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## Culturally Responsive Peer Assessment and Its Influence on EFL University Students' Pragmatic Competence

**A B S T R A C T**

Culturally responsive peer assessment is a strategy used to develop pragmatic competence skills . The current study aims at finding out: the effect of culturally responsive peer assessment on EFL university students' pragmatic competence, identifying which components of pragmatic competence are most influenced by culturally responsive peer assessment . The sample of the current study involves 70 students who were randomly selected from the Department of English Language, College of Education for Humanities, University of Tikrit, during the academic year 2025–2026. It is divided into two equal groups, experimental and control groups. Both groups are equalized in their ages, parents' academic attainment, and their scores in the previous year in conversation, and their achievement in the pretest .An achievement test has been constructed to the two groups. The results indicate that using culturally responsive peer assessment is more effective than using the conventional method for developing pragmatic competence.

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تقييم النظير المستجيب ثقافيا وتأثيره على الكفاءة البراغمتية لطلبة الجامعة دارسي اللغة الإنكليزية  
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**الخلاصة:**

يُعدّ تقييم النظير المستجيب ثقافياً استراتيجية تُستخدم لتطوير مهارات الكفاءة التداولية. تهدف الدراسة

الحالية إلى الكشف عن أثر تقييم النظير المستجيب ثقافياً في الكفاءة التداولية لدى طلبة الجامعة دارسي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. تتكوّن عيّنة الدراسة الحالية من (٧٠) طالباً وطالبة تم اختيارهم عشوائياً من جامعة تكريت / كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية / قسم اللغة الإنجليزية / المرحلة الرابعة خلال العام الدراسي ٢٠٢٥-٢٠٢٦. قُسمت العيّنة إلى مجموعتين متساويتين، مجموعة تجريبية وأخرى ضابطة. وتمت موازنة المجموعتين من حيث العمر، والتحصيل الدراسي للوالدين، ودرجات مادة المحادثة في السنة الدراسية السابقة، ونتائج الاختبار القبلي. دُرست المجموعة التجريبية وفق تقييم النظير المستجيب ثقافياً، في حين دُرست المجموعة الضابطة باستخدام الطريقة التقليدية. وقد تم إعداد اختبار تحصيلي، والتحقق من صدقه، وتطبيقه على المجموعتين. كما استُخدم استبيان الكفاءة التداولية لقياس تصورات الطلبة حول الكفاءة التداولية. وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن استخدام تقييم النظير المستجيب ثقافياً أكثر فاعلية من استخدام الطريقة التقليدية في تنمية الكفاءة التداولية .

**كلمات مفتاحية** ( تقييم النظير , التقييم , المستجيب ثقافيا , الكفاءة البراغماتية, الكفاءة )

## Section One : Introduction

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

In an age characterized by globalization and increased intercultural communication, pragmatic competence has become a major component of communicative ability .Pragmatic competence plays a crucial role in successful communication and significantly influences how messages are produced and interpreted in both academic and real-life communication . Pragmatic competence refers to the ability of a language user to use language appropriately in specific social contexts. It involves knowledge of how language is used fluently and effectively in socio-cultural interactions, enabling users to interpret meaning beyond grammatical form. Pragmatic knowledge is specifically significant for EFL and ESL learners, as it determines their ability to understand and manage complex social relationships in the target language (Taguchi, 2022).

One of the primary challenges in teaching pragmatic competence lies in the inherent complexity of pragmatic language use, as it is deeply embedded in social and cultural contexts. Learners are required not only to develop linguistic knowledge but also to become aware of contextual cues such as cultural

background, situational context, and interpersonal relationships. This complexity makes pragmatic competence difficult to teach and assess using traditional instructional and assessment practices. Moreover, conventional assessment tools, such as written examinations, often fail to assess learners' ability to use language appropriately in real-life communicative situations. This limitation highlights the need for alternative methods that can provide more accurate insights into learners' pragmatic abilities. Such methods create opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful communication and reflective evaluation, which are essential for pragmatic development. Formative assessments, peer evaluations, and performance-based tasks can provide valuable insights into learners' pragmatic skills, allowing for a more holistic understanding of their communication capabilities (Daniel and Oye, 2018 ).

Culturally responsive peer assessment builds on the principles of multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching, emphasizing recognition and appreciation of learners' diverse cultural experiences. culturally responsive peer assessment is a learner-centered practice in which students actively assess each other's language use while taking into account sociocultural norms, perspectives, and communication styles. It integrates culturally diverse content, encourages collaboration, and fosters positive peer relationships based on mutual respect and understanding ( Ladson-Billings, 2021).

Assessing learners from diverse cultural backgrounds through culturally responsive peer assessment can address challenges such as biased evaluation, differing achievement standards, and the limited preparedness of schools and teachers to manage cultural diversity . By engaging learners in reflective and interactive assessment, culturally responsive peer assessment accommodates different ways of knowing, participation styles, and cultural perspectives, while also supporting learners' well-being alongside academic development (Nortvedt et al., 2020).

Iraqi EFL learners often concentrate on linguistic competence, focusing on vocabulary acquisition and grammar mastery, while the focus on pragmatic competence is limited. This imbalance limits their ability to communicate effectively and to interpret subtle social meanings in the target language.

Moreover, Iraqi society is inherently multicultural, encompassing diverse ethnic, linguistic, and social backgrounds. Despite this diversity, conventional language instruction and assessment practices rarely address the sociocultural aspects of communication. In this study, culturally responsive peer assessment is employed to

utilize the multicultural context of Iraq, allowing students to engage in peer assessment that reflects sociocultural norms and perspectives. Through culturally responsive peer assessment, students are expected to enhance their awareness and application of pragmatic competence, bridging the gap between linguistic knowledge and contextually appropriate language use. However, there is a lack of empirical research on the use of culturally responsive peer assessment in EFL contexts, particularly in higher education, leaving a significant gap in the literature that this study aims to address.

## **1.2 Aims of The Study**

The current study aims at :

- 1- Finding out the effect of culturally responsive peer assessment on EFL university students' pragmatic competence .
- 2- Assessing the pragmatic performance of student (Experimental group) that exposed to culturally responsive peer assessment with those (control group) taught through conventional teaching assessment method .
- 3- Identifying which components of pragmatic competence (speech act , politeness, contextual appropriateness) are most influenced by culturally responsive peer assessment.

## **1.1 Hypotheses of The Study**

- 1- There are no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of the students' achievement in the experimental group between the pretest and posttest.
- 2- There are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group, which is taught by using culturally responsive peer assessment & the control group, which a taught by conventional method achievement posttest.
- 3- There are no statistically significant differences among the mean scores of the components of the pragmatic competence (speech acts, politeness, and contextual appropriateness) as measured by pragmatic competence questionnaire .

## 1.2 Value of The Study

The study is valued to the following :

### 1- Students and Researchers

For the students, it encourages active engagement, critical reflection, and mutual feedback within a culturally supportive learning environment, which may lead to increased motivation, confidence, and pragmatic awareness.

For researchers, It contributes to the existing body of literature by integrating culturally responsive pedagogy with peer assessment practices, particularly in relation to pragmatic competence in EFL contexts, the study offers a deeper understanding of the interaction between culture, assessment, and language use beyond grammatical accuracy.

### 2- Curriculum Designers

Offering evidence-based recommendations for incorporating culturally responsive assessment approaches into language curricula, highlighting the role of peer assessment in fostering pragmatic competence, the study emphasizes the importance of culturally responsive assessment tools in improving overall communicative competence.

### 3- Teachers

The study provides practical insights into implementing culturally responsive peer assessment strategy that enhances students' pragmatic competence. Such strategy can promote learners' awareness of sociocultural norms, appropriate language use, and meaningful communication in real-life contexts.

## 1.5 Limits of The Study

The study is limited to :

- 1- EFL Iraqi students , at University of Tikrit / College of Education for Humanities / Department of English /Fourth year. During the academic year 2025-2026, first semester .
- 2- The subject matter of the study is limited to Speak Now (4) Communicate with Confidence by Mari Vargo (2012) .

## Section Two : Literature Review

### 2.1 Concept of Culturally Responsive Assessment

The concept of culturally responsive assessment is an assessment that evaluates students' knowledge , skills , and understandings in a way that takes into account their unique cultural identities. A culturally responsive assessment incorporates flexibility and choice so that students can leverage their own cultural perspectives to demonstrate their mastery of a given subject area ( Landl 2021) . Culturally responsive assessment is situated within the broader framework of culturally responsive pedagogy, where the quality of student learning and achievement is a central concern, significantly shapes how students perceive, engage with, and demonstrate knowledge. Culture is a cumulative body of learned and shared behavior, values, customs, and beliefs common to a particular group or society (Frierson et al, 2010) .

According to Montenegro and Jankowski (2017) culture involves :

- 1- The overt elements that identify people to a certain group or groups, such as actions, traditions, roles, attitudes, appearance, language, dwelling region, heritage, race/ethnicity, rituals, and religion .
- 2- Ideas, values, ethics, gender identity, shared experiences (such as foster children and war veterans), and social identity , the implicit components that unite a group of individual .
- 3- Cognitive aspects refer to how shared life experiences impact a group's behavior, cognition, communication, knowledge expression, work ethic, cooperation, and self and social perceptions.

The assessment of culturally responsive assessment, including culturally relevant and culturally sustaining pedagogies, provided theoretical foundations for integrating culture into assessment (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). Ladson-Billings (1995) introduced culturally relevant pedagogy, emphasizing academic success, positive ethnic and cultural identities, and critical consciousness. Geneva Gay (2018) expanded this approach by focusing on instructional strategies that leverage students' cultural knowledge, experiences, and performance styles , it operationalizes assessment as a pedagogical tool that respects and sustains

students' cultural identities , promotes fairness, and challenges deficit-based approaches.

## 2.2 Principles of Culturally Responsive Assessment

Human development is only culturally mediated. The what, in what sequence , & with what methods a child learns & how his learning is expressed can be largely shaped by the society in which he grows up. And these cultural divides can be substantial. In cultural research, it is important to understand other people's (and even one's own) ways of doing things before placing value judgments on them. Even if value judgments become necessary at some point, those judgments will be better informed if behavioral patterns are first observed without prejudice (Rogoff, 2003) . At all stages of test design and development four design principle of culturally responsive assesment, which can effectively address the major criticisms of current assessment practices :

- 1.- Exams and assessments need to developed towards promoting system engagement or membership (academic system belonging). This principle is rooted in an attempt to create assessments that are representative of the test taker's self and life experiences.
- 2- Culturally responsive assessments based on the premise that all children can succeed at high levels and do well any kind of work. Such high expectations for all students will serve to counteract the effect of negative stereotypes which frequently alter student performance.
- 3-Assessment Should Be Culturally Diverse and Flexible to Recognize the Individual Differences in Culture, Interests, and Identity of All Learners. Culturally responsive assessments will enable test takers to take their opportunities, based on whatever it is that makes them a unique and talented individual no matter their background.
- 4- Culturally responsive assessments are constructed to represent an asset that based point-of-view, which assess what students know and can do as well as challenge historical deficit-orientated narratives . (Walker, et al. 2023).



## 2.3 Peer Assessment as Assessment as Learning

Two popular forms of assessment used as learning tools are peer assessment and self-evaluation (Yan and Boud, 2022). It has been found to support student-centered education and has been extensively discussed (Xiang et al., 2021).

Peer assessment is "a procedure in which individuals consider the amount, level, value, worth, quality, or success of the products or outcomes obtained from the learning of peers of similar status," according to Topping (1998).

He outlined the products to be evaluated in 2009, including test results, written work, oral presentations, portfolios, and other skillful behaviors (Topping, 2009). His conceptual reconceptualization in favor of the formative aspect of peer evaluation is evident in the fact that all of these products are seen as essential elements of classroom activities.

Peer assessment has additional advantages in the context of English as a foreign language, such as enhanced student accountability and autonomy (Shen et al., 2020) and improvements in learning effectiveness, drive, and quality (Adachi et al., 2018). Peer evaluation can also enhance students' self-evaluation by broadening their comprehension of quality, evaluating their performance, and promoting introspection about their advantages and disadvantages. (To and Panadero, 2019).

## 2.4 Pedagogical Advantages of Peer Assessment

Since a fairly broad spectrum of students benefit from using the method within the process, the educational virtues of applying the peer evaluation method, which is implemented in many stages of education, are treated in broad strokes. (Cestone et al., 2008).

### 2.4.1 Feedback

Since giving feedback from pupils is the main goal of peer assessment, these comments ought to be ameliorative, suggestive, and confirming. According to Butler and Winne (1995) and Topping (2009), constructing theoretical knowledge more deeply, reducing errors, and improving knowledge are all facilitated by encouraging and kind comments. Since there are always more students than teachers in a class, the most notable aspect of peer evaluation is its efficiency. Additionally, kids typically interpret criticism from their teachers as a reflection of



authority, while input from peers is perceived as fleeting and personal. Peer feedback is therefore more significant and helpful for pupils. (Cole, 1991).

#### **2.4.2 Cognitive Gains**

The benefits of peer evaluation are linked to both the person who evaluates and the assessee (Topping, et al 1998). Because this kind of evaluation can encourage criticism of oneself and enhance reflection on novel circumstances, generalization, and metacognitive awareness. Thus, before to, during, and following the use of peer assessment, cognitive and metacognitive advances take place.

#### **2.4.3 Improvement in Works**

Similar to collaborative education, peer assessment is an assessment technique that can be used in conjunction with other strategies. Peer critique, for example, is more motivational for individuals to improve the quality of the output in a group where students review each other. Additionally, it is anticipated that learners who take part in the peer assessment as assessors will be more creative (Searby, et al 1997). As a result, both individual performance and product quality are enhanced..

#### **2.4.4 Saving Teachers' Time**

When students participate in the evaluation process, all pupils are evaluated simultaneously, which is said to save instructors time. When the literature is taken into account, it is also evident that teachers are not burdened with time. Yet other authors caution that establishing a high-quality peer evaluation system in terms of its structure, training, and oversight procedures takes time (Falchikov, 2001). Peer assessment should be employed as an evaluation technique when necessary rather than as a supplement to the comments instructors give in order to save time. If not, this evaluation technique becomes more of a time-consuming tool than a time-saving one.

### **2.5 Pragmatic Competence**

"The study regarding language from the point that of users, especially of the choices they choose, the constraints they face in using language in social situations and the effects their use of the language has on other participants in the act of communication" is the definition of pragmatics, a branch of linguistics. (Crystal, 1997).

The concept of practical skills was first used in philosophy regarding language (Morris, 1938), but it has since spread to sociolinguistics and other subfields. Nowadays, this phrase is often used in the field of teaching and learning second and foreign languages, particularly when discussing practical skill as one of the skills included in the broad notion of communicative competence. Chomsky (1980) first described pragmatic competence as "knowledge of contexts & manner of proper application (of the language), in line with various purposes."

This concept was seen in opposition to grammatical competence that in Chomskian terms is "the knowledge of form and meaning." In a more contextualized fashion, pragmatic competence was included as one important component of their model of communicative competence. In this model, pragmatic competence was identified as sociolinguistic competence and defined as the knowledge of contextually appropriate language use (Canale and Swain, 1980). Later on, Canale (1988) expanded this definition, and stated that pragmatic competence includes:

"illocutionary ability, or the understanding of the pragmatic conventions for carrying out acceptable function of language, and sociolinguistic competence, or the understanding of the sociolinguistic conventions for carrying out language functions appropriately in a given environment".

These elements were revisited in Bachman's (1990) model of language proficiency, where pragmatic skill is a key element that includes the capacity to use language to convey a variety of functions and interpret its offensive force in discourse in accordance with the sociocultural setting in which it is uttered.

According to Bialystok (1993) pragmatic competence includes:

- 1) The speaker's ability to use language for different purposes.
- 2) The listener's ability to get past the language and understand the speaker's real intentions (e.g. indirect speech acts, irony and sarcasm).
- 3) The command of the rules by which utterances come together to create discourse .

Researchers in the discipline of inter-language pragmatics have widely embraced Rose's (1999) working concept of pragmatic competency. According to Leech (1983), the idea is defined as the capacity to employ accessible language assets

(pragma-linguistics) in a contextually suitable manner (socio-pragmatics), that is, how to utilize words appropriately. Pragma-linguistics "includes tactics like directness and indirectness, habits, and a large range of linguistic structures which can intensify or soften communicative acts," according to Kasper (1997)."

Socio-pragmatics, on the other hand, refers to the social perception of communicative action. For Kasper and Rose (2002), pragma-linguistic knowledge requires mappings of form, meaning, force, and context, that may be obligatory as when prepackaged routines are used, or not as when non-conventional indirectness is needed.

## **2.4 Basic Principles of Pragmatic Competence**

Pragmatic competence is grounded in three interrelated principles essential for successful communication: meaning, interaction, and context. These principles collectively explain how speakers and hearers construct, interpret, and negotiate meaning in real-life discourse situations.

### **2.4.1 Meaning**

Meaning constitutes the central concern of pragmatics, focusing on how language conveys intended messages in context (Allott, 2010). Pragmatic meaning extends beyond literal interpretation to include speaker intention and hearer inference. For instance, the utterance "It's cold in here" may function as a mere observation or as a request for action, depending on contextual cues. As Horn (2004) observes, speakers typically communicate far more than they explicitly express, and competent interlocutors must infer those additional layers of meaning (Bialystok, 1993).

Grice's cooperative principle and its four maxims (quantity, quality, relation, and manner) provide a framework for understanding how interlocutors infer intended meaning. These principles assume shared social expectations regarding rational and cooperative communication. Building on this foundation, scholars have distinguished between grammatical meaning, which is encoded in linguistic form, and pragmatic meaning, which emerges from speaker intention and contextual interpretation (Grice, 1969).

#### 2.4.2 Interactive Co-construction

Pragmatic meaning is co-constructed through the interaction of all participants in communication. This interactional perspective, emphasized by Bachman and Palmer (2010), views pragmatic competence as the ability to create, interpret, and negotiate meaning collaboratively within discourse. Meaning arises not merely from individual utterances but from how interlocutors jointly construct discourse in specific situations. As Bachman and Palmer (1996) note, discourse gains significance through its relationship to the situational and social context in which it occurs.

While Kasper and Ross (2013) criticize some models for underrepresenting the inherently social and co-constructed nature of interaction, the interactional approach remains compatible with Gricean principles and useful for instructional and assessment purposes. Within this view, pragmatic competence encompasses both the individual's ability to encode and decode intended meanings and the collaborative process through which interlocutors shape those meanings in real time.

#### 2.4.3 Context

Context serves as the anchor of pragmatic theory (Fetzer, 2004) and is indispensable for interpreting meaning. Every act of language use occurs within a particular situation defined by time, location, participants, social relationships, and preceding discourse (Levinson, 1983). These contextual factors guide both the speaker's linguistic choices and the hearer's interpretive processes. Fetzer (2004) distinguishes among cognitive, linguistic, social, and sociocultural contexts, all of which contribute to the pragmatic interpretation of utterances. In practice, these contextual layers are interwoven in any communicative event.

For pedagogical and assessment purposes, context should be described in terms of its physical setting, institutional or cultural background, participant roles, relationships, and discourse history (Halliday, et al 1989).

## **Section Three: Procedures**

### **3.1 Population and Sample of the Study**

The target population for this study consists of EFL university students enrolled in English Department at University of Tikrit / College of Education for Humanities , fourth stage / morning studies. During the academic year (2025/2026). The total number of students in fourth stage is (140) .

The sample of the current study consists of (70) students who have been chosen from fourth stage \ English Department \ University of Tikrit during the academic year (2025/2026). The students are distributed into two sections (A and B). These sections have been chosen randomly to present the experimental and the control groups, section (A) has been chosen to be the experimental group which consists of ( 35 ) students, while section (B) has been chosen to be the control group, which consist of ( 35 ) students, ( 18 ) student have chosen to be the pilot study. Thus, the total number of the sample participants is (88).

### **3.2 Instructional Materials**

The same instructional material has been taught to the two groups of students from the textbook, Speak Now (4) Communicate with Confidence by Mari Vargo , for fourth stage students .

The researcher himself has been taught the two groups, the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group is taught according to the culturally responsive peer assessment whereas, the control group is taught according to the conventional method. The experiment of this study has been carried out in the first semester of the academic year 2025-2026 . It started in the 26<sup>th</sup> of October \ 2025 and ended up in the 14<sup>th</sup> of December\ 2025 .It lasted for 8 weeks .The lectures are arranged to be on Sunday for the two groups.

The study has two instruments adopted to collect data .the first one is an achievement test and the second instrument is a questionnaire which is designed to measure learners' perception and pragmatic competence across four core dimensions: pragma-linguistic competence, socio-pragmatic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural awareness.

## **Section Four: Analysis of Data, Discussion of Results and conclusions and recommendations**

### **4.1 Comparison Between The Mean Scores of The Experimental Group in The Achievement Pre-Posttests**

To find out if there is any significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group in the pretest and the mean scores of the posttest achievement , the mean scores and the standard deviation have been obtained.

The mean scores of the experimental group in the pretest is (49.0) and the standard deviation is (2.48). While the mean scores of the experimental group in the posttest is (68.68) and the standard deviation is (3.14). The calculated t-value is ( 26.89 ), which is found to be higher than the tabulated t-value which is (1.70), at the degree of freedom (68) and the level of significance (0.05).

### **4.2 Comparison Between The Mean Scores of The Experimental Group and That of the Control Group in The Achievement Posttest**

The mean scores and standard deviation of the two groups have been obtained in order to find out if there is any statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group, which has been taught by using culturally responsive peer assessment and the control group, which is taught by conventional method in achievement posttest,

Results show that the mean scores of the experimental group is (68.68) and the standard deviation (3.14) . While the mean scores of the control group is found to be (55.14) and the standard deviation is (3.65). By using the T-test formula for two independent samples, the calculated T-value is found to be(16.6), while the tabulated T-value is to be(1.67) at the degree of freedom (68) and the level of significant (0.05).

### **4.3 Comparison Between The Mean Scores of The Experimental Group and The Mean Scores of The Control Group in The Pragmatic Competence Questionnaire**

The mean scores and standard deviations have been obtained to find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental

group and the mean scores of the control group in pragmatic competence questionnaire.

The mean scores of the experimental group is (3.95) with standard deviation (0,447). While the mean scores of the control group is (2.49) and the standard deviation is(0.319). The calculated t-value is (15.74), which is higher than the tabulated t-value (1.67), at the degree of freedom (68) and the level of significance(0.05).

#### **4.4 Discussion of the Obtained Result**

The findings from the analysis of pragmatic competence abilities among EFL university students reveal the effectiveness of the culturally responsive peer assessment comparing to conventional methods.

The obtained results from the experimental and the control groups indicate that the experimental group showed a statistically significant improvement in their pragmatic competence .The analysis of the data related to the first hypothesis revealed a statistically significant difference in the pragmatic competence of the experimental group taught via culturally responsive peer assessment between the pre-test and the post-test. The mean score of the posttest (68.68), while mean score of the pretest (49.0) . The significant differences observed between the pretest and posttest does not support the second hypothesis of this study. The findings highlight the effectiveness of the culturally responsive peer assessment in improving pragmatic competence among EFL university students, suggesting that this approach should be integrated into methods of language teaching.

The results is not aligned with the first hypothesis that indicates , there are no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of the students' achievement experimental group in pre- test and post-test .

The analysis of the data related to the second hypothesis revealed a statistically significant difference in the pragmatic competence of the experimental group taught via culturally responsive peer assessment and control group which is taught by conventional method .The mean score (68.68) for the experimental group not only exceed the mean score (55.14) for the control group but also suggests that students have an adequate level in pragmatic competence. This does not align with the second hypothesis that indicates, there is no statistically significant difference



between the mean scores of the experimental group, which is taught by using culturally responsive peer assessment and the control group, which is taught by conventional method in achievement posttest. Given these results from the experimental group, educators may consider cooperating culturally responsive peer assessment across other educational contexts. Such strategy could foster deeper understanding and enhancing overall academic achievement.

The findings from the pragmatic competence questionnaire indicate a statistically significant difference among EFL university students. The mean scores of the experimental group is (3.95) while the mean scores of control group is (2.49) .

The findings of the third hypothesis which indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in pragmatic competence Questionnaire , obtaining this results indicate that culturally responsive peer assessment contributes in developing EFL university students' pragmatic competence . The analyses reveal that pragmatic-linguistic competence is the most influenced domain , followed by socio-pragmatic competence, intercultural awareness, and discourse competence. These results suggest that culturally responsive peer assessment has the greatest impact on students' ability to use language accurately and appropriately in pragmatic contexts .

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

Culturally responsive peer assessment plays a vital role in enhancing the pragmatic competence of EFL university students. By incorporating culturally appropriate evaluation practices, this approach not only strengthens students' pragmatic ability but also fosters greater independence and responsibility in their learning. Compared to learners who utilize conventional assessment techniques, students engaged in culturally responsive peer evaluation demonstrate significantly higher levels of pragmatic development.

Furthermore, integrating culturally responsive peer assessment into the learning process positively influences students' academic engagement and cognitive development. The results reveal strong interaction with the assessment process, suggesting that culturally responsive practices help create a supportive and

meaningful learning environment that promotes reflection, collaboration, and the development of higher-order thinking skills.

#### **4.6 Recommendations**

In light of the findings and conclusions reached, several recommendations are proposed. EFL teachers are encouraged to employ culturally responsive peer assessment in order to enhance their students' proficiency across various language skills. Curriculum designers at the Ministry of Higher Education are also advised to adopt and formally recommend culturally responsive peer assessment as an effective teaching technique within university programs. Furthermore, EFL teachers should participate in in-service training workshops that enable them to teach different language components more effectively and to improve their professional performance through the use of culturally responsive peer assessment strategies. Finally, students are urged to apply this strategy actively to develop their language performance and enrich their overall educational experience.

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