DEVELOPING THE PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF FOREIGN LEARNERS: GUIDELINES TO USING CONSTATIVES IN MODERN ENGLISH DISCOURSE

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The article is devoted to the problems of foreign language education in linguistic universities, namely to acquiring the pragmatic competence by students. The research questions whether EFL learners are pragmatically competent in using language in a certain communicative situation. The experimental teaching session proves that the special research methods (descriptive, pragmatic, performative analyses) and divergent forms of learning the modal perspective of constatives in discourse can provide students with the appropriate knowledge base. The main conclusions drawn from this research are that EFL learners can have only elementary pragmatic competence without a special training session. Therefore the current study suggests the procedure of training the communicative skills in the appropriate use of constatives in the process of social interaction with the aim of developing the pragmatic competence of students and helping them acquire their proficiency in achieving certain goals in communication.

Keywords: pragmatic competence; foreign language education; constative; modality; verification; teaching strategies/methods.

Introduction

The pivotal message of the contemporary multiperspective studies presumes that language production, comprehension and variation are the most intricate and intriguing discussion matters being determined by many challenges in the process of foreign language learning (Aldhahi, Fernández-Parra, Davies, 2018). The difficulties arise from the fact that the basic verbal contents in an utterance can have variety of interpretations caused by nonverbal concomitant properties including the speaker's characteristics (age, gender, social rank, emotional and physical state, individual features, mentality, nationality, knowledge base, cultural background etc.) as well as the contextual demands (place, time, style, topical unity, structural identity and pragmatic correlation of information), supported by different deictic markers in discourse. Therefore, the acquisition of a foreign language is a complicated process, in which one of the most urgent tasks is to develop the pragmatic competence as a complement to the grammatical competence for achieving communicatively effective language use.

The current tendency in Applied linguistics is connected with instructing foreign language learners in the process of their speech interaction how to communicate effectively regarding the psychological type, gender, age and social status of their partners of communication (Altinsoy, Okan, 2017). The manner of categorising the world is displayed by verbal and nonverbal means, which are the cues for students in understanding the partner's personality as well as the reliability of the event depicted in their utterance. Hence, the utterance can vary greatly in its realisation, with all the parameters important for a particular conversation within social interaction (Hyland, 2000). Only the unity of both contextual and personal data can supply a profound understanding of the speech situation.

The study of the formation of the pragmatic competence of foreign language learners is mostly concerned with the analysis of the interpersonal level of the utterance reflecting both situation and personal features (sociolinguistic knowledge as the first part of pragmatic knowledge). It is also the level that deals with formal aspects of a language unit that reflect the interaction between communicants (functional knowledge as a second constituent of pragmatic knowledge). Each communicant acts with a particular purpose in mind. In some cases, that aim may be very prominent (as in a job interview); in others, it may be merely to sustain social relationships (as in phatic communication). The speech situation is predetermined by a certain speaker's strategy aimed at achieving particular communicative goals. The strategy – of which the speaker may not even be fully aware – is connected with language production unfolding in time, thus not all aims can be attained immediately. In most speech situations, a number of moves in turn-taking roles will be needed before the destined goal is achieved. Nevertheless, the speaker may have to deal with misunderstandings, interruptions, and irrelevancies, and even the rejection of his/her purposes, what leads to changing the strategy for the more effective in the speech situation. Achieving one's communicative purposes thus involves the input of energy, yielding a series of actions governed by the overall strategy; and these actions take place in accordance with the speaker's as well as the addressee's purposes and strategies (Hengevald, Mackenzie, 2008, p.71).

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Grammatical and pragmatic competences studied by Communicative Syntax and Pragmatics supply the EFL with the ability for creating and understanding discourse. Communicative syntax, aimed at generating grammatical competence, is fundamentally focused on the ways in which components of a discourse are organised for the achievement of the speaker's communicative strategy, and also with the structural properties of utterances that help the addressee to understand the speaker's goals. Pragmatics, focusing on forming the pragmatic competence, deals with investigating how speakers design their messages appealing to the addressee's current state of mind, their knowledge base, cultural background etc. (Hengevald, Mackenzie, 2008, p.72). The influence of these considerations upon the structure of linguistic units is examined under the rubric of pragmatic competence of EFL learners in their ability to modify the utterance and to understand its modal implication. The description of methods, forms and the process of acquiring the pragmatic competence by EFL learners in displaying and understanding the modality of the constative is the aim of the current article.

Due to the variety of communicative situations, it is crucial to develop pragmatic competence, which is the basic part in foreign language acquisition (Tulgar, 2016, p. 15). The issue of vital importance, as Kasper (1996) states, is not whether to teach pragmatics but how the pragmatic knowledge base is to be provided in the process of foreign language studying. Giving EFL learners examples and rules means supplying them with guidelines to proper language use in order to interact effectively in a particular communicative situation. The more students are instructed and the more varied the approaches to studying are, the more effective the result is. In order to develop the pragmatic competence in the teaching session in the University grammar course students as EFL learners are suggested divergent forms of studying: role-play, games, team work, competition, testing, writing essays etc. One of such forms – discourse analysis – is provided in the article with the descriptive approach applied which in contrast to the prescriptive focuses on describing the language as it is used, not saying how it should be used.

Our hypothesis is the EFL learners are not well aware of the sphere of using the lexical, grammatical as well as syntactic items used to display different emotions in daily communication. To check the assumption this research was initiated and carried out. The main research question put in this investigation is whether it is a problem or a habitual matter for students to express the emotional attitude towards the message transferred or received taking into account the situational parameters such as place, time of communication, roles of their partners, their age, social status, gender etc.

Methods

To prove the importance of gaining the pragmatic competence in using constatives, 2nd and 3^{d} grade students of Kyiv National Linguistic University were suggested the experiment which included three stages: 1) diagnostic: entry testing, 2) training: teaching session (which will be further discussed) and 3) checkout: final testing, designed to check the developing of the foreign language learners' understanding of the role of pragmatic features in communication. The entry test 'Testing the pragmatic competence of EFL students' included three parts: in Part 1 (Parts of speech) students were asked to state the parts of speech belonging of words in the sentence. At the next stage learners were suggested to fulfil the tasks of Part 2 (Modified utterances (individual work)): 1) Modify the sentence '*It is hot here'* so that to display the subjective attitude to the situation expressing: assurance, doubt, reliability, indignation, probability, annoyance etc.; 2) Give your explanations as to what communicative situation the sentence '*It is hot here'* can be used in. The last stage comprised the tasks of Part 3 (Discourse and discussion): section 'Team work' set the following tasks: 1) Make up a dialogue using the suggested sentence in one of the situations suggested. Discuss the situation from different topical perspectives, 2) State the subjective attitudes expressed in situations of your own, allot them to positive or negative and name the factors they are caused by; section 'Discussion' included two points: 1) Do you often use attitudinal words and expressions at your English classes? Provide the grounds, 2) Do you need a special teaching session to instruct you on the variations of utterances, marked by modal markers?

The methods of investigation included: the *deductive and the inductive* methods for searching and analysing information; the *descriptive* method for objectively analysing and describing how language is actually used by a group of people in a speech community; the *pragmatic* method is applied in the studying of the functioning of language units in speech, in a particular context of utterance; the *performative* analysis (initiated by J. Austin) is used at explaining the meaning of linguistic expressions in terms of their use in performing various speech acts (e.g., stating, asserting, hesitating, complaining, apologising, thanking etc.).

All the above-mentioned methods help describe the nature of interpersonal level, which adds much in discourse to the other one designating the reality in the utterance, called representational. The first is speaker-biassed, while the last is concerned with the correlation of the event presented in the utterance with

the reality (Hengevald, Mackenzie, 2008, p.130). There are a number of basic categories which we assume to be significant for the analysis of any language unit. These semantic categories in the classification of entity types presented by Lyons (1977) include: 1) an individual with their location in space and being evaluated in terms of its existence, 2) a state-of-affairs with its location in space as well as time and evaluated in terms of its reality, 3) a propositional content, being a mental construct, located neither in space nor in time and evaluated in terms of its truth (p. 442–447).

To develop the pragmatic competence the EFL learners were suggested a teaching session in the curriculum of the linguistic course "Modal perspective of the constative in Modern English discourse" that included four stages of teaching students to provide the event's assessment. Each stage incorporates the following parts: 1) the teacher's introduction (or students' pre-reading), 2) discussion, 3) practice, 4) testing.

Teaching session. Training stage 1 is aimed at studying ***constatives proper,*** which are facts and therefore are not marked by any modal means (Matruglio, 2018), being neutral in this case: *"My diploma is in the bottom bureau drawer with my two best dresses"* (Webster, 2006, p. 88).

In case EFL learners present some fact, there is no need to use any modal marker. Constatives proper can be attributed to the types of utterances with the objective modality, since the modality of reality appears to be the form of the Indicative Mood. However, the study of the constatives is complicated by the fact that any statement in the speech situation contains the implicit subject 'I', the presence of which is assumed by the act of speaking.

The case study provides students with the main types of constatives proper: a) about well-known and obvious truths; b) of the factual nature. Constatives proper about well-known truths convey information that was established as a result of numerous experiments, that is, information verified by experience and time. The only reason for the credibility of the fact (for example, that the surface of the sphere is four times larger than the circle) is that the evidence of scientific assertions was checked by a large number of scientists. Absolute confidence in the credibility of scientific reports is justified, since one cannot assume that all researchers made the same mistake. Credible in nature is also the knowledge of the philosophical nature, given in proverbs, sayings, aphorisms, which are a generalisation of human experience.

At Training stage 2 of the teaching session to signal 100% certainty the EFL learners practice using ***categorical constatives***, which amplify the factual character of the statement and reveal assertive modality marked by special linguistic means, such as modal verbs *must,* and modal expressions *I know, I am sure, probably, evidently etc.*: *"Everyone in the school knows he's waited for her by her locker every day this week. They're practically going together!"* (Steiber, 1992, p. 27).

It should be noted that the authorised complexes like *I state* may convey different pragmatic meanings, what depends not only on the semantics of the performative verbs, but on the situations in which they are used as in the example: *"I state that the camerlegno is the only priest here", Langdon said flatly* (Brown, 2000, p. 55). The assertion *'The camerlegno is the only priest here'* is complicated by a verb of argumentation "***to state***". The given utterance in the students' interpretation suggests that Langdon who speaks in front of his colleagues wants to show his authority and superiority over them, that is why he formally declares the fact about the priest.

The very fact that the scientific background significantly contributes to the credibility of information was obvious to the students in the example: *Last year he categorically proved that there exists an energy force that unites us all. He demonstrated that we are all physically connected* (Brown, 2000, p. 42). Here the authorised construction '*He proved'* is complicated by the qualifying adverb '*categorically'*, what excludes the possibility of doubting the theory underpinned by the results of the research.

At Training stage 3 of the teaching session having less certainty in the event, EFL learners practice using ***non-categorical constatives***, which reflect suppositional modality and contain hedges. Boyd et al.(2019) examined speculating and reasoning words (*think, would, might/maybe*) in 1299 turns of talk in two lessons in one classroom of six 4–5th grade English Language Learners. Statistical discourse analysis showed that S&R words were used by students for showing their *personal* 'connections' to the content. The scientists' discourse analysis showed how S&R word use cultivated a language of possibility and how the management of classroom discourse modality promoted dialogic talk (p. 25-35). The prevailing method of teaching here must be interactive for producing dialogical talk.

One of the effective methods for students to learn the usage of non-categorical constatives is analysing the illustrative material (a part of which is represented in the current article) and practising different involving activities in using hedges (making up dialogues or monologues, analysing discourse (videos, films, literary works), playing games etc.). By using hedge markers with low degree of certainty *I think, I suppose, I guess, I believe, I'm afraid* they study to diminish the factual status of the statement, pointing out that the statement has the status of supposition: *"I suppose Uncle Soames hasn't been going for the gloves"*

(Galsworthy, 1975, p. 112); *"I guess we should go"* (Steiber, 1992, p. 69); *"I'll die in harness, I hope"* (Galsworthy, 1975, p. 207). The verb of mental activity "*to believe*" also conveys a personal opinion and can hardly be an effective means of influencing the mental states of others, as can be seen from the following example: "*I believe that the full list comprises some four hundred and thirty-seven items, and can be viewed in Mr. Filch's office, if anybody would like to check it*" (Rollins, 2000, p. 13). In this very excerpt, the students found that Dumbldore just shares his knowledge, giving the information he believes to be true. The hearer is not obliged to believe Dumbldore; the former may either accept the given data as completely trustworthy or check their credibility himself. Thus, the students assumed that the verb "***believe***" possesses much weaker pragmatic meaning than the verbs "***state***" and "***prove***", i.e. a person suggesting something does not aim at convincing others, he/she is just giving personal opinion on the matter, which can be either accepted or easily rejected.

At Training stage 4 of the teaching session students learn to use ***problematic constatives*** with problematic/unreal modality (Conditionals) representing the contents of the utterance as possible but not at the moment of speaking (Conditional 1) or as impossible and unrealisable (Conditional 2, 3): *"And if I ever have any children of my own, no matter how unhappy I may be. I am not going to let them have any cares until they grow up"* (Webster, 2006, p. 56).

By doing plenty of practice students learn to verify the information they transmit and receive taking into account the content of the statement as well as other concomitant factors of a speech situation. The modality of the constative can vary depending not only upon the particular modal marker used, but also upon where the modal element is used in the sentence, the meaning of the sentence independently of the modal, the conversational context, and a variety of other factors. For example, the interpretation of an English sentence containing the modal verb '*must*' can be that of a statement of inference or knowledge (epistemic) or a statement of how something ought to be (deontic).

"Berenice didn't show up for classes. She must be sick" (Tushnet, 1978, p. 24);

"Berenice didn't show up for classes. She must be expelled" (Tushnet, 1978, p. 24).

The use of the modal verb *'must'* in the first example was interpreted by the students as indicating a statement of reasoned conclusion: the speaker concludes that Berenice is sick, because otherwise, she would have shown up for classes. In contrast, in the second sentence, 'must' is interpreted as a statement of how something ought to be: the speaker is saying that, because Berenice didn't show up for classes, she ought to be expelled.

The EFL learners can be suggested specific linguistic courses dedicated to the study of the modality of the constative or they can be introduced the emotive-verificational component value during Grammar classes. In each stage of the teaching session the students analysed specific for a certain type of the constative grammar issues, which included:

1. Modal verbs: *"I've just a moment, because I must attend two classes, pack a trunk and a suitcase, and catch the four o'clock train – but I couldn't go without sending a word to let you know how much I appreciate my Christmas box"* (Webster, 2006, p. 74);
2. Modal words or parenthetical phrases: *"Surely, sir, you've never had any bother here?"* (Galsworthy, 1975, p. 129); *"I'll be able to see all right, when he takes these bandages off," said Bill. "There's no question of maybe"* (March, 1978, p. 114);
3. Nouns: *"There is a slight possibility that he will return"* (Suckow, 1978, p. 99);
4. Adjectives: *"One thing was certain: somehow he would cut his losses!"* (Galsworthy, 1975, p. 113);
5. Verbs (with modal meaning in the Indicative Mood or in the Subjunctive Mood): *"Even if I had known, it would not have occurred to me as important enough to mention"* (Hailey, 2006, p. 193);
6. Non-finite clauses to mark hearsay (rumour, quotation, legend etc.): *"He is said to have chosen death"* (Thurber, 1978, p. 75).

For learning the pragmatic value of constatives during the teaching session EFL learners investigate different communicative situations through various activities. For achieving special goals teachers use certain strategies and methods, most of which deal with interactional dynamics (Dobrowolska, Balslev, 2017).

The effective ***strategies*** are: case study, cooperative learning (group work), problem-solving, discussion, active learning, plenty of practice and partners flexibility (taking into account the needs and peculiarities of partners and the situation).

The productive ***methods*** for forming the students' pragmatic competence in using constatives in Modern English discourse are: explaining, demonstrating (writing reports, essays, articles; literary sources studying for finding illustrative material (as it was shown in this research)), collaborating (group work: making up dialogues, making presentations, watching and discussing video materials), interactive/participatory (role play, game). The prevailing collaborating and interactive approach **creates a cooperative classroom** rather

than a competitive one. Students achieve success as a result of paying attention to their peers, asking questions, helping each other. Students do not compete. Instead, they are encouraged to embrace the knowledge from individuals all around them.

For instance, during the teaching session at the Grammar classes while studying modal verbs students practised the use of modal markers of different level of certainty in the form of the game "Guess the activity". This game is based on the informing some fact, which students should interpret from their point of view. The fact correlating to the constative proper can thus acquire the properties of either categorical or non-categorical constative by certain modal markers used in the students' statements.

Guess game: "Where did I go at the weekend?" aimed at studying supposition about the past possibilities in the form of the constative.

Teacher/student gives some clues: *I travelled by car. I had a rest. I was with my children…*

Students make their guesses using 1) modal words *perhaps, maybe, probably*, 2) modal expressions *it's (not) possible/likely, I'm positive/certain, there's a chance*, 3) modal verbs *must have Ved, had to have Ved, couldn't have Ved, mustn't have Ved* with strong degree of certainty or *may (not) have Ved, might (not) have Ved, could have Ved* with low degree of certainty. For example: *You may have visited your relative. You must not have travelled far.* Having made their supposition students can verify it by checking the teacher's version.

Another practice activity suggested at the Grammar classes was paraphrasing the sentence with the modal word or expression by using the correlating modal verb. For instance, in the sentence "*Perhaps they went to the zoo*" the modal word can be substituted by the modal verbs *might/may/could* with the Perfect Infinitive.

After the teaching session, having practised different activities and exercised various effective strategies suggested in the teaching session students were able to cope with the tasks of the final testing and to progress if contrasting its results to the entry paper.

Results and Discussion

Our assumption was the EFL learners are not successful in using language units to display different emotions in everyday communication. The main problem arisen in this research was whether it is difficult for students to express their attitude towards the message transferred/received taking into account the situational parameters such as place, time of communication, roles of their partners, their age, social status, gender etc.

The entry test revealed that before the topic was introduced, it was a complicated task for students even to allot correctly the words to appropriate word classes. They mostly confused adverbs and modal words, which are quite different in their grammatical roles: the adverb is dependent on the verb and provides the properties of an action, while the modal word modifies the whole sentence and signals about the attitude of the speaker towards the situation. The EFL learners were not aware of the modifications of the sentence in discourse marked with different emotions and failed to succeed. Moreover, they misinterpreted the verbal messages they had received from their colleagues and they failed to take into account many nonverbal parameters of communication. The entry testing results are the following: intermediate level pragmatic competence – 73 %, elementary – 27 %. The final testing was a success. Being provided with the instructions during the training session the students came to an understanding of the role not only of their grammatical but also of the pragmatic competence. The training session ended in the final test in writing and in the class discussion where practically all the learners presented their awareness of the pragmatic competence in using the constatives markers in accordance with the situation parameters. The final testing results are: advanced level pragmatic competence – 40 %, intermediate – 49 %, elementary – 11 %. As the figures clearly point out, the training session helped the EFL learners to develop their pragmatic competence.

The most intricate point in the study of the sentence by EFL learners was the interpretation of the nature of the sentence information capacity, the analysis of the content of which presupposes taking into consideration the unity of the objective – representational (in other terms, what is said) and the subjective – interpersonal (the speaker's propositional attitude toward what is said, e.g. the speaker's cognitive, emotive, and/or volition attitude) meanings. Taking into account both objective and subjective information provided in the constatives was essential for EFL learners to gain the pragmatic competence.

It was proved that the pragmatic competence is a significant component of the language competence. Accordingly, pragmatic properties of the language units should be included in the language curriculum of EFL learners. In order to supply students with the profound pragmatic knowledge, the grammar topics should incorporate the pragmatic functioning of all elements studied, namely the constatives which are under current analysis. After gaining the knowledge base of the constatives functioning in discourse, students should have enough practice to train the constatives use in different communicative situations. To develop the pragmatic

competence of EFL learners, teachers should: 1) have the necessary skills, 2) apply effective strategies and 3) practise divergent methods of teaching. All these factors are important for developing the EFL students' pragmatic competence in using constatives in Modern English discourse.

The process of analysing the modal perspective of the constative utterance was complicated as it is based on the study of the linguistic category of modality depicting: 1) the character of reference of what has been said to reality (verification), and 2) the correlation of the sentence's content with the speaker's activity. The most specific thing about the constative and its modal perspective for students to remember lied in the fact that verification was nevertheless subjective. They tried to estimate the situation as reliable/possible/unreal etc., taking into consideration both the information presented and the situation of communication with supporting extralingual factors (Berezenko, 2018). Students presenting the proper modal assessment of an event made their partner interpret the message as true/possible or unreal. Each EFL learner presenting a definite event correlated it with the moment of their speech actions, thus revealing their attitude to what they are talking about (Salimova, 2015).

At Grammar classes, the students learned to display their communicative intention taking into account that the pragmatic content of any utterance is represented in discourse by a statement ('constative' in terms of G. G. Pocheptsov (1975)) with the emotional-evaluative component. So, the basic type of an utterance still remains the constative as a pragmatic type of an utterance, the communicative-intentional content of which lies in assertion (p. 17), i.e. in stating the fact, as in the example: *"It is hot outside"* (Stevenson, 2008, p. 12).

It is very important for students to know the kernel sentence structures in the syntactic system of the foreign language under analysis. The constative, which is basically the simple sentence type, in its deep structure has a special component of communicative-intentional content "*I state*". This pragmatic element may become explicit when students convert direct speech into indirect: *He states that it is hot outside*. The cognitive base for such kinds of insertions is the student's mental state (doubt, hesitation, certainty, knowledge) about the event in the reality.

While studying different types of grammatical moods, students get to know that the constative is a pragmatic correlate to the declarative sentence as a type belonging to the Indicative mood, presenting events existing in the reality. The fact described in the constative, though, in the process of communication can be evaluated by students by specific linguistic means – the so-called ***hedges*** – belonging to various types of modality, such as *I think, I believe, I know, I hope, I doubt, It must be, perhaps, it is likely*, which provide different modal perspective of the same base sentence. Hedging as a significant metadiscourse tool can be used for various purposes. In most cases, it acts as a face-saving strategy and represents the certainty of the speakers' knowledge on the discussed issue (Lakoff, 1973). The significance of hedging can not be overestimated, though the excessive use of it may create a contrary effect. Only controlled use of hedging is an appropriate device for depicting the reality in an utterance. Hedging is important for all types of discourse, becoming even more valuable in academic discourse (Cuneyt, 2018; Hyland, 1998; Hyland, 2001).

In everyday class activity, students acquire skills of interpreting the reality in accordance with their subjective attitude towards it (Tatarinova, Shvetsova, 2019, p. 167). Certain verbal and nonverbal markers can help the EFL highlight the emotional-evaluative component within the constative, which gains in discourse different modal perspective, such as assertion, order, wish, supposition, hesitation, reality/unreality, credibility, deception etc. (Berezenko, 2018). EFL learners should be able to use both types of evaluation of speech situations:

A. emotional to express the feelings, evoked by the given situation (*it's a pity, I am glad*): *"I'm glad of that because it's the last drink you'll ever mix in my hotel"* (Hailey, 2006, p. 145);

B. verificational for assessing the situation in terms of its truth/falsity (*it is true, honestly*): *"It's true that I'm changed, but you must always be my friend. I am what I am"* (Wilde, 2006, p. 147).

In class communication students more often display the verificational rather than the emotional evaluation of the facts (due to the specificity of the communication in the process of University studying), which can be: 1) *neutral*, revealed by constatives proper; 2) *assertive*, designated by categorical constatives; 3) *suppositional,* corresponding to non-categorical constatives; 4) *unreal* represents the contents of the utterance as impossible and unrealisable, representing problematic constatives.

The subjective evaluation of the facts in students' communicative interaction signals about their level of mastering the language. The wider the use of modal expressions is, the higher students competences are. The value of modals is a rich domain for language-internal and cross-linguistic investigations as they determine the correlation of the utterance with the objective reality and the speaker's attitude towards the event depicted in the statement (Yang, 2013). The contents of the utterances cannot be limited to lexical and grammatical information only. Any utterance always includes a communicative-intentional or pragmatic message. Thus, the semantic structure of an utterance consists of two parts: a pragmatic component and proposition. The

pragmatic component mirrors the modal perspective, in other words, communicative intention of an utterance, while proposition reflects its cognitive contents. Both the cognitive contents and the communicative value of the utterance as well as the precise description of strategies (case study, cooperative learning, problem solving, discussion, active learning etc.) and methods of developing the pragmatic competence of foreign learners (explaining; demonstrating with writing reports, essays, articles; literary sources studying for finding illustrative material, collaborating group work with making up dialogues, making presentations, watching and discussing video materials; interactive/participatory) need thorough investigation in the perspective.

Conclusions

The major instruction in the study of constatives suggests that EFL learners should pay considerable attention not only to the objective information (representational level of the statement depicting the real state of events) but to presenting their subjective evaluation of the fact of emotional or verifiable nature (interpersonal level displaying the attitude towards the event). The gaining of the latter level in the process of learning English as a foreign language is very important for students in giving the proper sentence interpretation. The acquisition of the pragmatic competence in using constatives is signalled by students' use of particular verbal means, which are regulated by different extralingual factors in discourse. The verificational evaluation of the event reported in the constative utterance can supply the statement with numerous modifications: proper, categorical, non-categorical or problematic. Knowing the value of each statement and the way of its displaying students become pragmatically competent.

To conclude, the pragmatic competence in using constatives is an inseparable constituent of the language teaching and learning process. The goal of foreign language education is to instruct students how to properly and effectively use the language in different speech situations. At each grammar class, it is important for teachers to focus on the pragmatic competence of students and provide them with some helpful strategies that they can use to maintain successful communication. Therefore, the pragmatic competence must be an integral part of the foreign language acquisition. Supplying the students with the guidelines for using constatives is only a minor part of the process of teaching the pragmatic competence. To achieve this goal, there are still perspectives for further research aimed at students' progressing in using utterances of other types marked by verbal or even nonverbal means as well as at teachers' searching for other productive ways and strategies of teaching.

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