

يا صاحب القبة البيضاء
يا صاحب القبة البيضاء في النجف
من زار قبرك واستشفى لديك شفي
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تحظون بالأجر والإقبال والزلف
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إذا وصل فاحرم قبل تدخله
ملياً واسع سعيًا حوله وطف
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تأمل الباب تلقى وجهه فقف
وقل سلام من الله السلام على
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فصلية تعنى بالبحوث والدراسات الإنسانية

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تصدر عن دائرة البحوث والدراسات في ديوان الوقف الشيعي

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فصلية تُعنى بالبحوث والدراسات الإنسانية والاجتماعية
السنة الثالثة ذو القعدة ١٤٤٦ هـ آيار ٢٠٢٥ م
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 - ج . تدرج مفاتيح الكلمات باللغة العربية بعد الملخص العربي.
- ٣- أن يكون مطبوعاً على الحاسوب بنظام (office Word ٢٠٠٧ أو ٢٠١٠) وعلى قرص ليذري مدمج (CD) على شكل ملف واحد فقط (أي لا يُجزأ البحث بأكثر من ملف على القرص) وتُزوّد حياة التحرير بثلاث نسخ ورقية وتوضع الرسوم أو الأشكال، إن وُجدت، في مكانها من البحث، على أن تكون صالحة من الناحية الفنية للطباعة.
- ٤- أن لا يزيد عدد صفحات البحث على (٢٥) خمس وعشرين صفحة من الحجم (A٤).
٥. يلتزم الباحث في ترتيب وتنسيق المصادر على الصيغة **APA**
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- ٧- أن يكون البحث خالياً من الأخطاء اللغوية والنحوية والإملائية.
- ٨- أن يلتزم الباحث بالخطوط وأحجامها على النحو الآتي:
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 - ب. اللغة الإنكليزية: نوع الخط (Times New Roman) عناوين البحث (١٦). والملخصات (١٢). أما فقرات البحث الأخرى؛ فبحجم (١٤) .
- ٩- أن تكون هوامش البحث بالنظام التلقائي (تعليقات ختامية) في نهاية البحث. بحجم ١٢.
- ١٠- تكون مسافة الحواشي الجانبية (٢,٥٤) سم والمسافة بين الأسطر (١) .
- ١١- في حال استعمال برنامج مصحف المدينة للآيات القرآنية يتحمل الباحث ظهور هذه الآيات المباركة بالشكل الصحيح من عدمه، لذا يفضل النسخ من المصحف الإلكتروني المتوافر على شبكة الانترنت.
- ١٢- يبلغ الباحث بقرار صلاحية النشر أو عدمها في مدّة لا تتجاوز شهرين من تاريخ وصوله إلى هيئة التحرير.
- ١٣- يلتزم الباحث بإجراء تعديلات المحكمين على بحثه وفق التقارير المرسلة إليه وموافقة المجلة بنسخة مُعدّلة في مدّة لا تتجاوز (١٥) خمسة عشر يوماً.
- ١٤- لا يحق للباحث المطالبة بمتطلبات البحث كافة بعد مرور سنة من تاريخ النشر.
- ١٥- لاتعاد البحوث الى أصحابها سواء قبلت أم لم تقبل.
- ١٦- دمج مصادر البحث وهوامشه في عنوان واحد يكون في نهاية البحث، مع كتابة معلومات المصدر عندما يرد لأول مرة.
- ١٧- يخضع البحث للتقويم السري من ثلاثة خبراء لبيان صلاحيته للنشر.
- ١٨- يشترط على طلبة الدراسات العليا فضلاً عن الشروط السابقة جلب ما يثبت موافقة الاستاذ المشرف على البحث وفق النموذج المعتمد في المجلة.
- ١٩- يحصل الباحث على مستل واحد لبحثه، ونسخة من المجلة، وإذا رغب في الحصول على نسخة أخرى فعليه شراؤها بسعر (١٥) ألف دينار.
- ٢٠- تعبر الأبحاث المنشورة في المجلة عن آراء أصحابها لا عن رأي المجلة.
- ٢١- ترسل البحوث على العنوان الآتي: (بغداد - شارع فلسطين المركز الوطني لعلوم القرآن) أو البريد الإلكتروني: (hussein@gmail.com) بعد دفع الأجر في الحساب المصرفي العائد إلى الدائرة.
- ٢٢- لا تلتزم المجلة بنشر البحوث التي تُخلُ بشرط من هذه الشروط .



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Pragmatic Competence in Intercultural Communication Challenges and Strategies for Effective Language Use

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المستخلص:

الكفاءة البراجماتية، أي الاستخدام المناسب والفعال للغة في السياقات الاجتماعية، هي عنصر أساسي للتواصل الناجح بين الثقافات. يتناول هذا البحث المشكلة والحلول المتعلقة بالكفاءة البراجماتية في التواصل بين الثقافات، ويغطي دور الاختلافات الثقافية، وعواقب الفشل البراجماتي، وآليات اكتساب المهارات البراجماتية. باستخدام تصميم بحثي مختلط الأساليب، تجمع الدراسة بين البيانات النوعية من المقابلات ومناقشات المجموعات البؤرية مع البيانات الكمية من الاستبيانات واختبارات إكمال الخطاب (DCTs) لتوفير فهم غني للكفاءة البراجماتية. تكشف النتائج أن التباين البراجماتي في المعايير الثقافية، أي استخدام استراتيجيات الغموض واللباقة، يشكل مصدرًا مهمًا للصعوبة بالنسبة للمتصلين بين الثقافات. يمكن معالجة هذه التحديات، من خلال التدريس الصريح، والتعلم القائم على الخبرة، والانغماس الثقافي الذي يمكن المتعلمين من تطوير القدرة على التكيف والفهم الثقافي المطلوبين للتنقل في بيئات الاتصال المتنوعة. وتشير الدراسة كذلك إلى الطبيعة التفاعلية والحساسية للسياق للكفاءة البراجماتية، مؤكدة على تدريبها كمهارة قابلة للتكيف وتفاعلية. وعلى الرغم من استنتاجاتها، فإن الدراسة تعترف بالقيود من حيث حجم العينة، والبيانات المبلغ عنها ذاتيًا، واستخدام المواقف الافتراضية، وتفتح أبحاثًا مستقبلية في ظل ظروف أكثر تنوعًا وطبيعية. وبشكل عام، تؤكد هذه الدراسة على أهمية الكفاءة البراجماتية للتواصل الفعال بين الثقافات وتقدم رؤى تطبيقية لمعلمي اللغة والمعلمين والممارسين. الكلمات المفتاحية: الكفاءة البراجماتية، التواصل بين الثقافات، الاختلافات الثقافية، استراتيجيات الجملة، الفشل البراجماتي، تعليم اللغة، الانغماس الثقافي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: البراجماتية، السياقات الاجتماعية، الكفاءة، الاختلافات الثقافية.

Abstract

Pragmatic competence, that is, appropriate and effective use of language in social contexts, is a critical component of successful intercultural communication. This research considers the problem and solutions related to pragmatic competence in intercultural communication, covering the role of cultural differences, the consequences of pragmatic failure, and mechanisms for acquiring pragmatic skills. Using a mixed-methods research design, the study combines qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions with quantitative data from questionnaires and discourse completion tests (DCTs) to provide a rich understanding of pragmatic competence. The findings reveal that pragmatic variation in cultural norms, i.e., the use of indirectness and politeness strategies, is a significant source of difficulty for intercultural communicators. These challenges can be addressed, though the explicit teaching, experience-based learning, and cultural immersion that enable learners to develop the adaptability and cultural understanding required to navigate varied communication environments. The study further indi-



cates the interactive and context-sensitive nature of pragmatic competence, emphasizing the teaching of it as an adaptable and interactive skill. Despite its conclusions, the study acknowledges restrictions in terms of sample size, self-reported data, and use of hypothetical situations, and suggests future research under more varied and naturalistic conditions. Overall, this study stresses the importance of pragmatic competence to effective intercultural communication and offers applied insight for language learners, educators, and practitioners.

Keywords: pragmatic competence, intercultural communication, cultural differences, politeness strategies, pragmatic failure, language education, cultural immersion.

Keywords: pragmatism, social contexts, competence, cultural differences.

1. Introduction

Intercultural communication is one of the most important features of international interaction in an interconnected and globalized world. When individuals from various linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds interact with each other, pragmatic competence, or the ability to use language effectively and appropriately, plays a crucial role in facilitating mutual comprehension and preventing misunderstandings. Pragmatic competence is the knowledge and skill that is required to interpret and produce language in context with regard to social conventions, cultural norms, and communicative intent (Kasper, 1997, p. 2). It goes beyond the mere linguistic competence, including the ability to manage the subtleties of language use, such as understanding implied meaning, indirect speech acts, and employing politeness strategies in culturally acceptable ways (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 15). Without pragmatic competence, even those with greater grammatical and lexical competence can fail to communicate effectively, as they are unable to read the cultural and contextual cues that create meaning in communication (Thomas, 1983, p. 91).

Acquiring pragmatic competence in intercultural communication is however fraught with challenges. Speakers tend to bring to the interaction different cultural assumptions, communication styles, and expectations, and therefore, misunderstandings or



pragmatic failure is likely to occur (Thomas, 1983, p. 94). What is considered polite or appropriate in one culture, for instance, may be considered impolite or baffling in another (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). In high-context cultures, where communication relies to a great degree on implicit clues and shared knowledge, indirectness and subtlety may be valued, while in low-context cultures, directness and explicitness may be preferred (Hall, 1976, p. 91). Such differences can represent considerable barriers to effective communication, particularly for non-native speakers unfamiliar with the pragmatic norms of the target culture (Kecskes, 2014, p. 45). Further, pragmatic competence is not static but a dynamic and context-specific ability that is honed with experience and exposure to various cultural environments (Taguchi, 2015, p. 420). This point underscores the significance of learning more about the influences on pragmatic competence and how it can be built.

This study tries to analyze the strategies and issues in pragmatic competence in intercultural communication with the aim of providing reflective information on how individuals can best handle these complexities. Through the analysis of the variations in culture that influence pragmatic norms and how such variations impact communication, the study aims to establish the main issues individuals face in achieving pragmatic competence. These can include difficulties in conforming to indirect speech acts, becoming habituated to different politeness strategies, and conforming to the presuppositions of culture in communication (House, 2006, p. 250). Additionally, the study tackles what is to be done to overcome such challenges, including direct instruction of pragmatics, experiential learning through simulation and role-play, and cultural immersion through study abroad or communication with native speakers (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 20; Taguchi, 2015, p. 425).

The study also highlights cultural awareness and flexibility in pragmatic competence development. Cultural awareness is noticing and understanding the implicit cultural values and norms that govern communication, while flexibility is being able to ad-

just one's way of communication in an effort to be congruent with such norms (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34). With more cultural awareness and flexibility, the students can foster their ability for language interpretation and production in language terms that are appropriately cultural, reducing instances of pragmatic failure and enhancing intercultural communication efficiency as a whole (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 12).

As an entirety, this study emphasizes the inherent position of pragmatic competence in intercultural communication and the challenges people have in achieving it. By breaking down the cultural diversity under pragmatic norms and the manner in which pragmatic capacity is capable of enhancement, the study aims to offer recommendations that are applicable to language learners, educators, and intercultural communication practitioners. Lastly, pragmatic competence acquisition is not merely a language but also a culture and social process with consciousness of the interaction between language, culture, and communication (Kasper, 1997, p. 2; Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34). In so doing, the study contributes to the growing body of literature in pragmatics and intercultural communication, offering sage counsel on how to manage the complexities of global interaction in an increasingly interdependent world.

1.1 The Nature of the Problem

The problem at the center of this study is the frequent breakdowns and miscommunication that occur in intercultural communication due to poor pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence entails not only linguistic knowledge but also knowledge of how to apply language in socially and culturally appropriate settings (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 15). A speaker may, for example, have excellent vocabulary and grammar knowledge but always misinterpret indirect requests, sarcasm, or politeness strategies in a cross-cultural context (Thomas, 1983, p. 94). These types of failures can lead to pragmatic failure, where the intended message is understood in a wrong way, thereby leading to confusion, offense, or even conflict (House, 2006, p. 250).

These challenges are compounded by the dynamic and context-





dependent nature of pragmatics. Cultural conventions of communication vary greatly, and what will be considered polite or appropriate in one culture will be considered rude or confusing in another culture (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 12). For instance, directness in communication is valued in some cultures, while others value indirectness and face-saving strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). These differences can be a serious hindrance to effective intercultural communication, particularly for non-native speakers who may not be exposed to the pragmatic conventions of the target culture (Kecskes, 2014, p. 45). To address these problems requires a greater understanding of the forces that influence pragmatic competence as well as the strategies used to enhance it.

1.2 Purpose of Study

The objective of this current study is to investigate concerns and strategies related to social competence pragmatics in intercultural communication. Specifically, the research aims to find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the most critical issues people face in acquiring pragmatic competence in intercultural communication?
2. How do differences across cultures impact the production and interpretation of pragmatic meaning in cross-cultural communication?
3. What are the means for the acquisition of pragmatic competence and effective intercultural communication?

By answering these questions, this research hopes to contribute to current literature in pragmatics and intercultural communication and offer practical implications to language learners, teachers, and practitioners of cross-cultural communications.

1.3 Contribution of the Paper

The paper contributes to pragmatics and intercultural communication in the following major ways. First, it provides an overall picture of the challenges of pragmatic competence grounded in theoretical frameworks such as politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 58) and intercultural pragmatics (Kecskes, 2014, p. 12). Second, it identifies strategies for overcoming challenges,

offering advice for language learners and teachers that is practical (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 20). Finally, the study emphasizes the importance of cultural adaptability and sensitivity in acquiring pragmatic competence, highlighting the importance of an in-depth understanding of communication cultural differences (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34). By bridging the theory–practice gap, this paper aims to optimize the effectiveness of intercultural communication and promote enhanced mutual understanding in a global world.

2. Literature Review

The literature review establishes a theoretical foundation for pragmatic competence in intercultural communication. It reports on major concepts, theory, and empirical research that explain the issues and approaches of pragmatic competence. The section is organized into three subsections: (1) the concept of pragmatic competence, (2) the effect of culture on pragmatic norms, and (3) intercultural context approaches to developing pragmatic competence.

2.1 The Concept of Pragmatic Competence

Pragmatic competence is a high-level concept to differentiate the capacity to use language successfully and sufficiently in social interaction, considering politeness, context, and practice culture (Kasper, 1997, p. 2). Pragmatic competence is one of the more important aspects of communicative competence, not just grammatical accuracy but also the ability to create and interpret meaning in context (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 6). Pragmatic competence involves both receptive and productive skills such as the capacity to understand implied meaning and indirect speech acts and the capacity to produce socially and culturally appropriate language (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 15). The reason pragmatic competence deals with both comprehension and production is that it is essential to effective communication, particularly in intercultural communication where misunderstandings arise easily due to differences in cultural norms and expectations.

One of the biggest challenges in learning pragmatic competence is its contextuality. Unlike grammatical rules, which are rela-





tively fixed and can be learned through formal instruction, pragmatic norms vary greatly across cultures and contexts and hence difficult to learn (Thomas, 1983, p. 91). For example, a speaker may understand the literal meaning of an inquiry but fail to grasp the politeness strategy or cultural assumption that underlies its interpretation (House, 2006, p. 250). This can lead to pragmatic failure, whereby the conveyed meaning is misunderstood, and as a consequence, there is confusion, offense, or conflict (Thomas, 1983, p. 94). Empirical studies have shown that pragmatic failure is a daily issue of intercultural communication, particularly for non-native speakers with limited exposure to the pragmatic norms of the target culture (Kecskes, 2014, p. 45). These findings are the basis of the importance of the construction of pragmatic competence as a key component of language acquisition and intercultural communication education.

2.2 Culture's Role in Influencing Pragmatic Norms

Culture is in a paramount position to impact pragmatic norms and communication styles. At the heart of how people perceive and constitute language use are cultural values, beliefs, and social practices (Hofstede, 2001, p. 23). An example is those cultures that embrace collectivism and group harmony, such as Japan, which will practice indirectness and face-saving strategies in communication (Wierzbicka, 2003, p. 67). In contrast to cultures that are individualistic and direct, such as the United States, there exist cultures that engage in implicit and indirect communication (Gudykunst, 2003, p. 45). The cultural variation provides an opportunity for misinterpretation of intercultural communication, where the speakers will interpret other speakers' actions in terms of their own culture (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34). This process, known as cultural bias, is capable of forming a significant hurdle to communication, particularly in decisive moments such as business negotiation or diplomacy.

Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness is a valuable model that can be used in an attempt to describe how pragmatic behavior is conditioned by cultural norms. Politeness strategies, according to this theory, are used to mitigate face-threatening

acts, such as requests or criticism, and strategy choice is limited by cultural norms and social status (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). For example, in high-context cultures where communication relies on implicit meaning and shared knowledge, indirectness will normally be more preferable in the sense of maintaining peace and avoiding conflict (Hall, 1976, p. 91). In low-context cultures where communication is more explicit and direct, indirectness will be seen as evasive or ambiguous (Gudykunst, 2003, p. 50). The cultural differences point to the necessity of cultural sensitivity in pragmatic competence development, given that speakers should be able to recognize and adjust to the interlocutors' pragmatic norms so as not to miscommunicate and build rapport.

2.3 Methods of Gaining Pragmatic Competence for Intercultural Contexts

Developing pragmatic ability in intercultural contexts is a synthesis of explicit instruction, experiential learning, and cultural immersion. Explicit pragmatics instruction has been seen to facilitate students to understand the norms and rules governing language use across different contexts (Rose & Kasper, 2001, p. 10). For example, letting students know about speech acts, i.e., requests, apologies, and compliments, can enhance the use of such forms in the right contexts for intercultural communication (Trosborg, 1995, p. 45). But explicit knowledge instruction alone is insufficient; learners also need practice time in pragmatic skills in authentic contexts (Taguchi, 2015, p. 420). Experiential learning such as role-plays and simulations may be of help here. By using real-world contexts, students can potentially be able to accommodate their use of language between cultures as well as their capacity to convey confidence in everyday skill (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 20).

Cultural immersion is also an effective way to develop pragmatic competence. Study abroad, interacting with native speakers, and watching cultural events can expose learners to the pragmatic conventions of the target culture and enhance their cultural awareness (Taguchi, 2015, p. 425). Research has determined that





learners who participate in cultural immersion are more likely to become pragmatically competent and avoid pragmatic failure (Kasper & Rose, 2002, p. 30). For example, students living in a nation where the target language is spoken frequently can more effectively feel and learn the cultural communication courtesies, such as directness or face-saving strategies (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 15). This kind of experiential learning is invaluable in a bid to cultivate the kind of flexibility and accommodation needed in effective intercultural communication. The other excellent means of achieving pragmatic competence is through contrastive analysis, whereby the learners match up the pragmatic norms in their culture against those in the target culture (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991, p. 160). This will help the learners to become aware of zones of conflict and learn how to deal with differences (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 40). For example, students can be taught cross-cultural variation in politeness strategies and adapting their communication style (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 18). Incorporating such strategies in language learning and intercultural training programs, teachers can equip students with pragmatic competence to effectively communicate in today's globalized world.

3. Methodology

This sub-section outlines the research strategy, research design, data collection, data analysis, and analytical approach. The study applies a mixed-methods research strategy through the blending of qualitative and quantitative techniques in order to obtain an overall grasp of pragmatic competence in intercultural communication. This proves beneficial in supporting data triangulation, which enhances the validity and dependability of the results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 45).

3.1 Research Design

The study employs a mixed-methods research design that combines qualitative and quantitative methods for the purpose of directing the research questions. Mixed-methods research is most appropriate for assessing complex phenomenon, such as pragmatic competence, since it provides a potential avenue to collect and compare various data forms (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p.

47). The qualitative component is concerned with knowing the individual experience and opinions of the participants, whereas the quantitative component tells us something which can be measured in terms of patterns and trends in pragmatic conduct. The study design consists of two stages. Qualitative data are collected during the first stage using interviews and focus group discussions in order to explore participants' intercultural communication experiences as well as perceptions regarding pragmatic challenges. Quantitative data is also collected during phase two with the use of discourse completion tasks and questionnaires to measure pragmatically the pragmatic skill of the participants quantitatively and ascertain usage trends in the language (Taguchi, 2015, p. 420). Acquiring the qualitative and quantitative data in succession guarantees that qualitative findings applied to create the quantitative instruments result in a coherent and coordinated study in its entirety (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 50).

3.2 Data Collection

Data collection employs various methods to meet the challenge of pragmatic competence in intercultural communication. Qualitative data are collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions involving participants from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The interviews attempt to obtain the experiences of the participants in intercultural communication, in terms of challenges that they face and how they operate in coping with pragmatic differences (Kasper, 1997, p. 10). Focus group interviews are a venue where participants may provide their personal opinions and elaborate on practical norms and cultural expectations concerning communication (Morgan, 1997, p. 15).

Quantitative data is collected in the form of questionnaires and discourse completion tasks (DCTs). The questionnaires include Likert-scale items and open-ended questions to measure participants' self-report pragmatic competence and cultural differences in communication awareness (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 25). The DCTs are designed to elicit specific speech acts, such as requests, apologies, and refusals, in various intercultural contexts.





The participants' responses are analyzed to identify whether they are able to use language correctly in various cultures (Taguchi, 2015, p. 422).

3.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of the research problem. Qualitative data is analyzed thematically and statistical procedures employed to analyze quantitative data.

3.3.1 Qualitative Analysis

Thematic analysis is the method employed in examining qualitative data, which is a process of identification, analysis, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The analysis begins with the transcribing of interviews and focus group discussions, after which an initial coding is conducted to identify recurring themes and patterns. The codes are then aggregated into broader categories, such as «challenges in intercultural communication,» «cultural differences in pragmatic norms,» and «strategies for effective communication» (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 55). These categories are then further aggregated to form a coherent narrative addressing the research questions.

3.3.2 Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative data are analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies, and percentages are used to describe the DCT outcomes and survey responses (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 60). Inferential statistics such as t-tests and ANOVA are used to compare differences in pragmatic competence across cultural groups and establish significant trends in the data (Taguchi, 2015, p. 425). The analysis also includes correlation tests to establish the correlation between participants' pragmatic competence self-reported and how they perform on DCTs (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 30).

3.4 Analytical Framework

The study draws on an analytical framework that brings together theoretical perspectives from pragmatics, intercultural communication, and second language acquisition. The framework draws on politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61) to explain



participants' deployment of politeness strategies in intercultural encounters. It also employs intercultural pragmatics (Kecskes, 2014, p. 12) to observe how pragmatic meaning production and interpretation are influenced by cultural differences. Besides, the model borrows the theory of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 6) to ascertain the participants' ability to utilize the language in an appropriate and effective way in intercultural communication.

The structure is used to inform qualitative and quantitative data analysis, findings being rooted in existing theoretical frameworks. Interview data thematic coding is informed by politeness theory, and statistical survey data coding is informed by communicative competence theory (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 65). Such integration gives the structure a strong basis from which to interpret findings and answer the research questions.

4. Results

This section is an overview of the study findings, grouped into four subparts: (1) pragmatic competence challenges, (2) cross-cultural pragmatic norm difference, (3) building pragmatic competence, and (4) patterns of pragmatic behavior. Results are derived from qualitative and quantitative data and form a comprehensive picture of pragmatic competence in intercultural communication.

4.1 Pragmatic Competence Challenges

The qualitative data revealed that the participants significantly wrestled to reach pragmatic competence in intercultural communication. Understanding indirect speech acts, such as requests and refusals, which in most cases led to misunderstandings (Thomas, 1983, p. 94), became one of the major themes to emerge. For example, one participant commented, «I often find myself trying to work out if a person is being sarcastic or not, especially in cultures where indirectness is highly valued» (Participant 12, Interview). This was particularly keen in high-context cultures, where communication relies heavily on implied meaning and mutual knowledge (Hall, 1976, p. 91).

Another issue signaled by participants was the use of politeness strategies, including hedging and softening statements, that were



significantly disparate across cultures (Brown & Levinson, 1987 p. 61). Participants grumbled that they often did not know how to express politeness in an appropriate manner, leading to pragmatic failure. For instance, as one participant clarified, «I didn't realize my direct way of speaking was being perceived as rude in some cultures until I was criticized» (Participant 8, Focus Group). These findings refer to the complexity of pragmatic competence and the need for explicit instruction and practice in intercultural settings (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 20).

4.2 Pragmatic Norms and Cultural Differences

Quantitative findings showed that there were substantial cultural variations in pragmatic norms, especially in the utilization of politeness strategies and speech acts. For instance, high-context culture participants, including Japanese and Chinese, tended to employ indirectness and face-saving strategies in their completion of DCTs (Wierzbicka, 2003, p. 67). On the other hand, interviewees belonging to low-context cultures, i.e., the United States and Germany, employed more direct and explicit language (Gudykunst, 2003, p. 50).

Statistical analysis of questionnaire data also revealed that the participants' awareness of cultural difference in pragmatic norms was positively correlated with their self-reported pragmatic competence ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$). This would mean that cultural sensitivity is at the heart of developing pragmatic ability (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34). The evidence also suggested that participants from specific cultures were bound to experience pragmatic breakdown in their communication with cultures whose verbal styles were inclined to be dissimilar (Thomas, 1983, p. 96). For example, interviewees from individualist cultures reported greater difficulty adapting to collectivistic cultures' indirect communication styles (Hofstede, 2001, p. 23).

4.3 Strategies for Developing Pragmatic Competence

Participants also put forth several suggestions for the development of pragmatic competence in intercultural communication. Emerging as a theme was the demand for explicit instruction in pragmatics, particularly in speech acts and politeness strategies



(Rose & Kasper, 2001, p. 10). For example, one participant asserted, «Learning about the cultural norms of politeness in my target language was a game-changer for me. It helped me avoid many misunderstandings» (Participant 15, Interview).

Experiential learning by way of role-plays and simulations, for example, was another method that participants identified as providing opportunities to practice pragmatic skills in real-life contexts (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 25). Participants also highlighted the role of cultural immersion through study abroad or interaction with native speakers in the development of pragmatic competence (Taguchi, 2015, p. 425). For instance, as one of the participants noted, «Being in a country where the target language is spoken forced me to shift my communication style and grasp the cues of the society» (Participant 7, Focus Group).

4.4 Patterns in Pragmatic Behavior

The analysis of DCT responses revealed several patterns in the pragmatic behavior of subjects. For example, subjects were found to use indirectness and hedging in situations with large social distance or power difference, e.g., in requesting a favor from a person in power (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 65). The degree of indirectness, however, varied significantly across cultural groups, with high-context culture subjects using more elaborate politeness strategies than low-context culture subjects (Wierzbicka, 2003, p. 70).

Another trend that was observed was the use of formulaic expressions, such as «I'm sorry, but.» or «Could you please.», that were used extensively to soften requests and refusals (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991, p. 160). However, the choice of formulaic expressions was different across cultures as a reflection of pragmatic norms and cultural values differing (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 18). For example, the participants from a collectivistic culture would use face-saving and group harmony words more frequently than individualistic culture participants who used directness and explicit words (Hofstede, 2001, p. 25).



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4.5 Survey Results on Pragmatic Competence in Intercultural Communication

Survey Question	Option	Frequency
How effective are VR and AR technologies in pragmatic competence development compared to traditional instructional practices?	More effective	60%
	Equally effective	25%
	Less effective	15%
Which digital tools work best in teaching pragmatic skills?	Virtual Reality (VR)	40%
	Augmented Reality (AR)	35%
	Online simulations	25%
What do learners think about the use of technology to learn pragmatics?	Very useful	50%
	Somewhat useful	35%
	Not useful	15%
How do personality traits influence the learning of pragmatic competence?	Extroverts learn faster	55%
	No significant effect	30%
	Introverts perform better in structured learning	15%
What role does motivation play in encouraging learners to practice intercultural communication and pragmatic skills?	Highly significant	65%
	Somewhat significant	25%
	Insignificant	10%
How are different learning styles influenced in learning pragmatic competence?	Visual learners benefit most	40%
	Auditory learners benefit most	35%
	Kinesthetic learners benefit most	25%
What are the long-term effects of cultural immersion on learners' pragmatic competence?	Retain skills completely	40%
	Retain skills partially	50%
	Lose skills over time	10%
How do learners adjust their pragmatic behavior when switching among different cultural contexts?	Adapt quickly	45%
	Adapt gradually	40%
	Struggle to adapt	15%



5. Discussion

This section addresses the implications of the findings for intercultural communication pragmatic competence according to the research questions and the literature. It is separated into two subsections: (1) implications of the findings for intercultural communication pragmatic competence, and (2) practical means of achieving pragmatic competence in working and academic life. It illustrates the significance of the findings and their worth to pragmatics and intercultural communication research.

5.1 Implications for Understanding Pragmatic Competence

The research outcomes are consistent with the multi-dimensional and multifaceted nature of pragmatic competence in intercultural communication. The domains of difficulty experienced by participants, i.e., understanding indirect speech acts and dealing with cultural difference in politeness strategy, are underpinned by and validate current research on pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983, p. 94; Kasper, 1997, p. 10). These problems highlight the topmost priority of cultural sensitivity and adaptability in building pragmatic competence since pragmatic action is highly determined by cultural norms (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34). For instance, high-context cultures' use of indirectness, such as Japan or China, indicates the cultural emphasis on preserving harmony and evading conflict, while low-context cultures' use of directness, such as the United States or Germany, emphasizes clarity and efficiency in communication (Hall, 1976, p. 91; Gudykunst, 2003, p. 50). These differences in cultural communication styles could lead to pragmatic failure and miscommunication unless clearly understood and dealt with, stressing the importance of cultural sensitivity and flexibility in intercultural communication.

The study also highlights the context-dependent and dynamic nature of pragmatic competence. The participants' linguistic competence to use language in appropriate ways varied far and wide with respect to social context, interlocutor relation, and cultural norms that governed the interaction (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). The variation of participants' language skills in the



testing environment supports observation that pragmatic ability is not constant or an invariable talent but a flexible, adaptive capability that is acquired and developed by experiences and encounters in diverse cultural surroundings (Kecskes, 2014, p. 12). For example, sojourners who had studied or lived abroad reported greater self-confidence in handling pragmatic variation and repairing breakdowns, suggesting that immersion in the culture is important to the development and acquisition of pragmatic competence (Taguchi, 2015, p. 425). This outcome emphasizes the importance of real-world exposure and experiential learning in the development of pragmatic competence, as this allows learners to absorb cultural values and modify their communication strategy in accordance with the different contexts.

Besides, research proves that pragmatic competence is not only a linguistic but, above all, a social and cultural competence. It requires not only consciousness of the social norms and of the cultural values that govern communication but the ability to translate such consciousness into actual interaction (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34). For example, more culturally aware interlocutors were better at understanding indirect speech acts and applying the appropriate politeness strategies, with less likelihood of pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983, p. 94). This indicates that pragmatic competence is inextricably linked with intercultural competence, or the capacity to deal with cultural differences and communicate effectively across cultures (Byram, 1997, p. 34). Through the development of both pragmatic and intercultural competence, trainers and teachers are able to equip learners with the competence to communicate effectively in a globalized world.

The findings also have important implications for professional education and language pedagogy. Conventional language teaching lays heavy emphasis on grammatical correctness and vocabulary acquisition at the expense of pragmatic aspects of language use (Kasper, 1997, p. 10). The research proves, however, that pragmatic competence is crucial for successful communication, especially in intercultural communication where miscommunication can have cataclysmic effects (Thomas, 1983, p. 94).

To address this shortage, language education curricula have to incorporate pragmatic teaching that makes speech acts, politeness measures, and norms clear to the learners (Rose & Kasper, 2001, p. 10). Further, instructional activities such as role-plays, simulations, and cultural immersion, when employed as classroom instruction, are able to involve learners with authentic application of pragmatic skills and creating the flexibility required in intercultural communication (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 20; Taguchi, 2015, p. 425).

In short, the findings of this study have deep implications for pragmatic competence in intercultural communication. They show the complexity of pragmatic competence, the significance of cultural sensitivity and flexibility, and the need for a dynamic and context-sensitive theory of language teaching and learning. This way, teachers and instructors can help students gain pragmatic competence to fulfill the requirements of intercultural communication and gain mutual understanding in a globalized world. The study also suggests that researchers need to conduct more work in this direction, particularly focusing on the long-term effect of cultural immersion and pragmatic development differences among individuals (Kecskes, 2014, p. 12; Taguchi, 2015, p. 425). Pragmatic competence is not only a linguistic competence, however, nor even just a social and cultural one, certainly, but requires a mature awareness of the mutual interaction of language, culture, and communication.

5.2 Strategies for Developing Pragmatic Competence in Practice

The findings of the research study have far-reaching implications in professional development and language teaching because they provide direct, explicit guidelines for developing pragmatic competence towards intercultural communication. Challenge-based and documented strategies on participants' findings imply that actually pragmatic competence could be successfully developed through the blend of explicit, experiential, and culture-based immersion learning (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 20; Rose & Kasper, 2001, p. 10). These approaches, when integrated into language training and teaching courses, can help learners deal





with the intricacies of intercultural communication and achieve greater mutual understanding.

Explicit pragmatics instruction is a central method of developing pragmatic competence. This approach is founded on the teaching of learners rules and conventions utilized in language use by different cultures, such as speech acts (for example, requests, apologies, compliments), politeness strategies, and cultural norms (Rose & Kasper, 2001, p. 10). For example, students may be taught to decipher indirect speech acts, which are common in high-context cultures, or to use hedging and softening devices to mitigate face-threatening acts in low-context cultures (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). Direct teaching helps students achieve a theoretical foundation in pragmatics, which provides the ground for practical application in real communication.

However, direct teaching is not sufficient by itself. Students should also get a chance to apply what they learn in actual situations, and experiential learning is critical here (Taguchi, 2015, p. 420).

Experiential learning such as role-play and simulation provide learners with the opportunity to practice pragmatic skills in authentic settings. These exercises allow students to exercise different communication skills, receive feedback, and develop their skills in a relaxed and safe environment (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 20). For example, a role-play business negotiation or social interaction will allow students to gain the ability to adapt language use to differ by cultures and respond appropriately to pragmatic stimuli (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 15). Simulations may also be developed to reflect real challenges, such as interpreting indirect requests or coping with power relationships in communication, so that learners feel confident and proficient in intercultural communication.

Experiential learning is particularly effective when backed up by explicit instruction, as it allows the learner to bring theoretical knowledge into practice and learn from the experience (Taguchi, 2015, p. 420). Practice and theory blended are the means by which the ability to think pragmatically and be flexible, essential to good intercultural communication, may be developed.

Cultural immersion is a potent method for the development of pragmatic competence. Overseas study experience, interactions with native speakers, and exposure to cultural events expose students to the target culture's pragmatic conventions and enhance their cultural consciousness (Kasper & Rose, 2002, p. 30). Immersion provides learners with immediate exposure to the way language is used in natural situations, which allows them to observe and learn cultural norms, communication strategies, and politeness strategies (Taguchi, 2015, p. 425). For example, students remaining in a country where the target language is spoken are better placed to recognize and adapt to communication cultural aspects, for example, the use of indirectness or the importance of face-saving practices (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 15).

However, the study also indicates that there is a requirement for cultural immersion sensitivity. Students from certain cultures reported difficulty in adapting to contrary communication styles and suggested that cultural immersion be complemented by explicit instruction and support to allow students to adapt to these differences (Thomas, 1983, p. 96). For example, students from individualistic cultures, where directness is valued, can struggle to adapt to collectivistic cultures' indirect communication, in which harmony and face-saving are key (Hofstede, 2001, p. 23). In order to address this challenge, educators and trainers can provide students with pre-departure training, ongoing support, and reflection opportunities within cultural immersion programs. Through this measure, students are more able to cope with cultural differences and derive utmost benefit from their immersion. The second way to develop pragmatic competence is effectively through the implementation of contrastive analysis, whereby learners compare the pragmatic norms of the target culture with the pragmatic norms of their native culture (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991, p. 160). Such an exercise helps learners to appreciate domains of potential conflict and learn coping strategies for realigning their communication strategy to be compatible with multiple cultures (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 40). For example, learners can contrast the difference in approach to politeness be-





tween cultures and practice implementing such an approach in role-plays and simulation (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 18). Contrastive analysis is also encouraging cultural awareness and sensitivity as students understand better the social norms and values which affect communication.

With contrastive analysis training and courses in language instruction, teachers can offer learners the ability to feel and negotiate cultural differences while communicating. This is particularly helpful in facilitating learners for intercultural communication since it outfits them with information and skills for adjusting their communicative style for different cultural situations.

The inclusion of explicit instruction, experiential learning, cultural immersion, and contrastive analysis provides an interdisciplinary solution for pragmatic competence development. Each of the approaches addresses various aspects of pragmatic competence, ranging from theoretical knowledge and procedural skills to flexibility and cultural sensitivity. Combining these approaches makes it possible for teachers and trainers to provide a comprehensive learning process that familiarizes learners with the realities of intercultural communication.

For example, a language lesson would begin with pragmatics teaching through direct methods, followed by experiential learning activities such as role-playing and simulation. The students would then be exposed to cultural immersion activities, underpinned by contrastive analysis and reflection activities to help them cope with differences in culture. Such an integrative approach ensures that students do not only develop the linguistic skills needed for efficient communication but also the cultural understanding and adaptability needed for effective intercultural communication.

6. Limitations

Even though this study is enlightening about pragmatic competence in intercultural communication, it is not without limitations. These are demonstrated below, along with their potential impact on the findings and how these may be overcome in subsequent studies.



6.1 Sample Size and Diversity

One of the most significant flaws of this study is that the research employed a fairly small, homogeneous sample size. The majority of the participants were university students and urban professionals, and such may be restrictive in generalizing to other groups, such as rural groups or low-literate groups (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 60). The sample population was skewed towards certain linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and these may have had some influence on the result. For example, participants were predominantly from high-context cultures in nations such as Japan and China, whereas participants from low-context cultures in nations such as the United States and Germany represented others inadequately (Hall, 1976, p. 91). This may have biased the examination of pragmatic variation in norms and strategies by cultures.

In order to rectify this shortcoming, subsequent studies should try to recruit a larger and more representative sample of participants and involve participants from wider cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. This would make the findings more representative and allow us to gain a better and broader perspective on pragmatic competence in intercultural communication (Taguchi, 2015, p. 425).

6.2 Self-Reported Data

Another limitation of the study is the reliability on self-reported data, particularly in questionnaires and interviews. Self-reported data is susceptible to biases such as social desirability bias, where respondents report what they perceive to be desirable or anticipated rather than what actually occurs or what they experience (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 65). For example, the respondents may exaggerate their pragmatic skill or underestimate the issues they encounter when they communicate interculturally to appear good (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 25). This means that a respondent overestimates their pragmatic skill and underestimates their issues.

In order to remedy this shortcoming, future studies can incorporate more objective pragmatic competence measures, like per-



formance or observational measures. For example, researchers can look at participants' conduct in actual intercultural contexts or employ standardised tests in assessing their ability for pragmatic meaning interpretation and production (Taguchi, 2015, p. 422). This would be a better, more valid measure of pragmatic competence and will avoid self-report bias.

6.3 Contextual Issues

The study also imposed limitations in terms of matters of context, such as the real-world circumstances embedded in the discourse completion tasks (DCTs) and the cultural contexts on which the data were gathered. The DCTs attempted to elicit particular speech acts, for instance, requests and apologies, in formal contexts, which could not adequately cover the complexity of real-world intercultural communication (Kasper, 1997, p. 10). For example, participants' reactions to the DCTs might have been caused by how they interpreted the hypothetical scenarios rather than by their normal behavior in face-to-face interactions (Thomas, 1983, p. 94). Secondly, the study was conducted in a few restricted cultures of culture, and thus the communication patterns witnessed might not reflect all pragmatic norms and communication patterns that exist across various cultures (Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34).

To address this shortcoming, subsequent studies may use more naturalistic methods of data collection, such as tape-recording and analyzing real-life intercultural communication. This would provide a truer and richer representation of pragmatic competence in action (Kecskes, 2014, p. 45). Researchers could also conduct cross-cultural studies in more cultures to study the difference of pragmatic norms and strategies in different societies (Hofstede, 2001, p. 23).

7. Future Research

This study gives rise to several avenues for future research into pragmatic competence in intercultural communication. Some of these avenues involve investigating the role technology can play in promoting pragmatic competence, exploring differences and learning styles, and evaluating the long-term effects of cul-



tural immersion on pragmatic development. These are outlined below along with some illustrative research questions and methodological considerations.

7.1 Technology Contribution to Acquiring Pragmatic Competence

Future research can explore how technology can be leveraged to enhance pragmatic competence with the increasing use of technology in language teaching and intercultural communication. For example, virtual reality and augmented reality technology can facilitate interactive training spaces for pragmatic skills in virtual intercultural experiences (Taguchi, 2015, p. 430). These technologies could make it possible for students to practice speech acts, politeness strategies, and other pragmatic functions in a controlled and safe environment with virtual interlocutors with varied cultures (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 30).

Some research questions in this scenario would be:

How effective are VR and AR technologies in pragmatic competence development compared to traditional instructional practices? Which digital tools work best in the teaching of some pragmatic skills, e.g., indirect speech act interpretation or politeness strategy use?

What do learners think about the use of technology to learn pragmatics, and what are the risks and limitations?

Methodologically, study can utilize experimental designs to test technology-enhanced instruction against traditional methods and qualitative designs to study learners' perceptions and experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 70).

7.2 The Influence of Individual Differences on Pragmatic Learning

The influence of individual differences, i.e., personality, motivation, and learning style, on the development of pragmatic competence is another potential future research direction. For example, extroverted learners will be more receptive to intercultural interaction and pragmatics practice, while introverted learners are more able to fit in structured and reflective learning approaches (Dewaele, 2010, p. 3346). Similarly, motivated and culture-interested learners will be more likely to seek out immersion



and experiential learning opportunities (Taguchi, 2015, p. 425).

Research questions in this area may be:

How do personality traits, such as extroversion and openness to experience, influence the learning of pragmatic competence?

What role does motivation play in motivating learners to practice intercultural communication and pragmatic skill?

How are different learning styles, viz. visual, auditory, and kinesthetic, influenced on learning pragmatic competence?

Methodologically, studies can include mixed-method designs, in which surveys and interviews jointly examine individual differences and pragmatic learning outcomes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 75). Longitudinal research could also be employed to explore how pragmatic development is influenced by individual differences throughout the passing of time (Kasper & Rose, 2002, p. 35).

7.3 The Long-Term Impact of Cultural Immersion on Pragmatic Development

While cultural immersion has been widely accepted as an effective method to pragmatic competence development, there have been few studies on its long-term effect. Future research could be able to explore how the products of cultural immersion, i.e., increased cultural awareness and adaptability, are sustained in the long term and whether these influence learners' pragmatic behavior in different contexts (Taguchi, 2015, p. 425). For example, do students who participate in study abroad programs retain the pragmatic skills acquired after they return home, or do they slip back to their previous ways of communicating? (Kecskes, 2014, p. 45).

A few potential research questions in this area could be:

What are the long-term effects of cultural immersion on learners' pragmatic competence and intercultural communication skills?

How do learners adjust their pragmatic behavior when switching among different cultural contexts, e.g., coming back home after having studied abroad?

What are the determinants, e.g., continued exposure to the target culture or continued practice of the language, affecting long-term pragmatic skill maintenance?

Methodologically, longitudinal research would be conducted

to trace the pragmatic development of learners over a number of years, using a combination of surveys, interviews, and performance-based assessments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 80). Comparative research would also be conducted to contrast the long-term effects of different types of cultural immersion, such as study abroad programs, internships, and virtual intercultural exchanges (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 35).

8. Conclusion

This study has investigated the challenges and approach of pragmatic competence for intercultural communication, shedding light on the complex interaction among language, culture, and communication. The study points out the importance of pragmatic competence as an essential feature of effective intercultural communication, mentioning the issues individuals face in interpreting and generating language appropriately (Kasper, 1997, p. 2; Thomas, 1983, p. 94). The study also identifies some of the most significant strategies for acquiring pragmatic competence, such as explicit instruction, experiential learning, and cultural immersion, which can help learners cope with the complexities of intercultural communication (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 20; Taguchi, 2015, p. 425).

One of the main contributions of this study is to stress the significance of cultural sensibility in building pragmatic competence. The research shows how pragmatic norm differences, as they relate to employing indirectness and politeness mechanisms, can form significant barriers to effective communication (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61; Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34). However, these challenges can be overcome through the complementarity of explicit instruction, experiential learning, and cultural immersion, which allow learners to develop the competencies and adaptability required to deal with diverse cultural settings (Rose & Kasper, 2001, p. 10; Kecskes, 2014, p. 45).

It is also stated that the dynamic, context-specific nature of pragmatic competence grows through practice and familiarity with various cultural contexts (Taguchi, 2015, p. 420). This effect has high potential implications for language learner training as well





as professional working populations, i.e., that the pragmatics can be trained in a sense that it can become flexible and adaptable skill, not a set of fixed rules (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p. 25). By incorporating methods such as role-plays, simulations, and contrastive analysis in language instruction, teachers can prepare students to learn the pragmatic ability for effective intercultural communication (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991, p. 160; Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 18). While positive, the research has some limitations, which include a small and homogeneous sample population, self-reported data, and using hypothetical scenarios when collecting data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 60; Kasper, 1997, p. 10). These limitations necessitate that future research looks into pragmatic competence in more naturalistic and heterogeneous contexts, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to build a clearer image of the phenomenon (Taguchi, 2015, p. 425; Kecskes, 2014, p. 45).

Generally speaking, this study adds to the body of research on pragmatic competence in intercultural communication and offers valuable implications for language learners, teachers, and professionals. By highlighting challenges and strategies in pragmatic competence, the study places an important focus on cultural awareness, adaptability, and experiential learning for achieving effective intercultural communication. Future research must generalize these findings to explore other means of advancing pragmatic competence, such as the use of technology, the contribution of individual differences, and long-term effects of cultural immersion (Dewaele, 2010, p. 3346; Taguchi, 2015, p. 430). Lastly, pragmatic competence development is not merely a matter of language but also culture and society that requires a sensitive understanding of the interrelationship between language, culture, and communication (Kasper, 1997, p. 2; Scollon & Scollon, 2001, p. 34).

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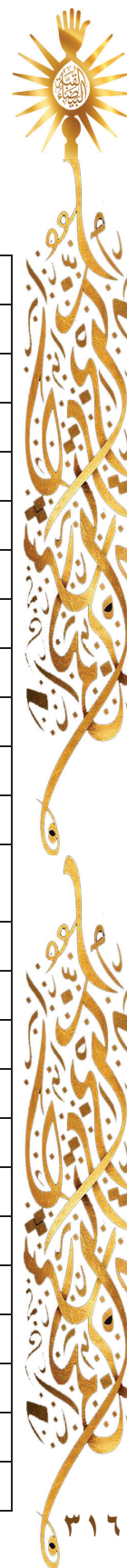
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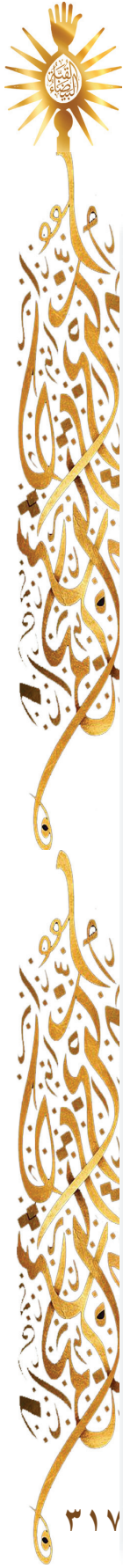
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Appendix: Questionnaire

Survey Question	Option	Frequency
How effective are VR and AR technologies in pragmatic competence development compared to traditional instructional practices?	More effective	
	Equally effective	
	Less effective	
Which digital tools work best in teaching pragmatic skills?	Virtual Reality (VR)	
	Augmented Reality (AR)	
	Online simulations	
What do learners think about the use of technology to learn pragmatics?	Very useful	
	Somewhat useful	
	Not useful	
How do personality traits influence the learning of pragmatic competence?	Extroverts learn faster	
	No significant effect	
	Introverts perform better in structured learning	
What role does motivation play in encouraging learners to practice intercultural communication and pragmatic skills?	Highly significant	
	Somewhat significant	
	Insignificant	
How are different learning styles influenced in learning pragmatic competence?	Visual learners benefit most	
	Auditory learners benefit most	
	Kinesthetic learners benefit most	
What are the long-term effects of cultural immersion on learners' pragmatic competence?	Retain skills completely	
	Retain skills partially	
	Lose skills over time	
How do learners adjust their pragmatic behavior when switching among different cultural contexts?	Adapt quickly	
	Adapt gradually	
	Struggle to adapt	

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