

A probe into how nonnative teachers deal with pragmatics

This survey seeks to collect information on the experiences of nonnative language teachers as they teach their learners about the pragmatics of the target language, whether it be more a second-language experience (where the language is spoken extensively in the learners' immediate community) or more a foreign-language experience (where the language is not spoken extensively in the learners' immediate community). For the purposes of the questionnaire, pragmatics is viewed as dealing with intended meanings, assumptions, and actions in both oral language and written language (especially as used in texting and emailing).

There are twenty questions in this survey, including both multiple-choice, short-answer, and open-ended items. Please focus just on the class or classes in which you are likely to teach the most about pragmatics. The questionnaire should take about 20-30 minutes to complete.

Thanks so much for your assistance. – Andrew Cohen (Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota)

1. What language(s) did you grow up speaking?

2. What language are you teaching now?

3. For how many years have you been teaching this language?

4. What levels of the language do you teach?

- Beginning
- Intermediate
- Advanced
- Other (e.g., a course). Please provide a brief description.

5. In several sentences, please describe how you achieved the language proficiency that enables you to instruct others in it.

6. Focusing just on the language course in which you are most likely to teach about pragmatics, indicate the extent of coverage that the following areas of pragmatics are likely to receive:

	Extensive coverage	Fair amount of coverage	Some coverage	Little coverage	No coverage
Politeness/impoliteness	<input type="checkbox"/>				
How to make requests	<input type="checkbox"/>				
How to apologize	<input type="checkbox"/>				
How to compliment and respond to compliments	<input type="checkbox"/>				
How to complain	<input type="checkbox"/>				
How to criticize	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Greetings and leave taking	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Thanking	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Conversational style (e.g., turn-taking, appropriate listener responses)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Humor	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sarcasm	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Teasing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cursing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The temporal, discursive, affective, and indexical roles of discourse markers like "well," "you know," "so," "I think," "on the other hand," "frankly," and "as a matter of fact"	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Conversational implicature (i.e., the implied meaning as interpreted by listeners based on context and knowledge of how conversation works)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

7. Please indicate the extent to which you feel comfortable serving as a resource for information about the specifics of pragmatics in your language of instruction:

8. If you encounter classroom moments when you don't feel like an authority on some aspect of pragmatics, what do you do about it? Indicate the extent to which you do the following:

	Extensively	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
I acknowledge my lack of knowledge to my students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have my students serve as data gatherers by checking with native speakers and then reporting back to the class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I teach what I know and hope it is adequate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use as a point of departure the pragmatics of my first language or of some other language.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please explain)

9. Pragmatics focuses on how the language is interpreted in a given sociocultural context within the target community. How would you assess your knowledge of the language and of the sociocultural contexts in which the language is likely to be used? (Mark all that apply.)

- Very knowledgeable about both the language and the sociocultural contexts
- More knowledgeable about the language than the sociocultural contexts
- More knowledgeable about the sociocultural contexts than about the language
- Still a learner in both the language and the sociocultural contexts within the target community

Please comment

10. It is said that teaching the pragmatics of a *foreign* language is more challenging than teaching the pragmatics of a *second* language since in foreign-language learning the learners are presumably not living in the target-language context. In your own experience as a language teacher, does this distinction still work for you?

Yes

Somewhat

No

Please explain.

11. FL Teachers: Do you think your students' development of pragmatic ability is influenced by their *not* living in the target-language community? Explain.

12. L2 Teachers: Do you think your students' development of pragmatic ability is influenced by their living in the target-language community? Explain.

13. Regarding your methods for teaching pragmatics,

All of the time Most of the time Sometimes Rarely Never

To what extent do you teach the pragmatics of the target language explicitly?

Please comment.

To what extent do you have your students access digital media (e.g., movies, YouTube, etc.) in learning pragmatics?

Please comment.

To what extent do you teach regional and dialect differences in pragmatics (e.g., the ways pragmatics differs in the Hispanic world)?

Please comment.

14. How do you motivate your students to learn about the norms for target-language behavior? Explain in a few sentences.

15. If you are teaching in more of a foreign-language situation, what activities have you found helpful in teaching pragmatics?

16. If you are teaching in more of a second-language situation, what activities do you found helpful in teaching pragmatics?

17. What do you do when you notice that a student has deviated from accepted norms for target-language pragmatic behavior?

18. What if your students' deviations from target-language norms are on purpose – namely, an expression of their self-identity (sense of agency)? How do you deal with that in the classroom?

19. What areas of pragmatics would you like to have more information about?

20. Thinking about specific areas of pragmatics (such as those listed in question #6 above), in what areas of pragmatics might you be interested in seeing the results of research?

21. Providing contact information is optional.

Name

Educational Institution

Street Address

City

State/Province

ZIP/Postal Code

Country

Email Address

Thank you so much for your time and willingness to provide feedback with regard to the role of pragmatics in your instruction!