

DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES IN EDUCATIONAL SPEECH: A PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION

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Annotation

This paper examines the role of discursive strategies in educational discourse, focusing on teacher-student interaction from a pragmatic perspective. It explores how teachers and students use language to achieve specific communicative goals, such as explaining concepts, managing classroom behaviour, and fostering a positive learning environment. Key areas of analysis include speech acts, politeness strategies, turn-taking, and feedback. The paper also addresses pragmatic challenges such as miscommunication, balancing authority and approachability, and adapting to diverse learners. The implications for teaching and learning emphasize the importance of teacher training, student empowerment, and cross-cultural awareness in creating inclusive and effective classrooms. This research is highly relevant for understanding the intersection of language, culture, and education in diverse contexts.

Key words

educational discourse, teacher-student interaction, discursive strategies, pragmatic analysis, speech acts, politeness strategies, turn-taking, feedback, miscommunication, authority and approachability, diverse learners.

Аннотация

Данная работа исследует роль дискурсивных стратегий в образовательном дискурсе, уделяя особое внимание взаимодействию учителя и ученика с прагматической точки зрения. В статье анализируется, как учителя и ученики используют язык для достижения конкретных коммуникативных целей, таких как объяснение концепций, управление поведением в классе и создание благоприятной учебной среды. Основные области анализа включают речевые акты, стратегии вежливости, очередность реплик и обратную связь. Также рассматриваются прагматические проблемы, такие как непонимание, баланс между авторитетом и доступностью и адаптация к разнообразным ученикам. Влияние на преподавание и обучение

подчеркивает важность обучения учителей, расширения возможностей учащихся и межкультурной осведомленности для создания инклюзивных и эффективных классов. Это исследование особенно актуально для понимания взаимосвязи языка, культуры и образования в разнообразных контекстах.

Ключевые слова

образовательный дискурс, взаимодействие учителя и ученика, дискурсивные стратегии, прагматический анализ, речевые акты, стратегии вежливости, очередность реплик, обратная связь, непонимание, авторитет и доступность, разнообразие учащихся.

Educational discourse, particularly the interaction between teachers and students, is a rich area for linguistic and pragmatic analysis. The way teachers and students communicate in the classroom reflects not only pedagogical goals but also cultural, social, and power dynamics. A pragmatic approach to teacher-student interaction focuses on how language is used to achieve specific communicative goals, such as explaining concepts, giving instructions, managing classroom behaviour, and fostering a positive learning environment. Below, we explore the discursive strategies used in educational speech, with a focus on pragmatics.

Discursive strategies are the deliberate use of language to achieve specific communicative goals. In educational settings, these strategies are employed by teachers and students to facilitate learning, maintain classroom order, and build relationships. Pragmatics, as a field of study, examines how context influences the interpretation of meaning, making it a useful framework for analyzing teacher-student interaction.

There are several key pragmatic features of teacher-student interaction:

A. Speech acts include directives, commissive and expressive. Teachers often use directives to give instructions or manage behaviour. These can range from direct commands ("Open your books") to indirect requests ("Could you please open your books?"). While in commissive teachers make promises or commitments, such as "I'll help you after class" or "We'll review this topic tomorrow". Teachers express emotions or attitudes, such as praise ("Great job!") or concern ("Are you feeling okay?").

B. Politeness Strategies involve negatives and positives. In positive politeness teachers use strategies to build rapport and show solidarity with students, such as using inclusive language ("Let's work on this together") or giving compliments ("You're doing really well"). While in negative politeness teachers may use indirect

language to minimize imposition, such as "If you don't mind, could you share your answer with the class?"

C. Turn-Taking and Feedback. Teachers control turn-taking in the classroom, often using strategies like nominating students ("What do you think, Sarah?") or providing feedback ("That's a good point, but let's consider another perspective").

D. Framing and Reframing. Teachers frame tasks and activities to make them more engaging or understandable. For example, a teacher might say, "Today, we're going to solve a mystery," to introduce a problem-solving activity.

Discursive strategies used by teachers. Scaffolding is the strategy that teachers use scaffolding to support students' learning by breaking down complex tasks into manageable steps. This often involves providing hints or cues ("What do you notice about this pattern?"), modelling desired behaviour or responses ("Watch how I solve this problem"). Gradually reducing support as students become more confident. Questioning is the next strategy that teachers use different types of questions to achieve various goals:

Closed Questions: To check understanding ("What is the capital of France?").

Open-Ended Questions: To encourage critical thinking ("Why do you think the character made that decision?").

Rhetorical Questions: To emphasize a point ("Isn't it amazing how plants grow?").

Feedback and Correction. Teachers provide feedback to guide students' learning:

Positive reinforcement ("Excellent answer!").

Constructive criticism ("You're on the right track, but let's think about this part again").

Indirect correction ("Can anyone else add to that?").

Classroom Management. Teachers use discursive strategies to maintain order and engagement:

Direct commands ("Please sit down").

Indirect requests ("It would be great if everyone could focus now").

Humour or light-hearted remarks ("I think someone's having a Monday morning!").

There are a number of discursive strategies used by students:

Seeking Clarification. Students use questions to seek clarification or additional information: Direct questions ("Can you explain that again?").

Indirect questions ("I'm not sure I understand this part").

Participation and Collaboration. Students use language to participate in class discussions and collaborate with peers: Agreeing or disagreeing ("I agree with Sarah because..."). Building on others' ideas ("Adding to what John said...").

Expressing Uncertainty. Students may use hedging or indirect language to express uncertainty: "I'm not sure, but maybe...", "Could it be that...?"

In some cultures, direct questioning or challenging the teacher may be considered disrespectful, while in others, it may be encouraged as a sign of critical thinking. For example, in Uzbek educational contexts, students may show respect by using formal language and avoiding direct disagreement with the teacher. The teacher-student relationship is inherently hierarchical, and this is reflected in the language used. Teachers often hold the authority to control the discourse, while students are expected to follow. The physical and social environment of the classroom can influence discursive strategies. For example, a more relaxed, student-centered classroom may encourage open dialogue, while a traditional, teacher-centered classroom may rely more on directives and formal language.

Pragmatic Challenges in Teacher-Student Interaction. Teacher-student interaction is a complex and dynamic process that involves not only the transfer of knowledge but also the negotiation of social roles, cultural norms, and communicative expectations. Pragmatic challenges in this context arise from the need to navigate these complexities while ensuring effective communication and a positive learning environment. Below, we explore three key pragmatic challenges: miscommunication, balancing authority and approachability, and adapting to diverse learners.

Miscommunication is one of the most common pragmatic challenges in teacher-student interaction. It can occur due to differences in cultural, linguistic, or contextual factors, leading to misunderstandings that hinder the learning process. One of the causes of miscommunication is cultural differences. In some cultures, indirect communication is the norm, while in others, direct communication is preferred. For example, a teacher from a culture that values indirectness might say, "It would be nice if someone could clean the board," expecting a student to volunteer. However, a student from a culture that values directness might not interpret this as a request and may not act. In Uzbek culture, for instance, students may avoid direct disagreement with the teacher out of respect, which can lead to misunderstandings if the teacher expects open debate.

Linguistic barriers. Students with limited proficiency in the language of instruction may struggle to understand nuanced language, such as idiomatic expressions, sarcasm, or indirect requests. Example: A teacher saying, "Let's hit the

books" might confuse a non-native speaker who interprets the phrase literally. Miscommunication can occur when the teacher and student have different expectations about the context. For example, a teacher might use informal language in a formal setting, leading to confusion about the appropriate level of formality.

Strategies to Address Miscommunication:

Clarification: Teachers can use clear, direct language and check for understanding by asking follow-up questions ("Does that make sense?").

Cultural Sensitivity: Teachers should be aware of cultural differences and adapt their communication style accordingly.

Visual Aids: Using visual aids, gestures, and examples can help bridge linguistic gaps.

Misunderstandings can arise due to differences in cultural or linguistic backgrounds. For example, a teacher's indirect request may be misinterpreted by a student who is used to more direct communication. Teachers must balance their role as authority figures with the need to be approachable and supportive. Overly formal language may create distance, while overly casual language may undermine authority. Teachers must adapt their discursive strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners, including those with different language proficiencies, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds. Pragmatic challenges in teacher-student interaction, such as miscommunication, balancing authority and approachability, and adapting to diverse learners, are central to creating effective and inclusive learning environments. Addressing these challenges requires teachers to be aware of the cultural, linguistic, and contextual factors that influence communication and to adapt their discursive strategies accordingly. By doing so, teachers can foster better understanding, build stronger relationships with their students, and ultimately enhance the learning experience.

The pragmatic challenges and strategies discussed in teacher-student interaction have significant implications for teaching and learning. Addressing these challenges can lead to more effective communication, inclusive classrooms, and empowered learners. Teacher training plays a crucial role in equipping educators with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate the complexities of classroom communication. Training in pragmatic strategies can help teachers create more effective and inclusive learning environments. Key areas for teacher training:

Pragmatic Competence: Teachers should be trained in the principles of pragmatics, including speech acts, politeness strategies, and conversational implicature. This will help them understand how language is used in context and how to adapt their communication to meet the needs of their students.

- Example: Training teachers to use indirect requests or polite forms when giving instructions to avoid sounding authoritarian.

Cultural Sensitivity: Teachers should be educated about the cultural backgrounds of their students and how these backgrounds influence communication styles. This includes understanding cultural norms around respect, authority, and participation.

- Example: Training teachers to recognize that students from certain cultures may be reluctant to speak up in class and to create strategies to encourage their participation.

Differentiated Instruction: Teachers should learn how to use differentiated instruction to cater to diverse learning styles and language proficiencies. This includes using visual aids, hands-on activities, and group work to engage all students.

- Example: Training teachers to scaffold their instructions and provide additional support for students who need it.

Classroom Management: Teachers should be trained in effective classroom management techniques that balance authority and approachability. This includes setting clear expectations, using positive reinforcement, and managing misbehavior constructively.

- Example: Training teachers to use humor and light-hearted remarks to diffuse tension and maintain a positive classroom atmosphere.

Benefits of teacher training:

- Improved Communication: Teachers who are trained in pragmatic strategies can communicate more effectively with their students, reducing misunderstandings and enhancing learning outcomes.

- Inclusive Classrooms: Training in cultural sensitivity and differentiated instruction can help teachers create inclusive classrooms where all students feel valued and supported.

- Professional Development: Ongoing training and professional development can help teachers stay updated on best practices and continuously improve their teaching skills.

Empowering students to take an active role in their learning is essential for fostering engagement, critical thinking, and independence. Encouraging students to use discursive strategies can help them become more confident and effective communicators. There are strategies for student empowerment:

Encouraging Questioning: Teachers can create a classroom environment where students feel comfortable asking questions and seeking clarification. This can be

done by using open-ended questions, providing positive reinforcement, and modeling curiosity.

- Example: A teacher might say, "There are no silly questions. If you're unsure about something, please ask."

Promoting Participation: Teachers can encourage students to participate in class discussions and group activities by using inclusive language, setting clear expectations, and providing opportunities for all students to contribute.

- Example: Using small group discussions or think-pair-share activities to ensure that all students have a chance to speak.

Teaching Discursive Strategies: Teachers can explicitly teach students how to use discursive strategies, such as turn-taking, active listening, and building on others' ideas. This can help students become more effective communicators and collaborators.

- Example: Teaching students how to use phrases like "I agree with... because..." or "Adding to what... said..." to participate in discussions.

Providing Feedback: Teachers can provide constructive feedback that helps students improve their communication skills. This includes praising effective communication and offering suggestions for improvement.

- Example: "You made a great point, but try to speak a bit louder so everyone can hear you."

The benefits of student empowerment include increased engagement which empowered students are more likely to be engaged and motivated in their learning. Encouraging questioning and participation can help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students who are empowered to use discursive strategies are more likely to feel confident in their ability to communicate and succeed academically.

The implications of pragmatic challenges in teacher-student interaction are far-reaching, affecting not only communication but also the overall learning environment. Teacher training in pragmatic strategies, student empowerment through discursive skills, and cross-cultural awareness are essential for creating effective, inclusive, and supportive classrooms.

Discursive strategies in educational speech play a crucial role in shaping teacher-student interaction. A pragmatic approach highlights how language is used to achieve specific communicative goals, such as explaining concepts, managing behavior, and fostering a positive learning environment. By analyzing these strategies, educators can gain insights into how to improve classroom communication and create more effective and inclusive learning experiences. This

topic is particularly relevant for PhD research, as it offers opportunities to explore the intersection of language, culture, and education in diverse contexts.

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