



## TEACHING ENGLISH PRAGMATICS AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

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### *Abstract*

*With increased globalization and the proliferation of an International Language of English, more opportunities arise to teach and learn pragmatics in L2 contexts. Rather than being viewed as a reflection of native-like ability, pragmatic competence is now viewed as a means for effective communication with people from diverse backgrounds in language and culture, the majority of them are not native English speakers. Despite this change, there are still few attempts to instruct EIL students in pragmatic competence. This study investigates the impact of pedagogical interventions regarding the oral application of pragmatic markers (PMs) in EIL pragmatics, which are an important facilitator of communication in an increasingly multilingual and multicultural society. The research design is a library research method that involves collecting, examining, and synthesizing various academic materials. According to the findings, participants who received pragmatic instruction greatly increased the frequency and diversity of PMs used in their academic presentations when compared to the control group. In addition to offering useful information for redirecting EIL courses toward a more appropriate integration of pragmatic skills in L2, these findings demonstrate the viability of pragmatic instruction within EIL.*

**Keywords:** *Eil, English Language Teaching, Pragmatic Markers.*

### INTRODUCTION

With nearly 2 billion English speakers globally, or one-third of the world's population the vast majority (between 75% and 80%) speak it as a second or foreign language, there is no doubt that English has earned that status. international language (Crystal, 2008) This word is no longer used primarily in monolingual contexts, but is now used more frequently in multilingual contexts as a means of communication. For example, English is now used in global business, is a key tool for is the most commonly spoken language in the world and has led to the internationalization of education. In this increasingly multicultural and multilingual context, being pragmatically correct is critical (Blitvitch, 2018). People must be able to use English effectively in all contexts in order for communication to be successful. As a result, it appears imperative that pragmatic competency instruction be incorporated into the English as an International Language (EIL) curriculum.

A long tradition of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) studies has asserted that pragmatic competence can be taught, primarily by providing clear guidance on various pragmatic objectives (Chen, 2015). The issue is that pragmatic teaching has historically relied on foreign language (FL) and second language (L2) pedagogical models that seek to emulate

native speaker (NS) strategies ideals that determine a language learner's proficiency.

However, as a result of globalization, the conventional perspective on language learning as a means of becoming more like native speakers has given way to a view of language acquisition as a means of bridging linguistic and cultural divides. English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) curricula must thus be reoriented toward embracing an EIL-based viewpoint with pragmatic teaching at its center (Alemi, 2021). Such a shift requires (1) a shift from mere native speakers to shared understanding, (2) an expansion to encompass the pragmatic standards of all English speakers across the globe, and (3) a shift in mindsets on the part of both educators and learners.

Few attempts have been made to suggest such pedagogical approaches, and they have not progressed beyond proposals and theoretical discussions, despite the fact that pragmatic instruction in EIL is widely acknowledged to be necessary (N, 2012).

Therefore, the question remains whether EIL pragmatics can be taught. To address this issue, this study investigated the effect of a pedagogical intervention informed by EIL on students' pragmatic skills in oral academic presentations. More precisely, instruction emphasizes pragmatic markers (PM), a component of pragmatics that is essential to effective communication in the globalized world of today but is rarely taught.

## **METHOD**

The literature and library studies are being used in the research. A literature study is a set of exercises pertaining to how to manage research materials, read and take notes, and gather library data.

This kind of study is known as library research, which is a collection of studies about libraries or research data collection techniques whose subjects are investigated using a variety of library resources (books, scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, and documents).

This study used secondary data, or data that wasn't gathered through direct observation, as its data source. Nevertheless, the information was derived from the findings of earlier studies. The documentation method is the data collection technique employed in this study. It is a way to gather information from different sources and compile it into a single unit that is used to address the issues that have been posed.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Teaching the Pragmatic of EIL**

The ability to communicate in English with other English speakers outside of Kachruvian circles is a pragmatic competency in EIL (Kachru, 1992). This includes countries where English is the first language (for example, Australia or the US), countries where it is the second but official language, or a language of institutions (for example, India or Nigeria), and all other countries where English is a foreign language or a lingua franca, that is, such as China or Spain. Therefore, it suggests the ability to reach a consensus through effective communication as well as the understanding of how to appropriately express one's own opinions and comprehend those of others based on the social and cultural aspects and contexts of interactions (Mckay, 2012).

One such lines of EIL that cuts across EFL/ESL models and their subsequent usage is this, that EIL utilizes all style of English usage from NS usage to IL and FL English as well as various localized uses of english such as Spanglish, Chinese English, Hinglish and many more. Therefore, as much as we do not support the separation of EFL/ESL and EIL (Cogo 2018), we advocate for the adoption of an EIL framework to support and enhance the

English language pedagogy.

According to earlier scholarly discussion, an EIL-informed approach to teaching pragmatic competence should consist of the following six elements (Kim, 2018): (1) familiarity with EIL pragmatic norms; (2) enhanced interactional competence; (3) function over form; (4) a belief in the validity of EIL; (5) support for learners' independence to choose their pragmatic behavior critically; and (6) attention to the needs of the students.

The first stage in developing pragmatic competence is becoming aware of pragmatic norms, according to ILP research (Alcon-Soler, 2010). In fact, the majority of pedagogical models created to teach speech acts in L2/FL intervention studies take an awareness-raising stance. This indicates that when students perform speech acts, it incorporates awareness-raising exercises to help them understand the linguistic and socio-pragmatic components of pragmatics. Therefore, in order to support the pragmatic growth of EIL, it is essential to start by exposing students to a variety of EIL input and deepening their comprehension of the language's widespread usage.

According to Sánchez-Hernández and Alcón-Soler (2021), corpora are excellent sources of EIL pragmatic input that depict actual language use in context (Barron, 2019). EIL data can be found in two corpora: the Vienna–Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE) and the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE). Distinct audiovisual resources, in addition to corpora, demonstrate how distinct communities of practice employ EIL (Bruti, 2016). To increase awareness of pragmatic behavior worldwide, EIL-specific teaching tools might be developed using both corpora and audiovisual input.

Second, EIL pragmatic education should emphasize interactional ability (McKay, 2009). Different conversation management techniques that enable meaning negotiation and effective English communication across settings and interlocutors are part of interactional competency in EIL. Scholars studying intercultural pragmatics and the pragmatics of English as a lingua franca (ELF) (J. Jenkins, 2011) have produced a wealth of information about the tactics non-native speakers (NNSs) employ when interacting with NSs and other NNSs in English.

Based on these findings, McKay (2009) emphasized the need to include practice in EIL curricula on discussional routines (e.g., agreeing and disagreeing, leaving routines, taking turns), repair strategies (e.g., asking for clarification, repetition, rephrasing), and negotiation strategies (e.g., defending a specific idea, suggesting alternatives, reaching consensus), all of which are prevalent in ELF communication. Third, function should come before form in an EIL-inspired pragmatics pedagogy (Canagarajah, 2014). The 'how' of using accommodation techniques to negotiate meaning with different interlocutors should be the main emphasis of instruction rather than the 'what' of specific social norms.

Several academics have suggested task-based learning as a way to accomplish this, giving students several opportunities for real-world interaction experience.

A range of technologically enhanced tools, such as synchronous communication (e.g., blogs, telecollaborative projects) and computer-mediated asynchronous communication (e.g., email, discussion forums), as well as artificially created immersive environments and locations, allow students to participate in authentic communication outside of the classroom. game on a mobile device (Gonzales-Lloret, 2018).

The fourth element focuses on how to help teachers and English learners adopt a mindset that recognizes the validity of EIL (Flor, 2021). According to Tajeddin et al. (2019), while the majority of English teachers are more likely to adhere to NS norms, some are open to learning new teaching strategies that take into consideration the plurality of EILs. As the writers suggest, offering teachers' attitudes toward EIL teaching skills will be reoriented with the aid of EIL resources and training.

A variety of research-based instructional methodologies, skills, and tactics are provided by Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2021) to assist teachers in better understanding EIL pragmatics and how to integrate pragmatic competence into their teaching methods. Likewise, Nguyen and Basturkmen (2021) provide a set of evaluation criteria to help teacher select appropriate EIL materials. Regarding the students, lectures, exercises, and class debates on tolerance for variety may specifically increase their awareness of the origins and validity of EIL (Matsuda, 2012).

Strategy-based education, or helping students gain the independence to acquire pragmatic competence on their own, should be the sixth component of the EIL pragmatics curriculum (Cohen, 2014). Increasing students' understanding of how English is used globally and equipping them with the critical thinking skills to decide which pragmatic behaviour to engage in given the situation are key components of a methodical approach to pragmatic learning in EIL. In order to do this, Taguchi (2018) suggested teaching metacognitive skills for identifying and assessing the suitability of pragmatic behaviour as well as cognitive skills for processing pragmatic data and expanding L2 pragmatic knowledge.

Furthermore, there have been different studies that have put up an intercultural proposal for teaching pragmatics on the basis of leading the student to understand his own as well as his interlocutor's sociocultural norm to be able to make use of them strategically. For example, Nguyen (2018) includes an intercultural element in pragmatic teaching where students are expected to consider their own cultural norms and determine whether they would prefer to adopt L2 norms, follow their own L1 norms, or combine both. For example, when students interact in English with teachers from their own culture, they are permitted to use L1 norms; their performance is assessed based on situational appropriateness rather than NS norms.

The final element describes the absence of a silver bullet when it comes to teaching EIL, which stands for being inapplicable universally across instructional contexts. As identified by Kecskes (2019), Having a universal list of ELF communication strategies is pointless because they tend to change depending on the situation.

He views ELF as a temporarily used way of communicating, socially constructed through pragmatic norms operating in an actual situation.

Creating an EIL curriculum based on the needs of the students and the community seems to be more beneficial. Sánchez Hernández and Alcón-Soler (2021) argued that in order to implement an informed EIL curriculum, a needs analysis of students' motivation and need to learn the foreign language, as well as their participation in communities of practice, should be conducted first.

In this way, the EIL pragmatics that will be suggested serve as a guide for the general guidelines that the curriculum will adhere to. To the best of our knowledge, however, there is a paucity of empirical data regarding the practical application of such pedagogical interventions. Therefore, the goal of the current study is to examine the effects of implementing Sánchez-Hernández and Alcón-Soler's (2021) pedagogical proposal on pragmatic development, specifically on the use of PMs in oral academic presentations.

### **Pragmatic Markers**

According to Aijimer (2013), PMs, which include phrases like "well," "you know," "yeah," and "I mean," are brief interactional devices that serve important pragmatic purposes in both written and spoken communication but do not perform particular semantic meanings. Therefore, they can be recognized by removing them from the text without changing the original message's meaning. Numerous academics have shown that PMs are a useful tool for communication because they maintain "pragmatic fluency," or the fluidity and flow of a

dialogue.

The most notable characteristic of PMs is their multifunctionality; depending on the production context, a single PM can perform a variety of functions. As a result, various methods have been put forth to categorize PMs based on their function. Fischer (2006) suggests that some scholars believe PMs perform a variety of functions, ranging from politeness to speech management. Other researchers suggest discursive or interpersonal functions, while still others only differentiate between PMs and discourse markers by focusing on their interpersonal nature (Trillo, 2012).

According to Martín-Laguna (2019, 2020), we consider PMs to be part of a functional continuum that encompasses textual and interpersonal roles. On the one hand, textual functions include organizing the discourse to facilitate comprehension (e.g., using "anyway" to shift the focus of conversation). On the other hand, interpersonal functions (such as using "you know" to match the interlocutor) enhance the social bond between the speaker and the hearer and assist the hearer in understanding the speaker's communication objective.

Numerous studies on ELF oral contact have provided an explanation for the use of PMs by NNSs. NNSs seem to be more variable than NSs in terms of the frequency and purposes of PM usage. First, they could rethink the use of PMs by using them for different purposes. For example, House (2009) observed that you know, which is mainly used as an interpersonal marker by NSs, was more frequently uttered by NNS (German EFL speakers) for textual purposes. Second, especially as a result of pragmatic transfer from their L1, NNS may develop their own PMs (N, 2012).

From my perspective, PM serves as an example, as demonstrated in the ELF spoken corpus in Mauranen (2012), which, in my opinion, was utilized in place of the more creative expression. Furthermore, NNSs may misuse specific PMs, like you see, you know, or I mean, which annoys their interlocutors, as Schnritz (2012) showed with Arabic EFL learners. Lastly, code-switching appears to be a common strategy employed by NNSs when using PM, as observed by Edmondson and House (1981) in German EFL speakers who frequently used the German word ja (which means "yes" in German) in their speech.

As a result, a number of approaches to teaching PMs have been proposed, the majority of which highlight the importance of (1) providing clear instruction on the roles and distributions of PMs, (2) conducting awareness-raising exercises to examine the use of PMs in discourse, and (3) providing production practice through a variety of written and oral assignments (J. Jenkins, 2011). For instance, Jenkins highlights the advantages of an explicit approach, which they refer to as Present-Practice-Produce (PPP), in comparison to a more implicit approach based on Illustration-Interaction-Induction (III), when teaching English PM to Chinese students.

Despite the fact that these methods emphasize teaching PM in EFL and other FL languages, as far as we are aware, there have been no previous attempts to teach PM with EIL. This study's pedagogical intervention included raising Kachruvian students' awareness of how different English speakers use PM, as well as promoting conversational practice by critically choosing PM usages.

## **CONCLUSION**

These results have various pedagogical ramifications. First, the current study emphasizes the necessity of approaching EIL instruction from the perspective of "communities of practice," which means that pedagogical practices should be designed and implemented with the needs of the students in mind. In order to accomplish this, a needs analysis was carried out on the first day of class, which indicated that students wanted to get better at using English in academic oral presentations.

Based on this, we directed the EIL pragmatic instruction toward the benefits of such a community of practice: a group of Spanish students in their final year of college, some of whom hope to find work abroad in the near future. More specifically, the training concentrated on PMs, which are essential tools for students to have when delivering an academic presentation to a diverse audience of English speakers because they improve the speaker's pragmatic fluency.

Furthermore, as demonstrated by the results, students became more conscious of how to use PMs appropriately as a result of pragmatic instruction in EIL. In keeping with earlier ILP research that demonstrated the value of implementing a consciousness-raising strategy as a preliminary step in acquiring pragmatic competence, these findings appear to confirm the beneficial role of pragmatic instruction. In fact, presenting a range of awareness-raising exercises has been a common practice in instructional pragmatics research in L2/FL contexts.

The first sessions of this study, which took an EIL perspective, focused on increasing learners' awareness of the legitimacy of EIL and their meta-pragmatic awareness of pragmatic behavior worldwide. Given the foregoing, the pedagogical approach used in this study is especially innovative on two levels. First, the current study focuses on EIL, whereas previous research on instructional pragmatics has focused on L2 and FL pragmatic competence. In the process, it helps transform the ILP field into conform to the current picture of globalization and worldwide communication.

However, by addressing PMs, a pragmatic aspect that is taught less frequently, this study has expanded the instructional target pragmatic features rather than concentrating on speech acts, which are among the most pragmatic aspects studied in prior ILP research. As a result, it adds to the small body of research that suggests pedagogical methods for instructing PMs.

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