DIALOGUE

Mr. Brown: Hello.

Yuka: Hi, you are Mr. Brown, aren't you?

Mr. Brown: That's right

Yuka: I'm a tenant next door. My car battery has just gone dead and I can't start my car. I really need to get to school. 1. (a) I was just wondering if I could by any chance get a lift; (b) I am just wondering if I could by any chance get a lift.

Mr. Brown: Well, actually, I am really busy helping other tenants moving into this apartment. So, I can't really help you

Yuka: I understand, but it's important that I get to school today because I have exams.

Mr. Brown: Tell you what. I've got my mobile phone. Why don't you call a taxi company?

Yuka: I haven't got that much money. Well, as a matter of fact, I haven't got any money to take a taxi and have lunch. So, 2. (a) would there be any chance I could borrow some money?; (b) will there be any chance I can borrow some money?

Mr. Brown: Well, I could lend you some.

Yuka: Really? That would be great.

Mr. Brown: No problem. There you go.

Yuka: Thank you so much, Mr. Brown. Just one more thing, I plan to come back by bus and I do not know how. 3. (a) Can you possibly explain how I do that?; (b) Could you possibly explain how I could do that?

Mr. Brown: Sure, I can.

(2)

Read the following situation and the dialogue and do the activity that follows the dialogue.

(2)

موقعیت و مکالمهٔ داده شـــده را بخوانید. سپس فعالیت‌های مربوطه را انجام دهید.

SITUATION

John is living in an apartment. He is extremely busy working on his assignment, but he needs to send a big parcel to England today. His landlady, Mrs. Taylor, whom he has never spoken to before, is extremely busy, but he decides to ask his landlady to send the big parcel. John sees the landlady.

موقعیت:

جان در یک آپارتمان زندگی می‌کند. او به‌شدت سرگرم انجام تکالیفش هســـت اما امروز باید یک بســـتهٔ بزرگ را به انگلستان بفرســـتد. صاحبخانه‌اش، خانم تایلر، شـــخصی که قبلاً هرگز با او صحبت نکرده، بسیار گرفتار و پرمشغله است. با وجود این، جان تصمیم می‌گیرد از او تقاضا کند که بســـتهٔ بزرگ را برایش پست نماید. جان صاحبخانه‌اش را می‌بیند.

DIALOGUE

John: Hi, you are Mrs. Taylor, aren't you?

Mrs. Taylor: That's right.

John: Hello. My name is John.

Mrs. Taylor: Oh, you are the tenant.

John: Yes. I live next door.

Mrs. Taylor: How is it going?

John: Pretty good, thank you. I'm very busy working on my assignment.1. I wondered if I could possibly ask you a favor.

Mrs. Taylor: What's the favor?

John: I need to send this big parcel to England today and 2. I was wondering if it would be possible for you to take it into town.

Mrs. Taylor: It's quite big, isn't it?

John: Yes, It's quite large. Usually I would do it myself, but since I need to turn in the assignment today, I **won't be** able to do so.

Mrs. Taylor: I understand. So, where is it going?

John: 3. Would it be possible for you to send this to England? And 4. I would appreciate it if you could perhaps send this by express today.

Mrs. Taylor: OK. I think I can do that.

Indicate the appropriateness level of the four underlined requests from your point of view using the scale below.

ســـطح مناسب بودن ۴ فرم تقاضایی را که زیر آن‌ها خط کشیده شده است، با استفاده از مقیاس زیر مشخص کنید.

very unsatisfactory = کاملاً نامناسب

completely appropriate= کاملاً مناسب

John: Yes. I live next door.

Mrs. Taylor: How is it going?

John: Pretty good, thank you. I'm very busy working on my assignment.1. I wonder if I could possibly ask you a favor.

Mrs. Taylor: What's the favor?

John: I need to send this big parcel to England today and 2. I think you are going into town today.

Mrs. Taylor: It's quite big, isn't it?

John: Yes, It's quite large. Usually I would do it myself, but since I need to turn in the assignment today, I won't be able to do so.

Mrs. Taylor: I understand. So, where is it going?

John: 3. Could you possibly send this to England? And 4. I would appreciate it if you could perhaps send this by express today.

Mrs. Taylor: OK. I think I can do that.

Indicate the appropriateness level of the four underlined requests from your point of view using the scale below.

ســطح مناســب بودن ۴ فرم تقاضایی را کــه زیر آن‌ها خط کشیده شده است، با استفاده از مقیاس زیر مشخص کنید.

very unsatisfactory = کاملاً نامناسب

completely appropriate = کاملاً مناسب

1. very unsatisfactory 1—2—3—4—5 completely appropriate

2. very unsatisfactory 1—2—3—4—5 completely appropriate

3. very unsatisfactory 1—2—3—4—5 completely appropriate

4. very unsatisfactory 1—2—3—4—5 completely appropriate

Chapter 2
Syntactic downgraders

They serve as optional conditions to soften the impositive force of the request by modifying the head act internally through specific syntactic choices. There are several types of syntactic downgraders that we are going to concentrate just on these two types: aspect and tense.

Aspect

I'm wondering if I could get a lift home with you. (I wonder if I could get a lift home with you)

Tense

I wanted to ask you to present your paper a week earlier.

I was wondering whether you could give your presentation in a week's time.

فصل دوم: تنزل‌دهنده‌های نحوی

ایــن تنزل‌دهنده‌ها، به‌عنوان شــرایط انتخابی، عمل کاهش شدت تحمیلی تقاضا را توســط تغییر درونی هستۀ کنش تقاضا از طریق انتخاب کلمات خاص انجام می‌دهند. چندین نوع از این تنزل‌دهنده وجود دارد که ما فقط در مورد دو نوع از آن‌ها، یعنی tense (زمان) و aspect (وجه- حالت) سخن خواهیم گفت.

Activities
(1)

Read the following situation and the dialogue and choose the more appropriate request form out of two offered for each underlined part and indicate your choice by circling (a) or (b).

فعالیت‌ها: (۱)

موقعیت و مکالمۀ داده شــده را به‌دقت بخوانید. سپس از دو تقاضای پیشنهاد شــده بــرای هر قسمتی که زیر آن خط کشیده شــده است، مناسب‌ترین فرم را انتخاب کنید و جواب خود را با خط کشیدن دور گزینۀ مورد نظر مشخص نمایید.

SITUATION

Yuka is about to start her car when she notices that her car battery has gone dead. She needs to go to school now and she does not have any other means but to ask her landlord, Mr. Brown, whom she has never spoken to before, to give her a ride to school. Her landlord is extremely busy, but she decides to ask her landlord to drive her to school.

موقعیت:

یوکا قصد روشن کردن ماشینش را دارد که متوجه می‌شود باتری ماشینش تمام شده است. او مجبور است همین الان به مدرسه برود. او هیچ چاره‌ای ندارد جز اینکه از صاحبخانه‌اش، آقای براون، کسی که قبلاً هرگز با او صحبت نکرده است بخواهد که او را به مدرسه برساند. صاحبخانه‌اش بسیار گرفتار و پرمشغله است؛ با وجود این یوکا تصمیم می‌گیرد از وی تقاضا نماید که او را با ماشینش به مدرسه برساند.

possibly/ perhaps/ by any chance

Activities

(1)

Read the following situation and the dialogue and choose the more appropriate request form out of two offered for each underlined part and indicate your choice by circling (a) or (b).

SITUATION

Yuka is about to start her car when she notices that her car battery has gone dead. She needs to go to school now and she does not have any other means but to ask her landlord, Mr. Brown, whom she has never spoken to before, to give her a ride to school. Her landlord is extremely busy, but she decides to ask her landlord to drive her to school.

موقعیت:

یوکا قصد روشــن کردن ماشینش را دارد که متوجه می‌شود باتری ماشــینش تمام شده اســت. او مجبور است که همین الان به مدرســه برود. او هیچ چاره‌ای ندارد جز اینکه از صاحب‌خانه‌اش، آقای براون، کســی که قبلاً هرگز با او صحبت نکرده است، تقاضا کند تا او را به مدرســه برســاند. صاحب‌خانه‌اش بســیار گرفتار و پرمشغله است. با وجود این، یوکا تصمیم می‌گیرد از او تقاضا کند تا او را با ماشینش به مدرسه برساند.

DIALOGUE

Mr. Brown: Hello.

Yuka: Hi, you are Mr. Brown, aren't you?

Mr. Brown: That's right

Yuka: I'm a tenant next door. My car battery has just gone dead and I can't start my car. I really need to get to school. 1. (a) I wonder if I could get a lift; (b) Could I get a lift.

Mr. Brown: Well, actually, I am really busy helping other tenants moving into this apartment. So, I can't really help you

Yuka: I understand, but it's important that I get to school today because I have exams.

Mr. Brown: Tell you what. I've got my mobile phone. Why don't you call a taxi company?

Yuka: I haven't got that much money. Well, as a matter of fact, I haven't got any money to take a taxi and have lunch. So, 2. (a) Could you perhaps lend me some money?; (b) Could you lend me some money?

Mr. Brown: Well, I could lend you some.

Yuka: Really? That would be great.

Mr. Brown: No problem. There you go.

Yuka: Thank you so much, Mr. Brown. Just one more thing, I plan to come back by bus and I do not know how. 3. (a) Can you possibly explain how I do that?; (b) Can you explain how I do that?

Mr. Brown: Sure, I can.

(2)

Read the following situation and the dialogue and do the activity that follows the dialogue.

(2)

موقعیت و مکالمهٔ داده شــده را بخوانید و سپس فعالیت‌های مربوطه را انجام دهید.

SITUATION

John is living in an apartment. He is extremely busy working on his assignment, but he needs to send a big parcel to England today. His landlady, Mrs. Taylor, whom he has never spoken to before, is extremely busy, but he decides to ask his landlady to send the big parcel. John sees the landlady.

موقعیت:

جــان در یک آپارتمان زندگی می‌کند. او به‌شــدت ســرگرم انجام تکالیفش است اما امروز باید یک بستهٔ بزرگ را به انگلستان بفرســتد. صاحب‌خانه‌اش، خانم تایلر، شــخصی که با او قبلاً هرگز صحبت نکرده، بســیار گرفتار و پرمشغله است. با وجود این، جان تصمیم می‌گیرد از او بخواهد که این بستهٔ بزرگ را برای او پست کند. جان، صاحب‌خانه‌اش را می‌بیند.

DIALOGUE

John: Hi, you are Mrs. Taylor, aren't you?

Mrs. Taylor: That's right.

John: Hello. My name is John.

Mrs. Taylor: Oh, you are the tenant.

APPENDIX A

Instruction for Explicit instruction with Structured input tasks

(The treatment for the implicit instruction with structured input tasks was the same as that for explicit instruction with structured input tasks but without the teacher–fronted explicit instruction.)

Introduction

REQUEST

Request: An act of politely asking for something: Please give me your book.

When we request from a person having a higher rank (our teacher), or a person whom we aren't familiar with (our new neighbor), or when doing the act of request by the hearer requires great energy or services (washing the dishes), it's better to use mitigating devices. In other words, mitigating devices can be used to minimize the imposition on the recipient of the request. One of these devices is internal modification that occurs in the head act, often in the form of words or phrases. (Head act: It is the minimal unit which can realize a request; it is the core of the request sequence: Ali, get me a glass of water. I am very thirsty.)

There are two types of internal modification: downgraders and upgraders. Here, we will focus just on downgraders. There are two types of downgraders: lexical/phrasal downgraders and syntactic downgraders that will be discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 1

Lexical/phrasal downgraders

They serve as optional conditions to soften the impositive force of the request by modifying the head act internally through specific lexical and phrasal choices. There are several types of lexical/phrasal downgraders that we are going to concentrate just on these two types: subjectivizers and downtoners.

Subjectivizers: They are elements in which the speaker explicitly expresses his or her subjective opinion.

I'm afraid you're going to have to move your car.

I wonder if you would give me a lift.

I think/believe/suppose you're going my way.

Downtoners: They are elements which are used by a speaker in order to modulate the impact his or her request is likely to have on the hearer.

Could you possibly/perhaps/by any chance lend me your notes?

فصل اول: تنزل‌دهنده‌های واژگانی یا مرکب

ایــن تنزل‌دهنده‌ها به‌عنوان شـــرایط انتخابــی، عمل کاهش شدت تحمیلی تقاضا را توسـط تغییر درونی هستۀ کنش تقاضا از طریــق انتخاب کلمات خاصی انجــام می‌دهند. چندین نوع از این تنزل‌دهنده‌ها وجود دارد که ما فقط در مورد دو نوع از آن‌ها، یعنی شخصی‌سازها و ملایم‌کنندگان لحن صحبت خواهیم کرد.

downtoners and subjectivizers

شخصی‌سازها

عناصری هستند که گوینده از طریق آن‌ها به‌طور صریح نظر شخصی خود را بیان می‌کند. همانند:

I think/believe/suppose, I wonder, I'm afraid

ملایم‌کنندگان لحن

عناصری هســتند که گوینده به‌منظور تنظیم و تعدیل تأثیر تقاضایش بر روی شنونده از آن‌ها استفاده می‌کند. همانند:

مقدمه

تقاضا به کنش درخواست مؤدبانه اطلاق می‌شود؛ مثال: لطفاً کتابت را به من بده.

هنگامی‌که از شـخصی که نسـبت به ما مقـام بالاتری دارد (هماننـد معلم کلاسـمان) یــا او را نمی‌شناسـیم (به‌طور مثال همسـایه جدیدمان) تقاضایی می‌کنیم یا هنگامی‌که عمل کردن به تقاضا توسـط شنونده به صرف انرژی و وقت یا خدمات زیادی نیاز دارد، بهتر است از ابزار تخفیف دهنده استفاده کنیم. به‌عبارت دیگــر، از ابزار تخفیف دهنده می‌توان برای کاهش میزان تحمیل بر روی فرد دریافت کنندۀ تقاضا استفاده کرد. یکی از این ابزارها، تغییر درونی اسـت که در هسـتۀ کنش تقاضـا رخ می‌دهد که اغلب به‌شکل کلمات یا عبارت‌هاست (هستۀ کنش: کوچک‌ترین واحدی که بیانگر یک تقاضا و همچنین قسمت اصلی تقاضاست. مثال: علی، یک لیوان آب به من بده. خیلی تشنه‌ام.)

indicate that structured input tasks function effectively when they provide learners with an emphasis on the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic features of the target structure. In this sense, it can be stated that the current study contributed to previous research on the positive effect of instruction on second and foreign language learning (Doughty, 2003) and, more specifically, it has shown the benefits of instruction on the development of learners' pragmatic competence in requests. The findings would be of great help for language curriculum developers, material writers, text book designers and higher education centers.

In light of these findings, some pedagogical implications may be proposed. First, the role of instruction on the development of pragmatic competence is a beneficial aspect to be implemented in the foreign language (FL) classroom. This issue is especially relevant to a FL context like Iran where the lack of naturally occurring input on pragmatic issues and the limited class time available for teaching the target language make the task of pragmatic language learning especially difficult. The findings may be generalizable to other EFL contexts with similar situations. A second pedagogical implication is related to the use of appropriate tasks. Because it has been argued that learning is effective when the tasks employed in the class provide learners with the opportunity for processing both the form and meaning of the target features. Thus, teachers, material writers, and researchers should attempt to design tasks that can help learners process both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic resources in depth.

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Figure2: Interaction plot for the multiple-choice test
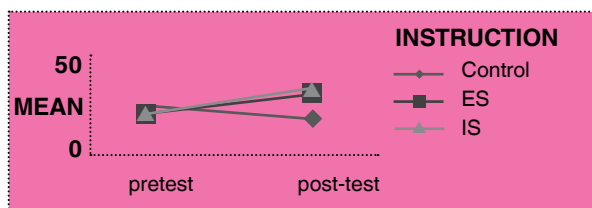
Note: ES= Explicit instruction with structured input tasks; IS= Implicit instruction with structured input tasks

DISCUSSION

The results of this study demonstrated that the two treatment groups outperformed the control group. It was further shown that the two types of instruction, explicit and implicit instruction with structured input tasks, were equally effective in promoting learners' pragmatic competence. However, these findings appear to contradict the results obtained in previous research. But it can be stated that the short

Acquisition of pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic rules is particularly difficult for those studying in an English as a foreign language (EFL) context. As a result of the difficulties involved in developing pragmatic competence in the foreign context, the role of instruction has received special attention in research on pragmatic development (Rose & (Kasper, 2001

length of the treatment led to this contradic-

tion. Four 30-minute treatments over a two-week period might have been insufficient to reveal the effectiveness of these two treatment conditions. However, regarding the effectiveness of these two approaches other possibilities need to be explored. For instance, it can be pointed out that the application of these two approaches by making input pragmatically salient through the input-based activities appeared to help learners notice the target forms that were the object of instruction.

Moreover, learners in the explicit instruction with structured input tasks received teacher's explicit information but in the implicit condition they did not receive such information. Consequently, it can be stated that the implicit instruction with structured input tasks involved greater depth of processing, resulting in knowledge that was firmly embedded. Given that there was no significant difference between the two groups, it seems that explicit information may not be necessary in the structured input tasks.

As for the input-based tasks employed in this study, i.e. structured input tasks, the results indicated that these tasks were effective in promoting learners' pragmatic proficiency. Thus, the findings of the present investigation seem to confirm the previous research that has focused on manipulating input by employing structured input tasks (Takimoto, 2006, 2008, 2009).

Conclusion and Implications

The primary purposes of this study were to identify the relative effects of input-based approaches and the presence or lack of explicit instruction on teaching syntactic and lexical/phrasal downgraders. The findings

Multiple-choice test

The multiple-choice test (MCT) consisted of short descriptions of eight situations written in English and required the participants to read the situations and select one of the 3 proposed answers. The participants had a Persian translation they could consult if they wished. There was no time limit for completing the multiple-choice test. Most participants, however, spent 20-30 minutes completing it. One nonnative speaker who had lived for about 20 years in England rated this test. Each correct answer received 5 points. Given that there were 8 items on the test, the maximum score was 40.

Reliability

Interrater reliability was estimated by calculating the correlation of the two rates' scores. Correlation coefficients for the DCT on the pre-test and post-test were .95 and .96 respectively, which were statistically significant ($p < .05$). With regard to internal consistency, the KR-21 reliability estimates for the tests ranged from .91 for the DCT and .91 for the MCT.

Validity

To promote content validity, the present study matched test items to the theoretical framework that outlined the degree of the three social context variables: ranking of imposition, power, and, distance.

Results from the DCT and MCT

The results of a one-way ANOVA revealed no statistically significant differences among the three groups for both DCT, $F (2, 21) = .0007$ and MCT, $F (2, 21) = 1.39$ ($p < .05$).

To determine whether there were any statistically significant differences in test score means, one-way ANOVA was performed on the post-test scores. The results of a one-way ANOVA of the raw scores in the DCT and MCT revealed statistically significant differences among the three groups for the post test scores, $F (2, 21) = 18.06$ for the DCT and $F (2, 21) = 13.82$ for MCT ($p < .05$).

In order to see where the differences lie, post hoc Scheffé tests were conducted. The results of Scheffé tests from both DCT and MCT revealed the following contrasts: The two treatment groups (ES and IS) performed significantly better than the control group; and there was no significant difference between the ES (explicit instruction group) and IS (implicit instruction group).

Moreover, in order to compare the performance of each group on the pre-test and post-test separately, matched t-tests were conducted. Results of the matched t-tests from both the DCT and MCT revealed that the employed instructional approaches promoted learners' pragmatic proficiency in the area of syntactic and lexical/phrasal downgraders in English request forms.

Figures1 and 2 illustrate two important characteristics of the discourse completion test and multiple-choice test results: (1) there were no statistically significant differences among the three groups on the pre-test scores; (2) the two treatment groups made gains from the pre-test to the post-test.

Figure1: Interaction plot for the discourse completion test
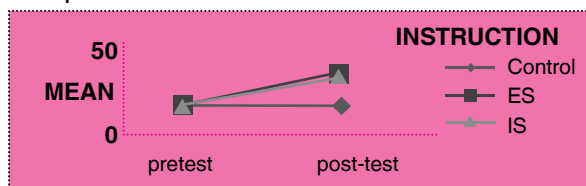
Note: ES= Explicit instruction with structured input tasks; IS= Implicit instruction with structured input tasks

get downgraders, and (b) structured input tasks comprising pragmalinguistic–sociopragmatic connection activities and reinforcement activities of the target downgraders.

Learners received handouts with a brief summary of the target downgraders and examples of the target structures in English. In the first part, teacher–fronted explicit instruction, the teacher read the summary and examples aloud in English and explained the summary and the examples in Persian. In the second part, learners engaged in performing structured input tasks consisting of pragmalinguistic-sociopragmatic connection activities and reinforcement activities. In the pragmalinguistic–sociopragmatic connection activities, learners read dialogues for given situations and chose the more appropriate request form among the two offered based on their pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge. In the reinforcement activities, learners read each dialogue aloud and rated the level of appropriateness of each underlined request on a 5–point rating scale.

Implicit instruction with structured input tasks

The treatment for the implicit instruction with structured input tasks was the same as that for explicit instruction with structured input tasks but without the teacher–fronted explicit instruction.

Control Group

In this group, learners received no particular instruction and they were not exposed to the target structures at all. Rather, they were engaged in reading comprehension exercises.

Testing instruments and procedures

This study employed a pre-test and post-test design. The pre-test was administered four days prior to the instructional treatment and the post-test one week after the treatment. Each test consisted of one input-based test, a multiple-choice test (MC) and one output-based test, a discourse completion test (DCT). Situations in the two testing instruments comprised the speech act of request.

During the pre-test and post-test, test components were administered in the following order: discourse completion test, multiple-choice test. The input-based test was administered after the output-based test to address the concern that it might provide participants with models for the production test. None of these tests were timed.

Discourse completion test

The discourse completion test (DCT) required the participants to read short descriptions of eight situations in English and to write what they would say in each situation in English. The participants had a Persian translation they could consult if they wished. There was no time limit for completing the DCT. Most participants, however, spent 40-60 minutes completing it. Two nonnative speakers of English who were trained for about half an hour rated the appropriateness of the request forms using a 5-point scale (One of them had lived in America for about 15 years and the other rater had lived in England for about 20 years.). An answer that reflected mastery of the targeted downgraders in the participants' requests received 5 points. Given that there were 8 items on the test, the maximum score was 40.

Findings from the three groups' performance revealed that there were no significant differences in the pragmatic ability of learners from both the implicit and explicit treatment groups.

However, interventional studies in teaching pragmatics have demonstrated that pragmatic features can be effectively learned when taught explicitly or implicitly with some sort of input-based activities. Some studies (Takimoto, 2006, 2008, 2009) have explored the adaptability of these input-based approaches to the teaching of second language (L2) pragmatics. In the study conducted by Takimoto (2009), for instance, the effect of three types of input–based approaches for teaching English polite request form was examined. The subjects were assigned to four groups: structured–input tasks with explicit instruction, problem–solving tasks, structured–input tasks without explicit instruction, and control group. The results indicated that the three treatment groups outperformed the control group.

The present study

The present study was an attempt to examine the following research question:

What are the effects of (a) explicit instruction with structured input tasks, and (b) implicit instruction with structured input tasks on the development of pragmatic proficiency among Iranian EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY
Participants

Twenty four Persian learners of English with the mean age of 19 were selected to participate in this study. The institution placement test indicated that all participants were intermediate learners of English. They were assigned to one of the three groups consisting of the two treatment groups, explicit instruction with structured

As said by Jeon and kya (2006, cited in Takimoto, 2009), instruction is as a continuum between the absolutely explicit and the absolutely implicit extremes. What identifies an instruction as explicit or implicit is the extent to which the target of the instruction is made overt to the learners.

input tasks (ES), and implicit instruction with structured input tasks (IS), and the control group (n=8 for all three groups). This study focused on teaching two syntactic downgraders, aspect and tense, and two lexical/phrasal downgraders, downtoners and subjectivizers, in English request forms. The three groups of participants, the ES, IS, and control groups, took part in three types of English language classes. Each teaching session for the two treatment groups and the control group lasted 30 minutes. The sessions occurred bi-weekly for two weeks. The first treatment session highlighted lexical/phrasal downgraders in English requests, and the second treatment session focused on syntactic downgraders. The third and fourth treatment sessions were reviews of the first and second treatments.

Treatment Groups
Explicit instruction with structured input tasks

This treatment consisted of two parts: (a) teacher–fronted explanation of the tar-

implicit instruction, are two ways of drawing learners' attention to target features while they are doing tasks (Takimoto, 2006). As said by Jeon and kya (2006, cited in Takimoto, 2009), instruction is as a continuum between the absolutely explicit and the absolutely implicit extremes. What identifies an instance of instruction as explicit or implicit is the extent to which the target of the instruction is made overt to the learners.

Interventional studies of L2 pragmatics

The necessity of instructional intervention for interlanguage has led to an increase in the number of the conducted studies on instructed ILP in the last decade. The results of these studies indicate that a foreign language learner's development of various aspects of pragmatic competence may be facilitated by the instruction of pragmatic routines and strategies in the foreign language classroom (Kasper, 2001). However, House (1996) argues that when such instruction is explicit, it appears to be more beneficial.

House and Kasper's (1981) study is among the first studies that revealed the superior effect of explicit instruction over implicit instruction. This study was focused on the use of discourse markers and gambits by German university students of EFL. The results of the study revealed that the explicit group outperformed the implicit group.

Alco´n's (2005) study provided further support to the claim of the superior effect of explicit over implicit instruction. The results of the Alcon's study indicated that learners' awareness of requests benefit from both explicit and implicit instruction. However, the explicit group showed an advantage over the implicit group.

In spite of the above mentioned studies, showing the superiority of explicit instruction, the results are not conclusive since there are other studies which do not lend support to this conclusion (Fukuya & Clark, 2001; Martinez-Flor, 2004).

In the study conducted by Martinez–Flor (2004), for instance, a combination of implicit techniques, were employed to analyze the effect of explicit and implicit teaching on the speech act of suggestions.

Introduction

Previous research in interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) has demonstrated that speech acts such as requests, refusals, and apologies reveal cross-cultural variation (Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990, cited in Takimoto, 2006). Furthermore, Bardovi-Harlig (2001) has provided evidence on this issue that native speakers and non-native speakers of a given target language seem to have different pragmatic comprehension and production and that such differences may cause serious communication problems. On the other hand, Rose and Kasper (2001) suggested that pragmalinguistic forms and socioporagmatic rules are not salient enough to guarantee that learners will notice them without any instruction in pragmatics. Acquisition of pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic rules is particularly difficult for those studying in an English as a foreign language (EFL) context. As a result of the difficulties involved in developing pragmatic competence in the foreign context, the role of instruction has received special attention in research on pragmatic development (Rose & Kasper, 2001).

Structured input tasks

According to Ellis (2003), structured input approaches are a type of input-based instruction that is based on the assumption that acquisition occurs as a result of input processing.

In line with this idea, Ellis (1997) proposed two ways of structuring input: input flooding and interpretation tasks. Of these two approaches, the latter is directly related to the present study. According to Ellis (1995, cited in Ellis 2003, p: 160), designing interpretation tasks consists of some general principles. These include the following:

1. An interpretation task consists of a stimulus to which learners must make some kind of response.

2. The stimulus can take the form of spoken or written input.

3. The response can take various forms, for example, indicate true–false, check a box, select the correct picture, draw a diagram, perform an action, but in each case the response will be completely nonverbal or minimally verbal.

Ellis (2003, p: 105) refers to implicit knowledge as "that knowledge of language that a speaker manifests in performance but has no awareness of" and explicit knowledge as "knowledge about language that speakers are aware of and, if asked, can verbalize"

4. The activities in the task can be sequenced to require first attention to meaning, then noticing the form and function of the grammatical structure, and finally error identification.

5. Learners should have the opportunity to make some kind of personal response, i.e. relate the input to their own lives.

Explicit and implicit learning

Ellis (2003, p: 105) refers to implicit knowledge as "that knowledge of language that a speaker manifests in performance but has no awareness of" and explicit knowledge as "knowledge about language that speakers are aware of and, if asked, can verbalize". Moreover, it is stated that whereas implicit knowledge is highly proceduralized, allowing quick access, explicit knowledge is available only through controlled processing. In this line, explicit and

The Effects of Instruction on the Development of Pragmatic Proficiency in Structured Input Tasks

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چکیده

هــدف اصلی این مطالعه بررســی میزان تأثیر دو روش مبتنی بر درون‌داد، یعنی آمــوزش صریح همراه با فعالیت‌های درون‌داد ســاختاری و آموزش تلویحی همراه با فعالیت‌های درون‌داد ســاختاری بر توانش زبان‌آموزان در استفاده از کنش گفتاری تقاضا بوده اســت. در مطالعۀ حاضر، ۲۴ زبان‌آموز فارســی‌زبان به یکی از این سه گروه شــامل دو گروه رفتاری و یک گروه کنترل تقسیم شدند. هدف، آموزش نحوۀ استفاده از تنزل‌دهنده‌های نحوی و واژگانی در کنش گفتاری تقاضا در زبان انگلیسی بود. عملکرد گروه رفتاری با عملکرد گروه کنترل در پیش‌آزمون و پس‌آزمون مقایسه شد و نتایج مطالعه حاکی از آن بود که عملکرد دو گروه رفتاری نسبت به گروه کنترل به‌طور معنی‌داری بهتر است. این مطالعۀ تجربی اطلاعاتی را درزمینۀ آموزش منظورشناسی بین زبانی فراهم کرده است.

کلیدواژه‌ها: آموزش مبتنی بر درون‌داد، فعالیت‌های درون‌داد ساختاری، منظورشناسی بین زبانی، آموزش صریح، آموزش تلویحی

Abstract

   This paper is based on a study designed to investigate the efficacy of instruction at the pragmatic level. Specifically, the main purpose of the study was to examine to what extent two types of input-based approaches including explicit instruction with structured input tasks and implicit instruction with structured input tasks affected learners' competence to use request strategies. In this study, 24 native speakers of Persian with intermediate level of proficiency in English were assigned to 1 of 3 groups, which consisted of 2 treatment groups and 1 control group. The purpose was to teach the learners how to use lexical/phrasal and syntactic downgraders in English request forms. The Treatment group performance was compared with the control group performance on the pre-tests and post-tests. The results of the study revealed that the two treatment groups performed significantly better than the control group. This study highlighted the ways input-based approaches could be implemented at the pragmatic level.

   Key Words: input-based instruction, structured-input tasks, interlanguage pragmatics, explicit instruction, implicit instruction