

PRAGMATICS INSTRUCTION FOR UZBEK LEARNERS STUDYING ENGLISH AS
A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Pragmatic competence is a key element of effective communication in a foreign language. It enables learners to interpret and use language appropriately in different social and cultural contexts. In many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, however, instruction often focuses mainly on grammar and vocabulary, while pragmatic aspects of language use receive less attention. This situation is also common in Uzbekistan, where learners may achieve grammatical accuracy but still face difficulties in real-life communication. This article discusses the importance of teaching pragmatics to Uzbek learners of English, identifies common pragmatic challenges, and suggests several teaching strategies that can help develop learners' pragmatic awareness and communicative competence, pragmatic aspects.

Keywords

pragmatics, EFL learning, communicative competence, Uzbek learners, language teaching.

Pragmatics plays a crucial role in language learning because it focuses on how language is used in real communication rather than only how it is structured. In the process of learning English as a foreign language, students often concentrate on grammar rules and vocabulary memorization. However, without understanding how to use language appropriately in context, communication may become ineffective or even misleading.

In the Uzbek EFL context, students usually learn English in classroom environments where exposure to authentic communication is limited. This situation creates a gap between linguistic knowledge and communicative performance. Learners may form correct sentences, but they may fail to express politeness, indirectness, or social appropriateness. Therefore, pragmatic competence should be integrated into language teaching from early stages.²³

One of the most important elements of pragmatics is speech acts. Speech acts include actions such as requesting, apologizing, inviting, and thanking. Each of these acts requires different linguistic forms depending on the situation and the relationship

²³ Brown, P., Levinson, S. Politeness; Some Universals in Language Usage. Cambridge University Press. P 55-56

between speakers. For example, a student speaking to a teacher may use more formal and polite expressions compared to communication with friends.²⁴

Another key concept is politeness strategies. English often uses indirect forms to show politeness. For instance, instead of saying “Open the window,” a speaker may say “Could you open the window, please?” Such differences are important for learners to understand in order to avoid sounding rude or inappropriate.

Uzbek learners may face challenges due to differences between Uzbek and English communication styles. Direct translation from Uzbek into English can lead to expressions that sound unnatural. Cultural norms also influence how people express requests, refusals, and opinions. Without awareness of these differences, learners may misunderstand or miscommunicate.²⁵

To address these issues, teachers should use effective teaching strategies. Authentic materials such as movies, interviews, and real-life conversations provide valuable examples of natural language use. These materials help students observe how native speakers communicate in different situations. Role-play is another effective method. It allows students to practice real-life scenarios such as asking for help, making invitations, or apologizing. Through repeated practice, learners develop confidence and improve their pragmatic skills.

Explicit teaching of cultural norms is also essential. Teachers should explain how language reflects social relationships and cultural expectations. This helps students understand why certain expressions are appropriate in specific contexts. Group discussions and analysis activities can further enhance learning. Students can examine dialogues, identify pragmatic features, and discuss alternative ways of expression. Such activities promote critical thinking and deeper understanding of language use. In conclusion, pragmatic competence is essential for effective communication in English. For Uzbek learners, it is particularly important due to limited exposure to real-life English communication. By incorporating pragmatic instruction into EFL teaching, educators can help students become more confident, appropriate, and successful communicators.

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²⁴ Kasper, G., & Rose, K. (2002). *Pragmatic Development in a Second Language*.

²⁵ Kasper, Gabriele, G., & Rose, Kenneth R. (2002). *Pragmatic Development in a Second Language*. Oxford: Blackwell. P-67

²⁶ Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press. P-126

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