

**TEACHING PRAGMATICS THROUGH COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE
ACTIVITIES IN UZBEKISTAN**

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Abstract: This article examines the importance of teaching pragmatics through communicative language activities in the context of foreign language education in Uzbekistan. The study focuses on the role of communicative tasks in developing students' ability to use English appropriately and effectively in different social and cultural situations. It highlights how role plays, discussions, pair work, problem-solving activities, and authentic materials contribute to the improvement of pragmatic competence, intercultural awareness, and communicative skills among learners. The article also discusses current challenges in teaching pragmatics in Uzbek educational institutions and emphasizes the need for learner-centered and communicative approaches in English language teaching. The findings of the study demonstrate that communicative activities significantly enhance students' pragmatic awareness and prepare them for successful real-life communication.

Keywords: communicative and pragmatic competence, communicative activities, EFL learners, intercultural communication, authentic materials.

Introduction: In recent years, the process of globalization and international cooperation has significantly increased the importance of learning foreign languages, especially English, throughout the world. In Uzbekistan, major educational reforms have been implemented to improve the quality of foreign language education and to prepare students for active participation in global communication. Modern language teaching no longer focuses only on grammar and vocabulary acquisition; instead, it emphasizes the development of communicative abilities that enable learners to use language effectively in real-life situations. In this context, teaching pragmatics has become an essential component of foreign language instruction.

Pragmatics refers to the study of how language is used in communication according to context, social norms, and speakers' intentions. It includes the ability to understand implied meanings, speech acts, politeness strategies, and culturally appropriate language use. Learners who possess grammatical knowledge but lack pragmatic competence often face difficulties in real communication because they may use inappropriate expressions or fail to interpret the intended meaning of others correctly. Therefore, pragmatic competence is considered one of the key elements of successful communication in a foreign language.

The concept of communicative competence introduced by Dell Hymes emphasized that language learning involves not only linguistic accuracy but also the ability to use language appropriately in social interaction. Later, scholars such as Michael Canale and Merrill Swain expanded this idea by identifying several components of communicative competence, including grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. Pragmatic competence is closely connected with these components because effective communication requires learners to understand both language structures and contextual meanings.

Communicative language teaching has become one of the most effective approaches for developing pragmatic competence. This approach focuses on interaction, authentic communication, and learner-centered activities that encourage students to use language meaningfully. Through communicative activities such as role plays, discussions, simulations, pair work, and problem-solving tasks, learners practice using English in realistic situations and develop awareness of sociocultural norms and communication strategies. Such activities help students improve not only their fluency but also their ability to select appropriate expressions according to different contexts and interlocutors.

In Uzbekistan, the importance of communicative language teaching has grown considerably due to the increasing demand for professionals who can communicate effectively in international and multicultural environments. Educational institutions are gradually introducing modern teaching methodologies aimed at improving students' communicative and pragmatic skills. However, despite these reforms, many English language classrooms still rely heavily on traditional grammar-translation methods, memorization, and teacher-centered instruction. As a result, students often experience difficulties in participating in authentic communication and applying language appropriately in social contexts.

Another important aspect of teaching pragmatics is intercultural communication. Since language and culture are closely interconnected, learning English also requires understanding the cultural values, behavioral norms, and communication styles of English-speaking communities. Without sufficient intercultural awareness, learners may experience misunderstandings or pragmatic failure during communication. Therefore, communicative language activities that include authentic materials and cultural contexts play a crucial role in helping students develop pragmatic awareness and intercultural competence.

The present study aims to explore the role of communicative language activities in teaching pragmatics in Uzbekistan. The research investigates how communicative tasks contribute to the development of students' pragmatic competence and examines the challenges faced by teachers and learners in the process of pragmatic instruction. Furthermore, the article seeks to highlight effective classroom practices that can improve students' ability to communicate appropriately, confidently, and successfully in real-life situations.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the improvement of English language teaching methodologies in Uzbekistan. The findings may help educators, researchers, and curriculum developers design more effective communicative activities and integrate pragmatic instruction into foreign language classrooms. Ultimately, teaching pragmatics through communicative language activities can support the development of competent and interculturally aware language users capable of participating successfully in global communication.

Materials and Methods: This study employed a qualitative and descriptive research design to investigate the effectiveness of teaching pragmatics through communicative language activities in the context of English language education in Uzbekistan. The research focused on analyzing how communicative classroom practices contribute to the development of students' pragmatic competence and their ability to use English appropriately in various social and cultural situations.

The participants of the study consisted of 55 undergraduate students and 8 English language teachers from higher educational institutions in Uzbekistan. The selected students were studying English as a foreign language at intermediate and upper-intermediate proficiency levels. These participants were chosen because learners at these stages are more actively engaged in

communicative interaction and are capable of demonstrating pragmatic language use during classroom activities.

Various educational materials and communicative teaching resources were used during the research process. These materials included communicative English language textbooks, authentic audio and video recordings, dialogues, role-play scenarios, discussion topics, problem-solving tasks, and classroom handouts. Authentic materials taken from real-life communication contexts were selected to help students practice speech acts, politeness strategies, and culturally appropriate language use.

Several methods of data collection were employed in the study. Classroom observation was one of the primary methods used to examine students' participation in communicative activities and their pragmatic performance during interaction. Special attention was given to learners' use of requests, apologies, greetings, suggestions, and responses in different communicative contexts. In addition, questionnaires were distributed among students and teachers to gather information about their attitudes toward communicative language teaching and the importance of pragmatics in foreign language learning. The questionnaires contained both open-ended and close-ended questions.

Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with English language teachers in order to identify the main difficulties and effective strategies related to teaching pragmatics through communicative activities. Furthermore, students' oral and written tasks were analyzed to evaluate their pragmatic awareness, contextual appropriateness, intercultural understanding, and communicative effectiveness.

The research procedure was carried out in several stages. First, theoretical literature related to pragmatics, communicative competence, and communicative language teaching was reviewed to establish the conceptual framework of the study. After that, classroom observations, surveys, interviews, and task analyses were conducted during one academic semester. The collected data were then analyzed using descriptive and comparative methods. Students' communicative performance was evaluated according to criteria such as fluency, appropriateness, interactional ability, politeness strategies, and pragmatic awareness.

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, and all participants were informed about the objectives of the research. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained during the data collection and analysis process, and the gathered information was used solely for academic purposes.

Results and Discussion: The findings of the study revealed that communicative language activities play a significant role in teaching pragmatics and developing students' pragmatic competence in English language classrooms in Uzbekistan. The data collected from classroom observations, questionnaires, interviews, and students' performance analysis demonstrated that learners who actively participated in communicative activities showed considerable improvement in their ability to use English appropriately and effectively in various social situations.

Classroom observations indicated that activities such as role plays, pair work, group discussions, simulations, and problem-solving tasks created meaningful opportunities for students to practice real-life communication. During these activities, students demonstrated greater awareness of speech acts, politeness strategies, turn-taking, and contextual language use. Many learners became more capable of expressing requests, apologies, suggestions, agreements, and disagreements in socially acceptable ways. This suggests that communicative activities provide learners with authentic contexts in which pragmatic competence can be naturally developed.

The analysis of students' oral and written tasks also showed noticeable progress in their communicative and pragmatic performance. Students who regularly engaged in communicative interaction used more appropriate vocabulary, expressions, and discourse patterns according to the communicative situation. They were able to distinguish between formal and informal language, apply polite forms of communication, and respond more effectively to different interlocutors. In addition, learners demonstrated improved fluency and confidence while interacting in English, which indicates that communicative activities help reduce anxiety and encourage active participation in the classroom.

The questionnaire results revealed that the majority of students considered communicative activities highly effective for improving both language proficiency and pragmatic awareness. Most participants stated that authentic communicative tasks helped them understand how English is used in real-life situations rather than only in textbooks. Students particularly emphasized the importance of role plays and discussions because these activities allowed them to experience practical communication and learn how to react appropriately in different social contexts.

Teachers who participated in the interviews also highlighted the positive impact of communicative language teaching on students' pragmatic development. According to the teachers, communicative activities encourage learner autonomy, creativity, and intercultural awareness. They noted that students became more motivated and interactive when classroom instruction focused on communication instead of memorization and grammar drills. Teachers further emphasized that pragmatic competence should be integrated into everyday language teaching because grammatical knowledge alone does not guarantee successful communication.

Another important finding of the study was related to intercultural communication. Students who were exposed to authentic materials such as videos, dialogues, and culturally-based classroom discussions demonstrated better understanding of social norms and cultural differences in communication. They became more aware of politeness conventions, indirect expressions, and culturally appropriate behavior in English-speaking environments. This finding confirms that communicative language activities contribute not only to linguistic development but also to intercultural competence, which is essential in modern global communication.

Despite the positive outcomes, the study also identified several challenges in teaching pragmatics through communicative activities in Uzbekistan. Some teachers reported difficulties related to limited classroom time, large class sizes, lack of authentic materials, and insufficient methodological training. In addition, certain students experienced problems in understanding implied meanings, humor, idiomatic expressions, and indirect communication strategies. Some learners were hesitant to participate actively because of fear of making mistakes or lack of confidence in speaking English.

The findings of the study support the idea that pragmatic competence develops most effectively through meaningful communication and interaction. Traditional grammar-focused methods may improve linguistic accuracy, but they often fail to prepare learners for authentic communication. In contrast, communicative language activities create realistic learning environments where students can practice language use according to context, culture, and communicative purpose.

Overall, the results demonstrate that teaching pragmatics through communicative language activities significantly improves students' communicative effectiveness, pragmatic awareness, and intercultural understanding. Therefore, English language teaching in Uzbekistan should continue to promote communicative approaches and integrate pragmatic instruction into classroom practice. Educational institutions should also provide teachers with professional development opportunities and access to authentic teaching resources in order to enhance the quality of pragmatic language instruction.

In conclusion, the present study demonstrated that communicative language activities play a crucial role in teaching pragmatics and developing students' pragmatic competence in English language education in Uzbekistan. The findings revealed that communicative approaches help learners use English more appropriately, confidently, and effectively in different social and cultural contexts. Activities such as role plays, discussions, pair work, simulations, and authentic communicative tasks provide students with valuable opportunities to practice real-life interaction and develop awareness of contextual language use, politeness strategies, and intercultural communication.

The research also confirmed that pragmatic competence is an essential component of successful communication and cannot be developed through grammar-based instruction alone. Although grammatical accuracy remains important, students need to understand how language functions in authentic situations and how communication is influenced by social and cultural factors. Communicative language teaching creates a learner-centered environment where students actively participate in interaction and gain practical communication experience.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of integrating authentic materials and intercultural elements into English language classrooms. Exposure to real-life communication and cultural contexts helps learners better understand speech behavior, social norms, and culturally appropriate expressions. As a result, students become more prepared for communication in international and multicultural settings.

At the same time, several challenges were identified during the research process, including limited classroom time, large class sizes, lack of authentic resources, and insufficient teacher training in pragmatics instruction. Some students also experienced difficulties in understanding indirect meanings and culturally specific communication patterns. These challenges indicate the need for further methodological improvements and greater support for teachers in implementing communicative and pragmatic approaches effectively.

Overall, the study proves that teaching pragmatics through communicative language activities significantly contributes to the development of students' communicative competence, pragmatic awareness, and intercultural understanding. Therefore, educational institutions in Uzbekistan should continue promoting communicative language teaching and incorporate pragmatic instruction more actively into foreign language education. Such efforts will help learners become competent language users who can communicate successfully and appropriately in the global community.

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