



| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi |

A Review of Pragmatics Studies Focusing on English Language Teaching in the Turkish Context

Türkiye Bağlamında İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Alanında Yapılan Edimsel Araştırmalar

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Keywords

1. English language teaching
2. Pragmatics
3. Speech acts
4. Research methods in pragmatics
5. Pragmatics research in Turkey

Anahtar Kelimeler

1. İngiliz dili eğitimi
2. Edimbilim
3. Sözedimler
4. Edimbilimde araştırma yöntemleri
5. Türkiye’de edimsel araştırmalar

Received/Başvuru Tarihi
05.03.2023

Accepted / Kabul Tarihi
15.07.2023

Abstract

Purpose: This paper reviews the studies in English language teaching focusing on pragmatics in the Turkish context in terms of their methodological choices.

Design/Methodology/Approach: For this purpose, 57 studies published between 2001 and 2022 were identified and coded for different methodological choices. They were then analyzed to map their methods in terms of aims, research design, sample size, research setting, participants, the type of data, data collection instruments, the methods of data analysis, pragmatic aspects investigated and the findings.

Findings: The results of the analysis indicate that there was an overreliance on some data collection and analysis methods. Studies commonly used elicitation tasks such as discourse completion tasks to collect elicited data and analyzed them using descriptive methodologies. Furthermore, studies that are in the university context populate the list of articles and few studies were conducted in primary and secondary school settings with younger learners.

Highlights: The findings indicate that there are several research gaps in pragmatic studies in the field of English language teaching in the Turkish context.

Öz

Çalışmanın amacı: Bu çalışma, yöntemsel tercihleri açısından Türkiye bağlamında edimbilime odaklanan İngiliz dili öğretimindeki çalışmalarını gözden geçirmektedir.

Materyal ve Yöntem: Bu amaçla 2001-2022 yılları arasında yayınlanmış 57 çalışma belirlenmiş ve farklı yöntem tercihleri açısından kodlanmıştır. Daha sonra amaçları, araştırma tasarımı, örneklem büyüklüğü, araştırma ortamı, katılımcılar, veri türü, veri toplama araçları, veri çözümleme yöntemleri, araştırılan pragmatik yöner ve bulgular açısından incelenmiştir.

Bulgular: Sonuçlar, bazı veri toplama ve çözümleme yöntemlerinin sık kullanıldığını göstermektedir. Çalışmalar, ortaya çıkarılan verileri toplamak için söylem tamamlama testi gibi söyletimli yöntemlerin yaygın olarak kullandığını ve bunları betimleyici yöntemler kullanarak analiz ettiklerini göstermektedir. Ayrıca, çalışmaların çoğu üniversite bağlamında yapılmış ve ilk ve orta okul ortamlarında daha genç öğrencilerle çok az çalışma yapılmıştır.

Önemli Vurgular: Bulgular, Türkiye bağlamında İngiliz dili eğitimi alanında edimbilisel çalışmalarda çeşitli araştırma açıklığı olduğuna işaret etmektedir.

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INTRODUCTION

While speaking a language, some knowledge of grammatical structures and a good size of vocabulary will help the second language (L2) speakers to a great extent. However, there will be moments where grammatical and lexical knowledge at a linguistic level will fail the L2 learners/users. Those are the moments where they cannot only depend on their linguistic knowledge since the use and interpretation may be specifically influenced by contextual factors, for example, when an L2 speaker needs to understand if what is said is what is meant, which could potentially cause challenges for second language learners and users. The linguistic field that studies this aspect of language is pragmatics, which is defined as the study of meaning in context (O'Keeffe et al., 2011). Yule (1996) emphasizes four aspects in his definition. He asserts that pragmatics deals with “speaker meaning ... contextual meaning ... how more gets communicated than is said ... the expression of relative distance” (p. 3). The field developed on theoretical grounds in the 60s, 70s, and 80s with the works of scholars such as Austin (1975), Searle (1969), Grice (1975), and Brown and Levinson (1987). They established that in communication people express certain meanings indirectly and context plays an important role in interpreting utterances.

Starting from the early 80's, studies in applied pragmatics have emerged, especially those that focus on cross-cultural pragmatics. As the studies developed methodological practices in terms of data collection and analysis, more studies followed through. Some of the coding schemes (e.g. Beebe et al., 1990; Blum-Kulka, et al., 1989; Hudson, et al., 1995; Trosborg, 1995), for example, have been commonly used in later studies. This gave subsequent studies in applied pragmatics a descriptive orientation in which data were collected through elicitation tasks such as discourse completion tasks and then qualitatively analyzed for strategies employed. Then they frequently quantified the analyzed data and presented them in descriptive statistics.

Later, interest in the learning of pragmatics has emerged with new research perspectives such as interlanguage pragmatics, which “examines second language (L2) learners' knowledge, use, and development in performing sociocultural functions. L2 learners need linguistic forms and skills to perform everyday social functions in the target language” (Taguchi, 2017, p. 153). One can expect a developmental perspective in studies in interlanguage development, yet “the study of use (rather than learning) dominates interlanguage pragmatics” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013, p. 69). Kasper (1992) pointed this out three decades ago when she stated that interlanguage studies were not acquisitional, but cross-cultural, comparing learner data with native speaker data with respect to some pragmatic aspects and attributed this to the methodological practices used in earlier studies of cross-cultural pragmatics. Referring to Kasper (1992), Bardovi-Harlig (1999) expresses similar sentiments and sets out a roadmap for research in interlanguage pragmatics and suggests that future interlanguage pragmatics research should focus on beginning-level learners, and include developmental studies focusing on learners proficiency as well as other longitudinal studies. In a more recent article, Bardovi-Harlig (2013) calls for investigations of task features to collect speech data and to reveal explicit and implicit knowledge, assessment, the relationship between linguistic and pragmatic knowledge, and the environmental effects on the development of pragmatics.

Another research perspective in pragmatics was instructional pragmatics and conducted mostly in experimental conditions. In this line of research, participants are provided different instructional treatments of various forms of explicit and implicit teaching such as consciousness-raising, input enhancement, feedback and the like (see Jeon & Kaya (2006) and Taguchi (2015) for reviews on the issue). In the studies reviewed by Taguchi (2015), researchers used a variety of outcome measures including but not limited to metapragmatic awareness questionnaire, multiple choice questionnaire, judgment task, different versions of discourse completion tasks, interview, role plays, online communication and emails and writing tasks. Similarly, in a review of data collection methods in L2 pragmatics, Nguyen (2019) categorizes data collection instruments into pragmatic production, pragmatic comprehension and perception, and pragmatic decision-making tasks. He lists the following methods employed by researchers in L2 pragmatics: naturally occurring data (like field notes, audio and video recording, synchronous and asynchronous computer mediated communication), conversation tasks, (closed and open) role plays, written discourse completion tests (with or without multiple turns), multiple choice questionnaire, judgment tasks (MCQ and scaled-response questionnaire), retrospective and introspective verbal report. He also lists methods of data analysis such as identifying occurrences of particular speech act strategies, conversation analytic techniques, descriptive and inferential statistics as well as thematic content analysis. These reviews document descriptive and experimental research methodologies and various forms of data collection and analysis tools and techniques employed by studies implemented in the field of pragmatics.

In Turkey, interest in pragmatics began in 1990's as evident in a few articles, theses and dissertations (e.g Demirezen, 1991; Erçetin, 1995; İstifçi, 1998; Tunçel, 1999) published during this period. In a bibliography of second language pragmatics research in Turkey, Ural and Asutay (2021) highlight that there are only a limited number of studies before the year 2000 and more studies have been published in recent years although they acknowledge that some of the studies that were published before 2000 may not be indexed by databases and not digitally available in any form to access. In any case, there are more studies focusing on pragmatics in language teaching, yet investigating the kind of research that has been conducted in foreign language teaching, especially in the field of teaching English, can draw a picture of the general tendency in research on pragmatics in Turkey. To what extent they used the methodological options available that have been employed in the field and whether they followed the research direction to fulfill the gaps in L2 pragmatics previously highlighted (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig, 1999, 2013) is important in identifying the focus of pragmatics research in the context of English language teaching in Turkey and in revealing the existing gap

within the context. For this purpose, this paper reviews articles on pragmatics with a focus on English language teaching for their methodological choices. The review includes studies between the years 2001 and 2022.

METHOD

In this mapping review, firstly, I conducted an online search by entering keywords such as pragmatics, speech acts, etc. in Turkish and English over databases in Turkey and Google Scholar. I also searched by combining some words and phrases such as pragmatics and Turkish learners of English. After identifying the articles, I initially reviewed them to see if they fit into the following inclusion criteria.

- Related to pragmatics
- Related to teaching English as a foreign language
- Conducted in Turkey
- Published in peer-reviewed journals
- Data collected from human subjects

In this respect, theses, book chapters, and conference papers (except those later published in journals) are not included as they do not usually go through the type of peer-review process exercised by academic journals. I wanted to include research that went through peer-review process of academic journals. In addition, studies with a textual focus, such as specific discourse markers, were excluded from the corpus. In addition, studies that deal with the teaching of pragmatics yet in languages such as Turkish and French are not included in this review. On the other hand, studies that focus on research methods in pragmatics but do so in the context of teaching English were evaluated. Finally, since the universities in Turkish-speaking Northern Cyprus are highly integrated into the university system in Turkey, and because a significant number of students from Turkey enroll in Northern Cyprus universities through the central university placement system of Turkey, the studies conducted in the context of universities in Northern Cyprus are included in the corpus provided that they meet the other criteria.

As a result of the search and the first review, 82 articles were examined. During the detailed analysis process, 25 articles were excluded from the review because they did not meet all the conditions. As a result, 57 articles were methodically analyzed and coded in terms of context, research question, research focus, pragmatic focus, research design, participants, number of participants, age, gender, language proficiency, data type, data collection methods, data analysis methods, comparison groups, and findings. Since the focus of this review is on the methods employed, these features, as methodological choices, were deemed relevant for the purpose of the study.

FINDINGS

Studies on pragmatics focusing on English language teaching in Turkey have increased in frequency in recent years. The number of studies identified that were published between 2000 and 2010 was eight whereas this number is 49 for the period between 2011 and 2022. There seems to be an increase in interest in pragmatics in the field of English language teaching in this context.

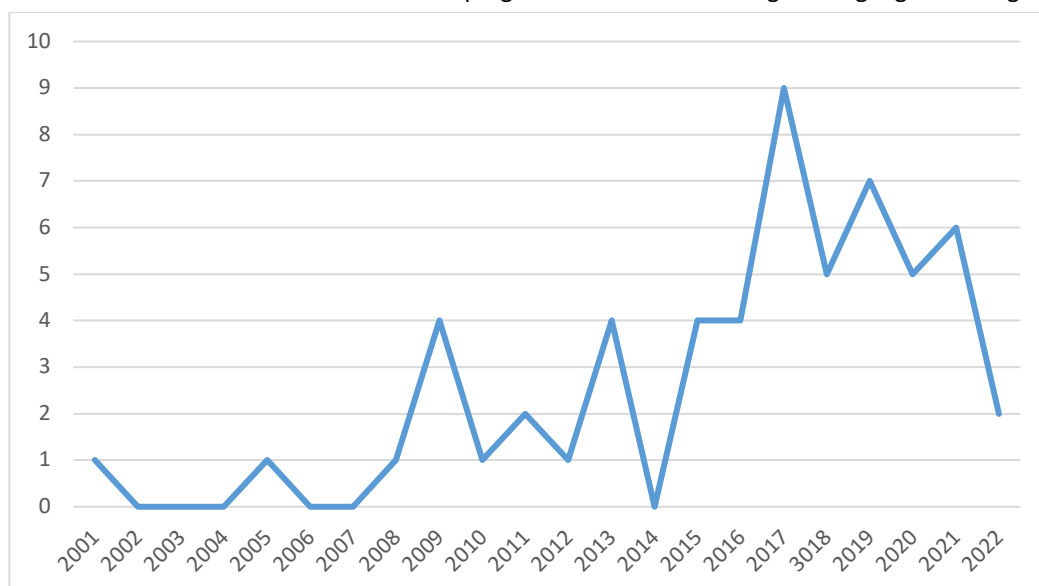


Figure 1. Number of Studies Published Between 2001 and 2022 Included in the Review

In these studies, the focus was mainly on interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics, instructional pragmatics, some specific pedagogical aspects and research methods. More specifically, when the research questions and aims of the studies are scrutinized, it seems that the studies sought to answer research questions with respect to:

- Speech act strategies employed by Turkish EFL learners/users in English (and Turkish) and the factors influencing them such as sociopragmatic factors and transfer from L1.
- Differences between various EFL learners (Turkish and others) in using speech acts.
- Differences between native speakers and Turkish EFL teachers/learners in comprehension and production of pragmatic features such as speech acts and implicatures.
 - EFL learners' speech act production perceived by native speakers.
 - The effect of individual and contextual factors on using speech acts and implicatures such as gender, level of English, type of school, seniority in school, length of stay, and sociocultural context.
 - The effect of instruction and different instructional models on awareness, comprehension, and production of pragmatic features in L1 and L2.
 - Learners', lecturers', EFL teachers', and teacher trainees' awareness, perceptions, and production of pragmatic features.
 - Difference between data collection instruments in assessing the performance of EFL learners.

The studies included in the review were looked into to see which of the basic research paradigms they fit into. This examination shows that the majority of the studies used both qualitative and quantitative research methods during the data collection and/or data analysis phase (Dörnyei, 2007), and in this respect, they preferred the mixed methods paradigm. A significant part of these studies collected qualitative data and coded the pragmatic strategies by analyzing the data with the content analysis method. Then, they analyzed these coded strategies using descriptive or inferential statistics. While 45 of the 57 studies included in the review used mixed methods, eight studies used quantitative methods and four studies used qualitative methods alone. These results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Design of Choice in Studies

Research paradigm	# of studies	Research method	# of studies
Quantitative	8 (14%)	Experimental	8 (14%)
Qualitative	4 (7%)	Descriptive	49 (86%)
Mixed (data collection or analysis)	45 (79%)		

A related finding is that eight of the 57 studies included in the review used experimental methods. In fact, these studies are all quasi-experimental studies as they do not apply random sampling required by the true experimental design. Furthermore, single-sample designs without a control group were also included in the experimental methods here, as they applied pretest-posttest and experimental intervention. The majority of the studies (86%) preferred non-experimental designs.

Table 2. The Number of Studies Employing Multiple Groups

Includes Multiple Groups			
Experimental		Descriptive	
Yes	No	Yes	No
5 (9%)	3 (5%)	25 (44%)	24 (42%)

Of the 57 studies, 30 included multiple groups (53%) while 27 did not include them (47%). In the eight studies that implemented experimental methods, five had control groups. These studies are in instructional pragmatics where the researchers tested the influence of instruction such as film-based, corpus-based, explicit instruction. In these studies, the experimental group received the target instructional method while the control group did not. In descriptive studies, on the other hand, 25 had multiple groups. In some of them, learner data were compared to native speaker data. Others compared different learner groups such as Turkish, Arabic, Chinese, Persian, and Kurdish.

Another aspect of research related to this corpus of studies is sample size. In these studies, the average number of participants is 94 with a range of 3 and 604. Besides, the average number of participants in groups where there are multiple groups is 48 with a range of 5 and 554 as seen in Table 3. It seems that overall the studies recruited a good number of participants given that the majority of the studies collected qualitative data.

Table 3. Sample Size in Studies

	Average	Range	Group average	Group Range
Sample size	94	3-604	48	5-554

Regarding the research setting, there is a clear preference for university setting as the large majority of the studies were conducted in university settings as could be seen in Table 4. Only seven of the 57 studies included settings other than universities, namely primary schools, high schools, and private language institutions. The reason for this is possibly the overreliance on the convenience sampling methods where the faculty members chose to recruit students from their institutions. Yet, 17 studies were able to recruit students from universities in other countries mostly to establish native speaker baseline data although there were cases to compare Turkish EFL data with EFL data obtained from universities in other countries. Since the university setting is the main context in these studies, naturally the participants were mostly university students in 45 studies although EFL teachers and faculty members at universities were also recruited. Sixteen studies included native speakers among their participants to compare with the EFL data. The reason why there seems to be a discrepancy in the numbers in the table between the setting and participants is the overlap between them. For example, a study worked with college students in a university setting, yet included some high school students as well. Since the setting was coded as a university, a difference between the figures ensued. When it comes to the proficiency levels of the participants, 36 studies did not specify the participants' proficiency levels. There was no study that worked with participants at the beginning level, yet other levels were represented in the other studies that reported them. Although the language level is not specified, since those studies were mostly conducted with English teachers, English language teaching students and faculty members, it would not be wrong to think that they are at upper-intermediate and higher levels.

Table 4. The Setting of the Studies

Setting	Number of studies	Participants	Number of studies	Language proficiency	Number of studies
Primary School	3	Primary school students	3	Unspecified	36
High School	2	High school students	4	Intermediate	8
Universities	50	University students	45	Lower-intermediate	7
Private language institutions	2	Turkish EFL students (not specified)	8	Advanced	6
		Other EFL students	3	Upper-intermediate	6
		Teachers/faculty members (NESTS & NNESTS)	8	Elementary	3
		English native speakers	16	Self-reported	1
		Turkish native speakers	3		
		TFL students	1		

Another aspect of participants is their age. Figure 2 demonstrates the age range reported by the studies. Since some studies did not include enough descriptions of age, only those that provide age range are included in this graph. As it can be seen, the studies mostly recruited young adults and usually college students. Those that include native speaker data sometimes included participants with higher age groups. Nevertheless, the target learner groups were usually college students in the majority of the studies. There seems to be a need for research that investigates the learning of pragmatics by younger learners.

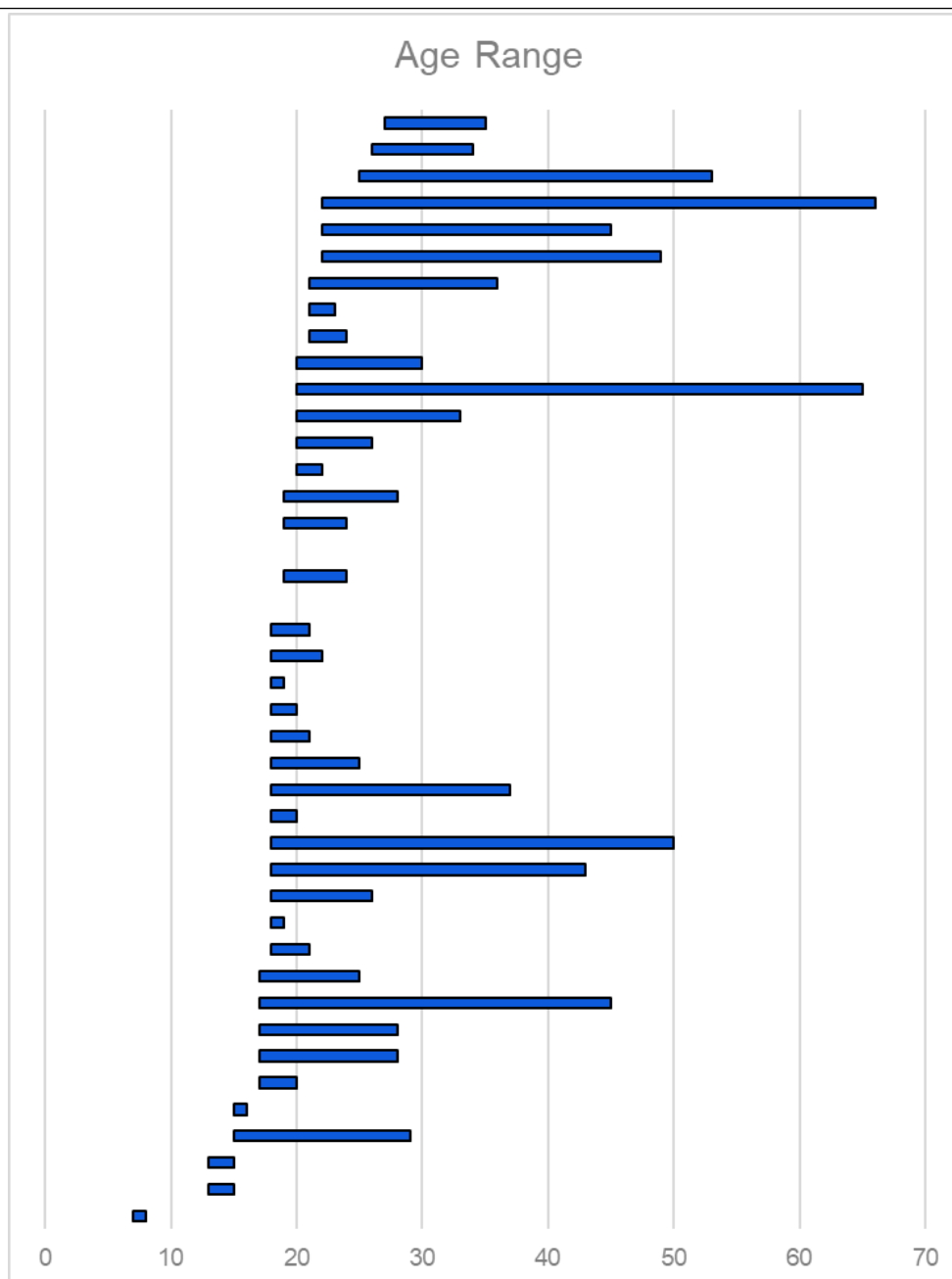


Figure 2. Age range of the participants in the studies that reported it

These outline the choice of setting, sample and participant characteristics. The review also focuses on the data collection and analysis done in these studies. It is apparent that there was an overwhelming tendency to collect elicited data (96%) as seen in Table 5. Natural data were collected in one study (Burgucu-Tazegül, Han & Engin, 2016). In this particular study, the researchers compiled a corpus of authentic emails they received over two months from their students that included requests. In another study (Takkaç-Tulgar, 2018), elicited data were collected, yet natural(istic) data could be said to have been collected as well through classroom observation that focused on the exposure to pragmatic features. In all other studies, data were collected through tasks and techniques that produce elicited data.

Table 5. The Type of Data Collected in the Studies

Data type	Number (%)
Elicited data	55 (96%)
Natural data	1 (2%)
Both	1 (2%)

To collect the data, the majority of the studies employed different forms of discourse completion tasks. To be exact, 47 studies (accounting for the 82% of the studies included in this review) used these tools. Although the studies resorted to 22 different types

of data collection methods, 14 of them were used only once. To triangulate the production tasks, some studies included interviews. Overall, participants were interviewed in 9 studies (16%). Among the production tasks, role-plays were also among the most frequent although they were implemented in seven studies (12%). Survey/questionnaire, class observation, rating scale, and reflective writing were uncommon, yet they were utilized in more than one study. Furthermore, the majority of the data collection methods employed in the studies were used to collect qualitative data in the form of mostly elicited speech data. Table 6 outlines the data collection methods used in the studies reviewed.

Table 6. Data Collection Instruments Used in the Studies

Data collection instruments	The number of studies
Written discourse completion task	34
Multiple choice discourse completion task	10
Interview	9
Role-play	7
Survey/Questionnaire	5
Class observation	3
Rating scale	3
Reflective writing	2
Discourse evaluation task	1
Authentic e-mails	1
Elicited emails	1
Oral discourse completion task	1
Reverse discourse completion task	1
Judgment task	1
Scenario-based communication task	1
Self-report	1
Language proficiency test components	1
Retrospective verbal report	1
Self-assessment questionnaire	1
Field note	1
Lesson plan	1
Reflective comment	1

Thirty-three studies used a single data collection instrument while 14 studies employed two instruments. Of the remaining seven studies, five employed three instruments, one employed four, and another five different instruments. Figure 2 depicts this finding.

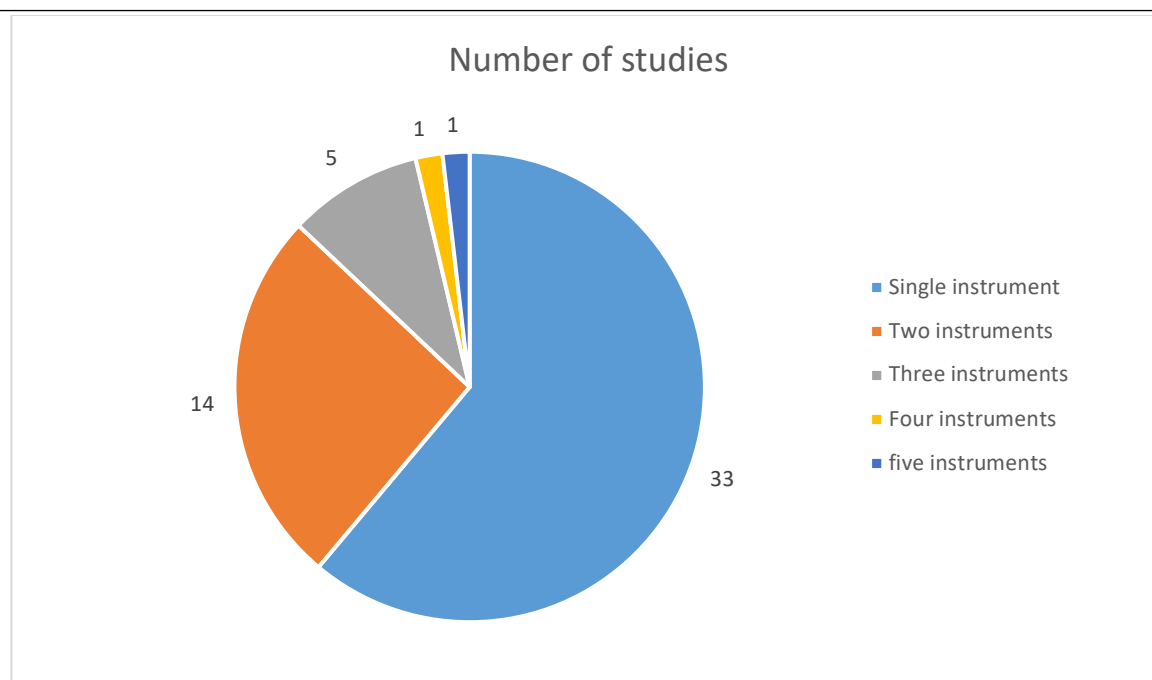


Figure 2. The Number of Data Collection Methods Employed in Studies

Furthermore, in these studies, there was a tendency to use both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The general trend in the studies is that the speech data were collected through elicitation techniques such as discourse completion tasks and then the researchers analyzed them and coded them into strategies and moves. Following this procedure, they quantified these data and implemented statistical analyses. In this respect, qualitative analysis was employed in 48 studies (84%) whereas quantitative analysis was used in 53 studies (93%). Nearly 80% of studies implemented both types of analysis. Of the statistical analyses, descriptive type reporting frequencies and percentages was the choice in 23 studies (40%) while the inferential type was preferred by the researchers in 30 studies (53%).

Table 7. Data Analysis Methods Employed in Studies

Type	Number (%)
Qualitative	48 (84%)
Quantitative	53 (93%)
Descriptive	23 (40%)
Inferential	30 (53%)
T-test	16 (28%)
Chi-square	10 (17.5%)
ANOVA	5 (9%)
Mann Whitney U	3 (5%)
Kruskal Wallis	2 (3.5%)
Wilcoxon signed-rank test	1 (2%)
Correlation	1 (2%)

There were several inferential statistical tests that were used, the t-test being the most common choice. Researchers preferred to use paired-samples or independent-samples t-tests depending on their grouping while they compared frequencies of speech act strategies. Studies that included more than two groups used ANOVA. When they were interested in the categorical distribution of strategies, they implemented the non-parametric test chi-square. A few studies tested the normality of the distribution and in line with the result of this test, they ran non-parametric tests such as Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis, and Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Finally, only one study implemented correlation as could be seen in Table 7.

In the studies reviewed, 18 different pragmatic aspects were investigated. This may seem to be an important variety, yet nine of them were only investigated once. In contrast, requests, refusals, and apologies were the most commonly investigated speech acts, accounting for more than half of the investigations. One-third of the studies investigated requests and a quarter examined the use of refusals. Four studies did not focus on a specific speech act or pragmatic feature. Rather, they were interested in perception and awareness without a link to any pragmatic aspects. Table 8 outlines this finding.

Table 8. Pragmatics Aspects the Studies Focus on

Pragmatic aspect	The number of studies
Request	19 (33%)
Refusal	14 (25%)
Apology	8 (14%)
Complaint	5 (9%)
Implicature	5 (9%)
Compliment response	4 (7%)
Compliment	3 (5%)
None (pragmatic development/perception and awareness)	3 (5%)
Suggestion	2 (4%)
Clarification	2 (4%)
Others (gratitude, agreement, disagreement, assertion, question, order, acceptance, response, advice investigated once)	9 (16%)

Finally, the findings of the studies are scrutinized. Several of them highlight the speech act realization patterns of EFL learners/users as they have a use perspective more so than a pragmatic development perspective. Some studies investigated the effect of different instructional models on learning pragmatics. They found positive instructional effects although the results of two studies were not quite conclusive. Also, in a couple of studies, positive attitudes to pragmatics teaching were identified. A number of other studies compared EFL learners/users with native speakers. Nearly all of them found differences. In general, the utterances of EFL learners/users were not native-like. A related result came from studies that examined the transfer effect. Overall, these studies documented transfer effects, mostly negative transfer, and one study found a reverse transfer effect. Furthermore, studies that compared different EFL learners found differences between them. These findings, together, likely point to the effect of the L1 background. Some studies investigated the effect of individual and contextual characteristics. Those that were interested in the effect of language proficiency found that it influenced pragmatic performance positively, that is, the higher the language proficiency the better performance the participants demonstrated. The effect of other characteristics was inconclusive. For example, about half of the studies that investigated gender found an effect whereas the others did not. Similarly, age and year in the program did not lead to conclusive results. On the other hand, among the situational features, the status of the interlocutor was found to be affecting utterances.

DISCUSSION

This review of studies in the Turkish context points to some research gap. For instance, in this context, a great majority of the studies focused on adults and specifically college students either in preparatory programs or in English language teaching programs. Overall, 91% of the studies worked with adults (including college students) while only 9% worked with teenagers (other than college students) and children. In fact, only one study recruited 7-8-year-old children. Similarly, few studies were conducted at the primary and secondary levels. Thus, more studies may be needed to understand the teaching and learning of pragmatics at different educational settings and levels. Besides, 36 studies do not mention proficiency levels, yet 21 studies had ELT students, EFL teachers, and faculty members as their participants, which implies that they had upper-intermediate level and proficient users of English as their participants. Still, 15 studies do not list proficiency levels. As the findings of some of the studies included in this review and others (e.g. Taguchi, 2011) demonstrate that language proficiency may influence pragmatic comprehension and performance, in studies that deal with pragmatic competence in some way, the proficiency level is likely to be an important variable to report, yet this was not always the case in this corpus of studies.

Furthermore, of the studies included in this review, the majority employed descriptive methods (86%). Only eight studies (14%) had a design that included some kind of intervention. Yet, they were all quasi-experimental studies either lacking comparison groups or random selection. Since the focus of this review is the pragmatics research in English language teaching, true

experimental studies may shed light on the effectiveness of different methods on pragmatic awareness or development of learners in the said context. Another research gap related to methodological design in the context is the need for longitudinal studies. Bardovi-Harlig (1999) proposed a research direction that focused on beginning-level learners and longitudinal and cross-sectional studies that demonstrate interlanguage development. It seems that in this corpus, research focusing on these areas has not been conducted commonly. In the corpus, there is only one study that is longitudinal in nature comparing college students' pragmatic awareness in the freshmen and senior years and there are five cross-sectional studies comparing students at different proficiency levels. Furthermore, no study recruited beginning-level learners and only three studies were conducted with elementary-level learners. As mentioned earlier, Bardovi-Harlig (2013), in another article, calls for investigations of task features to collect speech data and to reveal explicit and implicit knowledge, assessment, the relationship between linguistic and pragmatic knowledge, and the environmental effects on the development of pragmatics. Again, only a few studies have addressed these issues. In this respect, the research gap identified by Bardovi-Harlig (1999; 2013) has yet to be addressed in the Turkish context. In her article, Bardovi-Harlig (2013, p. 69) highlights that "the study of use (rather than learning) dominates interlanguage pragmatics" (p. 69). This seems to be the case in this context. The majority of the studies did not have a developmental perspective. They followed rather the methodological practices of cross-cultural pragmatics. In general, they identified EFL learners' use of speech acts, compared different EFL learners, or compared them with native speakers. In this respect, studies that approach the learning of pragmatics with developmental perspectives may contribute to interlanguage pragmatics research in the context through longitudinal and cross-sectional designs. In this way, pragmatic development of students in the Turkish context may be further explored.

Another finding about methodological choices is on data collection methods. Kasper and Dahl (1991) and Nguyen (2019) identify several data collection tools in their review of research methods in pragmatics. In the current review, the majority of studies relied on pragmatic production in the form of different versions of discourse completion tasks and role plays. Naturally occurring data were used in only two studies. Conversation tasks were not employed. Pragmatic decision-making tasks were also not common. In fact, only one study used a retrospective verbal report. Pragmatic comprehension and perception tasks were employed by some studies but were not common. A judgment task was reported in only one study. This indicates that in this context the data collection methods are not varied. Also, the majority of the studies relied on a single data collection method. In addition, there was an overreliance on elicited data and a research gap exists with respect to authentic speech data and variety in data collection instruments in this context. Since choices in data collection methods may potentially influence the data (see for example, Bataller & Shively, 2011; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2013; Félix-Brasdefer, 2007; Golato, 2003; Kanik, 2016, 2017b), variety in data collection methods and data triangulation may strengthen the research in the context. Nguyen (2019) suggests data collection on the real-life interactions of L2 learners, investigation of pragmatic comprehension and perception of L2 learners, validation of research instruments through verbal reports and data triangulation in L2 pragmatics studies in his review of data collection methods. Thus, the findings in this study also point to these research directions in this context.

In data analysis, there seem to be some mistakes in statistical choices in a few studies. For example, the paired-samples t-test was used in a study comparing two independent groups, or the independent samples t-test was used in a study involving a single group. Also, one study mentions the use of t-tests and factor analysis while reporting the results of only descriptive statistics. Besides, some studies mention a significant difference when using descriptive statistics. This indicates that some researchers in the context may benefit from further training on research methods. Another methodological issue is related to studies that include multiple groups. In some of these studies, participant profiles were not tightly matched. For instance, data obtained from college students may be compared with native English-speaking professionals who are older, have more experience, and are in different social settings. Since such variables may influence data, the validity of these studies may be negatively impacted.

Finally, there was not enough variety in pragmatic features addressed in the studies. Just three speech acts, namely request, refusal and apology, account for more than 50% of the pragmatic features investigated. Although 18 different features were pinpointed, the majority of them were minimally studied in this corpus. Thus, there is a need for more studies that address different pragmatic features to establish a knowledge base with respect to their teaching in the context.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study focuses on the studies conducted in the Turkish context on second language pragmatics. The review of the studies identifies an increase in interest in pragmatics research in English language teaching in this context, yet there still exist research gaps that have yet to be addressed. Although descriptive research that addresses Turkish EFL learners' pragmatic choices in simulated conditions adds to the growing body of research in the context, there is a need for studies that investigate what Turkish EFL learners really do through investigations of authentic data. Furthermore, the research designs should deviate from the methodology of traditional cross-cultural pragmatics and explore the learning of pragmatics from a developmental perspective and good practice in teaching pragmatics to EFL students in context. Yet, the interest in pragmatics research has increased in recent years and it is a positive sign for research potential in the context with a variety of methodological choices in years to come.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, author-ship, and/or publication of this article.

Statements of publication ethics

I hereby declare that the study does not have unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

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