

Teaching Discussion Pragmatics in an Academic English Program

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Our Teaching Context

- An intense 8 week program
- Beginner to advanced
- Maximum 16 students per class
- Integrated skill based pedagogy
- Well-balanced mix of linguistics backgrounds
- Wide variety of programs to cater to the needs of students
- Serving over 2,000 students from more than 50 different countries every year

Why I decided to teach pragmatics?

- Destination York Program
- Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking & Seminar
- Monolingual classroom (Chinese)
- Intermediate to advanced beginners
- Considerable proficiency in terms of grammatical accuracy
- Lack of pragmatic competence causing breakdown in communication
- Overuse of modals and an autocratic tone
- Overuse of (but/ok, but/may be, but/fine, but/alright, but/sorry, but).
- Need to maximize pragmatic competence during class discussions

What research says ?

- “Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication.” (Crystal, D. 1997, p. 301).
- “Pragmatic competence can be specifically defined as the knowledge of communicative action and how to carry it out, and the ability to use language appropriately according to context”(Kasper, 1997).

What is pragmatics?

- In simple language, Pragmatics is the use of appropriate language in a given communicative situation.
 - Using language
 - Changing language
 - Following rules
- Sociopragmatics – Use of appropriate speech acts in particular situations or contexts. (Culture focused)
- Pragmalinguistics – Use of grammar and typical expressions in a particular context or setting. (Language focused)

Pragmatics needs to be taught

- It is important because it plays a crucial role in students' integration into their social, educational and professional lives in their new country.
- Students especially need it for success in academic discourse and for assimilating in their academic environment.
- Most of the research clearly indicates that regardless of their level of grammatical competency, language learners have difficulty in the area of pragmatics.
- Grammatical accuracy \neq Pragmatic competence

Teaching Pragmatics

- Both ESL and EFL learners appear to benefit from explicit instruction in pragmatics. (Kasper, 1997; Kasper & Rose, 2001)
- Video is one of the richest resources teachers have for helping their students experience and observe pragmatics at work (for a fuller discussion, see Kasper & Rose, 2001).

Some useful websites

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2663> Humming bird story (2 min)

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3447> A Lifetime of favors (3 min)

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=4343> Bird die of plastic (5 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58aBoXJARNQ> Rwanda bans plastic bags (4 min)

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=4444> Story of Melka-Against early marriage (5 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dhxeeFzRfq8> Child Marriage (8 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Se12y9hSOM0> The story of bottled water (9 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXepkIWPhFQ> How to make filthy water drinkable (9 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0yGdNEWdn0> How to learn any language in 6 months (20 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WLHr1_EVtQ Five techniques to learn any language (15 min)

Some useful websites

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRp6seV9pYs> China's tortured beauty (15 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfq000AF1i8> The story of cosmetics (10 min)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=61leKGVAomo> Animal laboratory (14 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58y7LB_ef74 Animal testing (20 min)

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=3026> 7 habits of mindful eating (4 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRFIpDURN0E> Dr. Oz mindful eating (5 min)

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2343> Food safety (18 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YkNkscBEp0> What's wrong with what we eat (20 min)

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2699> Barefoot college (19 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYwTA5RA9eU> Why MOOC matters (16 min)

Use of jigsaw to motivate learners

- Cooperative learning techniques
- Team work
- Increases student participation
- Less threatening for some students
- Reduces competitiveness in the initial stage
- Reduces the teacher's dominance in the classroom
- Individual and group performance
- Integrated listening, speaking, retelling and paraphrasing
- Interesting, relevant and fun

Worksheets

- Expressing Opinions
- Agreeing
- Disagreeing
- Interrupting

100 phrases

25 phrases in each worksheet

- Tone & Body language – Use of pictures and videos
- Board game
- Fun Games

Assessment Rubrics

- Assessment Rubric for Expressing Opinion
- Assessment Rubric for Expressing Agreement
- Assessment Rubric for Expressing Disagreement
- Assessment Rubric for Expressing Interruption
- Assessment Rubric for Expressing Body language
- Final Assessment Rubric
- Group Discussion Assessment Rubric

Discussion Pragmatics Assessment Rubric

Expressing Opinions

Name:	Always	Often	Seldom	Rarely
Able to express opinions clearly				
Uses appropriate phrases				
Uses correct grammar				
Word choice is appropriate				
Tone is appropriate				
Score ____ / 20 ____ %				

Discussion Pragmatics Assessment Rubric

Expressing Agreement

Name:	Always	Often	Seldom	Rarely
Able to express opinions clearly				
Uses appropriate phrases				
Uses correct grammar				
Word choice is appropriate				
Tone is appropriate				
Score ____ / <u>20</u> ____%				

Discussion Pragmatics Assessment Rubric

Expressing Disagreement

Name:	Always	Often	Seldom	Rarely
Able to express opinions clearly				
Uses appropriate phrases				
Uses correct grammar				
Word choice is appropriate				
Tone is appropriate				
Score ____ / <u>20</u> ____ %				

Discussion Pragmatics Assessment Rubric

Expressing Interruption

Name:	Always	Often	Seldom	Rarely
Able to express opinions clearly				
Uses appropriate phrases				
Uses correct grammar				
Word choice is appropriate				
Tone is appropriate				
Score ____ / <u>20</u> ____%				

Discussion Pragmatics Assessment Rubric

Expressing Body Language

Name:	Always	Often	Seldom	Rarely
Use appropriate body language				
Uses appropriate facial expression				
Uses appropriate hand gestures				
Able to maintain eye contact				
Tone is appropriate				
Score ____ / <u>20</u> ____ %				

Discussion Pragmatics Assessment Rubric

Express Opinions	Agree	Disagree	Interrupt	Body Language	Score & Comments
					____ / <u>20</u> ____ %

Discussion Pragmatics Final Assessment Rubric

5 – Excellent 3 – Fair 1 – Needs improvement	N A M E																		
Takes initiative to participate in the discussion																			
Expresses opinions clearly and confidently																			
Expresses agreement and disagreement																			
Able to interrupt politely																			
Flexibly uses a wide range of vocabulary																			
Demonstrates good grammatical range and accuracy																			
Has a clear voice and precise pronunciation																			
Able to maintain eye contact																			
Thinks critically and makes relevant contribution to the discussion																			
Takes turns, listens to others, and respects others' opinions																			
TOTAL																			

25 PHRASES FOR EXPRESSING OPINIONS

I think....

I feel....

I guess....

In my view....

In my eyes....

From my perspective....

From my view point....

Personally, I think....

What I mean is....

Some people say that....

It is generally accepted that....

It goes without saying that....

I'm of the opinion that....

I believe....

I suppose....

According to me....

In my opinion....

It seems to me that....

From my point of view....

As far as I'm concerned....

I'd like to point out that....

Generally it is thought that....

Well, it is considered that....

My impression is that....

I hold the view that....

25 PHRASES FOR EXPRESSING AGREEMENT

I agree....

Definitely....

Absolutely....

I see your point....

I'd go along with that view to a point... Sure, that's one way of looking at it....

I have to side with you on this one.... I suppose so....

I think so too....

That's a good point....

You're right, that's a good point.... Actually, I think you're right....

That's true.... Well, I agree with you here....

You have my full agreement.... I second that....

Ok, that's convincing.... I take your word on it....

You took the words right out of my mouth...

25 PHRASES FOR EXPRESSING DISAGREEMENT

I see your point, but....

That's one way of looking at it, however....

Well, I see things rather differently....

I'm not sure I go along with that view....

I agree up to a point, but....

I wouldn't quite put it that way myself....

I can't/ couldn't go along with that....

You've got to be kidding....

I find that very difficult to accept....

Not necessarily....

There is no way I could agree with that....

No, I'm not sure about that because....

We don't seem to be in complete agreement....

I see what you are getting at, but....

I completely disagree....

Umm, I'm not sure about that....

I don't really agree with that idea....

You could say that, however....

I still have my doubts....

That's out of question....

Well, I don't quite agree with you....

We don't seem to agree here....

That's not always true....

I don't think so....

I'm afraid, I disagree....

25 PHRASES FOR EXPRESSING INTERRUPTION

Sorry to interrupt, but....

Is it ok if I jump in for a moment....

If I may interrupt....

Do you mind if I add something....

Excuse me, but in my opinion....

Excuse me for a second, but....

Let me finish what I have to say first....

Excuse me for interrupting, but....

Well, that reminds me that....

I don't mean to intrude, but....

Sorry, but can you let me finish....

Before you go on, I'd like to say something....

Before you move on, I'd like to say something....

Just a moment, I like to add something here....

Can I add something here....

If I might add something....

Can I throw my two cents in....

Umm, well not really....

Are you telling that....

Sorry, but I'm not done yet....

May I say something here....

Sorry to cut you off, but....

So, you're telling me....

Well, if that is the case....

Wait a minute....

Start	Chocolate is good	Online banking	Tea	Fast food
	We pay a lot of taxes	Vacation in Paris		Go back 2
	No homework on weekends	Tests are good		Running is better than walking
				Coffee is best
	Books is better than E Reader	Credit card or cash	Online education	Snow or rain
	Action movies or comedy			Audi or Porsche
	Online dating	Go Ahead 2		Bottled water is better
	Capital punishment			English is easy
	Reading	Essay	Gambling	Canada

• Roll the dice.
• Talk on the given topic
• Your partner can agree or disagree with you

HAVE FUN ☺

					Watching movies in theatre	IQ EQ	Tattoos are cool	Politics is dirty
					Trade places			Marriage Vs Live in relationship
Sports	Love	Sports cars are best	Cosmetic surgery is popular	Air traveling is risky	Soccer Vs Basketball			Drinking and driving
Living in a city is better								Go Ahead 2
Child marriage					Go Back 1	Money or job satisfaction	Win or lose	iPhone
Trade Places					Video games addiction			Accounting Vs Marketing
Healthy eating					World poverty		Free Q	MISS A TURN
Speaking					GO BACK 2	Facebook or twitter	Best gift	END

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