

Enhancing the Conversational Interaction Abilities of Iraqi EFL Freshmen Students through Improving Their Pragmatic Competence

Instr. Walaa' Jabbar Katti'

walaa.jabbar@garmian.edu.krd

University of Garmian/ College of
Languages & Human Sciences, Kurdistan
Region, Iraq

Angham Talib Saleh

Azuredew12@gmail.com

Mustansiriyah University/ College of Basic
Education

Asst. Prof. Ph.D. Ekhlas Mahdi

Hassan

ekhlas.hassan@uho.edu.iq

University of Halabja College of Education

Abstract

The most effective communication tool we have is language, but only when it is used well. Otherwise, it may have the same effect as a communication barrier. The most sensitive aspect of us is most likely our language.

Furthermore, a large vocabulary, flawless pronunciation, and a thorough understanding of grammatical structures are insufficient to assist students in mastering the English language. When speaking with a given interlocutor and executing a certain speech act, students must be able to judge what is socially acceptable in that scenario. Therefore, one must have established pragmatic competence in order to succeed in this domain of language use.

In fact, it has been demonstrated over years of teaching college

students in various grades that they frequently lack the requisite pragmatic competence, meaning they are unaware of the social, cultural, and discourse rules that must be adhered to in different contexts. The ways in which classroom-based training can support foreign language learners' pragmatic development have received comparatively little attention. Therefore, by concentrating on two speech acts—greeting and invitation—the current research paper sought to examine the impact of enhancing students' pragmatic ability. Furthermore, this study aims to determine whether students' capacity to engage in conversation will be significantly impacted once their pragmatic competence has been developed. In order to achieve the aims of this study and test its hypotheses, the researchers have constructed an achievement pre-test and post-test. The sample of the current study will be the freshmen students of department of English Language in college of Basic Education at Mustansiriyah University.

Key words: Conversational Interaction, Pragmatic Competence.

تعزيز مهارات التفاعل الحوارى لدى طلاب السنة الأولى العراقيين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية

كلغة أجنبية من خلال تحسين كفاءتهم البراغمية

م. ولاء جبار كاطع

جامعة كرميان/ كلية اللغات و العلوم الانسانية- كردستان العراق

م. انغام طالب صالح

الجامعة المستنصرية/ كلية التربية الاساسية

أ.م.د اخلاص مهدي حسن

جامعة حلبجة/ كلية التربية

الملخص

تعد اللغة أداة التواصل الأكثر فعالية لدينا، ولكن فقط عند استخدامها بشكل جيد. وإلا، فقد تُصبح عائقاً للتواصل. الجانب الأكثر حساسية فينا هو على الأرجح لغتنا. علاوة على ذلك، فإن كثرة المفردات، والنطق السليم، والفهم العميق للتركيب النحوية لا تكفي لمساعدة الطلاب على إتقان اللغة الإنجليزية. عند التحدث مع مُحاور معين وتنفيذ فعل كلامي مُعين، يجب أن يكون الطلاب قادرين على تقييم ما هو مقبول اجتماعياً في تلك الحالة.

لذلك، يجب أن يكون لدى المرء كفاءة براغماتية راسخة للنجاح في هذا المجال من استخدام اللغة في الواقع.

ثبت على مدى سنوات من تدريس طلاب الجامعات في مختلف المراحل الدراسية أنهم غالبًا ما يفتقرون إلى الكفاءة البراغماتية المطلوبة، مما يعني أنهم يجهلون القواعد الاجتماعية والثقافية والخطابية التي يجب الالتزام بها في سياقات مختلفة. لم تحظ الطرق التي يمكن من خلالها للتدريب الصفّي دعم التطور البراجماتيكي لمتعلمي اللغات الأجنبية باهتمام يُذكر. لذلك، ومن خلال التركيز على فعلين من أفعال الكلام - التحية والدعوة - سعت هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة أثر تعزيز القدرة البراجماتيكية للطلاب. علاوة على ذلك، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد ما إذا كانت قدرة الطلاب على المشاركة في المحادثة ستتأثر بشكل كبير بمجرد تطوير كفاءتهم البراجماتيكية. ولتحقيق أهداف هذه الدراسة واختبار فرضياتها، قام الباحثون بإعداد اختبار تحصيلي قبلي وبعدي. وستكون عينة الدراسة الحالية طلاب السنة الأولى في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية الأساسية في الجامعة المستنصرية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التفاعل الحواري، الكفاءة البراجماتيكية.

1. Introduction

The study of pragmatics, or language use, offers an alternative viewpoint on language and sheds light on the linguistic decisions made by users in society situations.

According to Yule (1988: 91), pragmatics is therefore interested in the characteristics of speaker-meaning and other facets of language meaning. Pragmatics is essentially the study of "invisible" meaning, or how humans may discern meaning even when it is not expressed verbally or in writing.

Additionally, Clark (2007:50) concurs that pragmatics is the study of implicit or unsaid meanings in language.

It is true that people do not always state what they intend, to be clear. When someone says, "It is warm in here," for instance, they might mean Is it possible for you to open the window? As a result, people's intentions may differ greatly from what they express.

Yule (1996) asserts that pragmatics is the study of meaning as it is conveyed by a speaker and understood by a listener. Additionally,

according to Jacob (2001), pragmatics is the study of how human language usage is influenced by social context.

Pragmatics focuses on cultural variations in the ways people use and interpret discourse. As Bonvillian (1993: 85) puts it:

'Understanding meaning is necessarily contextual, situating speech in interpersonal and cultural context. All cultures provide rules for appropriate communicative interaction, defining behaviors that should occur, that may occur and that should not occur in given contexts'.

In order to function most fully within a society, knowledge of language structures is simply not enough. Knowledge of how to use a language to best convey and interpret intended meaning is necessary as well. The emphasis on developing pragmatic competence, seem to be a common denominator among language learners who acclimate easily into the target culture.

Consequently, while communicative competence and grammatical competence are explicitly taught and developed in the EFL classroom, developing pragmatic competence is often overlooked. The present study hypothesized the following:

- 1) The positive effect of developing students' pragmatic competence on their language learning.
- 2) Developing the students' conversational interaction ability through developing their pragmatic competence.

1. Pragmatic Competence

Knowledge of language alone does not adequately prepare learners for effective and appropriate use of the target language. Richard and Renandya, (2002: 207) state that learners must have competence which involves knowing what is expected socially and culturally by users of the target language; that is learners must acquire the rules and norms governing the appropriate timing and realization of speech acts. As well as understanding the sociolinguistic sides of language helps learners

know what comments are appropriate, how to ask questions during interaction, and how to respond nonverbally according to the purpose of the talk. According to Crystal (1988: 48) 'if you choose to say something, there are all kinds of factors which constrain what you will say and how you will say it'. In fact, there is no theory prevents you to say anything you like, but in practice, you follow a wide range of social rules governing the way you speak.

Communicative language pedagogy and research into communicative competence have shown that language learning exceeds the limits of memorizing vocabulary items and grammar rules (Canale, 1983). Pragmatic competence, although sometimes in disguise, has been a part of the models describing communicative competence.

Pragmatic competence is not a piece of knowledge additional to the learners' existing grammatical knowledge, but it is an organic part of the learners' communicative competence (Kasper, 1997). Communicative competence, on the other hand, is a term for communication in spite of language, rather than communication through language (Higgs and Clifford, 1982:61).

Edwards and Csizer (2001) believes that pragmatic competence can be defined as the knowledge of social, cultural, and discourse conventions that have to be followed in various situations.

Pragmatic competence is the way learners manipulate language in order to meet communicative goals (Brown, 1994: 228).

It is good mentioning that linguists such as Bardovi-Harlig and et al (1996:324) highlight the importance of pragmatic competence and point out the consequences of the lack of this competence:

'Speakers who do not use pragmatically appropriate language run the risk of appearing uncooperative at the least, or, more seriously, rude or insulting. This is particularly true of advanced learners whose high linguistic proficiency leads other speakers to expect concomitantly high

pragmatic competence.'

Successful communication necessitates pragmatic competence, which changes form and realization from language to language. The implications of such an assertion are that when we teach a foreign language, there is a good chance that learners are faced with quite different conversational strategies in the target language from their mother tongue. Therefore, they may perform transfers from their language and these

out to be inappropriate in the target language context. Besides, they may simply have much difficulty to learn them properly because of their mother tongue interference.

2. Speech Act Theory

Our understanding of the underlying or unstated rules that govern communication owes a great deal to a particular theory of language known as speech act theory. Speech act theory was originated by the philosopher John Austin (1962), expanded by Searle (1969), and developed further by Grice (1975). According to Clark (2007: 57), the speech act theory is based on the belief that language is often used to perform actions and on how meaning and action relate to language. As Austin (1962: 100) says:

'The words used are to some extent to be explained by the context in which they are designed to be or have actually been spoken in a linguistic interchange'.

However, Yule (2006:118) claims that we can define a speech act as the action performed by a speaker with an utterance. If you say, *Good morning*, or *Would you like to come to my birthday party*, you are not just speaking, you seem to be performing the speech act of 'greeting' and 'invitation'.

As humans we communicate verbally and non-verbally. Austin (1962) called verbal communication a speech act and argued that speech acts

performed three different acts, these are:

- 1) The locutionary act corresponds to the act of saying something. It involves uttering certain noises in a particular grammatical construction with a more or less definite sense of reference.
- 2) The illocutionary act is the act performed in saying something. It reflects the speaker's intent in uttering a sentence.
- 3) The perlocutionary act is the act performed by saying something. It involves the effect that the speaker has on her/him listener when uttering the sentence (Cark: 2007:57).

Speech acts are verbal actions that accomplish something: we greet, insult, compliment, flirt..etc.. Austin (1962) believes that there are many types of speech acts, such as:

- 1) Representatives: here the speaker asserts a proposition to be true, using such verbs as: affirm, believe, conclude, deny, report.
- 2) Directives: here the speaker tries to make the hearer do something, with such words as: ask, beg, challenge, command, dare, invite, insist, request.
- 3) : Commissives here the speaker commits himself (or herself) to a (future) course of action, with verbs such as: guarantee, pledge, promise, swear, vow, undertake, warrant.
- 4) Expressives: the speaker expresses an attitude to or about a state of affairs, using such verbs as: apologize, appreciate, congratulate, deplore, detest, greet, regret, thank, welcome.
- 5) Declarations the speaker alters the external status or condition of an object or situation, solely by making the utterance: I now pronounce you husband and wife, I sentence you to be hanged by the neck until you be dead, I name this ship...

Concerning the present study, directives (invitations) and expressives (greetings) speech acts have been chosen as a tool to develop the students' pragmatic competence.

3. The Teachability of Pragmatic Competence

Can pragmatic competence be taught? This question has inspired a number of research projects exploring the role of instruction in learners' pragmatic development. Kasper (1997) argues that while competence cannot be taught, students should be provided with opportunities to develop their pragmatic competence:

Competence is a type of knowledge that learners possess, develop, acquire, use or lose. The challenge for FLT is whether we can arrange learning opportunities in such a way they benefit the development of pragmatic competence in FL.

A number of studies have explored how English language textbooks present speech acts (see Bardovi-Harling and et al (1996) on closings; Boxer and Pickering (1995) on compliments; Edwards and Csizer (2001) on openings and closings; and Richards (2000) on invitations. These studies concluded that textbooks usually fail to provide the necessary and appropriate input in speech acts, and the material they do present often differs from real life speech.

4. Textbook Materials Need to be Flexible

Although language is a social practice, learning a language is largely individual process as learners seek to integrate newly perceived information into their existing language system. It is essential for teachers to recognize the different backgrounds, experiences, and learning styles that students bring to the language classroom. In other words, it is to a large extent the learners, not the teachers, who control what is learnt since it is they who selectively organize the sensory input into meaningful whole

, the ultimate goal of the learning process is that the input from the materials provides linguistic and cultural preparation before or in parallel with, the learner-generated language. As O'Neill (cited in Rossner and Bolitho, 1990: 155–156)

Textbooks can at best provide only a base or a core of materials.... A great deal of the most important work in a class may start with the textbook but end outside it, an improvisation and adaptation, in spontaneous interaction in the class, and the development of that interaction.

According to Wright (1987) we teach with, rather than through, materials, thus being free to improvise and adapt in response to learner feedback. Effective teaching materials, by providing cultural and linguistic input and a rich selection of integrated activities, are thus a professional tool which can actually assist to be more responsive, both by leaving them time to cater to individual needs and by expanding their teaching repertoire. Learners, too, can benefit from access to the materials used in class, and this allows them to put on their learning.

The teachers' challenge is to maintain the balance between providing a coherent learning experience which scaffolds learner comprehension and production, and modeling effective strategies without losing responsiveness to the unique situation and needs of each learner. The textbook writers' challenge, on the other hand, is to provide materials which support teachers and learners, and present ideas for tasks and the presentation of language input without becoming prescriptive and undermining the teacher's and the learner's autonomy (Richard and Renandya, 2002: 88). Accordingly, textbook materials need to be flexible to cater to individual and contextual differences.

However, the role of textbooks in raising students' pragmatic awareness is more important. It is difficult to give clear suggestions for improving pragmatic input in textbooks, particularly because textbooks are usually targeted to an international audience. Boxer and Pickering (1995) underlined the importance of building teaching materials on spontaneous speech and not relying on native speaker intuition, which may be misleading at times. Enriching classroom input with real-world materials,

such as recordings of native speaker conversations, radio programs, can be beneficial. To provide sufficient pragmatic input for the students, it is also important to supplement textbooks that focus on pragmatics. This will give students firsthand experience in issues of pragmatic competence and deepen their understanding by letting them discover the rules themselves.

In practical terms, the present research support the idea that language classrooms should have a dual focus– not only on teaching language content, but also on developing learning processes

How to Communicate Effectively?

To communicate effectively, language learners need to become proficient in using , not just, the semantic, syntactic, lexical, morphological and phonological elements of the language being learnt. They also need to understand its pragmatics use.

It should be noted that learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules. Learners must also acquire the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structural interpersonal exchange, in which many factors interact (Richard and Renandya, 2002: 204). However, speaking a language is especially difficult for foreign language learners because effective oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interactions.

Accordingly, diversity in interaction involves not only verbal communication, but also paralinguistic elements of speech such as stress and intonation, nonlinguistic elements such as postures and facial expression. In addition, "there is tremendous variation cross–culturally and cross–linguistically in specific interpretations of gestures and body language" (Brown, 1994: 241).

5. Sociocultural Factors and EFL Learners' Oral Communication

Many cultural characteristics of a language affect FL learning. From a

pragmatics perspective, language is form of social action because linguistic communication occurs in the context of structured interpersonal exchange and meaning is thus socially regulated (Dimitracopoulou, 1990). In other words, "shared values and beliefs create the traditions and social structures that bind a community together and are expressed in their language" (Carrasquillo, 1994: 55).

As a matter of fact, culture plays an instrumental role in shaping speakers' pragmatic competence, which is related to the appropriate use of language. Generally, Richards and Renandiyas (2002) agree that appropriateness is determined by each speech community . In other words, it defied by the shared social and cultural conventions of a particular group of speakers. Therefore, it is essential to recognize different sets of culturally determined rules of communication. Just as Brown and Yule (1983:40) say, "a great number of cultural assumptions which would be normally presupposed, and not made explicit by native speakers, may need to be drawn explicitly to the attention of speakers from other cultures."

Thus, to speak a language, one must know how the language is used in a social context. It is believed that each language has its own rules of usage as to when, how, and to what degree a speaker may impose a given verbal behavior on his or her conversational partner (Berns, 1990). Because of the influence or interference of the

cultural norms, it is hard for nonnative speakers to choose the forms appropriate to certain situations. For instance, in Chines culture, paying a compliment to someone obligates that person to give a negative response to show modesty, whereas in North America culture such a response might be both inappropriate and embarrassing. In English, *How are you?* Is usually considered a greeting, not a real question. However, in Hungarian, the phrase *Hogy vagy?* The meaning of this phrase depending on whether the speaker uses the informal or formal

form. Thus, it may communicate genuine interest in the other speaker's well-being.

English phrases, such as greetings or invitations, are used in other languages, but often take on a different meaning. In Hangarian, for instance, *Hello*, in addition to being a greeting, is a leave-taking. Therefore, while it is perfectly acceptable in Hangarian to convey *goodbye* by saying *hello*, a native English speaker hearing *hello* is likely to be astonished by such leave-taking. In slang Arabic, we also use *hello* as a greeting and as a leave-taking.

It should be also mentioned that adult English speakers do not ordinarily address someone as *Auntie* or Uncle unless is genuine familial relationship of that sort.

During the process of language teaching , teachers can present situations in which there are cultural misunderstandings that cause people to become offended, angry, and confused.

As a result of these differences, learners often have difficulty acquiring the pragmatic rules and functions that differ from their native language. In fact, language proficiency cannot be complete without the knowledge of the appropriate pragmatic rules of the target language. According to Carrasquillo(1994: 65), language proficiency is not a unidimensional construct but a multifaceted modality, consisting of various levels of abilities and domains. Hymes (1971) also assumes that EFL learners need to know not only the linguistic knowledge, but also the culturally acceptable ways of interacting with others in different situations and relationships.

6. Learners' Conversational Interaction

Conversation is the first interaction type to be learnt by human beings. Conversation is also the most basic of all genres, the primordial site of language use (Schegloff (1996) cited in (shopen,2007:302). Whereas, Cutting (2002:28) defines conversation as a discourse mutually

constructed and negotiated in time between speakers.

Brown and Yule (1983) and Slade (1986) agree that conversation is a listener- or person-oriented. As in other speaking tasks, a conversation requires the speaker to

face temporal constraints and the social pressures of face- to- face interaction'(Chafe, 1986:16).

Conversation is a truly communicative event which is a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total information input, both linguistic and paralinguistic (Savignon,1971, cited in Higgs and Clifford, 1982:58).

Richards (1983:118), on the other hand, affirms that conversations begin with greetings and progress through various ordered moves: the speaker's and hearer's roles are ascertained, topics are introduced, rights to talk are assumed, new topics are raised, and at the appropriate time the conversation is terminated in a suitable manner. Underhill(1987:45) also believes that 'the speaker and the hearer have to take initiative, ask questions, or express disagreement in the conversation, all of which require a command of particular language features and which can be learnt.

Language learning evolves learning how to carry on conversation as well as learning how to communicate (Hatch, 1978: 63). In addition, Long (1983) suggested that if conversational adjustments in interaction help make input more comprehensible, and facilitate the EFL learning, then the linguistic and conversational adjustments that occur during interaction may promote language learning. These important claims, known as Long's interaction hypothesis, led to a great deal of work, including: relationships between conversational interaction and language comprehension, relationships between specific interactional processes and learning outcomes, and how interaction creates opportunities for learning. In Long's (1996),(as cited in (Mackey,2011:2)) updated

version of the interactional hypothesis, he maintains that conversational interactional is highly beneficial because 'it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive way.

Relatively, many previous studies such as (Gass and Varonis (1994) Swain (1995); and Oliver (1998) as cited in (Macky:2011:29) have examined the benefits of interactions between learners for promoting language development. In addition, these studies have indicated that during learners' conversational interactions, learners receive comprehensible input, opportunities to negotiate for meaning and receive others' feedback, and opportunities to produce modified output.

7. Procedures and the Experimental Design

7.1 The Experimental Design

In order to achieve the aims of the present study, the researchers used the pre-post-test for two groups, an experimental group and a controlling group.

The experimental group is taught the conversation activities with the focus on the pragmatic competence. The researchers have enhanced their knowledge about the

between the formal and informal forms in greetings and invitations. During the experiment, the students have shown the differences between their mothers' language which is Arabic language and the English language as a foreign language.

On the other hand, the controlling group is taught the conversation activities by using the ordinary method.

7.2 The Sample Selection

The population of the present study is the first year students in the department of English Language at the college of Basic Education at Mustansiriyah University. There are two classes of the first year students, each one consisted of 27 students. Class (A) is taken as an

experimental group, while class (B) is taken as a controlling group.

7.3 The Instruction

The instruction of the experiment has lasted seven weeks. Started on the 22nd of January, 2024. The experiment of the present study has ended on 10th of March, 2024. The researchers themselves taught the experimental and control groups in order to control the teaching variable in the experiment.

7.4 Instrument of the Study

To assess the success of the present instruction, an instrument which comprises two achievement tests are used. Written test and an oral test the aim of these tests are to validate the hypothesis that developing the learners' pragmatic competence is very important for their EFL learning. As well as, it is believed that developing learners' pragmatic competence will positively affect their conversational interaction.

7.4.1 Tests Construction

The achievement tests are used to measure the extent of learner progress toward the achievement of the instructional objectives of a specific study as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction (Harris, 1969: 3).

In fact, the researchers have constructed an oral test. This test aims at developing the learners' pragmatic competence awareness and enhancing the learners' ability in their conversational interactions orally. Therefore, during the instruction short conversations are given to the students, and they are asked to expand the dialog by adding extra phrases and elements. The researchers write the phrases on the board and play a CD concerned with oral conversations. The third edition of (Richards, 2005)^{1,2,3} have been been used during the instruction. The emphases will be on the effective using of the formal and informal greetings and invitations addition, the researchers have constructed a written achievement test.

The aim of this test is to investigate the effect of developing learners' pragmatic competence through two kinds of speech acts; that is, expressive (greetings) and directives (invitations). In order to determine the amount of learning gain during instruction, the same achievement test is used as a pre-test and post-test. The test consisted of (4) questions, contains (42) items.

7.4.2 The Scoring Scheme of the Test

The researchers gave one mark for the correct answer of each item, and zero for the wrong one. The test consisted of 42 items. Thus, the highest mark for the test is 24, while a zero is the lowest.

7.4.3 Test Validity

The validity of an item like the validity of a test is a complex quality. It is the degree to which it tests what it is said to test. However, there are four types of validity, that is, construct validity, empirical validity, content validity, and face validity. Accordingly, only content validity and face validity have been achieved.

7.4.3.1 Content Validity

According to Harris (1969: 19) the test has content validity if it is designed to measure the mastery of a specific skill or the content of a particular course of the study.

7.4.3.2 Face Validity

Face validity is secured if the list of items appears to measuring what it is intended to measure (Ebel, 1972: 78).

7.4.4 The Pilot Administration of the Test

The initial form of the test was given to (14) freshmen students, drawn from the same sample of the study. The aims of the pilot study is to

- 1) Determine the effectiveness of the items and secure the clarity of each item.
- 2) Estimate the time needed for answering the test completely.
- 3) Omit or modify the items that were not suitable for the students.

7.4.5 Item Analysis

The item analysis usually involves determining the level of difficulty and the discrimination power of each item of the test.

7.4.5.1 Difficulty Level

The difficulty level is calculated by determining the percentage of testers who answered the item correctly divided by the total number of the testers. By applying

the difficulty level formula of each item in the test, it has been found that the difficulty level of each of the 42 test items ranges from (0.39) and (0.78). According to Madsen (1983:182), any item whose difficulty level ranges from 30 percent to 90 percent is acceptable. See table (1).

7.4.5.2 Discrimination Power

The discrimination power of the test is calculated by subtracting the number of the testers in the lower group who answered the item correctly from the number of the testers in the upper group who answered the item correctly and dividing the result by the number of the testers in either group. By applying the discrimination power formula of each item in the test, it has been found that the difficulty level of each of the 42 test items ranges from (0.21) and (0.85). Brown(1981:104) believes that any item is acceptable when its discrimination power is 20 percent and above. See table (1)

7.5 Statistical Means

To achieve the results of the present study, the researchers have used the following statistical means to calculate:

1) The difficulty level of each item has been achieved by the following formula:

$$DL = \frac{HC + LC}{N}$$

2) The discrimination power of each item has been achieved by the following formula:

$$RU - RL$$

$$T$$

$$t = \frac{\overline{X}_1 - \overline{X}_2}{S \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}}$$

3) The difference in the achievement of the students in the pre and posttest and the difference between the control group and experimental group in the test, have been calculated by using the following formula

Table (1) The Difficulty Level and the Discrimination Power of the Test

Item	Difficulty Level	Item	Discrimination Power
1	0.71	1	0.57
2	0.58	2	0.43
3	0.46	3	0.21
4	0.57	4	0.28
5	0.39	5	0.35
6	0.46	6	0.21
7	0.53	7	0.21
8	0.64	8	0.28
9	0.57	9	0.85
10	0.46	10	0.21
11	0.53	11	0.21
12	0.46	12	0.35
13	0.60	13	0.35
14	0.46	14	0.21
15	0.53	15	0.35
16	0.57	16	0.85
17	0.78	17	0.43
18	0.71	18	0.57
19	0.78	19	0.43
20	0.78	20	0.43
21	0.64	21	0.71
22	0.78	22	0.43
23	0.57	23	0.85

24	0.57	24	0.85
25	0.78	25	0.43
26	0.78	26	0.43
27	0.46	27	0.21
28	0.46	28	0.21
29	0.46	29	0.35
30	0.57	30	0.85
31	0.57	31	0.85
32	0.57	32	0.85
33	0.71	33	0.57
34	0.46	34	0.35
35	0.46	35	0.21
36	0.64	36	0.71
37	0.64	37	0.28
38	0.57	38	0.28
39	0.71	39	0.57
40	0.64	40	0.71
41	0.71	41	0.57
42	0.64	42	0.71

7.6 Results

7.6.1 The Achievement of Learners in the Pre-test

The researchers have used this variable to equalize the subjects of the experimental and control groups in their previous knowledge concerning the material that would be taught during the instruction. Table (2) shows that the computed t -value is (0.299) and the tabulated t -value is (1.788) under (88) degrees of freedom and (0.05) level of significance. This indicates that there is no significance difference between the experimental and the control groups.

Table (2) Mean, Variance, and t-Value of the Pre Test Scores of the Two Groups

Group	N	X	S ²	Df	T – value		Level
					Computed	Tabulated	
Experimental	20	10.793	18.507	88	0.299	1.788	0.05
Control	20	10.501	20.521				

7.6.2 The Post Test

As a matter of fact, the same test which is used in the pre-test has been used as a post-test. This procedure aims to indicate which group of the learners has achieved better.

At the end of the experiment, the results which obtained from the test have been analyzed to determine whether there is any significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and the control groups in the total scores of the test. Table (3) shows that the computed t-value is (6.351) and the tabulated t-value is (3.112) under (88) degrees of freedom and (0.001) level of significance. This indicates that there is a significance difference between the experimental and the control groups. This difference is in favour of the experimental group.

Table (3) Mean, Variance, and t-Value of the Post Test Scores of the Two Groups

Group	N	X	S ²	Df	T – value		Level of Significance
					Computed	Tabulated	
Experimental	20	29.972	73.234	88	6.351	3.112	0.001
Control	20	15.277	50.099				

1.1.1 The Experimental Group's Progress

The researchers have compared the scores of the experimental group in the pre-test and the post-test. It is found out that the computed t-value is (12.363), which indicates that there is a significance difference

between the pre-test and post test scores of the experimental group as compared with the tabulated t-value, which is (3.089) at (0.001) level of difference under (44) degrees of freedom. See table(4).

Table (4) t-Test Statistics for the Experimental Groups' Progress

Group	N	$\bar{d}$	$d\sum$	$d^2\sum$	σ	Df	T - value		Level of Significance
							Computed	Tabulated	
Pre	20	20.153	899	20995	4.031	44	12.363	3.089	0.001
Post	20								

2. Conclusion

In order to communicate effectively in the target language, learners of English need to develop pragmatic competence, which can be accomplished through pragmatic instruction in the classroom, particularly in the oral English class. With the raise of pragmatic awareness, it is expected that learners will acquire the competence and their target language performance will improve.

The teaching of pragmatic competence can be very constructive and beneficial to students for developing communicative competence in the target language. The previous studies as well as the present one have enlightened that pragmatic knowledge does not seem to come along naturally in EFL classrooms, so teachers need to try to contribute to the developing of learners' pragmatic competencies through instruction. Hence, it has been concluded that:

- 1) The goal of this study is to ascertain how the explicit teaching of some aspects of pragmatic competence (greetings and invitations) affected freshmen students' performance.
- 2) Developing the freshmen students' pragmatic competence affects their conversational interaction.
- 3) The instruction has pointed the fact that language proficiency cannot be complete without knowledge of the appropriate pragmatic rules of the target language.

4) Pragmatic competence can be developed in the classroom through a range of situations and activities.

5) Speech has a performative function, and our learners' ability take part successfully in verbal exchanges of any kind, depends on knowing how to manage and behave in conversation.

3. Recommendations

On the basis of the results of the current study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Teachers and textbook writers should tap all channels that leading to effective language learning.

2. Pragmatic competence is an aspect that needs special attention and instruction. In order to provide effective instruction, it is necessary for teachers of EFL to carefully examine the factors, conditions, and components that underlie speaking effectiveness. Effective instruction derived from the careful analysis of this area, together with sufficient language input and speech-promotion activities will gradually help learners to compose suitable conversations and speak English fluently and appropriately.

3. Refreshing courses should be designed for the students to give them firsthand experience in issues of pragmatic competence.

4. Teachers should do their best to deepen the freshmen students' understanding by letting them discover the pragmatic competence rules themselves.

5. It is also believed that pragmatic rules that are different from or nonexistent in the students' first language need to be given more emphasis.

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