

The Case Study of Pragmatic Failure in Second Language of Pakistani Students

Muhammad Asif¹, Zhiyong Deng², Zahoor Hussain³ & Samma Faiz Rasool⁴

¹ PhD Scholar, School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai University, China

² Vice Dean, School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai University, China

³ BZU Bahadur Campus Layyah, Pakistan

⁴ Postdoctoral Station of Statistical, School of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Institute, Guangzhou University, China

Correspondence: Muhammad Asif, PhD Scholar, School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai University, China.
E-mail: asif.vu12@gmail.com

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Abstract

The current study explores the pragmatic failure in the second language (L2) of Pakistani learners at the graduate level. Pragmatic failure occurs mainly because of the lack of the cultural awareness and knowledge, and it offers an angle for the discussion in this study. However, the development of L2 learners' pragmatic competence plays a significant role in accomplishment of communicative competence. This study was aimed to examine the relationship between pragmatics and language proficiency. The data were selected from two universities, i.e., University of Management and Technology, Lahore, and Minhaj University Lahore. The sample of 80 L2 learners participated in this study, and forty students were selected from each university. They were studying English as L2 for four years, respectively. All learners were Urdu speakers and their age ranged from 22 to 28. To assess participants' language proficiency, Oxford Quick Placement Test (1999) was employed. The data were analyzed through the SPSS software (version 22) to answer the research questions. The descriptive analysis is utilized to find out the results. In order to evaluate the data, One Way ANOVA was run to see the level of significance among the three groups, i.e., High, Mid and Low. It is 0.445 between High and Mid group, and finally the level of significance between Low and Mid group is 0.001. The results reveal that L2 Pakistani learners have a lot of problems not only in pragmatic competence but in language proficiency as well. However, there is a significant relationship between pragmatics and language proficiency. And finally, it is found that there is no difference between male and female learners in pragmatic field, and eventually we came to this conclusion that pragmatic feature of English is predictable, namely, those students who are in a high level of language proficiency do better in pragmatic situations.

Keywords: pragmatic failure, pragmatic competence, language proficiency, L1, L2

1. Introduction

To satisfy the need of social development, the focus of English language teaching has shifted to cultivate learner's communicative competence. Pragmatic competence is an important component of communicative competence and it is defined by Thomas (1983) "the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and understand language in context". Pragmatic competence is concerned with the ability to apply the knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of the language. Traditional English teaching and learning has laid much emphasis on grammatically correct sentences and largely ignored the cultivation of students' pragmatic competence the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and understand language in context, which lead to L2 learners' pragmatic failure in intercultural communication. The study of pragmatic failure can be traced back to the mid of 1980's and subsequently many scholars (Canale, Swain, & Thomas) have turned their attention to this field. However, there are still some identifiable gaps. Pragmatic failure also occurs at the level of nonverbal communication. However, there are few studies (Thomas 1983; Beebe & Takahashi, 1989; Kasanga, 2001) that have ever investigated learners' pragmatic failure in nonverbal communication. The few researchers have taken the investigation to make a comparison between

those who have learned the course of intercultural communication and those who have not since cultural knowledge plays a vital role in improving the learners' pragmatic competence. The previous studies usually require the subjects to take a written test to examine their pragmatic failure, which cannot totally reflect the learners' pragmatic competence in real context.

Thomas (1983) defines pragmatic failure as "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said". She indicates that pragmatic failure has occurred on any occasion "On which H (the hearer) perceives the force of S's (the speaker's) utterance as other than S intended she or he should perceive it" (p. 94). Thomas used the following examples:

- a. H perceives the force of S's utterance stronger or weaker than S intended s/he should perceive it;
- b. H perceives as an order an utterance that S intended s/he should perceive as a request;
- c. H perceives S's utterance as ambivalent where S intended no ambivalence;
- d. S expects H to be able to infer the force of his/her utterance, but is relying on the system of knowledge or beliefs that S and H do not share." (1983, p. 94)

The main objectives of this study are discovering pragmatic failure, and finding out the relationship between pragmatic competence and second language learning. It is striving to respond to the question that if those learners who are competent in language proficiency have this ability to deal with pragmatic issues, or being linguistically competent guarantees coping with pragmatic problems. On the other hand, pragmatic awareness is explicit, reflective and conscious knowledge about pragmatics. It is defined as "the conscious, explicit knowledge about pragmatics, or the rules and conventions underlying appropriate language use in particular communicative situations and on the part of members of specific speech communities" (Alcon & Jorda, 2008, p. 193). The following research questions are observed for this study:

- How is the performance of L2 learners in pragmatic situations?
- Is there any gender difference regarding the use of pragmatic features of English?
- What is the association between pragmatic features and proficiency of English?

Learning to use language accurately (grammatical accuracy) as well as appropriately (pragmatic appropriacy) is a must. Pragmatic appropriacy and linguistic accuracy are two wings of language learning in which absence of one make the flying impossible. It is presumably possible to produce pure correct language in terms of grammatical accuracy, but it makes no sense without considering pragmatic appropriacy and it makes communicative barriers in the process of language learning. Fraser (1983) claims a theory of linguistic communication, "any effects beyond the successful recognition of the speaker's intentions, such as convincing, annoying, or confusing the hearer, are not part of communication but the result of communication or perhaps the result of failure to communicate" (p. 83). Fraser (1983) describes that "pragmatic failure to the inability to understand what is meant by what is said". Pragmatic failure is a sub branch of cross-cultural pragmatics which has grown tremendously in last twenty years. The main focus of pragmatics is on language users the choice they make, kinds of words regarding sociolinguistic competence, the effect the language has on the other participants in the process of communication and the like. Thomas (2014) believes that pragmatics is meaning in interaction. He holds that pragmatics is concerned with the negotiation of meaning between the participants, the context in which the utterance is taking place, whether it is physical, social, linguistic or potential meaning of utterance. LoCastero (2013) views language as an attempt to create meaning in a joint action by the speaker and the hearer. Pragmatics is also the study of implicit sense/meaning. The speakers have a presupposition in their mind to assume that there is a great deal of information shared between the participants.

2. Literature Review

Pragmatic failure is triggered by the learner's lack of awareness of the differences between his/her culture and that of the language he or she is learning. Fluency in a second language does not necessarily guarantee appropriate linguistic behavior. Cultural diversity realized in linguistic behavior raises questions such as whose culture should determine behavior. In instances where the learner uses speech act strategies from his L1, for example 'I want a pen' instead of 'Can I have a pen please' there is bound to be pragmatic failure of some kind. It would appear as if the learner's culture is pragmatically inadequate to deal with situations that require the use of 'Can I VP' speech act. This is not the case however, since principles are said to be universal across cultures. Pragmalinguistic failure occurs as a result of mismatch of pragmatic force or transfer of L1 speech strategies into L2. Learners need to know that pragmatic competence is as important a part of language learning as grammatical competence. L1 interference is the main source of pragmalinguistic failure.

As Thomas (2014) argues that it is worth to say that a great deal of misunderstanding is not because we do not hear the speaker or his words are not grammatical, but it is the inability to comprehend ‘what is meant by what is said’, Thomas (2014) exploited the term ‘pragmatic failure’. It is pragmatic failure which leads to cross-cultural communication failure, thus it seems essential to investigate the causes of pragmatic failure and seek for the ways to avoid them by choosing unwise linguistic forms for not to be offended or make a hindrance in the process of communication. Leech (2014) classifies general pragmatics into pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. He describes “pragmalinguistics is related to grammar” while “sociopragmatics is related to sociology”. In other words, “pragmalinguistic studies are language-specific” while “sociopragmatic studies are culture-specific” (pp. 65–66). Pragmalinguistics concerns with the conveying communicative acts and interpersonal meaning. The relationship that holds between both, language and culture is depicted. Leech (2014) describes pragmatics as “the study of linguistic communication in terms of conversational principles”, whereas sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics relate to “more specific local conditions of language use” (p. 56). Grice’s (1975) cooperative principles are based on four maxims, i.e., quality, quantity, manner, and relation. These maxims are the most important principles in the pragmatics. People usually express their meanings and implicit connotation of their statements by following certain maxims. Consequently, all things being identical, conversations are cooperative endeavors which are based on a standard ground and track a communal determination. In pragmatics, the foremost purpose of communication is considered to be the interchange of information.

It is perhaps necessary to point out that just as there is a lot of over lapping in various theories of language, terminology also overlaps a great deal. A common term may be used by different theorists to refer to (slightly) different concepts. One such term is ‘linguistic competence’. Thomas (1983) refers to the speaker’s linguistic competence as comprising of both grammatical and pragmatic competence. Widdowson (1984, p. 229) described Chomsky’s linguistic competence as ‘the language user’s knowledge of rules for the composition of sentences’. Thomas (1913) defines pragmatic competence as the speaker’s ability to use language appropriately and to understand language in context. Pragmatic competence is to communicative competence what grammatical competence is to linguistic competence. It is easier to explain pragmatic competence by contrasting it with grammatical competence. The distinction between grammar and pragmatics is the central point to works such as that of Leech (2014): principle of pragmatics. Hymes (1972) argued that the well formedness of sentences depend on their being appropriate on the context of their occurrences. The speaker’s competence should therefore comprise both the knowledge of the rules of syntax and the ability to use and understand language in ‘distinct social settings’ (pp. 53–73). It is important that learners should use the language appropriately in ‘distinct social settings’. The fact that pragmatic competence is based on a subject governed by social rather than linguistic factors makes it difficult for the theorists to lay down strict, rigid systematic rules for pragmatic competence. The learner’s pragmatic competence in a second language will enable him/her to use language appropriately as situations demand, and also to understand language in use.

Bachman and Palmer’s model is more comprehensive than the model of Canale and Swain (1980, 1983). It is based on components of communicative competence. The differences and similarities in the componential structure of the given models of communicative competence are described respectively. The current study examines the language knowledge and pragmatic knowledge of the Pakistani learners at graduate level.

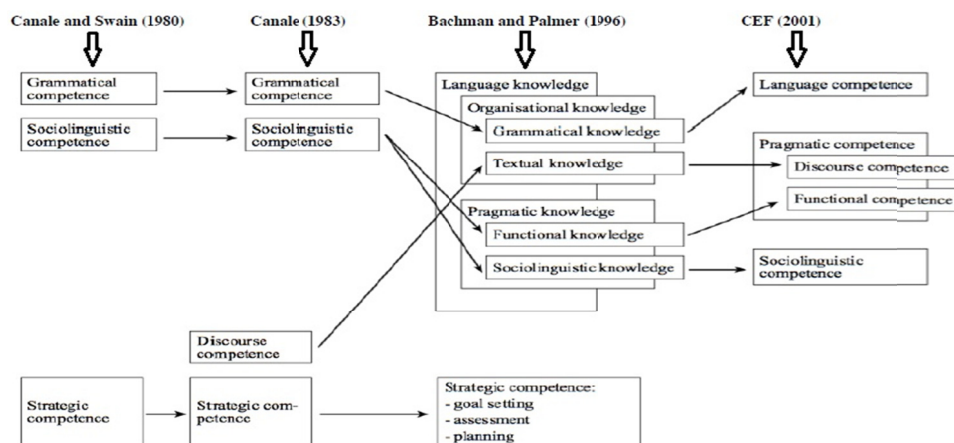


Figure 1. Description of different models of communicative competence

Source: Master Thesis, Entitled: THE EFFECTS OF PRAGMATIC FAILURE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFL LEARNERS' COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE by Rahmani Bacher (2016), retrieved from <http://dspace.univbiskra.dz:8080/jspui/bitstream/123456789/9955/1/BACHER%20Rahmani%202017.pdf> (p. 33).

Adaskou et al. (1990) argues that there has been a large number body of studies regarding pragmatics in the field of applied linguistics during the last four or five decades. In the last decade, the works of some scholars such as Kramsch (1988) indicate the close relationship between L2 teaching and pragmatics. Some studies suggest that participants, who had higher language performance, completed the pragmatic tests much better comparing low language proficiency participants in ESL contexts. Spencer (2004) describes that a good level of language proficiency may not guarantee a good level of pragmatic competence for “The disparity between learner’s and NS’s pragmatic competence may be attributed to two key factors related to input and the salience of relevant linguistic features in the input from the point of view of the learner”. Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1998) suggest two reasons: “The disparity between non-native and native learner’s pragmatic competence may be attributed to two key factors related to input and the salience of relevant linguistic features in the input from the point of view of the learners” (p. 224).

3. Research Design

The data were selected from two universities, i.e., University of Management and Technology, Lahore, and Minhaj University Lahore. The sample of 80 L2 learners participated in this study, and 40 students were selected from each university. They were studying English as L2 for four years, respectively. All the learners were Urdu speakers and their age ranged from 22 to 28. However, no one had visited any English-speaking country. They were expected to present themselves proficient in language skills. The instruments utilized were comprised of two parts; a language a pragmatic awareness quiz and proficiency test. In order to examine participants’ pragmatic knowledge, a pragmatic awareness quiz was employed. This quiz was based on different situations. The sample of the quiz (graduate students) is given below:

Situation	Statement	Select the correct option
You are now shopping in a department store. You see a beautiful suit and want to see it. You ask the salesperson to show you the suit.	You tell the salesperson: <i>Lady, I'd like to have a look at that suit. Would you please do me a favor?</i>	Appropriate
		Inappropriate
		Very appropriate
		Very inappropriate
While traveling, John put a heavy bag on the bus shelf. The bus stopped suddenly and the bag fell on a passenger.	The passenger: <i>Oh, my god! What is that?</i> John: <i>It is my bag. It's all right.</i> How appropriate do you think the reply from Mary was?	Appropriate
		Inappropriate
		Very appropriate
		Very inappropriate
A university student borrowed his teacher's book and promised to return it that day. When he reached the university, he discovered that he had left the book at home.	The teacher: <i>Have you brought the book?</i> The student: <i>Sorry, I forgot. Don't worry. I will bring it tomorrow.</i> Question: How appropriate do you think the reply from the student?	Appropriate
		Inappropriate
		Very appropriate
		Very inappropriate

Figure 2. Description of sample for graduate students

The English language proficiency test with 60 items was administered to collect data. These items were based on multiple choice questions. The purpose of the pragmatic awareness quiz is to elicit participants’ pragmatic awareness to evaluate the level of their pragmatic knowledge and to know how much they have acquired pragmatics during their academic studies. Our notion of pragmatic awareness is different in that it involves the learner’s not only ‘understanding’ but also explicating use of pragmatic features of English and proficiency of

English. As such, pragmatic awareness requires not only metalinguistic competence, but metapragmatic and metacognitive abilities too. In this respect, pragmatic awareness was measured by assessing learners' pragmatic competence and language proficiency. Schmidt (1995) defined pragmatic awareness "In pragmatics, awareness that on a particular occasion someone says to their interlocutor something like, I'm terribly sorry to bother you, but if you have time could you look at this problem? is a matter of noticing. Relating the various forms used to their strategic deployment in the service of politeness and recognizing their co-occurrence with elements of context such as social distance, power, level of imposition and so on, are all matters of understanding" (p. 30).

To assess participants' language proficiency, Oxford Quick Placement Test (1999) was employed. It was a 40-item multiple-choice test consisting of three sections: Reading with fill in the blanks (25 items), Grammar (10 items) and Vocabulary (20 items) and language use (5 items). The reading Section assesses students' ability to fill in the blanks with suitable words. The grammar section assesses students' grammatical knowledge and asks them to choose the item which is grammatically correct. The purpose of the vocabulary section is to assess the students' range of vocabulary understanding. Since this is a standard test and is used in language institutes to assess students' level of language proficiency, and its validity and reliability have already been established by Oxford University, we considered a good choice to utilize it.

The data were gathered over four weeks during the fall semester 2017–2018. The nature of the test was explained to participants of the study on the exam session. Moreover, the participants were guaranteed on the concealment of the results and the advantage of their contributions to this study. On the exam session, half of the participants were given pragmatic quizzes and at the same time, the other half were given the language proficiency tests. The instructions were given in each section, i.e., the pragmatic quiz and language proficiency test. The students were asked to complete both of the sections within given time. The exam sessions were observed and the participants' possible questions were answered.

The data were analyzed through the following statistical procedures through SPSS software (version 22) to response the research questions. The descriptive analysis is utilized to find out the results. In order to evaluate the data, One Way ANOVA was run to see the level of significance among the three groups, i.e., High, Mid and Low. ANOVA is used when we test the significance and mean value of three or more groups at once. The Independent Sample test is utilized when there are two separate groups of individuals design (e.g.: experimental vs control group: male vs female). It is used to evaluate the difference between two variables. In this study, Independent Sample test was used to measure the difference of males and females in the use of pragmatic features of English. To find out whether pragmatic features of English were predictable by language proficiency test, regression test was employed. Regression is utilized to explore the association between independent and dependent variable. The regression statistics is utilized to predict the independent variable when the dependent variable is identified. All these constituted the quantitative part of the analysis.

4. Findings

Results of the analysis of the data along with their interpretation and discussion are presented in this section, which is divided into two main parts. The first part deals with the quantitative analysis of the data, the tables and their interpretations, and in the second part discussions of the data analyses are presented. The first research question refers to performance of L2 participants in pragmatic issues in which descriptive analysis was used. The participants' scores on pragmatics are presented in Table 1, containing mean, minimum, and maximum of participants.

Table 1. Descriptive statistic results of the participants' pragmatic performance

Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Mean
Pragmatic test 60	80	15	30	20.05

The Table 1 specifies that the number of the participants is 80, the minimum achieved score is 15, the maximum score is 30, and the mean value is 20.05. Since pragmatic quiz consists of 60 items, the achieved mean value (20.05) of the participants is less than the total half.

Table 2. Correlation between pragmatics and linguistic knowledge

Correlation			
Placement Test (40)	Pearson Correlation	Placement Test (40)	Pragmatic Test (60)
	.501**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80
Pragmatic Test (60)	Pearson Correlation	1	.501**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80

Second research question is comprised with the association between language proficiency and knowledge of pragmatic features of English. Table 2 presents the association between language proficiency and pragmatics. It is observed that the Pearson correlation between pragmatic quiz and language proficiency is 0.501.

Table 3. ANOVA result of relationship between pragmatics and language proficiency.

	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	257.216	128.608	11.970	.000
Within Groups	612.434	10.744		

Table 3 describes the results achieved by On Way ANOVA test. It exposes that the level of significance between pragmatic and language proficiency quiz is 0.000.

Table 4. Multiple comparisons of three different groups of pragmatics

	Group 1	Group 2	Mean difference	Sig.
Scheffe	High	Mid	1.204	.413
		Low	5.156*	.000
	Mid	High	1.232	.445
		Low	3.689*	.001
	Low	High	5.456*	.000
		Mid	3.689*	.001

Table 4 indicates the multiple comparisons of the participants in pragmatics. We divided them into three groups as High, Mid, and Low. The level of significance between High and Low group is 0.000. It is 0.445 between High and Mid group, and finally the level of significance between Low and Mid is 0.001.

The third research question concerns the gender difference with regard to the usage of pragmatic features of English. The results are shown in the Table 5.

Table 5. Gender difference regarding the pragmatic features of English

Group Statistics				
Pragmatic test 40	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Male	50	19.43	4.540
	Female	30	18.78	4.001

Table 5 represents the gender difference regarding the use of pragmatic features of English. It is observed that numbers of male and female participants are 50 and 30, respectively. Their mean scores achieved are 19.43 for the males and 18.78 for the females.

Table 6. Independent sample test for gender difference regarding use of pragmatics

Independent Samples Test		t-test for Equality of Means						
		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Pragmatic test 60	Equal variance assumed	.623	53	.516	-.621	1.001	-2.560	1.35
	Equal variances not assumed	656	54.431	.567	.621	1.009	-2.545	1.37

Independent Sample test was used to see if the males and the females differ concerning the use of pragmatic features of English. It is observed from the Table 6, the levels of significance between the male and the female are 0.516 and 0.567.

Table 7. Correlation between language proficiency and pragmatics

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.521a	.244	.243	3.340

a. Predictors: (Constant), Placement test 40

Regression test was conducted to see if it is possible to predict pragmatic features with a language proficiency test. Table 7 shows the descriptive analysis of the regression test. As it is demonstrated, the R is 0.521 and R square or correlation coefficient is 0.244.

Table 8. Predictions of pragmatic features by linguistic knowledge test

ANOVA b						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	202.491	1	222.510	19.654	.000a
	Residual	634.210	58	11.145		
	Total	824.480	59			

The main statistical data concerning the subjects' results in the language proficiency test and the pragmatic quiz are represented in Table 8. It shows the achieved results by ANOVA test. It is observed the significance is 0.000.

In order to answer the research question one, which is how the performance of L2 students is in pragmatic situations, the descriptive statistics was used. As can be seen from the Table 1, the pragmatic knowledge test yielded lower scores than it was expected. The maximum obtained score was 15 and the minimum achieved score was 20 out of 60. And considering mean score which is 20.05, it is drastically low, and since the participants' mean score is less than the total half, it indicates that L2 students are poor in pragmatic awareness.

The second question suggested what relationship there is between language proficiency and knowledge of pragmatic features of English. Regarding the results illustrated in the Table 2, we can see that the correlation between proficiency test and pragmatic knowledge test is 0.521. Table 3 shows the level of significance as is 0.000. It is observed that the correlation is moderate and it is significant as well. From Table 2, these conclusions can be drawn as follows:

- The linguistic ability of the participants is not tied inextricably with their pragmatic awareness.
- There is an association between language proficiency test and pragmatic knowledge quiz (sig: 0.000) but it is not so strong. We can say that the relationship between these two tests is moderate (correlation: 0.521).

The level of significance between Low Level and Mid-level is 0.001. It means that as the subjects go from low level to high level in language proficiency their pragmatic knowledge increases and in the same line, as the subjects go from low level to high level their pragmatic knowledge increases as well (sig, 0.000). But the difference between mid-level and high level is not significant. This indicates that there is no significant difference between these two groups (Low & Mid) as their levels of language proficiency increase; it has no effect on their pragmatic knowledge.

The third question is striving to answer the question if there is a sex difference regarding the use of pragmatic features of English. To answer this question Independent Sample t-test was employed. Table 5 demonstrates that the mean score of the males is 19.43 and the mean score of the females is 18.78 out of 40. Table 6 shows the level of significance as is 0.5. This means that there is no significant relationship between the two sexes regarding the use of pragmatic features of English. The Two groups do not differ significantly in term of their English pragmatic knowledge and both sexes did the same job in pragmatic awareness.

The fourth question is dealing with if pragmatic knowledge is predictable by a language proficiency test or not. The results reported in Tables 7 and 8 represent that the R Square which is correlation coefficient between language proficiency test and pragmatic knowledge quiz is 0.244 and the level of significance is 0.000, so it is predictable. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between these two tests, but the correlation coefficient is very low. This shows that those students who are in a higher level of language proficiency do a better job in pragmatic contexts. Namely, the higher the level of subjects' language proficiency is, the higher their pragmatic knowledge would be.

5. Conclusion

Second language teaching in Pakistan has mainly focused on the training of grammatical competence, rather than communicative competence. It results in the frequent occurrence of pragmatic failure without being realized and recognized by the students in real intercultural communication. In intercultural communication, pragmatic failure is unavoidable. Therefore, it is worth our attention to make a research into this issue. The study of pragmatic failure is of great value for both English teaching and learning. In Pakistan, English is taught as a second language and provides them less exposure to the target language culture. As a consequence, most of students; regardless of their linguistic knowledge, they end up making serious mistakes whenever they have a chance to communicate with foreigners and they fall into what we know as pragmatic failure. Additionally, students need to depend more on themselves and develop their learning autonomy, not to rely only on their teachers and classroom instruction, since the classroom instruction is too limited to teach everything. Also, the students must be more aware about the interactional norms of conducting conversations in both formal and informal settings, as well as being more open-minded to the different cultural subjects that are considered as part of the foreign language learning. Further, pragmatics, as a significant subject of study, must be taught at early educational levels and be given more time in the instructional programs for its importance in developing students' awareness in cross-cultural communication. Pragmatic failures constitute a very significant source of intercultural communication breakdown. In the past few decades, many scholars have realized the importance of studying pragmatic failure. But these researches focus only on the description of pragmatic failure or superficial explanation of the causes or just attribute the causes to cultural differences. In fact, the causes of pragmatic failure still need deep and detailed discussion from broader aspects.

Despite the importance of teaching English, its functional goals have not been achieved yet. The assumption is that there are some problems in teaching English regarding the methods employed as well as textbooks which are currently used in the country. Consequently, such problems hinder the learners to acquire, or if acquire, develop communicative abilities. The present study was an attempt to prove the existence of such problems regarding the teaching methods in particularly in Pakistani institutions. Besides, this study explored to find out if pragmatics and grammatical knowledge develop simultaneously. However, considering language as a social interaction and as an act of communication, inter language pragmatics, pragmatic awareness, and pragmatic transferability should not be neglected from the attention of linguists and/or language educators. The significant elements that affect the development of interlanguage pragmatic awareness are environment, language proficiency, length of stay, and exposure to the meaningful interaction in the target community. L2 learners who have high-proficiency made the opportunities of being exposed to the target community relatively easier than those who have low-proficiency in their L2 acquisition.

In this study, we found out that L2 students are poor in pragmatic situations. Although they have gained mastery in language proficiency, they encounter a great deal of difficulties when they are put in a pragmatic situation. We also investigated the relationship between language proficiency and pragmatics and found out that they are correlated with each other and that there is a significant relationship between language proficiency and pragmatic awareness, but this correlation is weak. We also found that there is no difference between male and female learners in pragmatic field, and eventually we came to this conclusion that pragmatic feature of English is predictable, namely, those students who are in a high level of language proficiency, do better in pragmatic situations. Apparent pragmatic non-competence may be just a transitory stage in the language learner's language. In the same way as learners learn social rules operating in the classroom, they can learn sociolinguistic rules of the target language through sufficient exposure to the language. Not every apparent pragmatic failure therefore,

should be considered damaging and hindering the learner's progress. It may be a stage that a learner goes through en route to pragmatic competence.

Finally, this paper does not suggest that the teaching of pragmatic competence can take over completely from the teaching of grammatical competence. Equal emphasis and attention should be given to both forms of competence for successful second language teaching and learning. Committing a linguistic error when interacting with native speakers, the L2 learner will only be recognized as a nonnative speaker while committing a pragmatic failure usually causes offence and reflects badly on the L2 learner as a person. The study recommends that there is a dire need to amend the materials taught as texts at all levels and there is also a room for improving the teaching techniques in the Paksitani contexts of second language acquisition for gaining better proficiency. The sociolinguistic aspects should be incorporated into both the syllabus and teaching and the teachers may do adaptation for better results.

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