

Teaching Turn-Taking Rules and Pragmatic Principles to Empower EFL Students and Enhance Their Learning in Speaking Modules

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Abstract : Teaching and learning EFL speaking modules is one of the most challenging productive modules for both instructors and learners. In a student-centered interactive communicative language teaching approach, learners and instructors should be aware of the fact that the target language must be taught as/for communication. The student must be empowered by tools that will work on more than one level of their communicative competence. Communicative learning will need a teaching and learning methodology that will address the goal. Teaching turn-taking rules, pragmatic principles and speech acts will enhance students' sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence together with discourse competence. Sociolinguistic competence entails the mastering of speech act conventions and illocutionary acts of refusing, agreeing/disagreeing; emotive acts like, thanking, apologizing, inviting, offering; directives like, ordering, requesting, advising, and hinting, among others. Strategic competence includes enlightening students' consciousness of the various particular turn-taking systemic rules of organizing techniques of opening and closing conversation, adjacency pairs, interrupting, back-channeling, asking for/giving opinion, agreeing/disagreeing, using natural fillers for pauses, gaps, speaker select, self-select, and silence among others. Students will have the tools to manage a conversation. Students are engaged in opportunities of experiencing the natural language not as a mere extra student talking time but rather an empowerment of knowing and using the strategies. They will have the component items they need to use as well as the opportunity to communicate in the target language using topics of their interest and choice. This enhances students' communicative abilities. Available websites and textbooks now use one or more of these tools of turn-taking or pragmatics. These will be students' support in self-study in their independent learning study hours. This will be their reinforcement practice on e-Learning interactive activities. The students' target is to be able to communicate the intended meaning to an addressee that is in turn able to infer that intended meaning. The combination of these tools will be assertive and encouraging to the student to beat the struggle with what to say, how to say it, and when to say it. Teaching the rules, principles and techniques is an act of awareness raising method engaging students in activities that will lead to their pragmatic discourse competence. The aim of the paper is to show how the suggested pragmatic model will empower students with tools and systems that would support their learning. Supporting students with turn taking rules, speech act theory, applying both to texts and practical analysis and using it in speaking classes empowers students' pragmatic discourse competence and assists them to understand language and its context. They become more spontaneous and ready to learn the discourse pragmatic dimension of the speaking techniques and suitable content. Students showed a better performance and a good motivation to learn. The model is therefore suggested for speaking modules in EFL classes.

Keywords : communicative competence, EFL, empowering learners, enhance learning, speech acts, teaching speaking, turn taking, learner centred, pragmatics

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