

The Effect of Explicit vs. Implicit Instruction on Algerian EFL Learners' Production of Complaints

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Abstract: The present study aimed to investigate the effect of two approaches of instruction (explicit vs. implicit) on Algerian EFL learners' production of complaints. Moreover, it sought to know whether or not gender affects the participants' pragmatic production of the speech act in focus. Two intact third-year English-major groups (40 students) participated in the study. Each group consists of 29 girls and 11 boys. The pretest and posttest data were collected through a ten-item discourse completion test. Both groups' production of complaints was analyzed using a holistic rating scale to evaluate the overall appropriateness of language use. The results revealed that the explicit group significantly improved in the posttest over the pretest, greatly outperforming the implicit group. Additionally, there is no significant difference between the males and females of the implicit group. However, in the explicit group, gender came out to exert a significant impact on the way male and female participants produced the speech act of complaining.

Keywords .Complaining, explicit vs. implicit instruction, consciousness-raising activities, listening prompts, gender

ملخص. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في تأثير طريقتين مختلفتين للتدريس: صريحة وضمنية على إنتاج متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للشكوى كفعل كلام، كما تسعى إلى معرفة ما إذا كان الجنس يؤثر على الإنتاج العملي للمشاركين لفعل الكلام محل الدراسة. شاركت في الدراسة مجموعتان من طلبة السنة الثالثة تتكون كل مجموعة من 40 طالباً: 29 طالبة و 11 طالباً. لقيت كلتا المجموعتين 24 حواراً موضوعه الشكوى، ولكن في حين تلقت المجموعة الصريحة أنشطة رفع الوعي التي عززت وعيهم بالميزات اللغوية و الاجتماعية للحوارات، لم تتلق المجموعة الضمنية أي أنشطة لزيادة الوعي. تم جمع بيانات الاختبار القبلي والبعدي من خلال اختبار إكمال الخطاب المكون من عشرة سيناريوهات. أظهرت النتائج أن المجموعة الواضحة تحسنت بشكل كبير في الاختبار البعدي، متفوقة بشكل كبير على المجموعة الضمنية. فيما يتعلق بالجنس، لا يوجد فرق كبير بين الذكور والإناث في المجموعة الضمنية لكن في المجموعة الصريحة، أثر الجنس بشكل كبير على الطريقة التي أنتج بها المشاركون من الذكور والإناث فعل الكلام المدروس.

الكلمات المفتاحية . الشكوى كفعل كلامي ، تعليم صريح و ضمني ، أنشطة زيادة الوعي ، التلقين السمعي ، الجنس .

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1. Introduction

Pragmatic ability is an important component of communicative competence the absence of which could cause communication problems. As Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh, and Fatahi (2004) pinpoint "It is necessary to understand and create language that is appropriate to the situations in which one is functioning, because failure to do so may cause users to miss key points that are being communicated or to have their messages misunderstood" (p. 1). Worse yet is the possibility of a total communication breakdown and the stereotypical labeling of second language (Henceforth L2) speakers as people who are rude and bad-mannered (Thomas, 1983). The discrepancies that exist between different perceptions of utterances in two cultures are the most common reason of communication breakdowns. All this implies the necessity of teaching the rules of appropriate language use because every language contains specific formulas whose use is mainly governed by social and cultural aspects of contexts. Using these formulas appropriately in different contexts demands familiarity with and awareness of both linguistic knowledge and social rules (Afghari & Karimnia, 2007). In the last two decades, the issues of teaching L2 pragmatics and examining the factors which result in pragmatic learning development have been widely investigated. Among these factors is the impact of instruction on learners' comprehension and production of speech acts (Alcón & Pitarch, 2010). The rationale for the need of instructing ESL/EFL learners in pragmatics is provided by Schmidt's (1993) Noticing Hypothesis which claims that the mere exposure to the target language (Henceforth TL) does not guarantee a boost in pragmatic competence.

2. Literature review

2.1. The Speech Act of Complaining. The speech act of complaining takes place when a speaker reacts with displeasure or annoyance to an action that has affected him/her in an unfavorable manner (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993; Schegloff, 2005; Tanck, 2002). With regard to Brown and Levinson's politeness model (1978, 1987), complaining is a face-threatening act (FTA) that threatens the complainer's positive face and the complainees' positive and negative faces. Brown and Levinson (1987) define face as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (p. 61). It can be lost, saved, maintained, enhanced, or damaged in interaction. Face consists of two related components: positive face and negative face. The former refers to the individual's desire "to be ratified, understood, approved of, liked or admired" (p. 62) while the latter can be defined as the individual's desire that his actions "be unimpeded by others" (p. 62). A complainees' positive face is threatened when a complainer does not care about the complainees' desire to be liked or accepted. The complainees' negative face is threatened when his or her freedom is restricted. The complainer's positive face is possibly threatened when s/he is impolite and the complainees perhaps dislikes the complainer.

2.2. Language and Gender. Linguists and gender theorists have urged for a new theoretical perspective which adequately accounts for the differences between male and female speech patterns (Cameron, 1995, 1996). It is worth reminding here that sex is biologically determined whereas gender is a social construct involving a set of psychological and social phenomena as well as cultural differences between males and females. Gender is the differences of the

function, character, and responsibility of both men and women. It is used to refer to the social and psychological phenomena associated with being feminine or masculine as these concepts are defined in a given culture.

Men and women are different in interaction, style, values, and rules. Previous studies have shown that women are more responsive than men and men tend to give delayed responses to their addressees. For how the language used by men and women reinforces their respective positions in society, men maintain their dominance by the use of verbal strategies associated with power. On the contrary, it has been argued that women are maintained in a subordinate position as they are socialized to adopt powerless patterns of speech (Cameron, 1996). The tendency of men interrupting women more than women interrupt men can be explained in these terms. Another difference between men and women in talk concerns its purpose. According to Pease and Pease (2001), male awareness is concerned with getting results, achieving goals, status and power. Men tend to be interested in something that makes them obtain status and power. If it does not do so, they tend to give delay responses to their interlocutors.

2.3. The Role of Receptive Skill-based Instruction and Consciousness-raising in Enhancing Pragmatic Competence.

Using authentic materials in teaching the TL is one of the important principles of communicative language teaching (Omaggio, 1993). Authentic materials are “ordinary texts not produced specifically for language teaching purposes.” (Carter & Nunan, 2001, p. 68). In other words, they are materials that are designed for native speakers of the language and written not for language teaching purposes. Nunan (1999) defines authentic materials as spoken or written language data that have been produced in the course of genuine communicate “Authentic L2 input is essential for pragmatic learning, but it does not secure successful pragmatic development” (p. 22). Although there are various types of authentic materials, researchers such as Celce-Murcia (2001) insist on the use of authentic audio-taped materials as the basis for classroom learning activities. Similarly, the present study employed authentic listening materials accompanied by consciousness-raising tasks, within the explicit group, to examine their effectiveness on EFL learners’ pragmatic production of complaints.

As already mentioned, Schmidt (1990) assumes that input alone, be it comprehensible or not, is insufficient to facilitate the acquisition of L2. The Noticing Hypothesis claims that for acquisition to take place, learners must consciously notice forms in the input.

Schmidt (1993) extends his postulate of consciousness and learning to the field of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) by focusing on the ways consciousness may be involved in learning the principles of pragmatics in L2. Schmidt (2001, p. 30) observes that “in order to acquire pragmatics, one must attend to both the linguistic forms of utterances and the relevant social and contextual features with which they are associated.” He raised four points which can be summarized as follows: First, learners need to notice both the specific relevant pragmatic linguistic and contextual features of an event in order to motivate encoding. Second, attention to input is an essential condition for any learning to take place, and that what must be attended to is not input in general, but whatever features of input play a role in the system to be learned. Third, consciously paying attention to linguistic features of the input and trying to analyze

their significance in terms of deeper generalizations both have extremely facilitative effects on L2 pragmatic behavior. Forth, simple exposure to sociolinguistically appropriate input is likely to be insufficient.

Drawing on Schmidt's noticing hypothesis, Ellis (2003) distinguishes between implicit knowledge "that knowledge of language that a speaker manifests in performance but has no awareness of" and explicit knowledge "knowledge about language that speakers are aware of and, if asked, can verbalize" (p. 105). These approaches are differentiated by the presence (explicit) or absence (implicit) of metapragmatic information as part of the input (Alcon-Soler & Martinez Flor, 2008). According to Doughty (2003), explicit teaching involves directing learners' attention towards the target forms with the aim of discussing those forms. The implicit approach, on the other hand, aims to attract the learners' attention while avoiding any type of metalinguistic explanation and minimizing the interruption of the communicative situation.

In order to explore the effectiveness of both explicit and implicit treatments on learners' pragmatic awareness of complaints, Pazhakh (2013) uses a sample comprising of 33 males and 9 females selected from a population of 90 students at the intermediate level. Then, the sample was randomly assigned to two experimental groups, A and B. After that, learners were given a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) pretest. The two groups were under the explicit and implicit instructions of the instructor separately for 14 sessions. Then, they took a similar posttest to see whether the learners learned complain strategies appropriately. The results of three t-tests indicated that there was a significant difference between the performances of both experimental groups on pretest and posttest, and finally posttests. Consequently, the results of the study also confirmed that pragmatic competence could be developed through implicit instruction to some extent and explicit instruction of complaint to a more extent.

In another instructional study, Mirzaee and Esmaeili (2013) investigate the impact of explicit instruction on EFL learner's awareness and production of complaints, requests, and apologies. In doing so, it examined whether or not the learners' language proficiency plays any role in incorporating pragmatic instruction into L2 classrooms. Iranian undergraduate English-major learners with low and high levels of linguistic proficiency took part in the study. The instruction lasted for twelve weeks. Development in L2 pragmatics was assessed based on a pretest-posttest design using a multiple-choice discourse comprehension test and a written discourse completion test (Henceforth WDCT). The significant gains made by the experimental groups receiving instruction support the claim recently made by instructional pragmatics: explicit instruction accelerates the development of pragmatically appropriate use of language. However, learners' level of language proficiency has no significant role in the incorporation of the pragmatic-oriented instruction.

What can be seen from the previous studies reviewed above is that there has been a considerable amount of studies on the effect of instruction on EFL learners' development of the speech act of complaining but almost no attention has been paid to two aspects: 1) the role of listening-based instruction (i.e. listening prompts) in developing complaining production and 2) the relationship between individual characteristics such as gender and interlanguage pragmatic development of this speech act. In response to the paucity of research on these two

aspects, the present study attempts to examine the effectiveness of two types of instruction: listening prompts (Henceforth LPs) accompanied by consciousness-raising activities vs. LPs alone. It is assumed that the former is an explicit approach to teaching complaints and the latter is an implicit one. Another aim is to know whether or not gender affects the production of the speech act in focus. Consciousness-raising activities are tasks designed to develop awareness of how language forms are used appropriately in context depending on sociocultural variables (Eslami-Rasekh, 2004).

The present study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Do consciousness-raising activities enhance Algerian EFL learners' production of complaints? In other words, is explicit instruction more effective than the implicit one in improving the participants' production of the speech act in focus?
2. Does gender affect Algerian EFL learners' pragmatic production of complaints?

3. Methodology

3.1. The Population Investigated and Sampling. Conducting an experiment on the whole population of third-year English-major students at Batna 2 University (479 students) is impossible. Therefore, sampling is necessary. As the present study adopted a quasi-experimental design, the participants, who belong to two intact groups, were selected without random assignment. To initiate the experiment, the intact groups were randomly divided into an explicit instruction group and an implicit instruction group with each group consisting of 40 students. Both groups are made up of 29 girls and 11 boys. All the participants belong to the same age group (19-24 years old). They studied English as a subject in school for about 7 to 10 years and none of them had studied or had been to an English-speaking country.

3.2. Instruments and Materials

3.2.1. Nelson English Language Proficiency Test. To reassure that all the participants are homogenized in terms of their L2 proficiency, Nelson English Language Proficiency Test, developed by Fowler and Coe (1976), was administered to all of them prior to the experiment. Because this test is a standard measurement whose validity and reliability have already been established, the researcher did not pilot it.

3.2.2. The written discourse completion test

3.2.2.1. Rationale for using the written discourse completion test. The written discourse completion test (WDCT) was administered to both groups. It was chosen in particular as a data gathering tool in the present study for many reasons. First, it is easy to administer and suitable for collecting large amounts of data in a short time. Second, it allows the researcher to control features of the situation. Third, data elicited with the WDCT are consistent with naturally occurring data, at least in the main patterns and formulas (Billmyer & Varghese, 2000; Golato, 2003). It might be argued that the role play also encourages production but it was not chosen as a data gathering tool in the present study as it is believed that it cannot fully provide information about the learners' declarative knowledge of L2 pragmatics due to the processing load exerted on them. Despite its advantages, the WDCT has limitations. Its data do not show the interactional facets of a speech event. This limitation was not a major problem as investigating the interactional aspects of complaints is not one of the present study's purposes.

3.2.2.2. Design of the written discourse completion test. The WDCT used in the present study consists of ten scenarios which are based on similar situations that appeared in DCTs utilized by Arent (1995), Bonikowska (1988), Chen (2009), Deveci (2003), Murphy & Neu (1996), Olshtain & Weinbach (1987), Ouellette (2001), Piotrowska (1987), Prykarpatska (2008), Shea (2003), Tanck (2004), and Trenchs (1995). More specifically, Situations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were either taken or adapted from earlier studies such as the ones mentioned above. Situations 8, 9, and 10 were created from scratch by the current researcher.

3.2.2.3. Validity of the written discourse completion test. The WDCT was piloted to ensure its validity and reliability. A pilot study was done by administering the test to a third-year English-major intact group at Batna 2 University different from the explicit group and implicit group. This group consists of 39 students. Changes that were made as a result of piloting consist of the modification of the items that are too long, vague and/or difficult to understand. These items were rewritten with the help of two experienced EFL teachers at the aforementioned department and the newly corrected items were rechecked by them. Coding of the data collected in the pilot study revealed that all ten situations were capable of eliciting complaints. Piloting the instrument yielded a total of 347 complaints. In this way, it was judged that the WDCT is able to elicit complaints as intended.

3.2.2.4. Reliability of the multiple choice discourse completion test. As any other measuring instrument, the reliability of the WDCT depends upon the consistency with which it has been applied. The test-retest method was opted for in the present study because it is, in the researcher's eyes, the most practical one though it involves a greater recall in the retest. In doing so, the WDCT was administered to a sample of 39 students other than the present study's participants. Then, the same test was administered to the same group after three weeks under relatively the same conditions in terms of time and place. The two sets of scores were correlated and the reliability coefficient was obtained using Cronbach's alpha. The reliability index was found to be 0.77 which is, according to DeVellis (1991), a respectable reliability.

3.2.3. Listening Prompts. The present study utilized listening prompts which consist of 24 tape-recorded conversations extracted from *Flash Forward*, *Stargate* TV Series and *Annie Hall* Film.

3.3. Data Collection Procedures. After Nelson English Language Proficiency Test was administered and scored, it was found that all the learners' scores enjoyed the homogeneity criterion i.e. students have a similar level of English language proficiency. To initiate the experiment, the intact groups were randomly divided into an explicit group and an implicit group. A WDCT pretest was administered to both groups before starting the treatment to make sure that they are similar in terms realizing complaints. For the treatment, the first group received an explicit pragmatic-focused instruction based mainly on conscious-raising activities, teacher-fronted discussions, metapragmatic explanations, output practice and teacher explicit corrective feedback. In the consciousness-raising activities, for instance, the learners were asked to specify the social status of the interlocutors in the dialogue, determine the different types of complaint strategies employed, and observe mitigators. They were also taught to vary the way they frame their speech acts according to the sociopragmatic variables such as power, social distance and degree of imposition. Such tasks which targeted

pragmalinguistic as well as sociopragmatic features set the scene for subsequent teacher-fronted discussions and explicit corrective feedback in the form of comments on infelicitous realizations of complaints. The second group, on the other hand, received the mere instruction by listening to listening prompts and doing some vocabulary exercises on their transcribed conversation texts at the expense of consciousness-raising activities. In other words, there was no attempt to raise their awareness of the pragmatic features of the dialogues. Learners in both groups were presented four complaint listening prompts each session. Each session lasted for one hour and a half. Treatment was administered in the class of Oral Expression as third-year students do not take Pragmatics and the syllabus of Oral Expression is the most flexible one enabling the teacher to integrate pragmatic aspects in it. On the whole, treatment took 9 hours. At its end, the same WDCT posttest was administered to both groups with slight changes in the wording of the scenarios and their order to avoid the practice effect.

3.4. Data Coding and Analysis. Both groups' production of complaints was analyzed using a holistic rating scale to evaluate the overall appropriateness of language use. The holistic rating scale adopted in the present study was developed by Eisenstein and Bodman (1993), and had been used to assess different speech acts such as apology, request, compliment and compliment responses (Ahn 2007, Kim 2000). Following Kim (2000) and Ahn (2007), value labels were used for the measurement of participants' pragmatic production: 1 = native or near native, 2 = acceptable, 3 = problematic, and 4 = unacceptable.

Trosborg's (1995) and Yian's (2008) coding schemes were applied to code the WDCT data. The following eight strategies were adapted from Trosborg (1995) with Strategy 1 being the most indirect and Strategy 8 the most direct: *hints*, *annoyance*, *ill consequences*, *indirect accusation*, *direct accusation*, *modified blame*, *blame (behavior)* and *blame (personal)*. Three new categories: *directive acts*, *warnings* and *opting out* were added to refine the coding scheme and cover all response types in the data. The total number of strategies becomes eleven, as can be seen in Table 1. The first column describes the broad strategies, the second column details the specific complaints strategies, and the last one provides examples. Examples are adapted from Trosborg, 1995, p. 316-319)

Table (1): The Coding Scheme of the Present Study

Category	Strategy	Example
—	Str. 1 Opting out	I would say nothing
Cat. I. <i>No explicit reproach</i>	Str. 2 Hints	Don't see much of you these days, do I?
Cat II. <i>Expression of disapproval</i>	Str. 3 Annoyance	You know I don't like dust, I'm allergic to dust. Didn't you know it?
	Str. 4: Ill consequences	Now I will probably lose my insurance
Cat. III. <i>Accusation</i>	Str. 5: Indirect	Look at the mess, haven't you done any cleaning up for the last week?
	Str. 6: Direct	You used to do the cleaning up all the time. What's up with you now?
Cat. IV: <i>Blame</i>	Str. 7: Modified blame	"You could have said so, I mean, if you had so much to do." And "it's boring to stay here and I hate living in a mess, anyway you ought to clean up after you."

	Str. 8: Explicit blame (behavior)	"You never clean up after yourself, I'm sick and tired of it."
	Str. 9: explicit blame (person)	"Mete, (swear word) really, one can never trust you a damn."
Cat. V: Directive acts	Str.10: Request for repair	"Would you mind doing your share of the duties as soon as possible?"
	Str. 11: Threat	"I shall be leaving soon (if you don't do your share of the cleaning)."

Source: Trosborg's (1995) and Yian's (2008) coding schemes

After data were collected and coded by the researcher, two EFL teachers at the English Department of Batna 2 University were required to rate the participants' responses. In order to ensure reliability of rating, two-hour rater training was conducted in which the rating purpose and criteria were explained by the researcher followed by an analysis of sample complaints for the raters for better understanding of and agreement on the scoring rubric. Raters were not told about the present study's objectives to avoid subjectivity and guarantee more rating reliability. Besides, they were reminded that grammatical mistakes could be tolerated if they do not greatly interfere with the speaker's comprehensibility.

After the two raters were trained on rating, they worked separately to score the data elicited from WDCT. The correlation between the two ratings was calculated using Krippendorff's alpha since it is the most flexible method among the seven methods available for checking the inter-rater reliability which produces the most possible accurate result (Nili, Tate, & Barros, 2017). Krippendorff's alpha was calculated using PRAM software. As a rule, Krippendorff's alpha values between 0.6 and 0.8 are considered good, and values above 0.8 are considered excellent agreement (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). The value for this study was found to be 0.819 indicating an excellent inter-rater reliability.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. The Effect of Listening-based Instruction and Awareness-raising Activities on the Participants' Production of Complaints.

To answer the first question, an independent samples *t*-test was run to compare the means of pretest and posttest of both groups. Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics and the results of *t*-test.

Table (2): Comparison between the pretest and posttest means of both groups

	Pretest		Posttest	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Explicit instruction group	12.43	3.24	15.62	3.98
Implicit instruction group	12.51	2.99	12.97	3.36
<i>p</i> value	0.761		0.002	

**p* ≤ 0.05

As can be seen from Table 2, there is no noticeable difference between the groups' means in the pretest. However, there exists a noticeable discrepancy between them in the

posttest. In other words, the explicit instruction group outperformed the implicit instruction group in their production of complaints. This is due to the positive effect of the LPs accompanied by consciousness-raising activities. The findings of the first research question are in line with those of Birjandi and Derakhshan (2014), Gholamia and Aghaeib (2012), as well as Kargar, Sedighi, & Ahmadi (2012) among many others, which advocate the effectiveness of various instructional approaches on the production of speech acts in EFL contexts. The obtained results of the current study are compatible with the findings of empirical investigations such as Morrow (1995), Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh and Fatahi (2004), as well as Martínez-Flor and Usó-Juan (2015) which show the usefulness of explicit teaching of the illocutionary act of complaining.

What can be clearly inferred from the results is that the participants who received LPs accompanied by consciousness-raising activities outperformed those who received LPs only. These results are congruent with those of some previous inquiries which investigated the effect of consciousness-raising activities on pragmatic competence, namely Barekat and Mehri (2013).

4.2. The Effect of Gender on the Participants' Production of Complaints. To explore the impact of gender on learners' speech act production, a paired-sample t-test was run to make certain if there is any significant difference between the mean scores of male and female participants in both groups.

Table (3): Paired-sample t-test between male and female participants of both groups in the pretest

Group	Sex	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	<i>p</i> value
Explicit instruction group	Male	11	11.65	2.78	0.449
	Female	29	13.41	3.62	
Implicit instruction group	Male	11	11.49	2.47	0.483
	Female	29	13.03	3.99	

According to Table 3, as far as the production of complaints is concerned, there is no significant difference between male and female learners of the explicit and implicit group in the pretest ($p=0.449$ and $p=0.483$ respectively, $*p\leq 0.05$).

To compare the performance of the two groups in the posttest and scrutinize any trace of gender effect on the participants' production of the speech act in focus, another paired-sample t-test was run.

Table (4): Paired-sample t-test between male and female participants of both groups in the posttest

Group	Sex	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	<i>p</i> value
Explicit instruction group	Male	11	13.57	3.41	0.017
	Female	29	16.89	3.37	
Implicit instruction group	Male	11	11.53	2.61	0.308
	Female	29	13.14	4.07	

Again, there is no significant difference between the males and females of the implicit group ($p=0.308$). However, in the explicit group, gender came out to exert a significant

impact on the way male and female participants produced the speech act of complaining ($p=0.017$, $*p\leq 0.05$). Moreover, it is inferred from the results that the female participants of the explicit group performed better than their male counterparts in both pretest and posttest. Simply put, gender did not tangibly affect the implicit group's pragmatic production of complaints, but it was of paramount importance in the explicit group, especially to female learners. This finding is in harmony with Farashaiyan and Tan's (2012) study which examines the relationship between gender, language proficiency, and pragmatic knowledge. It came out that female learners performed more satisfactorily on the tests than their male partners did. This is also in line with the findings of Safa and Mahmoodi's (2012) inquiry which aims to see if any relationship can be found between EFL learners' lexico-grammatical and interlanguage pragmatic competences and if such a relationship is found, whether the gender variable affects it or not. The results indicate that there is a positive correlation between the learners' lexico-grammatical and pragmatic competences. More interestingly, the correlation is stronger for female EFL learners than the male participants though the pragmatic competence level of the male and female participants was not significantly different.

5. Conclusion and pedagogical implications

Findings of the present study show that even listening prompts cannot enable EFL learners acquire the target features of complaining in the absence of any pertinent instruction. In other words, explicit instruction is necessary for interlanguage pragmatic development. Although the sequence of acquiring patterns and strategies of complaining speech act were not dealt with, the current study showed that the consciousness-raising activities enable the EFL learners use these patterns and strategies appropriately.

Regarding pedagogical implications, it is hoped that the findings of this research would be beneficial not only to EFL curriculum designers and material developers, but also to textbook writers and teachers. Curriculum designers should develop more pragmatic-oriented curricula and material developers should expand the pragmatic scope of EFL textbooks, adopt a more functional approach which introduces various speech acts, and incorporate more awareness-raising tasks. For teachers, they should revisit their teaching methods to integrate as more pragmatic tasks as required according to their learners' needs. They should also embrace the explicit approach in teaching pragmatics as much as possible by showing their learners explicitly how the contextual factors affect native speakers' way of using the language.

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Appendix: The Written Discourse Completion Test

Dear students,

How would you respond to the following situations? Please write down the exact words you would say. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

1. You are a university student. Your mother keeps insisting that you go find a part-time job and earn some money. She does not understand that it is very hard to find a job these days. You have been talking to her over breakfast. She is very angry because you have not found a job yet. What do you say to her?
2. You are going to university in the morning. It is raining. A car passes by and splashes dirty water all over your trousers. The driver stops at a red traffic light. He is a young male, maybe 17-18 years old. What do you say to him?
3. One of your teachers was supposed to mark and return your exam papers by Monday morning. It is now Sunday of the following week and she has not marked them yet. You are anxious because it is the score of this exam which will decide whether or not you will be concerned with the resit exams which will start tomorrow. You visit the teacher in her office. What do you say to her?
4. It is 12 midnight on a Saturday. You have been trying to fall asleep for two hours, but your next-door neighbor in the campus is having a party next door. You cannot sleep because of the loud noise and music. This is not the first time. Your neighbor has thrown several loud and noisy parties over the past month. Since your neighbor has not taken you seriously, you decide to speak with him/her very firmly this time. What do you say to him/her?
5. You have a final examination today, and you are late for your exam. You get into a taxi and ask the driver to go fast, but find yourself in the middle of a traffic jam. The exam begins soon, and you are very angry. You arrive at the examination center ten minutes late. The teacher tells you "Sorry, but you cannot take the exam." What do you say to him?
6. Your neighbor's 10-year-old son has left his garbage near your front door. The garbage smells so bad and it is probably bad for your health. You are not very pleased about this and have decided to talk to him about it. You knock on the door and your neighbor opens it. What do you say to him?
7. You have just bought a brand-new smart phone, but when you get home, you find that it does not work properly. You go to the shop, but the salespeople do not want to help you. Also, they will not give you back your money. What do you say to them?
8. You arranged to meet a friend in order to get some books from him/her to study for an exam. You waited for an hour, but she/he didn't show up. How will you complain the next day when you see him/her?
9. You lend a handout to friend to study and return it to you, although you informed him/her about its rarity and your need but he/she lost the handout. How will you complain?
10. You are paid less of a bonus at New Year time than a colleague on the same pay scale and you think that it is unfair. How will you complain to your boss?