



THE ROLE OF PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND ITS ESSENTIAL TIPS AND TECHNIQUES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING ACQUISITION

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ABSTRACT

This article considers the application of pragmatics in second language teaching. It presents pragmatics as a discipline that should be taught and learned in the process of foreign language classes, in particular English. It explores some challenges of pragmatic competence and how to deal with these issues. Furthermore, it claims several essential ways and tips of teaching pragmatic elements in order to enhance learners' communication skills which are appropriate in the process of language usage. Finally, the article ends with my personal view on this research and its significant role in EFL classrooms.

Key words: pragmatic competence, discipline, task basic approach, language teaching, communication skills, cultural diversity, EFL classroom.

Over recent years, learning international languages has been evolved quickly, especially English. Hence, It demands more effective ways of teaching from teachers during the classes rather than traditional classes in past years. As it is known in foreign language teaching, there are four skills which should be improved; reading, writing, listening and speaking and most of us are limited only with these skills while learning and teaching process. However, as mentioned, English is a global spread language that allow variety of cultures to communicate and interact in different places. And this communication requires a correctness and politeness among the users. Therefore, pragmatic competence should also be taught and become worthwhile discipline in teaching process in order not to make specific errors regarding cultural differences in language.





In the teaching process of English we can divide learners into two types: learners in foreign environments, who learn English as a foreign language and learners who can study English as a second language in countries where English is widely spoken such as BANA countries (Britain, America, New Zealand and Australia).

Learners in foreign countries such as Uzbekistan or Kazakhstan have difficulties in comprehending language skills in particular, communicative competence and this phenomenon requires to teach pragmatics that can enable learners to understand cultural diversity in language and prevent some inappropriate errors in communication. In contrast, learners who can study English in BANA countries have opportunity to study not only from text books, but also from native or non native speaker teachers who have more experience and interaction with the culture. These kind of learners may notice the use of pragmatic features while communicating process such as greetings, apologies and refusals.

As a result of these multifarious learning experiences English users could be a learner who speaks English with a British accent and African politeness, or Uzbek citizen who speaks English with American accent, but has Eastern behaviors.

This assortment make learners use appropriate language according to the context they will use it. Consequently, teaching and learning English involve a new way of teaching include acting and feeling which is called “language ego” by D. Brown (2007) another means is pragmatic competence.

What are effective ways of teaching pragmatics?

In order to teach a good pragmatic competence to the students, there are some concepts that should be taken into consideration:

1. The goals and objectives of the lesson should be designed according to the needs of the students. It should be gainful to improve their communicative skills which is provided fluency and accuracy of communication. For that, the teacher and the students should concentrate on more oral activities that would help to improve communicative competence
2. The teacher should prepare hand outs or activities to engage the learners with pragmatic competence for communicative purposes. For instance, they can conduct the EFL classes some real sources of how to complain or asking permission in English. As Erton (1997:7) claims, “The functional study of language means, studying how language is used.





For instance, trying to find out what the specific purposes that language serves for us, and how the members of a language community achieve and react to these purposes through speaking, reading, writing and listening.” The Learners should have ability to put his or her knowledge of language into practice.

3.The next productive way of teaching pragmatic competence is using Interaction methods. As Mey (1993:185-6) states, “Linguistic behaviour is social behaviour. People talk because they want to socialise, in the widest possible sense of the world.” Mey would like to say that language is considered an essential tool to express human as the social creature. It is due to the fact that pragmatic competence should be taught integrating way of teaching like peer-share work by language instructors as there is not enough opportunity to use target language in communicative contexts outside the classroom. In fact, all classroom activities include the pragmatic components According to Bardovi-Harlig`s (as cited in Shemanski, 2000) investigation there are four basic tips to include pragmatic aspect into the curriculum.

These tips are:

- 1) identification of the speech act
- 2) data collection and description (journals, prediction charts, etc.),
- 3) evaluation of texts and materials (critiquing dialogues, and group discussions), 4) development of new materials.

The teacher explains the topic of the lesson and asks students to make prediction of this topic with the help of visual aids or graphic organizer. After that the results of the students' observations are evaluated and discussed. Finally, there is a time for active practice and use of the language with the appropriate pragmatic elements.

Furthermore , we can point out some effective teaching methods which allow students to determine the optimal way in order to develop pragmatic competence in foreign classroom .

- When students notice of communication breakdown while interacting with the people of another culture, they should tell their teacher what has happened and ask them to present the misunderstanding. Teacher has to create cultural awareness of students which helps them to make comparisons and reflection of pragmatic elements.



- Teacher should introduce the accurate subject matter which is based on comparason between students culture and target culture. This comparason make a significant role so that not use inappropriate pragmatic elements that may come from one`s own cultural norms and behaviors .
- It can be helpful for students to make some notes or keep records of their difficulties in the process of communication and also try to explain the reason of this. This kind of method can be useful in order to draw the student`s attention to the pragmatic competence .
- Moreover, some factors such as age, cultural background, and language proficiency is considered as references of pragmatics which should take into consideration in teaching foriegn language. It also helps teachers to find out the cultural difference of their students.
- To focus on the practice that can be benificial to build fluency in student`s oral speech. In this stage teacher may use some pair work activities like short dialogues, role plays or conversations which represent specific.
- Teacher must not correct students` errors in practice time. They need a chance to make mistakes without the distraction of corrections. Teacher should take notes of errors and present them after the practice time.

Conclusion

It can be suggested that pragmatic competence should be taught in the foreign language classrooms that would help learners to use appropriate language in different situations. To do so, teachers need to include the pragmatic component in their lesson. Whatsmore, some pedagogical implications such as select optimal classroom materials according to the level of students and effective learning and teaching methods may also help to develop this competence. It is also believed that the meaningful materials and clasroom activities will capture the students` attention and are crucial for the achievement of this goal.

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