

## Developing Pragmatics Competence in Sudanese EFL Learners at Tertiary Level

ELAMIN AHMED M. AHMED  
University of Al-Butana

### Abstract:

*This study aims at student's views on the use of language as a means of communication and to show the importance of language function, context and authentic situations to develop pragmatic competence in Sudanese EFL learners at tertiary level. To achieve the objectives, the study used a questionnaire in order to address the study questions and objectives. 150 employed students participated in the questionnaire. The Study found out that the students have positive views toward the using of the language as communicative means in various, functions, contexts and authentic situations inside and outside the classroom so as to enhance the students fluency in using the target language as well as the take care about the language forms to avoid imperfect using of the language.*

**Key words:** pragmatics competence, Sudanese EFL learners, tertiary level

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last decades pragmatics- the study of language in use has attracted a large numbers of scholars. Pragmatics involves a complex interplay among linguistic forms, context of use, and social actions. Crystal (1997) defines pragmatics as “the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using

language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication.” In order to be pragmatically competent, L2 learners must attend to multipart mappings of form, meaning, force, and context. They need to know how to say what they want to say with the level of formality, politeness, and directness required in a situation, or sometimes not to speak at all and communicate intention only non-verbally. Basic parameters of context, such as speakers’ relationship, role, setting, topics, and assumptions about what speakers already know or do not know, and perceived impact of their language on the listener, guide learners’ linguistic choice.

**This study is set to answer the following questions:**

- 1- To what extent the language functions is important than language forms?
- 2- What is the importance of using the context and authentic language?
- 3- How to improve speaking fluency through the communicative activities in an environment that English is a Foreign Language?

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The primary goal of the study is to shed light on the use of language as a means of communication and to show the importance of language function, context and authentic situations to develop pragmatic competence in Sudanese EFL learners at tertiary level.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Here the researcher will present the types of competence as well as the effect of pragmatic competence on linguistic

performance, moreover important abilities of the learner in order to be pragmatic competent

## **PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE**

Pragmatic competence is the ability to understand speakers' intentions, interpret their feelings and attitudes, and differentiate speech acts such as "requesting", "suggesting" and "threats". It is also having the necessary knowledge to interact appropriately in communicative situations. Kasper (1997) states that pragmatic competence is not extra or ornamental. It is not subordinated to knowledge of grammar and textual organization but it is co-ordinated to formal linguistic and textual knowledge. Learners need to develop pragmatic competence in order to communicate successfully in a target language.

Garcia (2004) presents the concepts of pragmatic ability and pragmatic comprehension. The former is the ability to use language appropriately according to the communicative situation and the latter refers to the comprehension of oral language in terms of pragmatic meaning. Therefore, students need to be able to comprehend meaning pragmatically in order to:

1. understand a speaker's intention;
2. interpret a speaker's feelings and attitudes;
3. differentiate speech act meaning such as the difference between a *directive* and a *commissive*;
4. evaluate the intensity of a speaker's meaning, such as the difference between a *suggestion* and a *warning*;
5. recognize sarcasm, joking, and other facetious behaviour;
6. be able to respond appropriately.

Still on the topic of pragmatic comprehension, Thomas (1995) proposes that the comprehension of speech acts and conversational implicatures are features of pragmatic

comprehension (In: Garcia, 2004, p. 2). Speech acts define utterances produced by a speaker who is trying to do something or trying to get the hearer to do something (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Conversational implicatures are utterances which express attitudes and feelings from the speaker and must be inferred by the hearer (Grice, 1975; Sperber & Wilson, 1986).

### ***Grammatical competence***

Grammatical competence is an umbrella concept that includes increasing expertise in grammar (morphology, syntax), vocabulary, and mechanics. With regards to speaking, the term mechanics refers to basic sounds of letters and syllables, pronunciation of words, intonation, and stress" (Scarcella and Oxford 1992:141). In order to convey meaning, EFL learners must have the knowledge of words and sentences; that is, they must understand how words are segmented into various sounds, and how sentences are stressed in particular ways. Thus, grammatical competence enables speakers to use and understand English language structures accurately and unhesitatingly, which contributes to their fluency.

### ***Discourse competence***

In addition to grammatical competence, EFL learners must develop discourse competence, which is concerned with intersentential relationships. In discourse, whether formal or informal, the rules of cohesion and coherence apply, which aid in holding the communication together in a meaningful way. In communication, both the production and comprehension of a language require one's ability to perceive and process stretches of discourse, and to formulate representations of meaning from referents in both previous sentences and following sentences. Therefore, effective speakers should acquire a large repertoire of structures and discourse markers to express ideas, show relationships of time, and indicate cause, contrast, and

emphasis (Scarcella and Oxford 1992). With these, learners can manage turn- taking in conversation.

### ***Sociolinguistic competence***

Knowledge of language alone does not adequately prepare learners for effective and appropriate use of the target language. Learners must have competence which involves knowing what is expected socially and culturally by users of the target language; that is, learners must acquire the rules and norms governing the appropriate timing and realization of speech acts. Understanding the sociolinguistic side of language helps learners know what comments are appropriate, know how to ask questions during interaction, and know how to respond nonverbally according to the purpose of the talk. Therefore, "adult second language learners must acquire stylistic adaptability in order to be able to encode and decode the discourse around them correctly" (Brown 1994:238).

### ***Strategic competence***

Strategic competence, which is "the way learners manipulate language in order to meet communicative goals" (Brown 1994:228), is perhaps the most important of all the communicative competence elements. Simply put, it is the ability to compensate for imperfect knowledge of linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse rules (Berns 1990). With reference to speaking, strategic competence refers to the ability to know when and how to take the floor, how to keep a conversation going, how to terminate the conversation, and how to clear up communication breakdown as well as comprehension problems.

### **The effect of pragmatic competence on linguistic performance**

There is a dispute whether pragmatic competence can be taught in the foreign language classroom. Several studies have been made addressing this question. Kasper (1997, p.1) states that

competence is not teachable: “Competence is a type of knowledge that learners possess, develop, acquire, use or lose”.

However, she suggests that teachers can arrange learning opportunities in a way that learners benefit from the development of pragmatic competence in L2.

LoCastro (2003) addresses this question even further. She indicates that all the areas of pragmatics are potential problems for learners in the L2 classroom and for members of minority groups who have a more limited proficiency in the target language. She exemplifies sources of input to which learners are exposed to: teachers, classroom and supplementary materials and other learners. In her study, she proposes different ways to maximize opportunities for the development of pragmatic knowledge using these sources of input.

On the other hand, Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor (2003) advocate the explicit teaching of pragmatic aspects to foreign language students in order to develop pragmatic competence in the EFL classroom. After observing a number of EFL learners, they came to the conclusion that students demonstrated a clear need for it and that the explicit teaching of pragmatics can be a successful classroom experience.

Language learners’ linguistic performance is significantly different from native speakers’. Areas such as the execution and comprehension of certain speech acts, conversational functions such as “greetings” and “leave takings” and conversational management such as “back channelling2” and “short responses” are particularly problematic to non-native speakers.

Furthermore, without the explicit teaching of pragmatics, language learners’ pragmatic competence will vary a lot regardless of their language background or language proficiency. “That is to say, a learner of high grammatical proficiency will not necessarily show equivalent pragmatic development”. (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003, p. 2).

From my own experience, even students at advanced levels show a wide range of pragmatic competence, especially if we compare learners who have had some experience living in the target language community and the ones who have not. The former tend to be more pragmatically aware in terms of appropriacy of linguistic forms whereas the latter tend to be more accurate in terms of grammar and less aware of cultural aspects.

Also the researcher will show the important abilities of the learner in order to be pragmatics competent.

### **The Ability to Perform Speech Acts**

Numerous studies have recognized that the ability of learners to use appropriate speech acts in a given speech event and to select appropriate linguistic forms to realize this speech act is a major component of pragmatic competence. As early as 1979, Rintell asserted that “pragmatics is the study of speech acts”, arguing that L2 learner pragmatic ability is reflected in how learners produce utterances to communicate “specific intentions,” and conversely, how they interpret the intentions which these utterances convey (p. 98). Fraser (1983) also describes pragmatic competence as the knowledge of how an addressee determines what a speaker is saying and recognizes intended illocutionary force conveyed through subtle “attitudes” (p. 30) in the speaker’s utterance. Among empirical studies of speech act behavior, Cohen (1996) lists studies of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) as the most comprehensive studies, both in depth and breadth. These studies compared the speech act performance of NSs of different languages with that of learners of those languages (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989). One of the consistent findings in these studies is that, although the typology of speech acts appears to be universal, their conceptualization and verbalization can vary to a great extent across cultures and languages. In other words, L2 learners may have access to the

same range of speech acts and realization strategies as do NSs (Fraser, Rintell, & Walters, 1980; Walters, 1979), but they can differ from NSs in the strategies that they *choose*. Therefore, it is clear that L2 learners must be aware of L2 sociocultural constraints on speech acts in order to be pragmatically competent.

### **The Ability to Convey and Interpret Non-literal Meanings**

Simply put, pragmatics is the study of the relationship between linguistic forms and their *uses*, whereas semantics, which is closely related to pragmatics, is the study of the relationship between linguistic forms and their *referents*. Grice (1975) distinguishes between *sentence meaning* which refers to the propositional meaning of an utterance, and *speaker meaning* which refers to the indirectly conveyed meaning beyond the surface-level linguistic forms of an utterance. From this perspective, pragmatic competence is concerned with the ability to bridge the gap between sentence meaning and speaker meaning in order to interpret the indirectly expressed communicative intention. The process by which interlocutors arrive at speaker meaning involves *inferencing*, which is guided by a set of rational and universal principles that all participants are expected to observe for successful communication, namely, *the Cooperative Principle*. According to Carrell (1984), “one aspect of pragmatic competence in an L2 is the ability to draw correct inferences” (p.1). Fraser (1983) also includes the ability to interpret figurative language as part of pragmatics because utterances that are overt and deliberate violations of the conversational maxims (e.g., *the future is now* as a violation of the maxim Quality, *I wasn't born yesterday* as a violation of Quantity) require the ability to recognize and interpret conversational implicature.

### **The Ability to Perform Politeness Functions**

Brown and Levinson (1992) posit universal principles for linguistic politeness based on a social rationale. As Leech (1983) and Thomas (1995) note, indirectness increases the degree of optionality and negotiability on the part of hearer and thereby reduces the imposition on the hearer. However, as a number of cross-cultural pragmatic studies on politeness point out, the application of this principle differs systematically across cultures and languages. Greek social norms, for example, require a much higher level of indirectness in social interaction than American ones, while Israeli norms generally allow even more directness than American ones (Blum-Kulka, 1982, 1987). Similarly, House and Kasper (1981) observed that German speakers generally selected more direct politeness than Americans when requesting and complaining.

### **The Ability to Perform Discourse Functions**

Most of the time, achievement of communicative intent in naturally occurring conversation requires a number of turns at talk between two interlocutors. Accordingly, as Blum-Kulka (1997) points out, “a full pragmatic account would need to consider the various linguistic and paralinguistic signals by which *both* participants encode and interpret each other’s utterances” (p. 49). Van Dijk (1981) also extends the notion of speech act to apply to a sequence of utterances constituting a stretch of discourse, that is, the “macro speech act” (p. 195). Kasper (2001) notes that speech act performance is often *jointly* accomplished throughout the whole discourse through a sequencing of implicit illocutionary acts rather than any explicit expression of the communicative intent. For this reason, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) express the concern that learners need to be aware of discourse differences between their L1 and the L2 in order to acquire pragmatic competence. At the observable behavioral level, what should L2 learners acquire in order to communicate their intentions successfully in

discourse? It seems that two types of discourse management ability are at work: (a) the ability to interpret and fill the discourse slot as L2 conversational norms dictate, and (b) the ability to recognize and produce discourse markers correctly in terms of their pragmatic functions.

First of all, some researchers focus on the ability to smoothly enter into and end discourse. Literature on conversational analysis has demonstrated that conversation closing is accomplished mostly in conventional ways.

It should be noted, however, that for smooth day-to-day, face-to-face interactions these, routines also carry cultural meanings, expressing cultural appropriateness and tacit agreements. Thus, the appropriate use of routines clearly plays an important role in L2 pragmatic ability.

### **The Ability to Use Cultural Knowledge**

The four aspects of pragmatic competence discussed so far considerably overlap with each other. In other words, they do not operate independently but interact with each other in complicated and yet systematic ways that govern learner linguistic behavior. More importantly, specific L2 culture-bound knowledge has been discussed as a deciding factor that underlies different aspects of pragmatic ability. This places culture at the heart of L2 pragmatic competence. Jiang's (2000) metaphor effectively captures the nature of language and culture as a whole: "communication is like transportation: language is the vehicle and culture is the traffic light" (p. 329).

Considering that culture regulates all language use and that every conversational exchange between a learner and a NS of a language is a form of intercultural encounter (Richards & Sukwihat, 1983), second language acquisition is indeed "second culture acquisition" (Robinson-Stuart & Nocon, 1996). Although some traditional pedagogies assume L2 culture learning to be a natural consequence of L2 language learning (as it is in L1 acquisition), others consider culture to be an outcome of

conscious learning. It is simplistic, however, to state that culture is important and must be learned: Cultural beliefs are subconscious systems and, therefore, it is difficult to make them explicit. The interdisciplinary nature of pragmatic competence calls forth a need to acquire pragmatic knowledge in a holistic context, encompassing all the discrete components of pragmatic ability, including discourse management ability and, most importantly, culture (Austin, 1998). In this context, Blum-Kulka (1990a) proposes a model of “general pragmatic knowledge (GP)” where an L2 learner’s GP for a speech act is organized as schema containing the L2 linguistic forms used for the speech act (p. 255). This schema, in turn, is governed by a L2 “cultural filter” (p. 256) which decides the situational appropriateness of the L2 linguistic forms. Consonant with Blum-Kulka, Wildner-Bassett (1994) advocates a solid connection between culturally bound schema, a specific situation, and an utterance appropriate to that situation: If L2 learners acquire L2 cultural knowledge about archetypal structures of speech events, they will not only be able to better understand a given speech event in general, but effectively participate in that given speech event using appropriate speech acts. In order to acquire L2 cultural knowledge, however, a more precise and conceivable description of L2 cultural rules of behavior is necessary. Responding to this call, Wierzbicka (1994) proposes the notion of “cultural script”, a specific type of schema, in order for learners to understand “a society’s ways of speaking” (p. 2). Cultural scripts capture characteristic L2 cultural beliefs and values, but avoid ethnocentric bias by using culture-independent terms (Goddard, 1997; Goddard & Wierzbicka, 1997). For instance, in a situation where an American’s car brushed against a Japanese child who had run into the street, the American may not understand why his Japanese counterpart would be upset and expect an apology when the American was not at fault. This is because he has not yet learnt the Japanese cultural grammar *if something bad*

*happens to someone because I did something, I have to say something like this to this person: "I feel something bad"* (Wierzbicka, 1994, p. 5). According to Wierzbicka, Japanese culture is often mistakenly characterized by the tendency to apologize too frequently.

However, the above cultural script accurately captures the Japanese norm that seeks harmony among the social members, without relying on the English speech act verb *apologize* which becomes a source of the stereotyping. As another example, Ranney (1992) observed that in medical consultation with L2 speakers, Hmong learners of English referred to their misunderstandings during speech acts such as asking questions, giving information, showing approval, or giving advice. Thus, acquiring accurate L2 cultural scripts can prevent pragmatic failure, as well as being a useful guide for acquiring L2 culture without potential stereotyping. While the other aspects of pragmatic competence discussed in previous sections are undoubtedly important, they can only be put to use if one has acquired the broader background of cultural knowledge.

### **The study methodology**

The study used a questionnaire for the purpose of data collection. The detailed of the questionnaire as follows: the students questionnaire (SsQ), consists of 12 statements, it was divided into three parts. The following table gives a brief summary about the students' questionnaire:

**Table (1) summary of students' questionnaire**

Variable measure	Measure by
Student's opinions about the extent of the importance of the language functions than the language forms.	Items 1 to 4
Students' attitudes towards the necessity of using context and authentic language	Items: 5,6,7and 8
Improve EFL students fluency through the communicative activities	9, 10, 11and12

### **Questionnaire sample**

The sample of this study included 150 students at Al Butana University, Faculty of Education, English language Department, all the students spent more than 10 years studying English language at school and university.

**Table (2) Distribution the sample according to the gender.**

Gender	Frequency	Percents
Male	30	20%
Female	120	80%
Total	150	100%

**Tables (3) Distribution of the students according to their studying grades.**

Class	Frequency	Percents%
Semester Three	90	60 %
Semester Six	60	40 %
Total	150	100 %

According to the results in tables (2& 3), a number of 150 students from Al- Butana University English Language Department participated in the study,20 % were male and 80% were female as showed in table(2).More than half of the students study at semester three 60% where as 40 % study at semester six as shown in table (3).

### **Validity of the tool**

The researcher deemed that the questions and the responses language to the appropriate intentionality with the flexibility in planning them within clarity about objectives and openness to various ways of achieving the responses.

The questionnaire was validated by the jury of three assistant professors specializes in English language. They based their comments on the following criteria:

- (i) The clarity of the items, instructions and the statements.
- (ii) The simplicity of the items, and how they related to the subject.
- (iii) The language used

Options are provided especially for sample, an aptitude for asking good questions and listening carefully to the advice given by the policy makers and the open dialogue shared with some of them with researcher's willingness.

### **Reliability of the questionnaire**

In statistics, reliability is the consistency of a set of measurements often used to describe a test. For the reliability of the test, the study used the split- half method: A measure of consistency where the test is splitted in two and the score of each half of the test was compared with one another. The test was distributed to 10 students. The coefficient correlation formula was used to calculate the correlation:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

The analysis shows that there was strong positive correlation between the answers given to the items asked:

PsQ. =067%

### **Procedures**

The student's questionnaire was distributed to them in their classes, then they were given enough time to response and fill the questionnaire.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The student's questionnaire covers the various aspect that assist in developing Pragmatic Competence in Sudanese EFL Learners at Tertiary Level, it include 12 items divided into three parts.

*Variable: Student's opinions about the extent of the importance of the language functions than the language forms.*

**Table (4) Language form must be explained when necessary.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
90 (60 %)	29(19.3%)	6(4%)	17(11%)	8(5.3%)	150(100%)

The study showed that (119) 79.3% of the students questioned are agreed that language form must be explained when there is need for it. This emphasis that the use of communicative approach is helpful for the EFL learners. Whereas there were (25) 16% of the students questioned disagree about this statement.

*Variable: Student's opinions about the extent of the importance of the language functions than the language forms*

**Table (5) the teachers must correct the grammatical errors of EFL learners to avoid imperfect learning.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
125 (83.3 %)	7(4.6%)	13(8.6%)	2(1.3%)	3(2%)	150(100%)

According to what was showed in table (5) it seemed that (132) 87.9 agree that the teachers must correct the grammatical errors of EFL learners in order to avoid the process of imperfect learning as well as to enhance the students accuracy of the language usage. This finding implies the necessity of concentrating on the language rules and sentence constructions so as to use the language appropriately in difference situations and for various functions.

*Variable: Student's opinions about the extent of the importance of the language functions than the language forms.*

**Table (6) Teachers feedback must be focused on the appropriateness of language not language form of EFL learners.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
100 (66.6 %)	12(8%)	16(10.6%)	5(3.3%)	17(11.3%)	150(100%)

According to the information showed in table (6) more than two thirds (112) 74.6% agreed that the feedback of the teachers must be focused on the appropriateness of the language rather than the language form. While (16) 10.6% of the students were not sure and (22) 14.6% of the students questioned were disagreeing, so this indicates that the importance of the language functions.

*Variable: Student's opinions about the extent of the importance of the language functions than the language forms.*

**Table (7) the focus of the class must be in situational language.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
130 (86.6 %)	14(9.3%)	2(1.3%)	1(.66%)	4(4.6%)	150(100%)

Concerning the focus of the class must be in situational language most of the respondents (144) 95.9% agreed with the statement which indicates that the teachers must prepared the suitable materials to be learned that reflects the various form of the language that suits the learners and satisfy their desires in acquiring the language by using the language appropriately in difference situations.

With the respect to the students' opinions about their extends of the importance of the language functions rather than the language forms, so the students views about the language forms must be explained when there is necessity for this explaining, the results showed that (119)73.3% agreed with this

statement, and this indicates that the students prefer the communicative classroom rather than traditional classroom, which focused on reading and writing and ignored listening and speaking, also the survey showed that 125 (83.3% from the sample) agreed that the teachers must correct the grammatical errors of the learners while they were using the language in order to improve the learning of the language. Moreover two thirds of the students agreed that the teachers must focus on the appropriateness of the language not the language form, as well as the use of situational language method instead of using Grammar Translation approach. In addition most of the students (130) 86.6% agreed that the focus of the classroom must be in situational language in which the learners need the creativity of the teachers for preparing the suitable items to be taught in the classroom that represent different situations of the language usage and this will be released by using communicative approach because we need to 'get real' about interaction and one way to do that is to promote integrated skills approaches such as whole language, cooperative learning, task-based learning, content-based learning or multiple intelligences. However, these kinds of language awareness building activities are supplementary to the real work of interaction in the classroom. We need to "get real" about interaction and one way to do that is to promote integrated skills approaches such as whole language, cooperative learning, task-based learning, content-based learning or multiple intelligences (Oxford, 2001, n.p.). The advantage of integrated skills approaches is eightfold:

1. It exposes English language learners to authentic language;
2. It challenges them to interact naturally in the language;
3. Learners rapidly recognize the richness and complexity of the English language;

4. Learners see that English is not just an object of academic interest nor merely a key to passing an examination; instead,
5. English becomes a real means of interaction and sharing among people;
6. It allows teachers to track students' progress in multiple skills at the same time;
7. It promotes the learning of real content, not just the dissection of language forms;
8. It can be highly motivating to students.

*Variable: Students' attitudes towards the necessity of using context and authentic language.*

**Table (8) Students must be given opportunity for interaction.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
118 (78.6 %)	22(14.6%)	7(4.6%)	1(.6 %)	2(1.3%)	150(100%)

The above table illustrates that 140 (93.3%) of the students agreed that the students must given opportunities for interaction with the teachers or with the students themselves during the lesson inside the classroom in order to improve their abilities to use the language appropriately.

*Variable: Students' attitudes towards the necessity of using context and authentic language.*

**Table (9) Students must be encouraged to use the language outside the classroom.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
124 (82.6 %)	13(8.6%)	11(7.3%)	2(1.3%)	-	150(100%)

More than four fifths of the students agreed that the teachers must encourage the learners for using the language outside the classroom and this can be done through interactions or activities of using the language outside the classroom.

*Variable: Students' attitudes towards the necessity of using context and authentic language.*

**Table (10) Watching original films and videos are useful for EFL learners.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
120 (80 %)	3(2%)	7(4.6%)	7(4.6%)	13(8.6%)	150(100%)

In the same respect, that 123(82%) of the students questioned agreed that performing activities outside the classroom will enhance the ability for EFL learners, and this represents in watching original films of the native speakers to show the real uses of the language in various contexts and authentic situations.

*Variable: Students' attitudes towards the necessity of using context and authentic language*

**Table (11) reading original English materials are helpful for EFL learners.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
140 (93.3 %)	6(4%)	2(1.3%)	-	2(1.3%)	150(100%)

146(97.3%) of the students prefer reading original English materials that help them to across English language culture and this can be done by reading English literature in difference

stages of educations such as reading short stories and short novels as well as plays of English authors and play Wright.

Concerning overall attitudes of the students towards the using of the context and authentic language, we note that 140 (93.3%) of the students agreed that they must be motivated for using the language and interacting with the teachers and with their colleagues inside the classroom. Moreover 137(91.2%)of the questioned students were agreed to be encouraged to used the language outside the classroom, in addition to 123(82%) of the students agreed with the process of watching films and videos are useful for EFL learners while( 13.2%) were disagree with this statement . Furthermore146 (97.3%) of the questioned students were agreed that reading original materials are helpful for them, so the using of context and authentic language will promote the students’ fluency which includes according to Fillmore 1979 the ability to:

1. fill time with talk [i.e., to talk without awkward pauses for a relatively long time]
2. talk in coherent, reasoned, and "semantically dense" sentences [Fillmore's emphasis]
3. have appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts
4. be creative and imaginative in using the language

*Variable: Improve EFL student’s fluency through the communicative activities*

**Table (12) Tasks used in English class must improve EFL learner’s ability to use the language appropriately.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
125 (83.3%)	9(6%)	6(4%)	6(4%)	4(2.6%)	150(100%)

The above table illustrates that 134(89.3%) of the survey sample agreed with the tasks used in the classroom must improve EFL learners abilities to use the language appropriately and this indicates the importance of the activities such as: dialogues pairs and group works as well as conversations besides to discussions between the learners and the teachers or between the learners themselves which allow the students to use the language in school day.

*Variable: Improve EFL student's fluency through the communicative activities*

**Table (13) most of Sudanese EFL learner's lack speech act strategies.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
120 (80 %)	11(7.3%)	4(2%)	5(3.3%)	10(6.6%)	150(100%)

More than four fifths 131(87.3%) of the questioned students agreed that most of Sudanese EFL learners lack speech act strategies, while 4 (2%) were not sure, and 15(9.9%) disagreed with the statement, so this indicates that most of Sudanese EFL learners do not aware about the strategies of speech act which include: how to request, how to order, how to condole, how to apologize, how to refuse and even how to thanks how to invite and how to Promise politely.

*Variable: Improve EFL student's fluency through the communicative activities*

**Table (14) communicative activities are very useful for EFL learners.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
127 (84.6 %)	5(3.3%)	8(5.3%)	7(4.6%)	4(2%)	150(100%)

133(87.9%) of the students agreed that the communicative activities are very useful for the EFL learners, while 11(6.6%) were disagree that the communicative activities are useful, thus this indicates the practical of the language by the learners will help them to be fluent persons and teachers must motivate the learners to perform this activities.

*Variable: Improve EFL student's fluency through the communicative activities*

**Table (15) the teachers must teach the learners how to communicate with people.**

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
100 (66.6 %)	11(11.3%)	14(9.3%)	20(11%)	5(3.3%)	150(100%)

Based on the information of the above table 111(77.9%) of the questioned students agreed that the teachers must teach the learners how to communicate with people using the target language, so this can be done through several activities, while 14(9.3%) were not sure, 25(14.3%) were disagree and this shows that the necessity of communicate class room.

Regarding overall students attitudes about Improve EFL student's fluency through the communicative activities, the researcher notes that 134(89.3%) of the survey sample agreed with the tasks used in the classroom must improve EFL learners abilities to use the language appropriately and this indicates in addition to 131(87.3%) of the questioned students agreed that most of Sudanese EFL learners lack speech act strategies, while 4 (2%) were not sure, and 15(9.9%) disagreed with the statement, furthermore 133(87.9%) of the students agreed that the communicative activities are very useful for the EFL learners, while 11(6.6%) were disagree that the communicative activities are useful, and 111(77.9%) of the questioned students agreed that the teachers must teach the learners how to communicate with people using the target

language, so this can be done through several activities, while 14(9.3%) were not sure, 25(14.3%) were disagree and this shows that the necessity of communicate class room. So that all these results indicate that Improve EFL student's fluency through the communicative activities will be performed through many ways in which the teachers will play an essential role for performing it, also communicative techniques can develop productive, receptive and interactive skills in students that are necessary for effective communication. Activities with listening and reading, aim at developing in students skills of receiving information. Activities with speaking and writing develop in students skills of producing information as well as communicative techniques aim to develop students' communicative competence. To communicate effectively, the students are involved in different kinds of activities that require practicing various skills to understand their peers and make themselves understood by others.

## REFERENCES

1. Austin, T. (1998). Cross-cultural pragmatics-building in analysis of communication across cultures and languages: Examples from Japanese. *Foreign Language Annals*, 31, 326-346.
2. Bardovi-Harlig, K.; Mahan-Taylor, R. *Teaching Pragmatics*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of State, 2003, disponible em: <<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/engteaching/pragmatics.htm> >
3. Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2001). Evaluating the empirical evidence: Grounds for instruction in pragmatics? In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 13- 2). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

4. Blum-Kulka, S. (1982). Learning to say what you mean in a second language: A study of the speech act performance of learners of Hebrew as a second language. *Applied Linguistics*, 3, 29-59.
5. Blum-Kulka, S. (1987). Indirectness and politeness in requests: Same or different? *Journal o Pragmatics*, 11, 131-146.
6. Blum-Kulka, S. (1990a). Interlanguage pragmatics: The case of requests. In R. Phillipson, E. Kellerman, L. Selinker, M. S. Smith & M. Swain (Eds.), *Foreign/Second language pedagogy research: A commemorative volume for Claus Færch* (pp. 255-272). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
7. Blum-Kulka, S. (1990b). You don't touch lettuce with your fingers: Parental politeness in family discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14, 259-288.
8. Blum-Kulka, S. (1997a). *Dinner talk: Cultural patterns of sociability and socialization in family discourse*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
9. Blum-Kulka, S. (1997b). Discourse pragmatics. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse studies vol. 2: Discourse as social interaction* (pp. 38-63). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
10. Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (1989). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
11. Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1986). Too many words: Length of utterance and pragmatic failure. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 8, 165-179. *Issues in Acquisitional Pragmatics* 26
12. Blum-Kulka, S., & Sheffer, H. (1993). The metapragmatic discourse of American-Israeli families at dinner. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 196-223). New York: Oxford University Press.

13. Blum-Kulka, S., Danet, B., & Gerson, R. (1985). The language of requesting in Israeli society. In J. P. Forgas (Ed.), *Language and social situation* (pp. 113-141). New York: Springer Verlag.
14. Berns, M. 1990. Contexts of competence: Social and cultural considerations in communicative language teaching. New York: Plenum Press.
15. Brown, H. D. 1994. Principles of language learning and teaching. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
16. Celce-Murcia, M., Dörnyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1995). Communicative competence: A pedagogically motivated model with content specifications. *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 6, 5-35.
17. Chen, R. (1993). Responding to compliments: A contrastive study of politeness strategies between American English and Chinese speakers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 20, 49-75.
18. Cohen, A. D. (1996b). Speech acts. In S. L. McKay & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language teaching* (pp. 383-420). New York: Cambridge University Press.
19. Cohen, A. D. (1997). Developing pragmatic ability: Insights from the accelerated study of Japanese. In H. M. Cook, K. Hijirida & M. M. Tahara (Eds.), *New trends and issues in teaching Japanese language and culture* (pp. 133-159). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
20. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 64-81). New York: Oxford University Press.
21. Faerch, C., & Kasper, G. (1989). Internal and external modification in interlanguage request realization. In S. Blum-Kulka, J. House & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies* (pp. 221-247). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

22. Firth, A., & Wagner, J. (1997). On discourse, communication, and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA research. *The Modern Language Journal*, 81, 285-300.
23. Francis, C. (1997). Talk to Me! The development of request strategies in non-native speakers of English. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics*, 13(2), 23-40.
24. Fraser, B. (1983). The domain of pragmatics. In J. C. Richards & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication* (pp. 29-59). New York: Longman. Issues in Acquisitional Pragmatics 28
25. Fraser, B. (1990). Perspectives on politeness. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14, 219-236.
26. Fraser, B., Rintell, E., & Walters, J. (1980). An approach to conducting research on the acquisition of pragmatic competence in a second language. In D. Larsen-Freeman (Ed.), *Discourse analysis in second language research* (pp. 75-91). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
27. Fillmore, C. J. (1979). On fluency. In C. J. Fillmore, D. Kempler, & W. S. Y. Wang (Eds.), *Individual differences in language ability and language behavior* (pp. 85-102). New York: Academic Press.
28. Garcia, P. Pragmatic Comprehension of High and Low Language Learners. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Electronic Journal, v.8. n.2, 2004.
29. GricE, P. Logic and Conversation. In Cole, P.; Morgan, J. (eds.) *Syntax and Semantics*. New York: Academic Press, v.3, 1975.
30. Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and Semantics, vol 3: Speech acts* (pp. 41-58). New York: Academic Press.
31. House, J. (1996). Developing pragmatic fluency in English as a foreign language. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 225-252. Issues in Acquisitional Pragmatics 29

32. House, J., & Kasper, G. (1981). Politeness markers in English and German. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), *Conversational routine: Explorations in standardized communication situations and prepatterned speech* (pp. 157-185). New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
33. House, J., & Kasper, G. (1987). Interlanguage pragmatics: Requesting in a foreign language. In W. Lörcher & R. Schulze (Eds.), *Perspectives on language in performance, vol. 2* (pp. 1250-1288). Tübingen: Nar.
34. Ide, S. (1989). Formal forms and discernment: Two neglected aspects of universals of linguistic politeness. *Multilingua*, 8, 223-248.
35. Jaworski, A. (1994). Pragmatic failure in a second language: Greeting responses in English by Polish students. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 32, 41- 55.
36. Jiang, W. (2000). The relationship between culture and language. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 54, 328-334.
37. Locastro, V. *An Introduction to Pragmatics: social action for language teachers*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003.
38. Kanagy, R. (1999). Interactional routines as a mechanism for L2 acquisition and socialization in an immersion context. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 31, 1467-1492.
39. Kasper, G. *Can Pragmatic Competence Be Taught?* University of Hawaii, 1997.
40. Kasper, G. (1979). Errors in speech act realization and use of gambits. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 35, 395-406.
41. Kasper, G. (1984). Pragmatic comprehension in learner-native speaker discourse. *Language Learning*, 34, 1-20.
42. Kasper, G. (1992). Pragmatic transfer. *Second Language Research*, 8, 203-231.

43. Kasper, G. (1996). Introduction: Interlanguage pragmatics in SLA. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 145-148.
44. Kasper, G. (2001a). Classroom research on interlanguage pragmatics. In K. R. Rose & G.
45. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 33-60). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
46. Kasper, G. (2001b). Four perspectives on L2 pragmatic development. *Applied Linguistics*, 22, 502-530.
47. Kasper, G., & Schmidt, R. (1996). Developmental issues in interlanguage pragmatics. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 149-169.
48. Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. New York: Longman.
49. Li, D. (2000). The pragmatics of making requests in the L2 workplace: A case study of language socialization. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57, 58-87.
50. Conversational structures in the foreign language classroom. In G.Kasper (Ed.), *Learning, teaching, and communication in the foreign language classroom* (pp. 11-22). Aarhus: Aarhus University Press.
51. Lörcher, W., & Schulze, R. (1988). On polite and foreign language classroom discourse. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 26, 183-199.
52. Olshtain, E. (1983). Sociocultural competence and language transfer: The case of apology. In S. M. Gass & L. Selinker (Eds.), *Language transfer in language learning* (pp. 232-249). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
53. Olshtain, E., & Blum Kulka, S. (1985). Degree of approximation: Nonnative reactions to native speech act behavior. In S. M. Gass & C. G. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 303-325). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
54. Olshtain, E., & Cohen, A. (1989). Speech act behavior across languages. In H. Dechert & M. Raupach (Eds.),

- Transfer in language production* (pp. 53-68). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
55. Olshtain, E., & Cohen, A. (1990). The learning of complex speech act behavior. *TESL Canada Journal*, 7, 45-65.
56. Oxford, R. (2001). *Integrated skills in the ESL/EFL classroom*. Accessed September 3, 2006 at <http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/0105oxford.html>
57. Ranney, S. (1992). Learning a new script: An exploration of sociolinguistic competence. *Applied Linguistics*, 13, 25-50.
58. Rehbein, J. (1987). On the fluency in second language speech. In H. W. Dechert & M.
59. Raupach (Eds.), *Psycholinguistic models of production* (pp. 97-105). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
60. Richards, J. C., & Sukwivat, M. (1983). Language transfer and conversational competence. *Applied Linguistics*, 4, 113-125.
61. Rintell, E. M. (1979). Getting your speech act together: The pragmatic ability of second language learners. *Working Papers on Bilingualism*, 17, 98-106.
62. Rintell, E. M. (1984). But how did you feel about that? The learner's perception of emotion in speech. *Applied Linguistics*, 5, 255-264.
63. Robinson, G. L. (1997). The magic-carpet-ride-to-another-culture syndrome: An international perspective. In P. R. Heusinkveld (Ed.), *Pathways to culture: Readings on teaching culture in the foreign language class* (pp. 75-95). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- Issues in Acquisitional Pragmatics 32
64. Robinson-Stuart, G., & Nocon, H. (1996). Second culture acquisition: Ethnography in the foreign language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 80, 431-449.
65. Rose, K. R. (1994). Pragmatic consciousness-raising in an EFL context. In L. F. Bouton & Y.

66. Scarcella, R. C. and R. L. Oxford. 1992. *The tapestry of language learning: The individual in the communicative classroom*. Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle Publishers
67. van Dijk, T. A. (1981). *Studies in the pragmatics of discourse*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
68. Wierzbicka, A. (1985). Different cultures, different languages, different speech acts: Polish vs. English. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 9, 145-178.
69. Wierzbicka, A. (1994). "Cultural scripts": A semantic approach to cultural analysis and crosscultural communication. In L. F. Bouton & Y. Kachru (Eds.), *Pragmatics and Language Learning*, monograph series vol. 5 (pp. 1-25). Urbana-Champaign, IL: Division of English as an International Language, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.
70. Wildner-Bassett, M. (1984). *Improving pragmatic aspects of learners' interlanguage: A comparison of methodological approaches for teaching gambits to advanced adult learners of English in industry*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
71. Wildner-Bassett, M. (1986). Teaching and learning 'polite noises': Improving pragmatic aspects of advanced adult learners' interlanguage. In G. Kasper (Ed.), *Learning, teaching, and communication in the foreign language classroom* (pp. 163-177). Aarhus: Aarhus University Press.
72. Wildner-Bassett, M. (1994). Intercultural pragmatics and proficiency: 'Polite' noises for cultural awareness. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 32, 3-17.