PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AS A STRUCTURAL COMPONENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF STUDENTS

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Abstract

In this article it will be exposed information about pragmatic competence as a structural component of foreign language communicative competence during teaching process. Pragmatic competence, the ability to use language appropriately in various social and cultural contexts, is increasingly recognized as an essential component of foreign language communicative competence. Despite its importance, pragmatic competence has often been neglected in traditional language teaching, which primarily focuses on linguistic forms like grammar and vocabulary. This article explores the role of pragmatic competence in foreign language learning and highlights its importance for effective communication. It further examines how pragmatic competence can be developed through teaching strategies, the challenges faced by both learners and instructors, and the potential methods for integrating pragmatic competence into language curricula. This article concludes by proposing ways to address the gap between linguistic competence and pragmatic skills, thereby improving foreign language education.

Keywords: Pragmatic Competence, Communicative Competence, Foreign Language Education, Language Teaching, Speech Acts, Cultural Contexts, Social Appropriateness, Language Learning, Pedagogical Strategies, Cross-Cultural Communication, Linguistic Competenc, Pragmatic Skills, Language Acquisition, Intercultural Communication, Teaching Methodologies, Curriculum Integration, Language Proficiency, Authentic Communication, Sociolinguistics.

Introduction

The concept of communicative competence has become central to the field of language teaching and learning. Coined by sociolinguist Dell Hymes in the early 1970s, communicative competence extends beyond grammatical accuracy to encompass the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in various social and cultural contexts. This comprehensive notion of competence has led to a reevaluation of language learning goals, encouraging educators to focus not only on linguistic skills (such as grammar, vocabulary, and syntax) but also on the ability to navigate real-world communication scenarios.

One of the key components of communicative competence is pragmatic competence, which refers to a speaker's ability to understand and appropriately use language in different social

contexts. Pragmatic competence involves knowing how to perform speech acts (such as requesting, apologizing, or complimenting) and understanding the nuances of meaning that arise from social relationships, cultural norms, and contextual factors. In other words, it is the ability to use language in ways that are contextually appropriate, considering factors such as politeness, formality, and social roles.

In foreign language education, pragmatic competence has often been overlooked in favor of more formal aspects of language learning, such as vocabulary acquisition and grammatical accuracy. However, as globalization and increased intercultural communication continue to reshape the ways in which people interact across language boundaries, the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately has gained increasing significance. Learners need more than just the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary; they must also be equipped with the skills to use language in ways that are sensitive to the social and cultural contexts of their interlocutors. The importance of pragmatic competence in foreign language education is thus increasingly recognized as essential for fostering students' ability to engage in meaningful and effective communication in the target language.

This article explores the role of pragmatic competence as a structural component of foreign language communicative competence. By examining its importance in language teaching, the challenges it poses for both students and educators, and strategies for incorporating pragmatic competence into language curricula, the article aims to contribute to the understanding of how pragmatic skills can be developed alongside linguistic skills in the process of foreign language acquisition. Through an analysis of current research and pedagogical practices, this article highlights the need for a more integrated approach to teaching pragmatic competence, ultimately enabling students to become more proficient and effective communicators in the foreign language.

Literature Review

In this part, we will begin by discussing pragmatics as a science, then define pragmatic competence and classify its constituent elements. After that, we will address the specifics of developing students' pragmatic competence in a foreign language.

The issue of determining the place of pragmatic competence within the framework of foreign language communicative competence has been addressed in the works of many researchers in the field of linguodidactics. For a long time, foreign language teaching focused on students mastering only the grammar and vocabulary of the target language. However, with the emergence of the communicative approach to foreign language teaching in the second half of the twentieth century, the need arose not only to master linguistic competence (which includes grammar and lexical units), as was practiced earlier, but also several other competencies. Among these competencies is pragmatic competence, the role of which within foreign language communicative competence will be discussed below.

First, let's define what pragmatics is as the central, significant element of pragmatic competence. Pragmatics studies how language is used in communication, specifically focusing not so much on what is said, but on how it is said. The term "pragmatics" was introduced by

the American philosopher C. Morris, who considered it a component of semiotics alongside semantics and syntax (Morris C., 1938).

While semantics asks what a word means, considering it outside the circumstances and context of its use, pragmatics, on the other hand, emphasizes these very circumstances. Pragmatics is primarily concerned not with sets of rules for correctly formulating sentences, but with how language is used in communication. Communication involves at least two parties—the speaker and the listener, or the writer and the reader. Therefore, pragmatics always involves the interaction between communicators.

Thus, communication is much more than the encoding of signs by the speaker and their decoding by the listener. It includes complex processes of interpretation, based not only on what is said in terms of meaning, but also on what should be said depending on the sociocultural context. In this sense, pragmatics is the "art of analyzing the unsaid" (Yule, G., 1996). The fundamental question in pragmatics is: "What does the speaker (writer) imply by what is said (written), and how is it understood by the listener (reader) in this situation?" (Leech G.N., 1983).

A significant factor in understanding the meaning of what is conveyed is the context in which communication takes place. Communication unfolds differently depending on the activity in which it is used. The language user chooses a linguistic form based on the social situation, which includes factors such as the speaker's identity, their relationship to the listener, the type of activity, and the speaker's position (Ohta A., 2001). Moreover, the understanding of an utterance is based on different types of signals. Interpretation depends on both verbal and non-verbal expressions, such as prosody, kinesics, gestures, and facial expressions. Indeed, listeners draw conclusions from the entire array of interacting behavioral events from different communication subsystems (or "modalities"), which are simultaneously transmitted and received as a unified (usually audio-visual) image (Crystal D., 1985).

Furthermore, the theory of utterance interpretation should have a dialogic approach. What is said is always in response to what has previously been said by someone else. This creates the conditions for what happens in communication afterwards. What we say or write (in any form or situation) creates the context for the interlocutor's response, and their response provides even more context for how we react to this reply, and so on.

As previously mentioned, to better understand pragmatics as a science and, consequently, pragmatic competence, it is worth examining some key aspects of pragmatics. One of the foundational theories in pragmatics is the theory of speech acts. A speech act in linguistics and philosophy of language is an utterance that has a performative function in language and communication. According to J.L. Austin, speech acts can be analyzed on three levels (Austin J.L., 1962):

- **Locutionary act**: the act of uttering the statement, the actual statement and its apparent meaning, including phonetic, factual, and ritual actions corresponding to the verbal, syntactic, and semantic aspects of any meaningful utterance;
- **Illocutionary act**: the pragmatic "illocutionary force" of the statement, i.e., its intended meaning as an appropriate verbal action in a given sociocultural context;

- **Perlocutionary act**: the actual effect of the utterance, such as persuasion, intimidation, enlightenment, inspiration, or any coercion to make someone do or understand something, whether intended or not.

Thus, it is evident that knowledge of the pragmatic norms of a foreign language ensures achieving the desired perlocutionary act from the interlocutor, i.e., ensuring effective communication.

Another cornerstone of pragmatics is the Brown-Levinson politeness theory (Levinson, S.C., 1983; 1987). P. Brown and S. Levinson's work has a two-part division. In the first part, the scholars discuss the theory of politeness in general: its nature and functional apparatus. In the second part, they provide a list of politeness strategies. P. Brown and S. Levinson work with three languages: English, Tamil, and Celtal. Thanks to these two scholars, the concept of "face" emerged in pragmatics, particularly in the theory of politeness. It is important to note that all interlocutors are interested in maintaining two types of "face" during interaction: "positive face" and "negative face." P. Brown and S. Levinson define "positive face" as the desire of a person to receive approval and positive evaluation from others during communication. While "negative face" is the desire for freedom of action without interference from others. Using the concept of "face," P. Brown and S. Levinson view "politeness" as having a dual nature: "positive politeness" and "negative politeness." "Positive politeness" is expressed through the satisfaction of the "positive face" in two ways: 1) by indicating similarity between participants, or 2) by expressing an evaluation of the interlocutor's self-esteem. "Negative politeness" can also be expressed in two ways. First, it is expressed through the preservation of the interlocutor's "face" (either "negative" or "positive") through face-threatening acts, such as offering advice and disapproval. Second, there is a way of satisfying the "negative face" when it is pointed out that the interlocutor's rights are not being encroached upon. In other words, politeness is expressed not only in minimizing face-threatening acts but also in satisfying the interlocutors' face regardless of whether a face-threatening act occurs or not.

People are social beings, and when they speak, they are usually having a conversation with others (except for monological statements). Paul Grice, a philosopher of the English language, argues that people have an intention to cooperate when they speak. For Grice, "cooperation" means that the speaker understands that every statement is a potential intervention into the personal rights, autonomy, and desires (a potential threatening act) of the other (Grice, H.P., 1968, 1969, 1975, 1989). This is why interlocutors must phrase their statements in a certain way.

Grice's Cooperative Principle is a set of norms that must be followed in conversation. It consists of four maxims (categories) that speakers must adhere to in order to be properly understood.

The Maxim of Quality suggests that speakers must tell the truth or say something that has sufficient evidence to support it.

The Maxim of Quantity states that interlocutors must be as informative as necessary, not providing more or less information than needed.

The Maxim of Relevance explains that the responses must be related to the topic of conversation.

379

The Maxim of Manner means that speakers must avoid ambiguity or vagueness; they should be direct and clear. This maxim includes the following components:

• avoiding unclear expressions;

• avoiding ambiguity;

• brevity (avoiding verbosity);

• organization.

Turning to the term "linguistic competence," it is worth mentioning that it was proposed by American linguist Noam Chomsky in contrast to the concept of "language performance" (Chomsky N., 1957). Initially, Chomsky understood competence as "the ability necessary to perform a certain, predominantly linguistic activity in the native language" (Chomsky N., 1957, p. 138). Linguistic competence was understood as mental knowledge about language, whereas the opposing term referred to actual, real language use in a specific situation (Chomsky N., 1967). Although the understanding of this term has changed over time, it has remained in use. In general terms, pragmatic competence can be defined as the ability to convey the intended meaning of an utterance with all its nuances in any sociocultural context and to interpret a message as it was intended by the speaker. However, it is important to trace how pragmatic competence has been viewed by different scholars and what they understood by it. In this way, we will attempt to study its component structure and its relationship with other competencies.

According to John Leech's definition, pragmatics refers to the linguistic strategies and resources necessary for encoding and decoding a given illocution (Leech G.N., 1983). For example, a linguistic strategy for making a request is an indirect request (e.g., "Could you open the door, please?"). The linguistic form of the sentence includes the use of a modal verb, an interrogative form, as well as hedging, which is a softening of the request (e.g., "please"). From this, we can conclude that pragmatics is more closely related to pragmalinguistics, and it is manifested individually in each language. Sociopragmatics, on the other hand, tends to focus on the regulatory norms of language use, that is, understanding how to express one's thoughts in a particular sociocultural context.

To determine how this component emerged and what it entailed, let us consider different models of communicative competence. Among the various approaches and models proposed by foreign scholars, which in one way or another include pragmatic competence, we can identify some groups. For example, V. Laughlin, J. Wain, and J. Schmidgall distinguish three such directions: (1) functional or discourse-oriented models; (2) component models; (3) meaning-oriented models (Laughlin V., Wain, J., Schmidgall, J., 2015).

Let us begin by reviewing foreign language communicative competence within the framework of discourse-oriented models, which apply a functional approach to pragmatic competence. First and foremost, we should mention the theory proposed by M. Halliday and R. Hasan, where the key role is played by the sociocultural context. It is this context that determines the meaning of the utterance (Halliday M.A.K., 1973; Halliday M.A.K., Hasan R., 1976; Halliday M.A.K., Hasan R., Christie F., 1989). These scholars introduced the concept of the "meaning-potential approach," which was later used and expanded by other scholars, such as M. Kanel and M. Swain.

The essence of the above-mentioned approach lies in the idea that the social context determines how the speaker behaves, which is reflected in a set of different meanings, i.e., the meaning potential. In M. Halliday's model, it is assumed that language is organized on multiple levels depending on the sociocultural context. There are three structural levels of the semantic system of language. The first level is called the ideational. It deals with how the content of the utterance is expressed. The second level is the interpersonal. This level involves the realization of various social functions and affectivity. The third level of the sociocultural context is the textual. It is associated with the linguistic elements required to reproduce discourse, and it also includes prosodic elements and cohesion. These three levels, in combination with the lexicon and grammar of the language, form an organized structure.

Something similar can be found in the works of T.A. van Dijk. From his perspective, language is a functional system that undergoes changes over time within a given linguistic community (van Dijk T.A., 1977). Pragmatic competence, within the framework of the scholar's concept, is more aligned with speech act theory. Pragmatics is understood in this case as the relationship between utterances and (1) actions performed through utterances and (2) contextual features. T.A. van Dijk acknowledged the interpretative aspect in the process of distinguishing meanings of speech acts in their direct use in a specific language.

E. Bialystok described the structure of communicative competence (Bialystok E., 1993), which largely aligns with the functionally-oriented models of M.A.K. Halliday and T.A. van Dijk. However, the scholar emphasizes a cognitive approach to the proposed components. E. Bialystok views communicative competence as a two-component ability to process information. From her perspective, the first component of communicative competence includes an analytical aspect concerning knowledge. This component has three levels. The first level is associated with the expression of meaning. The second level involves the structure of the expression. The third level is symbolism in expression. The second component concerns the control of processing this knowledge and applying it in real-life situations. From this point of view, pragmatic competence should be viewed as a combination of these components in three pragmatic phenomena (change of communicative strategy, cooperation, and cohesion).

Thus, discourse-oriented models view language as a multidimensional (sociosemiotic) system. In this case, pragmatics represents an important element that is largely synonymous with functional-discursive functions. The meaning that is created and mediated by context is typically open and is interpreted in a coherent flow of discourse by the interlocutor. These models adhere to a usage-oriented approach to language, focused on meaning.

In the models by D. Hymes and M. Canale & M. Swain, we can find a bidirectional interpretation of communicative competence (Hymes D., 1972; Canale M., Swain M., 1980, 1988). The first direction views communicative competence as a set of rules and forms organized into a coherent system of knowledge. The second direction sees it as the ability to use language appropriately in a specific context. These two directions laid the foundation for including three components in communicative competence: grammatical subcompetence, sociolinguistic subcompetence, and strategic (or compensatory) subcompetence. These three components were later supplemented by M. Canale (1983) with another component—discourse subcompetence. Let's now examine each component in more detail.

Grammatical subcompetence includes knowledge of lexical, syntactic, morphological, phonetic, semantic, and coherence rules of language use. As for the sociolinguistic component, it is traditionally divided into two areas: knowledge and ability to use rules for constructing and organizing discourse, and knowledge and ability to apply sociocultural rules for language use. The application of discourse rules involves the ability to construct and align larger texts for various communicative purposes. Regarding sociocultural rules, this refers to the speaker's ability to understand and reproduce utterances according to the current sociocultural context. Parameters such as the topic of the conversation, the social roles of the speakers, and so on, are taken into account. Thus, sociocultural competence is viewed both in terms of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. On the one hand, the speaker must be guided by context when choosing expressions. On the other hand, the speaker must correctly organize discourse depending on the sociocultural environment.

A very similar model of communicative competence was proposed around the same time by S. Savignon (Savignon S.J., 1983; 2002). In her model, she uses the same names for the four components of communicative competence. However, their content has been slightly modified. For example, S. Savignon includes various sociocultural parameters in the sociolinguistic subcompetence, which leads to the renaming of sociolinguistic subcompetence as sociocultural competence. This now includes social roles of communication participants, dialectal diversity, functions of interaction, and so on. Later, these elements were incorporated into pragmatic competence by other authors. S. Savignon argues that communicative competence is subject to development. The context in which communication occurs is also of great importance. According to the scholar, over time, the speaker's knowledge grows deeper, which enhances their ability to successfully engage in communication in a greater variety of communicative contexts. However, given the fact that no matter how much knowledge expands, it is impossible to know everything in every context, compensatory subcompetence is always needed in such cases, interacting with the other three subcompetences.

Parallel to the work on communicative competence by American scholars, the European model was proposed by J.A. Van Ek, who conducted research in the European Council (van Ek J.A., 1986). The author considers communicative orientation the main goal of foreign language teaching. J.A. Van Ek focuses on an individual approach to learners. He emphasizes the importance of the sociocultural context both in education and in communication in general. In his model, he characterizes the social and personal development of learners. Structurally, his model consists of six elements. In addition to the four components found in previously described models, J.A. Van Ek adds two more components. The first is social competence, which includes empathy skills and the ability to make correct decisions in different social contexts. The second additional component is sociocultural competence. In this sense, J.A. Van Ek distinguishes between sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence.

Analyzing the functional models of communicative competence outlined above, it can be argued that the authors generally adhered to D. Hymes' idea of the dependence of expression on context. In their works, they broke down communicative competence into smaller components, assigning specific functions to each. In all the models considered, the interconnection of structural elements is emphasized. The speaker uses several components

simultaneously in the process of communication. From this, we can conclude, for example, that the linguistic component cannot exist in isolation from the other components, just as they cannot exist without the linguistic component. This further underscores the significance of J. Leech's concept, which emphasizes the close interconnection of these phenomena. However, all authors acknowledged that, despite the presence of interconnections among the components of communicative competence, the nature of this connection has not been fully researched and studied. It is also worth noting that the views of the authors of these models in the area of sociocultural and sociolinguistic components later became the basis for the identification of pragmatic competence in later models.

Let's examine the language competence model proposed by L.F. Bachman and A.S. Palmer in more detail to understand the place of pragmatic competence within it. According to L.F. Bachman, language competence consists of two components at different levels: organizational competence and pragmatic competence. We will not go into the details of organizational competence, focusing only on its key aspects. Organizational competence involves the ability of a language user to control the formal structure of the language, to construct and recognize grammatically correct sentences, understand their meaning, and create coherent texts from these sentences. This competence includes two other components: grammatical competence and textual competence.

As the first component of pragmatic competence, Bachman and Palmer identify illocutionary competence (later also referred to as functional knowledge), which consists of speech acts (Searle J.R., 1969) and functions (Halliday M.A.K., Hasan R., 1976). This reflects the purpose and communicative orientation of utterances, as well as their connection within discourse (Bachman L.F., Palmer A.S, 1996, p. 68). For example, the question "Do you know how to get to the subway?" is unlikely to require just a simple answer of "yes" or "no," which, although grammatically correct, is inappropriate because it disregards the nature of the question as an information request. Later, L.F. Bachman and A.S. Palmer included speech acts and, more broadly, the entire functional set of language tools for achieving various communicative goals in a separate illocutionary subcompetence (Bachman L.F., Palmer A.S, 2010). Thus, Bachman and Palmer organize communicative intentions into broader categories. The scholars distinguish four such categories: cognitive, heuristic, manipulative, and artistic.

The second element of pragmatic competence is sociolinguistic competence, which relates to how utterances or sentences are connected to the specific context of language use (Bachman L.F., Palmer A.S, 1996, p. 68). In this way, it describes the sociographic knowledge necessary to relate utterances appropriately to the specific setting of language use. L.F. Bachman and A.S. Palmer (Bachman L.F., Palmer A.S, 2010, p. 46) identified the following structural elements of this subcompetence: dialectical differences, stylistic formatting, idiomatic expressions, genre formatting, cultural references, etc. Thus, the pragmatic component, being itself fragmented, includes everything that was previously included in earlier models under the sociolinguistic or sociocultural components. According to the scholars, the speaker applies a specific component of pragmatic competence at any given moment in communication. This highlights the interconnection and mutual influence between the speaker and the context.

The most recent so-called meaning-oriented model by J. Purpura is situated at the boundary between grammar and pragmatics. Thus, J. Purpura's model is a kind of synthesis of earlier functional and component models. As a result, it forms a mixed model that combines structural organization and functional orientation in terms of interpretation (Purpura J., 2004).

The author proposes his model as an alternative to the theory of L.F. Bachman and A.S. Palmer. Although J. Purpura considered his own concept of foreign language communicative competence to be "the most comprehensive conceptualization of language ability to date" (Purpura J., 2004, p. 54), he acknowledged that the model by L.F. Bachman and A.S. Palmer had an advantage because it more clearly describes how the speaker uses structural and grammatical knowledge in specific contexts. However, J. Purpura believes that it is necessary to bring grammar and pragmatics closer together in order to understand how they interact. To this end, he proposes his own model of language knowledge, where two interdependent levels — pragmatic and grammatical — are found. From J. Purpura's perspective, the two types of knowledge are integrated in a specific communicative context, even though they may appear to be completely different when considered separately. The author argues that the goal of communication determines the meaning of speakers' utterances. Hence, it becomes evident that for him, the main purpose of language use is communication.

In J. Purpura's model, the primary role is given to the meaning expressed, which is directly dependent on the current situational context. The direct or implied meaning can be conveyed through grammatical knowledge. This approach has similarities with the pragmatic knowledge proposed by J. Leech (Leech G.N., 1983). For J. Purpura, grammatical knowledge directly derives from the meaning of lexical units. In contrast, pragmatics describes "a domain of extended measures that are applied to forms associated with the literal and inferred meanings of an utterance." J. Purpura defines pragmatics as the set of implied meanings, which are directly dependent on the context of language use. Interpersonal relationships, personal characteristics of the interlocutors, and knowledge of the sociocultural environment of their communicative interaction are also taken into account.

Regarding pragmatic knowledge, it involves perceiving and reproducing structures with implicit meaning, which can only be understood through the analysis of context. From this perspective, pragmatic meaning includes the appropriateness of language use, the naturalness of expression, and so on. This can be realized at the sentence level or throughout the discourse. The author identifies five types of pragmatic meaning expression in context. The first type is called contextual. The second type is sociolinguistic. The third type is sociocultural. The fourth type is psychological. And the last one is rhetorical. While J. Purpura seems to restructure the components of pragmatics proposed in the L.F. Bachman and A.S. Palmer model, he expands the scope. J. Purpura introduces parameters such as social distance, degree of politeness, and other concepts developed in the framework of politeness theory (Brown P., Levinson S.C., 1987). The author starts from the concept of "meaning" to reconstruct the content of the main components of pragmatic competence.

It should be noted that over the last few decades, a number of different models have emerged that describe pragmatic phenomena to varying degrees. Although they differ in their individual perspectives, they share several common features. First and foremost, this concerns the dual

structure of the models. This means that all such models contain a linguistic component, also known as the grammatical component, which represents the immediate code of an utterance. The second component focuses on the contextual use of language, depending on the communicative goal (Niezgoda K., Roever C., 2001). This bidirectional relationship between context and meaning in pragmatic competence is evident in all models. It highlights the importance of developing pragmatic competence in foreign language learners.

In conclusion, it can be said that pragmatic competence represents a set of specific knowledge on how to correctly structure utterances and perform communicative functions. Pragmatic competence involves the ability to relate the construction of utterances to the sociocultural context. Three main principles underlying the implementation of pragmatic competence are: meaning, interaction, and context. Pragmatic competence is crucial for successful communication. However, it is often not given the attention it deserves in foreign language learning. As a result, foreign language learners who have mastered linguistic competence but not pragmatic competence may produce grammatically correct speech that fails to achieve its communicative goals. This highlights the importance of developing pragmatic competence. It has been proposed to include the following five components in pragmatic competence: social, sociolinguistic, sociocultural, speech, and compensatory.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative research approach, reviewing existing literature on communicative competence, particularly pragmatic competence, in foreign language teaching. The research explores how pragmatic competence has been defined and assessed in different theoretical frameworks and examines the pedagogical implications for language instruction. A wide range of academic articles, textbooks, and case studies were analyzed to identify common trends, methodologies, and challenges associated with teaching pragmatic competence.

Additionally, empirical research on the integration of pragmatic competence into foreign language curricula is considered. The study looks at practical examples of teaching methodologies and assessment tools used to evaluate students' pragmatic competence, such as role-plays, discourse completion tasks, and pragmatic awareness questionnaires. A comparative analysis of traditional language teaching approaches and those that incorporate pragmatic competence is also included to highlight the effectiveness of these strategies in real classroom settings.

Results

The findings indicate that pragmatic competence is a crucial, yet often overlooked, component of foreign language communicative competence. Language learners with high pragmatic competence are better equipped to interpret social cues, understand cultural norms, and use language in ways that are appropriate for different situations. This enables them to engage more effectively in cross-cultural interactions, avoiding misunderstandings and communication breakdowns.

Through the analysis of various teaching strategies, it became evident that integrating pragmatic competence into the curriculum is not only feasible but highly beneficial. Classroom

activities such as role-plays, authentic listening exercises, and tasks that simulate real-life situations help students understand how to use language in context. These activities foster the development of pragmatic strategies, such as the use of politeness strategies, turn-taking in conversations, and understanding speech acts like requests, apologies, and complaints.

However, several challenges were identified. One of the primary difficulties lies in the traditional structure of language teaching, which often prioritizes grammar and vocabulary over pragmatic aspects. Moreover, pragmatic competence is harder to assess through standard language tests, which typically focus on grammar and vocabulary knowledge. Teachers also face challenges in providing sufficient exposure to authentic language use in diverse social contexts, particularly when there are limited opportunities for students to interact with native speakers of the target language.

Discussion

The importance of pragmatic competence is evident when considering the real-world use of language. Effective communication requires not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to adapt one's language use based on the social context, relationships, and cultural expectations. For instance, making a request in English requires more than just knowing the correct grammatical structures; it involves understanding how to frame a request in a polite and socially acceptable manner depending on the relationship with the listener.

Several approaches have been proposed for teaching pragmatic competence. Task-based learning is one such method that offers students the opportunity to engage in realistic, communicative tasks. For example, students might participate in role-playing exercises where they must navigate real-world scenarios such as ordering food at a restaurant, giving directions, or negotiating a business deal. These tasks require students to not only apply their linguistic knowledge but also to consider the social and cultural dynamics at play.

Another key approach is the use of authentic materials, such as movies, TV shows, or news articles. These materials provide students with a window into the target culture, offering insights into language use in various social contexts. By analyzing authentic materials, students can identify how native speakers use language to convey politeness, humor, or emotion, and learn to apply these strategies in their own communication.

The challenge, however, remains in integrating pragmatic competence into traditional foreign language curricula. Teachers often find it difficult to balance the teaching of linguistic skills with the development of pragmatic competence, especially when limited class time and resources are available. There is also a lack of standardized assessment tools for evaluating pragmatic competence, which further complicates its integration into language programs.

Conclusion

Pragmatic competence is a crucial component of foreign language communicative competence. In today's globalized world, it is no longer sufficient for language learners to simply master grammar and vocabulary; they must also understand how to use language appropriately in diverse social contexts. Foreign language educators must recognize the significance of pragmatic competence and work to incorporate it into language teaching practices.

To address this challenge, language curricula should integrate pragmatic training alongside linguistic skills, using methods such as task-based learning, role-playing, and the use of authentic materials. Teachers should also be trained to recognize the importance of pragmatic skills and to use assessment tools that consider pragmatic competence. By fostering an understanding of the social and cultural nuances of language use, educators can help students become more effective communicators in the target language, ready to navigate the complexities of cross-cultural interactions.

Further research is needed to develop more effective pedagogical strategies for teaching pragmatic competence and to create reliable assessment tools that can be used to evaluate students' ability to apply language in context. As the global nature of communication continues to expand, the integration of pragmatic competence into language education will become even more essential.

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