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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONDUCTING PRAGMATIC ACTIVITIES IN EFL CLASSES

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Abstract : The author of this article discusses Pragmatics as science of linguistics and its role in language learning; moreover, this new approach, which appeared in linguistics in late 20th century thrust linguists and language teacher has to look back at their teaching and initiate innovations in language education. It should be noted that Pragmatic competence is one of the essential type of competences that a language learner is supposed to acquire in order to establish successful communicative environment when one aimed to produce communicative act. By having enough information about Pragmatics, language educators will be able to implement exceptional activities that develops language lea' pragmatic competence in their interpersonal communication. Therefore, the types of pragmatic activities has been identified as an effective ways are also has been discussed by pointing out their significance in EFL classes.

Key words: Pragmatics, Pragmatic activities, interpersonal communication, Pragmatic competence, Speech Acts

INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics as the subfields of Linguistics and Semiotics study the ways in which context defines and provides the meaning. Pragmatics tries to understand the relationship between signs and their users, while Semantics focuses on the actual objects or ideas to which a word refers, and Syntax studies relationship among signs and symbols. The study of meaning on the level of utterances and sentences in spoken and written text is known as a discourse analysis, or it can be termed as a Pragmatics. It focuses on the use of language in particular situation; moreover, it

explains the elements that influence on both verbal and nonverbal meanings carried out in an interpersonal communication.

According to Fasold, R., “Pragmatics concerns both the relationship between context of use and sentence meaning, and the relationships among sentence meaning, context of use, and speaker’s meaning”[1,170]. He describes that Pragmatics studies how people in real life situations that are highly influenced by cultural and social contexts target language. Besides the role of tone, pitch, intonation, eye contact, facial expressions, and body language are great and they are separable part of communication. It means that interpersonal understanding during the conversation plays a great role in communication, so that the ability to understand speaker's intended meaning is called Pragmatic competence. It is one of the essential communicative competences that should be acquired in the second language learning. Therefore, the language awareness approach to teaching foreign languages deals with the issues to develop learners’ language awareness in adequate communication.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Language learners may be able to form lengthy sentences and articulate sounds clearly, but if they do not understand and have not mastered the rules for communication, there may happen some misunderstandings during the communication. The process of communication usually initiated with a greeting, introducing the topic, and taking turns. Within that conversation, each person should be able to code person’s tone, facial expressions, eye contact, and nonverbal cues to determine if his or her partner is still eager to continue the conversation, whether it is appropriate to interrupt or add a comment, or when it is time to end the conversation or to move to other topic. Language learners stumble on difficulty with the use of social language, the use appropriate phrases/sentences within conversation, the sustaining the conversation or the shifting to new topic. These mentioned difficulties arose across multiple setting and situations are called Pragmatic disorder [7,4]

Pragmatic method is an activity-based method and the core of it is learning through personal experience exposed in a language learning process. Pragmatic activities mean preparation for practical life. The Process of Pragmatic activities means not so much teaching the learners skills that they ought to know, but encouraging them to learn through experimental and creative activities which enable them to enhance their communicative skills at the same time to improve their social and cultural competence. Learners who are involved in pragmatic activities are exposed to real life situations where they learn to solve the problems, to use their critical thinking and to enhance their social and cultural competence. According to above mentioned, having pragmatic skills is very essential for language learners, so that pragmatic activities helps students to develop and improve their pragmatic skills. Therefore, pragmatics has been defined as the study of language from the point of view of users. Some learners may have a limited variety of language that they use or they may have trouble in understanding emotions and feelings, which may negatively affect taken interaction. Therefore, the task of a teacher is to develop learners' pragmatic skills through activities. Teaching through Pragmatic activities aims to benevolent learners to understand basic speech acts that frequently occur in real life and to lead them to be fluent in using and performing these speech acts like greeting, enquiring, offering, inviting, etc. Learning by doing in pragmatic activities directs learners to achieve their confidence, cooperation with others, self-esteem, creativity and other attributes that help them to conduct successful interaction. "Pragmatic method is a Project Method... A project is a whole-hearted purposeful activity, proceeding in a social environment"[5,3]. It can obviously be claimed that Pragmatic method is socialistic in nature.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Pragmatics can be integrated easily into any classroom activities whether traditional or communicative. One of the ways to improve pragmatic competence of learners is through exposing EFL learners to the linguistic choices of speakers of

the target community, as G. Yule stated: “Pragmatics studies how language is used in communication”[7,4]. According to Fasold, Pragmatics involves using language in particular situations, it is usually done through exposing the learners to conversational formulas and encouraging them to memorize [1,5]. For instance, ***Role-play activities***, teacher may distribute different worksheets with situations or expressions accordingly to the topic and students are supposed to make a role play on these worksheets. Pragmatic aspect of this activity is that students are supposed to act as if they are in a real life. This activity raises students’ sociolinguistic awareness as they are interacting in a small group with each other which leads them to be socialized in further life besides role play improves learners’ pragmatic ability to react appropriately in different situations.

One more type of activity is ***Information gap activity***, in which learners are supposed to work in pairs or in a group of three. In this activity, students have to complete the information that is partially distributed to the pairs or members of the group. Besides they should put these pieces of information in logical order. This activity works effectively, because learners have the opportunity to talk extensively in the target language. Moreover, they use their critical thinking to complete the task.

Another way of conducting activity is ***Interviewing***. Mostly students work in pairs or sometimes in a group of three. The benefit that learners can obtain from this activity is that students learn the ways of asking questions and they are to improve their intonation, besides the sociolinguistic side of this activity is that of students has opportunity to practice turn-taking, floor, turn-holders that are crucial aspect of conversational interchange. These activities requires corroboration of learners, as they are anticipated to work in pairs either in groups which leads them to be engaged in real life issues. Therefore, Pragmatic activities which constitute real life of the community should be purposeful that facilitates students to be socialized.

Teachers that conduct pragmatic activities observed language learners performance and discovered that students show significant use because quite simply, observation of language learners shows that there is a demonstrated need for it and that conducting pragmatic activities can be quite successful. Learners show significant differences from native speakers in the target language, especially in comprehension of certain speech acts, in conversational functions such as greetings and leave takings, and in conversational management such as inquiring, back channeling and short responses. Kasper states: “Pragmalinguistics includes strategies like directness and indirectness, routines, and a large range of linguistic forms which can identify or soften communicative acts”. [2,5] For that reason, Pragmatic activities help learners to get significant feedback from their teachers to improve their pragmatic competence. As they support learners to avoid the interference of their native language to a target language in interpersonal communication. It can be claimed that Pragmatic activities improves learners’ competence in mapping the form, meaning, and context.

CONCLUSION

According to above-mentioned points, Pragmatic activities should provide young learners with linguistic tools, and help them to perform the action in an appropriate way. The fundamental goal of instruction in pragmatics is to raise learners’ pragmatic awareness and to endow with adequate choices throughout their interactions in the target language. Goal of instruction in pragmatic activities is not just to insist on conformity to a particular target-language norm, but rather to help learners become familiar with the range of pragmatic devices through practicing out them in the target language. These types of activities are crucial in language learning besides they are interesting, because learners become capable to make a sense of communicative interaction. Pragmatic activities teach learners to avoid communicative misunderstanding or failure, which sometimes effects negatively on language learners because they become unconfident and anxious in making interpersonal conversation.

In summary, it can be claimed that Pragmatics context to define and reveal the meaning. Accordingly Pragmatic competence is a key component of strategic competence, involving knowledge of when and how to use particular language forms to maintain successful interaction. Pragmatic activities are essential as they improve learners' pragmatic competence which is fundamental in interpersonal communication.

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