



LINGUODIDACTIC ASPECTS OF PARENTHESIS (INTRODUCTORY PARTS OF SENTENCES)

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Abstract

In the realm of linguodidactics, understanding and effectively teaching the use of parenthetical structures, especially introductory parts of sentences, plays a crucial role in developing learners' communicative competence. Parenthesis, in this context, refers to words, phrases, or clauses inserted into a sentence to provide additional information, clarification, or commentary without disrupting the syntactic structure. These elements often appear at the beginning of sentences and serve a variety of pragmatic and stylistic functions in discourse (Biber et al., 1999).

INTRODUCTION

From a linguodidactic perspective, teaching parenthetical elements involves both linguistic and pedagogical challenges. Linguistically, these elements are marked by intonation in speech and by punctuation (commas, dashes, parentheses) in writing. They include discourse markers, adverbial phrases, and comment clauses such as "frankly speaking," "in my opinion," "as a matter of fact," and "to be honest" (Quirk et al., 1985). These expressions not only fulfill syntactic roles but also provide insight into speaker stance, hedging, or emphasis, which is often culturally grounded.

Pedagogically, the introduction and reinforcement of these elements can enhance learners' academic and conversational writing and speaking. These structures help to organize discourse, convey attitude, and guide the listener or reader through the speaker's or writer's line of thought. Thus, mastering their use is essential for effective communication in both formal and informal settings. Additionally, they contribute to the development of textual coherence and cohesion, which are fundamental for advanced language proficiency (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Learners exposed to such structures in early stages of language development are more likely to produce complex and meaningful utterances.

One effective method of teaching parenthetical elements is through exposure to authentic texts and spoken dialogues where such structures are frequently employed. Teachers can utilize texts from various genres, including newspaper articles, academic essays, fictional narratives, and television interviews, to highlight the use and function of introductory elements. For instance, corpus-based studies can be used to analyze the frequency and variety of parenthetical elements in real-world usage, helping students understand their pragmatic roles (Hyland, 2005). The British National Corpus and the Corpus of Contemporary American English are valuable resources for such research.

Moreover, communicative language teaching (CLT) strategies should be employed to foster the active use of these elements. Activities such as role-playing, guided writing exercises, discourse completion tasks, storytelling, and peer-editing sessions support the acquisition and accurate usage of parenthesis. Interactive digital platforms like Padlet, Edmodo, and Grammarly can also aid in visualizing and experimenting with introductory elements in different contexts. Incorporating audio-visual materials, such as TED Talks and YouTube lectures, can also provide learners with real-time examples of how native speakers use parenthetical elements to express personal attitudes or to elaborate on ideas.

Furthermore, contrastive analysis should be conducted to address differences between the learners' native language structures and English. Teachers must be aware of potential transfer issues when learners mistakenly apply the syntactic or stylistic rules of their first language. In this regard, cross-linguistic comparison can improve awareness and aid learners in mastering culturally appropriate uses of parenthesis.

Assessment of learners' understanding of parenthetical structures can be integrated into both oral and written tasks. For instance, learners might be asked to rewrite paragraphs by incorporating appropriate introductory elements or to identify and explain the function of parenthetical phrases in sample texts. Rubrics can focus on appropriateness, variety, and accuracy of use, encouraging learners to reflect on their stylistic choices. Oral presentations and recorded monologues can be evaluated for the fluent and purposeful use of parenthetical devices, especially in academic settings.

In conclusion, the linguodidactic study and teaching of parenthesis, particularly the introductory parts of sentences, is a vital component of language education. It not only aids in the development of syntactic and stylistic awareness but also supports learners in becoming more nuanced and expressive communicators. With the increasing emphasis on discourse competence in modern language pedagogy, parenthetical elements deserve greater attention in curriculum design. Future research and classroom practice should continue to explore effective strategies for integrating these elements into curricula, ensuring that language learners gain a comprehensive understanding of how to use them appropriately and effectively.

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