

## **AWARENESS-RAISING STRATEGIES FOR LEARNERS' DIVERGENCE**

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**Abstract:** EFL students clearly vary in their acquisition of language aspects. Certain factors can affect EFL students' pragmatic competency acquisition; as a result, they have varying levels of competency acquisition. Learners face the threat of sounding insensitive and impolite if they do not have a firm understanding of the pragmatic rules in the target language. This paper synthesizes strategies to increase student divergence awareness.

**Key words:** Awareness-raising strategies, pragmatic competence, cultural identity, learners' divergence.

Pragmatic transfer, or the "influence of the learners' knowledge of other languages and cultures on their pragmatic use and growth of the L2," (Kasper, 1992, as cited in Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 78) can be one factor in improving pragmatic competence in a second language. As a result, the shift toward pragmatic transfer may be explained by EFL learners having less opportunities for authentic information, leading them to rely more heavily on their L1 and lower proficiency participants transferring more frequently than their higher proficiency peers. Teachers should observe the role of pragmatic transfer in both ESL and EFL contexts to see how it relates to knowledge and the pedagogical consequences of assisting students in becoming aware of the universal transfer. The issue of negative transfer can be mitigated, according to Rafieyan et al. (2013), when learners are familiarized with and inspired to learn about the L2 community. Research on the cultural gap between L1 and L2 cultures can have a greater impact on NNS familiarity with TL pragmatic norms (Kecskes, 2003) and inform classroom strategies for making feedback more salient.

When attempting to interact in the L2 in a foreign language sense, learners are more likely to rely on their L1 pragmatic competence (Takahashi & Beebe, 1987). Most learners in these circumstances do not have the ability to experience NSs in real-life situations, and many do not even have a native instructor. As a result, one would expect the learners' forms to mirror those they might use in similar circumstances in their first language.

The second pragmatic divergence is the effect of instruction or instructional materials. Learners' pragmatic divergence, according to Ishhira and Cohen (2010), may often be attributed to the impact of the instruction or instructional materials, rather than to a lack of pragmatic knowledge or incomplete pragmatic control on the learners' part. The growth of EFL students' pragmatic competence can be influenced positively or negatively by the oral expression of teachers' materials and instructions. The development of pragmatic competence can be positively influenced by accurate information presented in materials and explicit instruction from the teacher; however, the development of pragmatic competence can be negatively influenced by inaccurate information presented in materials and implicit instruction from the teacher. For instance, classroom instruction can place an emphasis on students producing complete sentences. When learners apply this pattern to real-life interactions, however, the communication may come across as inefficient, annoying, or lacking in tact.

### **Awareness-Raising activities**

#### **Activity 1. Analyzing Dialogues**

- Students evaluate how often complete and incomplete answers are selected after receiving transcripts of formal and informal interactions from the instructor. Students may also talk about the pragmatic implications of both forms of sentences in different situations. Complete sentences may be interpreted in a number of ways, ranging from acceptable formal/well-articulated to inefficient, redundant, tactless, or even rude or sarcastic, depending on the background. Similarly, incomplete sentences can come across as highly informal, uncooperative in conversation, or unnecessarily informal. Learners should be motivated to understand the pragmatic consequences of full and

incomplete utterances when reading and using them. This awareness-raising activity will help learners understand pragmatic context more effectively and make more educated decisions about how they express themselves, preventing improper use of instructional material.

### **Activity 3: Good version/Bad version**

#### **Instructions:**

Teachers can build on conventional role play by offering students a range of scenarios, such as those in Table 2, and asking them to create a pragmatically acceptable "positive version" and a pragmatically unacceptable "bad version" for each scenario. When students perform the bad version in front of the class, their peers should address their errors. Following the performance of the good version, the students and their peers discuss how they fixed the errors in the bad version. This activity would increase students' knowledge of pragmatic concerns and how to address them.

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