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"ENHANCING STUDENTS' PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE THROUGH  
NEWSPAPER ARTICLES"

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the importance of developing students' pragmatic competence through the use of newspaper articles in English language teaching. Pragmatic competence refers to the ability to use language appropriately in various social and cultural contexts. Misunderstandings in communication often arise due to cultural differences, and teaching pragmatics helps students navigate such challenges effectively. Newspaper articles provide authentic, diverse, and real -life language examples, making them valuable tools for enhancing students' awareness of context-appropriate language use. By analyzing the language used in different situations within news texts, students can better understand speech acts, politeness strategies, and cultural norms, ultimately improving their intercultural communication skills.

**Keywords:** pragmatic skills, authentic materials , student, modern technologies, professional activity, parents, personality, initiative.

РАЗВИТИЕ ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ СТУДЕНТОВ С  
ПОМОЩЬЮ ГАЗЕТНЫХ СТАТЕЙ

**Аннотация:** Данная работа посвящена важности развития прагматической компетенции студентов посредством использования газетных статей в обучении английскому языку. Прагматическая компетенция — это способность использовать язык уместно в различных социальных и культурных контекстах. Недоразумения в общении часто возникают из-за культурных различий, и обучение прагматике помогает учащимся эффективно справляться с такими трудностями. Газетные статьи представляют собой аутентичные, разнообразные и основанные на реальных событиях примеры языка, что делает их ценным инструментом для повышения осведомлённости студентов об уместности языковых форм в контексте. Анализируя язык, используемый в различных ситуациях, учащиеся лучше понимают речевые акты, стратегии вежливости и культурные нормы, что способствует улучшению их межкультурной коммуникативной компетенции.

**Ключевые слова:** прагматическая компетенция, межкультурная коммуникация, обучение английскому языку, газетные статьи, аутентичные материалы, языковая осведомлённость, речевые акты, культурные различия, уместное использование языка, прагматика в образовании



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Pragmatic competence is the ability to communicate in a foreign language by focusing on meaning. It refers to the appropriate use of language, where both implicit and explicit meanings play a central role. Pragmatic competence involves understanding speech acts and speech functions, as well as using language appropriately.

Broadly speaking, learning a new language involves more than memorizing vocabulary — it requires being skilled in communication and grammatical structures. While knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is necessary for successful language learning, it is not sufficient for effective and meaningful communication. To be able to use a foreign or second language effectively, learners must not only acquire the language but also develop the ability to communicate efficiently. The positive side is that English learners need to improve their communicative competence in all aspects. In order to communicate effectively with others, language learners must be able to use the language appropriately in context; otherwise, they may encounter misunderstandings, awkward situations, or other communication problems. American methodologists emphasize the importance of teaching English as a foreign language and suggest building the learning process using authentic materials, such as audio recordings of native speakers' spoken language, video recordings of real-life communication situations categorized by topics (e.g., "At the Airport," "In a Café," "Walking Around the City," "Visiting a Museum," "Birthday Party," etc.), excerpts from feature and documentary films, transcripts of popular talk shows on American television, and reading of authentic texts and newspaper articles. Naturally, all of these educational materials should have a pragmatic orientation.

By listening to audio and watching videos, as well as reading newspapers, magazines, and literary texts, students acquire sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge. However, according to scholars, such materials should not be introduced to students right away. First, students need to become familiar with the psychological, national-cultural, and other characteristics of the American people, which requires some degree of theoretical preparation based on independent study.

In the first lesson, the teacher can ask students to find and evaluate information about the specifics of the American mentality, their communicative behavior strategies, and ways of expressing opinions (in books, magazines, newspapers, and various websites). Anything that students find interesting or unusual can be written up as a report or presentation and shared with the class. This kind of preliminary work can be done individually or in groups of 3–5 students.

After becoming familiar with some characteristics of Americans as a nation, students should be engaged in linguopragmatic activities based on the study, interpretation, and analysis of speech acts, situations, and language units used in authentic texts or real-life scenarios. One of the tasks recommended by the teacher might be: "Read the dialogue and find the pragmatic mistakes." Here's an example of such a dialogue:

A: Good morning, Aunt Elizabeth!

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B: Good morning, John!

A: How are you?

B: Well, not so good. I've been having back pain lately... You know my salary is quite low, and we barely make ends meet at the end of the month.

A: Oh, that's good. I think it's all the government's fault; the other party would do a much better job...

B: Hmm, maybe. Oh, here comes my bus. I have to go. Goodbye.

A: Hello.

Students who have a good understanding of American communication principles may identify the following common mistakes in the situation:

1. The answer to "How are you?" is translated literally, similar to the Russian response style. However, in American communication, this phrase often simply functions as a greeting and does not require a detailed or negative response.

2. In American communication, topics like finance, health, and politics are considered taboo if the speech act involves individuals who are not close relatives or friends. Bringing up such topics can make the speaker appear rude or impolite.

3. At the end of the conversation, one of the speakers says "Hello," which, in Russian culture, can also mean "Goodbye," but in English, "Hello" is used only for greetings.

4. Americans never refer to someone as "Aunt" or "Uncle" unless that person is an actual family member. Referring to a non-relative that way is culturally inappropriate.

Why do we need to study pragmatics?

It is essential to be familiar with different cultures and pragmatics to prevent misunderstandings that may arise due to cultural differences. Studying pragmatics emphasizes the appropriateness of speech in intercultural communication. Through learning pragmatics, English speakers can improve their intercultural communication competence.

The benefit of learning a language through pragmatics is that people can better express and interpret the meaning behind others' words. However, a significant challenge is that analyzing different cultures' concepts objectively can be difficult. The goal of developing pragmatic skills is not only to teach learners how to use linguistic tools correctly from the perspective of language norms but also to ensure that these tools align with the speaker's communicative intent. Based on all of this, this course paper concludes by highlighting some valuable facts about the benefits of pragmatic skills in our daily lives and exploring methods for developing these skills in students through reading newspaper articles. From this perspective, pragmatics is a broad term that encompasses the key elements of communication — from the simplest to the most complex — including linguistic, sociocultural, and linguocultural features of speech interaction.

Therefore, in recent years, both foreign language teachers and language learners themselves have come to recognize the important role of pragmatics and



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pragmatic competence in language learning. Developing and later improving pragmatic skills leads to the correct use of language in intercultural and international communication. So why can pragmatic competence be developed through newspaper articles? Because newspaper articles contain a variety of texts and real-life stories that are not limited to one specific academic field. They present different situations, which help the reader understand how certain words or expressions are appropriately used in particular contexts or conversations.

Reading newspapers increases one's knowledge and makes it easier to engage in conversations with others who frequently discuss current events and politics. As a result, reading newspaper articles helps expand a student's understanding and improves their pragmatic awareness.

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