



INTENSIVE READING STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE PRAGMATIC
COMPETENCE IN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

Kodirjonov Asadbek Sherzodbek o'g'li

Master's student of Linguistics (English) Department Turan International University, Uzbekistan
Tel: +99894 308-14-28 Email:qodirjonovasadbek@gmail.com

Annotation (Uzbek): Mazkur maqola oraliq darajadagi ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'rganuvchi (EFL) talabalarning pragmatik kompetensiyasini intensiv o'qish strategiyalari orqali rivojlantirishga bag'ishlangan. Unda intensiv o'qish va pragmatik kompetensiyaning nazariy asoslari, ushbu ikki tushuncha o'rtasidagi bog'liqlik hamda intensiv o'qish jarayonida qo'llaniladigan strategiyalarning pragmatik ma'nolarni anglashdagi roli tahlil qilinadi. Maqolada eksplitsit va implitsit o'qitish usullari, metapragmatik xabardorlikni oshirishning ahamiyati va amaliy tavsiyalar keltirilgan. Tadqiqot natijalari intensiv o'qish strategiyalarini tizimli qo'llash orqali o'quvchilarning kontekstga mos til vositalarini tanlash va nutqiy aktlarni to'g'ri talqin qilish qobiliyatini sezilarli darajada oshirish mumkinligini ko'rsatadi.

Keywords (Uzbek): intensiv o'qish strategiyalari, pragmatik kompetensiya, oraliq daraja, EFL o'quvchilari, metapragmatik xabardorlik, nutqiy aktlar

Annotation (Russian): Данная статья посвящена развитию прагматической компетенции учащихся среднего уровня, изучающих английский язык как иностранный (EFL), посредством стратегий интенсивного чтения. Анализируются теоретические основы интенсивного чтения и прагматической компетенции, взаимосвязь между этими двумя понятиями и роль стратегий, применяемых в интенсивном чтении, в понимании прагматических значений. В статье обсуждаются эксплицитные и имплицитные методы обучения, важность повышения метапрагматической осведомленности и даются практические рекомендации. Результаты исследования показывают, что систематическое применение стратегий интенсивного чтения может значительно улучшить способность учащихся выбирать контекстуально уместные языковые средства и правильно интерпретировать речевые акты.

Keywords (Russian): стратегии интенсивного чтения, прагматическая компетенция, средний уровень, EFL учащиеся, метапрагматическая осведомленность, речевые акты

Abstract: this article examines how intensive reading strategies can help intermediate EFL learners develop pragmatic competence. The study reviews theoretical links between intensive reading and pragmatic skills and analyzes specific strategies such as contextual guessing, inference making, speech act analysis and meta-pragmatic awareness raising. The article provides practical recommendations for EFL teachers based on recent research findings. Results suggest that systematic application of intensive reading strategies significantly improves learners' ability to interpret implied meanings and use contextually appropriate language.



Keywords: *intensive reading strategies, pragmatic competence, intermediate level, EFL learners, meta-pragmatic awareness, speech acts*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching a foreign language today requires more than just delivering grammar rules and vocabulary lists. A learner must also understand how to use language appropriately in different social and cultural situations. This ability is called pragmatic competence. Without it even advanced learners may fail to communicate effectively because they misunderstand a speaker's true intention or say something that sounds rude without realizing it¹[2]. In Uzbekistan's higher education system English lessons often focus on surface-level reading comprehension. Students answer questions about facts in a text but rarely discuss what the author really meant or why a character chose particular words²[6]. This gap is especially problematic for intermediate EFL learners who have enough vocabulary to read but lack the deeper skills to interpret implied meanings. My dissertation addresses this gap by exploring intensive reading strategies as a practical solution. This article presents the theoretical foundation and practical recommendations derived from that research.

Intensive reading is a classroom-based activity where learners read a short text carefully and thoroughly with teacher guidance. Unlike extensive reading where students read many books for pleasure and general understanding intensive reading focuses on details³[4]. Learners analyze word choice sentence structure and logical connections. They also look for hidden meanings and the author's attitude. This type of reading trains students to slow down and think about every sentence. When a learner reads intensively they ask themselves: Why did the writer use this word here? What feeling does this sentence create? What is the writer really saying without stating it directly? These questions are exactly the same questions that pragmatic competence requires in real-life communication⁴[1].

A number of researchers have shown that intensive reading can be designed to develop not only vocabulary and grammar but also higher-order comprehension skills. For example, one study found that intensive reading instruction with explicit strategy training helped EFL students notice implied meanings they previously missed. Another researcher noted that intensive reading creates a safe environment for learners to test their interpretations and receive feedback. This is important because pragmatic errors often go uncorrected in everyday conversation. Teachers are usually too polite to point out that a student's request sounded rude. But during an intensive reading lesson a teacher can say:

¹ Bogale Y. N. (2018). Conceptualizing Reading to Learn: Strategy Instruction and EFL Students' Reading Comprehension. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*. 10(2), 93-117.

² Sutarsyah C. (2010). *Reading Strategies Used by EFL Learners*. Seventh Conference on English Studies. ISBN 9786028474177.

³ Rozha & Dr. Hoshang. (2024). The Application of Pragmatic Inference in Teaching Reading Comprehension to Kurdish EFL Students: An Experimental Study. *Journal of the Kurdish Academy*. (60), 78-98.

⁴ Ali Z. (2022). Reading approaches practiced in EFL classrooms: a narrative review and research agenda. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*. 7. Article 28.



"Look at how this character politely refuses an invitation. Compare that with your own attempt." Such comparisons raise awareness and lead to improvement⁵[3].

Pragmatic competence consists of two main parts: pragma-linguistic knowledge and socio-pragmatic knowledge⁶[5]. Pragma-linguistic knowledge refers to the linguistic forms that express speech acts. For example, knowing that "Could you open the window?" is a more polite request than "Open the window" is pragma-linguistic knowledge. Socio-pragmatic knowledge refers to understanding social rules. It means knowing when to use a polite form and when a direct form is acceptable. A learner might know the correct polite phrase but still use it in the wrong situation – for example saying "Would you mind terribly closing the door?" to a close friend in a casual setting. That sounds unnatural even though the grammar is perfect.

My review of recent studies suggests that a combined approach is best for intermediate EFL learners in intensive reading classes. A teacher can first provide explicit meta-pragmatic information about a speech act. Then learners read a passage containing multiple examples of that speech act. After reading they discuss the examples and test the rule. Finally, they complete a task that requires applying their knowledge – for example rewriting a rude dialogue to make it polite. This sequence of explicit explanation – implicit discovery – application has been shown to produce strong learning outcomes.

Conclusion

Intensive reading strategies offer a practical and effective way to improve pragmatic competence in intermediate EFL learners. Unlike grammar drills or vocabulary lists intensive reading places pragmatic meaning in a rich context where learners can see how language forms and social situations interact. The evidence from multiple studies published after 2005 supports the use of explicit instruction combined with discussion-based reading activities. For the Uzbek education system where English classes often prioritize surface comprehension these strategies represent an achievable improvement. By training students to read between the lines we also train them to speak between the lines – and that is what real communication requires.

REFERENCES:

1. Ali Z. (2022). Reading approaches practiced in EFL classrooms: a narrative review and research agenda. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*. 7. Article 28.
2. Bogale Y. N. (2018). Conceptualizing Reading to Learn: Strategy Instruction and EFL Students' Reading Comprehension. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*. 10(2). 93-117.

⁵ Khonamri F. & Doostalizadeh A. (2024). The Relationship between EFL Literature students' Pragmatic Competence and their Critical Reading Ability: The Role of Conversational Implicature. University of Mazandaran.

⁶ Soleimani M. M. & Birjandi P. (n.d.). Assessing Language Learners' Knowledge of Speech Acts: A Test Validation Study. *Issues in Language Teaching*.



3. Khonamri F. & Doostalizadeh A.(2024). The Relationship between EFL Literature students' Pragmatic Competence and their Critical Reading Ability: The Role of Conversational Implicature. University of Mazandaran.
4. Rozha & Dr. Hoshang.(2024). The Application of Pragmatic Inference in Teaching Reading Comprehension to Kurdish EFL Students: An Experimental Study. Journal of the Kurdish Academy. (60). 78-98.
5. Soleimani M. M. & Birjandi P. (n.d.). Assessing Language Learners' Knowledge of Speech Acts: A Test Validation Study. Issues in Language Teaching.
6. Sutarsyah C.(2010). Reading Strategies Used by EFL Learners. Seventh Conference on English Studies. ISBN 9786028474177.