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IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF ESP LEARNERS.

Аннотация

Recent years teaching English language became more complicated process. The reason is advances in teaching methods, interactive activities and implementation of technology. Furthermore, students are already coming to university with fundamental knowledge of English language. Even in universities where English is taught as ESP, learners possess at least elementary level. Some students obtained IELTS certificate which proves their ability in terms of speaking, writing, listening and reading. However, focusing only to these four skills does not guarantee to be fluent in English language. Pragmatic competence also plays crucial role in this process. Methods like observation, questionnaire and quantitative data collection are used in this research. The paper is focuses on improving the importance of improving pragmatic competence of ESP learners.

Key words: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), pragmalinguistic norms, pragmatic competence, intercultural pragmatics, social context, communication.

ВАЖНОСТЬ СОВЕРШЕНСТВОВАНИЯ ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ УЧАЩИХСЯ ESP.

Аннотация

В последние годы обучение английскому языку стало более сложным процессом. Причиной тому - прогресс в методике преподавания, интерактивные занятия и внедрение технологий. Кроме того, студенты уже приходят в университет с фундаментальными знаниями английского языка. Даже в тех университетах, где английский преподается как ESP, учащиеся владеют как минимум начальным уровнем. Некоторые студенты получили сертификат IELTS, который подтверждает их способности в области говорения, написание, прослушивание и чтения. Однако концентрация только на этих четырех навыках не гарантирует свободного владения английским языком. Прагматическая компетенция также играет решающую роль в этом процессе. В данном исследовании использовались такие методы, как наблюдение, анкетирование и количественный сбор данных. Статья посвящена повышению важности совершенствования прагматической компетенции учащихся ESP.

Ключевые слова: Английский язык для специальных целей (ESP), прагматические нормы, прагматическая компетенция, межкультурная прагматика, социальный контекст, коммуникация.

ESP STUDENTLARINING PRAGMATİK KOMPETENSIYASINI TAKOMILLAHSTIRISHNING AHAMIYATI.

Аннотация

So'nggi yillarda ingliz tilini o'rganish yanada murakkab jarayonga aylandi. Buning sababi o'qitish usullari, interaktiv metodlar va texnologiyani joriy etishdagi yutuqlardir. Bundan tashqari, talabalar ingliz tilini fundamental bilimlari bilan universitetga kelishadi. Hatto ingliz tili ESP sifatida o'qitiladigan universitetlarda ham talabalar kamida boshlang'ich darajada gapirishadi. Ba'zi talabalar IELTS sertifikatiga ega bo'lib, ularning gapirish, yozish, tinglash va o'qish qobiliyatlarini tasdiqlaydi. Biroq, faqat ushbu to'rtta ko'nikmaga e'tibor qaratish ingliz tilida ravonlikni kafolatlamaydi. Bu jarayonda pragmatik kompetensiya ham hal qiluvchi rol o'ynaydi. Ushbu tadqiqotda kuzatish, anketalar va miqdoriy ma'lumotlarni yig'ish kabi usullar qo'llanildi. Maqola ESP talabalarining pragmatik kompetensiyasini takomillashtirish ahamiyatini oshirishga bag'ishlangan.

Kalit so'zlar: Maxsus maqsadlar uchun ingliz tili (ESP), pragmalingvistik me'yorlar, pragmatik kompetensiya, madaniyatlararo pragmatika, ijtimoiy kontekst, muloqot.

Introduction. In comparison to well-established fields such as phonetics and syntax, pragmatics is regarded to be a relatively recent discipline. 'Pragmatics explores the relationship between language form and a context, where that form is utilized, and how this connection is seen and realized in social interaction,' according to Taguchi (2019, p. 1). This definition of pragmatics considers various variables, including linguistic form, context, language use, interaction, and society. These factors are closely connected each other. Most learners focus only on linguistic form as they believe that this is the most difficult part. They learn English grammar but use language in the way of their native one. For example, during conversation they only think about word order, grammar rules but in terms of context, appropriate vocabulary, society they rely on L1. In this way speakers do not struggle if both speakers are from the same community. This leads to misunderstandings if the partner is foreigner or native speaker of English language. Lack of pragmatic competence is noticeably influences to the achievement of successful conversation in this process.

Yusupova (2021) considers that pragmatic competence aids in the study of language's function as a tool of cognition, given that language is a means of generating a specific notion.

Finally, if the use of language is part of the content of speech communication, and every communicative act includes a moment of contact between communication partners, pragmatic competence aids in the study of language's primary function - communication. (p.5). Mastering pragmatic competence serves to communicate without fails and misunderstandings during conversation. Rather than being categorically "right" or "wrong," pragmatic norms refer to a set of tendencies or social practices within which particular actions are considered more or less acceptable, appropriate, or desirable under current circumstances. Furthermore, pragmatic norms vary across languages and civilizations, as well as within a single language, language variation or culture, and can change dynamically over time and depending on circumstances.

Literature review. There are myriad of hypothesis in terms of pragmatics by different linguists. Most of them proved its importance in language acquisition. Pragmatics conveys numerous meanings depending on context. Isihara and Cohen (2010) described this term as a term which implies practicality. Pragmatics need to be used in all four skills: receptive (listening and reading), productive (speaking and writing). Most language learners think that pragmatics is not important in receptive skills.

However, comprehending context appropriately is also significant process. Without understanding completely the context it is impossible to respond properly.

In order to make logically and semantically appropriate conversation it is useful to acquire pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic norms. Mirzaei, Roohani & Esmaeili (2012) pointed out that to reduce pragmatic failure, students should understand both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic components of using the target language. The word "pragmalinguistics" refers to understanding the techniques for carrying out speech intents as well as the linguistic objects used to communicate these intentions, whereas "sociopragmatics" refers to understanding the social factors that control language use. (79-102).

According to McConaughy (2019), pragmalinguistic norms are a standardized way of understanding the correspondence between linguistic forms and functions, while sociopragmatic norms involve an association—normative according to native speakers and their conception of appropriate language use—between the choice of a particular form and contextual features such as age, gender or role, among others. The ability to manage the complex interaction of language, language users, and interaction conditions is called pragmatic competence.

Zaxarova (2020) pointed out that pragmatics in ESP is based on the fusion of various concepts and theories, for example, the theory of speech acts, the concept of communicative competence, the principle of cooperation, and the theory of politeness. Thus politeness leads to positive conversation regardless nation and culture in any languages. In order to be able to support conversation between speakers of other language it is essential to be aware of the intercultural pragmatics.

Firth and Wagner (as cited in Block 2007) represented the concept of interlanguage arose at a time when SLA was dominated by extremely structuralist views of language, with language learning viewed essentially as acquiring a linguistic code. Although using the "interlanguage" idea to frame L2 pragmatics learning helped to widen the scope of SLA, it also introduced an ontology of language as a highly rule-governed system and the premise that native-like knowledge is the ultimate goal of learning.

According to Kecskes (2014) Intercultural Pragmatics examines how language is used in social interactions between individuals with various first languages, communicating in a common language, and representing diverse cultures. In these encounters, current pragmatic norms and developing co-constructed features coexist to variable degrees, creating a synergistic communication process. (p.14). Intercultural Pragmatics is a socio-cognitive viewpoint that emphasizes the

importance of both individual and social experience in constructing and comprehending meaning. This is the reason why language learners struggle in constructing conversation with native speakers.

Research methodology. For this research students of University of Management and Future technologies were chosen. Freshmen students were attracted as English is taught only 1 year at this university. One group was taken for experiment with different levels. The lowest level student was in A1 level and the highest one is B2 level. The specialization of students was computer programmer. There were 10 students in group.

Interview was taken so as to identify her language needs, interests, weaknesses, strengths and background knowledge. It helped also to be aware of her language experience and language background.

Observation was also conducted to be sure of their level of English language and learning preferences of students. During the research researcher observed 3 lessons. It helped to identify the topics and teaching methods of instructor in the classroom.

Questionnaire was taken to identify problems and weaknesses of students in pragmatic competence.

Quantitative data collection was used to analyze collected data. Analysis was made through comparing and contrasting the results of observation, answers during interview and questionnaire. Observation helped greatly to see real competence of participant and prove hypothesis.

Analysis and results. According to the interview it was clear that there were 5 A1 level, 2 A2 level, 2 B1 level and 1 B2 level student in the group. Most student are eager to learn English as they pointed out that in order to work in international companies they need English language fluently. There were all male students in the group. Most of them mentioned that they need mostly speaking skill, because they tend to fail during interviews. However, some of them said that they struggle in writing skill also while writing codes for programs. All students preferred to learn in an interactive way with activities especially based on technology.

Through observation it was clear that English classes are mainly taught in traditional methods. Lessons are based on teaching grammar structures and vocabulary. Terminology is priority during lessons. However, there is no any focus on communicative competence of learners. In addition, writing skill is also ignored during lessons.

For questionnaire was consists of 2 parts. 5 of them were in a test form and 5 of them practical tasks. They were based on pragmatic competence.

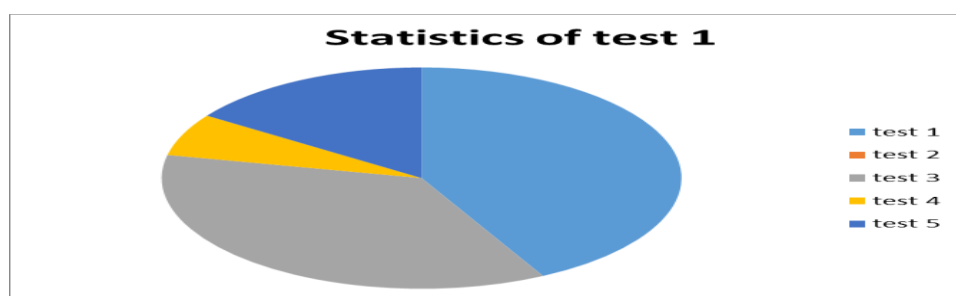


Figure 1. Statistical analysis of test 1

The result showed that 42 % of students are aware of difference between 2 cultures. Nobody knows what pragmatic competence is. 36 % of students prefer to learn English language based on computer. 6% of them think that body language is important. Finally only 15 % are able to start and finish writing letter in English language.

Other 5 tasks were to translate from Uzbek into English or complete sentences which are taken from different contexts.

Task 1 was completing the dialogue:

A: Hello, I missed you B:...

Task 2 was taking appropriate action according to context.

Boss: It is cold

Employer: A). Answering: Yes it is; B). Close the window; C) Put of your jacket and give him

Task 3 completing the dialogue:

A: You are so brave and hardworking employer B:....

Task 4 translate the word phrase "shvedskiy stol" from context in wedding.

Task 5 Reject your boss in polite way



Figure 2. Statistical analysis of task 2

According to table 34 % of students could deal with task 1. 27 % students could take appropriate action in task 2. 12 % of students could complete dialogue successfully in task 3. Only 1 student could translate “shvedskiy stol” appropriately in English which is “smorgasbord” others just translated word by word as “Swedish table” and fail communication. 18 % students could reject politely to their boss.

The result showed that 90 % of students are not able to comprehend and convey pragmatics in the communication. This proved how it is necessary to improve pragmatic competence of students in ESP.

Conclusion. Dan (2016) mentioned that pragmatic linguistic competence is built on grammatical competence, and it is an important component of communicative competence when learning a foreign language. It gives an adequate interpretation of speech actions by taking into account the situational significance

of the utterance, socio-cultural context, mindset, age, education, and social standing of speakers, as well as the appropriateness and purposefulness of speech conventions. (p.2) According to Yule (as cited in Sharipov 2022) pragmatics in this sense is “the art of analyzing the unspoken”. Leech mentioned that (as cited in Rühlemann, C., & Aijmer, K. 2014) the fundamental question in pragmatics is: “What does the speaker (writer) mean by what is said (written) and how is it understood by the listener (or reader) in a given situation?” (p.561) Communicative pragmatic competence is the capacity to utilize language effectively in a variety of social settings. This entails comprehending humor and sarcasm, recognizing nonverbal clues, knowing when and how to use polite language, and changing language to fit various audiences and circumstances. Essentially, it comes down to having social skills in terms of the language you use to interact with people and effectively communicate your message.

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