



Ringvorlesung Sprachdynamik

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14.00 – 16.00, A05-0-055

Pragmatic and grammatical awareness in advanced EFL learners The special case of language teacher trainees

Karen Glaser

University of Leipzig

When people learn a foreign language, they usually want to learn how to communicate successfully in that language, i.e. to use the language both correctly and appropriately. While *correctness* refers to the accurate use of language structures (grammar, vocabulary), *appropriateness* refers to the adequate use of the language in a given situation (pragmatics). Naturally, for a long time SLA researchers and language teachers have been interested in the relationship between the development of grammatical and pragmatic skills in learners. In 1998, Kathleen Bardovi-Harlig and Zoltan Dörnyei published their now-seminal paper on the relationship between pragmatic and grammatical awareness in EFL/ESL learners, more specifically, the severity with which the learners would rate grammatical violations (instances of *incorrect* language use) and pragmatic violations (instances of *inappropriate* language use). Several replications (Niezgoda & Roever, 2001; Schauer, 2006) and modified replications (Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005; Pflingstorn & Flöck, 2017; Xu, Case & Wang, 2009) of this research have shed more light on the issue and expanded our knowledge of the factors that influence such perceptions. As a continuation of this research tradition, the talk presents a current project that focuses exclusively on advanced learners of English who are studying to become English teachers in Germany (and are thus generally expected to possess a great deal of language awareness). Using a modified version of Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei's original instrument, the study asked the participants to a) judge utterances for their correctness and appropriateness, b) if applicable, identify the error, and c) to correct it. The results suggest that the grammar-pragmatics distinction is more complex than proposed in previous studies, and that the ability to spot an error does not necessarily imply the ability to explain it well (esp. grammar) or to repair it adequately (esp. pragmatics). Implications for language (teacher) education and future pragmatics research are derived.

References

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- Pflingstorn, J., & Flöck, I. (2017, October). *Die Bemessung pragmatischer Sprachbewusstheit: Precision und recall im metalinguistischen Beurteilungstest* [Assessing pragmatic awareness: Precision and recall in a metalinguistic judgment test]. Paper presented at the 27th Conference of the DGFF [German Association for Foreign Language Research], Jena, Germany.
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- Xu, W., Case, R. E., & Wang, Y. (2009). Pragmatic and grammatical competence, length of residence, and overall L2 proficiency. *System*, 37(2), 205-216.

Studierende und andere Interessierte sind herzlich eingeladen!

Info: ankelien.schippers@uol.de