DEVELOPING COGNITIVE-PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF FUTURE ENGLISH TEACHERS THROUGH SCENARIO-BASED SPEECH ACT INSTRUCTION

Shukurov U.B.
PhD, SamSIFL
uktam_bs@samdchti.uz
Kaliya Kiyasova
Associate Professor, Uzbekali Zhanibekov
South Kazakhstan Pedagogical University, Kazakhstan

Abstract. This article examines the role of scenario-based speech act instruction in developing the cognitive-pragmatic competence of future English teachers. Cognitive-pragmatic competence is understood as the ability to interpret communicative intention, evaluate contextual factors, select appropriate language forms, and reflect on the social consequences of utterances. In EFL teacher education, this competence is especially important because future teachers are expected not only to communicate appropriately in English but also to teach learners how meaning changes according to context, relationship, purpose, politeness, and cultural expectations. The article proposes the use of discourse completion tasks, role-play, pragmatic noticing, contextual analysis, and reflective evaluation as effective classroom techniques. It is argued that scenario-based instruction can help future English teachers connect linguistic knowledge with cognitive interpretation and pragmatic decision-making.

Keywords: cognitive-pragmatic competence, future English teachers, speech acts, pragmatic awareness, EFL methodology, teacher education.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada bo‘lajak ingliz tili o‘qituvchilarining kognitiv-pragmatik kompetensiyasini rivojlantirishda vaziyatga asoslangan nutq aktlari ta’limining o‘rni tahlil qilinadi. Kognitiv-pragmatik kompetensiya kommunikativ niyatni anglash, kontekst omillarini baholash, mos til birliklarini tanlash va nutqiy harakatlarning ijtimoiy natijalarini tushunish qobiliyati sifatida izohlanadi. Ingliz tili o‘qituvchilarini tayyorlash jarayonida bu kompetensiya alohida ahamiyatga ega, chunki bo‘lajak o‘qituvchilar nafaqat ingliz tilida mos muloqot qila olishlari, balki o‘quvchilarga ma’noning kontekst, munosabat, maqsad, xushmuomalalik va madaniy me’yorlarga ko‘ra o‘zgarishini ham o‘rgatishlari kerak. Maqolada diskursni yakunlash topshiriqlari, rolli o‘yinlar, pragmatik kuzatish, kontekstual tahlil va reflektiv baholash kabi metodlardan foydalanish taklif etiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: kognitiv-pragmatik kompetensiya, bo‘lajak ingliz tili o‘qituvchilari, nutq aktlari, pragmatik anglash, ingliz tilini o‘qitish metodikasi, o‘qituvchi tayyorlash.

Modern English language teaching requires more than grammatical accuracy and vocabulary knowledge. Future English teachers need to understand how speakers use language to perform social and communicative actions such as requesting, refusing, apologizing, disagreeing, complimenting, suggesting, and giving feedback. These actions are not interpreted only through words. They depend on context, speaker intention, social distance, power relations, cultural expectations, and the listener’s inferential ability. For this reason, the development of cognitive-pragmatic competence should become an essential component of English teacher education.

Cognitive-pragmatic competence may be defined as the ability to process language in relation to communicative intention and social context. A student with this competence can

understand not only what is said but also what is meant, why it is said in a particular way, and how the listener may interpret it. In the preparation of future English teachers, this competence has a double function. First, it improves their own communicative performance in English. Second, it prepares them to teach pragmatic meaning to their future learners. Therefore, cognitive-pragmatic competence should be formed through systematic, practice-oriented, and reflective activities.

One of the most effective ways to develop this competence is scenario-based speech act instruction. Speech acts such as requests, apologies, refusals, invitations, suggestions, and disagreements are closely connected with real-life communication. They allow students to understand how linguistic forms change according to the situation. For example, the expression "Open the window" may sound acceptable in one context but too direct or impolite in another. A more appropriate form, such as "Could you please open the window?" may be necessary when the speaker wants to show politeness or respect. Through such examples, future teachers begin to understand that pragmatic meaning is not fixed in words alone but is created through interaction between language, context, and intention.

Scenario-based instruction helps future English teachers analyze communicative situations in a structured way. Students may be asked to consider who is speaking, who is listening, what their relationship is, what the purpose of communication is, and what social or cultural expectations are present. For example, asking a close friend for help differs from asking a professor for an extension. Refusing an invitation from a classmate differs from refusing a request from a department head. These differences require different pragmatic strategies. By analyzing such situations, students develop the ability to make conscious communicative choices.

Discourse completion tasks are useful for this purpose. In such tasks, students are given a short situation and asked to produce an appropriate response. For instance, they may be asked to apologize to a teacher for submitting an assignment late, refuse a friend's invitation, or ask a senior colleague for advice. After writing their responses, students compare different versions and discuss which ones are more appropriate. This process develops pragmatic awareness because students learn to notice directness, politeness, formality, indirectness, and contextual suitability.

Role-play is another important technique. Unlike written tasks, role-play requires immediate reaction and interaction. It helps students practice pragmatic decision-making in real time. For example, one student may act as a teacher and another as a student who has not completed homework. The "teacher" must respond appropriately, using language that is clear, polite, and pedagogically effective. After the role-play, the class can discuss whether the language used was too direct, too soft, unclear, or suitable for the situation. This type of reflection is important for future teachers because classroom communication often requires sensitive pragmatic choices.

Pragmatic noticing also plays an essential role in the development of cognitive-pragmatic competence. Students need to observe how native and proficient speakers express meaning in authentic or semi-authentic contexts. Short dialogues, film extracts, classroom interaction samples, emails, and academic discussions can be used for this purpose. Students can identify expressions of politeness, disagreement, encouragement, hesitation, repair, and indirect meaning. Through noticing, they begin to understand pragmatic features as teachable elements of English.

Reflective evaluation is necessary because future teachers must learn not only to use pragmatic forms but also to explain and assess them. Students can evaluate their own and their peers' responses using criteria such as appropriateness, clarity of intention, politeness strategy,

contextual relevance, and possible listener interpretation. Such evaluation develops professional awareness and prepares future teachers to design classroom activities that include pragmatic aims.

The proposed approach is especially relevant for EFL contexts where learners may have limited contact with authentic English communication. In such contexts, students often learn grammar and vocabulary but have fewer opportunities to practice how English is used in real social situations. Scenario-based speech act instruction can reduce this gap by bringing communicative situations into the classroom. It allows future teachers to experience, analyze, and teach pragmatic meaning in a controlled but realistic way.

Thus, scenario-based speech act instruction can be considered an effective method for developing the cognitive-pragmatic competence of future English teachers. It connects language form with communicative function, encourages contextual thinking, develops pragmatic awareness, and strengthens pedagogical reflection. For English teacher education programs, this approach can contribute to preparing teachers who are able to communicate appropriately and teach English as a socially meaningful form of interaction.

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