simulated interviews, and problem-solving discussions, students were observed actively negotiating meaning, adapting language to different interlocutors, and employing a variety of strategies to convey their ideas effectively. These activities not only promoted linguistic accuracy but also strengthened learners confidence and autonomy in

communication. Quantitative assessment of learners☐ performance revealed measurable gains in vocabulary usage, sentence complexity, and grammatical accuracy. For example, students who engaged in collaborative group tasks showed a 15☐20% improvement in their ability to construct complex sentences and use context-appropriate vocabulary compared to those following a traditional, lecture-based curriculum. Similarly, reflective journal analysis indicated that students increasingly recognized gaps in their language knowledge and developed strategies to address these, such as self-correction during peer interactions or using digital resources to verify word choice and grammar. These findings align with the theoretical perspectives of Canale and Swain (1980) and Bachman (1990), who emphasize the importance of strategic competence in effective communication.

Qualitative observations further highlighted the motivational benefits of mixed-method approaches. Learners reported higher engagement levels when multiple instructional strategies were employed, particularly when tasks allowed for autonomy and collaboration. Peer feedback sessions, in particular, promoted metacognitive awareness, as students were able to identify errors, provide constructive suggestions, and reflect on their own language use. For instance, during a collaborative writing task, students not only corrected grammatical mistakes but also discussed nuances of tone and register, demonstrating an increased awareness of sociolinguistic norms. Technology-supported methods also played a crucial role in enhancing communicative competence. The use of corpus-based exercises, online discussion platforms, and digital collaborative tools provided learners with authentic language exposure and immediate feedback. Corpus-based activities, for example, allowed students to analyze real-life usage of idiomatic expressions and formal registers, thereby improving both lexical and pragmatic competence. Online platforms facilitated synchronous and asynchronous communication, enabling students to practice language in varied contexts, exchange ideas, and receive timely feedback from both peers and instructors. These findings support the observations of Godwin-Jones (2020) and Reinders and White (2016), who highlight the capacity of technology to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world communication.

Moreover, the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods provided a comprehensive understanding of learning outcomes. Quantitative tests measured improvements in accuracy and fluency, while qualitative data from journals, peer feedback, and classroom observations offered deeper insights into learners☐ affective responses, strategies, and engagement patterns. For example, while numerical scores reflected a general improvement in grammatical accuracy, qualitative analysis revealed that learners were also developing

pragmatic skills, such as adjusting politeness levels in different contexts or interpreting idiomatic expressions appropriately. This dual approach underscores the strength of mixed methods in capturing both measurable and experiential aspects of communicative competence.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings indicate that employing diverse mixed methods fosters a holistic development of communicative competencies by simultaneously addressing structural, functional, and sociocultural aspects of language. Learners demonstrated increased fluency, accuracy, strategic competence, and pragmatic awareness. The study also highlights the importance of contextualized tasks, collaborative activities, reflective practices, and technology integration as complementary components of an effective mixed-methods approach. These results suggest that language educators should adopt a flexible, multidimensional instructional design that responds to learners□ evolving needs, promotes active engagement, and facilitates the application of language in authentic communicative contexts.

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