
The Role of Pragmatic Instruction in Developing Reading Comprehension of Efl Students

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Abstract: This study investigates the role of pragmatic instruction in enhancing reading comprehension among B1-level EFL university students. The research focuses on how teaching pragmatic features such as implicature, speech acts, and contextual meaning supports learners' understanding of written texts. The findings indicate that pragmatic instruction positively influences reading comprehension by improving learners' ability to infer implied meanings and interpret contextual clues. The study highlights the pedagogical value of integrating pragmatics into EFL reading instruction at the university level.

Keys words: EFL reading, pragmatics, reading comprehension, B1 learners, pragmatic instruction

Introduction. Reading comprehension is a crucial skill in foreign language learning, particularly in academic contexts where learners are required to interpret texts critically. Many EFL learners face difficulties in understanding texts not because of limited vocabulary or grammar knowledge, but due to an inability to interpret implied meanings. This challenge is closely related to insufficient pragmatic competence. Pragmatics deals with language use in context and focuses on how meaning is constructed beyond literal interpretation. In reading, pragmatic competence enables learners to understand implied meanings, author intentions, and contextual references. However, traditional EFL reading instruction often emphasizes linguistic aspects while overlooking pragmatic features. Despite growing interest in reading strategies in EFL research, the role of pragmatic instruction in developing reading comprehension has not been sufficiently explored, particularly among B1-level university students. Therefore, this study aims to examine the importance of pragmatic instruction in enhancing EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Main Body. Pragmatics plays a significant role in reading comprehension as it enables learners to interpret meaning in context. According to Levinson (1983), pragmatic competence allows language users to infer intended meanings by considering contextual and cultural factors. In reading, this competence helps learners understand implied meanings, presuppositions, and discourse intentions that are not directly stated in the text. One of the key pragmatic concepts relevant to reading comprehension is Grice's (1975) theory of implicature. Implicature explains how readers infer unstated meanings based on shared assumptions and cooperative principles. EFL learners who lack awareness of implicature often struggle to interpret indirect meanings, irony, or implied opinions in texts. Therefore, explicit instruction in pragmatic features can enhance learners' inferencing skills during reading. Previous studies on instructed pragmatics suggest that teaching pragmatic elements improves learners' ability to interpret contextual meaning. Taguchi (2015) notes that pragmatic instruction raises learners' awareness of how meaning is shaped by context. When pragmatic features such as speech acts, implicature, and

contextual clues are integrated into reading instruction, learners become more active and strategic readers. In the present study, pragmatic-based reading instruction was implemented to examine its effect on B1-level EFL students' reading comprehension. The findings revealed that learners who received pragmatic instruction demonstrated improved ability to infer implied meanings and understand contextual information in written texts. Compared to traditional reading instruction, pragmatic-based teaching encouraged deeper text interpretation and greater engagement with meaning beyond the surface level. The results confirm that pragmatic instruction contributes significantly to the development of reading comprehension. By focusing on contextual meaning and pragmatic inference, learners are better equipped to interpret authentic texts and academic discourse. These findings support the view that pragmatic competence is an essential component of successful reading comprehension in EFL contexts.

Conclusion. This study explored the role of pragmatic instruction in developing reading comprehension among B1-level EFL university students. The findings indicate that integrating pragmatic elements into reading instruction enhances learners' ability to interpret implied meanings and contextual cues in written texts. From a pedagogical perspective, the study suggests that EFL teachers should incorporate pragmatic-based activities into reading lessons to improve learners' overall comprehension skills. Future research may investigate the effects of pragmatic instruction at different proficiency levels and in other language skills.

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