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The Effects of Explicit Pragmatic Teaching on Young Learners' Pragmatic Development

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Abstract

A large body of literature has examined the role of explicit teaching on L2 pragmatics. Previous research findings confirmed that explicit teaching has a positive impact on the development of L2 learners' pragmatic competence. Many studies attempt to explore the efficacy of instruction in improving pragmatics competence in terms of learners' speech acts of requesting. However, little attention has been focused on teaching request strategies to young learners. This study aims to investigate whether explicit instruction of request strategies may enhance the young learners' L2 pragmatic awareness and whether there will be an increase on the learners' awareness based on social power, distance, and imposition factors. Twenty-two second-grade Turkish students from a private school participate in the study. The participants are divided into experimental and control groups and each group consists of eleven students. The experimental group receives four hours of treatment in two weeks while the control group follows conventional instructions without any metapragmatic teaching on requesting strategies. The quantitative data is gathered by administering Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as both the pre and the post-tests. To increase the reliability and validity of the research results, the triangulation method is used. For triangulation, the teacher-researchers employ teacher observation with a rubric and semi-structured interview is conducted with purposefully chosen students. The results of quantitative analysis showed that there is no significant difference in learners' pragmatic awareness on L2 requesting. However, according to the qualitative results, there is a noticeable difference in the learners' pragmatic awareness on requests and pragmatic factors.

Key words: Pragmatics, Explicit Instruction, Speech Acts, Request

Doğrudan Edimbilim Eğitiminin İlköğretim Öğrencilerinin Edimbilimsel Gelişimi Üzerindeki Etkileri

Öz

Mevcut literatürün büyük bir çoğunluğu ikinci dilde doğrudan edimbilim öğretimini inceler. Önceki araştırma bulguları doğrudan öğretimin yabancı dil öğrencilerinin edimbilim yeterliliğinin gelişim sürecinde olumlu bir etkiye sahip olduğunu doğrulamaktadır. Birçok araştırma, rica konuşma söylemi özelinde edimbilim yeterliliğinin gelişiminde öğretim yönteminin etkinliğini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlar. Lakin, rica stratejilerinin genç öğrencilere öğretimi konusunda oldukça az araştırmalar yürütülmüştür. Bu araştırma, doğrudan rica stratejilerinin yabancı dilde edimbilim farkındalığının artırılabilceğini ya da öğrencilerin sosyal güç, mesafe ve dayatma derecesi hususlarında farkındalık seviyelerinde bir artış olup olmayacağını araştırmaktadır. 22 adet Türk ikinci sınıf öğrencisi katılımcılar olarak alınmıştır. Katılımcılar deney ve gözlem grubu olarak 11 kişiden oluşan 2 grup şeklinde ayrılmıştır. Deney grubu iki haftalık süreçte 4 saatlik uygulamaya tabii tutulurken, deney grubu mevcut müfredatı ek uygulama olmaksızın takip eder. Sayısal veriler Söylem Tamamlama Görevi (DCT) aralığı ile test öncesi ve sonuçları alınacak şekilde kullanılmıştır. Güvenirlik ve geçerlilik notlarında verilerin güçlendirilmesi adına üçgenleme yöntemine başvuruldu. Bu noktada, araştırmacı-öğretmenler öğretmen gözlem formu ve amaçlı örnekleme yoluyla yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu yöntemlerinden yararlandı. Sayısal veriler yabancı dilde rica söyleminin farkındalık seviyesinde ciddi bir fark olmadığını göstermiştir. Ancak, sözel veriler öğrencilerin edimbilimsel rica söylemi ve edimbilim faktörleri üzerine farkındalık seviyesinde ayırt edilebilecek bir farklılık ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Edimbilim, Rica söylemi, Edimbilimsel Farkındalık, Doğrudan Öğretim

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Introduction

The studies on Interlanguage Pragmatics (ILP) have enhanced since the 1960s in a correlation with the growing interest on the subfield of second language acquisition (SLA). For years, the pioneers have described and categorized the concepts of Pragmatics with several definitions and worked on whether pragmatics is teachable or not. According to the definition by Yates (2004), Pragmatics is conceptualized as “secret rules of language” to clarify the inner complexity and the essential role the notion plays in communication and the language learning process. Pragmatics has several branches that has different sociolinguistics and pragmalinguistic features for communicative purposes. Among presupposition, speech acts, deixis and multi-disciplinary principles, speech acts are one of the most studied scope of the field. Speech acts are initially categorized by Austin (1962) with a framework of performative utterances consisting of locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts. According to the scheme, the locutionary acts reveal the literal meaning that is meant to be conveyed and illocutionary acts, on the other hand, require interlocutors to comprehend the implication of the other speakers in a conversation. Being the last category of the framework, Perlocutionary acts make the interlocutor consider taking an action as a result of the request by the counterparts.

When the existing literature is examined, the studies of speech acts are oriented mainly on the latter two of these categories namely illocutionary and perlocutionary acts due to their relatively complex nature in conveying the underlying messages. Even though the literature is abundant in studies on speech acts and pragmatic instruction, there is a gap in young learners’ pragmatic development as a subfield of second language acquisition. Hence, this study sheds light on the effects of explicit instruction of request strategies on Turkish EFL second grade students’ pragmatic awareness and tries to uncover the difference in the learners’ awareness over power, social distance and imposition factors.

Literature Review

Pragmatic Instruction & Implicit-Explicit Teaching

The Need for Pragmatic Instruction

Although a large number of studies have focused on the need for pragmatic instruction in language classrooms, there is still a gap between the findings of research and teaching practices (Cohen, 2012). That is why it is necessary to build a connection between the recent findings of L2 pragmatics and recent practices in language learning classes. Many second language learning environments, teacher education programs, and course books that are used for language teaching are lacking in providing students with pragmatic instruction and everyday interaction features (Bardovi-Harlig, 2018). It was concluded by Bardovi-Harlig that instructional pragmatics is preferable rather than no instructions related to the topic of pragmatics because being exposed to the target language with the help of authentic materials is necessary for learners to see and hear the actual use of language.

Examining the deficiencies and failures in pragmatic instruction, Bardovi-Harlig’s study puts forward the need for revising the materials that are used during language instruction in terms of pragmatic components because of the deficiencies in language teaching curriculums and materials. It was suggested by the researcher that teachers should be equipped with pragmatic awareness so that they can help the learners’ pragmatic awareness by providing them with pragmatic instruction.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Bardovi-Harlig, Mossman, and Vellenga (2015) aimed to explore the impacts of pragmatic instruction on learners’ pragmatic competencies and focused on specific functions of language such as expressions of agreement, disagreement, and clarification. The results supported the fact that instruction plays an important role in learners’ pragmatic competency development since the participants of the study who were provided with classes of pragmatic instruction perform better in terms of the utilization of the target expressions. It was stated that although the existing studies in the literature and ongoing ones have proved the necessity of such kind of instruction, teachers still hesitate to include these components (speech acts, certain expressions, etc.) in their teaching. The findings of the research proved the need for pragmatic instruction in language classes and it is suggested by the researchers that the conducted study should help teachers and educators to regard this specific component of language as a part of their practices (Bardovi-Harlig, Mossman & Vellenga, 2015).

Implicit-Explicit Teaching

When the difference between implicit and explicit teaching is taken into consideration, there are many different views and studies on the issue since both implicit and explicit instructions are favored by different researchers in terms of the development of pragmatic competencies of language learners. According to a study

whose participants are adult learners of English, both learners who received implicit and explicit pragmatic instruction displayed improvement in their pragmatic competency levels (Nguyen, Pham, & Pham, 2012). However, it was stated that learners who were exposed to the explicit instruction presented a wider magnitude of effects. The researchers aimed to find the best form-focused instruction type that learners and teachers can benefit from and the findings showing the superiority of instruction in the form of explicit are not surprising because of the awareness factor (Nguyen, Pham, & Pham, 2012).

The positive effects of explicit pragmatic instruction were observed on undergraduate students (Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh & Fatahi, 2004) and non-native English teachers (Ngai & Janusch, 2018). By looking at the results revealing that learners' pragmatic knowledge and competence do not resist instruction in the form of explicit teaching, researchers Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh, and Fatahi (2004) claimed that providing learners with explicit instruction may help them consciously acquire the target pragmatic features. On the other hand, Ngai and Janusch (2018) supported the integration of pragmatic features into English programs since it was found beneficial for teachers to develop their communicative competence and pragmatic awareness. Derakhshan and Eslami (2015) studied the influence of awareness-raising video-driven prompts over apologizing and requesting with 60 EFL learners in a university. Utilizing authentic audio and video selections to enhance pragmatic awareness, the researchers assigned the learners into 3 different focused groups consisting of a discussion group, interactive translation group, and role-play group. The results showed that regardless of the type of instruction, the learners' pragmatic awareness level on the speech acts has improved. Yet, the result of the discussion group was better than the others. The researcher implies that mutual communication enabled discussion group members to learn from peers and negotiate the meaning better than the other groups. Birjandi and Derakhshan (2014) worked on the impacts of awareness-raising through authentic video-based materials on appropriate refusing, requesting, and apologizing methods. The learners were divided into 3 different groups which are named as a metapragmatic group, a role-play group, and a control group. The results showed that all of the learners could enhance their pragmatic awareness of three types of speech acts. However, metapragmatic group members got better results compared to the other groups. The findings can be attributed to the positive effects of explicit instruction and the appropriate selection of speech act strategies by the learner group. However, there is still a gap in the existing literature related to the impacts of implicit or explicit instruction on young learners' pragmatic awareness.

Social Power, Distance and Ranking of Impositions

The study of Brown and Levinson (1987) shed light on the polite use of requests in 3 sociological parameters. Li et al. (2015) worked on the Chinese English learners' pragmatics awareness and production in the development of pragmatic competence. The researchers found that, due to the cultural impact, the Chinese learners disregarded the aspect of imposition in several cases. Contrarily, related to the cultural hierarchic model, Chinese learners were competent in the realization of their partners' social power and they could produce appropriate language consequently. Jalilifar et al. (2011) conducted a cross-cultural study on differences between the Iranian EFL learners' and Australian native speakers' use of request strategies. It was found that there was a relationship between the learners' proficiency level and the use of indirect request strategies like native speakers. However, in terms of social parameters, there were context-oriented differences between the learner groups' language productions. The Iranian learners had difficulty in addressing the interlocutors considering the social power and distance variables. The researchers related the differences in performances to the pragmatic awareness and competence level of the Iranian learners. Koç (2011) studied on the Turkish EFL adult learners use of requesting strategies compared to British counterparts. Although, majorly, there were similarities in using request strategies by both groups of participants, the Turkish learners were more prone to using direct requesting strategies in the context whereas British participants were more eager to use the politest requesting strategies.

Age & Pragmatics

The pragmatic aspect of young learners in the second language has been rarely researched when it is compared to the pragmatic aspect of adult learners (Lee 2010; Savić 2015). As in the case of the pragmatic language development in the mother tongue, the pragmatic language development in a second language is also associated with the age factor. Observing a 4-year-old child in their longitudinal research, Nguyen and Nguyen (2016) revealed changes in the use of requesting strategies of the child. Increasing awareness of the concepts such as immediate context, adaptable request strategies, and sequence of conversations between interlocutors enabled the child to apply diverse options in requests. With the realization of formulaic language use cases in distinctive contexts, the child could adopt different formats of requests like "Can I or May I" considering the presupposed actions of the interlocutor over time.

Savić (2015), on the other hand, examined the use of request strategies applied by second, fourth, and sixth-grade learners in the light of the formation of head act and directness in their language use. The researcher found that the older learners' groups were better at applying several request strategies as well as utilizing indirect

context-oriented strategies. Additionally, it was figured out that the second-grade learners did not consider the social power and distance cases in requesting as much as the older learners. However, overtly, it was concluded by the author that all learner groups lacked in the realization of social power and imposition of the interlocutors in the pragmatic language use although they could perform adequately in the pragmalinguistic aspect of requests. According to Lee (2010), the production abilities and pragmatic competencies of young children alter and develop with age as their communicative and linguistic competence increase. In early childhood, children discover different ways of expressing themselves, and their awareness increases in terms of engaging in discourse. Lee (2010) investigated the comprehension of 5 distinctive speech acts of learners who are 7, 9, and 12 years old. According to the results of the study, the younger learner groups had difficulty in understanding the indirect format of the speech acts. The researcher found that even though the pragmatic comprehension skill of 7 years old learners increased considerably, and, subsequently, 9 years old learners increased to a great extent, the learners who were 12 years old had a stable pace regarding the development of pragmatic comprehension skills. Another factor highlighted by the researcher was that as the age of the learners decreased, there was a higher tendency to solely rely on the semantic meaning of the utterances and the employment of various strategies raised in relation to the age level.

Ishihara (2013) conducted a study with 3 students who are 9 years old. In the study, the researcher examined the learners' pragmatic development and assessed their sensitivity to politeness and appropriate language choices. Using visual narratives as supportive tools for pragmatic development to make it easier for learners to associate the immediate context with the language, the study showed that the learners could realize the social context and a necessity to adjust the language accordingly. However, in terms of language production, they used "please" as a means that can be used for any circumstances. One more issue that was highlighted by the researcher is that the learners perceived the use of more complex requesting forms (e.g. Could I) and they face difficulties in memorizing the types of requests. Studying high school learners' adaptation of request strategies, Brubæk (2012) obtained several results in the data analysis. For instance, the researcher put forward that the learners depended mostly on their pragmatic competence in their mother tongue. Moreover, once they are faced with a complicated situation, the learners felt unsafe and they leaned on choosing an informal language in face-threatening cases.

In light of the results and the implications of the studies, it can be concluded that the age factor has impacts on the L2 pragmatic language forms of the learners. From the very early ages, the awareness of power, distance, and context parameters developed in years. With the help of proper instructional practices, the universal norms that the learners own enable learners to develop L2 pragmatic competence and more appropriate pragmatic language choices that are in line with pragmatic factors.

Research Questions:

- 1- Is there any difference in second grade learners' pragmatic awareness before and after explicit pragmatic instruction of request strategies?
- 2- To what extent does explicit pragmatic instruction have an impact on learners' pragmatic awareness in terms of power, distance and imposition factors?

Methodology

Research Design

The present study adopts a quasi-experimental research method with the pre-test and post-test design. Discourse Completion Test (DCT) is employed as pre-and post-tests to obtain the primary data. The experimental group receives four hours of explicit pragmatic teaching on requesting strategies. The control group receives conventional instructions.

Participants

The participants of the study are twenty-two second-grade Turkish students at a private school in İstanbul. The students have received 15 hours of English instruction in a week for two years. The participants are divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. Each group consists of eleven students who are 7- 8 years old.

Data Collection Instruments

The primary data are collected through Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as both the pre and the post-tests. The present study adopts the triangulation method to increase the reliability and validity of the research results. For triangulation, teacher observations and semi-structured interviews are used to investigate the effect of

implicit teaching on students' pragmatic awareness and pragmatics competence in terms of learners' speech acts of requesting.

Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as the pretest and the posttest

Discourse Completion Test is administered to measure the participants' pragmatic awareness in terms of learners' speech acts of requesting. DCT is adapted from Domakani, et al.'s (2014) study. Two TEFL professors and two M.A. TEFL students measured the test validity in their study. Besides, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was employed to measure the reliability of DCT and it was found to be acceptable (.77). 10 requesting situations are given in the test and participants are required to assess the appropriateness of the speech acts for each situation on a 5-point rating scale ranging from 1 (very inappropriate) to 5 (very appropriate). The original version of the test consists of an extra task that requires learners to provide an alternative expression if they assess the speech acts as inappropriate. As the participants of the study have not fully developed their own L2 writing skills, the extra task is eliminated. However, the current investigation employs semi-structured interviews and teacher observations to compensate for the lack of the extra task. Considering the participants' language proficiency, the researchers simplified the situations given in the test.

Interview

Semi-structured interviews are conducted with the students at the end of the procedure to reveal their sensitivity to the appropriate use of request strategies considering the given situations (see Appendix C). The purposeful sampling method is used for interviews. Two very good students, two good students, and two weak students are chosen according to the last English exam scores. One of the requesting situations in DCT is selected and interviewees are asked to assess appropriateness of given the speech act. The students are asked to justify their judgments and then they are expected to provide an alternative speech act according to the given situation.

Teacher observations

The experimental group receives thirty-minute explicit instruction on pragmatics for four sessions. These sessions are observed by other teacher-researchers. In each observation, each teacher-researcher fills in the rubric during role-plays (see Appendix B). According to the rubric, the observers focus on interactions in the given situations, students' answers, and their justifications.

Data Analysis

The present investigation utilizes SPSS to compare the experimental and control groups' mean scores on pre-and post-tests. Independent samples t-test is run to reveal whether there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental group's mean scores on pre-and post-tests.

Teachers' observation rubrics were compared, in addition, interviews were transcribed. Their findings are coded based social power, distance, and imposition factors. Then the students' answers and justifications were analyzed in order to obtain whether explicit pragmatic teaching have an impact on learners' pragmatic awareness in terms of power, distance and imposition factors.

Findings

To be able to figure out the differences between pre-test and post-test results, the data was analyzed through comparison of means and Independent Samples Test to reveal whether there is a significant difference between the tests of scores of the participants in both experimental and control groups. Besides, to answer the second research question and find more data for the first research question, observation and interview sessions were conducted.

Quantitative Data Results

Table 1

Mean scores of the groups on pretest

Groups	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Experimental	3,4000	11	,47749
Control	3,3636	11	,59207
Total	3,3818	22	,52521

The table shows the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the pre-test. There is nearly no difference (0,0364) between the participants' pre-test results.

Table 2

Mean scores of the groups on posttest

Groups	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Experimental	3,4091	11	,79556
Control	3,0082	11	,63370
Total	3,2086	22	,73124

The table indicates that there is a difference ($> 0,4$) between the mean scores of the control and experimental group members.

Table 3

The group Statistics on pretest and posttest

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mean Pretest	Experimental	11	3,4000	,47749	,14397
	Control	11	3,3636	,59207	,17852
Mean Posttest	Experimental	11	3,4091	,79556	,23987
	Control	11	3,0082	,63370	,19107

The table shows the group statistics of the experimental and control groups. While experimental group members have nearly the same mean score of the test results ($< 0,00$), the control group members have a lower mean score of post-test ($> -0,35$).

Table 4

The Independent Sample t-test

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Mean Pretest	,15	20	,876	,03636	,22934
Mean Posttest	1,30	20	,206	,40091	,30667

The table shows that there is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results of both groups ($p > 0,05$).

Qualitative Data Findings

Teacher Observations

During the treatment, participants in the experimental group were provided with exercises in which they were taught the pragmatic features of requesting in the target language explicitly. They were expected to have an increased awareness in terms of the pragmatic factors of power, distance, and imposition at the end of the lessons. In order to do that participants were given various situations in which they needed to use requesting strategies. The situations were related to the strategies of asking for help, food, classroom materials and some specific actions from their teachers, friends, attendants, and family members (see Appendix A). During the in-class activities, the students displayed their readiness to request. In requesting situations where the students addressed to their equal social power interlocutors, they tended to use 'Can' and 'Please'. When they are asked to evaluate the appropriateness of speech acts in the given situations, most of the students were able to distinguish appropriate and inappropriate speech acts.

Lesson1/Situation2: You are eating lunch. You want to reach the salt on the table.

T: *"If you say "Hey, pass me the salt" to your brother, is it appropriate or inappropriate?"*
 S4: *"Inappropriate. Can you pass me the salt?"*

On the other hand, it was also observed that there were some situations that students could not explain why the utterance is appropriate or inappropriate.

Lesson4/Situation 4: You would like to borrow your teacher's pen.

T: *"What do you say? Can you lend me your pen, please? OR would you lend me your pen, please?"*
 S10: *"Would you lend me your pen, please?"*
 T: *"Why?"*
 S10: *"Teacher, I don't know."*

Teachers observed that Student 5 was not able to explain why asking "Can you pass me the salt?" from his sibling is appropriate.

Lesson1/Situation2: You are eating lunch. You want to reach the salt on the table.

T: *"If you say "Can you pass me the salt?" to your brother is it appropriate or inappropriate?"*
 S5: *"Appropriate."*
 T: *"Why?"*
 S5: *"Because it is appropriate."*
 T: *"Why do you think so? "Hey, pass me the salt" is inappropriate but "Can you pass me the salt?" is appropriate. What is the difference?"*
 S5: *"Because it is appropriate."*

However, in the third lesson, the student's questions for clarification justifies his/her increased awareness.

Lesson3/Situation 4: You don't have a book. You want to borrow your teacher's book.

T: *"How do you ask for a book?"*
 S5: *"From who?"*
 T: *"From your teacher."*
 S5: *"Book, yes?"*
 T: *"Yes."*
 S5: *"May I borrow your book, please?"*

In other situations where the learners request from their high social power addressees, they used 'Can', 'Please', 'May', 'Would', and 'Would you mind' within their speech acts. According to findings gathered from teachers' observations, students tended to be sensitive toward the social power of the addressees. The following example demonstrated that the student considered the social power factor in requesting and he was able to justify his speech act.

Lesson4/Situation2: You want your teacher to help you.

T: *"How do you say that you need help?"*
 S6: *"Would you mind helping me?"*
 T: *"Why?"*
 S6: *"Because it is more polite."*

Regarding these findings, the majority of the learners were sensitive toward the social power of addressees after receiving explicit pragmatic instruction. Besides, many of them were able to differentiate appropriate and inappropriate speech acts and justify their evaluations. It was also observed that the word *please* was used in commonly in requesting strategies.

Interviews

Interviewees were asked to gauge the appropriateness of the speech act "Sorry, teacher, can you repeat it?". In the given situation, a student addresses a teacher and tell him to repeat what he has just said. Three

interviewees found the speech act appropriate. They stated that it is a polite way to ask a teacher to repeat. Student 3 and Student 4 also extended their justifications by saying that ‘Sorry’ makes the speech act appropriate. Their answers demonstrated that they did not show sensitivity to the social power factor in requesting.

However, the other three interviewees found the speech act inappropriate. Student 1 justified her evaluation by stating that it is not appropriate to use ‘Can’ when addressing a teacher. Instead, she preferred to say ‘*Sorry, teacher, could you repeat it?*’. When she was asked to why she used ‘Could’, she indicated that ‘Could’ is more appropriate while addressing a teacher. She displayed sensitivity to social power of addressee. According to Student 5, ‘Please’ should be used to make the speech act appropriate while talking to a teacher. Student 6 stated that “‘Sorry, can you repeat it?’ can be addressed to a friend. She suggested that “*Excuse me, can you say again, please, teacher?*” as an alternative appropriate speech act. In addition, she found her answer very appropriate and more polite. Student 6 also proposed the use of ‘Please’ to be more polite when addressing a teacher. Student 1, Student 5 and Student 6 considered the social power of addressee. However, only Student 1 used ‘Could’ rather than ‘Can’. Student 5 and Student 6 used ‘Can’ in their alternative speech acts. Besides, they suggested to say ‘Please’ to make the speech act appropriate. The findings obtained from interviews showed that there is a mild increase on learners’ consciousness level of pragmatic use of requests in terms of social power, distance and imposition factors. Therefore, it can be claimed that explicit pragmatic teaching has positive impact on the enhancement of learners’ pragmatic awareness.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore the effects of explicit pragmatics teaching on the primary level students’ pragmatic awareness and the factors having impact on their pragmatic language choices. The results of quantitative data revealed that there is no significant difference between the experimental group members who received explicit pragmatics teaching of requesting strategies and the control group members who followed the curriculum and did not have additional treatment. However, considering the observation notes of the teacher-observers and the interview with experimental group members who are purposefully chosen according to their previous proficiency test results, there is a mild increase on their learners’ consciousness level of pragmatic use of requests contrary to the results of the quantitative data.

In terms of the first research question, even though a lot of studies in the literature conclude that there are positive impacts of explicit instruction in pragmatic awareness-raising activities (Halenko & Jones, 2011; Birjandi & Derakhshan, 2014), there are also studies in which there is no significant difference or there is barely noticeable difference is found in the learners’ pragmatic awareness on their understanding and production of appropriate language after an explicit pragmatic instruction (Sepehr, 2020; Fukuya & Clark 2001). Although the results of DCT did not indicate any significant difference after the treatment, the findings of observations and interviews provided evidence on the enhancement of learners’ pragmatic awareness during in-class activities and interview sections. In order to answer the second research question, findings of interviews and teacher observations were interpreted. In contrast to Savic (2015) study found that second grade learners did not consider the social power factor in requesting, the present study demonstrated that most of the students showed sensitivity to social power of interlocutors.

In Yuka’s (2012) study, participants mostly used *please* in requests. In addition, they stated that it was enough to add please to make speech acts polite. Ishihara’s (2013) study indicated that “magic word” *please* was employed to make sentence appropriate. According to findings that aligned with previous pragmatics studies, the students commonly used ‘please’ in requesting situations.

Conclusion

This study suggests that there is a mild increase on young learners’ pragmatic awareness of requests strategies with the help of explicit pragmatic teaching. Although the quantitative data found no significant difference in terms of the increase in pragmatic awareness levels of the experimental group members who received explicit pragmatics teaching of requesting strategies and the control group members who followed the curriculum without any additional treatment, learners’ consciousness level of pragmatic use of requests have slightly changed based on the results of the qualitative data.

Furthermore, it was concluded that the treatment of explicit pragmatic teaching has affected young learners’ pragmatic language choices. The impacts of social power, distance, and imposition factors were observed in the utterances of the participants in the experimental group. The majority of the students were sensitive to the social power factor in requesting. Moreover, they were able to evaluate the appropriateness of speech acts in the given situations. When they were asked to justify their assessments, many of them could explain why they found

the utterance appropriate and inappropriate. They were able to provide alternative speech acts. The findings also suggested that the politeness marker 'please' was employed in various requesting situations by the learners.

In the current study, the duration of the treatment was limited. The participants of the experimental group received only four hours of explicit pragmatic instruction on requesting. For future studies, the duration of the treatment can be extended. Furthermore, the quantitative data was collected with the help of Google Forms and the participants had no experience with that tool which was used for data collection. It was the first time that they engaged in Google Forms. To prevent any deviations, participants need to have prior knowledge about the specific tool that is administered for data collection. Future research can enhance the findings of the present investigation by following these suggestions.

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Appendices

Appendix A:

Lesson 1

Situation 1: You are at a lunch hall. You want to ask for food.

Situation 2: You are eating lunch. You want to reach the salt on the table.

Situation 3: You are having lunch at school with your teacher. You want your teacher pass the salt

Lesson 2

Situation 1: You are a teacher. You want your student to help you.

Lesson 3

Situation 1: You don't have a pencil. (to your friend)

Situation 2: You don't have a book. (to your friend)

Situation 3: You don't have a pencil. (to your teacher)

Situation 4: You don't have a book. (to your teacher)

Situation 5: There is a drawing activity. You don't have a green crayon and you want to draw a tree. You friend has lots of colors including the green one.

Situation 6: You are watching TV. One of your friends is standing in front of you and you can't see the TV.

Situation 7: Teacher asks you a question but you don't hear her voice?

Situation 8: You are reading a book at the library. Your friend is listening to music but the music is so loud.

Lesson 4

Situation 1: You are asking for a pencil.

Situation 2: You want your teacher to help you. (Teacher shows the options)

Situation 3: You would like to borrow your friend's pen.

Situation 4: You would like to borrow your teacher's pen.

Situation 5: You couldn't understand your homework?

Situation 6: Your hula hoop is broken. You want to borrow your friend's.

Situation 7: You are in the classroom. One of your friend's desk is really messy.

Appendix B

Lesson 1	Interaction	Questions	Students' answers	Reason
Situation 1	Student → The lunch lady	What do you say to the lunch lady?	S1: <i>"Can I take food?"</i>	
		What do you say to the lunch lady?	S2: <i>"Can you give me the lunch?"</i>	
Situation 2	Student → His/Her brother	If you say "Hey, pass me the salt", is it appropriate or inappropriate?	S4: <i>"Inappropriate." "Can you pass me the salt?"</i>	
		If you say "This meal is yucky, you can pass me the salt, right?" is it appropriate?	S6: <i>"Very inappropriate."</i>	
		"Can you pass me the salt?" is it appropriate or inappropriate?	S5: <i>"Appropriate".</i>	S5: <i>"Because it is appropriate."</i>
Situation 3	Student → Teacher	"Excuse me, would you mind passing me the salt" is it appropriate?	S7: <i>"Very appropriate."</i>	
		Asking "Can you pass me the salt?" is appropriate or inappropriate?	S9: <i>"It is inappropriate. Because you not say excuse me. We say "Excuse me, would you mind passing me the salt"."</i>	
		If you say "Teacher pass me the salt"?	S8: <i>"Inappropriate."</i>	S8: <i>"Because you are not say please or excuse me."</i>
		Asking "Can you pass me the salt?" is appropriate or inappropriate?	S9: <i>"It is inappropriate."</i>	S9: <i>"Because you not say excuse me. We say "Excuse me, would you mind passing me the salt"."</i>

Lesson 2	Interaction	Questions	Students' answers	Reason
Situation 1	Teacher → Student	How do you ask for help? S1: Can you help me?	S1: <i>"Can you help me?"</i>	

Lesson 3	Interaction	Questions	Students' answers	Reason
Situation 1	Student → Student	How do you ask for a pencil from your friend?	S1: "Please, give me your pencil, please?"	
		How do you ask for a pencil?	S2: "Can I write with your pencil?"	
Situation 2	Student → Student	How do you ask for a book from your friend?	S1: "Can you give me your book?"	
		How do you ask for a book?	S4: "Can I ask please borrow your book?"	
Situation 3	Student → Teacher	How do you ask for a pencil?	S6: "May I borrow you pencil, please?"	
Situation 4	Student → Teacher	How do you ask for a book?	S5: "May I borrow your book, please?"	
Situation 5	Student → Student	How do you ask for the green crayon?	S7: "Can I take the pencil?"	
		How do you ask for the green crayon?	S8: "Please, can you give me a green pencil? I can give you tomorrow."	
		How do you ask for the green crayon?	S9: "Can I borrow your pencil, please?"	
Situation 6	Student → Student	What do you say to your friend?	S10: "Can you sit on the couch? I can't see the television."	
		What do you say to your friend?	S11: "(...) I don't know."	
Situation 7	Student → Teacher	What do you say to your teacher?	S3: "I couldn't hear you, can you repeat again?"	
Situation 8		What do you say to your friend?	S11: "Be quiet."	

Lesson 4	Interaction	Questions	Students' answers	Reason
Situation 1		T: If I say "May I borrow your pencil please?", am I talking to my friend or my teacher?	S1: "Friend."	
		If I say "Is it OK if I borrow your pencil?"	S3: "Friend."	
		Do you think it is appropriate to ask this to your teacher?	S3: "No."	
Situation 2	Student → Teacher	How do you say that you need help?	S6: "Would you mind helping me?"	S6: "Because it is more polite."
		What do you say to your teacher?	S8: "Can you help me?"	
Situation 3	Student → Student	What do you say? Can you lend me your pen, please? OR would you lend me your pen, please?	S9: "Can."	
Situation 4	Student → Teacher	What do you say? Can you lend me your pen, please? OR would you lend me your pen, please?	S10: "Would you lend me your pen, please?"	S10: "Teacher I don't know."
		It is more polite to ask your teacher with would, right?	S10: "Yes. We are talking teacher. Can is talk a friend. Would is talking a teacher."	
Situation 5	Student → Teacher	What do you say to your teacher?	S2: "Can you help me teacher?"	
Situation 6	Student → Student	How do you ask? Do you say "Hey, give me your hula hoop"?	S4: "No, Can I play?"	
Situation 7	Student → Student	What do you say to your friend?	S5: "Please, table is dirty." "Clean your table, please?"	S13: "And teacher, no say "hey! Shut up". It is inappropriate."

Appendix C**Table 5***Interviews with Two Very Good Students***Table 6***Interviews with two good students*

Questions	Answers	
	Student 1	Student 2
1. Do you think it is appropriate or inappropriate?	<i>"Inappropriate."</i>	<i>"Very appropriate."</i>
2. Why do you think so?	<i>"Because we cannot say 'can'."</i>	<i>"It is a polite way."</i>
3. Instead of this, what would you say?	<i>Sorry, teacher, could you repeat it?</i>	<i>"Can you repeat it teacher?"</i>
4. Why did you use '...'/ Why did you say "..."?	<i>"'Could' ... More appropriate for a teacher."</i>	The question was not asked to the student.
Questions	Answers	
	Student 3	Student 4
1. Do you think it is appropriate or inappropriate?	<i>"Appropriate."</i>	<i>"Very Appropriate."</i>
2. Why do you think so?	<i>"Because we say "Sorry, teacher, can you repeat?". We say 'Sorry'."</i>	<i>"Because he says 'Sorry'."</i>
3. Instead of this, what would you say?	<i>Teacher, can you repeat, again?</i>	<i>"Sorry, teacher, can you repeat it?"</i>
4. Why did you use '...'/ Why did you say "..."?	The question was not asked to the student.	The question was not asked to the student.

Table 7*Interviews with Two Weak Students*

Questions	Answers	
	Student 5	Student 6
1. Do you think it is appropriate or inappropriate?	<i>"Inappropriate."</i>	<i>"Very inappropriate."</i>
2. Why do you think so?	She only said <i>"Please"</i> .	<i>"I'm saying "Sorry, can you repeat it?" to my friend."</i>
3. Instead of this, what would you say?	<i>"Teacher, can you talk slower please?"</i>	<i>"Excuse me, can you say again, please, teacher?"</i>
4. Why did you use '...'/ Why did you say "..."?	<i>"Appropriate."</i>	<i>"It's very appropriate. More polite"</i>