

# Carsten Roever: *Teaching and Testing Second Language Pragmatics and Interaction* — A Practical Guide

Qianqian Zhang<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ocean University of China, Qingdao, China

Correspondence: Qianqian Zhang, Ocean University of China, Qingdao, China.

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## Abstract

This book provides comprehensive guidance on teaching and assessing second language pragmatics and interaction. From theoretical foundations to practical methodologies, it offers valuable insights for educators and researchers. Covering topics such as context theory and pragmatic strategies, the book introduces various teaching methods, including role-play activities and dialogue interactions, to foster learners' pragmatic skills. Additionally, it addresses effective pragmatic assessment design, ensuring objective evaluations. Overall, the book is a valuable resource for enhancing learners' development in pragmatics and interaction.

**Keywords:** pragmatics, second language pragmatics, language teaching and testing, interactional competence

The increasing importance and urgency in the teaching and testing of second language pragmatics have provided the basis for Carsten Roever's work, "Teaching and Testing Second Language Pragmatics and Interaction." This book delves into the areas of pragmatics competence and interactional competence, exploring how these aspects can be effectively taught and assessed. Its primary goal is to provide readers with a comprehensive understanding of pragmatics and interactional competence, including insights into how learners acquire these skills. The book offers guidance on incorporating pragmatic and interactional abilities into language teaching practices and evaluating them through both classroom assessments and standardized tests.

In Chapter 1, Carsten Roever sets the stage for the book by providing an insightful introduction

to the field of second language pragmatics and interaction. This foundational chapter not only gives readers a glimpse into the scope and significance of the research area but also underscores the crucial role of pragmatics in language learning and communication. It begins by outlining the landscape of second language pragmatics and interaction, contextualizing its importance within the broader field of language education. Through a series of discussions, the author highlights the multifaceted nature of pragmatics and its pivotal role in facilitating effective communication in diverse linguistic contexts. Furthermore, Chapter 1 serves as a primer for readers, introducing key terminologies and concepts that will be recurrent throughout the book. By familiarizing readers with essential terminology, Roever ensures that they are equipped with the

necessary tools to navigate the subsequent chapters with clarity and understanding. Additionally, the chapter provides a succinct overview of the structure and content of the book, offering a roadmap for readers to anticipate the discussions and insights that will unfold in each subsequent chapter. This preview not only serves to orient readers but also reinforces the coherence and organization of the book's content. Overall, Chapter 1 serves as a crucial foundation for the book, laying the groundwork for readers to delve into the nuanced exploration of teaching and testing second language pragmatics and interaction that follows. Through its informative overview, introduction of key concepts, and preview of subsequent chapters, Chapter 1 sets the tone for an engaging and enlightening journey into the intricacies of second language pragmatics and interaction.

In Chapter 2, Carsten Roever delves into an extensive examination of pragmatics, offering readers a thorough understanding of its fundamental components and intricacies. This chapter serves as a comprehensive primer on pragmatics, covering core areas such as speech acts, implicature, routine formulae, and interactional competence. The chapter begins by elucidating the concept of speech acts, exploring how language is used not only to convey information but also to perform actions and achieve social goals. Through detailed discussions and illustrative examples, the author illuminates the various types of speech acts and their pragmatic functions in communication. Furthermore, Roever delves into the notion of implicature, unpacking how speakers convey meaning beyond the literal interpretation of their words through implicational inferences. This section explores the nuanced ways in which speakers exploit implicature to convey politeness, sarcasm, or indirect requests, among other communicative intentions. Moreover, Chapter 2 delves into the role of routine formulae in communication, highlighting their significance in facilitating smooth and efficient interaction. By examining commonly used expressions and formulaic sequences, the author elucidates how routine formulae contribute to the pragmatics of everyday discourse. Additionally, the chapter addresses the concept of interactional competence, distinguishing it from pragmatic competence in terms of their origins, data sources, and research

methodologies. Roever underscores the interconnectedness of pragmatic and interactional competence, particularly through the lens of speech acts, emphasizing how both contribute to successful communication. Overall, Chapter 2 provides readers with a rich and nuanced exploration of pragmatics, offering insights into its core areas and shedding light on the intricate dynamics of language use in social interaction. Through its comprehensive overview, this chapter equips readers with a solid foundation for understanding the complexities of pragmatics and its pivotal role in effective communication.

In Chapter 3, Carsten Roever delves into an exploration of various instruments essential for developing effective language teaching and testing activities within the realm of second language pragmatics. This chapter serves as a practical guide, offering educators and testers valuable insights into designing activities that facilitate the acquisition and assessment of pragmatic competence. The chapter commences by elucidating the process of activity design, providing readers with a systematic approach to creating activities tailored to target specific aspects of pragmatic competence. Through detailed discussions and illustrative examples, Roever guides readers through the intricacies of activity design, emphasizing the importance of aligning activities with learning objectives and contextual factors. Moreover, Chapter 3 delves into sampling procedures, offering practical guidance on how to select and structure activities to effectively sample learners' pragmatic skills. By outlining sampling strategies and considerations, the author equips readers with the tools to develop activities that provide comprehensive insights into learners' pragmatic abilities. Additionally, the chapter outlines the valuable information that these instruments can offer to both teachers and testers, underscoring their utility in informing instructional practices and assessment decisions. Through detailed discussions and examples, Roever highlights how these instruments can provide valuable insights into learners' pragmatic development and proficiency levels. Furthermore, Chapter 3 emphasizes the importance of establishing context in activity design, underscoring how contextual factors shape language use and pragmatic interpretation. The chapter introduces two main types of tools: receptive tools, such as

metapragmatic judgments and multiple-choice questions, and productive tools, including discourse completion tasks, role plays, and elicited conversations. Through detailed discussions on each type of tool, the author offers practical insights into their design, implementation, and assessment considerations. Overall, Chapter 3 serves as a comprehensive guide for educators and testers, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to develop effective language teaching and testing activities in second language pragmatics. Through its practical approach and detailed discussions, this chapter empowers readers to create activities that foster learners' pragmatic competence and enhance assessment practices.

In Chapter 4, Carsten Roever conducts a detailed exploration into the correlation between the concepts and research findings in pragmatics, as introduced in Chapter 2, and learners' proficiency levels. This chapter serves as a bridge between theoretical understanding and practical application, offering insights into how learners' proficiency levels impact their pragmatic development and interactional competence. The chapter begins by introducing the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) as a comprehensive framework for assessing language proficiency levels and abilities. Roever aligns the CEFR with other prominent frameworks such as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR), facilitating cross-framework comparisons and understanding. Furthermore, Chapter 4 delineates the principles of curriculum design for pragmatics, emphasizing the importance of tailoring instructional content and objectives to learners' proficiency levels. Through detailed discussions, the author elucidates what can be effectively taught at different levels of second language (L2) proficiency, providing educators with guidance on setting curricular objectives that align with learners' developmental needs. Additionally, the chapter outlines the curricular objectives for advancing learners to the next proficiency level, offering a roadmap for progression in pragmatic and interactional skills. By establishing a connection between proficiency levels and teachable pragmatics, Roever enables educators to design curriculum sequences that scaffold learners' development and promote continuous improvement. Moreover, Chapter 4 underscores

the mutual enhancement and augmentation of proficiency levels and pragmatics skills within a curriculum. By aligning instructional content with learners' proficiency levels, educators can effectively scaffold learning experiences that foster pragmatic competence and interactional proficiency, ultimately facilitating learners' overall language development. Overall, Chapter 4 serves as a valuable resource for educators seeking to integrate proficiency-based instruction into their pragmatics curriculum. Through its exploration of the relationship between proficiency levels and teachable pragmatics, this chapter provides educators with the tools and insights needed to design effective instructional sequences that promote learners' pragmatic development and interactional competence.

In Chapter 5, Carsten Roever delves into a comprehensive exploration of methods, techniques, and activities tailored for teaching pragmatics and interaction in a second language classroom. This chapter serves as a practical guide for educators, offering a wealth of strategies and resources to enhance learners' pragmatic competence and interactional skills. The chapter begins by addressing broader issues in teaching second language (L2) pragmatics, highlighting the underrepresentation of systematic pragmatics instruction in language curricula. Roever analyzes factors contributing to this underrepresentation and discusses the feasibility and benefits of incorporating pragmatics instruction into language teaching programs. Furthermore, Chapter 5 distinguishes between explicit and implicit approaches to pragmatics teaching, as well as between deductive and inductive approaches, examining how each approach influences the effectiveness of instruction. Through nuanced discussions, the author provides insights into selecting appropriate instructional methods that align with learners' needs and learning objectives. Moreover, the chapter explores supplementary materials and resources for teaching pragmatics, including sample dialogues and authentic materials. Roever outlines a variety of activities corresponding to different phases of pragmatic issues, offering educators a diverse array of instructional strategies to engage learners and promote meaningful interaction. Additionally, Chapter 5 illustrates how topics can be presented at varying levels of complexity throughout the syllabus, catering to learners'

developmental stages and proficiency levels. By providing guidance on sequencing instructional content and activities, the author empowers educators to scaffold learning experiences that promote continuous growth in pragmatic competence. Overall, Chapter 5 serves as an invaluable resource for educators seeking to enhance their pedagogical practices in teaching pragmatics and interaction in the second language classroom. Through its exploration of instructional methods, techniques, and activities, this chapter equips educators with the tools and strategies needed to foster learners' pragmatic development and facilitate meaningful interaction in the language learning context.

Chapter 6 delves into the content and difficulty levels of two primary types of testing: classroom assessment of pragmatics and large-scale assessment of pragmatics. It investigates reasons for the lack of pragmatics testing in large-scale tests and classrooms, reviewing the literature on pragmatics testing and discussing different generations of testing methodologies. The chapter explores pragmatics norms, benchmark samples, and raters, as well as various tasks for assessing pragmatic knowledge and ability in classroom-based testing. It then outlines the steps in Kane's argument-based validity framework for validating large-scale tests and discusses the fairness and bias present in pragmatics testing. Finally, it analyzes the reasons behind the absence of pragmatics testing in large-scale tests and classrooms, citing practicality concerns in large-scale testing and a lack of awareness of pragmatics exacerbated by its absence in curricula and textbooks in classroom assessments.

Chapter 7 brings the book to a close by offering insights into the future of teaching and assessing second language (L2) pragmatics. It discusses various strategies, such as creating contextual scenarios and incorporating pragmatic elements into textbooks, to enhance pragmatic instruction in the foreign language classroom. The chapter emphasizes the importance of aligning pragmatic teaching with learners' proficiency levels and highlights the ongoing efforts of educators and publishers to integrate pragmatics into language curricula. Additionally, it identifies challenges and gaps in current approaches and advocates for the development of supplementary materials for pragmatics instruction.

Furthermore, the chapter explores how

language for specific purposes can drive advancements in pragmatics teaching and testing. It explores the application of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in need analysis and task design, using experimental studies as examples. The chapter concludes by discussing the potential of technology to facilitate pragmatic testing and suggests specific tasks for assessing different pragmatic competencies and skills. For instance, it proposes using multiple-choice items for assessing routines and implicature, as well as monologic tasks for evaluating interactional abilities. It also suggests incorporating contextualized monologic pragmatics tasks and face-to-face components, and explores the potential of computer-simulated interactions for assessing interactional competence.

In summary, this book caters to various stakeholders for multiple purposes. It provides valuable insights for second language teachers, curriculum designers, and test makers, encouraging them to reconsider the challenges of pragmatics instruction and assessment. It also serves as a resource for students in teacher training programs or those interested in learning more about pragmatics. Additionally, it offers practical guidance for language teachers across different modern languages by illustrating how pragmatic content can be tailored to learners' proficiency levels, thus enhancing the effectiveness of teaching.

This book stands out due to several impressive features. Firstly, its layout is user-friendly, with clearly presented charts and a logically structured flow of information. For example, Chapter 6 highlights the absence of pragmatics testing in classroom assessments, leading to a discussion of potential improvements in Chapter 7.

Secondly, the book's accessibility is commendable, achieved through its organized and reader-friendly structure. Each chapter begins with an introduction, offering readers a concise overview of the content. Throughout the chapters, the author incorporates easily understandable sample studies to illustrate concepts, drawn from reputable sources in the field. Following each chapter is a brief conclusion and a section titled "Resources and Future References," providing readers with additional sources for further exploration and reflection.



Thirdly, the book's readability is impressive, characterized by clear and casual language. The author explains pragmatic theories using relatable examples from everyday experiences, enhancing understanding for readers with diverse backgrounds. Additionally, the consistent pattern of explanation across chapters ensures a systematic outline of the content.

Moreover, the book effectively bridges research and pedagogy, offering valuable insights for both teachers and learners. Pedagogical implications are highlighted throughout each chapter, empowering teachers to make informed decisions in their classroom practices. Despite these strengths, the book also has some limitations. For instance, it predominantly focuses on English examples, limiting its applicability to other languages. Additionally, while Chapter 7 discusses the role of technology, it could benefit from more examples of how technology can be integrated into pragmatic teaching and assessment.

In conclusion, despite minor limitations, this book will be of great interest to a broad readership. Its comprehensive examination of pragmatics and interactional competence, coupled with practical pedagogical insights, makes it a valuable resource for those interested in applied linguistics and language education. Overall, this book sheds light on the vibrant field of pragmatics and offers valuable guidance for future research and teaching endeavors.

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