LECTURER'S VIEW ON PRAGMATIC ISSUE: PRAGMATIC FAILURE AND PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

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Abstract*: Pragmatic is one of the important competences that should be mastered by language learners because it focuses on utterance and speaker meaning. With regard to its focus, pragmatics deal with language functions-that is what language expression is commonly used in a particular situation. As language function, there are some aspects of pragmatics to be known by language learners during communication. However, this idea is not in line with the real condition because most English teaching in Indonesia does not focus on it. The aim of this research is to know the lecturer's view on the pragmatic failures phenomenon, students' pragmatic competence, and the way to solve producing pragmatic failures in communication. This research belongs to qualitative research because it uses interview as data collection technique and analyze the phenomena using related theories. Pragmatic failures are caused by the lack of students' pragmatic understanding that affects their pragmatic's competence. Thus, they produce pragmatic failures when getting communication with others by using English. Reading poetry and understanding the meaning of it can help the students to develop their pragmatics' competence besides reading English magazine, newspaper, listening to music, etc. As language learner, reading poetry is recommended to be done in order to develop their pragmatics' competence and reduce a misunderstanding to communication.*

Keywords*: Pragmatics', pragmatics' failure, pragmatics competence*

INTRODUCTION

Being able to speak English becomes a popular trend among society today to be involved in a social communication. This trend is more popular among the language learners. It is a concrete performance to practice their English competences since they have learnt English for couple years. In the other hand, it can add their self-confidence while involving in an English communication. With regards

to this phenomenon, vocabulary and grammatical is required to be mastered by the language learner to support their practicing communication in English. Therefore, most of teachers drill them with vocabularies and grammatical to get a perfect speaking. Unfortunately, teachers' teaching method ignores the goal of language function in a communication.

Discussing about language function, pragmatics relies on this focus because it deals with language use, language in context, language appropriateness and language awareness. It is closely related to cultures and therefore, it is occasionally labeled as cross-cultural pragmatics (Thomas: 1983). According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of what speakers communicate and its interpretation by the hearer. Crystal (2003) defines pragmatics as the study language use which focuses on users' point of view and how the language used affects to the communication. Thomas (1999) pointed out that there are five areas covered in pragmatics: meaning disambiguation, complete meaning transfer, differentiating utterance meaning from what speakers intend to

say, how hearers interpret utterances, and figuring out why people communicate.

As pragmatics' focus on language use in a context, the language learners, who focus on English subject, are imperative to be knowledgeable of pragmatics and it relates to pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence is defined as the ability to convey and interpret meaning and to use language in context appropriately. To acquire the competence, language learners must have knowledge of language (language form) and how to use the language in particular situations or context in appropriate ways. (Saville-Troike: 2006 and Kasper: 1997 as cited in Wichien and Aksornjarung, 2011; Canale: 1983, as cited in Nguyen: 2011).

According to the Saville-Troike, pragmatic competence talks about the learner's ability to transfer and interpret meaning of language used in a particular context. This definition literally contrasts to the condition of English user in Indonesia. Most of them only focus on how to use their English appropriately and like a native without noticing their competence to

interpret the meaning. Most people suppose this phenomenon is as a common and normal, in the fact, it brings them into pragmatics' failure. Absolutely, it breaks their communication's goal and creates misunderstanding among the interlocutor.

This phenomenon belongs to pragmatic failure which is caused by many factors; one of them is pragmatic competence. I am interested to know the lecturer's overview about the phenomena of producing pragmatic failures by the students; improving their pragmatic competence and the chosen material to improve the students' pragmatics' competence.

Fortunately, the lecturer chooses poetry as the material used to improve the students' pragmatic competence with many considerations. Teaching poetry in language classes brings more feasible if the tool kit of linguistic techniques is appropriately employed for the understanding, interpreting, reading of the different poem types whether dramatic, descriptive or reflective (Elkommos: 2018). Therefore, this paper explores about the lecturer's overview about pragmatics issue, the importance of

improving students' pragmatic competence. Pragmatics' failure as the first-door to analyzes the gained data due to this research's topic.

The aim of this research is to know the lecturer's view on pragmatic issue; how the students produce pragmatic failures; the correlation between pragmatic failures and pragmatic competence and the way to minimize pragmatic failures. The data are collected, analyzed and described in form of words.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Related Theory
The Nature of Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of invisible meaning or how recognize what is meant even it isn't actually said or written (Yule: 2010). This statement is a development of his idea about pragmatics in 1996. Pragmatics is the study of relationship between linguistics form and the users of those forms (Yule: 1996, 2011).

As a result, pragmatics more concern to the analysis of the meaning of utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves. Cohen (2010) adds the definition of pragmatics has a numerous meanings depending on the

context and because of its taken term to something, it means the implication of that person is being practical.

In simply, a pragmatic approach involves the interpretation of people's meaning in a particular context and the context flow influences what is said. Absolutely, it requires people recognition to organize their want to say in accordance with who they are talking to, where, when and what circumstances they are.

According to Levinson (1983) pragmatic is the study of "ability of language users to pair sentences in the contexts in which they would be appropriate."

A wide explanation about pragmatic is delivered by Cruse (Cruse: 2006) "Pragmatics deals with aspects of meaning that are not 'looked up' but which are 'worked out' on particular occasions of use." Pragmatics deals with the uses made of those meanings. This is sometimes expressed by saying that semantics takes a formal approach and pragmatics a functional approach.

According to those explanations above, in simple words, pragmatic is the study deals with the language user's ability to find an implicit meaning of sentences within conversation.

The focus of pragmatics has been on area between semantics, sociolinguistics, and extralinguistics context. The boundaries between pragmatics and other areas have not been determined precisely.

Pragmatics, however, has not been without its own differences. To determine some of its peculiarities, several imitative terms have been proposed for the classification of the wide range of subject matters involved in pragmatics.

Leech (1983) draws on the term "pragma-linguistics" refers to the study of "the more linguistic end of pragmatics – where we consider the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions (namely, the speech act performed by an utterance)." He (1983) uses term "sociopragmatics" refers to the "sociological interface of pragmatics."

In other words, sociopragmatics is the study of the way in which conditions on language use derive from the social condition. In brief, pragmatics includes the study of: (1) how the interpretation and use of

utterances depends on knowledge of real world; (2) how the relationship between the speaker and the hearer influences the structure of sentences; (3) how speech acts are used and understood by speakers.

Pragmatic Failures and Pragmatic Competence

Particularly interesting about Thomas's description of pragmatic failure is the dichotomy between two types of pragmatic failure. She makes this distinction on the basis of difficulty of analysis and possible remedies in terms of both the responsibility of language teachers and the responses of language learners. She calls two categories of failure "pragmalingustic" and "sociopragmatic" failure.

Ziran (1988) in Lihui and Huang (2010) mentions that pragmatic failure refers to "failure to achieve the desired communicative effect in communication."

He further points out, "pragmatic failures are not the errors in diction, but those mistakes failing to fulfill communication because of infelicitous style, incompatible expressions, and improper habit" (Ziran: 1997). According to Ziran,

pragmatic failures are not errors in choosing words, but it is caused by inappropriate style, mismatched expression and unacceptable custom in communication so fail get the expectation communication between the speaker and the hearer.

Guanlian (2002) describe in details about pragmatics failures, "pragmatic failure is committed when the speaker uses grammatically correct sentences, but unconsciously violates the interpersonal relationship rules, social conventions, or take little notice of time, space and addressee" (Guanlian: 2002 in Lihui and Huang: 2010). Guanlian has a different understanding about pragmatic failure; he agreed that pragmatic failure is not caused by the mistakes in using grammatical, but he or she unconsciously broke the principle of interpersonal relationship, social rules and so on.

"There are three manifestations of pragmatic failure; pragmalinguistic failure, sociopragmatic failure and cross cultural pragmatic failure" (Ziran, 1988; Lihui and Huang, 2010). Ziran points out that pragmatic failure has three following three manifestations are pragmalinguistic

failure, sociopragmatic failure and cross cultural pragmatic failure.

The example of pragmatics failures is drawn below:

Misunderstanding at level 1 (failures to understand the proposition of S has expressed)

A (to fellow passenger on a long-distance coach): Ask the driver what time we get to Birmingham.
B (to driver): Could you tell me when we get to Birmingham, please? Driver: Don't worry, love, it's a big place—I don't think it's possible to miss it! (Thomas, 1983)

In this case, the driver understood that B's utterance was a request for information, but misunderstood the intended sense of when.

Many language experts confess that defining pragmatics is complicated because it covers the context of communication, either spoken or written.

Ellis (2008) offered that pragmatics covers interactional and speech act. Interactional acts concern on the structural discourse to make sure that the utterance enables to be received the receiver smoothly; how the speaker accomplishes the process of exchanging turns; how to open and close a conversation and how to order

acts to make sure a coherent conversation. In additional, speech acts concern on the language user efforts to perform specific action, in particular interpersonal functions such as compliments, apologies, requests, or complaints and all of them are performed in interaction.

Three components- grammatical, sociolinguistics, and strategic competence; that pragmatic competence; that pragmatic competence is included in sociolinguistic competence (Kasper: 2001).

Sociolinguistics was defined as the ability to produce and recognize socially appropriate language in context, operationalized as requests, offers and complaints produced in oral role-plays, the selection of contextually appropriate realization of speech act. (Kasper: 2000).

According to Ellis and Kasper opinion, pragmatic relates to the use of language to communicate with other people or the way to use language in communication by the native perspective. The function of language is to allow the interaction in a communication.

There is a correlation between

pragmatic failures and pragmatic competence when it is seen from the language experts; producing pragmatic failure by the students is caused by students' pragmatic competence. Having good pragmatic competence is the key success to create an interactive communication also the way to avoid misunderstanding among the interlocutors in communication.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

This research uses qualitative method to analyze the gained data because it describes in details all phenomena during interviews. Qualitative data collection is more than simply deciding or whether you will observe or interview people (Creswell: 2012 In Khasanah: 2019).

Qualitative research aims to describe the social phenomena as they occur naturally without manipulation of the situation under the study (Dornyei: 2007 in Khasanah: 2019). In another idea, qualitative research seeks to understand and interpret social phenomenon from the human perspective of the human participants in a particular natural setting. The source data of this study is the students

and lecturer of Universitas Teknologi Surabaya who involves Pragmatics. The third researcher prepares the interview's checklist for the students and the lecturer. Recorder is also prepared by the third researcher as the tool to collect data beside interview's checklist. It helps the researchers to save the conversation between the researcher and the informants.

As the first action, the second researcher interviews three students randomly to collect the data. She uses three students because the total of students who join pragmatic class is no more than five people. Most of students choose literary subject. Later, the third researcher does an interview the lecturer to collect the supporting data of this research. The third researcher uses conversational interview to know the lecturer's view of pragmatic issue; pragmatic failures; pragmatic competence and the way to minimize pragmatic failures.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Pragmatic competence is the main issue of the research which is developed by the lecturer through poetry. As mentioned in related theory, pragmatic is the study of

understanding the invisible meaning of utterances among the interlocutors, the reader and the writer.

A. The Phenomena of Producing Pragmatic Failure

Pragmatic failure is the main issue of this research corresponds to pragmalinguistic failure and sociopragmatic failure. As mentioned in review of related study, pragmatic failure is the inability of the hearer to understand the speaker's goal in his or her utterance (Ziran: 2004; Huang and Lihui: 2010), the hearer's inability is caused by many factors; one of them is the inappropriate diction of the speaker.

The inappropriate diction of the speaker refers to the pragmalinguistic failure; the speaker takes for granted that the hearer is able to understand his meaning and he, thus, makes an inappropriate utterance (Ziran: 2004; Huang and Lihui: 2010).

Pragmalinguistic failure is not only produced by the hearer but the speaker also. When the listener does not understand the speaker's goal in conversation, it is not totally the listener's mistake because the speaker, probably, has made a mistake in choosing the words. There are many

reasons of producing pragmatic failurein communication. One of them is the mistake in choosing the words as mentioned above. The effect of environment or society is also the reason of pragmatic failure, a sociopragmatic failure. The different cultural background and understandings are two of the causes of sociopragmatic failure among the interlocutors.

The researchers find most of English department students in Universitas Teknologi Surabaya produce pragmatic failures which considered to either pragmalinguistic or sociopragmatic failure shows from the students' interview about pragmatics understanding and it is also supported by the lecturer's opinion about producing pragmatic failures by the students.

The second researcher notes the phenomena of producing pragmatic failures during interviewing students.

R:"*Good morning! Please take your seat and how is your life?"*
S1: *just silence*
S2: *just smiling*
S3: *no response*(int/R2/S/1)

The researcher repeats the greeting and let them to sit for twice, the students do not respond to her. She starts conversation with the students,

asking about pragmatics definition and some expressions and responses. The researcher also asks their reason not to respond her greeting.

R: *"Why you do not respond my greeting?"*
S1*:"Uhm..I don't know, Ma'am!"*
S2*: "I do not know, Ma'am!"*
S3: **"I just know, how are you and sit down please!"**(int/R2/S/AD)

The researcher continues the interview and it goes well until the moment they fail to respond the researcher's compliment to them when completing the interview.

R:*"Well, our conversation   is quite pleasant, I am proud of you. Thank you!"*
S1: *just smiling*
S2: *"Thank you ma'am!"*
S3: **"Ah ma'am, you can!"**
R: *"Pardon?"*
S3:**just silence**
R: *"What you just say to me?"*
S3:**"Ah….ibu bisa saja!"**
R: *"Oh I see!"*(int/R2/S/5)

The bold sentences of dialogues above belong to the phenomena of producing pragmatic failures by the students. The students produce two kinds of pragmatic failures at the same time, pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatic failures.

At the first and second dialogue, most of students' answer belongs to pragmalinguistics failure because they do not understand the meaning of the

expression used to greet them. Additionally, pragmalinguistics failure occurs because the speaker chooses inappropriate diction during conversation, thus the idea of speaker fail to be gained by the hearer.

In the other hand, most of the students produce sociopragmatic failures because they are used to listen the greeting, **how are you** and **sit down please!** Their English teacher always expresses the bold line expressions above when opening their English class. Those bold expressions above shows that the social environment has a big contribution to someone's thinking, attitude and speech style in a conversation.

Pay attention to the first and third student's responses, 'just smiling' and **'Ah ma'am, you can!'** This phenomenon shows how the social environment influences her mind until she says unconsciously. The appropriate expression to respond the researcher compliment is **'thank you and smiling',** to show our respect to the speaker due to politeness, positive face. In the fact, two students break the concept of positive face because of their habit and the competence of pragmatics. Of course,

this phenomenon belongs to sociopragmatic failure; the listener fails to respond the speaker in a well-track because of her social environment.

B. Lecturer's View

The lecturer explains her opinion about the reason why producing pragmatic is enabling to occur. She also explains how the students produce a pragmatic failure to respond to some simple daily expression.

"I am so surprise when my students cannot respond my utterance. I do believe if they produce pragmatic failures successfully here." (Int/R1/L/1)

The lecturer is surprised to know if the students produce pragmatic failures in unconditionally. It means, she does not predict if the students is enable to do respond to her utterance. The students are not in purpose to produce it because they do not know the meaning of her utterance.

"If the speaker wrong to chooses the diction and the listener does not know the meaning. It can be the listener does not hear the diction which is uttered by the speaker. This situation chance to produce pragmatic failures" (Int/R1/L/2)

She also agrees that producing pragmatic failure is caused by the inappropriate diction of the speaker, thus the listener fail to understand the speaker's utterances. In a simply word, the listener does not know the chosen diction or not familiar with.

Additionally, she mentions many reason of producing pragmatic failures.

"I find many reasons of the students producing pragmatic failure such as:
1. *Students' pragmatic competence is poor;*
2. *Past experience in studying English;*
3. *Afraid of studying English;*
4. *Not confident and inferior to speak English;*
5. *Drilling and memorizing;*
6. *Do not like the teacher at school;*
7. *Bullying and traumatic;*
8. *Social factor* (Int/R1/L/3)

The lecturer believes those points are the factors of producing pragmatic failures. She also gives two different examples of producing pragmatics failure. The first is producing pragmatic failures to respond the greeting expression.

L: Good afternoon, class!
S: Good afternoon, Ma'am!
L: ***How is your life today?***
S: be silence

The second is producing pragmatics failure to respond asking to do something.

S: Sorry Ma'am, I come late.
L: That's okay, *just take your seat!*
The student waits her lecturer to let her sit down.

L: Why you do not sit down?"
S: I am waiting for you to invite me to sit, Ma'am."
L: Have I invited you?"
S: I do not listen you say *'sit down, please!'* to me, Ma'am."
If I classify the lecturer's mentioning the reason of producing pragmatic failures, I get two kinds of pragmatic failure; pragmalinguistic failure and sociopragmatic failure. Pragmalinguistic failure is caused by the inability of the hearer to understand the speaker's meaning within utterances. This is influenced by the listener's pragmatic competence. Even, sociopragmatic failures are caused by the listener's social experience, life experience, and culture also.

Related to the mentioned factors and the real examples, having poor pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence is integrated to each other. There is misunderstanding here because the students do not know the meaning of

chosen diction by the speaker. These phenomena remind me to previous study which concern on producing pragmatic failures in sociopragmatic area. Misunderstanding of politeness to reply invitation by using English culture is one of the factors of producing pragmatics' failure among the students (Khasanah: 2019).

Due to Khasanah's opinion about producing sociopragmatic failures phenomenon happen because of students' politeness misunderstanding. She agrees if the students respond the invitation using their own culture though it is incorrect. They should understand English culture in order to respond an invitation appropriately.

C. Resolving Pragmatic Issue: Pragmatic Failure and Pragmatic Competence

In this case, I find the similarity between Khasanah's phenomenon and the lecturer's. Both of them have the students who produce pragmatic failures, either pragmalingustics or sociopragmatic failure.

Additionally, the lecturer explains to me about the importance of having pragmatic competence to minimize producing pragmatic failures, either pragmalinguistics or sociopragmatics failures. The purpose is to avoid

misunderstanding during the communication is running. I do believe, sociopragmatic is also the suggested competence should be mastered by the students.

"The students should study CCU, Cross-Cultural Understanding, to improve their pragmatics competence, especially sociopragmatics competence. Reading English magazine, English newspaper, BBC, VOA even reading English poetry is the way to improve their pragmatic competence." (Int/R1/L/4)

The lecturer believes if the students' pragmatic competence will be improved by studying cross cultural understanding or CCU. Reading about western culture, English magazine, listening to the news from BBC, VOA, watching English movie is the numerous ways to improve students' pragmatic competence.

"When I teach them poetry, I also explain to them about the culture of the writer. Knowing the writer's situation while writing poetry is one of the ways to understand one culture and I hope it can improve their pragmatic competence in sociopragmatics' area." (Int/R1/L/5)

At the closing session of interview, the lecturer tells how she improves her students' pragmatic competence through poetry. She asks the students to find an English poetry and read it carefully. Thus, she asks them to understand the content of poetry without finding any information from Google and tell their understanding with their own words. She also asks them to note some found phrases or words that they do not know. After that, the lecturer explains the meaning of poetry randomly due to the real situation of the poetry.

"I do not say your work is wrong. No! Because pragmatic response during reading poetry is totally belongs to the reader. I just explain the writers' background and teach some phrases or words that they do not know. I hope they can respond directly when they hear or read the similar phrases or words found." (Int/R1/L/6)

At the end of interview, the lecturer points out some phrases or words which belongs to implicature, politeness, speech acts and many elements of pragmatics. She hopes the students' pragmatic competence can be improved by studying poetry with some notes, the lecturer should show the words or phrases belong to pragmatics.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusions

Pragmatic is a study that focuses on the intended meaning of an utterance. It occurs among the interlocutors, either writer and reader or the speaker and listener. This study often leads misunderstanding and fails to get the goal of communication among the interlocutors.

Getting failure and misunderstanding in communication refers to producing pragmatic failures. Pragmatic failure is the inability of the listener to get the intended meaning in an utterance during communication. Pragmatic failure is enables to spoil the mood of the speaker to explain the goal of the utterances. Absolutely, it causes the speaker discontinue his conversation.

Pragmatic failure can occur in any circles even students. Producing pragmatic failures of students' circle often occurs when they are involving in English conversation. There are many reasons in producing pragmatic failures by students, one of them is their pragmatic competence is poor.

Pragmatic competence is the main component to create a smooth and interactive communication among the interlocutors. As the language learner, pragmatic competence should be mastered to create an interactive communication and minimize misunderstanding. Moreover, it also minimizes producing pragmatic failures in a communication.

There are many ways to minimize producing pragmatic failures, such as reading magazine, newspaper, listening BBC news, VOA, listening musing, watching movie and reading literature, poetry which relates to English. Resolving pragmatic failures through poetry is suggested by the lecturer because the students the students should translate the text to understand the context. Furthermore, explaining the cultural background of the writer enables to improve their CCU and open their mind about English.

Suggestions

As the language learner, mastering pragmatic competence is a must to create a smooth and interactive communication. There are many ways can be done by the students to improve their pragmatic competence, one of them is by reading poetry. Furthermore, improving

pragmatic competence can minimize misunderstanding of communication. Of course, it also minimizes producing pragmatic failures in communication and spoils the atmosphere among the interlocutors.

As the lecturer, pay more attention to the students' pragmatic competence in order to help them creates a coherence and smooth communication. Moreover, the lecturer should give the appropriate materials which improve students' pragmatic competence.

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