TEACHING PRAGMATICS TO UZBEK LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

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Article history:		Abstract:
		It is often argued that the language is mostly associated with the grammar and vocabulary. However, in real life situations language learners are not only expected to produce the language and perform specific utterances which are meaningfully categorized according to the grammatical patterns or vocabulary, but also expected to represent utterances due to the proper sociocultural factors. Unfortunately, it is tough enough for the students to acquire pragmatic skills and competence due to the lack of authentic materials and situations in the classroom. Even though it is the era of technology and innovations, most of the educators conduct their classes through the textbooks and hardly go beyond them.
		This paper aims to decode some existing problems of teaching pragmatics in ESL/EFL classrooms in Uzbekistan and proposes possible solutions by highlighting the significance of materials based on real-life situations, targeted input and specific production activities, along with comprehensive comments.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally mastering the foreign language is being considered to be far simpler as the learners are demanded to acquire the grammatical forms and vocabulary notions of the language. But there has been an integral shift under the umbrella of Communicative Language Teaching and Learning, Canale and Swain (1980) suggested some urgent models on teaching the language through the communicative method and this view has been developed by Bachman (1990). Thus, apart from the grammatical forms and vocabulary, the language has absorbed another inseparable aspect which has been set as communication. The very notion has led the approach to the pragmatics and its competence. According to the standard definition pragmatics mostly deals with the process of interaction by bridging the mutuality between what and how the speaker produced the utterance, along with the respond which is performed by another negotiator.

Even though Uzbekistan is supporting teaching English through the laws and language policies, still in the classroom, input for learning is perceived mainly from textbooks which present some limited phrases and expressions in most cases. Another factor is that the language for speaking is utilized only in the classroom during the classes under the supervision of the teachers. Therefore, it is still challenging to challenge learners to speak.

This study glances at different concepts which are considered to be pioneer in teaching pragmatics and pragmatic competences for Uzbek learners of English, and then it focuses on some materials which are implemented into the process of teaching pragmatics for Uzbek learners of English. It also identifies some contradictions between the learners' needs and targeted input. Finally, it proposes some solutions to the mentioned issues.

PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

There are different definitions to define the pragmatics as a term. Jenny Thomas denominates pragmatics according to the following three aspects, a) the negotiation of meaning between speakers and listeners, b) the context of produced utterance, c) the potential meaning of the utterance after its production.

It can be revealed that the language is a tool of communication and pragmatics is a criterion which analyses how and why this tool (language) is used. Pragmatics assists to explore more understanding of intentions and meanings of the produced utterances of the speakers.

According to Leech (1983) when the negotiators use the language they take the parts of social actors turn by turn, thus, as speakers they can influence to the listeners and addressees.

Abovementioned definitions and depictions firmly demonstrate that pragmatics is a field of study which goes beyond the grammatical forms and rules. It is a main reason why it has become a sociocultural context.

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) point out that mastering a good pragmatic competence aids learners to perform utterances grammatically correct and also utilize them socio-culturally proper.

Continuous research and investigations made by Leech and Thomas (1983) have represented two components of pragmatic competence: pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic competences. The researchers define the former field as knowledge of understanding the reasons of intentions and how to use linguistic symbols in order to perform these intentions, while the latter concept can be comprehended as the perception of using the language in social situations which can vary from person to person, gender to gender or social distance.

PRAGMATIC INPUT AND AUTHENTICITY

As it has been outlined above Uzbek learners of English mostly rely on classroom input and tasks to perceive pragmatic competences. It can be mentioned that the role of teaching materials are considered to be important sources in teaching and learning the input provided during the class. However, the content of the textbooks should contain some authentic materials in order to expose the input clearly. Kasper (1997) claims that the authenticity of the materials or input helps learners understand the socio-pragmatic and pragma-linguistic skills. For instance, in terms of complimenting learners will be able to acquire information about target language norms and culture, appropriate topics and the language.

It is often difficult to teach compliments in Uzbek classrooms therefore it is vital to follow the following stages.

Initially, learners should be told that they are going to be demonstrated how to give compliments and the reason why it has to be done. The teacher can demonstrate an example with one of the students in the classroom. For example, the teacher comes to one of the students and pat on his shoulder and says: "Elnur, you put your all tools and books so neatly. You can use and find them without any difficulty in your further assignments". Then the teacher faces the other students and asks them what they have noticed.

Responds can be different: some of them may mention about a sincere attitude and an eye contact, others can notice something about facial expressions and calling the student by his name. Thus, the teacher can ask them to write down what they have noticed.

The most memorable example can be the role plays which is done among learners themselves because if they interact, they will understand better. In a real fact using the authentic material can be effective, but at the beginning it will be tough to perform it as each learner has a specific character to be approached.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Another barrier that can oppose teachers while teaching the compliments is shyness which is common for Uzbek learners. The very state can impact on teaching the speech act efficiently. Therefore it would be preferable to allow students to practice making compliments in a group with one another. It may be difficult at a glance, but when the teacher starts it in a pair work it can be successful. After having used some examples and explanations based on giving compliments the instructor may implement everything into practice. The "Compliment Circle" is the best technique for this process. The teacher can ask the students to draw a circle in which they should insert the name of their classmate and note one of his or her good deeds.

Thus, each student draws and fills in their circles. The teacher takes the part of facilitator and bridges students' ideas by leading the learners.

In order to create a learning atmosphere the teacher may produce the list of the words for the students and guide them. Learners choose the appropriate the phrases and use them in their own compliments.

RESULTS

According Kogan (2021) the list of the phrases which can be used as compliments may fall under the following categories:

A) Compliments related to the person's positive mood
* I bet you make babies smile.
* You have the best laugh.
* You light up the room.
* You have a great sense of humor.
* You're like sunshine on a rainy day.

* You bring out the best in other people.
* I bet you sweat glitter.
* Colors seem brighter when you're around.

B) Compliments related to personal traits

* I like your style.
* You're strong.
* Is that your picture next to "charming" in the dictionary?
* Your kindness is a balm to all who encounter it.
* You are beautiful on the inside and outside.
* You have the courage of your convictions.
* You were cool way before hipsters were cool.

C) Compliments related to personal abilities

* Your ability to recall random factoids at just the right times is impressive.
* When you say, "I meant to do that," I totally believe you.
* You have the best ideas.
* If someone based an Internet meme on you, it would have impeccable grammar.
* You could survive a zombie apocalypse.
* Your creative potential seems limitless.
* I bet you do crossword puzzles in ink.
* You have a good head on your shoulders.

D) Compliments related to the accomplishments

* I am so proud of you, and I hope you are too!
* You are making a difference.
* You deserve a hug right now.
* You're a great example to others.
* Actions speak louder than words, and yours tell an incredible story.

E) Compliments related to the relationships

* You're more helpful than you realize.
* Hanging out with you is always fun.
* The way you always know when someone needs something is amazing.
* Being around you makes everything better.
* Our community is better because you're in it.
* You always know just what to say.
* The people you love are lucky to have you in their lives.
* You're a gift to those around you.

F) Compliments related to the appearance

* You are glowing —and that's the least interesting thing about you, too.
* How is it that you always look so great, even if you're in ratty pajamas?
* That color is perfect on you.
You may dance like no one's watching, but everyone's watching because you're mesmerizing.
Your hair looks stunning.
You're irresistible when you blush.
Has anyone ever told you that you have great posture?

This type of activities may assist overcoming the challenges in giving compliments; even they may go beyond the aspects of gender, culture and status. Therefore the sort of tasks is highly beneficial to use during the classes in different language learning classrooms.

DISCUSSION

After having linked compliments to the speaking situations it is important to progress the process by connecting giving compliments to writing. Being one of the productive skills writing can also impact on broadening learners' complimenting features.

Traditionally, teachers select diverse types of writing tasks while arranging their lessons with learners. The authenticity of materials, specificity of genres, and clarity of rubrics, validity and reliability of sources are always in the center of attention. Aforementioned discussions have emphasized the role of culture and pragmatic competence; as a result these two inseparable notions should also be in.

CONCLUSION

In the final analysis, social interactions play an important role in building a good rapport between speakers. Thus, teachers can teach learners how to give compliments to each other in different situations and scenarios. Even though it has been considered to take into account the significance of social status, gender, age and cultural norms of the learners, the most paramount feature still becomes the aspect of using appropriate input and authentic materials which must match each other.

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