

## **Application and Significance of the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC) in Foreign Language Pedagogy**

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[Note: A preliminary version of this article was presented as a paper at the International Seminar on Two Decades of the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication, organized by the Department of Languages and Mass Communication, Kathmandu University School of Arts (KUSOA), on 26 May, 2024.]

### **Abstract**

This paper examines the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC) and its application in foreign language pedagogy. Rooted in Indian philosophy, SMC offers a holistic view of communication, emphasizing the interplay between the communicator, message, and recipient. It posits that communication is influenced by cultural and social contexts, which can enhance language teaching by promoting a learner-centered approach. By integrating SMC principles into language curricula, teaching materials, and classroom activities, educators can foster a deeper understanding of communication processes and adapt their methodologies accordingly.

The study highlights the benefits of using authentic materials and creating inclusive learning environments to improve language acquisition and cross-cultural understanding among students. It explores how SMC principles can facilitate language learning as a dynamic and

interactive process, encouraging educators to adopt strategies that value the unique experiences and perspectives of each student. By promoting cultural empathy and intercultural sensitivity, SMC provides a framework for cultivating communicative competence and enhancing the overall effectiveness of foreign language education.

**Keywords:** Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC), foreign language pedagogy, communication skills, cultural empathy, intercultural sensitivity, language acquisition

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 An Overview of the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC)**

The Sadharanikaran Model of Communication emphasizes the communal and participatory nature of communication, focusing on mutual understanding and shared meanings (Adhikary, 2009). The concept is rooted in the ancient text *Natyashastra*, attributed to Bharata, with attempts to trace its history back to the Vedic period (Adhikary, 2014). The model outlines key components such as the sender (Pravakta), receiver (Shrota), message (Sandesha), medium (Madhyam), context (Parisar), and feedback (Pratibha). It presents communication as an interactive process where roles are fluid and meaning is co-created by both parties, emphasizing the shared cultural context that facilitates effective communication.

Philosophically, the model underscores the importance of empathy, commonality, and mutual respect, reflecting the collectivist ethos of Indian culture. It integrates aesthetic and emotional dimensions, recognizing the significant role of emotions and expressions in conveying messages. This approach advocates for inclusive and participatory communication practices, promoting dialogue and feedback to enhance mutual understanding.

Unlike individual constructs, Sadharanikaran explicates relational and social processes of communication (Kundu, 2014).

In practical terms, the Sadharanikaran model is particularly relevant in contexts requiring high levels of mutual understanding and shared cultural knowledge, such as education, interpersonal communication, and media studies. It encourages creating meaningful and impactful communication experiences by focusing on shared experiences and common understanding. Since the model integrates cultural, emotional, and interactive dimensions, it has great research value to apply it to foreign language pedagogy.

### **1.2. Context of Foreign Language Pedagogy**

Foreign language pedagogy refers to the theory and practice of teaching languages other than one's native language. It encompasses various approaches, methods, and techniques used to facilitate language learning (McKay, 2012). In the 21st century, language education faces new challenges. Students need not only language proficiency but also higher-order skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) emphasizes the integration of these 21st-century skills into language courses (Betül & Margherita, 2020).

Effective communication is a cornerstone of language learning. It involves not only linguistic competence (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) but also pragmatic awareness (understanding social and cultural context) and strategic language use. Learners must be able to convey their ideas, negotiate meaning, and interact appropriately in real-world situations (McConachy, 2022). Effective communication skills enable learners to engage with native speakers, navigate daily life, and participate in

professional contexts. Language learning becomes purposeful when learners can use the language effectively in authentic situations (Brown, 1995). Effective communication involves understanding cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and nonverbal cues. This cultural awareness fosters empathy and promotes intercultural competence.

## **2. Literature Review**

The Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC) is deeply rooted in Indian philosophy and offers a unique perspective on communication that emphasizes mutual understanding and shared meaning. Adhikary (2014) outlines the model's historical roots in the ancient text *Natyashastra*, highlighting its focus on empathy, commonality, and mutual respect in the communication process. The philosophical foundation of the model aligns with the collectivist spirit of Indian culture and demonstrates the importance of cultural and social context in effective communication.

In the field of foreign language teaching, effective communication is not limited to language proficiency but also includes pragmatic awareness and strategic language use. McKay (2012) points out that language learners should effectively navigate social and cultural contexts. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) also emphasizes the importance of integrating 21st-century skills such as critical thinking and digital literacy into language education (Betül & Margherita, 2020).

Recent research suggests that cultural empathy and cross-cultural sensitivity are essential in foreign language teaching. Byram (1997) and Kumaravadivelu (2006) argue that understanding cultural differences and developing cross-cultural competence are essential for effective communication in language learning. The SMC model

emphasizes a shared cultural background and provides a framework for incorporating these elements into language education, promoting a learner-centered teaching approach that values the unique experiences of each student. This study will be a new attempt that may significantly improve the effectiveness of foreign language education in the future.

### **3. Application of SMC in Foreign Language Pedagogy**

Applying the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC) to foreign language teaching enhances both the learning experience and outcomes. SMC highlights shared understanding and emotional resonance, encouraging learners to appreciate cultural nuances and build connections with native speakers. By fostering active listening and empathy, SMC helps students grasp pronunciation and engage in meaningful dialogue. Incorporating SMC principles into teaching practices—such as using contextualized activities and interactive methods—supports deeper cultural understanding and boosts students' confidence and intercultural skills.

#### **3.1. The Application of Principles of SMC**

SMC emphasizes shared understanding and emotional resonance. In language learning, this translates to appreciating cultural nuances. Learners can benefit from understanding not only the language but also the cultural context behind it, which fosters deeper connections with native speakers. SMC also encourages empathy between communicators. In language teaching, this means promoting empathy toward learners' struggles. Teachers can create an environment where learners feel understood, valued, and motivated to express themselves authentically.

SMC underscores active listening and meaningful dialogue. Language learners can apply this by actively listening to native speakers to grasp pronunciation, intonation, and idiomatic expressions, and by engaging in

authentic conversations to practice speaking and build confidence. SMC's focus on shared emotional states aligns with language learning. Learners experience emotions related to language barriers (frustration, excitement, curiosity), cultural discoveries (surprise, appreciation), and language milestones (joy, accomplishment).

Language learners can benefit from SMC by forming language exchange partnerships. These partnerships allow learners to share experiences, learn from each other, and develop *Sahridayata* (shared understanding).

### **3.2. Specific Strategies and Methodologies**

While specific strategies for applying the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication in foreign language pedagogy may be limited, educators can leverage its principles to create engaging and culturally relevant language learning experiences for students. By incorporating contextualized learning activities, interactive teaching methods, cultural sensitivity training, feedback mechanisms, and task-based learning approaches, educators can empower students to become confident and proficient communicators in diverse linguistic and cultural settings.

First, language learning activities should be designed to immerse students in authentic cultural contexts and real-life situations. By contextualizing the use of language in various scenarios, students can develop a deeper understanding of its application across different contexts. Interactive teaching methods such as role-playing, simulations, and group discussions should be implemented to encourage active participation and collaboration among students, promoting dynamic interaction and facilitating the exchange of ideas and perspectives. Integrating cultural sensitivity training into language teaching is an innovative approach to cultivate students' awareness and respect for diverse cultural perspectives. Discussions that integrate

cultural norms, values, and practices can help educators develop students' intercultural competence. Providing regular feedback on language use and encouraging reflection on communication experiences will enable students to understand their strengths and areas for improvement, thereby promoting continuous learning and development. Finally, task-based learning methods remain the mainstream approach for engaging students in meaningful, goal-oriented language tasks while developing practical language skills.

#### **4. Significance of SMC in Foreign Language Pedagogy**

The significance of applying the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC) in foreign language pedagogy lies in its potential to enrich language teaching practices and enhance student learning outcomes.

SMC offers a holistic framework that emphasizes the interconnections of the communicator, message, and recipient, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of language use and communication dynamics. By integrating SMC principles into language teaching methodologies, educators can promote cultural sensitivity and intercultural competence, enhance students' communication skills, foster critical thinking and reflection, and empower students to actively participate in communication processes. This integration facilitates a deeper exploration of language learning beyond mere grammatical structures and vocabulary acquisition. Students are encouraged to engage with the cultural and contextual nuances of language use, enabling them to navigate diverse linguistic and cultural settings with confidence and proficiency. Through contextualized learning activities such as role-plays, simulations, and authentic communication tasks, educators create immersive language learning environments that mirror real-life scenarios, providing

students with opportunities to apply their language skills in meaningful contexts.

Additionally, interactive teaching methods such as group discussions, collaborative projects, and peer feedback sessions foster dynamic interaction and collaboration among students, promoting a learner-centered approach to language learning. Cultural sensitivity training embedded within language instruction enables students to develop awareness and respect for diverse cultural perspectives, facilitating intercultural communication and fostering mutual understanding. Furthermore, SMC encourages critical thinking and reflection by prompting students to consider the multiple perspectives and interpretations inherent in communication processes. By engaging students in reflective activities and discussions, educators deepen their understanding of language and communication, fostering metacognitive skills and facilitating deeper learning. Importantly, the application of SMC principles in foreign language pedagogy empowers students to take ownership of their language learning journey, promoting a sense of agency and self-efficacy. By providing students with opportunities to engage in authentic communication experiences and express themselves creatively, educators cultivate intrinsic motivation and confidence in their language abilities.

### **5. Case Studies and Examples**

Through research, we found that the application of SMC principles in foreign language subjects has great potential. By adopting specific strategies and methods, there are already many typical cases in foreign language teaching practice. Let us examine how SMC can be effectively integrated into language instruction to foster communicative competence, cultural empathy, and language acquisition processes among students through these cases.



### **5.1. Cultural Immersion Programs**

In a language classroom setting, educators can organize cultural immersion programs that involve participating in activities and experiences that authentically reflect real-life cultural contexts, helping students deeply understand and experience another culture. These programs typically include interacting with locals, attending cultural events, visiting historical and cultural sites, and learning about traditional customs and practices. For example, in a Mandarin Chinese language class, students may participate in a Chinese cultural immersion day organized by their educators. Throughout the day, students are immersed in various aspects of Chinese culture, including language, cuisine, arts, and traditions.

The cultural immersion day begins with a Mandarin language lesson focusing on key phrases and expressions related to daily interactions, such as greetings, ordering food, and expressing gratitude. Students then participate in hands-on activities, such as cooking Chinese cuisine, where they learn about traditional ingredients, cooking techniques, and dining etiquette. This activity not only enhances students' language skills but also provides insights into Chinese culinary culture and social customs. According to the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC), these experiences facilitate *Sahridayata*, or shared understanding and empathy, by immersing students in authentic cultural contexts. Through these activities, students and instructors become *Sahridayas*, achieving commonality and deeper emotional engagement with the language and culture.

In addition to culinary activities, students also engage in cultural workshops, such as calligraphy and traditional Chinese painting, where they learn about the significance of these art forms in Chinese culture. Educators may also incorporate sessions on traditional Chinese

festivals, customs, and rituals, allowing students to gain a deeper appreciation for the cultural heritage of the Mandarin-speaking world.

The cultural immersion program is an excellent example of applying SMC's holistic approach to foreign language teaching practice. It provides students with a comprehensive and well-rounded understanding of the Mandarin language and the culture of China. By participating in a variety of activities—including language, gastronomy, arts, and traditions—students learn about the interconnectivity of different aspects of culture, emphasizing the interconnectedness of transmitters, messages, and receivers in communication.

## **5.2. Contextualized Language Learning**

Educators can design language learning materials and activities that are contextualized to specific real-world situations. For example, in a Spanish language class, students engage in role-plays simulating everyday scenarios such as ordering food at a restaurant, making travel arrangements, or conducting business negotiations. Each language learning activity is carefully designed to reflect real communication situations that students may encounter in everyday life. For example, students can participate in role-playing, impersonating customers and restaurant workers, and practicing language functions such as ordering food, asking about menu items, and expressing preferences. This activity not only strengthens vocabulary and language structure but also familiarizes students with the cultural norms and etiquette of dining out in a Spanish-speaking environment. Engaging in language activities centered on travel arrangements—such as booking hotel accommodations, purchasing transportation tickets, or asking for directions—can also strengthen students' practical pragmatic skills. Through these activities, students not only

learn basic vocabulary and expressions related to travel but also gain practical communication skills necessary for traveling in Spanish-speaking countries. In addition, using real texts as language learning materials increases students' familiarity with authentic language resources such as menus, maps, and travel brochures, allowing them to interact with commonly used language in Spanish-speaking environments. Educators can also incorporate multimedia resources, such as videos or audio recordings featuring native speakers, to provide students with authentic language use and intonation patterns.

This teaching method contextualizes language learning within specific real-world situations, such as ordering food at a restaurant or making travel arrangements. By embedding language use within relevant cultural and social contexts, students gain a deeper understanding of how language functions in different communicative settings. This emphasis on contextualization aligns with the contextualization principle of the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC), which underscores the importance of understanding language within specific cultural, social, and situational contexts.

### **5.3. Cross-Cultural Communication Projects**

In the practice of foreign language teaching, there are many examples of cross-cultural communication. One such example is the virtual pen pal exchange. In this program, educators organize a virtual pen pal exchange in which students from different countries or cultural backgrounds communicate with each other through written correspondence. The program begins with educators pairing students from diverse cultural backgrounds, taking into account language proficiency levels and shared interests.

Students are provided with guidelines on how to introduce themselves, initiate conversations, and share

information about their cultural backgrounds, interests, hobbies, and daily lives. They exchange letters or emails with their pen pals, discussing topics such as family life, school experiences, cultural traditions, and societal norms. Throughout the pen pal exchange, students practice writing skills in the target language, apply cultural knowledge, and develop intercultural communication competencies. They learn to navigate linguistic and cultural differences, express themselves effectively, and adapt their communication styles to suit their audience. As part of the pen pal exchange program, students may also engage in collaborative projects or activities with their pen pals, such as creating joint presentations, digital photo albums, or multimedia projects that showcase aspects of their respective cultures. At the conclusion of the pen pal exchange program, students may have the opportunity to meet their pen pals virtually through video calls or webinars, providing a culminating experience where they can interact face-to-face, share their experiences, and deepen their cross-cultural understanding.

By incorporating SMC's cultural sensitivity principles into foreign language teaching practices, students are exposed to different cultural perspectives and practices, thereby enhancing their cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural competence. Through interactions with pen pals, students gain insights into cultural norms, traditions, and values, developing empathy, understanding, and appreciation for cultural diversity.

## **6. Challenges and Limitations**

While the application of SMC in foreign language pedagogy has yielded positive outcomes, its implementation in other cultural contexts presents certain challenges and limitations due to its strong ties to traditional Hindu philosophy. Students from diverse cultural backgrounds also possess varying interpretations of communication, often

resulting in outcomes that deviate from expectations in practical teaching settings. Evaluating the efficacy of this communication model poses a challenge as well, necessitating alternative assessment methods beyond conventional tests and examinations. Furthermore, disparities in language proficiency create obstacles to achieving meaningful communication.

One of the primary challenges in implementing SMC in foreign language pedagogy is the diverse cultural backgrounds of students. Within a language classroom, students may come from various cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds, each with its own communication norms, values, and practices. This diversity poses a significant challenge for educators, who must navigate cultural differences among students while promoting effective communication. Educators must also be mindful of potential variations in communication styles, preferences, and expectations among students to prevent misunderstandings and discomfort within the classroom.

In the field of foreign language teaching, one of the most prevalent issues is the uneven language proficiency among students. Within any given language classroom, there may be a wide spectrum of learners, ranging from absolute beginners with limited language skills to advanced students approaching native fluency. This disparity in proficiency levels complicates the facilitation of effective communication, as it becomes challenging for students to comprehend and express themselves across different levels. Lower-level students may feel intimidated and overwhelmed by verbal communication tasks, leading to frustration and disengagement. Conversely, higher-level students may experience impatience or disinterest when interacting with peers who struggle to communicate effectively.

To address the challenge of adapting to diverse environments, educators must adopt a contextualized approach to language teaching that recognizes and values students' unique linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds. By tailoring communication strategies to meet students' specific needs, preferences, and experiences, educators can create inclusive learning environments in which all students feel respected, valued, and empowered to engage in meaningful communication. Additionally, ongoing professional development and collaboration among educators can enhance their ability to apply SMC principles across varied contexts and support language learning success for all students.

## **7. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC) offers a holistic framework for understanding and enhancing communication processes in foreign language pedagogy. By emphasizing the interconnection among the communicator, message, and recipient, SMC provides valuable insights into the complex dynamics of language learning and intercultural communication. Throughout this paper, the application of SMC principles has been explored in various aspects of foreign language teaching practices, including contextualized language learning, cross-cultural communication projects, and virtual pen pal exchanges. These examples demonstrate how SMC can be effectively integrated into language instruction to foster communicative competence, cultural empathy, and language acquisition among students.

Despite the challenges and limitations inherent in applying the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC) in foreign language pedagogy—including cultural variability, differences in language proficiency levels, and

the need for contextual adaptation—educators can still leverage the transformative potential of SMC to create dynamic, engaging, and culturally relevant learning experiences. By adopting a culturally responsive approach, providing differentiated instruction, and fostering inclusive learning environments, educators can empower students to become proficient and confident communicators who are capable of navigating diverse linguistic and cultural contexts with ease and fluency.

Moving forward, further research and exploration are essential to continue refining and adapting the principles of the Sadharanikaran Model of Communication (SMC) to meet the evolving needs and challenges of language teaching and learning in an increasingly globalized world. By embracing SMC principles and fostering effective communication exchanges in language classrooms, educators can better prepare students to communicate ethically and effectively within interconnected and multicultural societies. Ultimately, the application of SMC in foreign language pedagogy holds significant potential to enrich language learning experiences, promote intercultural understanding, and cultivate global citizenship among students.

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