



SIGNIFICANCE OF FOCUSING ON PRAGMATIC AWARENESS TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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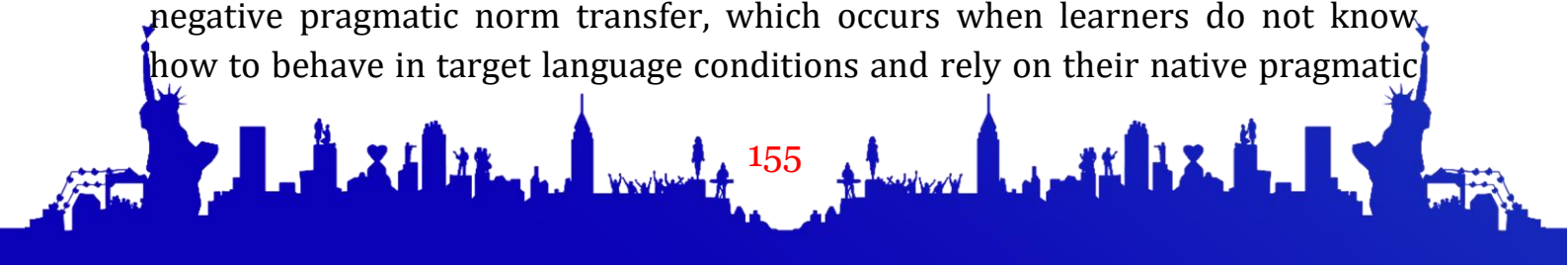
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Annotation. The necessity to acquire second language became priority of all young generation. Considering its benefits learners are realizing that speaking skill is the most important one among other skills as everyone judges the level of learners according to their speech. To be proficient in a second language, learners must consider both linguistics and pragmatics. As more people, regardless of their occupation, are willing to speak in English, it is evolving into a second language in our culture. Unfortunately, the majority of students lack communication skills. It is not just due to poor vocabulary or grammar skills, but also to a lack of pragmatic awareness of the cultural and social standards of various foreign countries. Even advanced level learners are aware of significant differences between their pragmatic behavior and that of native speakers, according to Ishihara and Cohen (2010). The necessity of developing second language learners' pragmatic knowledge is covered in this article.

Keywords: *Second language (L2), pragmatic knowledge, language acquisition, overgeneralization, speech acts.*

Learning a second language is a challenging process that requires students to develop a wide range of skills, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics. Even having these abilities down pat, it seems, might not be sufficient in real talks. Here, students struggle to communicate with native speakers in real-world settings despite extensive practice and are unable to identify the cause of their failure. L2 learners can struggle to understand or interpret the proper meaning in complex situations. It causes communication misunderstandings. It needs at least ten years of experience in the target language setting, according to Cohen and Olshtain (quoted in Ishihara and Cohen 2010), in order to be able to communicate in pragmatically native-like behavior. However, in reality not all learners obtain opportunity to learn language in real context.

Ishihara and Cohen (2010) identified five reasons for difference. The first is negative pragmatic norm transfer, which occurs when learners do not know how to behave in target language conditions and rely on their native pragmatic

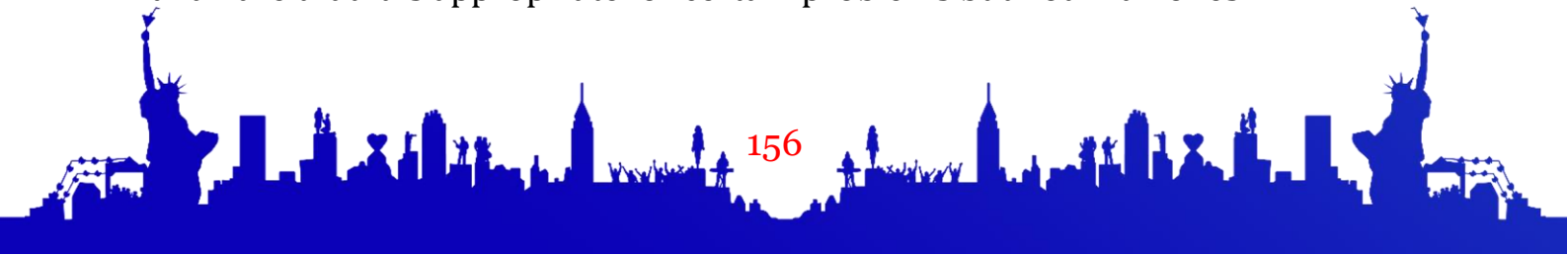




norms. Language learners are particularly vulnerable to this type of divergence. When faced with problems in expressing an idea in L2, it is usual to rely on L1. Some cultures have comparable pragmatic standards, and the learner may succeed in this scenario. Japanese and Korean pragmatic standards, for example, are comparable. As a result, when communicating, students may rely on their own pragmatic rules.

When the pragmatic norms of two languages disagree, it might lead to misunderstandings as Ishihara and Cohen (2010) stated when pragmatic norms are different from each other, it leads to misunderstanding. For example, Uzbek students learn English without focusing on their culture. While communicating in the target context, they must impart their own cultural norms. It is particularly visible during classroom activities. Learners demonstrate their language abilities using cultural norms during role-plays. For example, if the discourse is about compliments, English and Uzbek cultures respond differently. In the United States, it is usual to begin a conversation with compliments or to express satisfaction of someone's work, among other things. When someone praises the work of Uzbeks, they tend to discredit it or favor that person. It is mostly suitable in Asia, but not in the United States. In this circumstance, students may answer inappropriately, such as "Thank you, but it is nothing" or "Thank you so much, but my work is not as good as yours." Such responses are considered a rejection of the compliment and are not appropriate in the United States. During my teaching process, I encountered a number of cases relating to this speech act. When I commend my students, they reject it because they are modest. As a result, most students struggle to communicate with native speakers.

Overgeneralization is another point of departure. Pragmatics, like grammar, may be subject to overgeneralization. According to Selinker (as cited in Ishihara and Cohen 2010), learners frequently overgeneralize grammatical rules when the rule does not apply. The same is true in pragmatics. Due to a lack of knowledge about target cultural norms, learners overgeneralize some pragmatic rules when learning a language. In comparison to English speakers, Uzbeks frequently communicate indirectly. In times where it is permissible to talk directly, they may address indirectly. It results in a pragmatic failure. Alternatively, they may employ expressions acquired in class, such as "I'm sorry," "Excuse me," in situations where they are inappropriate. They are unaware that it is appropriate for certain problems but not in all ones.



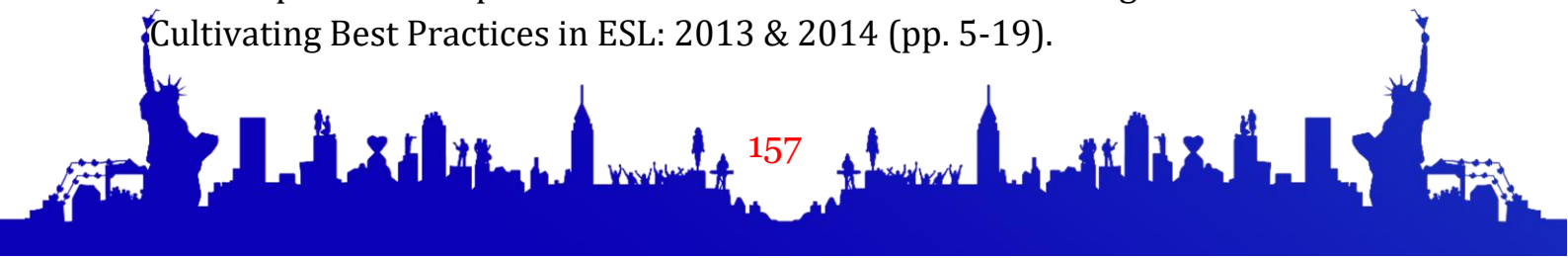


In order to avoid such pragmatic errors, it is essential to organize classes with awareness raising tasks that allow students to become familiarized with the cultural norms of the target language. When there is a shortage of pragmatic knowledge, organizing lessons with activities that contribute to improving language abilities such as productive and receptive or grammar, vocabulary may not be enough. Students should learn a language in the presence of people from the target culture. They should be given with real materials that improve their knowledge of cultural norms, since Kaiser (2012) claimed that one of the most difficult difficulties for teachers is considering their students' language and cultural demands. Unfortunately, instructors only concentrate on their language needs which create pragmatic failure.

According to Kumaravadivelu (2002), pupils cannot be treated equally in terms of cultural norms because one cultural standard may be accepted in one environment but not in another. This is considered undesirable behavior and has a negative impact on the learner's progress. As a result, it is crucial to be aware of second language cultural standards. The majority of educational resources are not legitimate. They are developed artificially for instructional purposes, which leads to the process of overgeneralization. Students frequently use those expressions in situations when they are not appropriate in a second language context. As a result, as Ishihara and Cohen (2010) observed, even upper level pupils face challenges with pragmatics. Cundell (as cited in Yassaei 2012) pointed out that video materials are accepted as the most powerful source as young generation is really obsessed with media, social networks. Bachman and Palmer (1996) proved this idea with the research on necessity of authentic materials in the classroom. It provides learners with real native context of learning language. This demonstrates why it vital to use more realistic materials that present learners with real-world target language contexts.

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