TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

Sa'dullayeva Sabina

Abstract: Teaching English as a second language (TESL) has evolved significantly over the years, with a growing emphasis on communicative competence. Pragmatic competence, a crucial aspect of communication, has gained attention for its role in enabling learners to use language appropriately in various social contexts. This article explores the importance of pragmatic competence in English language teaching and provides strategies for educators to integrate pragmatic instruction into their pedagogical practices.

Keywords: Pragmatic competence, English language teaching, communicative competence, sociolinguistics, language pragmatics.

Introduction:

In today's interconnected world, English has become the lingua franca of global communication. As a result, the demand for English language proficiency continues to rise, prompting educators to explore innovative approaches to language teaching. One such approach that has garnered attention is teaching English through pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence refers to the ability to use language appropriately in different social contexts, taking into account factors such as cultural norms, social roles, and situational variables. In this article, we delve into the significance of pragmatic competence in English language teaching and provide practical strategies for educators to enhance their students' pragmatic skills.

Main Body:

Pragmatic competence encompasses the ability to interpret and produce language in contextually appropriate ways. Unlike grammatical competence, which focuses on the mastery of linguistic rules, pragmatic competence deals with the nuances of language use, including speech acts, politeness strategies, and conversational implicature. For English language learners, developing pragmatic competence is essential for effective communication in real-life situations, where cultural and social factors play a significant role.

Pragmatic competence facilitates successful communication by enabling learners to understand and navigate the subtle nuances of language use. Proficiency in

pragmatic skills allows learners to express themselves appropriately in diverse social settings, thereby enhancing their communicative effectiveness. Moreover, pragmatic competence fosters intercultural understanding and empathy, as learners become sensitive to cultural differences in communicative norms and practices.

Strategies for Teaching Pragmatic Competence:

Integrating pragmatic instruction into English language teaching requires a multifaceted approach that incorporates both explicit and implicit learning strategies. Educators can employ various techniques to enhance students' pragmatic competence, including:

- Explicit instruction: Teachers can explicitly teach pragmatic conventions, such as speech acts (e.g., requests, apologies) and politeness strategies (e.g., indirect speech).

- Contextualized activities: Engaging students in role-plays, simulations, and authentic communicative tasks allows them to practice pragmatic skills in meaningful contexts.

- Reflective practice: Encouraging students to reflect on their own communicative experiences and cultural assumptions promotes metapragmatic awareness, enhancing their ability to adapt their language use to different contexts.

- Corpus-based analysis: Analyzing authentic language data from corpora enables students to identify patterns of language use and develop strategies for effective communication.

Examples

1. Making Requests:

Imagine a classroom scenario where students are learning how to make requests appropriately in English. The teacher could provide a role-play activity where students take on different social roles (e.g., customer, server) and practice making requests in various contexts (e.g., ordering food in a restaurant, asking for directions). Through this activity, students not only learn the linguistic forms for making requests but also understand the importance of politeness and cultural norms in different situations.

2. Giving and Receiving Feedback:

In a business English class, students may need to learn how to give and receive feedback professionally. The teacher could present case studies or simulations of workplace scenarios where feedback is exchanged, such as performance evaluations or project meetings. Students would practice using appropriate language and strategies for giving constructive feedback while maintaining positive interpersonal relationships.

3. Expressing Gratitude:

Expressing gratitude appropriately is an important aspect of pragmatic competence. In a language class focused on social interactions, students could explore different ways to express gratitude in English, ranging from formal expressions (e.g., "Thank you for your assistance") to informal ones (e.g., "Thanks a lot!"). Through role-plays or dialogue exercises, students learn how cultural factors influence the choice of expressions and the importance of matching the level of formality to the social context.

4. Apologizing:

Teaching learners how to apologize effectively involves understanding cultural norms and social expectations. In a language class, students could analyze real-life apologies from various English-speaking cultures, examining the language used and the underlying politeness strategies. Role-plays or scripted dialogues could then allow students to practice offering apologies in different scenarios, such as apologizing for a mistake at work or apologizing for causing inconvenience in a social setting.

5. Navigating Small Talk:

Small talk is an essential aspect of social interaction, requiring sensitivity to cultural norms and conversational conventions. In an English conversation class, students could engage in activities designed to practice small talk in different settings, such as networking events or social gatherings. Through guided discussions and feedback sessions, students learn how to initiate and sustain conversations, use appropriate topics and language, and interpret nonverbal cues.

These examples illustrate how teaching English through pragmatic competence involves creating opportunities for learners to practice language in contextually rich and culturally relevant situations. By focusing on real-life communication skills, educators can help learners develop the linguistic and socio-pragmatic competence needed to communicate effectively in diverse social contexts.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, pragmatic competence plays a vital role in English language teaching, enabling learners to use language effectively in diverse social contexts. By integrating pragmatic instruction into their pedagogical practices, educators can empower students to become competent and confident communicators. As English continues to serve as a bridge across cultures and societies, fostering pragmatic competence is essential for preparing learners to navigate the complexities of global communication.

In summary, teaching English through pragmatic competence not only enhances language proficiency but also fosters intercultural understanding and communicative effectiveness, equipping learners with the skills they need to succeed in today's interconnected world.

LIST OF USED LITERATURE:

1. Ergashevich S. S. Bio-Social Need To The Study Of Lexical Meaning //Journal of Positive School Psychology. – 2022. – Т. 6. – №. 9. – С. 4771-4777.
2. Шодиев С. Э. Деривационные особенности фразеологических выражений //Бюллетень науки и практики. – 2019. – Т. 5. – №. 9. – С. 512-520.