Effect of Pragmatic-Based Learning Model on Students' Pragmatic Competence

by I Made Rai Jaya Widanta

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Despite a number of research in interlanguage pragmatic teaching investigating how pragmatics is taught, none has been focused on developing English learning model particularly for vocational college. The research was aimed at developing and proving whether (or not) pragmatic-based English learning model is effective to improve students' pragmatic competence. The development included development of learning stages, learning module, and development of assessment. The participants involved in the research was twenty three semester four students of tourism department, Bali State Polyechnic. The research participants were given two tests, test one (T1) given prior to model implementation and test two (T2) given upon its implementation. Each participant was given four oral role play cards to respond. The respondents' responses in form of two request utterances and two refusal untterances were rated by a native English speaker pursuant to the assessment rubric. Statistical analysis using t-test revealed that the model developed was effective as it could improve student's pragmatic competence. In addition, the effectiviness was showed by significance difference between means of T2 and T1($t(22) = -7,854$, $p<0,05$). The finding strongly suggests that pragmatic-based English learning model shall be implemented in English learning at higher education institutions.

Keywords: Learning model, Pragmatic-based, English, Vocational college.

1. INTRODUCTION

Pragmatic competence is the ability of a speaker to produce appropriate utterances pragma-linguistically and socio-pragmatically. Pargma-linguistics isconcerned with the ability to make use the linguistic resources and socio-pragmatics is concerned with the ability of speakers to consider sociological aspects[1], suchas power (P), distance (D) and rank of imposition (R)[2]. The competence enables speakers to use a language functionally consistent with social context[3,4]. Other aspects paying important role in supporting the competence mastery are social status, knowledge of culture, and politeness[5].

There have been some studies in inter-language pragmatic teaching undertaken recently. Bardovi-Harlig[6] investigated pragmatic competence differences between native speakers (NSs) and non native speakers (NNSs) when responding to an offer.

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The investigation found that NSs tended to give suggestion and advices (instead of making refusals), while NNSs tended to make direct refusals. The study suggested that students should be exposed to authentic materials as much as possible, one of which is oral role play. This study is relevant with Kasper's[7] and Safont and Jorda's[8] view that pragmatic shall be taught explicitly. These studies made use discourse completion task (DCT) to collect research data which does not give naturally occurring data. The same instrument was also used by Gordon[9] to see how students can produce speech acts of request, refusal and apology. By involving sociological aspects of PDR, this study successfully found out that DCT could expose rich and comprehensible input for students. However, those studies were restricted only to measure students' pragmatic competence.

Research on developing parts of learning model was carried out by some scholars. Denny[10] undertook class action research by focusing on speech act of negotiation. The study succeeded in finding out an effective teaching stages, strategies, and authentic materials to support pragmatic teaching. In line with this, Castillo[11] also successfully created NAPKIN, a teaching stages, including *need, accurate introduction of subject matter, practice, knowledge review, internalization,* and *natural application*. This study pointed out that experimental learning which was able to correlate learners' action and cognition was considered very effective.

Study on explicit pragmatic teaching was also carried out by Alcon Soler[12]. By focusing on teaching speech acts of refusal, this study found out that the strategic technique to teach pragmatics is watching video, explaining refusal speech acts explicitly, recognizing sequence of refusal, and doing oral role play activity. A part from this study, Yuan[13] proposed that there are two domains the learning should be focused on: (1) learning content, including pragmatic knowledge, knowledge of intercultural communication, knowledge of English as a lingua franca as well as knowledge of language learning strategies, and (2) learning process, including task-based approach, intercultural communication approach, and

language learning strategies approach. Both studies still used DCT as data collecting instrument. Similar investigation on teaching refusal speech act explicitly was also done by Rycker[14]. In this case, Rycker[14] utilized naturally occurring data to compare between pragmatic competence of NSs and NNSs. The study suggested that explicit pragmatic teaching was sufficiently effective. And, Lenchuk and Ahmed's[15] study was also intended to see whether (or not) teaching pragmatic is essential. By developing lesson plan consisting of stages, such as *warming up, reading, acquiring compliment, listening, speaking, discourse completion task* and *listening*, this study concluded that students should be exposed to speakers' choice of expression of the target language.

The studies reviewed varied in term of intention, data collecting tools, research participant, scope of discussion and analysis. Some of them only focused on one speech act apart from request and refusal. Othe studies involved school students and workers out side educational institutions. Most of the studies utilized discourse completion task (DCT) as the data collecting instrument. Some studies' learning model focused on developing teaching stages and a simple learning materials for a number of meeting only.

However, there has been no study successfully developed a complete pragmatic-based English learning model, involving learning module, teaching stages or procedure, learning method, learning approach, as well as an assessment tool and rubric. Thus, this research was in purpose to develop a complete pragmatic-based English learning model at vocational college and to measure effectiveness of the developed model.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out pursuant to research and development (R&D) design proposed by Dick and Carey[16]. The development included a number of stages, such as needs analysis, developing learning model, validating the model, revising the model, and implementing the model.

Needs analysis was carried out to initiate the activity. This stage was done by observing learning activity recently, interviewing students, teachers, and stake holders on their perception about the current teaching activity, competence alumnae need to have at work places, and alumnae English competence. There was a lot of input obtained from hotel manager concerning what aspects in English learning shall be focused in order for student to be competent pragmatically.

Model development was started with designing and validating oral role play card which was used as the data collecting and pragmatic competence testing instrument of the research participants. Up on the instrument completion, the research participants were tested to see their base line performance. In addition, assessment rubric was also developed and validated. The rubric was designed to rate utterances of speech acts produced by participants. The third instrument to be developed was learning or teaching stages. The tool

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was made to be a procedure for lecturer who is assigned to teach using this module. Learning module was the last instrument developed as learning materials. Contents of the three instruments were adjusted so that they are correlated one another. Validation of the three instruments was done by expert judges.

The valid module was implemented in the ten-session lesson. Twenty three students were involved in the pragmatic-based English learning done for ninety minutes each. The students were from the institution where the researcher is incharge as a permanent lecturer. This is done in order for the researcher to have good access to the department where research participants are studying. The teaching was done by a teacher who was not assigned to handle the class regularly. During the model implementation, the lecturer applied the teaching stages developed in prior. Observation was done to the teaching and learning process to see whether (or not) the model implementation was effective. T2 was given after model implementation in those lesson lasted. Oral role play cards consisting of low imposing request (Rq R-), high imposing request (Rq R+), common refusal (Rf B), and specific refusal (Rf K) (as on T1) used to measure students' pragmatic competence. Students had to respond to each card by making utterances of speech acts. Utterances made on both tests were noted and recorded.

Utterances made by research participants were then explicated. They were noted in tables consisting of four columns of Rq (R-), Rq (R+), Rf (B) and Rf (K). A column following each speech act utterance was provided for scoring. A native speaker of English was assigned to give score for each utterance. Pursuant to assessment rubric, both test results (T1 and T2) were given score ranging from 1 to 4. Both test results were compared and analyzed to see effectiveness of the model developed.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

Table. 1. Frequency Table: Request-Low Imposition 1 (Rq R-)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Valid 1	5	21.7	21.7	21.7
2	7	30.4	30.4	52.2
3	11	47.8	47.8	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Table. 2. Frequency Table: Request-Low Imposition 2 (Rq R-)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Valid 2	1	4.3	4.3	4.3
3	18	78.3	78.3	82.6

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
4	4	17.4	17.4	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

participants' score on T1 and T2. There are five people obtained score 1 on T1 but none obtained the score on T2. The number of participant obtaining

that there is quiet significant difference between

Table. 3. Frequency Table: Request-High Imposition 1 (Rq R+)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Valid 1	9	39.1	39.1	39.1
2	8	34.8	34.8	73.9
3	6	26.1	26.1	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Table. 4. Frequency Table: Request-High Imposition 2 (Rq R+)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Valid 2	1	4.3	4.3	4.3
3	14	60.9	60.9	65.2
4	8	34.8	34.8	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Table. 5. Frequency Table: Common Refusal 1 (Rf B)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Valid 1	3	13.0	13.0	13.0
2	10	43.5	43.5	56.5
3	10	43.5	43.5	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Table. 6. Frequency Table: Common Refusal 2 (Rf B)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Valid 3	21	91.3	91.3	91.3
4	2	8.7	8.7	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Table. 7. Frequency Table: Specific Refusal 1 (Rf K)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Valid 1	5	21.7	21.7	21.7
2	12	52.2	52.2	73.9
3	6	26.1	26.1	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

Table. 8. Frequency Table: Specific Refusal 2 (Rf K)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Valid 3	19	19	82.6	82.6
4	4	4	17.4	100.0
Total	23	23	100.0	

In terms of Rq (R-), it can obviously be viewed

score 2 on T1was 7 people (30,4%) but the number decreased to 1 person or 4,3% on T2. Score 3 was achieved by the most participant in both tests (11 people or 47,8% on T1 and 18 people or 78,3% on T2). This is considered to be the sharpest increase ofall. Score 4 was the hardest to obtained. No participant gained the score (0%) on T1 and only 4 person (17,4%) participant gained the score on T2.

A different scene can be observed on students' pragmatice competence of Rq R+. Score 1 was obtained by 9 (39,1%) participant on T1 and no participant obtained score 1on T2. The number of participant achieving score 2 and 3 decreased, that is 8 dan 6 or 34,8% and 26,1% respectively. Participants' competence increased dramatically on T2. Score 3 was obtained by 14 people (60,9%). This is considered to be the most percentage. Score 2 could be obtained by only 2 people (4,3%). And score 4 was obtained by 8 people (34,8%).

Participants seemed to be more competent to produce speech act of refusal. In term of common refusal (Rf B), only 3 people or 13% participant obtained score 3 on T1, while the number of participant getting score 2 and 3 werebalanced, that is 10 (43,5%) people each. After being given treatment, no participant achieved score 1. Thenumber of participant getting score 3 increased 100% on T2, that is 21 (91,3%) people. far rapidly. Score 4 was obtained by 2 (8,7%) people.

Participants' achievement increased the most when making speech atcs of specific refusal (Rf K). It can be obviously seen that on T1, the number of participant obtaining score 1 and 3 were similar, that is 5 and 6 (21,7% and 26,1%). Score 2 was obtained by 12 (52,2%) people, and no participants obtained score 4. A lot better improvement occured on T2 however. It was aproved by the situation that no participant obtained score 1 and 2. Score 3 was obtained by 19 (82,6%) participant and 4 (17,4%) people obtained score 4.

The result of statistical analysis using paired t-test revealed that students' pragmatic competence upon thelearning increased significantly.

	N	Min	Max	Mean		Std. Dev.
Total Scr. T1	23	4	12	8,48	,435	2.086
Total Scr. T2	23	12	16	12,70	,239	1.146
Valid N	23					

Table.9. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean		Std. Dev.
	Statis Tic	Statis Tic	Statis tic	Statis tic	Std. Erro r	Statis tic

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(Listwise)

The result of statistical analysis using paired t-test showed that minimum score of participants on T1 was 4 and their maximum score on T1 was 12. However, their minimum and maximum score up on the implementation of the model in the learning was 12 and 16 respectively.

Table 10. Paired Sample Test

				Paired Differences				
	M	Std Dev	Std Err M.	95% conf. Intv. of Diff.		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Low	Upp			
P1 Total Scr T1	-4.217	2,575	.537	-5.331	-3104	-7.854	22	.000

Result of paired sample t-test showed that there was a significant diffrence between means of T2 (12,70) and T1 (8,48). The condition can be formulized as follows: t (22) = -7,854, p<0,05.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the point, it can be concluded that participants' competence in making the more complicated speech acts utterances was far higher than their competence in making simpler speech act utterances. It can be obviously seen that their competence (indicated by score) in producing speech acts of highly impossing request (Rq R+) dan specific refusal (Rf K) was better than producing speech acts utterances of low impossing request (Rq R-) and common refusal (Rf B). In addition, pursuant to production of speech acts of request and refusal, participants' competence in producing speech acts utterance of refusal both Rf B and Rf K was higher that their competence in producing speech acts utterances of Rq (R-) and Rq (R+).

The phenomenon may be resulted by phsycological factor, that is "force" and "motivation", both of which are based on consciousness. Phsycologically, students who were not familiar with the topic of learning, such as request and refusal were very much assissted by being given the initial activity of warming up, that is watching video. The elicitation activity with question and answer technic as well as giving trigger and challange, students became aware and conscious about the topic and felt to be challanged and forced to solve the problem given by the lecturer. To make students aware is actually the start of learning for them[17]. Thus, they could successfully make initial conclusion. This is actually the phase when meaningful learning occured. In other word, "force" could possibly make students confident as they could made up their mind to make an initial conclusion. It triggers them to do further learning.

In order for the students to get and to know the real reinforcement, a repeated statement about the theory or concept. This was done to assure that students or participant really understand the conclusion. With such an explicit approach they were able to produce utterances of speech acts more appropriately.

Of the four utterances produced by students, "force" was felt very much by students during producing speech acts of refusal as the producing of utterance was initiated and triggered by interlocutors' request. The request functioned as a challage for speakers to produce utterances. The students noticed and comprehended the request seriously and thus responded the request carefully. Thus, refusal could be produced more easily by students.

Force was effective to make students think actively and creatively.

concept or answer to the problem, the lecturer gave a clarification by giving a conclusion. To isert the clarification to students' mind, the lecturer did a

The second factor that can be put into consideration was motivation. Speakers' motivation to reach a goal plays an important role to their success in producing utterances. Motivation can be from two sources, internal and external. Internal motivation is the willingness of speakers to be able to utter a comprehensible speech act. Exetrnal motivation is environment which support speakers to produce utterances. Internal or self-motivation is very practical as it is the willingness of speaker to produce utterances consciously in order for interlocutor to feel convenient and not to loose face. Speakers in this case were aware that the success in producing pragmatically appropriate utterances would lead in interlocutors' convenience.

The condition will certainly trigger a good relationship between speaker and hearer, in this case hotel client and hotel staff. The good relationship will bring about a positive effect of hotel image. In addition, being aware that high impossing request (Rq R+) and specific refusal (Rf Khusus) utterances are far more complicated to produce as they are quite demanding, speakers are aware that they must produce indirect utterances of both speech acts with appropriate choices of lexicon and grammar, polite expression, as well as appropriate intonation. The effort was done as to avoid interlocutors' loosing face. This is an external motivation, that is, the motivation of speaker to produce utterances pursuant to features and condition of the speech acts.

Apart from low impossing request (Rq R-) and common refusal (Rf B), the speech acts of high impossing request (Rq R+) and specific refusal (Rf K) utterances has high flexibility. The speech act utterances are not based on procedure effective in the hotel, however, they requre speakers' effort of ellaboration, including, changing direct to be indirect speech acts, using embeded expression (salutation, opening, giving alternative, saying greeting and thanks, as well as use of communication strategies). The characteristic of the speech acts forces speakers to comprehend and produce responses which are able to minimize interlocutors' loosing face. The characteristic was consciously comprehended by the research participants and noticed (put it in their mind) to be intake[18].

The learning activity supporting flaxibility of students' thought was role play and extended practice. In the stages, lecturers explained and gave examples that responses made by students should be flexible and not pursuant to hotel procedures. Thus, in this study, the squence of SIRAT (salutation, information, Rq or Rf, alternative, thanks) is suggested to make it polite and avoid interlocutors' loosing face.

4. CONCLUSION

Pragmatic-based English learning model was found effective to improve students' pragmatic competence. This is evidenced with students' achievement up on the model implementation, which increased dramatically. Statistical analysis indicated that students were more capable to make the far more difficult speech acts (high imposing request and specific refusals). The tramedous achievement was resulted by the condition where students were aware of what they learned by noticing the inpts very carefully. With "force" from their lecturer and "motivation" from themselves, students found the learning very effective and meaningful that they could produce the more complicated utterances of speech acts far better. In addition, SIRAT (salutation, information, Rq/Rf, alternative, and thanks) was found to be effective sequence of speech act utterances.

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