

Is There Room for Pragmatic Knowledge in English Books in Iranian High Schools?

Javad Gholami¹

¹ Department of English, Urmia University, Iran

Correspondence: Javad Gholami, English Language Department, Urmia University, Urmia 165, Iran. Tel: 98-44-3336-4500. E-mail: j.gholami@urmia.ac.ir

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Abstract

Pragmatic competence and its development has been a pivotal issue in ELT in the last two decades. This paper explored pragmatic knowledge incorporation into Iranian EFL textbooks. Three high school English books named 'English Book 2, English Book 3 and Learning to Read English for Pre-University Students' were investigated with regard to their use of pragmatic features of English. These three textbooks were analyzed specifically based on speech acts, four politeness strategies, and lexical and syntactic classification. In addition, tense in temporal deixis, adjacency pairs and hesitation marks were analyzed too. The findings demonstrated that little consideration is given to the incorporation of pragmatic knowledge in developing these materials. This shortcoming may partially account for artificiality of the textbooks. Based on the findings, it is suggested that textbook developers include more pragmatic knowledge into Iranian EFL textbooks to increase on the one hand the authenticity of the textbooks and on the other hand pragmatic knowledge of Iranian EFL students.

Keywords: EFL books, high school, politeness strategy, pragmatic knowledge, speech acts

1. Introduction

Language is, without doubt, fundamental in the creation of the global village. This can be to the extent that its nonexistence makes the globalization shake to the core. Knowledge of languages enables us to perceive new horizons, to think globally, and to increase our understanding of ourselves and of our neighbors. Languages are then the lifeline of globalization, and communicating internationally demands languages through which meanings are created and exchanged. However, creating and exchanging meanings are not that easy since language is a complex system. It is composed of many different subsystems: phonology, morphology, lexicon, syntax, semantics and pragmatics (Freeman, 1997).

Learning language even without one of these subsystems will not be a complete learning. Pragmatics, also, if not more important than others, can be as important as others, and as Grice (1975) stated, pragmatics should center on the more practical dimension of meaning, namely the conversational meaning. Therefore, including pragmatics in EFL textbooks not only is not worthless but also leads to authentic and enjoyable performance of EFL students. Such performance is not well evident in the speech or writings of most EFL students particularly among Iranian EFL learners.

In Iranian EFL context, it is mostly through EFL textbooks that primary (perhaps only form of linguistic) input is provided for the learners. However, it seems that these textbooks on the one hand scale down pragmatic knowledge and on the other hand lend too much weight to syntactic knowledge. We can all remember the words like "Ali, Mehdi, Reza, Mina, Mr. Taban, Tabriz, Tehran, Ardebil, Hafez Avenue, Alavi Avenue, etc" in our EFL textbooks, but what about words such as church, English names or cities in other countries? Of course, one can see the word "London" among the names of four Iranian cities (English Book 2, p. 81), but is that enough? Have our EFL students received sufficient information about how to open or terminate a conversation? Or how to fill the gaps in conversations? Do Iranian students have nothing to show when they want to greet an English person, ask for something, complain, offer, or talk on the phone? Can they enter a meaningful interaction in these situations after many years of studying English at public schools?

Have our English students been told why past tense is used in second conditional sentences, or why is *could* more polite than *can* while requesting, or are they just simply asked to memorize formulaic structures? Why

does an Iranian speaker of English typically say “Sorry for bothering you” while he/she is leaving the host/hostess’s house? Why dose he/she say “Sorry, it isn’t such a nice present” while a present is given to an English friend? Why are they looking for English translation of phrases like “*khaste nabashid*” (literally *don’t be tired!*), “Ya Allah”, etc?

These and lots of other questions reflect lack of pragmatic knowledge in Iranian EFL text books. Of course, some believe that we must not blame Iranian EFL textbooks as the only source of these problems. The methodologies that have been applied in Iranian EFL classrooms are somehow problematic too. Although in the author’s book, this case is undeniable since it has not forgotten how the reading passage “How are you?” (English Book 2, p. 85) which gives useful information about greeting in English was translated by teachers. Taking an overall look at the Iranian EFL textbooks represents rigid materials with predominant representation of Iranian life and culture. This does not meant that learning about mother land culture is useless; however, the primary purpose of the EFL textbooks is to arm students with enough abilities to communicate in English, which is difficult and troublesome without knowing its culture.

Of course, in recent years, thoroughly revised versions of Iranian EFL textbooks have been launched in reverse; that is, the first English book to be revised was pre-university one and the other one was English book 3. Although this is a promising trend, it is not clear whether this procedure has been towards improvement, whether pragmatic soul has been integrated into the syntactic skeleton of the old books.

As a result, in this study pragmatic knowledge incorporation into Iranian EFL textbooks is taken into consideration. If the textbooks are revised in a way that include pragmatic knowledge in their different sections and if the teachers adapt their lesson plan and syllabus according to these materials, the product of this process can be knowledgeable EFL students who can perform appropriately and based on English language norms in different situations. However, this cannot be achieved unless material developers throw their heart and soul into incorporating more pragmatic knowledge into these materials.

Of course, there are controversial views towards pragmatic knowledge incorporation into EFL textbooks. On the one hand, there is a belief that cultural competence can be regarded as the fifth skill for the EFL students after listening, speaking, reading and writing (Watt, 2004). However, Kramersch (1998) objects to the idea of cultural competence being tacked on as just another skill, arguing that if culture is seen as social practice, it is the very core of language teaching. She concludes that cultural awareness must be seen as enabling language proficiency, and those who favor an intercultural approach to language teaching would agree. On the other hand, some scholars in inter-language pragmatics (Guilherme, 2006) argue that in modern context, a broad view of culture and language is required. In recent years, there have been numerous studies both theoretical and empirical in which pragmatic instruction have been scaled up or down based on the scholars’ points of views.

2. Review of Literature

As Kasper (2001) has claimed, second and foreign language learners can successfully perform under two circumstances even without instruction of pragmatic knowledge: when some universal pragmatic knowledge operates (e.g., politeness phenomena) or when both pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic can be positively transferred from the first language to the target language. However, these circumstances cannot exist in all of the linguistic contexts, and also it seems that EFL learners are not aware of using pragmatic knowledge in target language unless it is highlighted through instruction. It has also been illustrated that acquisition of pragmatic aspects, like any other types of knowledge in target language demands three conditions: provision of appropriate input, opportunities for output and feed back (Kasper, 2001). Following this assumption, the role and effect of these conditions among other issues have been examined in contexts of second and foreign language classrooms.

Soler, Martinez-Flor, and Fukuya (2005), Rose and Kasper (2001), Liddicoat and Crozet (1997), Takahashi (2001), and Bardovi-Harling and Taylor (2003) among others have regarded teaching pragmatics essential for development of pragmatic competence since as Lorsch and Schulze (cited in Soler, 2005) have stated a learner of high grammatical proficiency will not necessarily posses concomitant pragmatic knowledge. This is because in contrast to second language learning environment, the range of speech acts and realization strategies is quite narrow, and typical interaction patterns restrict pragmatic input and opportunities for practicing discourse organization strategies in foreign learning context. As a result, providing EFL learners with sufficient input can be both necessary and useful to promote their pragmatic knowledge.

Following Schmidth’s (cited in Takahashi, 2001) definition of input enhancement, most researchers have examined the instructional input in different ways, namely some form of corrective feedback with or without meta-linguistic information (e.g., Takimoto, 2006), visual enhancement (textual modification) with the use of bold or italic face (e.g., Soler, 2005) and task manipulation directing learners to notice and attend to target

structure (Evans & Williams, as cited in Takahashi, 2001). All of these studies are not only in support of Schmidt's noticing hypothesis but also are in favor of presenting feedback and meta-linguistic information. Also, according to Ellis (2003), there are two ways of helping to draw learners' attention to target features during task: implicit techniques that involve providing feedback on learners' use of a target feature in away that keeps the primary focus on meaning, and explicit techniques that involve providing learners with explicit information relating to the target feature during the performance of the task. As these studies indicate, most of them advocate inclusion of pragmatic instruction in EFL context.

The field of inter-language pragmatics has been regarded as a second generation hybrid since it belongs to different disciplines, namely those of pragmatics and second language acquisition (Blum-Kulka & Kasper, as cited in Kasper & Rose, 2001). Regarding the first discipline, lots of studies have been done. However, as Kasper and Rose (2001) have noted, the second discipline needs more studies addressing developmental issues that affect learners' acquisition of pragmatics. Based on this assumption, the sheer number of empirical studies has been conducted. Majority of the studies have examined the effectiveness of different approaches on teaching various issues in scope of pragmatics among which speech acts stand out.

In a study that is conducted by Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005), the effects of instruction on learners' production of appropriate and accurate suggestions have been examined. Martinez-Flor and Fukuya applied two types of pragmatic instruction, explicit and implicit, on eighty one Spanish learners of English for about sixteen weeks. The results revealed that in both groups the pragmatic knowledge of producing appropriate suggestions was improved. While in this study, both implicit and explicit approaches were sound options to teach, Soler (2005) reported the benefits of explicit approach over implicit one. However, his study was about request strategies. Also, in this research, the explicit group received instruction by means of direct awareness raising tasks and written meta-pragmatic feedback on the use of appropriate requests and the implicit group was provided with typographical enhancement of request strategies and a set of implicit awareness raising tasks. Similarly, in another study, House and Kasper (1981) involved German University students of EFL and focused on a variety of discourse markers and gambits. The authors designed two versions of the same communicative course, one explicit and one implicit, which provided learners with adequate input and opportunities to practice. Learners in explicit group received meta-pragmatic information and immediately after explanation they participated in discussions related to the target language form, whereas learners in the implicit treatment did not receive meta-pragmatic explanations. Results of the study indicated that both groups benefited from instruction focused on developing pragmatic fluency, but the explicit group had an advantage over the implicit one. In this trend, Koike and Pearson (2005) reported the effectiveness of explicit approach over implicit approach in answering the multiple choice items related to pragmatics. Their study done on Spanish EFL learners, also, disclosed that the group that had received implicit instruction together with implicit feedback performed significantly better in the open-ended dialogues, suggesting that the question recasts used had a positive effect on their pragmatic instruction. Apart from implicit and explicit instructional paradigms, effectiveness of explicit and implicit feedback has been evaluated too. Carroll and Swain (as cited in Takimoto, 2006) and Takahashi (2001) among others have investigated effects of providing different kinds of feedback on learners' responses.

Textbooks play an important role in English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom where they provide the primary (perhaps only) form of linguistic input (Kim & Hall, 2002). There are numerous studies that have analyzed EFL textbooks based on various subjects. In a study conducted by Jahangard (2007) about Iranian high school EFL textbooks, some criteria have been taken into account. These criteria were about the textbook layout, grammar presentation, visual materials available, etc. However, pragmatic knowledge is one important issue that is ignored. Of course, in a research undertaken by Vellenga (2004), the author has examined pragmatics in four EFL (Headway-Upper intermediate, Interchange2, Passages1, Voyages2) and four ESL textbooks (Focus on Grammar- high intermediate, Grammar Link 3, Intermediate Grammar: From Form to Meaning and Use, Understanding and Using English Grammar). The results have shown that the mean percentage of pages which included pragmatics knowledge is about 20.4% in EFL textbooks, and 5.02% in ESL textbooks. Also Gilmore (2004) carried out a study supporting Vellenga's claims. Also in another study undertaken by Khaki (2006), Iranian pre-university English Book was evaluated. The researcher has borrowed a checklist for textbook evaluation from Celce-Murcia which covers the subject matter, vocabulary and structures, exercises, illustrations and physical make-up. Evaluating the subject matter, Khaki (2006, p. 32) contended, "Although most topics are interesting, it seems there is no logic behind the sequence of the reading texts; all in all the topics seem to be interesting to students". Also, the author criticized other issues such as including the unknown vocabularies in the margin, including few vocabulary exercises, poor design of the book cover, etc. However, there is no point with regard to pragmatics.

Considering the inclusion of pragmatic knowledge, one can find lots of shortcomings. For example, if we take a look at the following conversation from English Book 2, we can feel the sense of artificiality.

C: How much is the tea?

D: It's 200 tomans.

C: And what about the egg?

D: They're 160 tomans.

C: And the onions?

D: They're 40.

C: How much is that altogether?

D: That'll be 400 tomans.

In this dialogue, starting and closing is so abrupt with no suitable speech acts such as "Can I help you?", "Excuse me", "Thanks", etc. There is a neat and tidy turn-taking. There is no overlap, back channeling or hesitation. The unit of money that is used is "toman" instead of "dollar". This and lots of other sections in Iranian EFL textbooks reveal lack of pragmatic knowledge, which leads to training students who are unaware of the natural norms of the language that they spend seven years for its learning. Therefore, this study was conducted to fill this gap in applied linguistics with the aim of exploring pragmatic knowledge incorporation into Iranian EFL textbooks. To this end, the study aimed to answer the following research questions based on a data categorization framework on pragmatics outlined in the method section.

- 1) Is pragmatic knowledge included in Iranian high school English textbooks?
- 2) If yes, what kinds of pragmatic knowledge are included in Iranian high school English textbooks?
- 3) To what extent are different kinds of pragmatic knowledge incorporated into Iranian high school English textbooks?

Based on Seliger and Shohamy (1989), because this research is descriptive and since question 2 relates to the existence of pragmatic knowledge and question 3 is about the extent of pragmatic knowledge, they cannot be answered until data is collected. Therefore, only one hypothesis is formulated according to question 1, i.e. pragmatic knowledge is not included in Iranian high school English textbooks.

3. Method

Adopting a descriptive design, this study used descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, standard deviation, percentage, and chi-square to analyze and evaluate the data.

3.1 Instruments

This study aims at exploring pragmatic knowledge incorporation into Iranian EFL textbooks used in public education system. Therefore, the instruments which are in consonance with this end are Iranian EFL textbooks; however, among these textbooks, in this study, only three of them are explored based on pragmatic knowledge incorporation.

The textbooks under the study are as follows:

Birjandi et al. (2005). *English Book 2*. Tehran: Textbook Publishing Company of Iran.

Birjandi et al. (2006). *English Book 3*. Tehran: Textbook Publishing Company of Iran.

Birjandi et al. (2006). *Learning to Read English for Pre-University Students*. Tehran: Textbook Publishing Company of Iran.

3.2 Procedure

Wesche (2004) contends that in this world, what is most urgently needed from the field of language teaching is to help students, through the study of another language, to see the world through others' eyes. That is, students should be able to communicate with regard to the culture of the language they learn. However, this may be troublesome for students with low proficiency level. Hence not including pragmatic knowledge into Iranian EFL textbooks in junior high school may be because of low proficiency of EFL students which cannot be the case for EFL students in senior high school and pre-university school. Therefore, because of the proficiency level of the students in this study, the English Book 2, English Book 3 and Pre-University English textbook are investigated. Then, as the next step, the number of units and pages under investigation are specified in Table 1.

Table 1. Pages and lessons in EFL textbooks analyzed in this study

Textbook	Number of lessons	Number of pages	Mean number of pages
English Book 2	6	93	X = 86
English Book 3	7	94	
Learning to read English for pre-university students	7 out of 8	71	

Then, the scope of the study was determined in detail. Since on the one hand, pragmatics is too broad to cover all the related issues in this study, the author, in order to make the study manageable, has focused on the mentioned pragmatic knowledge in the following paragraphs. On the other hand, since other scopes such as person deixis, temporal deixis (e.g., now and then), spatial deixis (e.g., here and there) are sufficiently used in Iranian EFL textbooks because of the nature of the language, they are skipped in this study. Therefore, in this study, the issues which are thought to be prerequisite for learners' natural speaking and seem to be ignored or less emphasized are taken into consideration. Thus, the exploration of pragmatic knowledge incorporation into Iranian EFL textbooks is done according to the following processes and topics.

3.2.1 Deixis

Deixis is often and best described as “verbal pointing”, and Levinson (2002) divides deixis into five categories. Among these five categories of deixis, the author focuses on temporal deixis. In temporal deixis, as it was argued by Yule (1996), one basic matter is the choice of the verb tense which is mainly under the focus in this study, especially using past tense in second conditional sentences, wish-sentences, and reported sentences.

For example, If I **were** rich, I **could buy** a big house.

I asked her if she **were watering** the flowers when he arrived.

I wish I **would be** a president.

3.2.2 Speech Acts

Levinson (2000) has classified speech acts into five categories. However, in this study, incorporation of three of them; namely, directive speech acts, commissive speech acts and expressive speech acts has been explored. This selection has been done on the one hand based on Vellenga's (2004) study and on the other hand since Iranian EFL textbooks especially Pre-University English textbook are mostly transactional rather than being interactional, most of the sections especially the passages are based on factual information, so all of the sentences of text can be regarded as representative which can not considered in this study. Therefore representative category is ignored. Also using declarative speech acts demands some particular contexts which cannot be included in these textbooks; hence, it was not taken into the scope of this study too. As a result the following categories with their sub-categories are considered.

a) *Directives*: invite, insist, request, order, suggest, wish, ask permission, and advice

b) *Commissives*: promise, threaten, refuse invitation, refuse request, and accept invitation, accept request, make excuse, and offer

c) *Expressives*: apologize, thank, complain, and express regret

For example in a conversation taken from “Intermediate New Headway English Course”, different kinds of speech acts are shown:

A: Hello. Nina Kendle's office.

B: Hello, could I speak to Nina Kendle, please?

Directives (request)

A: I'm afraid she's out at the moment.

Expressives (apologizing)

B: So, when can I try again?

A: Any time after 5:30.

B: Ok, thank you.

Expressive (thanking)

A: Thanks, Good bye.

Expressive (thanking)

3.2.3 Politeness Principle

a) **The bold on- record strategy** does nothing to minimize threats to the hearer's face.

b) **The positive politeness strategy** shows you recognize that your hearer has a desire to be respected. It also confirms that the relationship is friendly and expresses group reciprocity.

c) **The negative politeness strategy** also recognizes the hearer's face. But it also recognizes that you are in some way imposing on them.

Also, for mitigating negative politeness we can use:

Hedging: Er, could you, er, perhaps, close the, um, window?

Pessimism: I don't suppose you could close the window, could you?

Indicating deference: Excuse me, sir, would you mind if I asked you to close the window?

Apologizing: I'm terribly sorry to put you out, but could you close the window?

Impersonalizing: The management requires all windows to be closed.

d) **The off-record indirect strategy** takes some of the pressure of you. You are trying to avoid being direct. Instead you would rather it be offered to you (Brown & Levinson, 2004).

However, since politeness strategies overlap with speech acts, these strategies were taken into consideration through speech acts. Also, based on Virginia's (1994) linguistic markers of politeness; that is, lexicon and syntactic, the politeness strategies are classified under these two categories too. For example, the sentence "I just want to ask you if I could use your computer?" is directive and syntactic negative politeness strategy since if clause and modal auxiliary 'could' has been used.

3.2.4 Linguistic Interaction and Preferred Structure

The kind of talk and linguistic interaction is likely to differ according to the context and interlocutors. In any conversation there is turn taking which is not as neat as it is shown in Iranian EFL textbooks. Also, in most conversations there are overlaps, hatches and hesitation marks. Also there are some automatic sequences in language of which the speakers should be aware. These automatic sequences are called adjacency pairs. Since Yule (1996) has described these pragmatic topics; that is, turn taking, overlaps, latches, hesitation marks and adjacency pairs under the topic '*Linguistic Interaction and preferred structure*', the author has adopted this rubric in this study too. For example, considering the conversation below from English Book 2 (p. 9)

A: Would you mind opening the window?

B: All right

A: Thanks a lot.

B: You're welcome

turn taking is done very neatly. There is no overlap and hesitation and the expressions "thanks a lot" and "You're welcome" are adjacency pairs.

3.2.5 Explicit Meta-Pragmatic Discussion

As Vellenga (2004) mentioned, the explanatory nature of meta-language can provide students with rich extra-linguistic information such as interlocutors' status, cultural information, usage notes and other relevant contextual information. For example, the discussions like "*Using please makes the utterance polite.*" can give the students useful pragmatic knowledge. Of course, this kind of discussion is considered both with regard to speech acts and politeness strategies. Therefore, under the rubric "explicit meta-pragmatic discussion" this kind of information is scrutinized in EFL textbooks. Table 2 provides an overall description of all investigated pragmatic features.

Table 2. Data analysis framework on pragmatic features

Pragmatic scope	Subcategories
<i>Speech acts</i>	a) <i>directives</i> : invite, insist, request, order, suggest, wish, ask permission, advise b) <i>commissives</i> : promise, threaten, refuse invitation, refuse request, accept invitation, accept request, make excuse, offer c) <i>expressives</i> : apologize, thank, complain, express regret
<i>Explicit meta-language discussion about speech acts</i>	
<i>Politeness strategies</i>	a) The bold on- record strategy b) The positive politeness strategy c) The negative politeness strategy d) The off-record indirect strategy
<i>Politeness linguistic markers</i>	a) syntactic b) lexical
<i>Explicit meta-language discussion about Politeness strategies</i>	
<i>Deixis</i>	Tenses (wish-sentences, indirect speech, second conditional sentences)
<i>Linguistic interaction and preferred structure</i>	a) Adjacency pairs b) Hesitation markers

4. Results

4.1 Speech Acts Incorporation into EFL Textbooks

Scanning through the pragmatic books and articles, it can be observed that the major part of the pragmatic scope was allocated to speech acts since they encompass most of the language functions. However, the findings of this study revealed that just a few sentences or phrases are written for the sake of representing speech acts, and these sentences which can be counted on the fingers of one hand are mostly included in the ‘Language Functions’ section of the English Book 2 and English Book 3. For example, in lessons 1 and 2 of English Book 2 (p. 9 & 26), the topic of the ‘Language Functions’ is *Requesting Politely*, for which there is a conversation and some exercises. Also in lesson 3 of the same book (p. 40) the topic of the conversation is about *Asking for Price*, in which prices are given in ‘toman’ that is totally different from English context. Like English Book 2, such sections; that is, ‘Language Functions’ section is included in English Book 3 too. Speech acts such as requests and thanking can be seen in these sections.

For example:

A: Excuse me, how do I get to the station, please?

Directive (request)

B: The bus station?

A: Yes, that’s right.

B: Go straight on. It’s three blocks down this street, on your left.

A: Thanks a lot.

Expressive (thank) (English Book 3, p. 92)

However, when we go forward through the level of the books and take a look at Pre-University English Book, it can be seen that there is no such section in this book.

As it was mentioned, the reason for choosing these books rather than Iranian English Books of junior high school was that in these grades, the students are not proficient enough to be taught about pragmatic knowledge. Therefore lack of pragmatic knowledge incorporation in these books is not a shortcoming. Bearing this in mind,

a general comparison of speech acts in three EFL text books, English Book2, English Book 3 and Pre-University English Book indicated that as the proficiency level goes up, the extent of speech acts as instances of pragmatic knowledge inclusion goes down (see Figure 1).

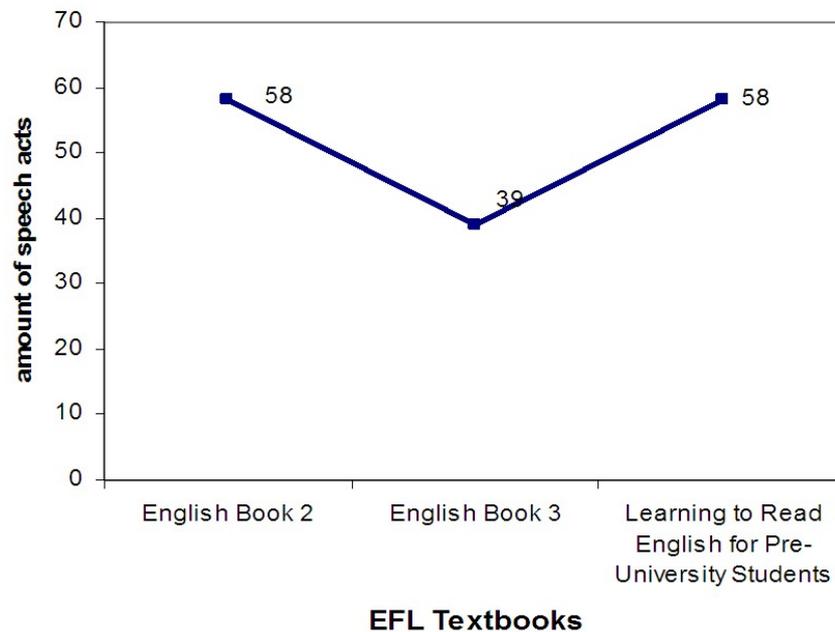


Figure 1. Amount of speech acts in EFL textbooks

However, a look at Figure 1 proves an opposite claim since the number of speech acts in pre-university English Book is more than the others. However, if we scan through the book, it can be seen that there are 52 suggestions out of which seven are in lesson three, and 15 are in lesson 4, just one after another with only transactional purpose rather than interactional purposes. Hence, if we subtract this number from 58, we will have Figure 2 that proves the claim.

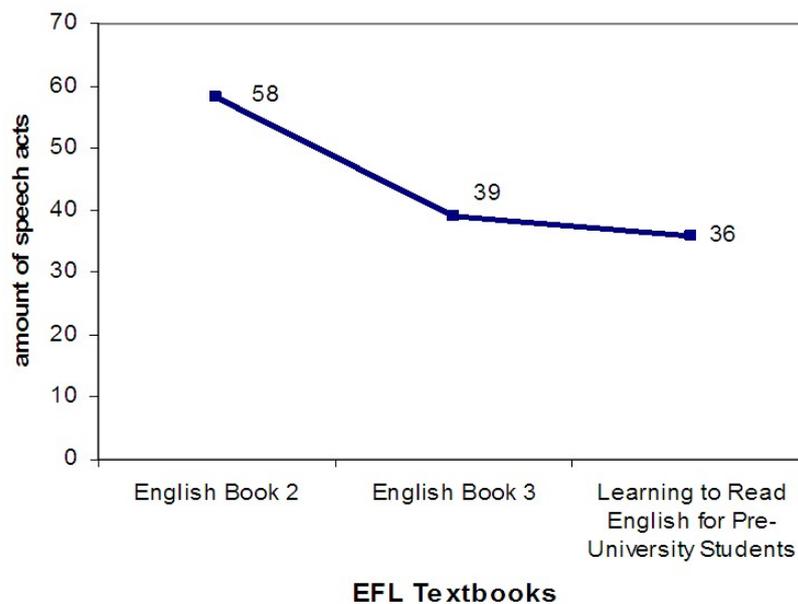


Figure 2. Amount of speech acts in EFL textbooks

Furthermore, chi-square analysis of the findings at 2 degree of freedom and significance of $1.00 > 0.05$ shows that the variation in the distribution of speech acts is not statistically significant.

4.2 Politeness Strategies with Regard to Speech Acts

As it was discussed, since the sentences or the phrases in the passages or exercises, which are considered in pragmatic scope, do not directly relate to pragmatic knowledge, expecting explicit meta-pragmatic discussion about them is senseless. However, when a section is dedicated for example to 'Requesting Politely', giving brief information about modal auxiliary verbs, the politeness of them, or how to accept or refuse a request seems useful.

4.3 Linguistic Interaction and Preferred Structure

Analyzing English Book 2, and in order to answer questions 2 and 3 in this section, it was found that there are fourteen imperative sentences in which bold-on record strategy has been used, while Positive Politeness Strategy (PPS) is the most frequent used strategy in comparison with other ones, for which the number 22 is evidence. Also, in 18 out of 22 sentences, syntax has given helping hand and for the rest lexicon to make PPS. Modal auxiliary verbs such as "may, would, can and will", first conditional sentences and negations are the structures by which PPS has been produced. As an illustration, the following sentences can be presented:

- May I borrow some of them? (Syntactic PPS using modal verb *may*) (English Book 2, p. 2)
- If you keep on trying, you'll soon learn how to do it. (Syntactic PPS using *conditional*) (English Book 2, p. 56)

On the other hand, the words such as *please, let's, sorry*, etc have been applied in this strategy. For example:

- Sorry, I can't. (Lexical PPS, using the word *sorry*) (English Book 2, p. 2)
- Let's buy some tea. (Lexical PPS, using the word *let's*) (English Book 2, p. 3)

One Strategy that is not included in any of Iranian EFL textbooks is off-record indirect strategy which can be used and understood in the context. However, in reading passages or in the conversations there is no such strategy used.

Accordingly, in English Book 3, there are 20 sentences in which bold-on record strategy is used. For example:

- Don't play football in the yard. (English Book 3, p. 60)
- Tell him to give back the books. (English Book 3, p. 43)
- Leave the room immediately. (English Book 3, p. 78)

And 14 PPS of which seven are syntactic and seven are lexical are used.

For example:

Syntactic:

- Could you switch the TV over? (English Book 3, p. 81)
- Why don't you sit down and relax? (English Book 3, p. 5)
- You should stay home and rest. (English Book 3, p. 5)

Lexical:

- Please, turn the TV off. (English Book 3, p. 43)
- Please make any endeavor to arrive on time. (English Book 3, p. 80)
- Let's measure the length of the table. (English Book 3, p. 65)

While these are some instances from positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy was not found in English Book 3.

Further analysis of EFL textbooks revealed that Pre-University English textbook includes 54 bold-on record strategies; three positive politeness strategies, one negative politeness strategy and no off-record indirect strategy. Of course if we exclude those 17 sentences from bold-on record strategy, there will be 37. Of the three PPS, two are lexical and one is syntactic:

- Let's think of something that... (p. 64)
- Please look up the definitions of the words in your dictionary. (p. 69)
- Can you give me further details of how the accident happened? (p. 59)

Also the negative politeness strategy which is used in this book is syntactic:

- Are you willing to help me wash the car tomorrow morning? (p. 49)

The observed chi-square value was not significant at .05 level of significance.

4.4 Tenses through Temporal Deixis

In English Book 2, lesson 7, the grammar is about second conditionals, and in section 'To the Teacher' there is a brief point about imaginary situation of second conditionals. However, it is just written to the teachers not to the students. Therefore, in current situation it is the EFL teachers' responsibility to elaborate on it to the students. Also there is just one wish-sentence in English Book 3 (p. 52) which is included in vocabulary drill section:

- I wish I had someone who could guide me through this forest.

Therefore, since there is no structure related to wish-sentences as well as indirect reported sentences, there is no discussion in these books about these structures.

4.5 Linguistic Interaction and Preferred Structure

While speaking naturally, everybody thinks, hesitates, remains undecided, etc. However, it seems that the speakers in Iranian EFL textbooks even in dialogues are so neat with no repetition, back channeling, and hesitation. Through analyzing page by page of the three books, there was not a single case on the use of hesitation markers. The following examples can illustrate this matter:

A: What do English people do in their free time?

B: It depends. They do many different things.

A: Well, what do you do?

B: Oh, this is easy to answer. I read, I watch television and I play football. (English Book 3, p. 51)

A: What is the weather like in Tehran?

London

Ardebil?

Bandar Abbas?

B: It's pretty bad most of the time.

cold

wet

It's all right.

It's quite nice. It's warmer, but not too hot.

It's very hot and humid. (English Book 2, p. 81)

Taking a look at these conversations reveals the claim. They do not sound like an authentic conversation. They are just some artificial dialogues which do not come to the students' rescue in a rainy day. Besides scrutinizing EFL textbooks for the sake of exploring adjacency pairs demonstrates that there are six cases of adjacency pairs in English Book 2 out of which five are for accepting requests in different ways and one is 'you're welcome' as a response to 'thank you'. For example:

A: Would you mind opening the window?

B: Not at all.

Of course not.

All right.

A: Thanks so much.

a lot

B: You're welcome. (English Book 2, p. 9)

Also, as it was mentioned before, in lesson 7 of English Book 2, a text with the topic 'How are you?' is included in which the way for greeting is discussed. Although the numbers of adjacency pairs in English Book 2 are not considerable, it is good in comparison with English book 3 and Pre-University English Book since English Book 3 contains just one adjacency pairs and Pre-University English Book has no one. The chi-square analysis demonstrated that the distribution of these categories is not statistically significant at 2 degrees of freedom and .05 level of significance.

5. Discussion

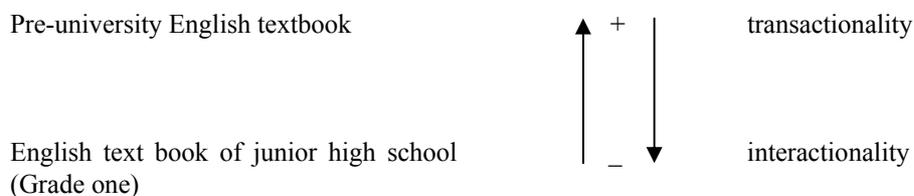
Considering different scopes in this study, it can be argued that according to numerical calculations, the proportion of speech acts is somehow more than other scopes. However, for a clear reason, as it was mentioned before, those numbers cannot be reliable. Also politeness strategies used in these books are not in a way that raise students' awareness. According to Schmidt (as cited in Soler, 2005) learning requires awareness at the level of noticing and what learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning. Hence, since incorporation of speech acts as well as politeness strategies in these books are done with no special strategy for input enhancement, learning will not be in line with Schmidt's noticing hypothesis. As a result, learning pragmatic knowledge will fail. Other scopes in this study; that is, hesitation marks and adjacency pairs are also not sufficiently used in these books which can add to artificiality of the conversations.

Thus, as a complete answer to the three questions it can be said that answer for the first question that is about whether pragmatic knowledge included in Iranian EFL textbooks is "Yes". Subsequently hypothesis 1 which is "Pragmatic knowledge is not included in Iranian EFL textbooks." can be rejected, and its opposite is proven.

Second question is based on the *kinds* of pragmatic knowledge incorporated into Iranian EFL textbooks. According to the scope of the study and analysis of the data the most frequent pragmatic knowledge incorporated in these books is speech acts in which directive speech acts are more than the others. Also, some politeness strategies are used in stating different kinds of speech acts. Analysis based on exploring meta-pragmatic discussion also reveals that there is just one text in English Book 2 in which this kind of discussion is included. Besides, hesitation markers are the one shortcoming of these books, and there are just few adjacency pairs in English Book 2 and 3. The third and last question was concerned with the *frequency* of different kinds of pragmatic knowledge incorporated into Iranian EFL textbooks.

In some studies like the one conducted by Jahangard (2007), the data can be evaluated for certain since the criteria for examination such as grammar presentations, fluency practice for four skills, vocabulary,...have particular sections in Iranian EFL text books. Or in another study undertaken by Vellenga (2004), the books chosen for analysis are developed in a way that include special contexts in which pragmatic knowledge is clearly incorporated. However, in this study, one can claim that the sentences or phrase that the author has taken as pragmatic knowledge are in fact for the sake of teaching syntactic knowledge, and it seems that inclusion of pragmatic knowledge was not in the mind of Iranian EFL text books developers while writing these books. Therefore, by raising the questions "Is that pragmatic or syntactic knowledge?", and "Are those scopes included in these books purposefully or just unintentionally and randomly?", the findings of this study can be called into question.

One brief look at EFL textbooks written by native speakers for adults and even for children reveals that they quite frequently include pragmatic knowledge. The authors' experience in teaching EFL books such as Bravo, Tiny Talk, Chatterbox, Interchange, and Headway series, proved that not only do students even in lower ages learn a lot about pragmatic knowledge easily, but also their performance is much more enjoyable and authentic than those students that learn English from EFL textbooks at public schools. Therefore, although some researchers such as Watt (2004) believe that adults typically resist learning pragmatics since they are afraid of losing their own identity and culture, while in practice it is not the case. Students in all ages are eager to learn authentic not artificial language. However, unfortunately, one evident issue that can be grasped by looking at Iranian EFL textbooks from junior to senior high school is that as we proceed towards Pre-University EFL text book, interactionality of the textbooks comes down and instead their transactionality gets more emphasis, and accordingly pragmatic aspects of the language are deemphasized too.



Of course, the name of Pre-University English textbook is a good illustration for this. It is "Learning to **Read** English for Pre-University Students" not "Learning to **communicate**". Therefore, it seems that EFL students have problem in even simple performance, let alone authentic English performance!

6. Conclusion

In order to remove the artificiality of Iranian EFL textbooks, textbook developers should blow pragmatic soul to

the syntactic skeleton of the books. Definitely a native academic English textbook developer can give a helping hand to Iranian EFL textbook developers. After years and years of learning and teaching English, we may not acquire pragmatic features of the target language deeply. We are more likely to be biased towards Iranian culture for which our English textbooks in public school have a strong touch of Iranian culture. This study highlighted the fact that the analyzed books more often look like Persian books literally translated into English. Through integrating authentic English with some content from Iranian culture and lifestyle, these books can be authenticated a lot. For instance, the word ‘church’ can also be included along with the word ‘mosque’. There will not be the name of just one English city near several Iranian city names. Streets, shops, books, parks, etc will not be named just by Iranian names. The unit of money will not be introduced with ‘toman’ in an English book. The conversations will be devoid of artificiality. English pragmatic knowledge can be incorporated into these conversations. Of course, this incorporation will not be in a fixed pattern like the ones in present Iranian EFL textbooks. In other words, conversations will make language learners capable of producing alternative ideas. The results of this study can contribute to the Iranian textbook developers to first get the idea that there have been substantial differences between the content of Iranian EFL textbooks and their authentic equivalents. This can be understood when we bear in mind that the material writers have tended to use different sections in the books to reinforce particular grammatical points or to present vocabularies. Second, by noticing this gap in EFL textbooks, material developers can make an attempt to fill this gap by incorporating pragmatic knowledge. Also despite all the limitations that Iranian EFL teachers have in teaching English, based on the results of this study, teachers can make corresponding changes in approaches to foreign language teaching, since the limitations imposed by the textbook and the classroom on pragmatically appropriate input hinder learners from becoming truly proficient in communicating in the target language.

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