

Teaching Pragmatics in Language and Literacy

Understanding Context, Meaning,
and ELA Mastery

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What is Pragmatics?

- - Pragmatics is the study of language in use and the contexts in which it is used.
- - Focuses on implied meaning, conversational norms, speaker intentions, and listener interpretation.
- - Goes beyond literal meaning to include tone, body language, and shared knowledge.

Key Concepts in Pragmatics

- - Deixis: Words like 'here', 'you', and 'that' depend on context.
- - Speech Acts: Language used to do things—apologizing, requesting, etc.
- - Implicature: Meaning implied rather than stated.
- - Presupposition: Background knowledge assumed by speakers.

Common Errors and Challenges

- - Taking language too literally (missing implicature).
- - Ignoring cultural variations in pragmatics.
- - Overlooking tone, body language, or context.
- - Misunderstanding indirect speech (e.g., sarcasm, irony).

Teaching Pragmatics in the Classroom

- - Use role-play and real-world scenarios.
- - Teach speech act functions (e.g., requesting, suggesting).
- - Analyze dialogues from texts or videos.
- - Encourage reflective thinking about meaning and intent.

Development and Grammar in ELA

- - Pragmatic skills evolve with language exposure.
- - Supports reading comprehension and writing fluency.
- - Integrates with grammar: syntax, morphology, sentence types.
- - Reinforces understanding of parts of speech and function.

Domain 1: Language, Structure, and Linguistics

- - 1.1g: Understand parts of speech and their morphological markers.
- - 1.1h: Use syntactic structures (phrases, clauses) to form varied sentence types.
- - Pragmatics complements grammar by showing how these forms convey intent.
- - Real-world application in ELA builds mastery and fluency.

References

- Yule, G. (2020). *The Study of Language* (7th ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In *Syntax and Semantics* (Vol. 3). Academic Press.