# The Essential Role of Teaching Pragmatic in the Iraqi EFL Classroom

Nadhim Obaid Hussein[1*]      Intan Safinas Mohd Ariff Albakri[2]

1.Faculty of Languages and Communication, University Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Kula Lumpur, Malaysia

2.Faculty of Languages and Communication, University Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Tg. Malim

Perak, Malaysia

## Abstract

This study described the necessity for teaching pragmatic in EFL classroom, research on pragmatics in EFL learning and teaching. The study was presented by a public curriculum lead that prioritizes the necessity for teaching students' pragmatic to increase their ability to use language successfully in social and academic communications. Additionally, Many English teachers fail to offer pragmatic ability in classroom that is because the lack of understanding of teaching pragmatic. There is increasing material of studies on value of teaching pragmatic on increasing EFL students' communication, as well as usage of request. However, the scholars have pointed to concentrate on how English learners require new approach such as teaching pragmatic to develop the students' production of request in the EFL schoolroom. The new approaches of teaching pragmatic to these Iraqi EFL learners have been discussed in details of the current study.

**Keywords:** Teaching Pragmatic, Pragmatics in EFL Learning and Teaching, and EFL Students.

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## 1. Introduction

With rapid growth of technology and advance of sciences, there has been a worldwide growing demand for effective communication in the English language. Being multilingual is becoming a strategic investment that learners from all walks of life have been expending their time, their effort and their riches to realise. To interact with people of other nations, cultures and linguistic backgrounds is a notable feat. It includes acquiring a foreign language, comprehending and being understood communication among the people. Adopting a teaching pragmatic to achieve this undertaking has placed more emphasis on accomplishing the practical component of the L2 along with its linguistic component. Different studies (Kasper and Roever, 2005; Rose, 2005; Deda, 2013) claim that language learners do not only have to develop their linguistic competence, but also their pragmatic competence which denotes to the function and the use of the language. Language is a complex system that is utilized fundamentally for social communication or a type of message that is used necessarily for culture communication. As well as, a study by Whong (2011: 1) defines language as two complementary terms: 'language as form' and 'language as function'. The first is concerned with the language rules and the second is interested in what the language does, to increase communication among people. Due to the intricacy of the processes included, acquiring L2 by adult learners is considered a daunting venture. Thus, a greater understanding of teaching pragmatic and their attributed features will definitely be supportive to effective L2 learning.

Fundamentally, it was found that EFL students in a university or school in Iraq seem to sometimes lack new method such as teaching pragmatic when trying to communicate in English language, which is their foreign language. As a result, Iraqi learners seem less usage of request when communicating in the English language; more specially when performing face-threatening acts (FTA) such as requesting that is because they don't know how teaching pragmatic may affect the growth of their usage of request. A study by Cohen (1996) states that language learners can have all of the syntactic context and lexical items and still not be able to communicate their message because they lack the necessary teaching pragmatic to communicate their intent. Although some Iraqi students seem pragmatically competent when speaking in the Arabic language, this competence is not necessarily reflected in their foreign language. As a result, they need to learn pragmatic aspects through using teaching pragmatic in EFL schoolroom, and teaching pragmatic permit them to produce the request suitably, and they also become more pragmatically aware of their own expressions.

## 2. The Necessity for Teaching Pragmatic in EFL Classroom

Teaching pragmatic is considered is one of most important approach in EFL classroom. A study by Kasper (1997a) stats raising students' pragmatic competence has become one of the main goals in the EFL schoolroom, and many studies have been focused on the teaching pragmatic and its essential role on increasing EFL students' pragmatic aspects (Kasper & Rose, 2001; Rose, 2005; Rueda, 2006; Alcón-Soler and Martínez-Flor 2008). Moreover, a study by Bardovi-Harlig (2016) also discusses a necessity for teaching pragmatic aspects in the acquisition of pragmatic knowledge in FEL environments. The lack of adequate opportunities for exposure to teaching pragmatic in the Foreign Language setting cannot make the students' demonstration of the functional abilities in EFL schoolroom, where students do not communicate with native speakers of the target culture with very few opportunities to

practice and thus they become less sensitive and less communicative while more importance on language rules (Hassall 2008; Niezgoda & Roever, 2001). Additionally, the most EFL contexts tend to be less conducive to increasing pragmatic information, with reduced TL input where instructors and learners share the same first language as well as the same social background in process of pragmatic learning, with a limited range of cultural communications among countries, and less complex conversion organizations, and fewer politeness levels in general curriculum. This is a particular problem for Iraqi context. As a result, the lack of adequate teaching pragmatic to Iraq EFL learners, particularly in the case of renowned academic institution can cause major problems in process of teaching pragmatic. A case in point is one of the notable private higher education in Iraq, where the language learning contexts include a lack of pragmatic aspects such as speech act of request, and the teaching of language don't provide cultural or authentic aspect of the language for EFL learners.

Furthermore, there have been encouraging researches that teaching pragmatic results in "acquisitional gains" in diverse areas (Rose, 2005; Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005; Bardovi-Harlig, 2013, 2016). This study highlights the necessity for teaching pragmatic in EFL environments particularly in Iraq, such as in formulating requests in different situations.  A study by Alcón-Soler (2005) indicates that it is important to use teaching pragmatic on increasing EFL learners' pragmatic aspects and in order to help them to raise social conversions. In other words, a study by Rueda (2006) asserts that the significance of teaching pragmatic may be to furnish the EFL learners with knowledge of the socio-cultural rules of the target language, as well as securing them the opportunity to decide whether they would like to converge with the NSs' norms. Achiba (2003) reports the scarcity of studies on the growth of teaching pragmatic on developing EFL learners' usage of speech act of request. Thus, the study is required to discover how to provide these Iraqi EFL learners with enough opportunities to benefit from effective teaching.

Although the rising interest in teaching pragmatic in many forms of studies, little in-depth study has been conducted on the effect of teaching pragmatic on Iraqi EFL learners, where most of foreign language teaching lacks adequate teaching pragmatic. This study tries to address this major problem by discovering the main role of teaching pragmatic in language learning schoolroom mainly in Iraq as an EFL environment and how teaching pragmatic may affect the growth of Iraqi learners' usage of request, as well as discovering the learners' views towards this teaching pragmatic, when English learners acquire pragmatic aspects in EFL environment. A lot of the available English language curriculum in Iraq assume that language learners know when and how it is proper to utilize a particular linguistic rule and at the same time they do not able to produce pragmatically appropriate models for EFL learners. Consequently, there is need for EFL instructors incorporate teaching pragmatic into their English language teaching that is because that teaching pragmatic facilitates the learning speech act of request, and enable learners to communicate in any situation successfully.  In particular, language use in some materials does not seem to present a good source of speaker-hearer communications (Barron, 2016). Therefore, there is no evidence that classroom teachers combine teaching pragmatic into their English language teaching. As well as to the lack of opportunities for showing pragmatic aspects in the EFL settings, in addition to the lack of opportunities to practice the aspects made achieving the functional abilities of the language even more complicated in teaching English language. Consequently, the necessity for teaching pragmatic is more serious for foreign learners who are not exposed to sufficient input from native speaker and hence are not provided the opportunity to acquire pragmatic aspects (Achiba, 2003; Edwards & Csizer, 2004).

Moreover, Kasper (1997) maintains that without some techniques of teaching pragmatic, many features of pragmatic competence do not develop suitably. She points out that some pragmatic features could be developed without using teaching pragmatic if learners' L1 form-function is similar to that of L2. Unfortunately, learners do not know what they possess, so they do not make use of it. Therefore, it is necessary to make Iraqi EFL learners aware of what they already know in L1 and encourage them to use it in L2 through using teaching pragmatic. Stating to the review above, it can be concluded that English trainer can be a key factor to help Iraqi EFL learners achieve pragmatic competence. However, a teacher who gives teaching pragmatic to Iraqi EFL learners must be equipped with a good command of pragmatic information.  Hence, the study highlights the main role of teaching pragmatic and it's a positive effect on learners' usage of request in foreign language learning, it is to discover the effects of teaching pragmatic in Iraqi College English learning and teaching procedures.

## 3. Research on Pragmatics in EFL Learning and Teaching

Pragmatic is one of the most important component in act of communication. Pragmatics is developed as a recognizable part of linguistics mainly in the late of 20th century, it appeared as a field of study in the 1970s and it advanced well established in the 1980s. Pragmatics is a growth of language study, which is precisely focused on the speakers' meaning in the context (O'Keefe et al., 2011). Pragmatics is defined by many linguists, educationalists and scholars from a variety of viewpoints (Schauer, 2009; Yule, 1996; Grundy, 1995).

Additionally, a study by Chapman (2011:11) maintains pragmatics investigates "performance and interpretation of language in relation to contexts of use." Besides, a study by Thomas (2006: 92) states that pragmatics as the study of 'meaning in use', which is focused on how language is really utilized by native speaker

to produce different functions in social and cultural communication. These contain aspects that play a main role in production of utterance: how level of politeness is conveyed, how speech acts are realized in diverse environments, the effect of the syntactic structure of an utterance on its degree of directness, and "utterance interpretation" of the intent. Additionally, a research by Hussein and Elttayef (2018) indicates that EFL learners' pragmatic which is an aspect of communicative competence. Such pragmatic should be successfully and purposefully chosen in such a way that they should be more testable, interesting, motivating in FL classroom. As well as, a study by Bataineh and Hussein (2015) states that pragmatic doesn't focus on grammatical knowledge, but it focuses on the meaning of learners' language use in the acts of communication in EFL classroom. Also, it focuses on helping learner to create meaning rather than develop perfectly grammatical structure. Therefore, "the coding and the decoding of utterances by both narrators and listeners" is at the heart of defining pragmatics, according to Schauer (2009: 23). Due to the subtlety of the change among these definitions, they all tend to furnish more or less similar sense, which corresponds with the meaning of pragmatics.

Essentially, earlier researches (Vellenga, 2004; Alcón-Soler,2005; Rueda, 2006) on pragmatics in EFL learning and teaching has stated that it is necessary to help language learners to increase both usage of speech act of request, and ability to communicate successfully in different situations. Findings of the earlier studies provide rich evidence to support the necessity for EFL learners to develop pragmatic information, yet further researches need to be conducted in different contexts, with various models to gain a deeper understanding of how students can cultivate such competency successfully in their classroom. It is also worth discovering strategy-teaching for learning pragmatics as study has discovered that strategy-based teaching has been effective for EFL learners to improve four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Consistently, forms of motivation and supportive attitudes towards teaching and learning in pragmatics were stated by Kim (2016). In her study, she shows that the learners are motivated and that they voiced their necessity for teaching pragmatic aspects to facilitate their communications in L2. She purports that they embraced encouraging perception that teaching pragmatic fostered their communication skills and improved their usage of speech act, improved their pragmatic consciousness on social-culture differences, as well as instilling confidence in their English communications. She carried out an investigation into the learners' insight toward the teaching pragmatic. As well as, Hussein and Elttayef (2016) stated that researchers' experience as teachers of English, learners face difficulties in learning the foreign language regarding communicative competence such as discourse competence in pragmatic aspects. Therefore, the findings revealed that teaching pragmatic is essentially crucial and supportive for Iraqi EFL learners to communicate more successfully.

As well as, pragmatic learning assisted EFL learners to use second language or foreign language successfully and helped them to engage in effective communication (Salehi, 2013). According to (Grace, 2010; Abdul Sattar & Farnia, 2014) have indicated that the acquisition of sufficient pragmatic is important for foreign language use because extensive pragmatic help EFL student to use the language and functions for positive and understandable communication. By the same form, pragmatic is an essential feature in teaching and learning any language and it is significant aspect in the growth of language (Nivis, 2013; Alinezhad, 2015), they stated that pragmatic learning is regarded as the most important element in academic achievement for foreign or second language students. Furthermore, teaching pragmatic has a vital role inside the schoolroom, it can be effective in developing learners' awareness of the use of speech acts, namely requesting suitably (Cohen, 2010). A study by Kasper and Rose (2001) specified that teaching pragmatic includes speech acts, speech function, address markers, hedges, and conversational structure. These aspects increase language learners' awareness of language use inside the classroom situation. Therefore, the teaching pragmatic is play important role in increasing Iraqi EFL learners' consciousness of language use and it can be used by the teacher to convey the main features of English language.

## 4. Conclusion

To conclude, this paper has addressed the major role of teaching pragmatic as a new method in a new field of Iraqi EFL, in addition its explanations and features. It has presented different studies on teaching pragmatic in EFL learning as well as its effect on Iraqi EFL students' usage of request, and enhance their communication. The researches show a consensus that teaching pragmatic can be taught request strategies in EFL learning and teaching helps language Iraqi EFL students in their development of pragmatic aspects specifically request. Additionally, it has been stated that learners' different language request strategies may have served them obtain successful language learning results. However, this summary also find out that more investigation needs to be shown in diverse situations to identify features that may affect the way learners go about teaching pragmatic. Finally, the researcher tends to put a new method such as teaching pragmatic and resolve the problem of Iraqi EFL students' communication in EFL schoolroom.

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