The Importance of Pragmatic Competence in the EFL Curriculum: Application and Implications[*]

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Abstract
The field of language teaching and curriculum development has been characterized by its constant development, with a concomitant impact on the quality of education and training. The drive is mostly due to the rapidly changing world characterized by globalization and the result of openings on other fields of research. One area that has informed this field is the teaching of L2 pragmatic competence, with the commonly expressed generalization being that there is a gap between what research in pragmatics has found and how language is generally taught today (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010). On this view, this paper purports to investigate the role of pragmatic competence in the teaching of English. We provide evidence that language proficiency should not only be equated with grammatical well-formedness, but also with how to use it appropriately and efficiently in the target language. This being the case, however, we will show that the implementation of this view is far from being easy, especially in a trend that has for long been characterized by a focus on the grammatical competence, both in terms of training and curriculum design. This is paired with a similar difficulty in terms of how to translate the pragmatically-based approach into L2 classroom practices and how to identify modes of assessment. Addressing these issues, we believe, will shed light on some of the challenges and implications on the teaching of English along with the applicability of the suggested approach to the current ELT reform in the Arab world in general and in Morocco in particular.

Keywords: Curriculum Development, Foreign Language Teaching, Intercultural Competence, Interlanguage Pragmatics, Pragmatic Competence.