

The Role Of Pragmatics In Achieving Communicative Competence: Implications For English Language Education In Nigeria In The 21st Century

Basil O. Nwokolo

Abstract

The ultimate purpose of every second language education is to impart proficiency, which entails linguistic and sociocultural competence. The teaching and learning of English in Nigeria has continued to emphasize linguistic competence alone, resulting in the imparting of textbook English to learners. The paper examines this issue and makes a case for the formal teaching and learning of pragmatic principles in schools in order to make learners acquire communicative competence. Pragmatic categories of context, presupposition, etc are discussed. Finally, the paper highlights the implications of pragmatics in English language education in Nigeria in this 21st century.

Introduction

The ultimate goal of second language education is to achieve competence in the use of language. This has been the goal of English language education in Nigeria since its adoption as a second language. Since then, language pedagogy has been directed towards equipping learners with the English language skills that will enable them to acquire near-native speaker competence in order to ensure the required minimum intelligibility.

As a result of the influence of the linguistic theories of the 1960's, especially Noam Chomsky's Transformational-Generative Grammar, pedagogy placed a huge emphasis on grammar alone as a means of achieving proficiency in language use. Classroom activities focused on the task of making learners acquire the core features of syntax, phonology morphology and semantics. Richards (1985:115) observes that: "Within much L2 theory and research, the primacy of syntax has been taken for granted and the syntactic paradigm has been dominant. Although phonology and other areas have not been ignored, second-language learning has largely been described as a continuum of gradually complexifying syntactic systems". Using Chomsky's terminology, it seems that what a second language learner requires is to acquire grammatical competence only. By grammatical competence, Chomsky means the mastery of the underlying rules of the language system which enables the speaker-hearer of a language to speak and understand the language. A body of these system rules constitutes the grammar of the language and the knowledge of this grammar translates to competence. The theory explains that a native speaker's knowledge of the grammar of his language is innate and unconscious; and this implies that non-natives speakers have to study and learn this grammar in order to be able to speak and understand the language.

In the early 1970's, Chomsky's theories, as contained in his *Aspects of the theory of syntax* (1965), came under severe criticisms as being inadequate to account fully for how language is used for communication in context. Nunan (1988:24) observes that there is "dissatisfaction with structuralism and the situational methods of the 1960s". The criticisms made it clear that grammatical or linguistic competence was not enough to

make a non-native learner of English achieve proficiency in the use of English or, in other words, to acquire communicative competence. The theory of communicative competence, therefore, emerged in the wake of the reactions against grammatical competence, and it has remained, since its emergence, a dominant theory influencing second and foreign language education globally. In the words of Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor (2008:158), “Nowadays, the most accepted instructional framework in second or foreign language” education is the one that will increase learners’ communicative competence.”

The aim of this paper is to show how the knowledge of pragmatics can enhance the communicative competence of teachers and learners of English in a second language environment like Nigeria. The paper will also discuss the implications of realizing the importance of pragmatics in second-language education. The next section of the paper will focus on the concept of communicative competence and recent trends in pragmatic principles. Efforts will be made to examine some pragmatic categories whose knowledge is indispensable for a learner of English who wants to be communicatively competent. Finally, the paper will discuss the role of pragmatics and the implications in the achievement of communicative competence in the entire process of language education in Nigeria in the 21st century.

Communicative Competence

As Munby (1978:9) reports, “Hymes, Jakobovits, Campbell and Wales, Widdowson, Cooper and others, all reject Chomsky’s restricted view of competence”. Hymes (1971), according to Munby, “points out that Chomsky’s category of competence provides no place for language use but neither does his category of performance, despite his equating language use with performance”. Hymes goes further to say that, “There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless.” Jakobovits (1970), as Munby reports, “argues that social context selection rules are as necessary a part of the linguistic competence... of a speaker as those in syntax with which we are familiar”. Campbell and Wales (1970) also maintain that Chomsky’s conception of competence has omitted the most important language ability, which is “to produce or understand utterances which are not so much grammatical but, more important, appropriate to the context in which they are made...” Apart from recounting the views of others, Munby himself agrees that, “The restriction of competence to perfect knowledge in a homogeneous speech community independent of sociocultural features is inadequate to account for language in use, for language as communication”(p.10). On his part, Richards (2006:3) points out that, “While grammatical competence is an important dimension of language learning, it is clearly not all that is involved in learning a language...” The essence of cataloguing some of the criticisms against grammatical competence is to show how massive its opposition has been and also to explain why the alternative communicative competence has been received with much interest among many linguists.

The theory of communicative competence is said to have been postulated by Dell H. Hymes, an American Sociolinguist and anthropologist, in a seminal paper entitled “On communicative competence”, published in *Sociolinguistics*, edited by J.B. Pride and J. Holmes, in 1972. Widdowson (2007:128) defines the concept in line with Hymes’s postulation as “the knowledge of what constitutes the communicative use of language and which enables users to make judgments about how far a particular use is possible, feasible, appropriate, and performed.” Commenting on Hymes’ theory of communicative competence, Mumby (1978:15-16) notes:

Those four sectors of his communicative competence reflect the speaker-hearer's grammatical (formally possible), psycholinguistic (implementationally feasible), sociocultural (contextually appropriate) and de facto (actually occurring) knowledge and ability for use. The fact that the grammatical sector is one of four parameters of communicative competence shows the extent of this recasting of Chomsky's notion of competence, which consisted only of grammatical competence.

The debate on Hymes's theory has, thus, generated huge awareness that the knowledge of grammar alone cannot make a non-native learner of English an effective communicator in, or a good speaker of, the language. Rather, the learner has to acquire the knowledge of the sociocultural and psycholinguistic elements involved in real-life communication. So, communicative competence refers to the knowledge and the ability which the speaker of a language has imbibed and which makes him produce grammatically and socioculturally acceptable utterances in a language. It has been emphasized also that context (immediate and distal, physical and psychological) plays an enormously inevitable roles in making communication successful. Canale et al. (1980) as cited by Weir (1988:8) "took communicative competence to include grammatical competence (knowledge of the rules of grammar), sociolinguistic competence (knowledge of use and rules of discourse) and strategic competence (knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies)". For Nunan (1988:25), "learners have to be able to construct grammatically correct structures" and "also have to do much more." He further reports thus:

In working out what this 'much more' entails, linguists and sociolinguists began to explore the concept of speech situation. In so doing they were able to articulate some of the ways in which language is likely to be influenced by situational variables. Among the more important of these variables are the situation itself, the topic of conversation, the conversational purpose, and, probably the most important of all, the relationship between interlocutors in an interaction.

From the same perspective as Nunan, Richards (2006:9) sees communicative competence as a "broader" concept because it includes "knowing what to say and how to say it appropriately based on the situation, the participants, and their roles and intentions". Bagarić and Mihaljevic (2007:100) also arrive at the conclusion that linguists, in the field of applied linguistics, "have reached an agreement that a competent language user should possess not only knowledge about language but also the ability and skill to activate that knowledge in a communicative event."

From the contributions of the above linguists and some others, in terms of the espousal of the theory and also in terms of offering detailed explanation of the theory as Nunan above, it became clear that the theory had wide acceptability and that a new era had dawned in the history of language education. As a consequence of the theory, the mode of classroom interactions, curriculum design, and testing changed in order to reflect the new knowledge. New concepts like *communicative syllabus*, *communicative language testing*, *learner-centred language teaching*, *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)* and *communicative event* emerged as well. It was not only linguists and sociolinguists that welcomed the communicative approach to language education but also

politico-educational bodies and language teachers. The Council of Europe “sponsored international conferences” and “published monographs and books” on communicative language teaching. Also, textbook writers, publishers, governments, institutions like curriculum development centres and the British Council “gave prominence nationally and internationally” to the communicative approach (www.vobs.at/ludescher/Alternative%20n). Nunan (1988:29) also reports that, “Given the prominence of communicative language teaching in the literature, a study was designed to investigate the relevance of ‘communicative’ as opposed to ‘traditional’ practices for second language teachers.” The results of the study showed clearly that the 60 second-language teachers, who were the subjects of the study, considered communicative language teaching salient.

However, it seemed that the theory of communicative competence was misunderstood in some quarters. The theory was misinterpreted to mean paying less attention to the teaching of grammar or a total rejection of the structuralist approach to language pedagogy. Richards (2006:9) reports that the “centrality of grammar in language teaching and learning was questioned” and that in curriculum planning “grammar was no longer the starting point.” Wong and Barrea-Marlys (2012:62) also report that “some scholars” like Prabhu (1987) “support the exclusion of grammar learning.” The misconception, which was short-lived, unfortunately crept into some second language situations, including West African English-speaking countries. The misconception of the new approach prompts Littlewood (1981:1), as cited by Nunan (1988:26), to say that, “The structural view of language has not been in any way superseded by the functional view”. In his own reaction, Cook (1989:12) states that, “It is not a question of setting these two up as irreconcilable enemies, trying to make one a hero and the other a villain, for both have an invaluable contribution to make to the understanding of language, and both ultimately need each other”. Many linguists today share the view of Belchamber (2007) that communicative competence implies “equipping students with vocabulary, structures and functions, as well as strategies, to enable them to interact successfully.”

It is quite obvious, from literature, that the new approach does not in any way imply that the teaching of grammar should be given less attention; the teaching of grammar is extremely important in second and foreign language situations. A native speaker of English already has the knowledge of the grammar, at least intuitively or unconsciously, and then needs to learn the rules of discourse to enable him/her to be proficient. He/she can also acquire the rules of discourse informally as he interacts with members of his community in different speech situations. A second language learner, in contrast, needs to learn both the grammar of English and discourse in order to be a competent communicator. Ishihara and Cohen (2010:75-76) observe that “Even without explicit instruction in pragmatics in the classroom, they [L2 learners] might eventually improve their pragmatic ability. However, if no formal instruction is provided, it is said to generally take at least 10 years in a second-language context... to be able to use the language in a pragmatically nativelike manner”. We want to comment that the 10-year unconscious learning period can only obtain in a normal L2 situation, where the L2 is the only L2 and is used widely and intensively.

But the problem in second-language teaching environments like Nigeria is that the grammar component of communicative language teaching has dominated the entire language curriculum in schools. Richards’ observation twenty-eight years ago, as cited in the introduction, is still pertinent in today’s situation in Nigerian schools. The reason for

this is that grammar constitutes the complex structure of language architecture; it is vast and difficult to implant in the language faculty of an adult who already has the grammar of his mother tongue firmly established. The situation is compounded by the fact that outside the classroom, the English language is rarely used in communication. Native languages and Pidgin remain the dominant means of interactions. So, even when English is used, the users are not expected to speak like the native speakers of English. As a result, the learners do not receive necessary informal feedback about their pragmatic use of language. In this type of situation, it will take many more years for a learner to acquire, if at all, discourse competence to a reasonable degree outside the classroom. But there is the need to change the situation in view of the fact that English has become an international language in our today's world in which time and space constraints are rapidly disappearing. In the words of Ishihara and Cohen (2010: x), "the demarcation between native and non-native speakers is becoming increasingly blurred with the spread of English as an international language". No one should, therefore, be content and comfortable with Nigerian or West African English any more. The communicative competence of the present generation of learners has to be improved. The most appropriate way of doing this, it now seems, is to introduce the teaching and learning of pragmatic discourse in the school system. Ishihara and Cohen (2010: 322) emphasize the point that the "effort to promote systematic teaching of pragmatics in the L2 curriculum instruction is a relatively recent endeavor". They posit that "explicit classroom instruction can accelerate the learning..." The next section will focus on what pragmatics means and also examine some of its categories.

Pragmatics

Pragmatics has been defined in several ways. It is concerned with the study of the meaning a speaker intends to communicate to a hearer in a speech-event situation and how the speaker does it. According to Gregoriou (2009:143), "Pragmatics is concerned with the study of the meaning as communicated by one human and interpreted by another." For Yule (1996:3), pragmatics means the following: "the study of speaker meaning", "the study of contextual meaning", "the study of how more gets communicated than is said", and "the study of the expression of relative distance." Another definition that is of interest is the one offered by Wales (1989:368-9): "...pragmatics is concerned with the meaning of utterances rather than sentences or propositions; and meaning that comes from the contextual and interpersonal situation involving speaker and listener." One more definition that can help us to understand pragmatics is succinctly offered by Mey (2001:6): "Pragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society". As can be deduced from the above definitions, the linguistic domain of pragmatics is interested in the speaker meaning, how the listener/hearer interprets the speaker's utterance, the role of context in meaning formulation, processing and interpretation, and the effects of socio-cultural conditions on communication. These concerns pertain to the second major component of communicative competence. In the words of Wales (1989:369), "Pragmatists ask not *what does X mean?* but *what do you mean by X?* There [sic] are interested in the functions, intentions, goals and effects of utterances, and ultimately in the kind of linguistic competence required to use language in specific social situation". For Ishihara and Cohen (2010: 5), "Having pragmatic ability means being able to go beyond the literal meaning of what is said or written, in order to interpret the intended meanings, assumptions, purposes or goals, and the kind of actions that are being performed".

The scope of pragmatics is vast. To be versed in pragmatics, one has to study the following pragmatic categories: context, deixis, reference, inference, presupposition, entailment, implicature, face affects, pragmatic principles and maxims, speech act theory, conversation analysis, discourse, metapragmatics, intercultural pragmatics, literary pragmatics, etc. Sound knowledge of these pragmatic categories will certainly equip the learner with needed pragmatic ability. As a result of the vastness of the subject, it will be unwieldy to attempt to show, in this chapter, how each and every category can contribute to communicative competence. What we can do here is to briefly discuss a few of them.

Speech Acts and Pragmatic Meanings

It is important for second-language learners to have the knowledge of speech act theory. According to the theory, which was first propounded by J. Austin in his 1962 work, *How to do things with words*, people perform acts when they make utterances. There are three related acts that can be performed simultaneously by making an utterance: locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. The first is the mere act of producing a meaningful expression. The second, the illocutionary act, refers to the purpose of the locution, i.e. the meaning the speaker intends to convey to the listener. The third, the perlocutionary act, refers to the effect (visible or not) which the illocution has on the hearer(s). While locution relates to literal or semantic meaning, illocution relates more to pragmatic meaning, the function of the locution, or the action which the speaker has performed by uttering some words. Let us illustrate these acts.

Let us suppose that you returned from work and then said to your wife: "I am hungry." This utterance is the locution; grammatically, it is a statement, informing your wife about your physiological condition. This is the semantics of the expression. But you did not merely intend to just make a statement about yourself. Rather, you wanted your wife to serve you some food. So, the illocutionary force of your utterance is a request (for food). Therefore, what you had done with words was to make a request. The expected perlocutionary act would be that your wife would serve you food or apologize for lack of food in the house, if she understood the pragmatics of your utterance. Apart from requesting, some other acts we can use words to perform include: apologizing, promising, warning, asserting, informing, offering, accepting, rejecting, questioning, answering, complimenting, inviting, etc. These are regarded as social functions which people carry out using speech. It should be noted here that the illocutionary act is the most important aspect to pragmatists.

It is worthy to note that speech acts can be direct or indirect. "I am hungry" above is an indirect speech act, i.e. an indirect request. The direct equivalent could have been, "Please serve me lunch." Also, the person who asks "Do you sell oranges here" is indirectly asking to buy oranges, not just to know whether oranges are sold there or not. Also, if your brother is blocking your view and you want him to move away, you can perform the act directly or indirectly:

- (a) Move out of the way (direct).
- (b) You are blocking my view (indirect).
- (c) Do you have the right to block my view? (indirect)
- (d) Are you transparent? (indirect).

Each of a – d is a speech act ordering or requesting the person concerned to move away from his location. A critical examination of b – d will reveal that there is no logical relationship between the form of an utterance and its meaning or function, or its illocutionary force, i.e. the intention or purpose that has motivated the speech. To

interpret b – d correctly, one must be present in the immediate communicative context. It is the knowledge of the context that will assist the addressee to make the correct inference as regards the pragmatic meaning of an utterance.

The task before the L2 learner is to master how each speech act is appropriately performed in the second language. For example, what is the acceptable language form for expressing compliments? How does one make or reject an invitation in the L2? And how does one make a request for a pen or a large sum of money? The strategies for performing these acts vary according to the interactants, the topic and culture and they should be mastered and applied in the appropriate communicative situations. “As speakers, we need to know how to say what we want to say with the proper politeness, directness and formality.... We also need to know what not to say at all and what to communicate non-verbally” (Ishihara and Cohen, 2010: 4). As writers, the same thing also applies. We will consider next the role of context in communicative competence.

Context

Let us attempt to explain the concept of context. Ochs (1979:1) believes that the “scope of context is not easy to assess and define.” But all language users know that the term evokes immediate spatial and temporal language use situation, including the participants involved in the speech event. It encompasses much more than this for Wales (1989:94), who believes that context extends to “remote environment... such as the geographical, social and cultural; also the context of background or shared knowledge and beliefs: the macro-context, then, of the world at large.” The shared knowledge and beliefs referred to by Wales constitute what is called schema. Although it forms a part of the remote context, we will discuss it separately later.

The role of context in communication can never be stressed enough. This is because language does not and can never take place in a social vacuum. In a communicative situation, both the speaker and the listener depend on it for mutual intelligibility. Ochs (1979:1) describes it as a “key concept” in pragmatics and goes further to say that, “few features of language are untouched by context; the effects of context are pervasive...; to be competent, a language user must know the multitude of norms for adapting language to the situation at hand.” Expressing a similar opinion, Mey (2001:43) states that, “The context determines both what one can say and what one cannot say: only the pragmatics of the situation can give meaning to one’s word.” Both quotations appear to be pointing to only the speaker or the communicator. But the truth is that the speaker will only make pragmatic sense to the hearer if the hearer is conversant with the related and relevant context of an utterance.

So, it is important for second-language learners to consciously learn that the social status of the participants in a speech event determines the form of address and politeness strategies that will be adopted – Sir, Madam, Chichi, Old Boy, or Your Excellency. The type of register to be used will depend on whether the situation is formal or informal. The knowledge of the context is needed to understand the pragmatic import of an utterance like, “I have come back.” This may variously mean the following:

- (a) You can now close for the day (if addressed to an office messenger who has been waiting for his boss to return to the office for him to go).
- (b) Nobody will worry you any more (if addressed to a woman being harassed by her husband’s creditors because the husband has been away, and now the husband is back).

- (c) I want to have my key back (in a situation in which Mr. A has the custody of Mr. B's apartment's key while Mr. B was away for some time).
- (d) I apologize and I will not abandon you again (if a man, who has been away for a long time, says so to his family).

As can be seen, the information conveyed by "I have come back" is distinct from its truth-conditional content. Technically, the conveyed meaning is termed the *implicature*; so each of (a) to (d) is an implicature of the utterance. It should be stressed that it is the context that helps the hearer to process the utterance and work out the implicature. It should also be noted that the utterance, "I have come back", cannot be addressed to just anybody; the utterer is expected to address it to a person with whom he shares common knowledge. We will pursue the issue of common knowledge in the next section.

Presupposition and Common Knowledge

Presupposition refers to the knowledge or belief which the speaker assumes the hearer is conversant with during an interaction. Yule (1996:25) defines it as "something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance." Thus, it is the speaker that presupposes, and his presupposition determines the amount of information he can linguistically encode. The speaker is not likely to encode elaborately any information that is common knowledge. For example, the statement, "Emeka's teacher was here yesterday" carries the speaker's presupposition that Emeka and his teacher are already known to the addressee. The only new information in the utterance is that the teacher visited. If it were otherwise, the utterance would have taken the following form: "Emeka, who is our son or the son of our neighbour, is a student and has a teacher. A teacher is a man or woman that helps children to learn new things. The teacher came here yesterday". It is important to note that in the sequencing of information, any new information becomes presupposed in a subsequent utterance or proposition. For example, the new information above will become presupposed when we extend the text thus: "The visit was a blessing in disguise".

There are linguistic forms that are indicators of the speaker's presupposition and it is worthwhile teaching them to enable students to become familiar with them. For example, the definite noun phrase is always an indicator. However, we wish to proceed by briefly considering, further, the pre-existing background knowledge into which the speaker and hearer key as they encode, process and interpret utterances. This shared background knowledge is technically called a *schema* (plural, *schemata*). Yule (1996:85) defines a schema as a "pre-existing knowledge structure in memory" while Widdowson (2007:132) sees it as a "mental construct of taken-for-granted assumptions about how reality is ordered... and how communication is managed..." Schemata include all kinds of knowledge about the world, including cultural knowledge and the processes of doing things.

It is believed that knowledge schema is activated in the mind by key words and phrases in a text; it is the schema that makes it possible for the text processor to make sense of the text. Cook (1989:72) observes that, "In reality the mind must activate many schemata at once, each interacting with the other. It must be capable of moving rapidly from one to another, of using more than one simultaneously, of focusing on a sub-schema... It must be capable of building new schemata, and ditching old ones." To illustrate a typical schema, let us think about a bungalow. Immediately the word is mentioned, all the features of the structure come to the mind: doors, rooms, windows, ceiling, roof, etc. If the house is occupied, the sitting-room will evoke a sub-schema:

seats, table, blinds, carpet, television set, fan, etc. Let us also examine a football match schema. What comes to the mind include: football, two sets of players, field, spectators, a referee with a whistle, goal posts, etc.

As we have already indicated, common knowledge or schemata make communication economical. Cook (1989:74) observes that, "It would be hard to see how communication could take place if we could not take some sort of mutually shared knowledge for granted, if every discourse had to begin from scratch." If a speaker shares the same schemata with his audience, he will not be verbose and the audience will easily process his speech. If the speaker overestimates how much the audience knows, or evokes strange schemata, his speech will sound esoteric to his audience, that is, processing and comprehending the speech will not be easy. If a comprehension passage is about a man riding a bicycle, students are likely to understand it faster. But if it is about 'doing butokoloding' (a nonsensical invention by the author), they will not have any mental picture whatsoever about the process because butokoloding does not exist in their world of experience.

We have attempted to show that pragmatics constitutes an interesting and essential body of knowledge, which can contribute to the improvement of communicative competence in a second language situation. Native speakers of English have acknowledged this as a fact and are, therefore, giving it some attention in their schools. As a result of constraints, what we have done in these few pages is merely taking a cursory look at an all-important issue. If the knowledge of pragmatic discourse is essential for communicative competence, it means that this realization or fact has serious implications for the way English language education is presently conducted in Nigeria.

Implications

The first major implication is that pragmatics should be taught in schools, just like all the domains of grammar: syntax, semantics, morphology and phonology. Systematic tuition in grammar helps greatly in promoting its learning in a second-language situation. The same conscious effort should be made to inculcate pragmatic knowledge and discourse rules in learners. Cook (1989:41) stresses the importance of pragmatic theories in language learning. He argues that the "human penchant for indirection" and the "divergence of function and form means that we cannot rely upon teaching only form." It is his view that, apart from the teaching of the "formal language system – pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary", teachers need to decide the "degree to which other components of communication need teaching." So, English language teachers in Nigeria need to be made ready for the teaching of pragmatic discourse in schools. Ishihara and Cohen, who pose the question "How prepared are teachers to provide pragmatics instruction?" (p. 322), also note that learning pragmatics constitutes "a complex and challenging area for learners at all levels" (p.320).

If pragmatics would be systematically taught in schools, it should first be enshrined in the language curriculum. The language curriculum should, therefore, be reviewed in order to incorporate pragmatics into it from primary to tertiary level. Pragmatics should be introduced and emphasized in the language programmes of colleges of education and language departments in our universities, where, up to now, the subject has received little or no attention. Apart from leading prospective teachers into the knowledge of pragmatics, helping them to acquire modern methods and strategies of teaching pragmatics in the classroom should also be emphasized. This is very important. Unless teachers master pragmatics and how to teach it, imparting communicative

competence to our students will be impossible and we will continue to be condemned to the use of textbook English.

The next implication is that serving language teachers need to be retrained since many of them lack the knowledge of pragmatics. Refresher courses and workshops should be organized to acquaint them with the knowledge.

Finally, language testing in our schools should become more communicative, than before i.e. it should incorporate both linguistic and pragmatic dimensions.

Conclusion

It is obvious that the overall goal of the English language education in Nigeria is proficiency or communicative competence. Efforts to achieve this goal have been one-sided in that it is the linguistic aspect of competence that has been emphasized all along. The pragmatic discourse component must be given attention for the goal to be fully realized. As Ishihara and Cohen (2010:13) have pointed out, “An explanatory approach to pragmatics has its goal to alert learners as to why L2 speakers commonly use the language as they do, why there are differences in how meaning is conveyed in the L2, and how underlying cultural values, beliefs and assumptions influence L2 speakers’ pragmatic behavior”. The knowledge of pragmatics will certainly equip L2 learners with skills that will help them to avoid cross-cultural misunderstandings and make them aware of the social norms that guide the performance of certain speech acts. Certainly, the knowledge will improve listening, speaking, reading and writing.

References

- Bagaric, V. & Mihaljevic, D.J. (2007). Defining communicative competence. *Metodika*. Vol. 8, br. 14, 94-103.
- Belchamber, R. (2007). The advantages of communicative language teaching. *The internet TESL journal*. Vol. XIII, No. 2 (<http://itesl.org/Articles/Belchamber-CLT.html>)
- Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Communicative language teaching. www2.vobs.at/ludescher/Alternative%20n
- Cook, G. (1989). *Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gregoriou, C. (2009). *English literary stylistics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ishihara, N. and Cohen, A. D. (2010). *Teaching and learning pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Mey, J.L. (2001). *Pragmatics: An introduction*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

- Munby, J. (1978). *Communicative Syllabus design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nunan, D. (1988). *The learner-centred curriculum*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ochs, E. (1979). Introduction: What child language can contribute to pragmatics. In (Ed.) Ochs, E. and B.B. Schieffelin. *Developmental pragmatics*. New York: Academic Press.
- Richards, J.C. (1985). *The context of language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J.C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. New York: Cambridge Press.
- Usó-Juan, E. & Alicia Martinez-Flor. (2008). Teaching intercultural communicative competence through the four skills. *Revista alicantina de estudios ingleses*, 21,157-170.
- Wales, K. (1989). *A dictionary of stylistics*: London: Longman.
- Weir, C.J. (1988). *Communicative language testing*. Exeter: University of Exeter.
- Widdowson, H.G. (2007). *Discourse analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wong, C.C.Y. & M. Barrea-Marlyns. (2012). The role of grammar in communicative language teaching: An exploration of second language teachers' perceptions and classroom practices. *Electronic journal of Foreign language teaching*. Vol. 9, No. 1, 61-75. (<http://e-fl.l.nus.edu.sg/>)
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.