

**STUDENTS' AND FACULTY MEMBERS'
PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING AND ASSESSING
PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE IN EFL CONTEXT**

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**Doctoral Dissertation
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ÖĞRETİMİ VE DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ KONUSUNDAKİ ALGILARI

(Students' and Faculty Members' Perceptions of Teaching and Assessing
Pragmatic Competence in EFL Context)

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
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Doktora tezi olarak sunduđum “YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĐRENME ORTAMINDA ÖĐRENCİ VE AKADEMİSYENLERİN EDİMBİLİMSEL YETENEĐİN ÖĐRETİMİ VE DEĐERLENDİRİLMESİ KONUSUNDAKİ ALGILARI” bařlıklı alıřmanın, tarafımdan, bilimsel ahlak ve geleneklere aykırı dűşecek bir yardıma bařvurmaksızın yazıldıđını ve yararlandıđım eserlerin kaynakada gűsterilenlerden olduđunu, bunlara atıf yapılarak yararlanılmıř olduđunu belirtir ve onurumla dođrularım.

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ÖZET

DOKTORA TEZİ

YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENME ORTAMINDA ÖĞRENCİ VE AKADEMİSYENLERİN EDİMBİLİMSEL YETENEĞİN ÖĞRETİMİ VE DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ KONUSUNDAKİ ALGILARI

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, üniversite öğretim elemanlarının ve İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin dil eğitiminde edimbilimsel yeteneğin öğretilmesi ve değerlendirilmesi konusundaki algılarını, tutumlarını ve kişisel değerlendirmelerini araştırmaktır. Çalışma, karma araştırma deseni üzerine kurulmuştur. Katılımcılar, Türkiye'deki altı devlet üniversitesinde eğitim gören 554 yabancı dil öğrencisi ve bu üniversitelerde görev yapan 50 akademisyenden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmada nicel ve nitel veri toplama tekniklerinden yararlanılmıştır. Nicel veriler, öğrencilerden söylem tamamlama görevi ile akademisyenlerden anket yoluyla toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın nitel verileri ise, öğrenci ve akademisyenlerin cevapladıkları altı açık uçlu soruyla toplanmıştır. Veri çeşitlemesi, iki grup katılımcının da edimbilimsel yeteneğin öğretilmesi ve değerlendirilmesi konusundaki algılarına dayanarak nicel ve nitel verinin birbirini desteklediğini göstermektedir. Sonuçlar, neredeyse tüm katılımcıların, özellikle İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenme ortamlarında edimbilimsel yeteneğin öğretilmesi ve değerlendirilmesinin çok önemli olduğunu düşündüklerini göstermiştir. Katılımcılar, edimbilimsel yeteneğin, genel dil yeteneğinin önemli bir parçası olduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Ayrıca, nitel sonuçlar, özellikle de Türkiye yabancı dil eğitim sistemini de içeren, edimbilimsel yeteneğin öğretimi ve değerlendirilmesinde de bazı temel sorunlar olduğunu göstermiştir. Edimbilimsel yeteneğin gelişmesi sürecinde karşılaşılan sorunlar arasında; mevcut eğitim sistemi, sınav şekli, ders anlatma tarzı, öğrencilerin genel dil yeteneği, dile karşı tutumları, düşük seviyedeki motivasyonları ve ilgisizlikleri ile akademisyenlerin öğretim şekli, hedef dildeki yetenekleri ve öğretme kabiliyetleri sıralanmıştır. Karşılaşılan sorunlara rağmen, birçok katılımcı, edimbilimsel yeteneğin dil eğitiminin bir parçası olması gerektiğinin altını çizmiş; ayrıca, mevcut sorunların olumsuz etkilerini azaltmak ve dil eğitiminin, özellikle de edimbilimsel yeteneğin öğretilmesinin etkinliğini artırmak için daha fazla çaba harcanması gerektiğini

vurgulamıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, yabancı dil eğitiminde yer alan öğrenciler ve akademisyenler için bazı öneriler sunulmuştur. Üniversite seviyesindeki öğrencilerin ve akademisyenlerin edimbilimsel yeteneğin öğretilmesi ve değerlendirilmesi konusundaki algılarını nicel ve nitel olarak inceleyen bu çalışmanın, alanyazına edimbilimsel yetenek konusunda katkıda bulunması beklenmektedir. Çalışma, edimbilimsel yeteneğin önemi konusundaki farkındalığı artırarak dil eğitiminin iyileştirilmesine yardımcı olmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Edimbilimsel yetenek, değerlendirme, algılar, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenme ortamı, üniversite seviyesi

ABSTRACT

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION (Ph.D.)

STUDENTS' AND FACULTY MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING AND ASSESSING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE IN EFL CONTEXT

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions, attitudes and self evaluations of EFL learners and faculty members regarding teaching and assessing pragmatic competence in foreign language education. The study was based on a mixed methods research design. The participants of the study were 554 EFL learners and 50 faculty members from six state universities in Turkey. The data were collected both quantitatively and qualitatively. The instruments for collecting quantitative data included a DCT that student participants were asked to complete and a questionnaire that the faculty members completed. In the qualitative phase of the study, both the student participants and the faculty provided answers to six open ended questions. Data triangulation revealed that qualitative and quantitative findings were mostly consistent with each other. The results revealed that almost all participants regarded pragmatics instruction and pragmatic assessment as an essential element especially in EFL context. Most participants expressed that pragmatic competence is a significant part of general language competence. The results also showed that there are some basic challenges in teaching and assessing pragmatic competence, especially including a critical assessment of foreign language education in Turkey. The existing education system, examination style, the way of language instruction, general language proficiency of students, their attitudes, low levels of motivation and sometimes their indifference as well as instructors' teaching style, their level of L2 proficiency and teaching abilities were among the points of criticism. Despite the possible challenges, most of the participants stressed that pragmatic competence should be an integral part of language education and further effort should be made in order to decrease the negative impacts of the challenges and to increase the efficiency of language education in general and pragmatic instruction in particular. The findings of the study present some implications for those who take part in the process of foreign language education, especially students and

faculty members. Using qualitative and quantitative data to reflect the perceptions of students and faculty members at tertiary level, this study is expected to contribute to the existing literature related to pragmatic competence. It aims to help the betterment of foreign language education by raising awareness considering the importance of pragmatic competence.

Key Words: pragmatic competence, assessment, perceptions, EFL context, tertiary level

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Since human life began on earth, people have always felt the need to communicate with each other either verbally or non-verbally. In the distant past, having knowledge of one's own language was enough to survive in daily life because there was little opportunity to interact with people from different cultures. With the growing globalization of the world and the need for international relations, one's native language is currently not enough to meet communicative needs. It is now a necessity for many to learn at least one foreign language in order to keep up with the constantly-evolving globe, and this established the grounds for the emergence of the field of language learning and teaching.

For many years, linguists and researchers have put invaluable effort to improve the field to achieve better results to attain an ideal level in teaching foreign language. However, like in all other fields of study, in the field of language teaching and learning, too, there are countless questions to be investigated, ameliorated or solved; among which is the issue of pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence is one of the most significant parts of the process of language teaching and learning. Despite its importance, it has been somewhat neglected compared to the other language competencies, particularly in the EFL contexts (Alco'n & Safont, 2001; Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004). Why do learners, especially learners in EFL contexts, experience difficulties in varying degrees in communicative events? What are the factors that cause problems for learners in the process of developing their pragmatic competence? What are the possible solutions to overcome the problematic situations in the most effective way? These questions need to be taken into consideration in order to identify problems and offer solutions to them in the process of developing pragmatic competence.

Communication requires some certain level of pragmatic competence in order to be based on reasonable and strong grounds. Regardless of the native language (L1) or target language (L2), pragmatic competence is an essential requirement in communication. Being a significant component of language knowledge, pragmatic competence has been attributed a number of definitions all emphasizing its magnitude. The first discussion considering pragmatic competence was that of Chomsky's. In 1965, Chomsky made a distinction between "competence" and "performance". He defined "competence" as the general knowledge of a person about his language and "performance" as the actual language use. As a response to Chomsky's distinction, Hymes (1972) developed the idea of "communicative competence". Though not denying Chomsky's distinction between the general language knowledge (competence) and the actual language use (performance), Hymes, to some extent, criticized Chomsky's term of competence claiming that knowing only the linguistic system of a language is not enough for a person to initiate and maintain successful communication. In order to support his claim, Hymes (1972) indicated that grammatical rules would be meaningless without some rules of appropriate language usage.

Hymes (1972) considered language competence as consisting not only of a set of grammar rules to form grammatically correct sentences but also of sociocultural knowledge of the target language. In other words, besides *what* to know (linguistic knowledge), he included other *wh-s* like "when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner" (p. 277). According to Hymes, communicative competence is a combination of grammatical, psycholinguistic, sociocultural and probabilistic aspects of the language as well as the culture and the environment. He advanced the notion of communicative competence from linguistic to communicative and interactional aspects of language (Allen & Widdowson, 1979). Developing his definition of communicative competence, Hymes (1972, p. 281) proposed four types of knowledge and abilities that successful speakers-listeners should possess in the act of communication: whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible, whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available, whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and

evaluated and whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails.

Promoting the idea of communicative competence to gain a new and diverse momentum, Hymes' (1972) insights also initiated the development of language teaching and language assessment methods in the field from simply grammar-based to communication-based dimension. From a theoretical viewpoint, the model of Canale and Swain (1980), which was later revised and developed by Canale (1983), the model of Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) and that of Bachman (1990) were among the developments in the field of communicative language competence. Canale and Swain (1980) further developed the notion of communicative competence by dividing it into three basic components. The first component is "grammatical competence" which "includes knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 29). Grammatical competence in this model resembles Chomsky's (1965) definition of "competence". The second part of Canale and Swain's (1980) model is *sociolinguistic competence* which is to do with "the extent to which certain propositions and communicative functions are appropriate within a given sociocultural context depending on contextual factors such as topic, role of participants, setting, and norms of interaction" (p. 30). Sociolinguistic competence depends on "the extent to which appropriate attitude and register or style are conveyed by a particular grammatical form within a given sociocultural context" (p. 30). The third and last element is *strategic competence* including both verbal and non-verbal strategies to accomplish the expected communication. Canale and Swain (1980) stated that strategic competence can be utilized "to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence" (p. 30).

As regards communicative competence, Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) suggested that pragmatics should be divided into two parts: pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. The former describes such strategies as the use of linguistic forms to maintain the communication in the desired level. The latter, on the other hand, refers to social behaviors and norms based on the way a particular group prefers to approach and interpret interaction. In other words, while pragmalinguistics is more connected with the linguistic/grammatical features of the language, sociopragmatics is more about the socio-cultural side of communication.

Expanding on the previous researchers' definitions, Bachman (1990) suggested a model consisting of two parts: language knowledge and strategic competence. According to Bachman's model, language knowledge includes *organizational knowledge* and *pragmatic knowledge*. While the organizational knowledge is more about the linguistic aspects, pragmatic knowledge refers to the ability to use language according to the purpose of the conversation (functional knowledge) and according to the context (sociolinguistic knowledge). Strategic knowledge, on the other hand, refers to the ways to compensate for the problematic instances in the communicative act as defined by Canale and Swain (1980). Despite their differences in terminology, one of the common aspects in all the above definitions is that they consider communication as a combination of not only the linguistic features of language but the social context in which the communication takes place.

In order to highlight the purpose of the study, it is better to narrow the focus back to the concepts of pragmatics and pragmatic competence with some definitions. Of the definitions of pragmatics, the most frequently cited one belongs to Crystal (1985). Crystal describes the concept as "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (p. 240). Stalnaker's (1972) description, which is also among the early propositions in this field, combines linguistic aspects and the context in the following way. According to Stalnaker, pragmatics is "the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed" (p. 383). Trailing previous definitions, Rose and Kasper (2001) refer to the field of pragmatics as the examination of communicative action based on its sociocultural context. They further elaborate their definition and describe pragmatics as "the way speakers....accomplish goals as social actors who do not just need to get things done but must attend to their interpersonal relationships with other participants at the same time" (p. 2). Based on a similar perspective, pragmatics can be defined as a discipline dealing with language use which involves language users and setting. Therefore, it can be stated that pragmatics approaches language from the perspective of the participants' language abilities and the effects of the context in which the communicative act takes place.

The notion of *pragmatic competence* has received a number of definitions, too. Fraser (1983) defined it as “the knowledge of how an addressee determines what a speaker is saying and recognizes intended illocutionary force conveyed through subtle attitudes in the speaker’s utterance” (p. 29). Pragmatic competence also encompasses the interpretation of explicit and implicit knowledge based on context in order to use and understand language in successful communication (Thomas, 1995). Pointing at the importance of learning environment, Taguchi (2008a) states that pragmatic competence entails the interlocutors’ ability to be in command of language, other participants of the interaction and the context in which interaction takes place. A recent definition of pragmatic competence has been proposed by Murray (2010). Emphasizing the combination of linguistic form and context, the researcher considers the concept as the recognition of the connection between linguistic forms and the interactional environment which helps people to properly and accurately express their ideas and interpret intended meanings of the others. All these definitions highlight the crucial combination of linguistic, social and contextual knowledge.

At this point, some questions concerning pragmatic competence inevitably capture our attention. In order to learn and communicate in a different language, is it not enough to have a good knowledge of linguistic forms in the language? Is it not possible for a learner to have a good command of language without the knowledge of pragmatics? It is not totally necessary to conduct research in order to recognize the importance of possessing at least some degree of pragmatic knowledge and competence; just a careful observation can be enough. In any type of conversation, it is essential for both parties, i.e. listener and speaker, to have some basic knowledge of the language forms in order to form sentences and some contextual knowledge to pick up appropriate forms to establish and sustain the conversation. The ability to combine these two main components is called pragmatic competence and it is critical to be successful communicators.

Regardless of which L2 they try to learn, language learners commonly have difficulty in understanding the intended meaning (the illocutionary force) as well as coping with problems in producing appropriate language. This problem becomes more obvious in different conversational instances and is especially apparent when non-native speakers are compared to native ones (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996).

While some of the errors can be considered as natural and be tolerated to a certain extent, some others may have more severe consequences than expected. To understand the seriousness of some pragmatic failures combined with grammatical errors, Rajabi and Farahian (2013, pp.28-29) explain:

Lack of mastery of grammar, combined with sociolinguistic confusion, can make learners appear improper or incompetent. It can also cause misunderstandings or create offense when learners can understand only the literal meaning of words and do not know the rules of use for interpreting those words. Such differences often contribute to unexpected pragmatic failure and possibly to serious trouble for L2 learners.

Some previous literature has indicated that breaking the rules of pragmatics of the language may have more severe consequences compared to grammatical violations (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005; Murray, 2010). Making a comparison between grammatical and pragmatic errors, Thomas (1983) concludes that, unlike grammatical errors, pragmatic errors may cause bad reflections on the speaker as an individual, especially from the viewpoint of native speakers and this sentiment is also supported by Rajabi and Farahian (2013). Comparing both types of errors, Crandall and Basturkmen (2004) further comment that people are more forgiving and tolerable of grammatical errors than pragmatic failure. Unlike grammatical failures which may be attributed to some problems in the learning process, the consequences of pragmatic failures are generally assessed on the personal or social level (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003), which demonstrates that pragmatic failures have more serious consequences.

Regarding the importance of pragmatic competence in maintaining healthy interaction and relations, development of pragmatic competence can be valued as central for language learners. That is why teaching pragmatics should be an essential part of language instruction. The basic aim in teaching pragmatics is to improve learners' ability to choose grammatically, socially and contextually appropriate language in the act of communication. It is especially significant in EFL contexts where learners cannot have much opportunity to interact with native speakers to practice and develop their pragmatic competences (Alco'n & Safont, 2001; Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004; Lörcher & Schulze, 1988; Rose, 1999). Compared to those in an ESL setting, learners in an EFL setting do not, most of the time, have

enough opportunities for being in contact with the authentic language use, either inside or outside the classroom. In EFL contexts, learners are exposed mainly to the grammatical aspects of the language and pragmatic functions are mostly ignored during instruction. As a result, at the end of the learning process, students end up with a number of grammatical rules they know well but they cannot turn the theory into practice. Their mastery of grammar does not enable them to be competent language users. Supporting this idea, Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) maintain that even those learners with good linguistic knowledge make mistakes during interactions because they fail to communicate their meanings and understand others' intentions. In a similar vein, Bardovi-Harlig (1996) expresses his opinion that a language learner with a good command of grammar may not "necessarily show concomitant pragmatic competence" (p. 21).

The literature has indicated that it is essential to teach pragmatics (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2010; Fordyce, 2014; Halenko & Jones, 2011; Ifantidou, 2013; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Martines-Flor & Soler, 2007; Takimoto, 2009). However, the review of the history of language teaching shows that though being really significant in human communication in every period, pragmatics has been somewhat neglected in language teaching (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Chomsky, 1965; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004; Ellis, 1994; Hymes, 1972). In the early periods of language teaching, it was assumed that in order to accomplish a mastery of the target language, having a good command of grammatical competence and linguistic knowledge was enough (Firth & Wagner, 1997). The focus of this way of language teaching was on the accuracy of language and pragmatics did not receive the attention it deserved. Hymes coined the concept of "communicative competence" in 1972 as a reaction to the negligence of pragmatic competence. Starting from his initiation, a shift occurred from grammatical competence to communicative competence. Therefore, such different aspects of language instruction as sociolinguistic knowledge or strategic competence gained popularity besides grammatical competence. Referring to this radical shift in language teaching, Chang's (2009) comment is worth considering. The researcher maintains that having some knowledge of the phonological, lexical and grammatical systems of the language is necessary but not in itself sufficient. Because of this shift, the value of possessing sociolinguistic competence has now been recognized for full language

development. With the help of this shift, pragmatics and, therefore, pragmatic instruction has, to some extent, gained popularity. As a significant part of language instruction, pragmatic competence has become a lively-debate of research studies based on different dimensions. Researchers have focused on diverse aspects of the issue such as the effects of instruction on pragmatics (Liddicoat & Crozat, 2001; Safont, 2003), the development of pragmatic competence (Ohta, 2001a, 2001b) and the effects of learning environment (Barron, 2003; Takashi & Beebe, 1987).

However, the review of the relevant literature reveals that almost all the studies concerning pragmatic competence have focused on the learner-side of the issue (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Koiko, 1996; Li, 2010; Liddicoat & Crozet, 2001; LoCastro, 2001; Pae, 2008; Silva, 2003; Alco'n Soler, 2005; Taguchi, 2008a; Taguchi, 2008b). Therefore, there is a real need to investigate the perspectives of the instructors about their conceptions of pragmatic competence. In addition, there is also a scarcity of research in the field regarding the assessment of pragmatic competence. Therefore, as a significant part of communication and instruction, pragmatic competence needs to be comprehensively investigated from a number of perspectives including how it is perceived and assessed.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Regardless of the extent of linguistic or grammatical competence, learners, most of the time, cannot reach the desired level of pragmatic competence in the process of language learning. Most learners have a good command of linguistic knowledge while they experience problems in communicative performances. This problem is observed especially in EFL settings where learners are not mostly provided with the essential tools to achieve pragmatic competence in the target language (Rose, 1999). Therefore, it is essential to investigate the concept of pragmatic competence in EFL context considering the perceptions of students and instructors on the issue. In addition to understanding the perceptions of them regarding pragmatic teaching, it is also important to examine their opinions pertaining to pragmatic assessment as evaluation is a significant part of language education which promotes development.

The review of relevant literature reveals that the investigations related to the issue of pragmatic assessment are also not rich enough to provide comprehensive conclusions and implications especially in Turkish EFL context. Though pragmatic assessment has been accepted as an essential part of general language evaluation, there is a limited number of studies showing that pragmatic assessment does not share a considerable percentage in general language assessment (Aufa, 2013; Russell & Grizzle, 2008). Taking the Turkish EFL research into account, it can be seen that the studies on pragmatic competence in Turkish context mainly focused on speech acts (Aydın, 2013; Deveci, 2010; Genç & Tekyıldız, 2011; Kılıçkaya, 2010), Interlanguage Communicative Competence - (Çetinavcı, 2012; Hişmanoğlu, 2011; Sarıçoban & Öz, 2014) and the levels of pragmatic competence and awareness of pre-service teachers (Atay, 2015; Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2012). However, there is some scarcity in Turkish EFL research regarding the investigation of pragmatic competence in terms of its teaching and assessment. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to the gap in the literature considering the perceptions related to pragmatic competence and especially its teaching and assessment among language learners and instructors. In addition, most of the studies on pragmatic competence were conducted with language learners. There is still some necessity for studies carried out with instructors in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issue including their ideas. Investigating and determining the problems and their causes concerning the process of pragmatic competence development and its teaching and assessment is expected to contribute to the literature with some practical implications in the context of Foreign Language Teaching.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

Aiming to investigate the perceptions, attitudes and self-evaluations of language learners and faculty members concerning teaching and assessing pragmatic competence as well as factors affecting EFL learners' pragmatic competence, this study is expected to contribute to the field with its findings and suggestions.

The research questions that motivate the study are:

1. How do language learners and faculty members perceive teaching pragmatic competence?
2. How do language learners and faculty members perceive assessment of pragmatic competence?
3. What factors affect the level of English pragmatic competence of EFL students in Turkey?
4. Is there a relationship between these factors and learners' pragmatic development?

1.4. Significance of the Study

The rationale of this study is grounded on the notion that there exists a gap in literature, especially in Turkish EFL context, considering the perceptions of learners and instructors as for pragmatic competence and its assessment. The review of relevant literature shows that most of the studies have been conducted based on one or two variables at a time and most of them are experimental studies with the purpose of examining the impact of the selected variable/s on pragmatic development. However, based on qualitative and quantitative data, this study aims to take the effects of different factors into consideration in a single study. This study is also expected to contribute to the existing literature by identifying the factors that are considered as real challenges in the process. Therefore, in a mixed methods research design, the perceptions of language learners and the faculty members are taken into account for the purposes of this study.

In addition, the issue of pragmatic assessment has not, yet, received the attention it deserves particularly in Turkish EFL setting. This study also investigates learners and the faculty members' perceptions of assessing Turkish EFL students' English pragmatic competence and its impact on learning and teaching. These aspects of pragmatics and pragmatic competence need investigating in order to provide significant implications for EFL teaching and assessment, especially in Turkey.

1.4. Overview of Methodology

This study is based on a mixed methods research design. For the purposes of the study, triangulation design was adopted. Both quantitative and qualitative data were

collected from language learners and faculty members. The quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time. The quantitative part of the study included a Discourse Completion Task which was originally formed by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) and later expanded and validated by Xu (2009) was utilized in order to identify the grammatical and pragmatic levels of the student participants. This instrument consisted of twenty scenarios. Eight out of 20 have pragmatic infelicities without grammatical mistakes, 8 grammatically inappropriate but pragmatically appropriate and, the rest four with neither grammatical nor pragmatic mistakes. The student participants were asked to identify mistakes and provide possible correct answers to the statements after they rate the severity of the mistakes. The quantitative data from the faculty members were obtained through a questionnaire adopted from a study by Huang, Sheeran, Zhao and Xiong (2014). The instructors were asked to provide answers to the statements in a Likert scale format related to their perceptions of pragmatic competence in language education. The qualitative side of the study included six open-ended questions that both the student participants and the faculty members were required to provide answers reflecting their perceptions of teaching pragmatic competence and its assessment.

The participants of this study were 554 students enrolled in English Language Teaching Departments in six state universities in Turkey. The faculty members, 50 in total, were also instructors in those universities with different ages, academic and teaching experiences.

Taking the data collection procedure into account, for the purposes of this study, the researcher first conducted a pilot study with 10 students and 2 faculty members in order to identify any problematic cases that would be of potential harm for the main study. Then, the main phase of the study was carried out with the main participants taking their consents. This whole data collection procedure took approximately three months. After this process finished, the analysis of the data was conducted in two phases. In terms of quantitative analysis, the necessary statistical procedures were followed (descriptive and inferential statistics; e.g. t-test, Kruskal Wallis H, ANOVA). For qualitative assessment, the data obtained from the written answers to the questions were analyzed through content analysis. After the researcher went over the data for several times in detail, codes were identified and, then, they were combined into

relevant categories and broader themes and the analysis was carried out with two instructors.

1.6. Key Terminology

Pragmatic competence: Pragmatic competence is the ability to use the language in an effective and appropriate way taking the contextual, cultural and social variables into consideration as well as the linguistic aspects of the language.

Grammatical knowledge: Grammatical knowledge is a language user's knowledge about the linguistic features of a language.

Faculty member: This term refers to the instructors working at tertiary levels.

Assessment: Assessment is the systemic collection, review and use of information for the purpose of improving student learning and development.

EFL: This concept refers to English as a Foreign Language. It is about learning English in a non-English speaking setting.

ESL: ESL stands for English as a Second Language and refers to learning English in an English speaking context.

L2: For the purposes of this study, the concept "L2" will be used to refer to *foreign language* instead of *second language*. A foreign language can be basically defined as a language which is not spoken in the native community of the learner as in the case of language learners in Turkish context. On the other hand, second language refers to the language which is spoken in the locale of the learner though it is not the learner's mother language.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The history of language learning and teaching has witnessed a wide range of different approaches from those which have focused on the structure of the language to the ones that have emphasized the social and communicative aspects of language. With the increase in the importance of communicative aspects of language, there occurred a shift towards the issue of pragmatics and related concepts such as pragmatic competence and the dynamics behind pragmatic competence (Bachman, 1990; Hymes, 1972). This chapter, firstly, offers the definitions of the concepts of pragmatics, pragmatic competence and inter-language pragmatics. Then, it presents the components of pragmatics and proposed models of pragmatic competence. The chapter continues with the presentation of the studies on pragmatics in ESL and EFL contexts focusing on factors affecting pragmatic competence of learners. The chapter concludes with the issue of assessment of pragmatic competence.

2.2. Pragmatics

2.2.1. Introduction to pragmatics

Communication is one of the building blocks of a society and language is an indispensable medium in the act of communication. It is thanks to the language that people can accomplish a wide collection of communicative acts involving different participants in a variety of settings and circumstances. However, communication requires more than just a set of words. It is also related to such issues as the interlocutors' social status, their relationships to each other as well as the communicative context in which interaction takes place. Therefore, in addition to lexicon and grammatical knowledge, a person should also have the knowledge of pragmatics in order to establish and maintain healthy a communication and relationship. Language users should follow pragmatic rules of the society they participate in;

therefore, society, in a way, controls the form of the communicative acts among language users. Pragmatics deals with the analysis of what people actually want to convey with their utterances instead of the dictionary meanings of words or phrases in conversations.

Though it is commonly regarded as a relatively new concept in the field of linguistics, some old references of the term pragmatics can be traced back to Greece and Rome. As stated by Liu (2005), *pragmaticus* in Latin and *pragmaticos* in Greek both have the meaning of *being practical*. A comparatively recent reference can be attributed to Morris (1938), who was a language philosopher. In his *Foundations of the Theory of Signs*, Morris introduced the notion of pragmatics. According to him, while syntax is the study of the relationship between signs and semantics focuses on the relation between the signifier and the signified, pragmatics examines the associations of the signs and their interpretations. Based on his perspective, it can be stated that semantics focuses on a sentence at the basic level, or literal level, and pragmatics deals with what is hidden between the lines.

Pragmatics is crucial for any language user if the person wants to understand what is really meant in order to keep on the conversation in an effective manner. Thus, language users rely on specific norms and conventions, some of which are universal and culture/language-specific. Having a good knowledge of these conventions is necessary because it enables people to comprehend each other in different circumstances even if the meaning is not clearly stated (Yule, 1996) when the aim is bettering people's communicative competence (Ji, 2008).

2.2.2. Definitions of pragmatics

Pragmatics, as a broad concept, has received a number of definitions. One of the earliest definitions is provided by Morris (1938) who describes the components of language while referring to pragmatics. Introducing the modern use of pragmatics, Morris (1938, p.6) defines syntax as “the formal relation of signs to one another”, semantics as “the relation of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable” and, finally, pragmatics as “the study of the relation of signs to interpreters”. Extending his definition and underlining the interplay among different aspects of interaction, Morris

comments that pragmatics “deals with the biotic aspects of semiosis, that is, with all the psychological, biological and social phenomena which occur in the functioning of signs” (p. 108). A comparatively recent but one of the most frequently cited definitions is presented by Crystal (1985), who defines pragmatics as:

The study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication (p. 240).

Crystal (1985) claims that the choices and the constraints which are mostly determined by the conventions of the society influence people in the process of selecting words and grammatical structures from their language reservoir.

To continue with the earlier definitions, those belonging to Leech (1983) and Levinson (1983) can be provided as striking examples. While the former labels pragmatics as the study in which people’s utterances gain meaning according to context, the latter identifies pragmatics as “the study of those relations between language and context that are grammaticalized, or encoded in the structure of a language” (Levinson, 1983, p.9). Classifying pragmatics as a branch of semiotics, Trosborg (1995) focuses on the relation between utterances and those who utter them in addition to dealing with the context in which the communicative act and the relationships between the participants of the communication take place. Sharing a more or less similar perspective, Thomas (1995) views pragmatics as the analysis of “meaning in interaction” (p. 22). Considering language forms and language users as main components of interaction, Yule (1996) conceives pragmatics as the study of identifying intentional human action and regards it as “the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms” (p. 4).

The last decade has witnessed some other definitions of pragmatics intended to include the essence of the present age. For example, Rose and Kasper (2001) define pragmatics as “the study of communicative action in its socio-cultural context” (p. 2) in which interlocutors “do not just need to get things done but must attend to their interpersonal relationships with other participants at the same time” (p. 2). This definition is also adopted by LoCastro (2003), who supports her assumption with

several claims: meaning is generated during interaction, there are both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects that affect the meaning of interaction and there are significant criteria influencing the choices of language users. All these definitions denote that the interpretation of what is said is based on a wide range of factors from the speaker and the listener to the context in which the conversation takes place and to the conventions of language and society.

The definition proposed by Barlovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor (2003) can be provided as a support to the significance of the combination of language users, their relationships and the context in the communicative act. They define pragmatics as “the ability of language users to match utterances with contexts in which they are appropriate” (p.37). As a major discipline combining different aspects that contribute to the formation and maintenance of desired communication, pragmatics “takes into account the full complexity of social and individual human factors, latent psychological competencies, and linguistic features, expressions, and grammatical structures, while maintaining language within the context in which it was used” (Garcia, 2004, p. 8). In other words, pragmatics takes the *wh-s* into consideration; what to say, to whom to say, when to say, where to say and how to say and, most significantly, pragmatics deals with the interpretation of what is said (Bloomer, Griffiths, & Merrison, 2005). A more recent description comes from Pitz and Neff-Aertselaer (2008), who offer a comprehensive definition as follows:

Pragmatics as a usage-based perspective on the language sciences such as linguistics, the philosophy of language and sociology of language essentially focuses on the exploration of language use and the users of language in real-life situations and, more generally, on the principles which govern language in everyday interaction. (p.9)

Based on the above-mentioned comments and definitions, it can be assumed that pragmatics mainly emphasizes the relationship between the use of language and the social and interpersonal aspects of human interaction (Roever, 2010). It works on language use taking place in communicative acts to maintain social interactions. Basically, pragmatics is the study of how language users accomplish things with language and its primary goal is to understand the dynamics affecting such interactional actions as the context or the relationship between the participants of communication.

Therefore, it is also interrelated with other disciplines like psychology, philosophy and sociology. In a way, pragmatics tries to find out the hidden meanings or tries to read between the lines in order to go beyond the literal meanings of what is said in order to understand what is actually meant.

2.2.3. Components of pragmatics

Pragmatics is composed of some particular core components. It involves language users (second or foreign), context, meaning and interaction as the key elements in interaction in addition to language. These components, which are significant and influential factors in language competence in general and in pragmatic competence in particular, are briefly discussed as follows.

2.2.3.1. Language users

Either in a second or foreign language learning context, language users are expected to make every effort to reach the available sources in the target language to accomplish communicative acts. In order to achieve the desired level of interaction, it is not sufficient for learners, or language users, solely to possess the linguistic or structural aspects of the language like its grammar, phonology or lexicon. In addition to these structural aspects, learners are also expected to have the knowledge of the society, the language of which they are trying to learn. As Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) maintain, their participation should involve social engagement with the target culture.

Considering the issue from the perspective of language users, Mey (2001) proposes that pragmatics is related to accumulation and use of the knowledge of the target language. Language users are expected to combine their linguistic repertoire with their knowledge of target culture and society in different communicative contexts. That is why, pragmatics involve the study of the process of language use as well as the study of those who use the language in a variety of settings.

2.2.3.2. Context

In its broadest sense, context can be defined as any social setting in which communication takes place. It is of great significance to integrate context while trying to

interpret the meaning of an utterance. It has been observed and stated that the same sentence may have different meanings in different settings. In order to support this notion, Bilmes' (1986) comment can be provided as an example. Bilmes suggests that "the meaning of an utterance is determined in large part by how it responds and how it is responded to, by its place in an interactional sequence" (p.127).

Besides meanings that words themselves can convey, context has an undeniable impact on the interpretation of the conversation between speakers and listeners. In other words, language users rely on not only their structural knowledge but also, to a great extent, the contextual information. Mey (2001, p.39) emphasizes the changing nature of any context and comments that context is:

A dynamic, not a static concept: it is to be understood as the continually changing surroundings, in the widest sense, that enable the participants in the communication process to interact, and in which the linguistic expressions of their interaction become intelligible.

Contextual information plays a vital role in the effort to increase the intelligibility of a conversation. Therefore, in order to almost fully comprehend an utterance, pragmatics involves the ability to integrate context into the process of communicating in the target language. Thus, valuing the role of context is significant in an attempt to teach pragmatic competence to language learners. Otherwise, language teaching would focus merely on the development of linguistic aspects of the language ignoring the value of the core factor, i.e. the value of contextual information.

2.2.3.3. Meaning

Meaning is a crucial part in people's understanding of life and what is happening around them. It is with the help of meaning that people can conceptualize the world. It is again thanks to meaning that language users can understand conveyed messages. Meaning which is a chief component in understanding any communicative act in any setting may be hidden beyond words or sentences. It is not formed only by the participants of the conversation. Meaning making involves the integration of what words can convey by themselves with what context can add to the literal meanings of those words. Hence, we face different types of meaning like "meaning in use" or

“meaning in context” (Thomas, 1995, p.1) and “speaker meaning” or “contextual meaning” (Yule, 1996, p.3).

Highlighting the sense-giving nature of meaning, Parks (2000) comments that meaning includes the “search for a sense of connection, pattern, order and significance...it is a way to understand our experience that makes sense of both the expected and unexpected” (p.14). Viewing the concept from a similar perspective, Nash and Murray (2010) consider meaning as a collection of interpretations or faith or beliefs that people bring with them to contexts in which they interact with each other. To sum up, there are different factors to affect the meaning of an utterance based on who the language users are, what their position to each other is and where the conversation is taking place.

2.2.3.4. Social interaction

Whether formal or informal in nature and whether in spoken or written form, people participate in different kinds of social interactions. As Vygotsky (1978) argues, it is mostly through these social interactions that people can improve their language. Therefore, it is essential that language learners attach importance to any kind of social interaction and make use of available opportunities to develop their interactional abilities.

2.2.4. Interlanguage pragmatics

The concept of *interlanguage* has been one of the basic terms in language learning. The term was first coined by Selinker in 1972. Interlanguage refers to a separate linguistic system that is formed when a person learns another language. This system is claimed to be located between the learner’s native language and the target language. In other words, it is neither the L1 nor the L2. Interlanguage is a unique system in its own right because it can be considered as evidence of the developmental stages of the learner’s new linguistic system. In this system, the learner, regardless of his proficiency level, constantly tests the hypotheses concerning the target language in his mind. Ellis (1985) defines interlanguage as “the systemic knowledge of language

which is independent of both the learner's L1 and the L2 system that he is trying to learn" (p.42).

Originating mainly from the theory of pragmatics, interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) is a comparatively recent area which concentrates on the pragmatic aspects of learners' linguistic system in the process of learning an L2. Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993) describe ILP as "the study of non-native speakers' use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language" (p. 3). Looking from a developmental perspective, Kasper and Schmidt (1996) recognize ILP as "the study of the development and use of strategies for linguistic action by non-native speakers" (p. 150). Underlining that ILP is a branch of SLA research, Kasper and Rose (2002) consider ILP as a second-generation hybrid, the roots of which belong to pragmatics and SLA. To express the scope of ILP, they comment as follows:

As the study of second language use, interlanguage pragmatics examines how non-native speakers comprehend and produce action in a target language. As the study of second language learning, interlanguage pragmatics investigates how L2 learners develop the ability to understand and perform action in a target language. (p.5)

In a way to summarize the above remark, Bataller (2010) maintains that ILP involves a learner's ability to effectively communicate, interact and interpret in a variety of contexts following the rules of pragmatics. According to Bardovi-Harlig (2010), ILP combines the study of language user, structure, use and context. In order to accomplish the desired communication level, learners must possess not only the knowledge of what is appropriate in a given situation, i.e. pragmatic knowledge, but also a vast compilation of linguistic knowledge from which what is suitable for the context is picked up. Therefore, with the aim of finding the possible reasons for and solutions to the issues that cause problems for language learners, ILP focuses on identifying the systematic features in interlanguage development.

2.2.4.1. Cross-cultural pragmatics

With the globalization of the world, it has become inevitable for people from diverse cultures not to interact with each other in a variety of contexts. People speaking

different languages and belonging to diverse cultures can communicate in a common language, mostly in a lingua franca. Therefore, it is important to study the differences between cultures considering their language use (Shi, 2014), which is the focus of cross-cultural or interlanguage pragmatics. According to Alptekin (2002), intercultural communicative competence should encompass linguistic and cultural behaviors based on the awareness that there are differences among languages potentially affecting the flow of interaction. The knowledge of these differences to maintain effective communication is referred as cross-cultural or intercultural communicative competence and the field which examines these issues is called cross-cultural pragmatics.

Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993) broadly define cross-cultural pragmatics as the study of how language learners with different backgrounds produce language. Yule (1996) suggests that “the study of differences in expectations based on cultural schemata is part of a broad area of investigation generally known as cross-cultural pragmatics” (p.87). This area of investigation looks at the systematic relationship between language use and the effects of different contexts.

As individuals bring their own values and systems into the interactional setting, some problematic cases like communication breakdowns or misunderstandings at varying degrees may occur. Referring to this situation, Boxer (2002, p.151) states that “individuals from two societies or communities carry out their interactions (whether spoken or written) according to their own rules or norms, often resulting in a clash in expectations and, ultimately, misperceptions about the other group”. It can be concluded that culture as well as individual characteristics influence the way people communicate. Therefore, it is essential to examine cultural issues to achieve efficient cross-cultural communication with minimum or no breakdowns.

2.3. Pragmatic Competence

2.3.1. Shift in second/foreign language education

Foreign language education, until the last few decades, mainly focused on the structural aspects of the target language de-emphasizing the value of its communicative side. Foreign language teaching methods such as Grammar-Translation Method

emphasized teaching the grammatical structures of the language as separate units and grammatical accuracy was the main goal in language use. The pragmatic features of the target language were underestimated and were simply dealt with not as a discrete component of the language but under the title of syntactic knowledge.

However, especially with Hymes' (1972) introduction of the concept of *communicative competence*, the focus of language education shifted from grammatical accuracy alone to communicative aspects of language including the fluency of language use. It was realized that in order to master a language, learners need to know the pragmatic aspects of the target language along with its structural components such as its phonology, morphology or syntax. Based on communicative competence, new approaches in language teaching emerged in the field like Communicative Language Teaching. In these new methods, the perspective has been to develop learners' abilities to communicate in a variety of real life contexts.

The following part presents the difference between Chomsky's and Hymes's viewpoints of language knowledge and language use. It refers to Chomsky's distinction of competence and performance. Then, it introduces Hymes's notion of communicative competence. The section continues with the subsequent models of communicative competence developed by other researchers in the field. Then, pragmatic competence is provided with different models.

2.3.2. Language competence and performance

One of the most prominent figures in the field of linguistics, Chomsky (1965) proposes a distinction between two fundamental terms: *competence* and *performance*. With these terms, he changes the emphasis of linguistic analysis from the structures of the language to people who use the language. In other words, he suggests that linguistic study should focus on use of language instead of only on the linguistic structures. He proposes that the study of linguistics should deal with "*mental reality* underlying actual behaviour" (Chomsky, 1965, p.4). Further elaborating on his focus on language user than linguistic aspects of the language, Chomsky (1965, p.3) mentions the process of turning competence into performance with the following utterance:

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance.

According to Chomsky (1965), competence refers to a person's mental capacity of the language. Competence is a broad concept that involves a person's underlying knowledge or linguistic ability of a language. This knowledge helps the person to understand and produce language. It involves the knowledge of such linguistic forms as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. On the other hand, performance can be basically defined as the actual language performance or production of a person. It can be considered as the linguistic output. To put it in simple terms, competence is about knowing and performance is about doing in a language.

For Chomsky (1965), performance is based on and mostly directed by an individual's competence. Performance is, to some extent, the reflection of a language user's competence. However, it is prone to some drawbacks of memory or attention or some issues related to psychology. Therefore, performance is not always the full representative of a person's competence. Considering his distinction, it seems that Chomsky places more emphasis on competence than performance; in other words, competence should be at the heart of linguistic study. He presents this idea in the following statement: "Observed use of language (...) cannot constitute the actual subject matter of linguistics, if this is to be a serious discipline" (Chomsky, 1965, p.4). He supposes the superiority of competence over performance based on the fact that performance can be influenced by some external factors.

2.3.3. Communicative competence

Chomsky's heavy reliance on the grammatical knowledge of the language, or competence, was later criticized by Hymes (1972), who coined the term *communicative competence*. What was criticized was not the essence of Chomsky's view but some limitations and inadequacies coming along with the notion. As a reaction to Chomsky's inadequacy of the distinction between competence and performance and his devaluing

approach considering the concept of performance, Hymes (1972) conducted an ethnographic examination of communicative competence referred to as *ethnography of communication*. Hymes (1972), though not entirely rejecting the place of grammatical knowledge, stressed the significance of communicative dimension with the following statement: “[t]here are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (p. 278). Based on Hymes’ perspective, it can be concluded that the major focus of attention in communicative competence should be on different types of speech events and the interaction between language and culture. Hymes’s notion of communicative competence is assumed to have formed the grounds of a drastic shift in the attention from grammar-based to communicative-based aspects of language studies.

In his well-known paper *On Communicative Competence*, Hymes (1972) makes a critique of Chomskian notion from several directions though not totally denying his approach. The first dimension is about the social side of language use. While Chomsky underlines the significance of knowing structural features of a language, which he refers to as competence, he undermines the value of the social aspects of language use, i.e. performance. Chomsky underestimates the value of performance because it is vulnerable to the negative effects of outside factors and, therefore, it cannot fully reflect the potential of a person’s competence. This is what Hymes objects to. He suggests that while studying language, social aspects should be valued as much as the knowledge of the language. Hymes refers to children’s acquisition of their first language and notes that while acquiring their native language, children attain not only the grammatical structure but also the pragmatic aspects of the language. In other words, while children acquire the phonology, morphology or the syntax of L1, they, at the same time, acquire the knowledge of what is appropriate or not in various situations with different participants. Calling attention to the appropriateness of language use besides possessing linguistic aspects of the language, Hymes (1972) further elaborates as follows:

We have then to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part

in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others. (p. 277-278)

About the communicative nature of language function and language use, Hymes suggests that what is necessary in L1 acquisition is also a requirement in L2 learning. Language performance, either in L1 or L2, and its unifying nature of different aspects of the language takes language competence of different interlocutors into consideration. There exists an interactional nature of competence and performance and performance can be considered as a bridge between listeners' and speakers' language competence. In a way, performance is the actualized form of competence, i.e. the internal knowledge of a language required for the maintenance of communication.

Chomskian view to rely basically on grammatical competence was also criticized by Halliday, who considers language as the reflection of a social fact and; therefore, puts emphasis on the communicative aspects of language use. With the following utterance, he conveys the idea that people act out their social identities by means of language: "By their everyday acts of meaning people act out the social structure, affirming their own statuses and roles and establishing and transmitting the shared systems of value and of knowledge" (Halliday, 1978, p.2). Language users should possess communicative competence as well as a good knowledge of the structure of a language in order to establish and maintain the desired level of interaction with people.

The second area of criticism directed to the Chomskian view is to do with the functional dimension of the language. Linguists who appreciate the communicative role of language direct the attention to its functional nature for the expression of meaning. Functional perspective includes semantic and communicative dimensions of language use. Halliday claims that language is not rules about the structures; instead, language should be weighed up with meaning potential. Taking first language acquisition, Halliday (1975) proposes seven fundamental functions of a language. The first is the *instrumental function*, which refers to the function of language use to get or obtain things (ex: *I want*). The second is the *regulatory function*, which defines the use of language to regulate or control others' behaviors (ex: *do what I say to you*). The third function is the *interactional function*, which helps language users to construct

interaction or communication among each other (ex: *I and you or “we”*). The fourth is the *personal function*, which allows people to put their feelings and ideas into words (ex: *I think*). The fifth is the *heuristic function*, which creates opportunities for people to learn and discover new things through language (ex. *tell me about it*). The sixth is the *imaginative function*, which helps the language user to form and develop his imagination (ex: *suppose that*). The last function is the *representational function*, which can be considered as a way to transmit information among people (e.g. *I have something to say to you*). It can be stated that Halliday’s seven functions of language are directly linked to the personal and social needs of language users. They exhibit universal relevance no matter what the user’s native language is. For second language acquisition, Halliday says that L2 learning process involves adding multilingual capabilities to what has already been acquired in L1. It is not new functions that are added but new language properties to accomplish the already existing language functions.

The third area of criticism directed towards Chomskian standpoint is that Chomsky considers *sentence* as the main unit that forms the basis of linguistic analysis. However, linguists who emphasize the communicative characteristics of language use advocate the consideration of language analysis just beyond sentence level. For example, Halliday comments that language is not a combination solely of sentences. Instead, language involves discourse. Discourse deals with language beyond sentence level. It covers such information as what is or what is not appropriate to say next, or when to say what and how to say it. Based on the communicative dimension, language use operates beyond single sentence levels; it includes cohesion and coherence in both spoken and written form to create a more effective language use.

With the growing awareness of communicative outlook, the importance of context has also increased and it has become an indispensable part of language analysis that can affect the shape and meaning of an utterance. With the increasing understanding of the value of context in language comprehension and production, context became an essential part of pragmatics. Cummings (2005) also emphasizes the significance of context in language and especially pragmatics and states that “no definition of pragmatics would be complete in the absence of some mention of context” (p. 4).

Another ethnographer who agrees with Hymes's notion of communicative competence is Saville-Troike. Approaching communicative competence from the perspective of second and foreign language settings, Saville-Troike (1989, 1996) suggests that the concept should include three sorts of knowledge: linguistic, interactional and cultural. The *linguistic* component primarily refers to Chomsky's notion of competence. However, that of Saville-Troike's includes the knowledge of the differences between diverse linguistic expressions besides single grammatical knowledge. In other words, while in an act of communication, language users should follow the rules of expression to form both grammatically and socially appropriate utterances. The second part is about the *interactional* skills in communication. This involves the knowledge of social norms and criteria like initiating or ending a conversation or turn-taking. When language education, especially foreign language education, is taken into account, it can be concluded that interactional skills, compared to linguistic skills, are hard to learn for language learners, because of the limited opportunities of instruction and practice. The last property is *cultural knowledge* which is related to the social composition of the community in which the act of communication takes place. When interacting, people should produce language according to the conventions and composition of the society in order not to fail. In other words, language users must be able to distinguish between manners of speaking that are appropriate for different roles. Taking all these three components into consideration, it seems clear that Saville-Troike supports Hymes's notion of communicative competence because it includes linguistic, social and cultural knowledge.

As it is obvious in the above definition, communicative competence basically describes a language user's structural, i.e. grammatical, knowledge such as phonology, morphology or syntax as well as his knowledge of social aspects of language use including when and where to say what to whom. Hymes places great emphasis on the contextual properties of any interaction and suggests that context and contextual information is as significant as structural knowledge of a language in the maintenance of successful communication. Hymes (1972) maintains that understanding and conveying an idea in communication is largely based on the context and communicative event. He claims that all communicative events have some purposes and some norms to follow. In order to clarify the impacts of different components on the *meaning-forming*

and meaning-making process of an interaction, Hymes (1972) proposes an acronym called *SPEAKING*. The first letter symbolizes two concepts: *setting* and *scene*. Setting mostly involves the time and the place in which communication takes place and it refers to physical conditions. Scene refers to psychological circumstances. The formality or the seriousness of the interactional environment can be examples of scene. The second letter stands for *participants*. The term participant involves both listeners and speakers. The next letter refers to *ends*, in other words, the purposes of the interaction. The fourth letter is *act sequence* which is about the form and order of the interactional action depending on the context and purpose. The next letter symbolizes *key*. This term is about the manner or the tone of the conversation to increase the effectiveness of speech. The sixth letter stands for *instrumentalities*, which is mainly about the style of the speech. The seventh letter refers to *norms of interaction and interpretation*. Norms are about the social rules that direct the actions of the participants and the event. The last letter represents the notion of *genre* that is to do with the sort of the speech act.

Taking the above-mentioned aspects into account, it can be concluded that language competence is more than having some knowledge of linguistic aspects of the target language. It also comprises an understanding of such interactional features as interlocutors or context. Communicative competence, thus, can be defined as an ability which involves cultural, contextual and social knowledge as well as linguistic knowledge.

2.3.3.1. Canale and Swain's model of communicative competence

Starting from Hymes's (1972) introduction of the term *communicative competence*, there have been some other models proposed by different researchers. One of these models first developed by Canale and Swain (1980) and further elaborated by Canale (1983), essentially refers to the key characteristics of the knowledge and skills for interactional events. The model consists of four major components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence.

The first constituent *grammatical competence* refers to the general knowledge of the linguistic aspects of a language. It includes the knowledge of phonology,

morphology, syntax, etc. Grammatical knowledge resembles Chomsky's notion of language competence and; therefore, it provides language users with necessary items to understand and produce language. The second part is *sociolinguistic competence*. It helps language users to put what they have as grammatical knowledge into practice according to their appropriateness in a given context. Kasper (2001) defines sociolinguistic competence as the capability of people to construct their expressions based on different factors in communicative settings. Sociolinguistic competence shapes the language form in relation to the requirements of the setting, the status of the participants in relation to each other and the purpose of the interaction in general.

The third component is *discourse competence* which basically refers to the ability to follow cohesion and coherence in language production, either in spoken or in written form. It enables language users to maintain the desired unity and flow. Canale (1983) provides definitions of the terms *cohesion* and coherence. He perceives cohesion as the knowledge of how to connect utterances in a structural way and adds that cohesion influences the interpretation of a conversation or a written text. Seeing coherence as a type of interaction among diverse meanings, Canale (1983, p.9) defines this term as "the relationships among the different meanings in a text, where these meanings may be literal meanings, communicative functions, and attitudes" and proposes that discourse competence is the "mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres". The last constituent of the model is *strategic competence* which fundamentally includes any verbal or non-verbal tactics to eliminate or, at least, decrease communication breakdowns and maintain an effective communication. These strategies may work compensatory and ameliorating in nature.

Effective communication with as few communication breakdowns or misunderstandings as possible is based on the successful combination of Canale and Swain's (1980) above-mentioned four essential components. Any communicative event requires the communicative competence of both parties, i.e. listener and speaker, in order to keep the interaction on a stable tract and at the expected level. Unlike grammatical competence which evaluates people's knowledge of language individually, communicative competence appreciates the contributions of language users in the act of interaction. Realizing the unifying nature of communicative competence, Savignon

(1983) remarks that communicative competence is “relative, not absolute, and depends on the cooperation of all the participants involved” (p. 9). As a result, communicative competence may be suggested to enable people to express themselves as well as understanding and interpreting others’ ideas and feelings through language.

2.3.4. The concept of pragmatic competence

Against Chomsky’s reliance on language competence and devaluing the significance of language performance, models that highlight the necessity of communicative competence have emerged in the field. Starting with Hymes’ (1972) notion of communicative competence, new models have been proposed by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983). Taking the nature of communicative competence into consideration, Bachman (1990) was the first scholar to emphasize *pragmatic competence* as a separate and indispensable part of general communicative competence.

Pragmatic competence has become one of the focal points in a plethora of EFL research, especially in the last three decades. Weinert (2010) maintains that language can be considered as a way of sharing social events because language is the best tool that people have to communicate. Therefore, language studies should focus on the communicative aspects of language use including pragmatics.

The growing prominence of pragmatic competence as a central theme in language studies is principally because of the shift observed in the field of language teaching and learning. The shift from grammatical to communicative competence in L2 pedagogy has necessitated a more in-depth analysis of the crucial aspects related to communicative and pragmatic competence (Trosborg, 1987). Ellis (1994) comments that the need for deeper investigation has been the product of the fact that a thorough examination of language in real communication should be conducted if the aim is to discover how a language is learned. Previous studies have focused basically on the grammatical aspects of language knowledge. According to Rubin (1983) grammar-based studies have presented language learners neither the “deep-seated cultural values” (p. 11) nor the “underlying values of a speech act” (p. 12), which are both essential for effective and appropriate communication. Contrary to grammar-based approach, the new dimension of research dedicated to communicative or pragmatic competence has

given almost equal status to all the competencies required for successful communication.

Pragmatic competence, in essence, can be described as the capability to use language in effective and appropriate manners as well as understanding and interpreting messages based on contextual information. Referring to the unity and interaction of language user and setting, it can be stated that pragmatic competence is about language use that is based on and affected by language user and the context in which communication takes place. Kasper and Röver (2005) regard pragmatic competence as the ability to make use of language as a source of action and interaction. In other words, pragmatic competence enables people to produce and understand language taking the essential and indispensable components of communication, i.e. the hearer and speaker and the setting, into consideration. Pragmatic competence can be evaluated as the capability of language users to follow abstract socio-cultural rules and context-bound aspects.

In general, pragmatic competence enables people to form, maintain or even devastate social relationships through the use of language (Spencer-Oatey, 2008). It also provides opportunities for language users to present and introduce themselves as members of any social community. In other words, it helps people to reflect their personality in order to participate in the act of socialization as a result of a variety of purposes (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010). Turning the benefits of pragmatic competence into practice requires language users to use certain strategies while producing language and understanding or interpreting what others say (Ifantidou, 2011). Therefore, pragmatic competence –which can be defined as the “understanding of the relationship between form and context” (Murray, 2010; p. 293) helps interlocutors to maintain healthy communication in which people can understand and convey meanings in a successful way.

2.3.4.1. Leech’s distinction between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence

Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) made a distinction between pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. Leech (1983, p.11) distinguished *general pragmatics* from

pragmalinguistics and *sociopragmatics*. According to Leech, general pragmatics deals with the study of “linguistic communication in terms of conversational principles”. On the other hand, the other two concepts are more specific. Pragmalinguistics is basically about the linguistic and grammatical aspects of language knowledge while sociopragmatics refers to the knowledge of social aspects that are possibly to affect the interaction between people. The following figure displays Leech’s (1983, p. 11) description of pragmatics:

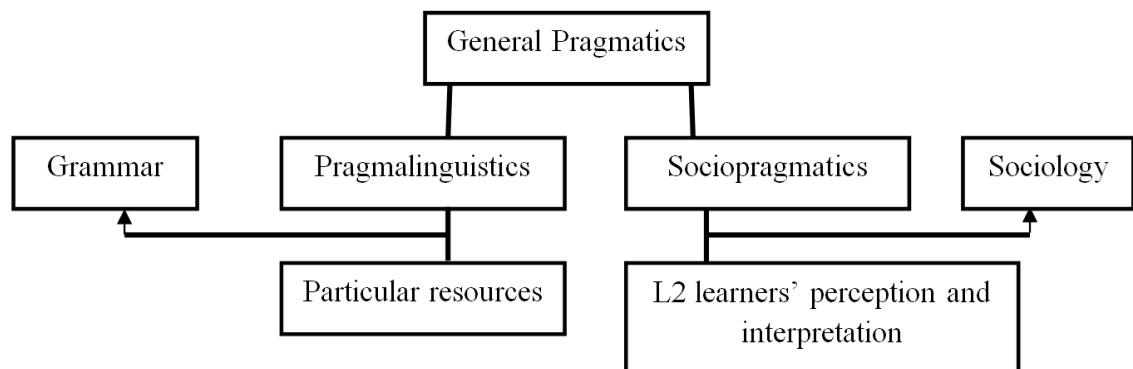


Figure 2.1. Leech’s presentation of pragmatics

Pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence can be examined as two separate types of pragmatic competence. The former basically has a linguistic orientation, that is, pragmalinguistics presents ‘the more linguistic end of pragmatics’ (Leech 1983: 11). Leech (1983) describes pragmalinguistics as “the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions” (p. 11). In other words, pragmalinguistics enables users to achieve illocutions through the sources that are present in language. Kasper and Rose (2001) consider the linguistic sources as tools to convey meaning and continue interaction and refer them as “pragmatic strategies such as directness and indirectness, routines and a large range of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communicative acts” (p. 2). Therefore, pragmalinguistic competence is a prerequisite for maintaining efficient communicative events and conveying individual meanings (Cenzo, 2007).

The other part of the distinction, *sociopragmatic competence*, refers to social and cultural end of pragmatics; that is, it is about the “sociological interface of pragmatics” (Leech, 1983, p. 10). It is culture-specific because it gives emphasis to the social aspects that are likely to influence any interaction. Among these factors are the social

relationships or distance of people or their social status. These are the factors that possibly affect the linguistic preferences of language users. Pointing to the influential nature of sociopragmatic competence, Harlow (1990) regards this concept as the capability to “vary speech-act strategies according to the situational or social variables in the act of communication” (p. 1). Sociopragmatics has an impact not only on the choice of linguistic items but also on the process of interpretation of what others say. Highlighting the two-dimensional influence of the term, Kasper and Rose (2001, p.3) maintain that one of the most significant interests of sociopragmatics is about “the social perceptions underlying participants’ interpretation and performance of communicative action”.

Despite the distinction between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence, it cannot be denied that pragmatic development necessitates a successful combination of both dimensions for effective interaction. Kasper and Röver (2005) comment that pragmatic competence is the ability to “understand and produce socio-pragmatic meanings with pragmalinguistic conventions” (p. 318). Pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competences are inseparable parts which complete each other. Pragmalinguistic competence provides necessary tools in the act of communication and sociopragmatic competence determines the appropriateness of the utterances according to the conventions and principles of the present social context. Hence, efficient communication depends on a proper combination of both sides of language competencies.

2.3.4.2. Bachman’s model of pragmatic competence

As a prominent figure who first coined the term *pragmatic competence*, Bachman presents a model of language competence covering all the aforementioned aspects related to pragmatic competence. The language model proposed by Bachman (1990, p.87) consists of two central parts: *organizational competence* and *pragmatic competence*. Bachman presents her model as in the following figure:

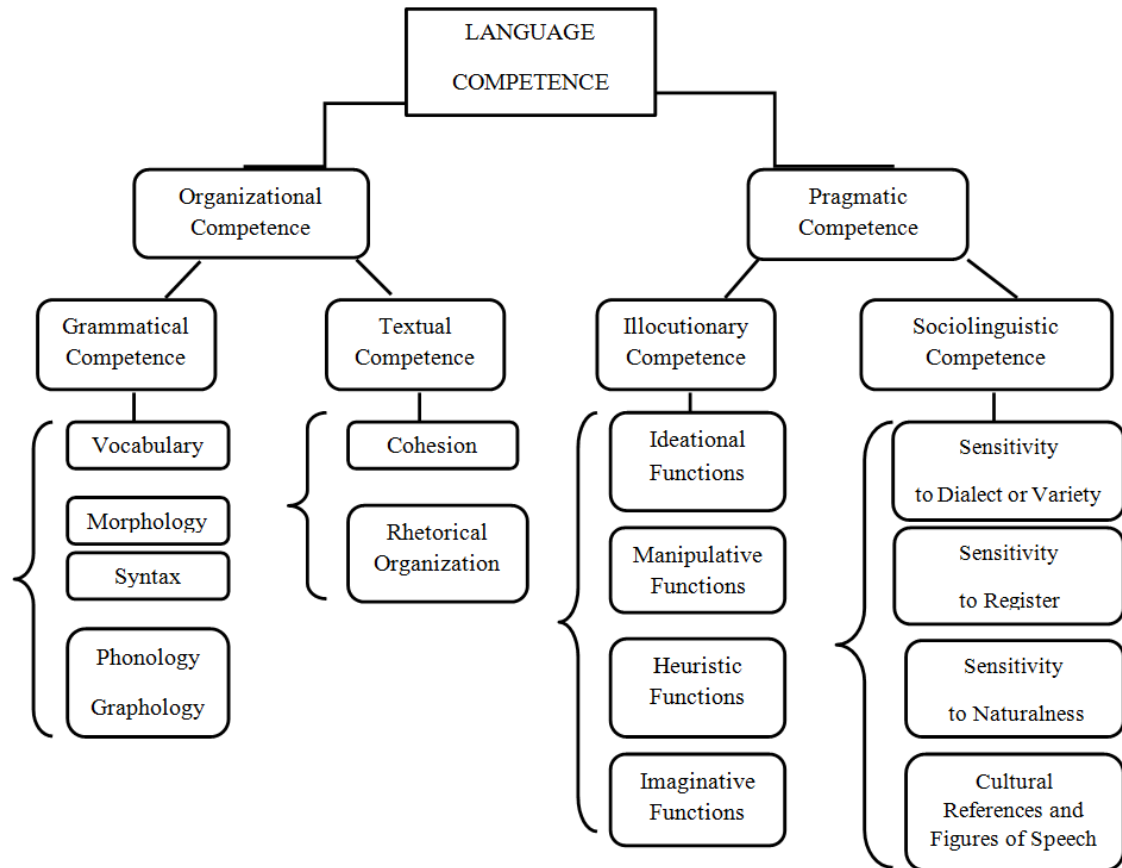


Figure 2.2. Bachman's model of language competence

With some differences and details, Bachman's language model can be basically considered as analogous to the communicative competence model of Canale and Swain (1980). Bachman (1990) regards language competence as "knowledge of language" (p. 85). In her model, language competence consists of organizational and pragmatic competence as two major competencies. Organizational competence has two sub-headings. The first is *grammatical competence* which refers to a language user's knowledge of such linguistic structures as vocabulary, morphology and syntax. The grammatical knowledge in Bachman's model resembles Chomsky's definition of language competence. It also exhibits similarities with Canale and Swain's (1980) grammatical competence.

The second sub-heading in organizational competence, *textual competence*, in Bachman's model involves the knowledge of cohesion and coherence issues resembling discourse competence in Canale and Swain's (1980) model. Bachman (1990) defines textual knowledge as "the knowledge of the conventions for joining utterances together to form a text, which is essentially a unit of language- spoken or written" (p. 88). She

suggests that language users can be successful in communication, either written or spoken form, if they combine the advantages of both organizational and pragmatic competence.

The second major component, *pragmatic competence*, involves *illocutionary competence* and *sociolinguistic competence*. Illocutionary function requires four capabilities on the part of language user. The ideational function enables people to state their ideas or feelings; the manipulative function helps people to get what they want; the heuristic function provides opportunities to learn new things and solve the existing problems via language and, finally, imaginative function develops people's creativity. These four competencies resemble Halliday's (1975) proposal of the seven functions of language use (instrumental, regulatory, interactional, personal, heuristic, imagination and representational functions). Elaborating on illocutionary competence as an essential part of the model, Bachman and Palmer (1996, pp. 69-70) define the components of illocutionary competence as follows:

Knowledge of ideational functions enables us to express or interpret meaning in terms of our experience of the real world. Knowledge of manipulative functions enables us to use language to affect the world around us. Knowledge of heuristic functions enables us to use language to extend the knowledge of the world around us. Knowledge of imaginative functions enables us to use language to create an imaginary world or extend the world around us for humorous or aesthetic purposes.

The second constituent of pragmatic competence, *sociolinguistic competence*, in Bachman's model is about the required sensitivity towards differences and variations in different communicative settings. Bachman (1990) suggests that sociolinguistic competence provides language users with the opportunity to produce language that is appropriate to the context. Sociolinguistic competence requires sensitivity towards language variations due to regional or social differences in or between groups. The differences and variations stemming from region or society naturally influence the conventions of language use. Sensitivity to register helps people to differentiate variations in language use in diverse contexts. Sensitivity to naturalness necessitates the capability to appreciate the appropriateness of an utterance in both linguistic and social terms. The last component, *the capacity to interpret cultural references and figures of*

speech, enables language users to evaluate and appreciate cultural peculiarities belonging to a specific context. To make a distinction between illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence, it can be stated that while the former determines the sorts of language functions to perform, the latter helps people to pick the appropriate strategies or conventions in a particular context.

Taking Bachman's model into account, one can conclude that pragmatic competence, besides grammatical knowledge, is a crucial part of language competence to be able to succeed in any communicative event. In other words, language competence would be imperfect without pragmatic competence. The two models proposed by Canale and Swain (1980) and Bachman (1990) highlight the significance of communicative competence for an individual to be a capable language user. However, these two models do not specify clear connections between the main and sub-components of language competence. After a few years, Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell (1995) have filled this gap by proposing another model of communicative competence.

2.3.4.3. Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell's model of communicative competence

The model proposed by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995, p.10) presents communicative competence as a concept including five major components which are interrelated with each other: *linguistic*, *actional*, *sociocultural*, *discourse* and *strategic competence*. They display their model in the figure below:

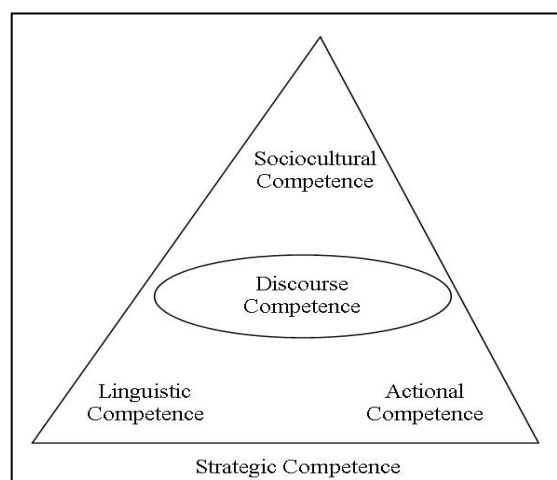


Figure 2.3. Celce-Murcia et al.'s model of communicative competence

In this model, linguistic competence (as in Chomsky's (1965) language competence, Canale and Swain's (1980) grammatical competence and, again, Bachman's (1990) grammatical competence) refers to the knowledge of separate components of linguistics: morphological aspects, lexis or sentence varieties. The *actional competence* resembles Canale and Swain's sociocultural competence and Bachman's illocutionary competence. Celce-Murcia et al.'s (1995) component of actional competence entails the knowledge of different language functions in order to accomplish production and comprehension with the help of linguistic conventions.

The *sociocultural competence* in this model corresponds, more or less, to the sociocultural competence in Canale and Swain's, and Bachman's communicative competence models. It requires the knowledge of what is appropriate or not according to social conventions and norms in a certain context. Located in the center of the figure, discourse competence can be considered as the major component of Celce-Murcia et al.'s model. *Discourse competence* is connected with other components and involves the knowledge of cohesion, coherence, deixis and diverse genres. It is similar to Canale and Swain's discourse competence and Bachman's textual competence. The above-mentioned four components are all connected to the last part, *strategic competence*. Strategic competence is presented as the knowledge and application of communication strategies needed to avoid communication breakdowns and maintain the ideal flow during any conversation.

The model presented by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) differs from the two previous models, i.e. that of Canale and Swain's (1980) and that of Bachman (1990) in that it involves the integration of the five components to construct communicative competence. What is common among these three models is that all of them advise the combination of all the components to form and preserve success in interaction. They all favor that grammatical knowledge should be incorporated with pragmatic competence to achieve meaningful and successful communication. Otherwise, unexpected or undesired misunderstandings or break-downs might occur during interactional events, which may cause severe consequences.

2.3.5. Speech act theory

Speech act theory has been one of the foremost issues in the field. It has attracted almost the widest interest among the subjects in general theories of language use (Levinson, 1983). Austin (1962, 1975) was the founder of speech act theory, which was later expanded by Searle (1969, 1975, 1976). Concerning language usage, speech act theory has strong connections to the field of pragmatics as it considers language as a social activity. For example, when a person says he is sorry, he not only expresses it but also actualizes the act of apologizing.

2.3.5.1. Austin's speech act theory

The founder of *speech act*, Austin (1962) bases his theory on his observation that people use language both to say something and to do things. Austin differentiates among three components of speech acts: *locutionary act*, *illocutionary act* and *perlocutionary act*. The first one refers to the literal, or the real, meaning of an utterance. The second, *illocutionary act*, is about the force or the meaning that are hidden beyond words and their literal meanings. Leech (1983) describes illocutionary act as “the communicative plan behind a speaker's remark” (p.200). The last one, i.e. *perlocutionary force* or *act*, defines the effect of illocution on the hearer. In other words, it refers to the state of whether the listener understands and does what the speaker means by taking action.

2.3.5.2. Searle's speech act theory

Further elaborating on Austin's (1962) model, Searle (1965, 1975) divided the speech act model into *direct* and *indirect speech acts*. Searle's direct speech act model can be regarded as equivocal to Austin's locutionary act referring to the real meaning in any utterance. It can be evaluated as a revision of the illocutionary force in Austin's model when indirect speech acts are taken into consideration. Searle (1980) regards the illocutionary force as the major unit in human interaction remarking that “the minimal unit of communication is not a sentence or other expression, but rather the performance of certain kinds of acts, such as making statements, asking questions, giving orders, describing,...., etc.” (p.7). Moreover, Searle asserts that the effect of an illocutionary

force and the observed result of a perlocutionary force are both subject to the speakers' choice of words in their utterances and the listeners' interpretation of what is said. Developing Austin's (1962) model of illocutionary force, Searle (1976) proposes five major classes of illocutionary act:

- *Representatives* lead the language user to express what is true in the existing conditions (ex: asserting, concluding).
- *Directives* are ways to get the listener to do what the speaker requires (ex: requesting, suggesting, or commanding).
- *Commissives* require the speaker to commit some future action (ex: promising, offering or threatening).
- *Expressives* present the psychological state of the speaker (ex: thanking, apologizing, congratulating or welcoming).
- *Declarations* are the influential ones to immediately change the existing conditions and reality. Declarations can be of religious or political basis such as christening or marrying people or declaring war.

The combination of these five separate categories forms the totality of almost any action that people can accomplish through language. The choice of categories users prefer and the linguistic structures through which they achieve communicative purposes naturally and inevitably will differ depending on their linguistic preferences and language proficiencies. In addition to linguistic and personal choices, there is also the effect of context on the preference of which category to utilize in the process of communication. This became a point of criticism towards the early proposals of speech acts as they did not cover the impact of context.

Although the theories of speech acts proposed by Austin and developed by Searle have covered a vast area in communicative purposes and have received great attention as significant parts of pragmatic competence, they have been criticized for various reasons. Considering Austin's introduction of speech acts, Kasper and Rose (2002) criticize it as a relatively narrow approach in which a unit of linguistic or communicative analysis is based on isolated speech acts. Unlike Austin's proposal of speech acts, they suggest a broader perspective that values the influence of action and context together.

Another major criticism for Searle's (1965, 1975) speech act theory is about the number of speech acts. The numbers proposed by Austin and Searle can actually be extended beyond five items. Ballmer and Brennenstuhl (1981) maintain that the number can go up to 600 types of speech acts if different versions are taken into account.

The above-mentioned speech act theories have also received negative comments concerning the effectiveness of their classification. When diverse cultures are considered, it is natural that the conventions exhibit variations at differing degrees. Blum-Kulka (1989) notes that as there are common or universal aspects across languages, there are also language-specific and culture-specific sides that should be taken into consideration when attempting to assess any speech act. The notion that speech acts can be affected by different aspects, especially by cultural norms and conventions, is also highlighted by Wierzbicka (1991). She pointed out that any speech act should be evaluated based on the culture and context in which it takes place. Commenting on the delicate nature of any interaction, Levelt (1993) expresses this notion with the following utterance:

Speech act's effectiveness depends on a variety of factors; (1) what the speaker says, (2) the context in which it is said, (3) the way in which it is said in terms of prosody, accompanying gestures, gaze, etc., and (4) various listener factors, such as attention, willingness, and available background information (p. 59).

The criticisms towards Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1965, 1975) models originated from the lack of consideration of context in interaction. Therefore, depending on the comments of the researchers, it can be concluded that a full and effective analysis of speech acts requires the combination of linguistic and cultural knowledge of any language. In other words, as language and culture are inseparable concepts, the analysis of language use should be conducted through an integration of linguistic and cultural features.

2.3.5.3. Grice's maxims

Grice's (1975) main idea related to human interaction is that there are universally common expectations to be achieved in conversations and these are called

cooperative principles. Referring to the concept *cooperative*, Arundale (2005) points to the togetherness of any conversational event; in other words, communication requires the mutual efforts and participation of both listeners and speakers. In order to fulfill the criteria of interaction, Levinson (1983) suggests the construction of “conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (p.101). As for the expectations speakers are to meet, Grice (1975) mentions four basic conversational maxims to provide an interactional context in which interlocutors can properly understand each other. These four maxims are: *quality*, *quantity*, *relevance* and *manner*.

Maxim of *quality* is about the correctness of the conversational event. It requires the maintenance of truthfulness of what is said. In addition, it necessitates the conversation to be based on solid grounds. Unless the interlocutor has the evidence to say or claim so, he should not utter something about it. Maxim of *quantity* is related to the amount of what is said. It entails a moderate amount of information to be conveyed during conversation and rejects the rest if unnecessary. In other words, this maxim does not favor the abundance of language use.

Maxim of *relevance* demands what is said during any interaction should be related to the topic under discussion. If what is said is unrelated to the main topic and purpose of the conversation, then maxim of *relevance* is violated. The last one, maxim of *manner*, has to do with the way in which utterances are produced. It involves the avoidance from ambiguity and defends clarity. In order to preserve clarity during interaction, interlocutors should be brief and follow a particular order to stay in the track.

Grice stresses that interlocutors should follow these maxims in order to create and maintain the expected and desired interactions. He notes that disregarding any of the maxims would eventually result in communication break-downs or misunderstandings. However, Grice’s model has also faced criticism. One of the criticisms is, as the one directed to Austin and Searle’s models of speech acts, is about the cultural differences that are possibly to affect conversation styles of interlocutors. In some cultures or some settings, interlocutors may be required to give as little

information as possible. Therefore, there occurs some concern about the universality of the maxims.

Another criticism directed towards Grice's model is based on the stiffness, or lack of flexibility, which is demanded by the maxims. Resembling the stiffness of the maxims to commands, Taylor and Cameron (1984) express their disapproval as follows:

The Cooperative Principle and the Maxims function as commands which conversational participants should follow and cooperative principle and the maxims have failed to develop a method by which one can identify the rules of conversation and offered 'fictional rules' instead" (p. 96).

The lack of flexibility in the cooperative principles of Grice's model is also evaluated from a different perspective. Zegarac (2000) takes the interpretation process in any interaction into consideration and comments that the maxims are not detailed or specific enough to explain how to evaluate and interpret a conversation. They just draw some lines to follow during interaction but do not mention any interpretation procedures. An additional concern or criticism is related to the psychological and interpersonal side of interactional events (LoCastro, 2003).

The critical approaches to these four maxims indicate that they ignore the effects of individual preferences in interactions. Sometimes, people consciously break the rules of the maxims in order to achieve a specific purpose in their minds. Therefore, it can be concluded that because of various reasons, people can flout the rules of maxims. The politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) can provide an explanation of the possible reasons for flouting the maxims.

2.3.5.4. Politeness theory

Politeness theory was proposed contrary to the idea of regularly following cooperative principles. Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest that the underlying reason behind the possible violation of Grice's (1975) maxims is to be evaluated within the framework of interlocutor's wish to communicate politely and not to be offensive. Regarding the Politeness Principle, Leech (1983) maintains that it is not a principle to replace the Cooperative Principle but, instead, it can compensate for the missing aspects in the CP model. Politeness Theory is mostly based on the notion of *face* which is

proposed by Goffman (1967). Goffman (1967) defines face as the “positive social value of a person effectively claims for himself... by making a good showing for himself” (p. 5). In other words, face is the desired self-image that language users want to show to other interlocutors. Brown and Levinson (1987) consider face as something which has an emotional basis and which can be constructed, maintained and changed during interaction.

There are two sorts of *face* proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987): *positive* and *negative face*. Positive face is defined as the desire to be approved by other interlocutors. It is the wish of “every member that his wants to be desirable to at least some others” (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 62). Negative face, on the other hand, refers to the desire of interlocutors to defend their self image. Brown and Levinson (1987) regard negative face as the wish of “every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others” (p.62). Taking the concepts of both positive and negative face, Watts (2003) makes the following remark:

[N]egative face is the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction – i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition, and positive face is the positive consistent self-image or ‘personality’ (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. (p. 104)

As people are in a constant process of interaction, different speech acts pose different types of threats to negative or positive faces of interlocutors. These threats are referred to as *face-threatening acts (FTA)*. Brown and Levinson (1987) assert that some speech acts are fundamentally threatening in nature and they should be softened in order to achieve politeness. Based on their observation that there are two essential points in politeness during interaction (to maintaining positive self image towards others and to evade being forced to do something or to avoid the violation of freedom by others), Brown and Levinson basically propose fifteen positive and ten negative FTAs. For example; some threats to the listener’s positive face can be complaining, criticizing or disagreeing while ordering, advising or warning can be threats to the negative face of the listener. On the other hand, taking the speaker-side into account; accepting an offer or accepting thanks can be presented as examples of threats to the negative face of the

speaker. In addition, threats to the positive face of the speaker are apologizing or confessing.

As to the level and type of face-threatening acts, Brown and Levinson (1987) comment that there are three influential factors: the social space or distance between listeners and speakers (D), the comparison of the social power between listener and speaker (P) and the level or ranking of the imposition in the specific context (R). Based on these factors, Brown and Levinson (1987) propose a formula to predict the weight or weightiness ($W\chi$) of the face-threatening act between hearers (H) and speakers (S) as the following:

$$(W\chi) = D(S, H) + P(H, S) + R\chi \text{ (p. 69)}$$

The simple examination of this formula presents the correlation among these factors. In other words, the weight of the face-threatening act depends on the level of the social distance, social power and ranking of imposition. Starting from the possible effects of these threatening acts in different contexts, Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest some politeness strategies to decrease the severity of threats. The following figure displays the politeness strategies offered by Brown and Levinson (1987, p.60):

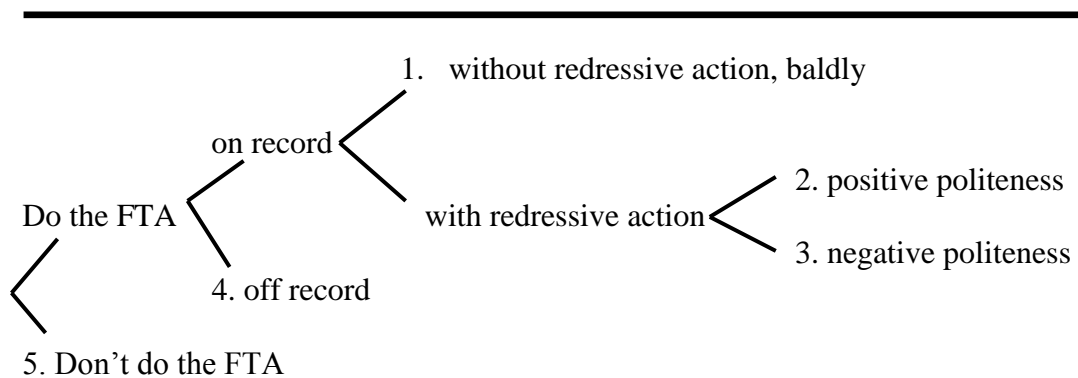


Figure 2.4. Politeness strategies

The definitions of the terms taking place in politeness strategies offered by Brown and Levinson (1987) shed light on the figure provided above. *On record* refers to the case in which the speaker says something directly avoiding ambiguity (ex: I need to use your dictionary). *Off record* means the avoidance of the speaker to give direct

utterances and ask direct impositions (ex: I have forgotten my dictionary). *Baldly without redress* defines saying the intention directly and clearly without softening it (ex: Give me your dictionary). *On the contrary, redressive action* requires the speaker to change and soften his utterances when he puts what is in his mind into words. Redressive actions include some modifications or additional behaviors (ex: Would you mind lending me your dictionary). *Positive politeness* asks the speaker to soften his utterance as much as possible in order to minimize the likely threat of the desire (ex: If it won't be a problem for you, is it possible that we can use your dictionary together?). On the other hand, in *negative politeness*, the speaker asks the listener to do what he wants while trying to preserve his own self-determination (ex: I am really sorry to disturb you; but, can you please give me your dictionary?). Another possible solution is to make use of *do not do the FTA*. In this way, the speaker avoids taking the risk of potential threat and preserves politeness during the interaction.

The Politeness Theory is significant for the general study of speech acts and the specific study of indirect speech acts due to the positive correlation between the degrees of indirectness and politeness in speech acts. Searle (1975) considers politeness as the basic component or motive for indirectness. If an interlocutor wants to be polite, he needs to adopt more indirect strategies or vice versa. Therefore, the model of politeness is essential in studying and understanding speech acts, especially indirect ones as indirectness is related to the fundamental nature of politeness.

As in any other model in linguistic studies, The Politeness Theory is not above criticism. The foremost criticism, as in the previous ones, is related to the universal applicability of the model. Several researchers comment that there are some differences from culture to culture concerning the politeness issues and strategies, degrees and levels of directness and indirectness (Bialystok, 1993; Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper 1989; House & Kasper, 1981; Wierzbicka, 1991, 2003). As for the delicate nature of communication and the fact that it is also influenced by context, Meier (1995) stresses the effects of context on the flow of the conversation or interaction. Referring to the relationship between politeness and context, she utters that politeness is among the core components to present appropriate and socially acceptable language use. In order to underline the culture-specific nature of politeness, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) maintain that the grammatical and pragmatic aspects of languages are unique, which

naturally makes their language use unique. Therefore, it can be implied that in order to learn another language, people need to gain at least some basic knowledge of the social properties and take the context into account to accomplish communicative acts.

Another issue of criticism is about the limited nature of Politeness Theory. Bowe and Martin (2007) claim that the basic point highlighted in the theory is about the politeness strategies that are to be used in face-threatening acts. However, they point out that actual communication does not consist only of face-threatening acts; instead, there are cases in which interlocutors intentionally or unintentionally perform acts of praise or approval towards the others.

The series of models mentioned above concerning interaction should not be regarded as theories proposed in order to replace the previous one/s. Instead, they are designed to compensate the missing parts in the prior model/s by touching different points from diverse perspectives. Austin (1962) and Searle (1969, 1975) formed the basis of speech acts. Grice (1975) presented conversational maxims to follow in order to maintain order in a conversation which is based on truths, which is as informative as necessary and, hence, not filled with unnecessary remarks. Finally, the Politeness Theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) offered strategies of politeness to preserve both the hearer's and speaker's faces during any kind of interaction. Although there are still some points that receive criticism from different angles, these theories or designs are all valuable as they are essential components in forming the framework of the establishment and evaluation of conversations among different interlocutors in a variety of contexts.

2.3.6. Acquisition of L1 and L2 pragmatic competence

Regarding the acquisition process of L1 and L2 pragmatic competence, the relevant literature displays that the number of studies of L2 pragmatic competence acquisition is fewer than those in L1. Considering the acquisition of L1 pragmatics, studies have shown that children, while acquiring their native language, have the opportunity to be exposed to a great deal of language input especially from their parents (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Children go through a process of gradual development

beginning with the use of gestures or body movements to a number of different strategies that are appropriate to their language and the context (Becker, 1982).

However, considering the acquisition of pragmatics for children and adult learners, Kasper and Schmidt (1996) state there is no considerable difference between both groups as in some other areas of acquisition. In other words, children do not have an advantage over adult learners because pragmatic development occurs in a continual progress taking place in diverse settings with different purposes. In addition, there is no specific order that is observed in the development of pragmatic competence. The more language learners are exposed to language, the more they participate in different contexts in which language is used for a variety of reasons in a variety of language forms, the more their pragmatic competence improves.

On the other hand, the situation is quite different for L2 learners. The L2 learner needs to attain pragmatic competence besides the knowledge of linguistic structures of the language such as the phonological, morphological or syntactic aspects. Comparing the inner-capacity of an L1 learner with that of an L2 learner, Bialystok (1993) states that the L2 learner does not have a “childlike naiveté about the social uses of language” (p. 47). According to Bialystok (1993), while acquiring their mother tongue, children are basically supposed to assign meanings to the symbolic representations offered by their parents or caregivers. They, in a way, naturally acquire pragmatic competence in the process of socialization. However, L2 learners go through a process of learning two difficult dimensions of the target language. They need to learn the linguistic properties of the target language and understand and get used to the social and pragmatic aspects of a language which is mostly new and unfamiliar to them. To point at this issue, Bialystok (1993) asserts that L2 learners, especially adult ones, “make pragmatic errors, not only because they do not understand forms and structures, or because they do not have sufficient vocabulary to express their intentions, but because they choose incorrectly” (p. 54). The difficulty of acquiring all the essential elements concerning linguistic properties and pragmatic features results in wrong choices of language to communicate. Moreover, in order to achieve the desired level of both linguistic and pragmatic competence, L2 learners need to take the social and contextual factors into consideration and evaluate the effects of these factors on their language comprehension and production. So as to attain and use one of the most essential skills, i.e. pragmatic

competence, learners are to possess the ability to distinguish between diverse settings and then make an evaluation regarding their particular requirements in order to decide on the appropriate way to use the language (Kasper & Rose, 2002).

2.3.7. ESL vs. EFL contexts for pragmatic competence

EFL stands for English as a Foreign Language whereas ESL stands for English as a Second Language. EFL refers to a learning and teaching context in which the target language is learned in a country where English is not the mother tongue. For example, Turkish students who try to learn English in Turkey are learning the language in an EFL context. On the other hand, an ESL context is a setting where the target language is taught to students in a country in which English is the dominant or official language. Turkish students learning English in England or America are conducting their language studies in an ESL context. Some researchers also support this notion that there are apparent differences between ESL and EFL contexts (Freed, 1995; Huebner, 1995; Longcope, 2009). Although the difference between these two instructional contexts may be interpreted as slight at first, there are actually great differences between them considering the objectives of the instructional program and learners, the requirements, the teaching strategies and the available opportunities.

For the purposes of this presentation, the term *context* is used in order to refer to not only the classroom setting but also the environment outside the classroom in which learners can interact in the target language and can be exposed to it. As the present study examines English in a foreign language context, focusing on EFL side of the issue would be useful. The fundamental basis of the studies examining EFL contexts from the pragmatic perspective arises from the necessity to understand and identify the way non-native learners or speakers interact with each other. The main purpose of the studies is to discover the difficulties in the process of communication and provide some possible solutions to these problematic areas.

One of the most outstanding problems in an EFL context is reported to be the limited opportunity to interact with speakers of the target language. In other words, the necessary contact that language learners need in order to develop their communicative skills is not actualized due to contextual limitations (Lörscher & Schulze, 1988; Rose,

1999). The typical classroom context and the way of instruction may hinder students' development because of the constraints in pragmatic input. In addition, class size has mostly a negative effect on the chances to practice the language. Learners in classrooms with a number of students are, most of the time, not able to use the target language for practical purposes (Rose, 1999). The instructional focus on teaching the linguistic aspects of the target language but giving less emphasis on the pragmatic features is also one of the points of criticism (Alco'n & Safont, 2001; Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004). This point is also referred to by Wilkinson (2005) who, after analyzing the instructional curriculum of undergraduate students, comments that language courses are not comprehensible enough to facilitate the development of productive skills and this results in problems when students try to interact in the target language. Therefore, she recommends that the opportunities should be increased in order to offer students a unified form of instruction combining linguistic and communicative development.

What mainly distinguish ESL and EFL contexts are the opportunities for language exposure as well as language contact. In addition, the issues of *input* and *output* are also worth to mention. In ESL contexts, learners can be exposed to language input in different contexts inside and outside the classroom. The input helps learners improve their language competence as proposed by Krashen (1981, 1985). Moreover, learners in ESL contexts can also find chances of producing the language in diverse settings. In this way, they can progress their communicative skills through output which is suggested by Swain (1985, 1995). In a comparatively recent study, Longcope (2009) found that the students in ESL context had more opportunities for language input in different settings compared to those in the EFL setting. Moreover, he concluded that ESL context offers more chances of interaction which facilitated language production of the participants unlike those in the EFL setting. Therefore, previous literature reveals that there are basic differences between ESL and EFL contexts for language learning because the former offers more opportunities for practicing the target language in different settings including those outside the classroom whereas the latter is not as rich as the ESL settings in terms of the available chances for input and output. EFL settings generally need different approaches for language education unlike ESL contexts where learners can learn the language by living in its own culture and society. Regarding this

difference and the need to compensate for the inadequacies, Brown (2001) suggests the consideration of “the pedagogical implications for a continuum of contexts ranging from high visibility, ready access to the target language outside the language classroom to no access beyond the classroom door (p. 116). Taking these points into account, it is especially essential to provide instruction and ample opportunities to promote learners’ language development in general and pragmatic development in particular.

Taking especially pragmatic competence into account, Rose (1994) comments that while there has been some emphasis on the development of pragmatic abilities in ESL contexts, its development in EFL settings has been somewhat neglected. The researcher explains that in an ESL context, learners can make use of the available materials or opportunities for practicing the language as well as interacting in the target language outside the classroom; however, this is mostly not the case for EFL learners. Even if they can reach communication opportunities, they most of the time communicate with non-native speakers. Moreover, most language teachers are also non-native speakers of the language. This might be problematic because in such contexts, there are not native speakers to regard as a model. As to the development of pragmatic competence in EFL contexts, Krieger (2005) also states that due to the lack of available opportunities to use the language, teachers need to attach great significance for practicing the language through a wide range of activities in order to promote language development as well as raising pragmatic awareness. These researchers emphasize the essential nature of including pragmatic instruction in general language education especially in EFL settings.

2.3.8. Pragmatic awareness

Among the components of successful communication, pragmatic awareness has been recognized as a fundamental constituent. Therefore, raising learners’ pragmatic awareness is of vital importance in language studies. In order to highlight the value of pragmatic knowledge or awareness, Gombert (1993) maintains that a language user needs the knowledge of not only the linguistic parameters to construct utterances but also the knowledge of how to make use of these parameters according to the situation in which interaction takes place. Taking a similar stance, Kasper and Dahl (1991), Kasper and Rose (2002) and Schauer (2006) suggest that pragmatic competence is composed of

two main elements: pragmatic performance, i.e. production, and metapragmatic awareness. Upon the indispensable effect of pragmatic awareness on pragmatic competence, Garcia (2004) comments as the following:

[P]ragmatic competence refers to a language user's ability to produce language for different purposes and to comprehend speaker intention. It also refers to a language user's knowledge of social rules of appropriacy [...] and awareness of how utterances are strung together in coherent discourse. (p. 16)

Another concept related to pragmatic awareness, *metapragmatic awareness*, is defined, by Verschueren (2000) as an essential motive that directs the meaning-making power in using language. This concept is also defined as the "knowledge of the social meaning of variable second language forms and awareness of the ways in which these forms mark different aspects of social contexts" (Kinginger & Farrell (2004, p. 20). Hence, it can be assumed that the knowledge of linguistic aspects of a language is not enough to achieve proper communication. In order to accomplish the desired level of communicative competence, a language learner should also possess pragmatic awareness through being exposed to the information concerning the pragmatic aspects of the target language (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005). It is, thus, a part of teachers' responsibility to raise pragmatic awareness of their learners. Considering teachers' role in awareness raising, Thomas (1983) notes that language teachers need to "develop ways of heightening and refining students' metapragmatic awareness, so that they are able to express themselves as they choose" (p. 91). To teach learners pragmatic awareness, teachers are first of all required to develop their awareness. Teachers' raising their own awareness of a variety of linguistic and pragmatic aspects is essential in language instruction.

One of the issues worth mentioning in the discussion of pragmatic awareness is Schmidt's (1990, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2001) Noticing Hypothesis. Schmidt (2001) comments that in order for learners to learn the features of the target language, they need to be exposed to those aspects. According to Schmidt, learners first need to notice the surface forms in order to manage the underlying forms. In other words, language learners are to be aware of some aspects in the input before they can internalize the form as an intake. When the specific feature is noticed, it becomes available in the

interlanguage of the learner to use during language performance. Underlining the significant position of noticing in language learning, Schmidt (2001) states that “while there is subliminal perception, there is no subliminal learning” (p. 26). In a study conducted to suggest the most suitable and effective ways of instructional treatment, Silva (2003) maintains that learners are to pay attention to the language input they receive. In this way they can raise their awareness in order to recognize the differences between their language production and that of native speakers and to identify ways to develop their pragmatic abilities. In a different study investigating the influence of pragmatic consciousness-raising (PCR) activities in pragmatic competence acquisition, Narita (2012) suggests that PCR activities are beneficial in raising learners’ awareness towards the target language forms, which naturally has positive effects on their language production.

2.3.9. Pragmatic failure

Pragmatic failure can be essentially defined as the inability to use pragmatics properly in interactional contexts. Thomas (1983) describes pragmatic failure as the incapability of the language user to use the language in an effective manner and the inability to understand what the other interlocutor says. Pragmatic failure results in communication break-downs or misunderstandings. Some of these failures can be regarded as funny and tolerated; yet, some may have severe consequences than expected (Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011; Einstein & Bodman, 1993; Padilla Cruz, 2013; Shi, 2014; Thomas, 1983).

Thomas (1983) identifies two main sorts of pragmatic failures: *pragmalinguistic failure and sociopragmatic failure* (The concepts of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics have already been discussed in the preceding section -2.3.4.1. Leech’s Distinction between Pragmalinguistic and Sociopragmatic Competence). She states that there may be differences between the native and the target language considering the linguistic forms of expression for a certain speech act. Therefore, cross-cultural pragmalinguistic failures take place when the linguistic structures required to perform a speech act differ in the linguistic systems of the two languages. In other words, the inappropriate transfer of L1 linguistic strategies cause pragmalinguistic failures in L2 production. Sociopragmatic failure, on the other hand, is about the differences between

the social contexts and norms in the two languages. If the language user cannot follow the social rules of maintaining the conversation based on the social structure of L2, then sociopragmatic failure occurs.

Thomas' (1983) distinction between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failures has been extended by including the receptive/interpretive and productive failures (Muir & Xu, 2011). The researchers propose that there are four types of pragmatic failures. The first one is *interpretative pragmalinguistic failure* which takes place when non-native speakers mis-interpret the meaning of an utterance that is, in fact, contextually appropriate. The second type is *interpretative sociopragmatic failure*. The main reason for this kind of failure is the socio-cultural differences between L1 and L2. If a language user cannot understand or misunderstands the native-speaker because of such social issues as power or distance, then interpretative sociopragmatic failure occurs. The two other failure types are related to productive aspects. *Productive pragmalinguistic failure* occurs because of the non-native speaker's mis-match between a linguistic form and the appropriate context. In other words, when a NNS uses an utterance which is not suitable for a specific context, what he says is evaluated as productive pragmalinguistic failure. The last type of failure is *productive sociopragmatic failure* which takes place when the NNS performs a linguistic action that is not appropriate according to the socio-cultural differences between the two languages. Proposing these four types of failures, Muir and Xu (2011) also maintain that there is not an absolute distinction among them. In addition, the failure in one type can cause failure in the other. For example, if a NNS goes through an interpretative pragmalinguistic failure, it is possible for him to conduct productive sociopragmatic failure.

It is important to avoid pragmatic failures because in using language for interaction, people construct and reflect their identities (Pavlenko, 2002). Therefore, in order not to display a false or inappropriate reflection on other interlocutors, language learners are to develop their pragmatic competences. That is why, teaching pragmatics to language learners is of vital importance.

2.3.10. Why teach pragmatics

As discussed in the previous section, the lack or inadequacy of pragmatic awareness and pragmatic competence results in pragmatic failures with different degrees of severity. Therefore, integrating pragmatic instruction in the EFL and ESL curriculum is of great significance. However, despite the growing awareness of the importance of pragmatic competence, there are still some inadequacies in the pragmatic instruction (Alco'n Soler, 2002; Eisenchlas, 2011; Erton, 2007; McKay, 2003; Vellenga, 2008; Wilkinson, 2005). These researchers make some criticisms based on their observations and studies that instructional settings are still more concerned with teaching grammatical and lexical aspects of the target language and ignore the instruction of pragmatics. For example, McKay (2003) maintains that since the introduction of communicative approaches, there have been few modifications in teaching and assessing pragmatic competence of learners.

Vellenga (2008) suggests some possible reasons for the lack of pragmatic instruction. These reasons are the design of the material for use in instruction, the belief that learners can somehow learn the pragmatic aspects of the target language and teachers' inadequacy or unwillingness to employ different instruction methods to teach pragmatic features to students. In addition to these reasons, Eisenchlas (2011) also points at some other causes like the artificiality of most classroom activities and the limited nature, both qualitatively and quantitatively, of input presented in textbooks.

Looking at the issue from a different angle, some researchers point out that the high levels of grammatical or linguistic proficiency does not guarantee success in pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989; Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, & Thurrell, 1995). For example, Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) state that "even fairly advanced language learners' communicative acts regularly contain pragmatic errors, or deficits, in that they fail to convey or comprehend the intended illocutionary force or politeness value [of utterances]" (p. 10). Bardovi-Harlig (1996) further notes that regardless of their linguistic proficiency, most language learners experience problems in pragmatics. If language learners are not provided with the necessary knowledge of pragmatics, they may adopt the strategy of transferring what they already have in their L1. However, the errors as a result of this pragmatic

transfer, as Richard (1980) notes, may have more serious consequences than those occurring at other linguistic or syntactic levels. Therefore, it can be concluded that possessing grammatical knowledge alone is necessary but not sufficient in order for language users to communicate successfully. They are also required to know and follow the social norms and rules for effective interaction.

Different studies have highlighted the importance of including pragmatic instruction besides linguistic instruction (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Kasper, 1996; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; LoCastro, 2003; Takimoto, 2008). Kasper (1996), underlining the necessity of teaching pragmatics and emphasizing the indispensable nature of including pragmatics into instruction, maintains that “the issue is not whether or not but how to teach” (p. 147). Kasper and Schmidt (1996) note that “there is every reason to expect that pragmatic knowledge should be teachable” (p. 160). Erton (2007) suggests the integration of certain pedagogical features of pragmatic competence into ELT programs. The integration of pragmatic aspects in the instructional process is essential because, especially in EFL settings, learners have limited opportunities to contact with native speakers of the target language and they have little chance to practice in authentic environments. Considering the effect of pragmatic instruction in increasing learners’ familiarity with the appropriate rules and strategies, Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor (2010) make the following comment:

The goal of instruction in (L2) pragmatics is not to insist on conformity to a particular target-language norm, but rather to help learners become familiar with the range of pragmatic devices and practices in the target language... [E]xposing the learners to pragmatics in their second or foreign language helps them expand their perceptions of the language and speakers of the language. (p. 5)

In order to provide language learners with the necessary pragmatic instruction, language teachers should, first, equip themselves with adequate knowledge of the pragmatic structure of the target language. Stating that language teachers do not have to be native speakers of the target language, Kasper and Rose (2002) assert that language teachers should improve their pragmatic competence in order to help their learners develop their pragmatic competencies. Upon the same issue, Tatsuki and Houck (2010) stress the point that teachers should be aware of different pragmatic aspects of the

language they teach and have a wide knowledge of various strategies or methods to teach pragmatics.

Therefore, in order to raise language learners' awareness of pragmatic aspects of the target language and to equip them with essential and helpful strategies to develop their pragmatic competence, pragmatic instruction should be an indispensable part of foreign language teaching process. With appropriate and adequate pragmatic instruction, learners can learn how to adapt and adopt strategies in the process of comprehension and production of language. Possessing the essential strategies and skills, language learners can avoid break-downs or misunderstandings that are possibly to occur during communication.

2.4. Factors Affecting Language Learners' Pragmatic Competence

Pragmatic competence of language learners is affected by a number of factors which will be separately discussed in this section. These main influential factors are: *language proficiency, instruction and input; learning environment, length of residence, motivation, learning strategies, feedback and output.*

2.4.1. Research on language proficiency

Research on the factors affecting pragmatic competence shows that language proficiency has large-scale effects on pragmatic competence. There are a number of studies examining the effects of L2 proficiency on language learners' pragmatic competence or development. Some of these studies show that there is a positive correlation between L2 proficiency and pragmatic performance (Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Beebe & Waring, 2004; Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; Cook & Liddicoat, 2002; Ifantidou, 2011; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 2003; Koiko, 1996; Matsumura, 2003; Rose, 2000; Phakiti & Li, 2011; Pieneman, 1998; Safont Jorda, 2005; Su, 2010; Taguchi, 2011b; Takahashi, 2005; Takashi & Beebe, 1987; Wannaruk, 2008). On the other hand, there are some other studies that provide counter-argument and evidence supporting that L2 proficiency does not always bring success in L2 pragmatic competence or performance (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999; Einstein & Bodman, 1993; Scarcella, 1983; Shardakova, 2005; Schmidt, 1983).

As for interlanguage pragmatic development, a number of studies have pointed out that there is a positive correlation between learners' general L2 language proficiency and their development of pragmatic competence. Cohen and Olshtain (1981), who carried out one of the earliest studies mostly dealing with speech acts, investigated apology strategies and found that L2 learners did not make use of the necessary apology strategies as it was required since they lacked the essential linguistic and lexical knowledge. In a similar vein, though based on a different speech act, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) conducted a study investigating requests with three groups of students with different proficiency levels. The major results revealed that the groups performed according to their proficiency levels. In other words, the lower proficiency group underperformed while the advanced or higher proficiency group showed a nearly native-like performance of requests. Examining the performance of apologies by L2 learners, as in Cohen and Olshtain's (1981) study, Trosborg (1987) found out that the participants mostly employed direct strategies of apologizing instead of providing explanations for more indirect strategies.

Reaching similar conclusions with the above-mentioned studies, Takahashi and Beebe (1987) carried out a study on refusals. The results revealed that the participants with higher proficiency levels preferred more indirect strategies for refusing with softened expressions whereas the lower level participants employed more direct strategies. Assessing the issue from the results of these studies will reveal the conclusion that higher proficiency levels in the target language help language learners to adopt more indirect strategies which are mostly more valued than direct ones, especially for refusals.

Another researcher who identified a positive correlation between L2 proficiency and pragmatic competence was Trosborg (1995). Based on a study on complaints, the research called attention to the occurrence of a significant difference between the performances of advanced and lower level learners. The performances of higher level participants turned out to be more native-like compared to the lower level ones. Another study was conducted by Koike (1996) who worked on Spanish as a foreign language. The study explored the pragmatic development of learners with different proficiency levels on a cross-sectional perspective. The participants were first and second-year students and students with advanced levels of Spanish. They were required to provide

possible answers to the videotaped scenarios and to identify the speech act type. The results revealed that there is a significant difference between the performances of advanced group and the other two groups. Depending on the results of this study, it can be concluded that learners' proficiency levels also affect their pragmatic awareness, as does the amount of exposure and staying in the target community.

There are other studies supporting the positive effects of L2 proficiency on pragmatic performance. For example, Rose (2000) investigated three types of speech acts; requests, apologies and compliments. The participants were Hong Kong elementary school students with different proficiency levels and different ages. Divided into two main groups, the participants were evaluated as regards their pragmalinguistic proficiency (the capability to identify the appropriate speech act and provide correct linguistic items in order to convey the meaning) and their sociopragmatic proficiency (the ability to take the social criteria into consideration while performing speech acts). The main results showed that the pragmalinguistic proficiency of lower level group was higher than their sociopragmatic proficiency. The sociopragmatic proficiency of the higher level group was better than that of the lower group. In addition, the participants with higher levels showed more development in pragmatic competence than the other participants. Piennemann (1998) stressed that in order for learners to achieve the desired level of pragmatic competence, they need to go over the previous stages of acquisition, which is also supported by Rose's (2000) study.

Aiming to find out whether there is a difference between the language performances of lower and higher proficiency learners, Cook and Liddicoat (2002) carried out a study on ESL learners' pragmatic awareness of requests. The researchers compared the performances of ESL learners with those of native speakers. The results revealed that lower level participants were not as successful as their higher level counterparts in identifying the differences between conventional and nonconventional meanings hidden in the requests that were presented to them. The higher level group was better at recognizing the native-like utterances. Attracted by the possible relationship between language proficiency and pragmatic development, Beebe and Waring (2004) conducted a study with 40 ESL learners in two proficiency groups. The participants were asked to complete a discourse completion task. Based on the results, it was revealed that there were differences in the performances of the two groups, as there

were differences in their general linguistic proficiency. The higher level participants were much better at following the necessary social conventions and employing the strategies to use the target language appropriately. Taking all these studies into account, it can be stated that there may be a positive correlation between language learners' general language abilities and their pragmatic performances. It can be assumed that any language performance is based on some basic knowledge of the linguistic structures and the lexical knowledge in the target language.

Studies conducted in recent years have also focused on the possible influence of language proficiency on pragmatic performance. The study conducted by Safont Jorda (2005) touched upon the effects of the level of language proficiency on the performances of the participants though there were other variables to be evaluated like the effects of knowing more than one language. Developing an original data collection instrument, Taguchi (2008b) measured the level of pragmatic comprehension in Japanese as a foreign language. While investigating the ability to identify the illocutionary force presented in conventional and nonconventional aspects, the study also looked at the influence of proficiency on comprehension. 63 college students with two different proficiency levels were required to complete a listening test assessing their comprehension abilities. The comprehension performances of the students were evaluated based on accuracy and comprehension speed. The results revealed that the effects of the proficiency levels were on the accuracy but not on comprehension speed. Therefore, it can be concluded that while proficiency levels may affect the appropriateness of pragmatic performance, the speed of the performance is affected by other internal or external factors.

Taking the issue of pragmatic transfer into consideration, Wannaruk (2008) and Allami and Naeimi (2011) found that there is a positive correlation between levels of language proficiency and pragmatic transfer. Examining the similarities and differences between American English and Thai in refusals as well as the Thai EFL learners' pragmatic transfers considering refusals, the study of Wannaruk (2008) showed that EFL learners with lower levels of English proficiency made use of direct translations from their L1 to L2 because of their limited knowledge of pragmatics in the target language. However, participants with higher proficiency levels could employ the appropriate pragmatic transfer strategies. Allami and Naeimi (2011) conducted a study

with 30 Persian learners of English in order to examine the frequency and content of semantic formulas taking learners' language proficiency into account. The related findings showed the existence of a positive correlation between pragmatic transfers and language proficiencies of the participants. Higher level learners were more capable in transferring L1 socio-cultural and sociopragmatic features into L2 language production. Based on the results of these two studies, it can be claimed that learners with higher levels of language proficiency can make use of the advantages of pragmatic transfer. Though it does not always produce the expected results, the socio-cultural features of L1 can effectively be transferred into L2 pragmatics. Learners with higher levels can employ this strategy more successfully than lower level ones because the latter group lacks the necessary linguistic strategies to transfer what they already know in L1 into L2.

Working with graduate students carrying out their Master's studies, Phakiti and Li (2011) investigated the difficulties experienced in general academics and academic reading and writing. The data were collected through a questionnaire completed by 51 students and semi-structured interviews with 11 participants. The results pointed out that the difficulties experienced by the participants in general academics and the field of academic writing and reading were partly due to the lack of their academic language proficiency as well as other factors like motivation, self-efficacy or academic adjustment.

Taguchi (2011b) carried out a cross-sectional study to evaluate the effects of general language proficiency and the experience of studying abroad on the pragmatic comprehension. 25 native English speakers and 64 Japanese college students participated in the study. The Japanese students were divided into three groups in accordance with their language proficiency and study-abroad experience. Analyzed according to the comprehension accuracy scores and response times, the results of the pragmatic listening test revealed a considerable impact of proficiency on response times. In other words, the participants with higher proficiency levels were quicker in comprehending the audio in the target language.

The results of the above-mentioned studies, from different angles, all support the positive impact of L2 proficiency on pragmatic competence or performance. However,

as in almost all issues under discussion, there are also studies, the results of which object to the positive influence of L2 proficiency on target language pragmatics. These studies provide counter-evidence that there is not a close connection between L2 proficiency and L2 pragmatic competence. To give an example, one of the most frequently cited studies, Schmidt's (1983) Wes study, showed that the participant's limited linguistic knowledge did not prevent him from communicating with native speakers of the target language. By interacting with the native speakers, Wes actually improved his pragmatic competence. Based on the observations, Schmidt (1983) commented that Wes' motivation to interact in the target language was very high and this helped him develop his pragmatic abilities and added that Wes "would show more development over time in the area of sociolinguistic competence compared with his very limited development in grammatical competence" (p. 702). The results of this observation reveal that in order to improve pragmatic development, a language learner does not have to depend on linguistic development.

The results of the study by Scarcella (1983) attracts attention to a different aspect of the issue by pointing out that even learners with higher proficiency levels still experience problems during their pragmatic performances. The study of Einstein and Bodman (1993) also revealed that the performance of learners with advanced levels were far from the desired native-like performances. Upon the dependency of pragmatic competence on linguistic competence, Bardovi-Harlig (1999) maintained that a higher level of linguistic competence is not a guarantee for higher levels of pragmatic development. Grammatical competence is a necessary but not a sufficient factor alone in the promotion of pragmatic competence.

The view that language proficiency is not significantly related to pragmatic competence is also shared by Matsumura (2003). The researcher conducted a study on Japanese ESL learners' sensitivity to appropriateness concerning advice as a sort of speech act. The results of this longitudinal study revealed that the proficiency levels of the participants do not have direct impacts on their performances. In a study of apology strategies, Shardakova (2005) pointed at the discrepancy between L2 proficiency levels and apology performances. The higher levels of proficiency did not help the participants to pick proper apology strategies. Supporting the results of Einstein and Bodman (1993), Bella (2012) also stated that although there were some points that showed

development with increasing language proficiency, the performances of advanced level learners were far below those of natives in terms of several dimensions.

Table 2.1.

Summary of the Studies on the Effects of L2 Proficiency on Pragmatic Competence

Summary of the studies investigating the effects of L2 proficiency on L2 pragmatics in ESL & EFL contexts		
Researchers	Context and Participants	Major Findings
Cohen & Olshtain (1981)		The lack of necessary linguistic and lexical knowledge resulted in poor pragmatic performance.
Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1986)	Three groups of L2 EFL learners with different proficiency levels	The pragmatic performances of the participants were in accordance with their proficiency levels.
Rose (2000)	Hong Kong elementary school students with different proficiency levels	Sociopragmatic ability of the higher level participants was better than that of the lower group.
Cook and Liddicoat (2002)	ESIL learners with higher and lower proficiency levels	Higher level participants were better in recognizing the illocutionary meanings.
Beebe and Waring (2004)	40 ESL learners in two proficiency groups	The lower level participants were not as successful as the higher level ones in employing the essential social conventions and strategies.
Taguchi (2008b)	63 college students with different proficiency levels	The results, based on the evaluation of pragmatic comprehension, showed that the proficiency levels affected the accuracy of comprehension but not its speed.
Wannaruk (2008)	Thai EFL learners with varying levels of proficiency	Lower proficiency levels directed learners to use more direct strategies while higher level learners were better in employing appropriate strategies.
Allami and Naeimi (2011)	30 Persian learners of English	Higher level learners were more successful in utilizing L1 pragmatic norms in L2 interaction.
Phakiti and Li (2011)	Graduate students conducting Master studies	The difficulties in general academics and academic production were because of the lack of language proficiency as well as other factors.
Taguchi (2011b)	25 native English speakers and 64 Japanese college students	The proficiency levels positively affected the response durations of the participants.

The above table presents the results of the studies pertaining to the impact of language proficiency on pragmatic competence. Though conducted in diverse settings

with different participants, a great percentage of research on the issue reveals the positive effect of L2 proficiency on pragmatic development. It can be concluded from the analysis of the studies mentioned in this section that a good level of language proficiency naturally increases pragmatic competences of language learners. There are also other factors that are influential in pragmatic development. One of these aspects which has close connection with L2 proficiency is *language instruction and input* which is discussed in the following section.

2.4.2. Research on instruction and input

This section presents the effects of instruction and input on the development of pragmatic competence. Bringing to the forefront the scope of the studies on the impact of instruction upon pragmatics, Kasper and Rose (2002) state there are three essential points of investigation: whether the pragmatic aspects are teachable, whether instruction is more efficient than no instruction and whether various approaches affect the development of pragmatics differently. Many studies have investigated the impact of instruction mostly from the explicit and implicit dimensions of the issue and most of them favored the positive effects of instruction on learners' pragmatic development (Alco'n Soler, 2005; Alco'n Soler & Guzmán Pitarch, 2010; Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2010; Dewaele, 2004; Fordyce, 2014; Halenko & Jones, 2011; Ifantidou, 2013; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Li, 2012; Liddicoat & Crozet, 2001; Martines-Flor & Fukuya, 2005; Nguyen, Pham & Pham, 2012; Nikula, 2008; Rajabi & Farahian, 2013; Rose, 2005; Rose, 2012; Savignon & Wang, 2003; Silva, 2003; Takahashi, 2005; Takimoto, 2007; Takimoto, 2008; Takimoto, 2009; Uso'-Juan & Martí'nez-Flor, 2008; van Compernelle, 2011). Pointing out the benefits of either explicit or implicit type of instruction, or sometimes the combination of both, the related studies have all shown that instruction should be a major component in language learning and teaching to enable learners to be aware of language forms and language usage in interaction (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan Taylor, 2010). Uso'-Juan and Martí'nez-Flor (2008), in their study proposing a learner-based instruction at university level, stress the significance of developing learners' capabilities to use language for communicative purposes and suggest the integration of pragmatic education in instruction for accomplishing improvement of pragmatic competence.

Some researchers made a distinction between explicit and implicit instruction. Doughty (2003) maintains that explicit instruction directs learners' attention to target structures in order to discuss forms while implicit instruction tries to attract learners' attention and raise their awareness without providing any metalinguistic explanation. In other words, explicit instruction differs from implicit instruction in that the former gives rule explanation while the latter does not.

The results of the studies conducted on instruction and pragmatics revealed that instruction is mostly an effective factor in pragmatic development of language learners. One of these studies belongs to Liddicoat and Crozet (2001). With Australian university learners of French, the researchers conducted a study on the effects of instruction on one of the aspects of communication. Role-plays in a pre and post-test design accompanied with instructional treatment with four parts (production, feedback, awareness-raising and narrative reconstruction) were applied. The main findings showed that following the instructional treatment, the participants were able to produce native-like forms in using both language structures and language content. A year later, a delayed post-test was again applied to the participants. The results showed that the content was remembered easily though there were some problems with the retention of language forms. Therefore, based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that communicative aspects are more amenable to instruction and are easier to integrate into instruction than linguistic forms.

Some of the related literature focusing on explicit instruction showed that explicit instruction generally promotes pragmatic competence. Silva (2003) conducted a study to investigate the impact of explicit instruction on L2 pragmatic development as well as looking for the best and most effective way to teach pragmatic content. In an experimental study with pre and post-tests, the researcher integrated metapragmatic awareness into task-based methodology during instructional treatment. The main purpose of the instruction was to teach sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic components of refusals as a speech act. Fourteen low-intermediate learners with different L1s were randomly and equally divided into experimental and control groups and they were asked to conduct role-plays. Analyzed through a qualitative discourse analytic approach, the results revealed that the instructional treatment created positive effects on the L2 pragmatic capabilities of the participants. Revealing similar results

with those by Liddicoat and Crozet (2001), Silva's (2003) study also highlighted the importance and positive impact of instruction on the development of L2 pragmatic competence. They propose that when combined with meaningful opportunities for practice, instruction becomes an essential component of the pragmatic development process.

The review of relevant literature shows that there are also some studies conducted on the impacts of both explicit and implicit instruction. In 2005, Koike and Pearson carried out a study to evaluate two types of instruction and feedback ways on pragmatics. They examined the effectiveness of explicit or implicit pre-instruction and explicit or implicit feedback to English learners of Spanish. The results of this experimental study pointed out that the group with explicit pre-instruction and explicit feedback outperformed the implicit group in multiple choices. However, the performance of the group receiving implicit instruction and implicit feedback in open-ended dialogues was significantly higher than that of the explicit group. The results of the delayed post-tests also approved the positive effects of these two instruction ways, i.e. both explicit and implicit. The participants in both the explicit and implicit groups showed more awareness of a variety of pragmatic expressions and they were quicker in producing the expected utterances than the control group with no instruction. Pointing at the impact of explicit and implicit instruction on different aspects of language production, this study shows the benefits of instruction over non-instruction.

Another experimental study was presented by Martines-Flor and Fukuya (2005). The study investigated the effects of explicit and implicit instruction on learning head acts and downgraders used in suggestions. Eighty-one Spanish-speaking learners of English were divided into three groups; one group with explicit instruction was provided with metapragmatic information on suggestions, one group with implicit instruction was offered pragmalinguistic enhancement and recast activities and the control group with no instruction. All the groups were required to deal with e-mail and phone activities during pre and post-tests. Compared to the control group, both the explicit and implicit groups showed pragmatic improvement in suggestions by presenting appropriate and correct forms in linguistic and pragmatic terms. Based on their results, the researchers proposed that the combination of both types of instruction could yield the expected results in the development of L2 pragmatic competence.

Investigating the extent of the efficacy of explicit and implicit instruction on the development of request strategies, Alcón Soler (2005) conducted a study with one hundred and thirty-two students who were included in three groups of the experimental design, i.e. the explicit, implicit and control group. All the participants in these groups were presented excerpts with request forms. The explicit group received instruction including direct awareness-raising tasks and written metapragmatic feedback while the implicit group was offered implicit awareness-raising tasks. The comparison of these two groups with the control group pointed at the superiority of both explicit and implicit groups over the control group. However, a comparison between the explicit and implicit groups revealed an advantage of the explicit group over the implicit one. Unlike Koike and Pearson's (2005) and Martines-Flor and Fukuya's (2005) study, this study rated explicit instruction over implicit instruction. This difference among the results of the studies might be due to their sampling and what is included or excluded during their explicit and implicit instructions.

Basically examining the effect of instruction on pragmatics, Takahashi (2005) carried out a qualitative study which investigated how Japanese EFL learners' noticing is restricted by different treatments and to what extent learners' noticing affect their learning outcomes. After a pre-test, forty nine participants were divided into two groups: one group exposed to form-comparison and the other exposed to form-search conditions. The analysis was made according to the extent of learners' noticing the appropriate request forms as well as the post-test self reports about learners' concerns of request production. The results showed that the performance of the form-comparison group was better than the form-search group. Besides, those learners whose awareness was raised during the treatment reflected this development in their post-test performance. Therefore, it can be supposed that the reason why the form-comparison treatment worked better than the other was that by focusing on a comparison of the existing forms, the participants' awareness was raised. Awareness is indicated to be an essential factor in the internalization of any language structure or language usage (Schmidt, 2001). This appears to be the probable reason why the form-comparison group performed better than the other group.

Looking at the issue of instruction from a different perspective, Takimoto (2008) examined the influence of deductive and inductive approaches on pragmatic

competence, especially on how to produce phrasal and syntactic down-graders in requests. Sixty adult Japanese learners of English with intermediate levels were randomly assigned to four groups: one treatment group with deductive instruction, one treatment group with inductive instruction including problem-solving tasks, one treatment group with inductive instruction including structured input tasks and a control group. In addition, both the deductive and inductive groups were offered different explicit input-based instruction. The participants were asked to complete a pre-test, a post-test and a follow-up test each having two receptive judgment activities and two production tasks. The results indicated that the performances of all the treatment groups were significantly higher than those of the control group. One negative result was observed in the deductive instruction group in their performances between the post-test and the follow-up test; the positive contributions of the treatment decreased and the deductive instruction group could not reflect what they received in the treatment in the follow-up test. However, all the instructional groups were better than the control group with no instruction.

The results of the study by Takimoto (2008) resemble those of the study conducted by Takimoto (2007). Takimoto (2007) explored the efficiency of three different sorts of input-based approach on performing requests: structured input tasks with explicit information, problem-solving tasks and structured input tasks without explicit information. This study also revealed that there was a significant difference between treatment and control groups. The group receiving the structured input with explicit information could not maintain the positive impact of the treatment between the post-test and follow-up test period as in Takimoto's (2008) study. Another study conducted by Takimoto (2009) revealed similar results. Examining the effectiveness of three kinds of input-based instruction (comprehension-based instruction, structured input instruction and consciousness-raising instruction), Takimoto (2009) found that there was a significant difference between the treatment groups and the control group. However, the comprehension-based group (like the deductive instruction group in Takimoto's (2007) study and the structured input group with explicit information in Takimoto's (2008) study) could not preserve the positive influence of the treatment between the post-test and the follow-up test in the listening test. Despite the general efficiency of the instructional treatment, these results indicate that there are other factors

that are possibly influential in the process of pragmatic development besides different types of treatments.

The positive impact of instruction on the development of pragmatic awareness was also supported by Martínez-Flor and Alcón Soler (2007). Examining the efficiency of explicit and implicit instruction on raising learners' pragmatic awareness, they found the positive effects of both instruction types. Taking the effect of instruction on learners' cognition, Alcón Soler and Guzmán Pitarch (2010) also emphasized the value of attention and awareness on the cognitive processes involved in pragmatic development. Proposing a pedagogical application for refusals, the researchers referred to the positive impact of instruction on increasing learners' awareness. Another study valuing the effect of instruction was carried out by van Compernelle (2011). Designed as a case study, the main focus of the research was to focus on the development of sociopragmatic knowledge of a US learner of French with intermediate level of proficiency. The participant was required to attend a one-hour concept-based instruction. The microgenetic analysis revealed that the instruction positively triggered the participant's cognitive functioning by raising her attention.

Halenko and Jones (2011) conducted an experimental study to find out the effectiveness of explicit treatment on the development of pragmatic awareness and production of Chinese learners of English in an EAP (English for Academic Purposes) setting. Twenty six participants were divided into the experimental group with explicit instruction and the control group with no instruction over a 12-week process. The general results based on the pre/intermediate and delayed post-tests revealed that the group receiving explicit instruction better performed than the control group; in other words, they were able to identify and produce pragmatically appropriate forms. However, as in the three studies by Takimoto (2007, 2008, 2009), there was an observable decrease in the performance of the experimental group after six weeks. All in all, the positive effect of instruction over non-instruction is again highlighted.

Nguyen, Pham and Pham (2012) investigated the effectiveness of two form-focused instruction types on criticism as a speech act. Sixty nine Vietnamese learners of English were the participants. While the explicit group was exposed to consciousness-raising activities with explicit meta-pragmatic explanation and error corrections and the

implicit group was provided with pragmalinguistic input enhancement and recast activities, the control group received no types of instruction for a ten-week period. Based on the results of the pre and post tests with DCTs, role plays and oral feedback tasks as well as a delayed post-test, the results indicated that both treatment groups performed better than the control group. Unlike some studies mentioned above (Takimoto, 2007, 2008, 2009), the treatment groups in this study maintained the positive effect of instruction in the delayed post-tests. A comparison between the two treatment groups, however, pointed at the superiority of the explicit group over the implicit one in all measures.

Another recent study supporting the contribution of instruction to awareness-raising belongs to Rajabi and Farahian (2013). Working with 34 Persian learners of English, the researchers provided the experimental group with 10 sessions of awareness-raising instruction on pragmatics. Comparing the results of assessment tests, they found that the treatment group was much more successful than the control group. Interpretation of the findings of these studies reveals that pragmatic instruction is valuable in raising learners' pragmatic awareness which positively influences their pragmatic comprehension and production.

A recent study investigating the immediate and long-term impact of explicit and implicit instruction on pragmatics was carried out by Fordyce (2014). One of the main differences between the previously-mentioned studies and this one is its linguistic focus. While the other studies mentioned above mostly examined the effect of instruction on different kinds of speech acts, this study investigated those effects on epistemic stance which has rarely been studied in pragmatics. The participants were eighty one English learners studying at tertiary level in Japan. In this study, there were two main groups; the explicit and implicit group with three hours of instruction. In order to assess the immediate and long-term effects of the instructional interventions, written production data were collected in three phases: before the interventions, just after interventions and five months later. The analysis of individual use of epistemic stance forms and learner corpus revealed that the explicit group outperformed the implicit group in both the instant and long-term retention. Referring to the stronger effects of explicit intervention, the researcher did not deny the potential efficiency of implicit instruction; therefore, called for further research.

Studies on the effects instruction, in a way, refer to the impact of input on pragmatic development. This is mainly because in any kind of instruction, either explicit or implicit, language learners are provided with input related to language structures or language usage. Providing learners with the necessary input promotes pragmatic development (Li, 2012). VanPatten (2004) defines input as a stimulating force in language. However, as Matsumura (2003) argues, a large amount of input may not be sufficient enough to explain the acquisition of pragmatic competence. Instead of mere exposure to input, instruction should be incorporated with other activities to attract learners' attention and raise their awareness to promote not immediate but long-term positive effects on pragmatic development. Rose (2012) suggests the integration of pragmatic instruction with grammar lessons stating that in this way the input presented to language learners becomes contextualized and more meaningful to the learner instead of simply offering the grammar rules. As understood from these findings, providing learners with a language learning environment in which they can find the chance to practice both language forms and language usage in meaningful and interactional contexts is more beneficial than exposing them merely to input.

It should be noted that input is also provided in the target language community by the native speakers of L2. In the target language environment, learners can find ample opportunities to interact with native speakers of the language. In an implicit way, learners are equipped with the appropriate structures and the usage of the target language. Supporting this viewpoint, DuFon (2000) suggests input provided in the target language environment to the participants in his study as one of the essential factors facilitating learners' progress in terms of pragmatic competence. Barron (2003) also points at the influence of the exposure to target language input as an aspect assisting the development of participants' pragmatic capabilities. It can be assumed depending on the findings stated above that input in L2 can be provided both in instructional settings and in target language environments, that the input presented in the target setting is more authentic than the input in an instructional setting, and that input naturally occurring in the target environment is easier to internalize since the learner does not feel that it is artificially constructed for specific instructional purposes.

Considering input and instruction, based on, again, the results of the above-presented studies, it can be suggested that integration of different ways and methods is expected to help both teachers and learners. Taking the explicit and implicit sides of instruction, it can be assumed that instead of preferring one to the other, a combination of both, when possible, can yield better results because different advantages coming along with each method combine in this way. Therefore, as instruction and input are essential parts of L2 development, in our case, the development of L2 pragmatic competence, they should not be underrated in language teaching.

The table below displays the studies which were conducted on the effect of instruction and input for the development of pragmatic competence. Almost all the studies were based on experimental designs with participants from different backgrounds. What was common among these studies is that all favor either explicit or implicit instruction over no instruction in language development in general and pragmatic development in particular. As an essential component of instruction, input has received a great deal of attention.

Table 2.2.

Summary of the Studies on the Effects of Instruction and Input on Pragmatic Competence

Summary of the studies investigating the effects of instruction and input on L2 pragmatics in ESL & EFL contexts		
Researchers	Context and Participants	Major Findings
Liddicoat and Crozet (2001)	Australian university learners of French	The positive impacts of instructional treatment were observed in language production.
Silva (2003)	Fourteen low-intermediate learners with different L1s in experimental and control groups	Explicit instruction proved to be beneficial in pragmatic development.
Koike and Pearson (2005)	English learners of Spanish who were provided with explicit or implicit pre-instruction and explicit or implicit feedback	Despite some areas of superiority, the efficiency of two instructional ways was presented.

Table 2.2. (Continued)

Researchers	Context and Participants	Major Findings
Martines-Flor and Fukuya (2005)	Eighty-one Spanish-speaking learners of English in four groups; 3 experimental-1 control group	Both the explicit and the implicit groups performed better than the control group.
Alco'n Soler (2005)	132 students in three groups; explicit, implicit and control group	Both the explicit and the implicit groups were better than the control group. However, a comparison between the two experimental groups indicated the superiority of explicit treatment over the implicit one.
Halenko & Jones (2011)	26 Chinese learners of English in an EAP setting; experimental design	Explicit treatment improved learners' abilities to identify and produce pragmatically appropriate forms, though this positive impact could not be maintained after six months.
van Compernelle (2011)	A case study of a US learner of French with intermediate level of proficiency	Concept-based instruction improved the participant's cognitive functioning by raising attention and awareness.
Rajabi & Farahian (2013)	34 Persian learners of English; experimental design	The group receiving awareness-raising instruction was more successful than the control group.
Nguyen, Pham and Pham (2012)	69 Vietnamese learners of English; experimental design	Both explicit and implicit groups performed better than the control group. Unlike other studies cited in this section, the positive effects of both treatment types were preserved after a period. Explicit treatment exhibited superiority over the implicit one.
Fordyce (2014)	81 English learners studying at tertiary level in Japan; an explicit and an implicit group	The explicit group outperformed the implicit one in both immediate and long-terms. However, the value of implicit instruction was also referred to.

The studies focusing on the significance of input as stated above emphasize that language input should be provided to learners in order to increase their success. At this point, it can be suggested that the quality of input should be more important than its quantity. In other words, essential features that learners can internalize and make use of should be presented in language instruction. Along with the quality of instruction and

input, another aspect, *learning environment*, should also be taken into account as an inseparable element in foreign language instruction.

2.4.3. Research on learning environment

In this section, the discussion is mainly based on two different types of instructional settings: EFL and ESL contexts. According to a number of different studies, learning environment is an effective factor in pragmatic development (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Matsumura, 2003; Schauer, 2006; Schmidt, 1983). The issue of ESL and EFL contexts has already been discussed in a previous section. Since the influence of staying in the target culture will be handled in this section, ESL and EFL contexts will be briefly mentioned.

As ESL context can provide language learners with more and better opportunities for practicing the target language, it is claimed to be an ideal setting to learn a target language including its every-day usage and culture. If learners are expected to be competent users of the target language, they need to be aware of the hidden rules of spoken language in different contexts as well as possessing the knowledge of linguistic forms. Therefore, it can be suggested that learners can learn the communicative aspects and raise their awareness towards the appropriate forms in practice better in ESL settings than they can achieve this in EFL surroundings. The following studies are related to effects of learning environment on pragmatic performance.

Research on the effects of EFL and ESL contexts on pragmatic development mostly revealed that those learners in ESL settings are more sensitive to improper pragmatic usages than grammatical ones compared to EFL learners. One of the earliest studies referring to the difference between ESL and EFL settings in pragmatic competence was carried out by Takahashi and Beebe (1987). Looking for the impact of L1 pragmatics on L2 pragmatics considering refusals, the researchers found that the Japanese learners in the EFL setting conducted more negative transfers compared to their counterparts in the ESL environment. As an individual learning Japanese in a foreign language context, Cohen (1997), referring to his tape-recorded journal and several written notes, reported that his pragmatic awareness did not reach the desired

level in a foreign language context. Among the possible reasons for his lack of pragmatic awareness, he listed learning in a foreign language environment as the first important factor. He supported this by referring to the traditional and formal instruction format in which the linguistic forms are more favored than the practical concerns of language use.

One of the pivotal studies on the difference of ESL and EFL contexts was conducted by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998). The starting point of this seminal study was whether environment had an effect on grammatical and pragmatic awareness of ESL and EFL learners. In the ESL group, there were 173 learners in the USA with intermediate and advanced proficiency levels. The EFL group, on the other hand, consisted of 370 learners of English in Hungary with low-intermediate to advanced levels of language proficiency. Basically, the participants were required to evaluate the grammatical and pragmatic appropriateness of twenty videotapes. The results pointed out significant differences between the performances of learners in two different instructional contexts. While the ESL learners considered pragmatic errors more serious and identified more pragmatic infelicities, the EFL group identified more grammatical errors compared to pragmatic ones.

Furthermore, the researchers re-evaluated their samples based on the proficiency levels of the participants. The results revealed that, in the EFL context, those participants with higher proficiency levels rated pragmatic and grammatical errors more severely than their friends with lower proficiency. Taking the ESL group into account, the results showed that the higher-level students were more successful in identifying pragmatic infelicities than the lower ones. Moreover, the higher-level ESL participants rated grammatical errors as less severe compared to the EFL group. The evaluation of the ESL and the EFL English teachers displayed, more or less, similar results. While the EFL teachers regarded grammatical errors as more serious, the ESL counterparts attached more importance to pragmatic errors than grammatical ones. It can be concluded, setting out from the results of this seminal study, that learning context and proficiency level are two essential dynamics behind learners' linguistic and pragmatic awareness. These two elements are influential in pragmatic awareness and pragmatic development of language learners.

As a replication of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study, Schauer (2006) utilized the same instruments of the original study as well as interviews with the participants to find out the way the participants noticed the problematic cases in the scenarios. There were three groups in total; the first group included 16 German ESL learners, the second included 17 German students in Germany and 20 native speakers as the controllers. The results of this study showed similarity with those of the findings of the original study. While the ESL learners were better at identifying pragmatic infelicities, their EFL counterparts were more successful in recognizing grammatical problems.

Taguchi (2008a) conducted a study to investigate whether accuracy and speed of comprehension in L2 pragmatics increase in time and whether the increase is related with the amount of language contact in an L2 environment. Forty four college students in the USA, over four months, were required to complete a pragmatic listening test to evaluate the ability to recognize the implied speaker intention, a lexical access test to measure the speed of semantic judgments and a language contact survey to identify the amount of time learners spend in the L2 environment outside the class. The performances of the learners in their comprehension speed and accuracy were evaluated. According to the results, the contact with the L2 environment significantly increased learners' speed of comprehension. However, a similar increase was not observed in the accuracy of comprehension. Therefore, it can be concluded that being in contact with the L2 environment is a good opportunity to increase the speed of comprehension in L2 setting. Yet, in order to develop the accuracy part, learners must take other factors into consideration.

Assessing the results of these studies, one can conclude that an EFL context provides learners with more opportunities to learn the linguistic aspects of the target language while offering limited chance to use language for communicative purposes. Generally in traditional language teaching practice, EFL environments offer learners a bundle of target linguistic rules in isolated contexts. In this way, while learners can accomplish a good level of linguistic proficiency, their level of pragmatic competence remains relatively low. The ESL setting, on the other hand, offers language learners a good chance of observing language use in real-communication which raises their pragmatic awareness and helps them improve their pragmatic competence with limitless

opportunities for practice. Seeing the linguistic form in meaningful contexts, the learner can easily and subconsciously improve his/her pragmatic competence.

However, not all the studies support the notion that an ESL environment absolutely improves learners' pragmatic competence. There is also a counter-argument that learners can also develop their pragmatic abilities in non-target language environments (DuFon & Churchill, 2006; Hill, 1997; Taguchi, 2007) if they can improve their proficiency levels in the target language. These studies maintain that an increase in learners' proficiency levels result in a natural increase in their pragmatic competencies. For example, Hill (1997) investigated the development of a group of Japanese tertiary level learners' development in request forms. The researcher found that as the participants' proficiencies increased, their performance in request forms also improved. Therefore, as understood from these counter-arguments, it can be assumed that learning environment is not the only factor that affects pragmatic development of language learners. Though there are some examples of the positive impacts of the learning environment on pragmatic ability, it may be misleading to consider it as the single influential aspect. Other factors integrating with each other seem to influence the pragmatic development of learners.

A brief overview of these studies, as also presented in the table below, reveals that learners in ESL contexts, in most of the studies, performed better than those in EFL contexts. The main reason for this may be that ESL learners can benefit from language exposure more than EFL learners. In other words, an ESL setting is richer in terms of language input compared to an EFL setting.

Table 2.3.

Summary of the Studies on the Effects of Learning Environment on Pragmatic Competence

Summary of the studies investigating the effects of environment on L2 pragmatics		
Researchers	Context and Participants	Major Findings
Takahashi and Beebe (1987)	Japanese learners in EFL and ESL settings	The participants in the EFL setting employed more negative transfers compared with their ESL counterparts.
Cohen (1997)	Personal experience as an individual learning Japanese in a foreign language context	The pragmatic level of the researcher did not reach the desired level. The learning environment was suggested as the possible reason.
Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei (1998)	173 ESL and 370 EFL learners	The ability of the ESL learners to identify pragmatic infelicities were much higher than that of the EFL learners who, more frequently, recognized grammatical errors.
Schauer (2006)	16 German students in ESL and 17 German students in EFL context and 20 native speakers as the control group; a replication	As in the original study, the ESL learners were more successful in recognizing pragmatic infelicities compared to EFL learners.
Taguchi (2008a)	44 college students in the USA	The speed, but not the accuracy, of the comprehension increased with the contributions of L2 environment.

Although there are some counter-arguments in literature, ESL context has mostly been claimed to be more effective for pragmatic development. This is especially significant for learners who stay in the target language environment. At this point, another factor enters the scene: the *length of residence* in the target environment.

2.4.4. Research on length of residence (LOR)

Length of residence in the target environment is a factor that plays a key role for the improvement of pragmatic competence (Bataller, 2010; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Bouton, 1999; Churchill, 2001; DuFon, 2000; Iwasaki, 2008; Ren, 2013; Roever, 2012; Schauer, 2006; Shively, 2011; Taguchi, 2014; Watson, Siska & Wolfel, 2013).

The studies supporting the benefits of length of residence also hold the notion that target environment provides better opportunities for language learners compared to EFL contexts. The basic assumption is that learners living in the target language community can find many chances of interaction in L2 and this increases their chances of exposure to the appropriate usages for their pragmatic development. Studies on length of residence convey the idea that the more a language learner spends his time in the target language setting, the better his pragmatic abilities become.

Research on the length of residence generally referred to the positive impact of staying in the target culture on pragmatic development. For example, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1986) reported a positive correlation between the length of residence and the focus of the study, i.e. the perception of directness and politeness in the target language. Their participants showed a more native-like perception of direct and polite forms. DuFon (2000) carried out a study on the acquisition of Indonesian address forms. Dufon observed some improvement from more formal to more informal uses (which were more appropriate). The possible reason for this improvement was suggested to be the chance of interaction and the input provided to the learners in the target language community. Lafford (2004) also mentioned the positive effect of spending time in the target environment comparing the communicative performances of the staying-at-home and the abroad group. The researcher reported that the interactional capabilities of the abroad group significantly improved and there was no decrease in their grammatical abilities.

Another study evaluating the efficiency of the length of residence belongs to Schauer (2006). Schauer, as mentioned in the previous sections, conducted a replication of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study in order to find out whether there is a difference in learner performances stemming from learning environment (ESL vs. EFL) and the duration of staying in the target language environment. The difference between the original study and the replication was that the replication aimed to evaluate two factors while the original study only investigated the impact of one aspect, i.e. learning environment. The results of the replication indicated that the groups staying in the target language culture for a nine-month period showed significant progress in their pragmatic abilities. The performance of one group staying in the ESL context to identify pragmatic

infelicities approached that of native speakers. Hence, the length of stay can be regarded as an effective factor in increasing pragmatic awareness of language learners.

Among recently-conducted studies, Bataller's (2010) research can be provided as an example with its interesting findings about the expected contributions of the length of residence for a foreign language learner in the target language environment. In order to assess the progress in request strategies of 31 non-native speakers of Spanish who lived in Spain for a four-month period, the researcher employed an open role-play. During the role play, the participants were required to interact with the native-speakers of Spanish. The results revealed that some features of the request strategies changed while some remained the same despite the exposure to the target culture and language. Depending on these results, it can be assumed that although exposure to the target language can make some positive changes on pragmatic performance, some pragmatic aspects are not affected only by the length of residence.

Ren (2013) conducted a longitudinal study to examine, in a study-abroad context, the cognitive progresses of L2 learners with advanced proficiency levels in dealing with status-equal and status-unequal refusal forms. The participants were 20 Chinese learners of English studying abroad over an academic year and they were asked to provide retrospective verbal reports on their experiences. The results pointed at a level of development regarding the attention of the learners towards sociopragmatic features in the interactional setting. Moreover, participants' awareness of the factors influencing their production increased. Therefore, while there was some decrease in the pragmatic-related problems, there was considerable increase in the attention and awareness of the participants towards different aspects of pragmatics.

Another recent study was carried out by Reynolds-Case (2013). What differentiated this study from most of the LOR studies was that it investigated the impact of a staying abroad experience lasting no more than six weeks. As an answer to the main research question, i.e. whether even short stays can influence the pragmatic development, the results turned out to be positive. The short-term study-abroad experience showed that the abilities of the participants to identify, understand and produce the desired language forms improved.

Taguchi (2014) aimed to find out whether there was a correlation between cross-cultural adaptability and progress in speech act production. 22 learners of Japanese who studied abroad for a semester were asked to complete a survey as well as a speaking test with 10 scenarios of speech acts based on different levels of formality. The participants completed the tests both at the beginning and the end of the semester. The assessment was conducted by native speakers of Japanese taking into consideration the correctness of the speech style and the speech act. The evaluation revealed a positive correlation between the adaptability to the cross-cultural aspects and the identification of the appropriate speech act.

It can be concluded, counting on the findings of the above-mentioned studies, that staying for some period, either short or long, in the target language environment positively contributes to the pragmatic development of language learners at least in some respects. However, there is not a total agreement about the length of residence as a factor influencing pragmatic development. There are studies revealing that there is little or no relationship between length of residence and pragmatic improvement (Han, 2005; Klein, Dietrich & Noyau, 1995; Matsumura, 2003). According to these studies, not all language learners who stay in the target language environment for a certain period can gain equal pragmatic abilities. Matsumura (2003) is another researcher who rejects the relationship between LOR and pragmatic competence. In order to strengthen his argument, the researcher suggests that there are individual and contextual differences affecting learners' chances of interaction in the target community. Either because of personal preferences or contextual limitations, all learners cannot have equal opportunities to be exposed to language in its authentic use and to practice the language. That could be the basic underlying reason indicating the point that some learners can develop their pragmatic abilities in target contexts while some others cannot.

The notion that there is a correlation between LOR and L2 pragmatic abilities is not supported by Han (2005), either. In a dissertation study, the researcher worked with Korean ESL learners in America. In spite of their experiences of staying in the target environment, all the participants failed to perform native-like language productions, showing that there was not a relationship between their LOR and pragmatic competences. A recent study also refers to this non-linear relationship. To investigate the development of Indonesian address terms, Hassall (2013) conducted a study with

Australian study-abroad learners in a summer course. The results of the pre/post-tests, written test responses, interviews and diaries demonstrated that learners' pragmatic abilities can develop even during short experiences. However, the researcher commented that there are some limitations on the part of the study-abroad learners. These learners may not put enough effort to socialize with the native speakers of the target language. In addition, as they are foreigners to that culture, their identity may prevent them from adapting and adopting the social and cultural features of the target community and, therefore, the target culture.

Setting out from the analysis of the findings of the above-mentioned studies supporting the effect of length of residence on the development of pragmatic competence, one can remark that staying in the target culture can offer language learners a good chance of exposure to the original language forms and usage as well as great opportunities of practicing the language with its native speakers. This is essentially because the target language is used in a natural and authentic manner in the target culture. On the other hand, according to some other researchers providing counter-arguments for the same issue, there are other influential factors playing fundamental roles in the development of pragmatic competence. They are of the opinion that individual and contextual factors can hinder or promote language learners' linguistic and pragmatic development. Willingness or motivation of a language learner to participate in the target language environment may either increase or decrease depending on any individual or contextual element.

The quality of the exposure in the target environment is as important as, or sometimes, more important than its quantity. If a language learner does not direct his full attention to how the language is formed and used in different settings, then he will not possibly develop his pragmatic abilities despite the advantage of the environment. Upon the significance of the quality of staying abroad experience, Klein, Dietrich and Noyau (1995, p. 277) maintain that "What matters is intensity, [...] Therefore, ordering learners according to their duration of stay is normally pointless because too crude a measure for what really matters: intensity of interaction". Therefore, utilizing the advantages of staying in the target language environment is as important as having the chance of staying there.

The results of the studies pertaining to the effect of the length of residence on pragmatic development generally point at the positive impact of this variable as displayed in the table below. Studying in different contexts, most of the researchers found that there is a positive correlation between the amount of time spent in the target environment and the pragmatic development of the participants. Providing chances of language exposure and contact, target environments enable learners to improve their pragmatic skills. However, it should also be maintained that length of residence is not the only factor that has an impact on pragmatic development.

Table 2.4.

Summary of Studies on the Effects of LOR on Pragmatic Competence

Summary of the studies investigating the effects of LOR on L2 pragmatics		
Researchers	Context and Participants	Major Findings
Schauer (2006)	16 German students in ESL and 17 German students in EFL context	Those in the ESL context outperformed in the ability to identify pragmatic problems compared to the EFL group.
Bataller (2010)	31 non-native speakers of Spanish living in Spain for four months	The length of residence positively affected some features of the request strategies while some remained the same.
Ren (2013)	20 Chinese learners of English studying abroad over an academic year	LOR contributed to the improvement of pragmatic usages and increased the level of awareness.
Reynolds-Case (2013)	3 male and 7 female university students in the USA	Even a short experience of staying in the target environment developed the identification, comprehension and production abilities of the participants.
Taguchi (2014)	22 learners of Japanese studying abroad for a semester	Cross-cultural adaptability and identification of the appropriate speech act showed linear increase.
Han (2005)	Korean ESL learners in America	Despite the experience of staying in the target environment, all the participants failed to perform native-like language productions.

One other important factor which also exerts its influence on the improvement of pragmatic competence is motivation discussed in the next section. Motivation has been referred to a significant aspect in language education in general. There are also some

studies focusing on the connection between motivation and pragmatic competence which are presented below.

2.4.5. Research on motivation

Based on a review of the previous studies, LoCastro (2001) reported that there is a mismatch between language learners' motivational levels and their language behaviors. Although most of the learners claim that they are motivated for language learning, it turns out, as a result of further explanation, that what forces them to learn another language is not their willingness but the necessity in existing conditions. LoCastro (2001) conducted a study in order to examine the attitudes of EFL learners, especially their willingness, to adapt themselves to L2 pragmatic norms. Based on the data collected from Japanese EFL learners' self-reports, the researcher reached the conclusion that the participants did not create resistance against learning the target pragmatic norms. However, they had to spend extra effort in order to adapt to their new identities as users of the L2 while trying to preserve their original identities in their L1 without giving up their goals. Working with 80 Japanese college level learners, Takahashi (2005) found that there are some basic differences in degrees of learners' noticing appropriate forms and this difference is dependent on their motivational levels instead of their language proficiency.

Another study highlighting the impact of motivation from a different perspective was conducted by Pae (2008), who aimed at investigating the relationship between factors influencing L2 achievement. The results revealed that, though indirectly related to L2 achievement, intrinsic motivation was the most powerful factor in the amount of the participants' motivation and self-confidence. Although intrinsic motivation does not directly affect language outcomes, it can be regarded as a strong force that facilitates the development of learners' self-efficacy beliefs as well as increasing their motivation. The more a learner believes that he can succeed in language learning, the more intense his attention becomes and the better the outcome will be.

The consideration of motivation in language learning indicates that it is an essential factor that facilitates not only linguistic but personal development of learners as well. In addition, the level of motivation is to determine the willingness and self-

confidence of the learner to fulfill his goals. A motivated learner holds the ambition to carry out language studies despite some possible challenges. With the help of essential desire besides other influential factors, learners can succeed in shaping their identities as users of L2 in a desired way and level.

As the limited presentation in the following table denotes, studies on motivation in language learning indicates that motivation has a considerable impact on learners' willingness to continue with their language studies. Motivation has been shown to positively affect learners' attention to language.

Table 2.5.

Summary of the Studies on the Effects of Motivation on Pragmatic Competence

Summary of the studies investigating the effects of motivation on L2 pragmatics		
Researchers	Context and Participants	Major Findings
LoCastro (2001)	Japanese EFL learners	The analysis of attitudes and willingness of participants revealed that while there was no resistance towards learning pragmatic norms, learners needed to go into a process of adaptation to their new identities.
Takahashi (2005)	80 Japanese college level learners	The differences in learners' noticing were because of the variation in their motivational levels not because of their different levels of proficiency.
Pae (2008)	315 Korean EFL learners at university level	Indirectly related to achievement, intrinsic motivation turned out to have the strongest impact on the level of motivation and self-confidence.

However, motivation is not the only factor to influence learner performance and pragmatic development. In the next section, another factor, *learning strategies*, is discussed. Learning strategies have been one of the core concerns in the field as it has influence on different aspects in the process of language learning.

2.4.6. Research on learning strategies

As learning strategies have been recognized as significant elements to attain success in language learning process (O'Malley & Chamot, 1994; Oxford, 1990; Oxford & Lavine, 1991), a number of studies have been dedicated to test the effectiveness of

these strategies. Most of the results of the studies on the issue revealed that learning styles and strategies impact the process of language learning on an individual basis (Wang & Jin, 2008) and they are essential in the learning process (Liu, 2010). However, there is some scarcity in the number of studies presenting the relationship between learners' pragmatic competence and their preferences of learning strategies.

There are a number of studies investigating language learning strategies showing that learners with higher proficiency levels are aware of and adopt more strategies than their lower-level counterparts (Chu, Shia Huang, Shih & Hsin Tsai, 2012; Green & Oxford, 1995; Javid, Al-thubaiti & Uthman, 2013; Md Yunus, Sulaiman & Embi, 2013; Park, 2010; Yilmaz, 2010). However, there are only limited number of studies on the relation between strategy uses and pragmatic development. One of the studies on this issue was carried out by Sheorey (1999), who worked with 1261 Indian college students. The results of the English Language Learning Strategies Inventory revealed that more proficient learners used learning strategies more frequently than the lower-level ones. In addition, the adoption of functional practice strategies promoted students' communicative performances. A recent study examining pragmatic strategies and syntactic forms preferred by Cantonese students was conducted by Li (2010). The performances of the participants were compared with those of the native English speaker-students in Australia. The results indicated that because of the deficiency in their pragmatic knowledge and capabilities, the participants were not successful in utilizing pragmatic strategies during their interactions.

Therefore, considering the studies on learning strategies, it can be concluded that differences in language experiences and backgrounds influence the adoption of learning strategies. In addition, learners with higher levels of proficiency make use of more strategies and they use them more frequently than lower-level learners. The use of learning strategies brings positive contributions in the language development of learners. With the aim of developing their pragmatic competence, learners need to use different learning strategies. Moreover, in order to use these strategies, learners also need to be aware of the areas in which they do not have the necessary knowledge. At this point, it can be suggested that learners should be taught different strategies they can use in different contexts. They need to be provided with the opportunities to observe and practice these learning strategies in order to reach the desired levels of linguistic

and pragmatic competences. In time, with adequate instruction and practice, individual learners will be able to identify what is appropriate in a particular context. In this way, they become autonomous learners who can direct their learning experiences and they naturally become more confident and motivated.

Taking the limited number of studies in the following table into consideration which focus on the correlation between learning strategies and pragmatic competence, it can be concluded that the adoption of appropriate learning strategies can promote the development of pragmatic competence. While employing different strategies, learners can use the target language in different ways and can compensate for their weaknesses.

Table 2.6.

Summary of the Studies on the Effects of Learning Strategies on Pragmatic Competence

Summary of the studies investigating the effects of learning strategies on L2 pragmatics		
Researchers	Context and Participants	Major Findings
Sheorey (1999)	1261 Indian college students	More proficient learners used more learning strategies and the adoption of functional practice strategies promoted pragmatic development.
Li (2010)	Three groups of Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong and Australia	The limited application of pragmatic strategies resulted in problems in pragmatic knowledge and competence.

However, utilizing diverse learning strategies is also not the only solution to overcome possible problems in developing pragmatic competence. In this process, it is also significant to get *feedback* in order to make a comprehensive evaluation of pragmatic development. The studies on the impact of feedback on pragmatic development are presented in the next part.

2.4.7. Research on feedback

Providing learners with the necessary feedback is essential in helping them to be aware of the appropriate and inappropriate parts in their performances. Without feedback, it is difficult to raise learners' awareness; therefore, they will not be able to

identify the problematic points in their language comprehension and production. Especially in the recent years, with the growing awareness towards the importance of feedback as a significant component of language education, the number of the studies investigating the effect of feedback on pragmatic competence and awareness has increased.

Research pointed at the positive effects of feedback on pragmatic development. One of the studies examining the relation between feedback and pragmatic instruction belongs to Koike and Pearson (2005). In an experimental design, the researchers investigated the efficiency of providing pragmatic information with the help of explicit and implicit pre-instruction and explicit and implicit feedback. The results of the pre and post tests revealed that the performance of the group receiving both types of instruction and feedback was significantly better than that of the control group. However, the delayed post-tests showed that the positive effects of the interference were not maintained after some period. Despite the failure in the retention of the advantages, instruction and feedback were beneficial in increasing learners' awareness.

Li (2010) examined the efficiency of corrective feedback in SLA, carrying out a study to fill in the gaps in previous meta-analysis studies. The researcher reviewed 22 published studies and 11 PhD. Dissertations. The review revealed the positive effect of corrective feedback. In addition, the impact of implicit feedback was more long-lasting compared with the explicit feedback. Though not focusing specifically on pragmatics, this study supported the positive influence of feedback in language studies.

Like Koike and Pearson's (2005) study, Salemi, Rabiee and Ketabi (2012) carried out a study to examine the effectiveness of implicit versus explicit instruction and feedback on the development of pragmatic competence. 100 EFL Iranian learners with intermediate levels of language proficiency were divided into four experimental and a control group: the first group received explicit instruction and explicit feedback, the second group explicit instruction and implicit feedback, the third implicit instruction and explicit feedback and the last, experimental group, implicit instruction and implicit feedback in two sets of twenty-two minute sessions. The results were based on the post-tests and delayed post-tests and indicated that explicit versions of instruction and feedback were more effective for the development of pragmatic competence of the

participants. However, the delayed post-tests showed that these positive effects were not maintained after a month.

Another study examining the efficiency of explicit and implicit corrective feedback on pragmatic development was conducted by Ajabshir (2014). With an experimental design, the study included forty Iranian EFL learners who were provided with explicit and implicit feedback. According to the results of post-tests, the experimental groups performed better than the control group. There was not a significant difference between the explicit or implicit groups except one of the performance variables.

These studies, as also presented in the following table, show that, either explicit or implicit, feedback should be provided to learners in order to develop their language awareness and pragmatic abilities. Feedback enables learners to direct their attention to specific points in language construction and helps them realize what they do not know or, in other words, what they do not know correctly. Either explicit or implicit, feedback is an influential factor in promoting language comprehension and production abilities of learners.

Table 2.7.

Summary of the Studies on the Effects of Feedback on Pragmatic Competence

Summary of the studies investigating the effects of feedback on L2 pragmatics		
Researchers	Context and Participants	Major Findings
Koike and Pearson (2005)	99 native speakers of English divided into five experimental groups	The groups receiving explicit and implicit instruction and feedback performed better than the control group. However, the positive effects were not maintained after some time.
Li (2010)	A review of 22 published studies and 11 PhD. Dissertations	The review indicated the positive effect of corrective feedback. Implicit feedback turned out to be more long-lasting.
Salemi, Rabiee and Ketabi (2012)	100 EFL intermediate Iranian learners divided into four experimental and one control groups	Explicit instruction and feedback were more efficient. The positive effects could not be preserved after a period.
Ajabshir (2014)	40 Iranian EFL learners	The experimental groups receiving explicit or implicit feedback outperformed the control group.

However, feedback cannot be the single effective factor as some studies revealed that the positive effects of feedback are not retained after some period. Therefore, while feedback should be made available to learners, other factors should also be taken into consideration. One of these factors that play a key role in pragmatic development is *output*.

2.4.8. Research on output

The Output Hypothesis was proposed by Swain (1995). The main purpose in the introduction of this hypothesis was presented by the prominent researcher as follows: “the act of producing language (speaking or writing) constitutes, under certain circumstances, part of the process of second language learning” (p. 471). Therefore, though not denying the value of input, this hypothesis supports the notion that producing the language is not only the result of language learning; instead, it is also a part of the developmental process as an invaluable contributor. Output is essential in learning a target language as it shows the learners the potential areas of strengths and weaknesses helping them notice the infelicities in their production. Therefore, the effects of output on pragmatic development should also be considered.

Related research revealed that output positively influences pragmatic development. For example, regarding the effects of output on language learning, Izumi (2002) conducted a study with 61 ESL learners divided into two groups for the experimental design. The main purpose of the study was to assess the efficiency of output and input on noticing. There were two treatment groups who were asked to complete a reconstruction activity of a given text. One of the treatment groups could re-write the text but the other could not; instead, they only answered the questions related to the text. Based on the pre and post-test results, it was seen that while the input did not bring any significant influence to noticing, the output group with the chance of reconstructing the text showed great enhancement. The results indicated that input alone is not adequate; learners also need to work on the language to produce it.

In a study investigating the effect of explicit and implicit instruction, Martinez-Flor and Fukuya (2005) suggested that there was a noticeable development in the explicit group because their level of awareness was raised with the help of explicit

instruction. Considering the implicit group, the researchers stated that the possible influential factor on the development in the implicit group could be the role-play activities in which the participants practiced the language forms as a part of the treatment.

It can be assumed from the findings of researchers that output is a vital component in the development of both receptive and productive language abilities. As Kasper and Röver (2005) maintain, mere exposure to linguistic input, although having a significant value, is not enough to enhance pragmatic development. Thus, learners need to practice linguistic aspects of the target language as well as its sociopragmatic usages through an effective pragmatic development process.

2.5. Assessment of Pragmatic Competence

The issue of pragmatic assessment is among the significant parts of language education. The aim of teaching another language to students is to enable them to use the target language in different situations with different people. For this purpose, students are given instructions regarding the forms and usages of the L2. However, educational process does not consist only of providing learners with instruction accompanied with a diversity of activities. There is also a need to make an evaluation of what students have learned. Therefore, assessment is expected to be a critical component of language education.

Language education has experienced a shift from teaching linguistic aspects of the L2 to its communicative side in the last few decades. Especially since the early 1970s –a period when the emphasis on language forms turned into a focus on language use- a number of ways and techniques have been suggested to yield the best results in language education. Gaining importance due to the shift on the focus, pragmatic competence has also benefited from the suggestions on the possible and most effective ways of teaching the communicative features of the target language. However, the matter of testing and assessment has still remained somewhat disregarded or, to put it differently, has not received the attention it deserves in educational circles. The consideration of language assessment reveals that focus, to a large extent, is on the evaluation of linguistic knowledge of learners. In other words, there are not as many

tools or instruments to assess pragmatic knowledge or competence of language learners as those to evaluate their grammatical competence.

Based on the review of relevant literature, it can be stated that although assessment of L2 pragmatic competence is a comparatively new area, it has gained momentum in the field. The number of studies may appear limited, as yet, when compared to studies conducted on other components of language and language competence but the interest in the field is increasing. The main reason for this is, as stated above, that different theories have regarded pragmatics as a vital component of language. The early theories that can be assumed to lead the way to this shift are the speech act theory proposed by Searle (1969, 1975), Canale and Swain's (1980) communicative competence model; Leech's (1983) distinction between the terms of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics and Bachman's (1990) conception of pragmatic competence.

Of the earliest, most systematic and comprehensive studies, the study by Hudson, Detmer and Brown (1992, 1995) can be provided as an example pragmatic assessment. Studying the issues of social distance, the power differences between interlocutors and ranking imposition based on a specific culture, the researchers examined the impact of these three variables on speech acts. For the purposes of the study, they developed six prototype instruments. Their assessment models were: discourse completion tests with multiple-choice items (MCDTCs), written DCTs with open-ended statements (OPDCTs), DCTs with oral production (ODCTs), discourse role-play tasks (DRPT), DCTs with self-assessment (DSAT) and role-plays with self-assessment (RPSA). All these suggested instruments aimed to evaluate different characteristics of pragmatic competence. For instance, DCTs with open-ended items and oral production evaluated the learners' off-line pragmatic productions. In these off-line activities, the learners were not engaged in an interactional conversation with another interlocutor. Instead, they were asked to provide possible answers to the scenarios in listening audios or situations in reading texts. On the other hand, in on-line productions, learners were expected to produce L2 while interacting with another interlocutor. Role-plays were suggested in order to evaluate learner performance in interaction.

To explain these instruments in more detail, Brown (2001) maintains that oral discourse completion tasks, discourse role-play tasks, discourse self-assessment tasks and role-play self-assessment tasks are of particular importance to evaluate learners' oral production. Therefore, in these activities, learners' performances should generally be recorded for further analysis. These tasks aim to assess learners' performance in terms of appropriate language usages asking them to produce oral responses to the given situations or to conduct role-plays. Tasks designed for written versions—written completion tasks and multiple-choice discourse completion tasks—require learners to offer written answers to the given scenarios. These last two instruments ask learners to comprehend and then produce the L2. These six suggestions that were designed by Hudson, et al. (1992, 1995), and later proposed by Brown (2001), have taken the initiative for further L2 pragmatic assessment.

Besides classroom assessment, these proposed models have also been used in studies focusing on pragmatics. The models developed by Hudson, et al. (1992, 1995) have been translated into different languages and utilized in studies conducted in diverse contexts because of its relatively high levels of validity and reliability. Some other researchers have also designed their own tools to be used in pragmatics studies; and, these studies were based either on quantitative or qualitative bases (Grabowski, 2009; Roever, 2005; Walters, 2007). For instance, conducting a quantitative study, Lui (2007) focused on assessing off-line pragmalinguistics in Chinese EFL setting. Taking the possible limitations in the designs of Hudson, et al. (1992, 1995), Lui re-designed DCTs with multiple-choice items. With this improved instrument, the researcher found that MCDCTs were not only convenient but reliable as well for evaluating Chinese EFL learners' pragmatic competence. A qualitative research was carried out by Walters (2007) who adopted a hermeneutic design. Criticizing the DCTs as they did not comprise real communicative situations, the researcher also made use of conversation analysis informed tests (CAIT) to obtain more reliable results. Walters (2007) concluded that CAITs were effective ways to collect valid results though he stressed the necessity for additional examination.

The examples from literature on pragmatic assessment reveal that while some of the studies have put emphasis on designing new instruments for pragmatic assessment considering validity and reliability issues, some others have pointed to such different

matters as the application of the instruments or the methodological aspects. It cannot be denied that these studies have contributed to the conception of pragmatic assessment in L2. However, there is still a need for further research as the number of studies highlighting pragmatic evaluation is not high. Another concern regarding the necessity for more instruments is that pragmatic assessment can possibly be influenced negatively by subjective evaluation as most of the available instruments do not provide exact criteria for measurement. In other words, the instruments for pragmatic assessment may not be as appropriate for objective evaluation as those for linguistic knowledge.

2.6. Research on Pragmatic Competence in Turkish EFL Context

As this study was conducted in EFL settings in Turkey, it would be more helpful to refer to research conducted in Turkish EFL context. The review of relevant literature displays that those studies focusing on pragmatic competence in Turkish context are not many in number. Some of them investigated different types of speech acts (Aydın, 2013; Balcı, 2009; Deveci, 2010; Genç & Tekyıldız, 2011; Kılıçkaya, 2010) while some others examined Interlanguage Communicative Competence –ICC- (Çetinavcı, 2012; Hişmanoğlu, 2011; Sarıçoban & Öz, 2014). There are also some studies which have concentrated on pre-service teachers' pragmatic knowledge or pragmatic awareness (Atay, 2015; Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2012). though not directly conducted on pragmatic competence, there is also some research on speaking anxiety or language anxiety among Turkish EFL learners (Aydın, 2008; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014; Subaşı, 2010). What is to possibly attract attention is that research focusing on pragmatic knowledge or competence has been conducted especially in the last decade accompanied with an increase in the realization of the significance of pragmatic competence.

Before looking at the studies almost directly related to pragmatic competence, the presentation of those conducted on speaking anxiety would be more appropriate. Considering language anxiety as an influential factor in language learning process, Aydın (2008) investigated the reasons for and levels of language anxiety as well as fear of negative evaluation. The results of the quantitative data indicated that language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation affected the process of language learning in a negative way. Based on these results, the researcher suggested the promotion of less

stressful learning environments in which learners can find different chances of practicing the language.

In a similar vein, Subaşı (2010) also aimed to examine the impact of fear of negative evaluation as well as learners' perceptions of their own speaking abilities. Working with 55 first year students, the researcher found a positive correlation between fear of negative evaluation and level of anxiety. The data also revealed that personal issues, teachers' attitudes, teaching process and early language learning experiences are the factors that have influence on the levels of anxiety. Studying the factors impacting speaking anxiety, Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) also found that the participants considered speaking skill as a anxiety-provoking factor in their language learning experiences. This study also revealed that immediate questions, the thought of making mistakes, pronunciation and the possibility of negative evaluation are regarded as the major factors for speaking anxiety.

Following the presentation of the studies on speaking anxiety, those conducted on pragmatic competence can be mentioned. One of the earliest studies carried out in Turkey revealed that idioms, metaphors and proverbs are crucial components of language. Focusing on socio-pragmatic problems in L2 teaching, Çakır (2006) investigated the difficulties experienced in the process of learning idioms, metaphors and proverbs, and maintained that these features are significant parts of any language reflecting its culture; therefore, they should be included in language content. He underlined the crucial nature of integrating cultural components of the target language into language education. Otherwise, he proposed, students cannot get the total essence of the target language in its actual usage.

The relevant literature also focused on speech acts as essential components of pragmatic competence and the studies revealed that they require the interlocutors to follow some pragmatic rules for effective and appropriate communication. Having an important place in pragmatic competence, speech acts have been an area of investigation for some of the researchers. For example, in her Master thesis, Balcı (2009) examined apology and request productions of Turkish and American speakers of English in a secondary school in Turkey. 20 Turkish and 20 American teenagers participated in the study and they completed Written Discourse Completion Tests. The

main results of the study revealed that while Turkish students performed as properly as American students for their apology production, American students outperformed Turkish students for request productions. Another researcher focusing on requests was Kılıçkaya (2010). The researcher, working with 40 undergraduates studying at a state university in Turkey, investigated the pragmatic knowledge of learners by employing certain request strategies. The results obtained through a DCT displayed that the participants possessed a good level of linguistic knowledge that could enable them to produce pragmatically appropriate requests. However, when communicating in situations requiring higher levels of politeness in requests, the participants could not perform that well. Based on these studies, it can be concluded that even if language learners have satisfactory levels of linguistic competence, they still experience problems when it comes to producing the language in different situations.

Another study on speech act revealed that regional variations did not affect the speech act performances much and social status of interlocutors was an important factor to consider. Focusing on refusals, Genç and Tekyıldız (2011) investigated how Turkish EFL learners produce refusals and whether there is any variation in performances based on the regional differences. The participants were 101 Turkish EFL learners (50 from urban and 51 from rural settings) from Turkey and 50 native English speakers (25 from urban and 25 from rural settings) from the USA. The results of the DCTs showed that regardless of the regional variations, the participants in these four groups performed more or less in a similar way. Moreover, most of the participants also took the social status of the interlocutors into consideration while they were performing their refusals. In a recent Master thesis, Aydın (2013) focused on apology strategies employed by 30 Turkish native speakers, 29 American English speakers and 15 non-native speakers of English with high language proficiency. Though investigating a different speech act, the study conducted by Aydın (2013) worked with a similar profile of participants to those Genç and Tekyıldız (2011) included in their study. The data obtained through DCTs demonstrated that all the three groups showed similarities in their apology production. Yet, non-native speakers of English were, more or less, as successful as the native speakers of the language.

The results of the studies on Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) reveal that there is a positive correlation between language proficiency as well as

exposure to the target language and culture and ICC. ICC can be basically defined as the ability to communicate properly and efficiently with people from different cultures (Byram, 2000). With a purpose of finding out the relationship between ICC and linguistic proficiency, experience in the target culture and language education, Hişmanoğlu (2011) conducted a study with 35 learners from a university in Northern Cyprus. The results indicated that the students with higher language proficiency performed better than those with lower proficiency. Moreover, participants who were exposed to the target culture through overseas experience had higher levels of communicative competence. It was also shown that language education, or formal education, improved participants' ICC. The findings of the researcher indicate that general language proficiency and formal education are effective variables in the development of communicative competence even if all language learners can have the chance of language exposure and communication through overseas experiences.

Conducting a secondary research, Çetinavcı (2012) contributed to the literature by referring to the place and the existing state of language teaching considering the competencies and skills that learners are to develop. The researcher, while mentioning the relevant studies, maintained that there is still a gap in the literature regarding pragmatic or communicative competence. He further suggested that additional studies are needed in order to clear out the vagueness and offer better solutions to the problems in this area since what is in hand cannot go beyond some assumptions or beliefs.

An additional study focusing on the Intercultural Communicative Competence of the pre-service teachers was carried out by Sariçoban and Öz (2014). The researchers worked with 89 participants and examined the effects of studying abroad, gender and language proficiency variables on pre-service teachers' communicative competence. The results of the Intercultural Communicative Competence Questionnaire displayed similarity with those of Hişmanoğlu (2011) in terms of the positive effects of language proficiency and exposure to the target language and culture through experiences in other places. As for the gender variable, the study revealed that there were not statistically significant differences between male and female pre-service teachers. The results of this study and those by Hişmaoğlu (2011) indicate that having a high level of language proficiency makes it easier for language learners to improve their pragmatic skills. In addition, being exposed to the target language and culture also enables learners to

improve their levels in communicative competence. Some other studies carried out in Turkey also share a common point with the research of Sarıçoban and Öz (2014) in that they consider the issue of pragmatic competence from the perspective of pre-service teachers.

Since pre-service teachers are prospective teachers who are expected to perform well on the stage, they need to be equipped with the necessary qualifications in terms of general language competence and teaching skills. One of the studies with pre-service teachers in Turkey was conducted by Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2012). Pointing at the disappointing fact that most of the language learners can produce grammatically correct but pragmatically inappropriate statements, the researcher examined whether pre-service English teachers possess a good level of pragmatic competence. For the purposes of the study, she worked with 23 pre-service teachers and employed DCT as a data collection instrument. The results revealed that the performances of the participants were at a satisfactory level though there were some differences between their performances and those of the native speakers.

Focusing on pragmatic awareness, Atay (2015) conducted a study on the impact of a five-week course which aimed to raise the consciousness of pre-service teachers of English. Thirty prospective teachers were offered the course including theoretical knowledge as well as activities with different speech acts. The results pointed out that the five-week course reached its aim in terms of increasing participants' pragmatic consciousness. It was also revealed that, in language teaching, raising the pragmatic awareness of learners should be taken into account. For this purpose, consciousness-raising activities can be integrated into language content.

Besides the above-mentioned studies which are directly related to pragmatic or communicative competence, there are also some other studies indirectly focusing on different aspects of pragmatic knowledge or performance. For instance, Çakır (2010) examined the frequency of the presentation of cultural components in the ELT course books. Randomly selecting three elementary level course books, the researcher found out that these books did not contain enough number of culture-specific representations and information. Moreover, what was presented in the book was not explained appropriately and adequately. The researcher proposed that representing cultural

elements in course books is essential in order to show learners the proper ways of using the language and expose them to the target language and culture.

The results of a recent study in Turkey on pragmatics revealed that although they are willing to communicate, most of the EFL learners do not possess high levels of communicative competence. Öz, Demirezen and Pourfeiz (2015) investigated the levels of willingness in terms of communication of EFL learners. 134 EFL students were required to complete a questionnaire on Willingness to Communicate (WTC). The results indicated that nearly a quarter of the participants had a high level of willingness to communicate. However, only more than a tenth of them had a high level of communicative competence. In addition, there was a significant correlation between communicative competence and communicative apprehension. Based on the results of this study, it can be assumed that awareness in terms of the importance of communicative competence is a factor that influences pragmatic development.

Taking these studies into account, it can be concluded that there are different factors influencing communicative or pragmatic competence. Different studies in Turkey focusing on diverse features of the issue have provided findings for certain aspects of pragmatic competence. However, despite the increase in the number of studies in recent years, there is still a scarcity of studies in the field as regards research conducted in Turkish EFL context on teaching and assessing pragmatic competence.

CHAPTER THREE

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology involved in the process of formation and continuation of this study. The main purpose of this study was to examine the factors affecting EFL learners' pragmatic competence as well as the perceptions, attitudes and self-evaluations of both learners and faculty members considering pragmatic competence and the issue of its assessment as a significant part of language competence. The chapter begins with a presentation of the research design of the study. Then, it continues with the participants and the characteristics of the research settings. Finally, it concludes with the data collection and data analysis procedures.

3.2. Research Design

In the process of determining the research design of the study, previous research were analyzed. Most of the existing studies were based on quantitative research design. For the purposes of this study, a mixed methods research design was adopted with the aim of collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. Given the complexity and nature of the issue of pragmatics and pragmatic assessment, obtaining data from diverse sources would be advantageous because different populations can offer a great amount of information. This variety can be representative of different views from different angles about the issue under discussion. That is why the present study was based on a mixed-methods design to compensate the weakness of the other (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The main purpose of adopting such research design is to enrich the research data and make a comparison of what are available in both data types. Commenting on the general characteristics of the mixed methods research design, Creswell (2005) maintains that, in this type of design, both qualitative and quantitative data are, almost, of equal importance as information sources. Also, both types of data

are simultaneously collected during the study. After the data collection procedure, the results obtained from the afore-mentioned sources are analyzed with the aim of determining similarities and differences between two forms of data reflecting the participants' views.

Overall, the advantage of integrating both approaches propelled the adoption of mixed methods design to increase validity, reliability and generalizability of the study. For the purposes of this study, both the qualitative and the quantitative data were collected at the same time. Therefore, this study was based on a triangulation design. The quantitative data were collected from the student participants in order to reach an understanding of pragmatic competencies of them and from the faculty members in order to find out their general perspectives on pragmatic competence in language education. In a similar vein, qualitative data were obtained from the instructors and students to reach more detailed understandings of how they consider teaching and assessing pragmatic competence.

3.3. Setting

The study was conducted in the English Language Teaching Departments at six state universities in Turkey. For the purposes of this study, random convenience sampling was used. The reason why these universities were chosen to conduct this study was that they would represent the student profile from the east and the west of Turkey. In that way, there would be a chance to obtain data from different student profiles and; moreover, an opportunity to make some comparisons considering the views of participants from diverse populations. These universities were chosen as representative of the student profile in the east and west of the country because the students studying at different universities had got different scores from the university entrance exams reflecting their language success before they entered universities. Moreover, since there are different instructors working at tertiary level, the education that students get may change from one university to the other. Therefore, collecting data from diverse settings would help to obtain more comprehensive data and reach broader understandings.

Working in various settings for the purposes of the study was also significant because in Turkey, students learn the L2 in an EFL environment. In other words,

students are learning the language in a non-English speaking context as also mentioned in Literature Review section. Therefore, there are some perceived disadvantages of learning the target in such a setting with limited chances of exposure and language contact.

3.4. Participants

As the data were collected from both the language students and their instructors (based on their voluntary consents) in the six state universities, the participants of this study can be mentioned in two categories: The Faculty Members and The Student Participants. Below is separately displayed the demographic information about the participants.

3.4.1. The Faculty Members

Working in six state universities in Turkey, the number of the faculty members was 50 in total. They showed differences based on gender, age, academic degrees and years of experience variables. Below is presented the distribution of the faculty in terms of these variables.

Table 3.1.

Demographic Information About the Faculty Members

Demographic Information about the Faculty		
Gender	Female	22
	Male	28
Age	<30	24
	31-39	4
	40-49	7
	>50	15
Academic Degree	Bachelor's	11
	Master's	13
	Ph.D.	26
Experience Years	< 5 years	23
	6-9 years	12
	10-19 years	5
	>20 years	10
Total		50

3.4.2. The Student Participants

There were 554 student participants who contributed to the study in total. There were differences among the participants considering their gender, grade and years of learning the target language as well as the universities they were studying. Table 3.2 presents the demographic distribution of the student participants.

Table 3.2.

Demographic Information About the Student Participants

Demographic Information about the Student Participants		
University	University A	113
	University B	110
	University C	58
	University D	54
	University E	43
	University F	176
Gender	Male	173
	Female	381
Grade	Prep	10
	First year	121
	Second year	160
	Third year	185
	Fourth year	78
Learning Experience	< 10 years	81
	≥ 10 years	473
Total		554

3.5. Data Collection Instruments and Procedure

Prior to determining the data collection instruments, a comprehensive review of the previous studies examining issues related to pragmatics or pragmatic competence was conducted. For the purposes of the present study, the researcher adopted three data collection instruments; a Discourse Completion Task, a Perception Questionnaire and Written Responses for Open-Ended Questions. These instruments are presented separately below.

3.5.1. Discourse Completion Task (DCT)

The review of relevant literature revealed that in order to gain an understanding of language learners' pragmatic abilities, DCTs are one of the most commonly preferred tools for data collection. A DCT can be described as a data collection instrument that is purposefully created with the aim of obtaining responses to problematic statements (Zuskin, 1993). Therefore, with a goal to identify the level of student participants' pragmatic competence, the researcher decided to adopt a DCT which was originally formed by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) but expanded and validated by Xu (2009). This instrument included demographic information and then 20 scenarios. The original instrument contained 20 scenarios and required the participants to identify whether the statements were correct or not and then to rate the severity if there were any mistakes. Xu (2009) expanded the scenarios by adding qualitative responses at the end of each scenario. In this way, the DCT became more practical in terms of measuring participants' level of grammatical and pragmatic competence.

The main part of the instrument included 20 scenarios representing a sample conversation in possible educational settings. Eight out of twenty scenarios included grammatical mistakes without pragmatic infelicities and eight grammatically correct but pragmatically inappropriate statements. The rest four scenarios included neither grammatical nor pragmatic infelicities. The grammatical mistakes included the adoption of double past tenses, adding –ing form after a modal or not using a subject. On the other hand, the pragmatic infelicities were related to politeness issues such as using imperatives for requests or not providing the reason of refusal. In order to make this more comprehensible and concrete, examples from the three types of scenarios can be provided. The first scenario is an example of a grammatical infelicity:

Peter is talking to his teacher. The conversation is almost finished.

T: Well, I think that's all I can help you with at the moment.

P: *That's great. Thank you so much for all the informations.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

_____.

The following is an example of a pragmatically inappropriate scenario:

Anna needs directions to the library. She asks another student.

(Direction Scenario)

A: Hi.

S: Hi.

A: #Tell me how to get to the library.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

_____.

The last is an example of both grammatically and pragmatically correct scenario:

Peter's teacher wants to talk to Peter about the class party. Peter makes arrangements to come back.

T: Peter, we need to talk about the class party soon.

P: Yeah, if tomorrow is good for you, I could come any time you say.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

_____.

As well as providing the content of the DCT, it is also essential to refer to the reliability of the instrument. Below are presented the reliability values of the DCT as an instrument for data collection from student participants.

Table 3.3.

The Reliability Values of the Student Participants' DCT

	Internal consistency	Split half coefficient
Discourse Completion Task (24 items)	.73	.71

Cronbach's Alpha and split-half coefficient reliability analyses were conducted with the purpose of identifying the reliability of the Discourse Completion Task. The Cronbach's Alpha value was .73 and the split half coefficient value was .71. Taking the value of .70 and above as the basis for a reliable instrument, the DCT turned out to have a sufficient level of reliability value.

3.5.2. The perception questionnaire for the faculty members

As for the data collection instrument for the academic members, a questionnaire developed by Huang, Sheeran, Zhao and Xiong (2014) was adopted. The main purpose of adopting this instrument was to gain an understanding of the faculty members' perceptions of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence in language education. The instrument was composed of three main parts. The first part included items about demographic information. The second part included 20 statements that the participants would rate from 1 to 5 in the Likert Scale format. What these 20 items asked about were such issues related to pragmatic competence as its significance, the challenging aspects of teaching and assessing it and how this competence should be taught and evaluated.

As this instrument is a quantitative one, the matter of reliability gains importance at this point. The reliability values of the Faculty Perceptions of Pragmatic Competence and Assessment Questionnaire are displayed below.

Table 3.4.

The Reliability Values of the Faculty Questionnaire (The Faculty Perceptions of Pragmatic Competence and Assessment)

	Internal consistency	Split half coefficient
<i>The Faculty Perceptions of Pragmatic Competence and Assessment (21 items)</i>	.75	.72

In order to identify the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's Alpha and Split half coefficient reliability analyses were conducted. It was found that the Cronbach's Alpha value was .75 and the Split half coefficient value was .72 . Considering the notion that an instrument is to have a reliability value of .70, in order to be accepted as a reliable one, it can be stated that the questionnaire *-The Faculty Perceptions of Pragmatic Competence and Assessment-*was found to be moderately reliable.

3.5.3. Open-ended questions

The qualitative part of this study included open-ended questions that were formed by the researcher in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and thoughts of both students and the faculty pertaining to pragmatic competence and its assessment. The basic reason why open-ended questions were preferred was that they allow participants to freely convey their messages. This freedom of expression naturally results in a wealth of information (Singleton, Straits & Straits, 1993) representing the underlying reasons and facts behind the issue under discussion. Furthermore, the responses provided to these questions are good sources of clarification and elaboration reflecting the inner-thoughts of participants.

The open-ended questions were formed based on the main purposes of the study. Since the aim was to find out the perceptions of both the faculty and the students concerning the significance of pragmatic competence and its assessment, the questions were mainly designed to elicit information about these points. Moreover, the questions also asked about the challenges in the process of pragmatic development as well as pragmatic evaluation (The open-ended questions are provided in Appendix A and B).

3.5.4. Data collection procedure

Before initiating the data collection process, all the necessary legal and ethical applications were conducted and permission was obtained from the related departments. The participants were warranted that their participation was voluntary and the information they would provide would be kept confidential. Before conducting the main study, a pilot study with 10 students and 2 academic members were conducted in order to establish a clearer outline for possible challenges or issues that might be experienced during the main study (The participants of the pilot study did not participate in the main study). After obtaining some preliminary results from the pilot study (which resulted in no main application problems), the process of data collection for the main study began. The afore-mentioned instruments for both students and academic members were copied and they were posted to the related departments. The data collection procedure lasted approximately three-months. After all the data were sent back, the process of data analysis started.

3.5.5. The pilot study

In order to identify any problematic areas in terms of instrument design or the application procedure, a pilot study was conducted before the main study. For the purposes of the pilot study, there were 10 student participants and 2 instructors. The 10 student participants were asked to complete the DCT and provide answers to the open-ended questions described above. Likewise, the 2 instructors were also asked to complete the Perception Questionnaire and answer the open-ended questions. During the process of collecting data for the pilot study, no major problems that could possibly influence the main study occurred. The analysis of the pilot study was conducted according to the criteria that were proposed by the researchers who designed the instruments. The analysis revealed similar results with those of the main study that will be discussed in the next section. The results from the pilot study briefly showed that these limited number of participants perceived teaching and assessing pragmatic competence as important in language education although there are some basic points that they considered as challenges in the process.

3.6. Data Analysis

As the data of the study were collected both quantitatively and qualitatively, the analysis procedure was also conducted in two phases: Quantitative Data Analysis and Qualitative Data Analysis. It should be noted that the evaluations of both quantitative and qualitative data were conducted with two raters.

3.6.1. Quantitative data analysis

After the data obtained during the main study were transferred into software, the necessary conditions for parametric analyses were revised. For this purpose; extreme value analysis, normality and homogeneity analyses were conducted. It was determined that the data set ensured the necessary criteria for parametric analyses. Moreover, for the purposes of analysis, extreme value analyses were carried out with Skewness and Kurtosis values; and, normality analyses were conducted with Kolmogorov-smirnov tests. As to the homogeneity of the data set, Levene homogeneity test was applied and the data set were found out to ensure parametric characteristics. Normal distribution was not identified only in the data set that was collected from the faculty considering *age variable*. Therefore, Kruscal Wallis-H test was employed in order to determine whether there were differences in terms of average scores in the data. For the data set with parametric characteristics, Independent-Samples T-test and One-way ANOVA was adopted in order to identify the differences between or among the average scores in the data set. Also, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was employed to find out the correlations among the variables. During the process of data analysis, $p < .05$ value was adopted as the significance value for all the analyses.

3.6.2. Qualitative data analysis

Content analysis was adopted in order to analyze the qualitative data collected both from the student participants and the faculty. First, the researcher carefully went through the written data several times, she tried to identify codes out of the data. Then, these codes were combined into relevant categories that were later merged into broader themes. The following figure presents the qualitative data analysis procedure which is proposed by Creswell (2012, p.237).

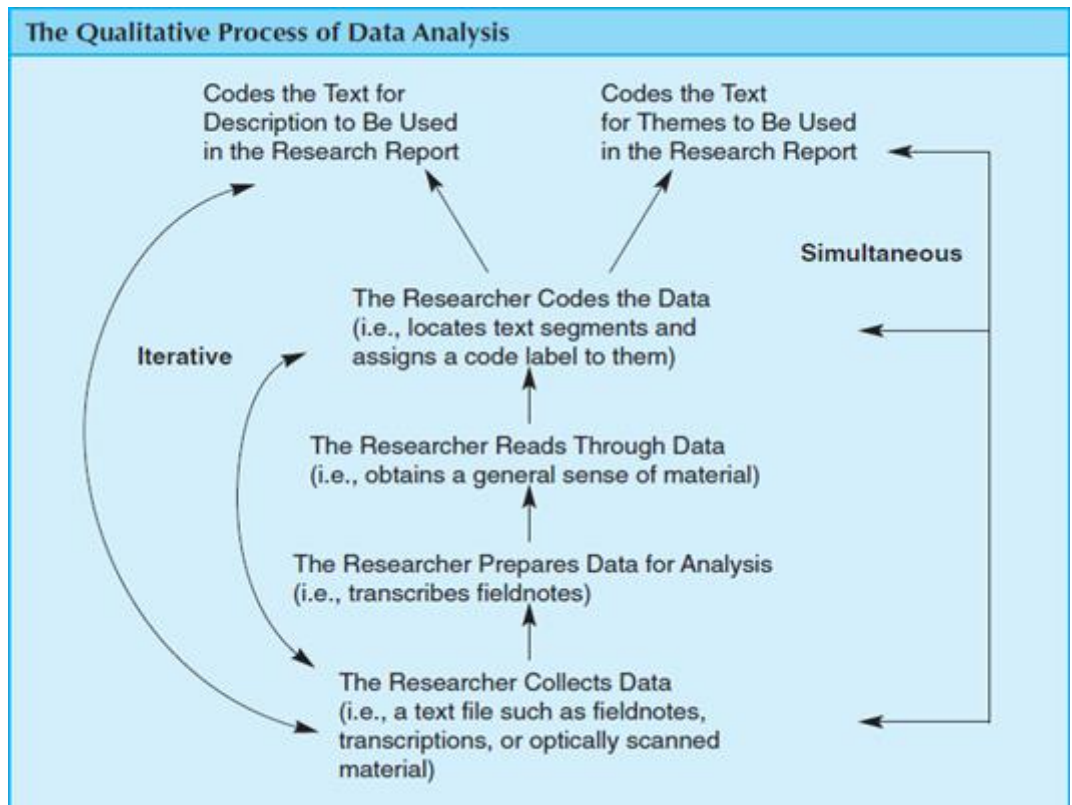


Figure 3.1. The qualitative process of data analysis

CHAPTER FOUR

4. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This section presents the qualitative results that were collected from both the students and the faculty members. Therefore, the results obtained from the open-ended questions are displayed in two separate sections: as “Results from the Faculty Members” and “Results from Students”. The presentation of these parts is provided in the following way. Each theme is presented in tables showing relevant categories and codes. The tables also include the perceptages of the participant statements. Then, examples from faculty members and student participants are provided to further elaborate the issues under discussion.

4.2. Qualitative Results from the Faculty

The analysis of the written data collected from the faculty members are categorized into four main themes: *the importance of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence*, *challenges in assessing pragmatic competence*, *contribution of pragmatic assessment in teaching and learning process* and, finally, *assessment of pragmatic competence*. These main themes and the subsequent categories and codes were formed based on the six questions that the faculty members were asked to respond. Theme 1 is based on the first two questions, Theme 2 on the third question, Theme 3 on the fourth question and Theme 4 on the fifth and sixth questions. These six questions are presented in Appendix A.

4.2.1. Theme 1: The importance of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence

The perceptions of the faculty considering the importance of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence were evaluated in this theme. The theme consisted of

two main categories identified as “teaching” and “assessing” pragmatic competence. The general views of the participants will be provided within the framework of these two points. Before offering examples, providing a table outlining the first theme and its relevant categories and codes with the percentages will be more enlightening as a visual representation.

Table 4.1.

Theme for the Importance of Teaching and Assessing Pragmatic Competence

Theme 1: The Importance of Teaching & Assessing Pragmatic Competence			
	N	F	
Category 1:Teaching pragmatic competence	Integral part of language competence	23	32.4
	Essence of language competence and communication	12	17
	Teaching linguistic and cultural differences btw L1 & L2	5	7
	Not teachable	2	2.8
Category 2:Assessing pragmatic competence	Raising awareness	13	18.3
	Identifying problematic areas	7	9.9
	Fostering effective communication	5	7
	Motivating learners	4	5.6

The data on the faculty members’ perceptions of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence show that the instructors generally hold positive attitudes towards pragmatic competence. They are aware of the contributory nature of pragmatic competence and its assessment in language education. Considering the first category, the faculty members generally regarded pragmatic skill as the *essence* of language competence. Therefore, they stated that pragmatic competence is supposed to play a fundamental role in language teaching as an integral part of general language competence. One of the participants stated the significance of pragmatic competence and made a detailed comment about the necessity of teaching pragmatics as the following:

“Teaching pragmatic competence should be an inseparable part of any language teaching since it is the ability to use language appropriately in different social situations. The basic purpose of language teaching is to make learners communicate in the target language, so they should learn the purposes, topic areas, situations and relevant status of communication. Pragmatic instruction should be incorporated in the school curriculum in general... Turkish EFL learners need to know how to express a variety of functions and which terminologies to use in different circumstances. Pragmatic competence in L2 must be well developed in order to communicate successfully in a target language and avoid misunderstanding”.

As regards the significance of pragmatic competence in language development, most of the participants stated that it should be an inseparable and integrated part of language teaching and learning. Without pragmatic competence, language development would not reach the desired levels. While referring to the importance of pragmatic competence, one of the participants indicated that although pragmatic competence is considered as a vital component of language development, it has been neglected for a long time mainly because it is not as easy to teach pragmatics as teaching linguistic aspects of the target language. Referring to the contributions of pragmatic competence, he expressed his thoughts as follows:

“It is a common perception that the essence of teaching and learning a foreign language involves far more than targeting surface grammatical or lexical systems. The other aspects of language have been referred as invisible since they are often more difficult to teach and acquire. As pragmatic competence is defined as the ability to communicate effectively and involves knowledge beyond the level of grammar, it should be widely regarded as an integral part of learning and teaching a language.”

Pragmatic competence is considered as one of the most essential factors that help learners develop their language abilities. What was common in the participant statements was that having some good knowledge of the linguistic aspects of the target language is not enough to master that language and maintain communicative acts. Focusing on this point, one of the participants also referred to the existing state in Turkish language education and maintained that:

“To be linguistically competent in a language does not mean that one is competent enough in that language... In Turkey, lessons are generally linguistic-based, so the students are not really good at speaking. Even the ones who are good at speaking make mistakes by using the wrong words and phrases in wrong situations. I think, in language teaching, pragmatic competence is necessary and it should be taught in a way integrated in the lesson plan.”

The data on the importance of teaching pragmatic competence also pointed at the difference between L1 and the target language in terms of their linguistic and cultural systems. Some of the participants maintained that while teaching pragmatics of the language, students should also be informed about the cultural differences between the two languages. One of the participants, upon this matter, referred to the diverse natures of different languages as for their linguistic aspects and their cultural elements. She made a comprehensive comment considering the significance of pragmatic competence in conveying messages and meaning making. She further mentioned the unique nature of each language and stated that students should be given opportunities and they should be encouraged to develop their pragmatic competence for their language development. The combination of all these points was made clear by this participant with the following words:

“We know that the society is the product of culture. It consists of people’s way of living, behaving and speaking. Each language occurs as the product of its own society. It reflects its features. I think that acquiring both linguistic competence and pragmatic competence will bring success to students. They will understand things beyond words... It is necessary to set effective communication with other people. So, the professors should attach importance to encourage the students to acquire pragmatic competence. They should develop techniques to teach it to their students.”

Considering teaching pragmatics, it was also revealed that the knowledge of linguistic aspects of the target language is necessary for full development. Some of the participants favored the integration of teaching linguistic and pragmatic aspects since they both contribute to the development of language proficiency. Without one, the other would not be complete. Teaching linguistic features of the target language would help the learner to establish a base for further information and development. One of the

participants who resembled language without pragmatic knowledge as a mechanical pile stated that language without linguistic knowledge is also incomplete. He said that language competence requires the mastery of both dimensions of the knowledge of language. Only one would not be enough to have a good command of language. Therefore, there should be a simultaneous development of both linguistic competence and pragmatic competence without neglecting either of them. The participant put his thoughts into the following words:

“I believe language as a system is nothing but a mechanical pile without the pragmatic aspects since learning a language requires complete integration of structural and pragmatic dimensions. That is why, instructors should be able to consider learners’ pragmatic development in language learning as well as their grammatical competence. Turkish EFL learning context is widely criticized for its grammar-depended nature; however, learning a language suggests competence in both grammatical and pragmatic aspects in a way that learners are able to communicate effectively in the target language.”

Not all the participants, however, share the same ideas about teaching pragmatic competence. As indicated in Table 4.1, some of them, though not many in number, believe that pragmatic competence is not the type of competence that can be taught to language learners. In other words, it is not teachable. Instead, it is something that students can develop in time as their knowledge of other features of language develops. What can be done by instructors is to offer language learners the kind of learning environment in which students can have the opportunity to be exposed to language in different forms. Without allocating special effort and time, it would be enough to conduct language classes with different opportunities that learners can make use of. In such a language learning atmosphere, learners can develop their pragmatic competence as they develop their linguistic and lexical competence. Sharing this perspective, one of the participants commented as the following:

“Competence, whether pragmatic or linguistic, is not teachable; competence is a type of knowledge that learners possess, develop, acquire, use and lose. The challenge for foreign or second language teaching is whether we can arrange learning opportunities in such a way that students benefit from the development of pragmatic competence in second

language... adopting pragmatic competence as one of the goals of second language learning does not necessarily imply that pragmatic ability requires any special attention in language teaching. Pragmatic knowledge simply develops alongside lexical and grammatical knowledge without requiring any pedagogic intervention.”

Participants reflected their thoughts about the overall aspects of pragmatics in a wide perspective and called attention to the details of the issue. One of them questioned even the teachability of pragmatic competence bringing to the notice the problems in application. He expressed that it is not the instructors' responsibility to teach pragmatics to learners due to time constraints. Instead, it is the responsibility of learners to develop their pragmatic competence. The main reason, according to the participant, for this is that instructors do not have enough time to allocate to teaching pragmatics in their busy schedule. Based on their curriculum, they are supposed to focus on teaching academic courses and this means, most of the time, there is little or no time to teach pragmatics. Therefore, as language development requires pragmatic competence as an important part, this means that the responsibility to develop their pragmatic competence is on the shoulders of learners themselves. The participant pointing at this issue expressed his thoughts in this way:

“Firstly, we should ask this question: ‘Can pragmatic competence be taught?’. In my opinion, it is the learners’ responsibility; they should acquire and develop it. In teacher training programs, we mostly focus on academic courses and have no time to teach or assess pragmatic competence.”

Based on Table 4.1, the data on the second category *-assessing pragmatic competence-* revealed that most of the faculty members referred to the benefits of pragmatic assessment. Those instructors who integrated pragmatic evaluation in the process of assessing general language competence considered pragmatic assessment as contributory in nature. As possessing pragmatic skills is an essential part of general language competence, the evaluation of this competence is not only crucial but also beneficial in that it ensures motivation and success by making the problematic areas clear and increasing awareness of learners as well as teachers. There were basically four advantages that were mentioned: *raising awareness identifying problematic areas,*

fostering effective communication and motivating learners. Before having a general look at these codes, it would be better to present a quote from one of the participants who made a general comment about the necessity of pragmatic assessment. The participant noted that if the aim of teaching and learning a target language is to develop learners' communication skills, then it is necessary to improve their pragmatic competence. Therefore, this requires the assessment of pragmatic competence to realize the main aim of language teaching. The participant stated that there is a connection between the purpose of language teaching and the necessity of further applications in the process. He commented that the scope of assessment depends on the purposes of language education. In other words, assessment of pragmatic competence is needed if the aim is to teach pragmatics:

“In my opinion, the necessity of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence is related to the aim of teaching the target language. Specific purposes of teaching and learning a language can specify the content and the type of assessment. If pragmatic competence is a part of our teaching targets, so it must be assessed. And, I believe that it must be a part of general assessment.”

As displayed in Table 4.1, raising learners' awareness was considered as one of the most important aspects of pragmatic assessment. Since assessment provides learners with the chance of evaluating their language knowledge and performances, learners can realize the areas that need further development. The assessment can be regarded as a form of feedback with the help of which learners improve their abilities of communication more appropriately. One of the participants who also complained that there is not a balance between undergraduates', and even graduates', levels of linguistic competence and their communication performances further commented as follows:

“There is a great gap between linguistic competence and real communication performance of the students/graduates of language programs in Turkey. Assessing their pragmatic competence in advance may help them be aware of their needs (related to pragmatic competence) for effective real communication and bridge the gap between linguistic competence and real communication performance to some extent.”

Pragmatic assessment was also considered as beneficial in the identification of problematic areas in pragmatic development. Pragmatic competence can be regarded as the ability of learners to say appropriate things in appropriate situations. Therefore, assessing pragmatic competence would help learners identify what is lacking in their knowledge and performance in terms of pragmatic aspects of the foreign language they learn. In addition to identifying the problems on the learner-side, it also helps teachers recognize some issues or applications that should be changed in the teaching-side or the process. One of the participants pointed at all these issues and explained that pragmatic assessment makes the identification of problematic areas easier not only for the learner but also for the teacher and stated as the follows:

“Naturally, testing learners’ pragmatic competence in English can be useful for identifying problem areas; this is needed in order to address any shortcomings in learners’ understanding, or in the instructional process itself and the materials used in teaching this specific aspect of the language.”

Table 4.1 displays that another significant aspect of pragmatic assessment is to foster effective communication. As pragmatic assessment shows learners their weaknesses in interaction, students can realize the areas they need to improve and, in this way, they can develop their communicative skills. Referring to this point, a participant maintained that pragmatic assessment is essential in language teaching and learning process since pragmatic competence is among the core elements that fosters learners’ communication. Moreover, it is a factor that contributes to learners’ awareness of language as a means of communication. The participant sharing this viewpoint uttered the following phrases:

“Pragmatic assessment helps the development of students’ second language proficiency because students who cannot gain pragmatic competence fail to realize the targets of communication.”

As can be seen in Table 4.1, pragmatic assessment was also regarded, by some of the faculty members, as helpful in motivating learners. Evaluating their own language performances, learners can have the chance of improving their language competencies. This development, in turn, can increase their motivation in the process of

language education. The motivational influence of pragmatic assessment was reflected by participants who commented that pragmatic assessment makes positive contributions to learners' pragmatic knowledge and their language performance. A participant put his ideas into the following words:

“Pragmatic assessment, undoubtedly, contributes to the pragmatic knowledge and performance of the learners in ESL and EFL setting. Such awareness throughout the assessment and evaluation process will certainly motivate and foster the learners at different levels. Therefore, the general assessment process should evaluate pragmatic knowledge and performance.”

On the other hand, the data also revealed that the faculty had some concerns about the process of pragmatic assessment though most of them realized the significance of teaching and assessing pragmatics. They stated that assessing pragmatic competence is not as easy as teaching it. Besides, they also referred to their belief that it is not actually possible to conduct pragmatic assessment because there are not many valid and standardized tests to do this. Taking this point into account, one of the participants, after highlighting the significance of pragmatic competence, focused on the need for its assessment:

“Pragmatics is called as ‘language use in social contexts’. It is related to how something is said, the intentions of the speaker, the cultural expectations, etc. Therefore, it is a very complicated part of communicative competence and it is very challenging to assess it... However, it is very difficult to have a valid and reliable standardized test to assess pragmatic competence. Yet, it would be good if we attempt to look at the application of social knowledge in our assessment.”

At this point, it should also be noted that the views about the possibility of assessment of pragmatic competence were not all the same. While the above participant was of the opinion that it is almost impossible to measure it, another participant shared the view that assessing pragmatic competence is not as unproblematic. He believed that pragmatic assessment should be an integral part of general language assessment. Making a connection between teaching and assessing pragmatic competence, the participant explained his point of view with the following phrases:

“Just like its teaching, pragmatic assessment should not be separate on its own. Pragmatic development should be regarded as a part of whole language development. Since it is not possible to claim that linguistic competence is enough for successful communication in the target language, then, it is also not possible to maintain that an assessment which is based only on linguistic competence is enough to assess the learners’ communicative competence effectively.”

Based on a general review of the first theme presented in Table 4.1, one can see that the perceptions of the faculty considering pragmatics generally focused on two dimensions of the issue: teaching and assessing pragmatic competence. Most of the participants shared the viewpoint that pragmatic competence is an essential part of language knowledge and, to some extent, it is more important than linguistic competence since without having pragmatic competence linguistic knowledge would not help the learner to use the language effectively. What was not common among the participant views was about the matter of teaching pragmatic competence. While most of the participants stated that pragmatic competence should be taught to learners, few others were of the opinion that it is not teachable; for them, it develops in time as the knowledge of language develops. Again, they believed that it is not the teacher’s responsibility to teach pragmatics; instead, students themselves should develop it in time.

Considering the assessment of pragmatic competence, the participants, in general, focused on the benefits of pragmatic assessment in language education and development. Most of the participants believed that pragmatic assessment has a motivational effect on the learner-side as well as fostering language development for communicative purposes. It also helps learners and instructors to identify the points that may possibly hinder the development of pragmatic competence. All in all, what was common as for the first theme was that teaching and assessing pragmatic competence is crucial in the process of language teaching and learning in order to actualize the pre-determined purposes and attain the desired competency levels.

4.2.2. Theme 2: Challenges in teaching and assessing pragmatic competence

The difficulties and challenges faced in the process of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence were among the core issues on which participants revealed their opinions. The analysis of written data considering this issue resulted in three categories. These categories were about the factors that are to do with the students, the instructors and the factors that are beyond the control of learners and instructors. The following table presents the codes and broader categories about the challenges that are experienced or that are possibly to experience in the process of pragmatic assessment.

Table 4.2.

Theme for the Challenges in Assessing Pragmatic Competence

Theme 2: Challenges in Teaching and Assessing Pragmatic Competence				
	N	F		
Category 1:external factors	Education system	24	22.4	
	Examination style	22	20.3	
	Crowded classes	5	4.7	
	English as a Foreign Language	6	5.5	
	Time limitation	3	2.7	
	Cultural and linguistic differences btw L1 & L2	2	1.8	
	Lack of authentic materials	5	4.7	
	Category 2:student-related factors	Students' proficiency levels	7	6.4
		Students' indifference	4	3.7
Lack of student awareness		8	7.4	
Students' perceptions		5	4.7	
Category 3:faculty-related factors	Instructors' proficiency levels	6	5.6	
	Instructors' attitudes	11	10.1	

The data on the faculty members' perceptions of the challenges of pragmatics teaching and its assessment revealed that there are some external factors negatively

influencing the process of education and evaluation. The first category, *external factors*, is related to the factors that are out of the control of instructors and students. As presented in Table 4.2, the most commonly stated factor was the existing system in Turkish education that has been applied for many years. Almost all of the participants pointed at this problem while they were mentioning the challenges in pragmatic assessment. They stated that in Turkey, foreign language education mainly focuses on the development of linguistic competence without giving necessary emphasis on the development of pragmatic competence. A comprehensive statement from one of the participants can be provided as an example to make this point clear. The participant, after referring to some possible challenges in the process of pragmatic assessment, continued his explanation with his observation of the existing system and stated that all the components of the foreign language education are designed and directed to develop mostly the linguistic competence of the learners. What is more, learners and instructors are accustomed to this way of instruction even though they realize the importance of pragmatic competence in language learning and teaching. The participant expressed his views on these points as the following:

“The challenges in assessing students’ pragmatic competence include such factors as education system, general assessment system, perceptions of FL teaching and learning and teachers’ and students’ preparedness. For the assessment of pragmatic competence, the common education system seems to be the basic challenge. It seems to be very common that language teaching in many courses do not go beyond the teaching of linguistic components. Language teaching materials are designed for teaching these components, teachers are trained to teach these components, students are accustomed to this type of language education and also the language assessment is based only on linguistic competence. In general standardized tests, the basic criterion is linguistic competence in the target language. Therefore, many students and teachers tend to think linguistic competence as the ultimate goal of foreign language courses, and pragmatic competence as secondary or complementary. Unless an education system which also puts emphasis on pragmatic competence is established, the problems seem to be far from solution.”

Table 4.2 shows that the second basic challenge is the examination style which is also based on the existing education system. While complaining about the design of the education system, most participants referred to the examination style as a drawback of traditional design. They claimed that as language instruction, in general, focuses on the development of linguistic competence, language assessment is also, most of the time, based on evaluating the linguistic knowledge of the learners ignoring their pragmatic knowledge and development. One of the participants, sharing similar viewpoints with the previous participant, considered the education system as a serious problem in evaluating learners' pragmatic competence. He commented that the present examination system is not appropriate to make an evaluation of pragmatic knowledge of learners. He suggested that instructors should be aware of the significance of teaching and evaluating pragmatic competence for language development:

“The challenges in assessing students’ English pragmatic competence are mostly related to traditional teaching-learning approaches. The education system should be based on a style to integrate pragmatic competence into courses. Examinations are mostly far from assessing pragmatic competence because they assess contents of courses which are not suitable to test pragmatic competence. The faculty should be aware of the inevitability of pragmatic competence in language teaching but it cannot be said that all academics are aware of the importance of the issue.”

The same concern about the examination style is also referred by another participant. He stated that what is evaluated in our education system is mostly the learners' knowledge of linguistic features of the target language. Therefore, learners are used to spending their time to study linguistic aspects of the language to obtain the desired grades and pass the exams. Yet, the evaluation of pragmatic competence is neglected. Complaining about the existing situation and stating his concern, the participant also noted that some things should definitely be done in order to ameliorate the process of pragmatic assessment though he could not make a suggestion for development. This comment is expressed with the following phrases:

“Our education system is full of exams that assess mainly the capability of students to use the rules of the language. Therefore, both

teachers and students focus on this capability to pass the exams. However, pragmatic competence which may be one of the most significant elements of language is neglected. It is not easy to make recommendations on how to change the assessment or examination system to increase the efficiency of assessing; but it should be changed completely.”

On the other hand, there were also some faculty members who recognized some basic alterations in the existing system. Appreciating these encouraging changes in foreign language education, a participant commented that the curriculum in application designed to improve foreign language teaching puts emphasis on language as a means of communication. There have been attempts to teach language fostering communicative development. However, the participant also added that despite positive changes, the examination system still does not lead the desired level of assessment. Expressing his observations and concerns about the present applications, he complained that although pragmatic competence has been recognized as an important part of language competence, the assessment practice is not appropriate to evaluate learners' pragmatic knowledge:

“Our new curricula focus on language as a means of communication. Teaching communication with new techniques is important in our new language education system. However, our examination system is inconsistent with the purpose of language education: communication. Although we say that communication and pragmatic competence are important, we still assess our students' language level by focusing on only their linguistic competence. We conduct multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank tests which are inadequate in assessing pragmatic competence. We need alternative assessment techniques in order to assess pragmatic competence.”

As shown in Table 4.2, another concern of participants related to the process of pragmatic assessment was related to the number of learners in language classes. Some participants complained that most of their language classes are too crowded to teach and especially assess pragmatic competence appropriately and effectively. The more the number of students increases, the more difficult it becomes to healthily carry out the educational process. One of the participants who referred to this problem made a striking comment about his observation that quantity is more important than quality in

the existing education system. He stated that the students who are in the process of learning the target language are not prepared to go through such an assessment process:

“As classes are pretty crowded, even though we want to assess students’ speaking and listening abilities, it is impossible to realize. When we are teaching within an education system that cares quantity rather than quality, every attempt faces challenges. The target students who are used to learning in traditional ways are also not ready for that (pragmatic assessment).”

The data showed that one other factor that causes problems in pragmatic instruction and evaluation is the time-limitation. The inadequacy of time for language classes is also referred to by another participant. The participant commented that language teachers are supposed to spend the allocated time to cover the basic features of the language and enough time cannot be spared to increase the level of pragmatic competence in language education. Because of the lack of student interest and limited time, most of the time, the general concepts of the target language are focused on. In order to express his unease with this situation, the participant made the following comment:

“One of the most noteworthy challenges of assessing pragmatic competence is the time limitation during English classes. The attention paid by students to English language teaching is so little that it becomes difficult for language instructors to cover all dimensions of the target language, forcing them to stick to the basic aspects of the language in the classroom.”

Pertaining to the context of education, as displayed in Table 4.2, some of the faculty members were also concerned about the fact that in Turkey, English is learned as a foreign language. This means that learners do not have enough opportunities to be exposed to the target language and culture out of the instructional environment. Therefore, they are supposed to develop their language abilities mostly in the classroom. A participant, upon the issue of learning language in an EFL context, maintained that learning the target language in such a setting is not the same as learning it in an ESL context. In an ELF context, it is more possible that learners feel they are learning the language in an unnatural environment with a number of limitations, which

may cause them to feel uncomfortable about language learning and development. Though providing a short comment, the participant commented that:

“In Turkey, English is taught as a foreign language; this results in serious deficiencies in terms of syntax, semantics and pragmatics... Learning environment cannot be the same as natural environment. As a result, learners can feel unsafe and threatened while learning.”

Table 4.2 presents that the second category -student-related factors-, includes such factors as students' levels of language proficiency, their indifference and lack of awareness concerning pragmatic development as challenges in the process of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence. As for the problems related to the learner-side of the issue, a participant covered all these three factors in a single comment. He maintained that lower levels of motivation prevent learners from having enthusiasm to develop their language competence. In addition, the participant also stated that some of the learners do not possess adequate levels of interest to develop their pragmatic skills. Instead of trying to improve their pragmatic competence, learners prefer making use of their existing language knowledge mostly based on their knowledge of first language. Reminding that it is not easy to conduct pragmatic assessment with low levels of language proficiency and motivation, the participant put his ideas into the following words:

“It is nearly impossible to assess pragmatic competence in assessing Turkish EFL students' English language proficiency. As Turkish EFL students are not motivated enough to learn the target language, they always simply try to make use of pragmatic transfer with their weak language knowledge, and these attempts generally result in pragmatic failure. Besides, some of the learners are also not interested in developing their pragmatic competence. Therefore, with this low level of motivation, interest and proficiency, it is not easy to assess pragmatic competence.”

However, the data on the challenges of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence showed that the difficulties in the process should not only be sought on the learner side. Some of the participants maintained that instructors may also be responsible for the possible problems faced in the process of pragmatic assessment. The finding that low level of language competence not only of learners but also of

instructors makes teaching and assessment of pragmatic competence problematic was remarkable in that it reflected the need to consider all the partners of the subject within the same framework. Some language teachers may not possess the necessary language proficiency to teach pragmatic features of the target language and then assess it appropriately. Taking this perspective into account, a participant directly stated that it is the instructor's responsibility to conduct language classes fostering pragmatic competence by teaching and assessing it. He explained that referring to the education system or learners' perceptions can only be considered as excuses. The basic issue is instructors' awareness concerning the importance of pragmatic competence and their language proficiencies to teach and assess pragmatic competence. He criticized the way language classes are conducted sticking to the traditional ways of teaching. As well as mentioning the choices of assessment tools and applications, the participant expressed his opinions with the following phrases:

“The basic challenge seems to be the inefficiency of instructors’ awareness and proficiency levels in terms of pragmatic knowledge and performance. Traditional teaching conventions are very hard to overcome. In addition to the instructional style, assessment preferences and tools are also influential factors that may be regarded as challenges. However, student perception and education system, in my opinion, should not be blamed for the lack of pragmatic success in language teaching. The core responsibility is on the shoulder of instructors.”

The general consideration of the second theme -challenges in teaching and assessing pragmatic competence- shows that the potential challenges in the process of pragmatic assessment are not only the result of one factor. Instead, there are basically three factors -external factors, student-related factors and faculty-related factors- that possibly impact pragmatic assessment in language education. Regarding the first category, the analysis of the written data has shown that the most frequently mentioned factors are, in general, out of the control of learners and instructors. The existing education system is the first factor that has been referred to create problems in pragmatic assessment. The participants criticized the education system in that it focuses on teaching the linguistic aspects of the language without emphasizing the significance of pragmatic features. The examination style, which is mostly based on the education

system, is another point that received much criticism. What was made clear in the data was that exams mainly focus on linguistic evaluation and do not basically include items to test and assess pragmatic competence of learners. While there are different tools to assess linguistic competence, the same is not true to evaluate pragmatic competence in an effective way.

The number of learners in language classes is also a different problem that makes the process of pragmatic assessment difficult. In crowded classes, it becomes more difficult to evaluate learners individually and appropriately. Besides, time limitation causes problems because instructors need to cover what they are supposed to do according to their schedule. While covering the curriculum, they cannot attain the necessary level of pragmatic instruction and evaluation.

Another external factor is about the teaching and learning environment of the target language. English is learned as a foreign language in Turkey and the faculty members considered this as a potential problem. They stated that in such a learning environment, learners do not have much opportunity to expose the target language in its natural use. On the contrary, they are provided with materials that are not always authentic and mainly designed to present linguistic features of the language instead of pragmatic aspects.

The second category is about factors related to learners. The consideration of this category revealed that learners' low level of language proficiency and their indifference are the most basic factors that negatively impact the process of pragmatic assessment. The faculty members complained that some of the learners do not have the essential level of language proficiency so that they can develop their pragmatic competence and this makes it difficult for instructors to conduct pragmatic assessment.

An additional problem concerning learners was their indifference towards pragmatic development. Since learners do not show enthusiasm towards language development, it becomes hard to teach them pragmatic knowledge and then assess their pragmatic competence. Learners also lack motivation to improve their pragmatic development. Low levels of learner motivation and high levels of indifference inevitably cause problems in the process of pragmatic assessment.

The factors related to the instructor side of the issue formed the third category under the broader theme of challenges. Instructors' attitudes towards teaching and assessing pragmatic competence were one of the problems mentioned by the participants. Some of the participants maintained that instructors, sometimes, have the traditional view of language teaching and shape their teaching and assessment styles accordingly. These instructors attach importance to linguistic aspects of the target language. As a result, they focus on teaching and assessing linguistic features instead of helping learners develop their pragmatic competence.

One more potential problem related to the instructors was the possibility that some of the instructors may not possess enough language competencies to lead the process of language teaching in an effective manner. The participants who raised concern about low levels of language proficiency on the side of teachers maintained that teachers who do not possess the desired levels of language competence cannot carry out the language teaching process at the desired level. This is evaluated as a potential problem which hinders the development of students' language competence in general and pragmatic competence in particular.

4.2.3. Theme 3: Contributions of pragmatic assessment in teaching and learning process

Despite certain problematic issues concerning its application process, pragmatic assessment has some positive contributions to the process of language education as well. The analysis of the written data reflecting the faculty members' perceptions revealed that pragmatic assessment contributes not only to learners but also to applications in teaching and assessment process. The following table presents the codes and categories related to the contributions of pragmatic assessment in the educational process.

Table 4.3.

Theme for the Contributions of Pragmatic Assessment in Teaching and Learning Process

Theme 3: Contributions of Pragmatic Assessment in Teaching & Learning Process			
		N	F
Category 1: contributions on the learner side	Raising student awareness	14	25.5
	Improving communicative skills	11	20
	Increasing L2 proficiency	7	12.7
	Raising cultural and linguistic awareness	4	7.2
Category 2: contributions on the application side	Making the teaching and learning process more productive and enjoyable	13	23.7
	Identifying problematic areas	6	10.9

The data on the contributions of pragmatic assessment in teaching and learning process revealed that pragmatic assessment is contributory in nature considering learners and the process of education. As shown in Table 4.3, the first category is related to the contributions of pragmatic assessment to language learners. Raising student awareness was the most frequently mentioned contribution which was subsequently followed by improving communicative skills, increasing L2 proficiency and raising cultural and linguistic awareness. The faculty members stated that pragmatic assessment increases learners' awareness of the importance of pragmatics in language education. Learners who become more aware of its importance tend to give much emphasis on developing their pragmatic competence. With the help of pragmatic assessment, learners begin to realize the essential place of pragmatic competence in their language development. Therefore, pragmatic assessment was also believed to contribute to general language competence of learners by expanding their language knowledge and by motivating them in language learning. In such a motivated mood, it becomes more enjoyable and easier for learners to study the target language beyond its linguistic aspects. The more thoroughly they study the target language, the better proficiency levels and the more successful communication stages they reach. A participant's far-reaching comment can be indicative of positive contributions of pragmatic assessment to language learning:

“To include pragmatic competence in the assessment of Turkish EFL students’ language proficiency contributes to the students’ L2 proficiency in the sense that students get the awareness of the importance of pragmatic competence in the target language. Students try to get not only the linguistic but also the pragmatic knowledge in the target language. They become more aware that pragmatic competence is an essential component of effective language use and their linguistic knowledge cannot be enough for communication in English unless they get pragmatic knowledge. This awareness, thus, contributes to their motivation towards their learning of pragmatic knowledge and eventually to their proficiency in English. Students who know the importance of pragmatic competence make it an integrated part of their foreign language learning and do not consider language learning as a job of learning only grammatical rules and memorization of vocabulary. Pragmatic assessment contributes to the level of proficiency in the target language and consequently makes students better communicators of the language they learn.”

Reflecting the view that pragmatic competence should be an inseparable part of language proficiency, another participant also referred to these contributions. He noted that without pragmatic competence, language proficiency is not possible to attain. Therefore, teaching and assessing pragmatic competence should be included in language education. The participant commented that pragmatic assessment positively affects language knowledge and performance of learners since it helps them understand the essence of the target language. Moreover, while increasing their linguistic and cultural awareness, pragmatic assessment motivates learners to continue with their language studies:

“It is reasonable to think that language competence cannot be achieved by excluding communicative competence; thus, pragmatic performance of the learners should be included in the assessment of language performance. In addition, the involvement of pragmatic features in the language teaching and testing process is likely to contribute to language performance in a way that EFL learners can grasp the motive behind language learning and engage with the activities. As well as increasing cultural awareness, assessing pragmatic competence raises students’ pragmatic awareness and makes them competent in some

functions like greetings, offering, rejecting, inviting, apologizing or suggesting.”

The data on the contributions of pragmatic assessment points at a second category -contributions on the application side. As shown in Table 4.3, this category refers to the benefits of making the teaching and learning process more productive and enjoyable as well as promoting the identification of problematic areas. Regarding the betterment of the process of language education, one of the participants provided a general comment stating the necessity to include the teaching of pragmatic aspects of the language and their assessment. He suggested that through pragmatic assessment, learners will become more aware of the significance of pragmatic competence and this will result in an increase in the efficiency of language learning and teaching:

“The impact of assessing pragmatic competence on learning and teaching should be viewed from a perspective reflecting teaching language as a whole. Not only structural teaching but also real use of language teaching must be included in course contents. If this is achieved, assessment of pragmatic competence will improve language learning and teaching. In this way, students will feel that they should not limit their work with only words, sentences, dictionaries, answers to the questions of teachers; they will feel the necessity of the uniqueness of expressions of intentions and aspirations.”

The findings also brought to light that pragmatic competence improves the process of language education since it helps the identification of potential problems in the process. As well as increasing the level of motivation and enthusiasm of learners and raising their language awareness, pragmatic assessment was also conceived to promote language education with the identification of problematic areas. Underlining the positive contributions of pragmatic assessment, one participant provided the following substantial comment:

“Students will be more motivated and more enthusiastic in the learning setting when pragmatic competence is included in teaching and, finally, assessment... Moreover, identifying students’ weaknesses in the area of pragmatics can guide educators in developing content that supports the development of this skill”

A final viewpoint on the contribution of pragmatic assessment considering language education focuses on designing courses appropriately. One of the participants commented that pragmatic assessment helps the improvement of foreign language teaching and learning with relative arrangements in designing language courses. In these newly-designed course atmospheres, the importance that teachers and learners attach to pragmatic assessment increases. The participant also stated that pragmatic assessment enhances language proficiency of learners:

“The assessment which includes pragmatic knowledge will, first of all, show its effects on the foreign language teaching and learning system. The content of language courses will include pragmatic knowledge, new language teaching materials will be designed and the emphasis placed by teachers and learners on this type of knowledge will increase consequently. Most importantly the learning of pragmatic knowledge will be taken seriously and learners’ L2 proficiency will increase since this type of knowledge is certainly required for effective communication in the target language.”

To provide a summary of the third theme, it can be said that pragmatic competence has positive influences on both learners and the process of language teaching. Considering the contributions to learners, the basic concept maintained by the participants was that pragmatic competence promotes learners’ awareness in terms of the significance of pragmatic competence. Becoming more conscious and aware of the process, learners put more effort to learn the pragmatic aspects of the target language as well as its linguistic aspects. The results also revealed that pragmatic assessment is believed to contribute to general language knowledge as well as improving communicative skills. The more their pragmatic competence develops, the better learners’ communicative competencies become. Learners also expand their knowledge about the target culture besides its language functions as well as enhancing their communicative abilities.

The data also revealed that in addition to exerting positive effects on learners, pragmatic competence also contributes to the teaching and learning process. It makes the identification of problematic areas easier and enables the necessary improvement for applications in the educational process. In this way, the materials used in teaching the

target language can be modified or new materials can be adopted. Moreover, the existing teaching techniques can be revised so that more effective ways can be applied.

Based on the participants' statements, it was also understood that pragmatic assessment also makes teaching and learning process more effective and enjoyable. If learners become aware of the functions of the target language, they will feel the initiative to develop their pragmatic competence. The more they improve their communicative skills, the more enjoyable and motivating the learning process becomes. The level of learner motivation also influences the level of teacher motivation. Therefore, it can be briefly stated that pragmatic competence has contributions to different aspects of the educational process and these all influence each other in turn.

4.2.4. Theme 4: Assessment of pragmatic competence

The last theme that is identified as a result of the analysis of the written data is about the assessment of pragmatic competence. Two main categories were identified out of the data: *the scope of assessment* and *assessment tools*. Table 4.4 illustrates the two basic categories and related codes about pragmatic assessment.

Table 4.4.

Theme for the Assessment of Pragmatic Competence

Theme 4: Assessment of Pragmatic Competence			
	N	F	
Category 1: the scope of assessment	Assessing in different contexts	16	12.9
	Assessing both pragmatic & grammatical competence	17	13.8
	Assessing only pragmatic competence	9	7.2
Category 2: assessment tools	Authentic communicative tasks	19	15.4
	Scenarios	13	10.5
	Role plays	13	10.5
	Dialogues	11	8.9
	Videos-audios	7	5.6
	DCTs	6	4.8
	Portfolios	4	3.2
	Homework	3	2.4
	Observation	2	1.6
	Check-lists	2	1.6
Presentations	2	1.6	

The data on the scope of assessment revealed that while some of the participants favored the assessment of pragmatic competence as a separate language function, some others considered it necessary to integrate the evaluation of both grammatical and pragmatic competence. As displayed in Table 4.4, those who favor the integration of pragmatic and grammatical assessment are more in number compared to the other group. The participants supporting the integration of grammatical and pragmatic evaluation in language assessment explained that language is composed of different skills; hence, language development should include all the components of the target language. That is why; in their opinion, language assessment should combine the evaluation of both structure and pragmatics. On the other hand, those who maintained that assessment of pragmatic competence should be conducted alone supported their claims by stating that pragmatic competence is a more important language function to master than grammatical competence. Therefore, in their estimation, in the assessment of learners' language competence, pragmatic assessment should be the basic purpose to accomplish. These were the two main considerations of the scope of pragmatic assessment. However, almost all of the participants expressed their considerations only with a few words: "Pragmatic assessment is more important" or "both grammatical and pragmatic assessment". For this reason, it is not possible to provide comprehensive participant descriptions due to the inadequacy of statements. Of the limited expressions, one pointing at the equal importance of grammatical and pragmatic assessments indicated that in language learning, teaching and assessment, all the aspects should be attached equal significance because the total combination of them enables mastery in the target language. The participant suggested the integration of all skills without neglecting some areas and maintained that this integration fosters language development. What follows presents the opinions and suggestions of the participant:

"It is not reasonable to focus on certain aspects by ignoring other dimensions. On the contrary, components of pragmatic competence should be adjusted in correspondence with other competence types beforehand. Thus, language teaching process should commence as a well-equipped package which enables the training and assessment of language learners who are developed in every skill."

Considering the first category, it is seen that what is generally highlighted by the participants with reference to the scope of pragmatic assessment is related to assessing it in different contexts. Most of the participants stated that in order to evaluate pragmatic competence, instructors should provide learners with essential circumstances in which learners are supposed to establish and maintain communication. It was stated that it is important to design different contexts if the aim is to evaluate learners' abilities to use language including diverse speech acts. One of the participants commented that pragmatic assessment should evaluate learners' capability to use the target language appropriately and he suggested that there should be as many different circumstances as possible to have a broader scope and variety for assessment:

“Students should be assessed on their ability to use language properly. This should be done in different speech acts under different circumstances. Their use of language appropriately in different contexts should be viewed as part of their general language knowledge. How they use language in different circumstances must be assessed with a focus on their ability to take part in a conversation. In fact, there should not be a limitation for the number of circumstances, and there should not be a common pragmatic assessment system; students must reflect their skills in all possible different circumstances.”

The data also revealed that providing learners with a number of contexts for pragmatic assessment contributes to learner success. Different circumstances enable learners to think more comprehensively and this helps them improve their creativity. In addition, while being engaged in diverse contexts, learners' background knowledge considering the cultural and social aspects of the target language also expand. One of the participants reflected his views on this issue as follows:

“Learners' ability to use the target language appropriately in different contexts seems to be the most important dimension to consider. It will contribute a lot to their cultural and social specific knowledge of L2. Besides, this approach will positively contribute to their creativity.”

In addition to contexts of assessment, the criteria for evaluation and the issue of objectivity were also referred to by some participants. A participant put forward some questions that can possibly guide the process of pragmatic assessment. The questions

were mostly related to the learners' ability to understand the interlocutor's meanings and to maintain a conversation effectively by choosing appropriate language items as well as making use of non-verbal elements. The participant maintained that it is not an easy process to evaluate pragmatic competence because there is not a totally objective way to assess it:

“The assessment should consider such questions as ‘Do the students reflect their intentions and understand their interlocutors’ intentions?, Do they use non-verbal signals effectively?, Do they select appropriate words?’. However, it is not easy to assess pragmatic competence through tests or activities. In this sense, it is almost impossible to mention an objective process.”

As Table 4.4 presents, the second category -assessment tools- was related to the tools or instruments that can be utilized in the process of pragmatic evaluation. Participants mentioned different ways and tools that can be effective to conduct evaluation in diverse contexts. Authentic communicative tasks, role-plays, communicative scenarios and dialogues were among the most commonly referred ways of assessment. The basic reason why these kinds of activities were suggested is that they require learners to establish and keep on communication during the activity. One of the participants expressed that teachers should shoulder the responsibility to provide different circumstances and encourage their learners to use the target language for communicative purposes. As far as the participant was concerned, teachers should provide contexts in which learners feel the need to communicate:

“Pragmatic competence can be assessed in a variety of ways including role plays or authentic communicative scenarios. In their classes, teachers may create role-plays. They may request their students to develop their ways of speaking through different structures after they learn various structures of the language. I think teachers have serious responsibility in this process. They should encourage their students to talk about what they have learned. Teachers may want students to make up new stories that will serve to improve their competence.”

Task-based activities were among the ways that were suggested for pragmatic assessment, as well. These activities were suggested because they enable learners to

focus on a specific activity and engage in communication to complete the activity. A participant referred to task-based activities and further maintained that instructors should not be included in the process of assessment. In other words, they should evaluate the process as an external examiner. In addition, the evaluation must be done individually not as a whole. Each student should be evaluated based on his/her own performance. The statement of the participant considering these points depicts a mixture of perspectives of the issue:

“From the perspective of second language acquisition and pedagogy, the assessment of this competence requires a task-based approach. Students should take alternating discourse roles as speaker and hearer, yet different types of tasks may engage students in different speech events and communicative actions. It is important to identify very specifically which pragmatic abilities are called upon with different tasks. As assessment of the process must be done as an external examiner, the teacher must observe the whole process and grade each student individually, which requires so much time and effort.”

The data also revealed that pragmatic assessment should be conducted over a period. For this purpose, some of the participants favored portfolios and classroom observations for pragmatic evaluation. They maintained that portfolios and observation are effective ways to monitor learner development over a certain period. Instead of assessing learners in a single set, instructors can make use of these ways which present learner performance from different angles and in different periods. A participant who suggested portfolios also referred to different software applications that can be utilized to access diverse language activities. He made the following comment considering tools and ways of pragmatic assessment:

“I personally believe that assessment of pragmatic competence is quite applicable since learners’ pragmatic skills can be monitored in various ways. For instance, portfolios are lucrative tools for observing and documenting how learners react to different genres in written form. Moreover, lexical activities with the help of authentic web tools such as web quests, wikis, and concordances can contribute to learners’ depth in vocabulary, enabling them to use appropriate sets of words in communication.”

To sum the results of the last theme, assessment of pragmatic competence, it can be stated that there were mainly two views considering the scope of assessment of pragmatic competence. Most of the participants supported the notion that linguistic and pragmatic evaluation should be of equal importance in language assessment. They maintained that without developing their linguistic ability, learners will not be able to improve their pragmatic competencies. Therefore, teaching and assessing both types of abilities should be given the desired values. Without one, the development of the other would not be complete. On the other hand, the other group of participants favored that what should be given more importance in language assessment is the evaluation of pragmatic competence as it is the core purpose why language is taught and learned. Without pragmatic competence, learners will not be able to obtain communicative functions and, therefore, they will not be able to maintain communication in the target language. Those participants who supported this view suggested that pragmatic competence is more significant to develop compared to linguistic competence and by having some basic linguistic skills, learners will be able to develop their pragmatic competence. That is why; linguistic assessment should subordinate pragmatic assessment.

Taking the second category into account, it is seen that there are many different ways of conducting pragmatic assessment. Among those items are authentic communicative tasks, some communicative scenarios, dialogues, role-plays, videos, presentations and observations. Most of the participants suggested that as pragmatic competence develops in time; its assessment should also be conducted over a period instead of in a single evaluation phase. They favored observation and portfolios as healthy ways of evaluating learners' pragmatic development over a process. Check-lists were also suggested by some participants in that they would provide instructors with pre-set criteria to assess pragmatic competence.

What was common in the suggestion of different instruments or ways is to provide learners a variety of contexts for pragmatic evaluation. The data revealed that almost all of the participants suggested making use of various instruments in different contexts for the evaluation of pragmatic competence. They stated that the more different the contexts are, the more possible it becomes for learners to use different functions of the language. Since different circumstances require different language functions,

learners will be more motivated to use language communicatively. What is more, when they see that they are engaged in the communicative side of the target language, they will become more encouraged and motivated to try to move forward in their language development.

4.3. Results from Learners

There were 554 learners participating in the study from six different universities. However, not all of them provided answers for the qualitative part of the study. Therefore, this section presents the viewpoints of those participants who contributed to the written sections. As in the analysis of the written data collected from the faculty members, those collected from the learners were also analyzed through content analysis. There were six questions that the learners were asked to answer. Based on these six questions, four major themes were identified. Theme 1, The Importance and Perception of Pragmatic Competence, is based on the first two questions. Theme 2, Contributions of Teaching and Assessing Pragmatic Competence in the Learning Process, is based on the third question. Theme 3, Difficulties in Learning and Assessing Pragmatic Competence, depends on the fourth question. Finally, the last theme, Assessment of Pragmatic Competence, is formed out of the answers given to the fifth and sixth questions.

4.3.1. Theme 1: The importance and perception of pragmatic competence

The written answers elicited from the first two questions are mostly related to the perceptions of the learners considering the place and significance of pragmatic competence in their general language competencies. The content analysis ended up with three main categories according to which learners regarded pragmatic competence as necessary for appropriate communication, understanding language and using language beyond rules. Table 4.5 presents the first theme, its categories and relevant underlying codes.

Table 4.5.

Theme for the Importance and Perception of Pragmatic Competence

		Theme 1: Importance of Teaching & Assessing Pragmatic Competence											
		Uni. A		Uni. B		Uni. C		Uni. D		Uni. E		Uni. F	
		N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F
Category 1: Appropriate communication	Different situations	50	23.5	55	23.3	33	21.6	21	15.5	18	19.2	72	20.2
	Different interlocutors	35	16.4	33	13.9	21	13.7	15	11	7	7.5	53	14.8
Category 2: Understanding language	Making meaning	39	18.4	48	20.2	25	16.3	32	23.5	23	24.4	67	18.8
	Making inferences	16	7.5	13	5.5	7	4.6	4	3	3	3.2	21	5.8
Category 3: Language use	Language beyond grammar	38	17.8	49	20.6	38	24.8	37	27.2	24	25.5	86	24.1
	Conveying messages	35	16.4	39	16.5	29	19	27	19.8	19	20.2	58	16.3

Note: The abbreviation "Uni." refers to university

The data on the students' perceptions of pragmatic competence showed that most of the learners consider pragmatic competence as essential in language development in terms of establishing and maintaining effective interaction. Taking the first category into account, as can be seen in Table 4.5, learners generally think that pragmatic competence plays an important role in proper communication with different interlocutors based on diverse contexts. They relate pragmatic competence with the ability to successfully use the target language for communicative purposes. What is highlighted in the answers of student participants is that pragmatic competence is essential to determine how to say things as well as what to say. Before revising the specific results according to relevant categories, it would be helpful to provide some participant comments regarding the general place of pragmatic competence in L2 development. A participant maintained that acquiring a foreign knowledge without mastering its pragmatic aspects is not always enough to use the language effectively. Linguistic rules are necessary parts of the target language. However, they are not the only elements with which one can keep on successful communication. The participant explained that interaction is more than a pile of words and rules. She stated that it is pragmatic competence that hinders communication breakdowns:

"Communication is more than some words coming after one another. As well as its linguistic features, a language also includes pragmatic

aspects which enable the speaker to communicate meanings. Without pragmatic competence, communication may fail at certain stages.”

Based on the data, as a common means of communication, language is conceived as a concept which is not stable; instead, it develops and changes in time. Pragmatic competence is the part of language that makes language a developing phenomenon because the rules of language are mostly stable. Therefore, based on this notion, a participant maintained that if learners do not develop their pragmatic competence, their language development will remain at a certain level based on the knowledge of the linguistic aspects of the language:

“Pragmatic competence is an essential part of language competence. Language is a living, developing and changing concept. Therefore, if we don’t improve our pragmatic competence, we have to stick only to linguistic rules of the language and cannot develop our general language ability.”

As shown in Table 4.5, most of the student participants regarded pragmatic competence as crucial for communication in different contexts with different people. They conveyed the idea that language exists for communication and this is also valid for the target language. Pragmatic competence is what enables language users to communicate and convey their messages appropriately. One of the participants, considering this point, expressed that language learning is different from learning mathematics; there is not just one way to do things in language. Instead, there are diverse situations and different interlocutors; therefore, it is necessary to integrate pragmatics into language education as linguistic knowledge alone is not enough for full language development. What compensates for the inadequacies of grammatical competence is pragmatic competence. It provides learners with the necessary knowledge considering how to use the language in possible situations. Referring to different situations and interlocutors, the participant supported her views by stating that students do not use the same language when they interact with their friends and with their teachers and that it is pragmatic competence that helps people use proper language based on different situations:

“Teaching and learning pragmatic competence is essential. If we don’t know how to talk to another person, then communication breakdowns occur. We cannot use a language in the way we solve math problems... Linguistic knowledge only is not enough to help us use the language effectively. It is common in all languages that language use should change according to the participants, culture or the situations. The way we communicate with our friends is not the same as the way we communicate with our teachers. Pragmatic competence helps us to know how to use the language in the appropriate way.”

A brief but striking example from a participant can be provided here to highlight the significance of pragmatic competence in using the language in different situations. As well as referring to the necessity of having linguistic competence, the participant maintained that pragmatic competence is essential for effective and successful communication with different people in different contexts. The striking point about his comment was that he made a connection between ‘Google Translate’ and a language user who cannot adapt her/his language usage according to the context:

“Of course, as well as linguistic knowledge, one should know how to use the language based on different situations and interlocutors. Otherwise, there would be no difference between us and ‘Google Translate’.”

As displayed in Table 4.5, the second category, understanding language, showed that pragmatic competence helps making meaning and making inferences in interaction. Most of the learners stated that pragmatic competence improves their understanding of the target language. Pragmatic competence is believed to help learners to develop their language usage as they improve their understanding of the ways to communicate in the target language. To clarify their argument, they maintained that only having grammatical knowledge is not enough to sustain effective communication. Most of the participants noted that without pragmatic competence, what a person says may not convey the exact meaning that s/he plans or intends to say. Due to the lack of some level of pragmatic competence, the conversation may end up with communication failures or misunderstandings. These breakdowns may even cause misunderstandings

some of which may have severe consequences. The following quotation from a participant summarizes these points:

“Having only linguistic knowledge is not enough to master the target language. To be honest, most of us, I think, are not capable enough even in linguistic competence although we have received linguistic knowledge for many years... However, pragmatic competence is of great importance if the aim of language learning is to communicate in the target language. Pragmatic competence helps people to convey messages and understand conveyed messages correctly. If we cannot use the target language appropriately, then misunderstandings and communication failures occur and this may have severe consequences.”

The third category -language use-, as presented in Table 4.5, is related to how pragmatic competence helps language learners to use the target language beyond linguistic rules. Almost all of the participants stated that unless they know how, where and when to say something, learning the grammatical rules of the target language will be meaningless. For them, without pragmatic competence, language consists only of grammatical rules which they cannot utilize to speak in the target language. With the help of pragmatic competence, they can use the language for communicative purposes and they can put the theory, i.e. their linguistic and pragmatic knowledge into practice, i.e. communication. In order to emphasize the significance of pragmatic competence in language development, one of the participants maintained that one cannot claim to master the language only with linguistic knowledge:

“Pragmatic competence is definitely necessary in language development. One cannot say that s/he knows the target language if s/he only knows the linguistic aspects of the language. If we do not know what to say; where and how to say something, then there is no point in learning the linguistic features of the target language. What we learn about linguistic aspects only occupy a certain place in our minds. In order to master a language, it is important to learn how to use the language appropriately. So, pragmatic competence helps us use the language beyond grammar.”

Sharing a similar viewpoint, another participant made similar comments. This participant also stated that only linguistic knowledge alone is not sufficient to reach the

desired level of language competence. Grammatical knowledge enables learners to be successful in many exams because they are mostly designed to evaluate linguistic competence. However, in communicative situations, linguistic competence is not that efficient. The participant commented, as the previous participant did, that without pragmatic knowledge, linguistic knowledge alone will be some rules kept in mind but not put into practice for conveying meaning:

“Only linguistic knowledge is not enough. Linguistic knowledge helps us to be successful in tests or exams. However, pragmatic knowledge helps us use the language effectively and fluently. Only linguistic knowledge cannot promote language competence. We end up with many rules in mind but with no ability to use them. It is pragmatic knowledge that helps us use the language beyond linguistic aspects in order to convey our messages.”

Regarding the first theme based on the written comments of student participants, it can be comprehended that most of the learners are aware of the significance of pragmatic competence in their language development. There are three main categories - appropriate communication, understanding language and language use- out of their comments. These categories are basically related to how pragmatic competence helps learners to use the target language for successful communication. To briefly remind, the first category is about how to use the target language in different contexts with different interlocutors. Most of the participants commented that pragmatic competence improves their ability to use the language appropriately in diverse situations. Without pragmatic competence, it would be difficult to communicate in the target language because of the difficulty to adapt the language according to differing situations.

Pragmatic competence is also considered as indispensable in that it enables learners to understand the intended meanings in a more effective way. As language is basically for communication, there is a great necessity to convey messages and understand the conveyed messages. It is pragmatic competence that makes the correct understanding possible. The student participants are of the opinion that without pragmatic competence, their skills to understand and to be understood will not develop. Even if what is said is grammatically correct, the meaning may be wrongly conveyed if there is not pragmatic appropriacy. What most of target language learners or users fear is to convey wrong messages. Thus, pragmatic competence is considered as critical in

order to convey appropriate messages and avoid communication failures and further misunderstandings.

What is also highlighted by almost all the participants is that pragmatic competence is a major component of general language ability. They know that knowing the linguistic aspects of the target language is important. However, without having pragmatic competence, their linguistic knowledge does not mean much. Language is based on two main elements; grammatical aspects and pragmatic features. It can be stated that the grammatical features of a language can be regarded as the skeleton of the language while pragmatic features are elements that shape the skeleton and give it the appropriate form. A skeleton without shape will lose most of its use and value. These two aspects complete each other for effective language learning and mastery. Therefore, the student participants considered pragmatic competence crucial in language mastery. They suggested the integration of grammar instruction and pragmatic instruction instead of only focusing on linguistic aspects of the target language. They believed that language is not composed of only grammatical rules presented in textbooks. In their estimation, language education should be integrated in communicative contexts to practice both grammatical and pragmatic aspects of the language.

4.3.2. Difficulties in learning and assessing pragmatic competence

As in every phase of education, there are naturally some difficulties or challenges that are possibly faced in learning and assessing pragmatic competence. The second theme, Difficulties in Learning and Assessing Pragmatic Competence, is related to the possible challenges that are perceived and experienced by student participants in the process of learning pragmatic competence in the target language and its assessment. The following table displays the broader theme as difficulties and its relevant categories and basic codes.

Table 4.6.

Theme for Difficulties in Learning and Assessing Pragmatic Competence

		Theme 2: Difficulties in Learning and Assessing Pragmatic Competence											
		Uni. A		Uni. B		Uni. C		Uni. D		Uni. E		Uni. F	
		N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F
Category 1:external difficulties	Education system	45	21.2	67	27.2	40	23.4	39	23.9	29	20.1	144	21.8
	Rule-based instruction	53	25	64	26	43	25.1	41	25.2	30	20.8	151	22.8
	Examination style	29	13.6	35	14.2	32	18.7	29	17.9	23	16.1	123	18.6
	Lack of opportunity & exposure	32	15.1	28	11.4	20	11.7	17	10.4	21	14.6	73	11
	Lack of material & context	34	16	38	15.4	18	10.5	16	9.8	13	9	68	10.3
	Teacher's incompetence	5	2.4	3	1.2	4	2.6	3	1.8	3	2	17	2.6
	Inadequacy of teacher salary	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	0	1	0.6	0	0	2	0.3
Category 2:internal difficulties	Lack of self-confidence	5	2.4	3	1.2	3	1.7	4	2.4	7	4.9	23	3.5
	Lack of motivation	6	2.8	7	2.9	8	4.6	13	8	18	12.5	56	8.5
	Fossilization	2	1	0	0	2	1.7	0	0	0	0	4	0.6

The data on the difficulties in learning pragmatic competence and its assessment showed that most of the student participants referred to some external factors that are out of their control and some internal factors that are related to themselves. As presented in Table 4.6, the first category is related to the factors that are mostly out of control of the learners in the process of developing their pragmatic competence. What was common in almost all participants' statements is the education system as the basic problem in the process of learning pragmatic knowledge. Participants criticized the education system stating that it is based on traditional ways of language teaching and; therefore, there is not much emphasis on communicative aspects of the target language. While pointing at this problem, most of the participants believed that the existing education system negatively affects the way language classes are conducted and criticized the examination style that is far from evaluating learners' language competences. What is frequently expressed is that there is a great focus on teaching grammatical aspects of the target language while pragmatic features of the language are

mostly ignored. Furthermore, exams are basically designed to evaluate learners' linguistic competences and disregard pragmatic evaluation. Considering these problematic issues, one of the participants made the following general comment about the existing education system and its drawbacks:

“The education system is the main problem. The general language curriculum does not include the elements of pragmatic competence. I still have some difficulties in adapting to the way in which some of the courses are conducted. Furthermore, the teacher-centered style and the lack of authentic examinations are also other challenges. Therefore, some essential changes should be made in the education and examination system.”

Sharing a similar perspective, another participant also criticized the language education style noting that there are not adequate conditions offered to language learners in our country. He referred to Grammar Translation Method as the basic method through which language classes are conducted. This method is not favored much by most of the learners, either, since it does not enable learners to improve their pragmatic skills as it focuses on the linguistic aspects of the target language. Instead of focusing on pragmatics, it makes learners memorize linguistic rules of the target language without practicing in the target language for communication. The participant expressed his disapproval with the following words:

“I don't think our education system is effective in developing our pragmatic competence. The way classes are conducted have mostly made us develop our memorization skills. Language classes which are almost totally based on Grammar Translation Method are mostly based on teaching linguistic rules instead of providing practical usages. Furthermore, we haven't had much chance of exposure to the target language. Unless you study yourself, you cannot develop your language competency”

As shown in Table 4.6, examinations that are mostly based on multiple-choice items are among the factors for criticism. One of the students remarked that as the language education system aims to teach linguistic aspects of the language, the evaluation system also emphasizes the assessment of grammatical knowledge.

Therefore, in such a system which centers on linguistic development, it is natural, to some extent, to expect exams to evaluate general linguistic performance. What is problematic, as stated by most of the participants, is that the existing examination style makes learners focus on grammatical aspects of the target language in order to succeed. However, since there is no focus on language performance, communicative abilities do not reach the desired levels. Considering his observation, the participant commented that while learners can be successful in understanding complex language usages requiring high levels of linguistic and vocabulary knowledge, they cannot maintain interaction using the target language even in some basic situations. Criticizing this situation, the participant expressed his view as such:

“One of the most important problems is the education system which is based on linguistic development in language education. In addition, the evaluation system which mainly depends on multiple-choice questions is also another problem. With these tests, our pragmatic competence hasn’t developed well because language courses haven’t given the necessary importance to pragmatic competence... Unfortunately, after a while, you realize that while you can understand complex texts, you cannot communicate with another person in the target language even in a simple context.”

The data also pointed at the way language classes are conducted. Most of the student participants maintained that in the process of learning the target language, the same subjects or topics, especially linguistic aspects, were covered over and over again. In addition, without having much chance of practicing the target language, learners were expected to go through a process of memorization in order to be successful in language exams. Therefore, they ended up with some pile of knowledge. However, they could not improve their interactional abilities in the target language. The participant counted the way classes were conducted and the examination style as the reasons that hindered their pragmatic development in the process:

“The way classes were conducted negatively affected the process. The same topics were covered each year. The examination system also evaluated reading skill and vocabulary knowledge as well as grammatical knowledge. As our education system is based on grammar and vocabulary

knowledge, we had to study those aspects to pass the exam. Therefore, our levels of speaking haven't reached the desired level."

The obligation to memorize linguistic items to be successful in language exams is also referred to by another student participant. She explained, based on her experience, that as language learners they had to adapt to the way the process required. What was expected from them was to memorize what was taught and they had to do this if they wanted to be successful. However, the participant showed that she did not approve this procedure by stating that memorization only helped them to pass the exams but no more. She criticized the way some language classes are conducted as they prevented learners from advancing their pragmatic competence. Below is provided her comment about the challenges in pragmatic development based on her experience:

"Since our education system is based on memorization, most of us have memorized the rules of the target language and this helps us only to pass the exams. Pragmatic development is negatively affected because some of the courses have not been properly conducted... We know the rules but we cannot use them in communication. I personally have difficulty in using the target language in different contexts because I directly think of the grammar rules."

The data on the difficulties in learning and assessing pragmatic competence revealed that apart from the drawback of the existing education system, examination style and the conduct of language classes based on the educational purposes, the lack of opportunities for interaction in and exposure to the target language was also another challenge. Most of the participants complained that they are not provided much chance of engaging in language activities which can help them develop their pragmatic competence. What is considered as the main reason for the lack of opportunities here is stated as the education system. Based on his language learning experience, one of the participants provided the following comment considering the limited opportunities and time for language practice suggesting the importance of pragmatic competence and the need to integrate it in language education:

"A person who wants to learn a language should be exposed to the language and engaged in situations to use the language. This is mainly because exposure to language is one of the most effective ways of

improvement... For almost 13 years, we have received foreign language education. However, we didn't have the chance to learn the language in an environment in which we can practice it. Unfortunately, the education system and the examination style forced us to memorize only the grammatical rules of the target language. We only encountered some practice through the dialogues in the textbooks. We had to develop our language competence in a limited time with limited opportunities."

Considering the lack of opportunities offered in foreign language education for pragmatic development, a participant made a shorter but a more serious and striking comment. He conveyed the opinion that pragmatic competence can be a significant part of language education. However, in the existing system, the term "pragmatic competence" cannot go beyond the concept understood and applied in academic circles. The participant criticized the education system since it does not offer learners a learning environment in which to practice their language knowledge and improve their pragmatic abilities:

"Unfortunately, pragmatic competence, in this system, is a part of language ability which is only mentioned in articles or course books. We haven't been provided opportunities to develop our pragmatic competence."

In addition to the drawbacks in the education system, examination style and the conduct of the language classes, the cultural and linguistic differences between the first language and the target language are sometimes considered problematic in language teaching. Some of the participants commented that they have found it difficult to learn some of the aspects in the target language because of the differences compared to those in their native language. Experiencing such a difficulty, one participant stated that the cultural and grammatical diversities between L1 and L2 were the main sources of difficulty in the process of language development. He was sometimes confused because of making comparisons between the two languages. He maintained that one statement which can be considered as correct in one language may not mean anything in the other. This participant referred to his process of learning the L2 and shared his experiences at the beginning of getting used to the language forms and usages as the following:

“The linguistic and cultural differences between the two languages were the biggest problems for me. Some statements were perfectly appropriate in one language while they were not so in the other. This caused confusions for me in the process.”

The data on students’ perceptions of the possible challenges in learning pragmatics and its assessment showed that there are also teacher-related factors that the student participants regarded as problematic. Some of the student participants also considered teachers as the responsible ones for some challenges experienced in the process of pragmatic development. Taking this point into account, a comment from one of the participants can be provided as an example. While referring to the possible negative impact of the education system on teaching and assessing pragmatic competence, the participant also, in a somewhat sarcastic manner, considered teachers as one of the agents causing problems in the process. He thought that while there is no coherence between the education system and teaching of pragmatic competence, there is an unfortunate balance among the ways language classes and language assessment are conducted which are both based on the education system. The participant stated that teachers are not given much chance to evaluate their learners pragmatically in this system, but added that the education system might not be the only cause of the problem. It might also be possible that teachers themselves find it easier to evaluate grammatical competence instead of assessing pragmatic skills of their learners. The following presents how the participant expressed his point of view related to the problems in teaching, learning and assessing pragmatic competence:

“First of all, the education system contradicts with teaching and assessing pragmatic competence because the education system and examination style only assess surface knowledge of language. They only evaluate learners with the criterion testing a certain level of language items. Therefore, classes are conducted on this notion. In other words, teachers do not have much chance to evaluate learners’ pragmatic competence. Or, this is what teachers prefer doing.”

As presented in Table 4.6, though not many in number, some of the participants consider language teachers as agents of difficulties. According to them, what is responsible for the inadequacies preventing the development of pragmatic competence

is not actually the education system but the language teachers themselves. These participants referred to the teachers' attitudes towards pragmatic education. An additional point of criticism regarding language teachers was their general ability to use the target language. Language teachers are expected to not only equip themselves with field-specific but also improve their teaching abilities. However, contrary to this expectation, some of the student participants maintained that some of their language teachers are not able to use the language; therefore, they lack certain skills to teach important aspects including pragmatics let alone its assessment. An example can be provided below to describe this situation. As well as referring to the grammar-based education and the examination system as a problem, the participant also considered the lack of teacher capacity as one of the factors that negatively influenced their pragmatic development:

“Language classes were mostly conducted based on Grammar Translation Method. Therefore, we did not have much chance to practice the language. Furthermore, some of the teachers could not use even the language themselves; so, they could not teach us much. And the system was based on examinations evaluating linguistic competence. Therefore, it was not much possible to develop pragmatic competence.”

Another participant also regarded teachers as the main agents that are responsible for the negative effects in the process of pragmatic development. This participant also maintained that the number of learners in language classes is high and this makes teachers' jobs more difficult. Crowded classes hinder teachers from dealing with learners individually and enabling them to learn the target language in appropriate learning contexts. The participant also conveyed the perspective that regardless of these factors, what is essentially needed is teachers who are really competent in their job. In other words, language education needs teachers who can master the target language themselves so that they are able to teach the target language to their students. Below is presented the comments of the participant who mentioned his early experiences in a language class which was crowded and which was directed by a teacher who did not have the necessary qualifications:

“The classes in which we had language education were really crowded. For this reason, teachers could not deal with students

individually and they could not provide the appropriate environments necessary for language teaching. But, besides less crowded classes, it would be better if teachers were more competent in the target language.”

The lack of teacher competence in the target language was reflected in the statement of another participant pointing out that most foreign language classes are conducted in the first language. This results in a learning environment in which learners are not provided with the opportunity to be exposed to the use of the target language. For this reason, their abilities to use the language for communicative purposes do not develop over time:

“Some of the language teachers are not competent in using the target language. So, language classes are conducted mainly in the first language. This creates a language education environment isolated from the target language.”

Based on the data, a further interesting comment related to the teacher-side of the issue also catches attention. Though not many in number, some of the participants considered the amount of teacher salary as a potential factor that negatively impacts teachers' performances. What was remarkable pertaining to the perceptions of these participants is that they regarded teacher salary as a factor that influences the level of teacher's attention and willingness to do their jobs effectively. Holding such a perspective, one of the student participants expressed his views in the following phrases:

“The education system and the examination style are the main problems. However, these are not the only problems. Some of the teachers, besides not having the necessary knowledge, do not place the necessary emphasis to language teaching because of their low salaries, I think.”

The data from the student participants' comments revealed that in addition to the external factors over which students do not have much control, there are also student-related factors that negatively influence the process of learning pragmatic competence. The second category, as shown in Table 4.6, consists of these factors which are mostly related to learners' low levels of motivation, willingness and self-confidence. In

addition, awareness of the importance of pragmatic competence was also among the internal factors which is worth to consider.

Regarding learner motivation and willingness, one of the participants put the blame for the failure in teaching and learning foreign language in general and pragmatic competence in particular on both teachers and students. He argued that in the existing educational settings, most of the teachers and students are not eager to try hard to reach better results. He also maintained that even if some teachers are enthusiastic about providing effective learning environments for their learners, it is the learners themselves who do not intend to benefit from the efforts of their teachers. Lower levels of motivation were considered as effective in decreasing the aspiration to practice the target language and develop their pragmatic competence. His comment can be considered as a confession that some students do not have the willingness to study hard:

“We are the type of students who study only for exams and our teachers are not much different from us. They teach for exams. The main reason for these is the education system. However, we, as students, are mostly lazy and resist the teachers who want to teach us. In this vicious circle, the learning environment becomes unproductive.”

Self-confidence was another challenge for some of the student participants. Those who experienced problems due to their low levels of self-confidence maintained that they could not practice the language because they were mostly shy. One of the participants having a comparatively low level of self-confidence shared his experience in the following way:

“Of course, I knew the importance of practicing the language in order to develop my communicative abilities. However, I was shy and didn’t have much self-confidence. So, I could not improve my pragmatic competence that much.”

The data also showed that learners’ awareness about the significance of pragmatic development was also regarded as a factor influencing pragmatic development. Some of the learners maintained that because of what they were exposed to in language classes, they have not developed the necessary level of language awareness. In other words, their language awareness has not reached the levels that can

motivate them to go further in their language studies. The following comment presents a participant's views concerning language awareness in the process of language development. She expressed that due to the lack of proper and adequate instruction, developing language awareness became a problematic issue and this negatively impacted their learning process and language success:

“The main problem was the way in which language classes were conducted. In addition, we didn't make additional studies for language development after the classes were over. That is why; what we learned was not permanent. We have recently realized the importance of pragmatic competence and I think it is a bit late for raising language awareness.”

The general consideration of the second theme, difficulties in the process of learning and assessing pragmatic competence, shows that there are basically two categories consisting of external factors and internal factors. When the external categories are taken into account, the existing education system appears to be the central problem for language learners as it is for the language teachers. The education system negatively impacts the examination style and the conduct of the language classes. Almost all of the student participants conveyed the information that language classes are generally based on the traditional ways of teaching. The focus of the lessons is on the linguistic features of the target language and almost totally ignores the pragmatic components. In language classes learners are not provided with much chance to practice the language for communication. Learners are mostly required to practice the grammatical features they have been taught.

In addition to the way language classes are conducted, the examination style is also among the problems pointed out by participants. Since the emphasis of language education is on teaching learners the structures of the target language, exams are designed with the purpose of evaluating learners' grammatical knowledge. Participants expressed that it is difficult to develop pragmatic competence in such a system which is based on the linguistic development instead of developing communication skills.

Student participants also referred to language instructors while mentioning the challenges in pragmatic development. They stated that some of the teachers do not have the necessary competence of the target language. Therefore, they sometimes lack the

necessary qualifications that will enable them to teach the language in the best way. It is a natural but undesirable consequence that if the teacher does not know something appropriately, s/he cannot convey this knowledge to her/his learners.

Apart from the external factors, there were also two important internal factors that were related to the learner-side of the issue. Although not all learners considered themselves as agents of challenges in this process, some of them maintained that their lack of consciousness as regards the significance of pragmatic competence is among the factors that negatively impacted their pragmatic development. As they do not have the necessary level of pragmatic awareness, they do not focus on improving their communication abilities. Instead, they mostly concentrate on learning the linguistic aspects of the target language in order to be successful in language exams. Another problem is the level of learner motivation, willingness and self-confidence. Some of the participants stated that as their motivation and willingness decrease because of certain reasons, their pragmatic development is negatively influenced. The lower level of motivation they have, the worse their language competence becomes.

4.3.3. Theme 3: Contributions of pragmatic competence in the learning process

The third theme, contributions of pragmatic competence in the learning process, is related to the advantages of pragmatic competence in the process of language learning and development. Although there are some challenges that are caused by different factors in the process, there are, at the same time, some positive contributions of pragmatic competence to learners both for their general language improvement and for their personal development. The following table displays the third theme, its relevant categories and underlying codes.

Table 4.7.

Theme for Contributions of Pragmatic Competence in the Learning Process

		Theme 3: Contributions of Pragmatic Assessment in Teaching & Learning Process											
		Uni. A		Uni. B		Uni. C		Uni. D		Uni. E		Uni. F	
		N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F
Category 1: Language development	Language beyond rules	19	13.6	26	16	30	23.8	31	28	22	26.5	56	19.4
	Language awareness	40	28.9	43	26.5	37	29.3	29	26.1	19	22.9	47	16.3
	Language permanency	12	8.6	10	6.1	6	4.8	4	3.6	2	2.4	28	9.7
	Enjoyable learning	8	5.8	7	4.3	4	3.2	3	2.7	3	3.6	23	8
	Effective learning	24	17.3	32	19.6	16	12.7	18	16.2	18	21.7	49	16.9
Category 2: Personal development	Developing self- confidence & motivation	22	15.8	34	20.8	28	22.2	24	21.6	17	20.5	73	25.2
	Developing self- assessment	14	10	11	6.7	5	4	2	1.8	2	2.4	13	4.5

The data on the contributions of pragmatic assessment in teaching and learning process showed that the benefits of pragmatic assessment are observed in learners' language development and their personal development. As displayed in Table 4.7, the first category, language development, is about the contributions of pragmatic competence in learners' language growth. A considerable number of the learners commented that pragmatic competence helped them use the target language beyond linguistic rules. They stated that they realized the importance of using the target language for communication and this was not possible by knowing only grammatical aspects. Considering this view, one of the participants maintained that he focused on developing his linguistic abilities at the beginning of his language learning experience. However, in the course of time, he realized that this was not enough for him to master the necessary level of communicative competence. He further added that by means of pragmatic competence, he started to use the target language in the way it should be:

“At first, I considered it reasonable to learn the linguistic features of the target language from books and memorized words for language

development. However, after many years I realized that I could not reach the desired level of communicative competence in this way. I recognized the importance of pragmatic competence in language development. I learned how to use the target language in appropriate ways with the help of pragmatic competence.”

Raising learner awareness was another contribution of pragmatic assessment, as shown in Table 4.7. What was commonly stated by the student participants was that pragmatic competence increased their level of awareness considering the appropriate use of the target language and the importance of communicative skills in language education. They became more aware of the proper ways to use the language and this facilitated their communication in different situations and with different interlocutors. One of the participants with such an experience in the learning process uttered that his consciousness regarding what to say in diverse contexts to different people developed with the help of pragmatic knowledge:

“By means of pragmatic competence, I learned how I should use the target language and what kind of words I should use in different contexts. For example, I realized that the way I speak with my mom is not the same as the way I speak with my teacher. Pragmatic competence helped me to be aware of the points to pay attention during communication and to understand how to use the target language.”

Being aware of the potential help and the significance of pragmatic competence in their language learning process, one of the participants said that while communicating in the target language with pragmatic consciousness in her mind, she makes fewer mistakes. She further commented that pragmatic competence also improved her perspective of analyzing the target language. In other words, her abilities to make conclusions and to infer cause-effect relations in the language use developed:

“Of course, pragmatic competence contributed to my language competence. It helped me to establish cause-effect relationships, to make reasonable implications and to offer proper solutions to language related issues. In addition, it helped me make fewer mistakes while I use the language.”

The data showed that pragmatic competence was claimed to contribute also to the efficiency of language education. Some of the participants stated that pragmatic competence increased the effectiveness of their learning and it made it more enjoyable for them to conduct their language studies. One of them indicated that in his learning experience, he firstly focused on developing his linguistic knowledge; however, later he realized that his communicative abilities did not develop that much. He realized and suggested that there should be a balance between linguistic and pragmatic development. The participant also stated his view that pragmatic competence provides a more effective learning environment:

“When I first started to learn the language, I mainly focused on the structural aspects of the language. After I mastered linguistic features, I realized that my knowledge in the pragmatic side of the target language was not well-developed. I think that there should be a balance in learning these two sides of the language. I believe that with pragmatic competence, the learning process will also become more effective and easier.”

Pragmatic competence was also referred to increase permanency in language learning. Some participants perceived pragmatic competence as a factor that increases not only the effectiveness of the learning process but also the permanency of what is learned. One of them, revealing his own experience, noted that with the help of pragmatic competence, the process of language learning became easier and more productive for him. Pragmatic competence enabled him to make connections between his L1 and the L2 and through these connections; it became easier for him to develop his language skills. Moreover, learning became more permanent for him as seen in the following phrases:

“Pragmatic competence made my learning process faster and easier. The time in which I process the language decreased with its help. Making connections between my first language and the target language became easier and more effective. Pragmatic competence improves the process of language learning and makes learning more permanent.”

As can be seen in Table 4.7, the second category, personal development, is about the contributions of pragmatic competence and assessment in the process of language learning on the side of the learners. Pragmatic competence and its assessment were

considered as beneficial in increasing learners' levels of self-confidence and motivation. Moreover, it enables learners to evaluate their own language development. Considering its contribution to learners' self-confidence and motivation, one of the participants indicated that pragmatic competence helps learners become more aware of the communicative side of the target language. Realizing the significance of communication, learners become more competent in using the target language for interaction. This, in turn, influences their motivation and confidence as they can see that they can use the language as expressed by a participant below:

“Pragmatic competence is essential because there is a social side of language. While learning a target language, we should also learn the socio-cultural aspects of that language. This helps us to be aware of the social and communicative aspects of the language when we use it for interaction. I think, with the help of pragmatic competence, we can adapt to the target language in an easier way. When you improve yourself, you become more motivated.”

The positive influence of pragmatic competence on raising learners' confidence is also presented in another example. One of the participants noted that with the help of pragmatic competence, learners are able to use the language in an appropriate way. He coined the term “chicken translation” (an expression in our country denoting a wrong, word-to-word translation) in order to make it clear that pragmatic competence improves the learning process and enables the learner to attain language performance beyond the application of some linguistic items. He commented that language performance becomes more than chicken translation by means of pragmatic competence:

“I think that the more you develop your pragmatic competence, the better your language skills become in general. With pragmatic competence, your language skill becomes much more than ‘chicken translation’. This increases your confidence to use the language more appropriately.”

Pragmatic competence is also claimed to contribute to learners' ability to evaluate their own language learning processes and performances. An example can be provided to illustrate this contribution. One of the participants stated that his awareness of the interactional side of the target language and the appropriate ways to use the

language increased with the improvement in his pragmatic abilities. He noted that he could practice the grammatical aspects of the target language in communication. He further commented that pragmatic competence enabled him to identify more efficient ways of conducting his language studies as well as making evaluations of his own language learning experience. The following is what the participant provided as a comment considering the contribution of pragmatic competence in his language learning process:

“With the help of pragmatic competence, I became more aware of the communicative features of the target language. Moreover, I practiced the linguistic aspects and realized better and more effective ways to learn the language. Now, I can better assess my own development.”

To briefly consider the whole point, contributions of pragmatic competence and assessment in the learning process, the data revealed that there are basically two aspects of contribution of pragmatic competence in the process of language education. The first broader category is related to its contributions to language development. Almost all of the participants stated that pragmatic competence helped them realize that language is more than grammatical rules to master. There is an interactional side of language and it is necessary to have, at least a certain level of, pragmatic competence to deal effectively with communicative situations. Learners can use the language beyond its linguistic features and their awareness of the appropriate ways of communication increases with the help of pragmatic competence. They can identify ways of expressing their messages properly in different contexts as well as with different interlocutors. It allows learners to realize that different situations ascribe different meanings to the same phrases.

As well as increasing learners' awareness, pragmatic competence is also considered to contribute to the learning process. Some of the participants believed that pragmatic competence makes the learning process more enjoyable and more effective since it provides learners with the knowledge of appropriate language usages. As the learning process becomes more enjoyable, learners become more willing to conduct their language studies and learn more. Moreover, the data also revealed that, by means of pragmatic competence, what learners have learned related to the target language becomes more permanent. This language permanence improves learners' language skills.

The second category, contributions to personal development, is related to the contributions of pragmatic competence to the learners. It was stated in some participant comments that pragmatic competence increases the level of motivation and self-confidence of the learners. The more learners can see that they can use the target language in an appropriate and effective way, the higher their motivation becomes. With high levels of motivation, learners become more willing to improve their language competence. This increases their motivation and self-confidence. Moreover, by means of pragmatic competence, they can also make evaluations of their learning experiences, identify problematic areas, find solutions to these problems and, as a result, come up with better ways of studying the target language.

4.3.4. Theme 4: The assessment of pragmatic competence

The last theme, assessment of pragmatic competence is related to the views of the student participants concerning the assessment of pragmatic competence. This theme consists, as in the last theme of the faculty members, of two main categories; the scope of assessment and tools of assessment. Table 4.8 displays the categories and related codes.

Table 4.8.

Theme for Assessment of Pragmatic Competence

		Theme 4: Assessment of Pragmatic Competence											
		Uni. A		Uni. B		Uni. C		Uni. D		Uni. E		Uni. F	
		N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F	N	F
Category 1: The scope of assessment	Only pragmatic assessment	23	13	18	9.7	13	7.3	12	7.8	5	7.2	37	8.7
	Both prag & linguistic assessment	48	27	53	28.5	29	16.2	22	14.2	11	16	63	14.6
Category 2: Assessment tools and contexts	Authentic and different contexts	32	18	36	19.4	27	15	21	13.5	9	13	64	14.8
	Communicative tasks	26	14.6	28	15	34	19	29	18.7	8	11.6	72	16.8
	Role-plays	10	5.6	12	6.5	28	15.6	27	17.4	11	16	89	20.7
	Observation	9	5	7	3.8	6	3.4	4	2.6	2	2.9	17	3.9
	Scenarios	7	3.9	9	4.8	12	6.7	9	5.8	6	8.7	16	3.7
	Dialogues	15	8.4	17	9.1	23	12.8	26	16.8	15	21.7	56	12.9
	Check-lists	8	4.5	6	3.2	7	4	5	3.2	2	2.9	17	3.9

The first category, the scope of assessment, presents the opinions of student participants concerning the language evaluation. There were two main points of view about this issue: either pragmatic assessment alone or pragmatic assessment integrated with grammatical assessment. As can be seen in Table 4.8, those who favor the integration of pragmatic and linguistic assessment are more in number compared to those who support pragmatic assessment alone. Those participants who suggested that pragmatic assessment should be given more significance in language education provided the reason that grammatical rules are not much applicable in the process of communication. Language users do not stick to all the linguistic rules while they are using the language for communication. Therefore, pragmatic assessment should have a more important place in the evaluation of general language abilities and performances of the learners. One of the participants holding this point of view stated that if a speaker focuses on grammatical accuracy, then he may miss the flow of the communication and may fail in correctly expressing himself:

“Pragmatic assessment is more important than grammatical assessment because while paying attention to speaking and using language for communication, we may not focus on grammatical accuracy. If we pay attention to grammar, then we may not be able to express ourselves appropriately.”

What was common in the statements of the participants supporting the view that pragmatic competence is and should be more essential was the perspective that understanding and being understood is more important than using grammatically correct statements. Since the main purpose of language education is to help learners communicate in the target language, it is not very logical to focus on their grammatical accuracy ignoring their pragmatic appropriateness. One of the participants shared this viewpoint and commented that if one can express himself successfully, minor linguistic errors should not be considered as important. He does not deny the value of linguistic assessment but he favors pragmatic evaluation over the other:

“If the learner can express himself and can be understood, then minor linguistic errors can be ignored. Of course, this does not mean that linguistic evaluation can be totally undermined. Instead, if the learner can

use the target language in communication effectively, slight errors of linguistic forms may not be included in evaluation.”

Not all the participants, however, hold similar views as to the place of pragmatic evaluation as the more prominent aspect for general language assessment. Some of the participants are of the opinion that pragmatic assessment and grammatical assessment should be almost of equal importance as they both are elements that provide success in general language competence. An example from a participant, who suggested the integration of both grammatical and pragmatic assessment in language education, can be provided to illustrate the issue. This participant commented that learners should improve their linguistic abilities to use correct forms. Moreover, they should also develop their pragmatic skills in order to use what they know in different situations appropriately. The participant suggested that the desired levels of language competence can be reached with the integration of both grammatical and pragmatic competence:

“In order to reach the desired level of language competence, we should use the language effectively and understand the meanings correctly as well as having a knowledge of the linguistic features of the target language. There should be both grammatical and pragmatic accuracy in language use. Therefore, evaluation should be done based on this criterion.”

There is also the perspective that for a full and comprehensive language evaluation, both grammatical and pragmatic assessments are necessary. One of the participants stated that what a learner says may be of accuracy considering one criterion; however, it may lack certain qualifications in the other. Therefore, it is not right to accept this statement as appropriate if it does not provide certain points of evaluation. He reflected his point of view by explaining that linguistic competence is necessary in order to use proper forms in the target language. Pragmatic competence, on the other hand, is also essential for successful communication with different interlocutors in various contexts. Therefore, without one, the other cannot be complete and this may result in unsuccessful and ineffective communicative acts. The participant expressed his view that both grammatical and pragmatic accuracy are needed for total evaluation as follows:

“Both of them are important because they affect each other as structural appropriateness is important for proper language use and pragmatic appropriateness is important for communication. One should know the ways to use the target language based on its linguistic features and, at the same time, should use the language based on context and interlocutors. Therefore, language evaluation should include the assessment of both aspects because it is possible to make an evaluation of pragmatic competence only if there is linguistic competence in the performance of the learner.”

Taking the second category, the assessment tools and contexts, into consideration, it is seen that student participants referred to a number of ways and tools to assess pragmatic competence. There are similarities between the suggestions of faculty members and those of student participants. However, what was striking about some of the student participants' comments was their not being able to mention possible ways of pragmatic assessment since they have not been pragmatically evaluated much in their language learning experiences. A statement from one of the participants can be provided to exemplify this point. The participant commented that because of the traditional ways of language education, pragmatic assessment is not given the necessary emphasis. Therefore, he has not experienced pragmatic assessment in his own language education. He reflected this point with the following phrases:

“It is not possible and appropriate to assess pragmatic competence with the traditional methods and tests. I think that the present ways of pragmatic assessment are not effective. Since I haven't been evaluated much concerning my pragmatic competence, I cannot provide possible ways of pragmatic assessment. I do not have much information about the tools of pragmatic assessment as I haven't been involved in the process because of the traditional education system”.

Another comment from one of the participants can also be provided to represent students' concerns about pragmatic assessment. The participant stated that pragmatic evaluation should be done by those language teachers who are, themselves, competent in the target language. He also maintained that such traditional ways of assessment as written exams or multiple-choice questions are not appropriate for proper pragmatic assessment. The participant expressed his concerns and suggestions as the following:

“Pragmatic assessment should be conducted by those who are competent in using the target language. Moreover, instead of written exams or multiple-choice tests, pragmatic competence should be assessed practically, I mean, teachers should evaluate learners in contexts requiring the use of target language in spoken forms.”

As shown in Table 4.8, communicative tasks, role-plays and dialogues in which learners are supposed to use the target language communicatively to complete the activity are suggested by student participants as possible ways of pragmatic evaluation. One of the participants, referring to these tools, also offered that opportunities to interact with native speakers of the target language should be arranged if possible. His suggestions of some possible ways of pragmatic assessment are given below:

“Conversational tests, daily conversation scenarios and role-plays can be used to conduct the process of pragmatic assessment. If possible, some situations in which learners can interact with the native speakers of the language can also be arranged to develop pragmatic competence.”

Observation is also among the suggested ways of pragmatic evaluation. What is most appreciated about observation is that it enables language teachers to evaluate learner performances over a period instead of just in one set. In this way, teachers can better judge the language development of their learners. Referring to observation as an effective way of assessment, one of the participants suggested that teachers can conduct pre and post evaluations to reach better understandings concerning learners' language performance and development:

“Time is the best way to evaluate learners' pragmatic competence. Teachers can observe learners over a period. In addition, if possible, some pre and post evaluations can be conducted to see whether there are changes in time.”

The data also revealed that some students considered some pre-set criteria to be used in the process of pragmatic assessment as essential. Some of the participants noted that pragmatic assessment is not easy; therefore, suggested that language teachers should prepare some scales or rubrics in which the evaluation criteria are made clear. One of the participants, holding this perspective, maintained that the items according to which pragmatic assessment is to be conducted should be pre-determined clearly for the

evaluation to be efficient:

“Pragmatic assessment is not an easy process. Before assessment, teachers should prepare check-lists or observation forms. Besides, some scales for evaluation can be used. However, for effective assessment, the criteria should be precisely determined.”

As presented in Table 4.8, apart from the assessment tools, participants mentioned contexts of pragmatic assessment, too. Most of them favored that pragmatic evaluation should be conducted in different contexts in which they can use the language based on contextual diversities. One of the participants made the following comment and stated that different contexts for evaluation are necessary. Moreover, he made it clear that in those contexts, it is important for learners to feel relaxed and comfortable:

“In pragmatic evaluation, learners should be provided an atmosphere in which they can feel comfortable. There should be various contexts in which learners can use the target language to show their pragmatic abilities.”

When the last theme, assessment of pragmatic competence, is summarized, it can be stated that there are similarities between the views of the student participants and those of the faculty members. Taking the first category into account, one can realize that it is related to the scope of assessment. In other words, it presents the participants' views about whether pragmatic assessment should be more important than linguistic assessment or whether both of them should be of equal importance. Some student participants stated that pragmatic assessment is more important in language education while some others believed that the roles pragmatic competence and grammatical competence play in the process of learning the target language are different; therefore, both of them should be parts of the general assessment process.

Regarding the tools and contexts of assessment, what is commonly stated by student participants is the necessity to present diverse communicative contexts for pragmatic evaluation. It was noted that this diversity can enable learners to perform the target language in different settings requiring different language usages. As tools of assessment, communicative tasks, role-plays and dialogues are favored as well as observations. Observations were suggested because they make it possible for language

teachers to make evaluations over a period. In this way, evaluation of pragmatic development is believed to be more effective.

On the other hand, while offering some possible ways of pragmatic assessment, participants proposed that evaluation process should be conducted by teachers who, themselves, have a good command of the target language. They insistently pointed out that pragmatic evaluation should not be conducted with traditional ways of language assessment. They assumed that if these two points are not paid proper attention, the assessment cannot reach its purpose.

To make a summary of this section, it can be stated that the qualitative results showed similarities regarding the perceptions of the faculty members and the students in terms of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence. Participating from different universities, most of the participants provided, more or less, similar comments as to the issues under discussion. One of the most prominent results was that the existing education system is mostly perceived as the main problem that hinders the development of pragmatic competence. The examination system and the conduct of language classes which are mainly based on the education system are also among the challenges in the process. In addition, learning and teaching English in an EFL context was another challenge for the participants chiefly because of the lack of opportunities for authentic contexts and interaction. The levels of learners' language proficiency as well as their awareness of the importance of pragmatic competence were also counted as the challenges in the process.

Regarding the assessment process, a great percentage of the participants maintained that pragmatic assessment is not conducted appropriately and efficiently in language education. They referred to the emphasis on linguistic instruction and lack of proper assessment instruments as the common reasons for the problems in pragmatic evaluation. In addition, teachers' capability and professional knowledge were also questioned in conducting healthy pragmatic instruction and assessment. However, despite some possible challenges, what was common in most of the participant comments, from students and faculty members, was that pragmatic instruction and assessment should be an essential part of general language education. Almost all the participants considered teaching and assessing pragmatic competence as a significant part of language education which deserves great attention and awareness.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

This section presents the results which are based on the quantitative data collected from the faculty members through a perception questionnaire and from students through a DCT. Throughout the analysis procedure, the data were analyzed in terms of normality and homogeneity for each. According to these findings, parametric and non-parametric analyses were applied.

5.1. Results from the Faculty Members

The quantitative results that are based on the data collected from the faculty members are displayed in this section. These presentations include the results related to age, gender, academic degree and experience years of the instructors. Table 5.1 shows the comparison of pragmatic competence between female and male faculty members with different age groups.

Table 5.1.

Kruskal Walls H Results for Pragmatic Competence of the Faculty with Different Age Groups

Age	N	Mean Score for Pragmatic Competence	χ^2	p
< 30	24	25.48		
31-39	4	22.13		
40-49	7	30.14	1.035	.793
>50 years	15	24.27		
Total	50			

As can be seen in Table 5.1, almost half of the faculty members were under the age of 30. The comparison of the participants according to their ages revealed that there was not a statistically significant difference among the faculty members in terms of their perceptions of the importance of pragmatic competence and its assessment ($\chi^2 = 1.035$,

$p > .05$). However, in Table 5.1, it can also be seen that there occurred a decrease in the mean scores of the faculty members between the ages of 31-39 compared to the group under 30 considering their perceptions of the significance of pragmatics and its evaluation in language education. On the other hand, there was a noticeable increase in the mean scores of the instructors between the ages of 40-49. This increase might be attributed to the experiences of the faculty members. As they continue with their professional lives, the faculty members have possibly formed and developed new and broader perceptions regarding the value of pragmatics in foreign language teaching.

Another variable taken into account in the analysis of the quantitative data was the genders of the faculty members. As there were two variables, Independent Samples T-Test was used. Below are presented the results in terms of gender variable.

Table 5.2.

Independent-Samples T-Test Results for Perception of Pragmatic Competence and its Assessment by Gender

Gender	N	Mean	d	t	p
Male	28	79.71	8.07	.123	.903
Female	22	79.45	6.46		

Table 5.2 shows faculty members' perceptions about pragmatic competence and relevant assessment views in terms of gender differences. Since there are both qualitative and quantitative variables and the independent variable has two categories, an Independent Samples T-test was employed. There is no statistically significant differences in terms of gender ($t_{48} = .123$, $p > .05$). Further, there seems a close mean value between two groups.

Table 5.3.

Kruskal Wallis H Results for Perception of Pragmatic Competence and its Assessment by Academic Degree

Academic Degree	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	p
Bachelor's	11	23.18	.389	.82
Master's	13	25.58		
PhD.	26	26.44		
Total	50			

Table 5.3 presents faculty members' perceptions considering pragmatic competence and its assessment process according to their academic degrees. Since the variables related to the academic degrees of the faculty members show non-parametric features, Kruskal-Wallis H test was applied. The analysis showed that there is not a significant difference among participants considering their different academic degrees ($\chi^2 = .389$, $p > .05$). As can be seen, most of the participants are either pursuing their doctoral studies or have already doctoral degrees. The participants appeared to respond the questions within similar perspectives. Therefore, it is seen that the views of the faculty members about pragmatic competence and relevant assessment considerations did not show a statistically significant difference. However, as the academic background of the participants develop, their levels of awareness in terms of the importance of pragmatic competence and its assessment show a slightly increasing tendency.

Table 5.4.

Kruskal Wallis H Results for Perception of Pragmatic Competence and its Assessment by Teaching Experience

Experience	N	Mean Score for Pragmatic Competence	χ^2	p
< 5 years	23	24.13	.763	.85
6-9 years	12	25.71		
10-19 years	5	30.30		
>20 years	10	26.00		
Total	50			

Table 5.4 shows faculty members' views about the importance and challenges of pragmatic assessment given their teaching experiences. As seen from the table, most of the participants do not have a long range of experience period. Only 20 % of the participants have a teaching experience for more than 20 years. However, there is not a significant difference among the views of the participants even if their teaching experiences display certain differences. Given the non-parametric aspects of the variables, Kruskal-Wallis H test was here used, too. The analysis showed that there is not a significant difference of the awareness concerning pragmatic competence and its assessment among the faculty members considering their years of experience ($\chi^2 = .763, p > .05$). As seen in the table, novice faculty members have less awareness about the importance, contribution and challenges of pragmatic competence and assessment. As the experiences of the faculty members strengthen throughout the years, their awareness of pragmatic use increases as well. However, 20 and over 20 years of teaching show a slight tendency of decrease because of certain reasons.

5.2. The Quantitative Analyses over Student Participant Data

For the purposes of this study, 554 students from different genders, grades and learning experiences participated in the study. Those participants were enrolled in six universities in Turkey. Table 5.5 presents the descriptive information related to the student participants in the study.

5.2.1. Descriptive results

Table 5.5 shows the descriptive results related to the student participants' genders, grades and their learning experiences as well as the universities they study at. In six state universities, the student participants were from different grades. In addition, they also differed in terms of their language learning experiences.

Table 5.5.

Descriptive Results for Student Participants (n=323)

		N	%
University	A	43	7.8
	B	110	19.9
	C	113	20.4
	D	58	10.5
	E	54	9.7
	F	176	31.8
Gender	Male	173	31.2
	Female	381	68.8
Grade	Prep	10	1.8
	First year	121	21.8
	Second year	160	28.9
	Third year	185	33.4
	Fourth year	78	14.1
Experience	Less than 10 years	81	14.6
	Equal or more than 10 years	473	85.4

Table 5.5 shows that 7.8 % of the student participants were from University A, 19.9 % from University B, 20.4 % from University C, 10.5 % from University D, 9.7 % from University E and the rest from University F. Almost one third of the student participants were male while the rest were female. The percentages of the student participants according to their grades were more or less similar except the number of the participants from the fourth year. According to their experiences of learning the target language, the percentages of the student participants show a great difference, % 14.6 with a learning experience less than 10 years and the rest with a learning experience more than 10 years.

Table 5.6 presents the mean scores of the quantitative data from student participants based on pragmatic appropriateness, grammatical appropriateness, pragmatic severity, grammatical severity and control points.

Table 5.6.

Descriptive Results for Pragmatic Appropriateness, Grammatical Appropriateness, Pragmatic Severity, Grammatical Severity and Control Scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean scores	S.D.
Pragmatic Appropriateness	554	.00	8.00	2.78	1.58
Grammatical Appropriateness	554	.00	8.00	4.36	1.89
Pragmatic Severity	554	.00	48.00	16.39	7.55
Grammatical Severity	554	.00	48.00	19.73	8.67
Control	554	.00	4.00	1.43	.80

The analysis of Table 5.6 reveals that the average scores related to pragmatic appropriateness was 2.78 while it is 4.36 for grammatical appropriateness. The result that the average of grammatical appropriateness scores is higher than that of pragmatic appropriateness is not surprising because language students' levels of pragmatic competence are lower than their grammatical competence. However, as the student participants commented they have been receiving linguistic instruction for many years. Therefore, the average of grammatical appropriateness being barely more than the possible total score can be an unexpected result. In other words, if learners have received mainly grammatical instruction in their language education experiences, then the average for this variable could be higher.

Considering the perceptions of student participants regarding the seriousness of the mistakes in the given scenarios, the average scores for pragmatic severity and grammatical severity were 16.39 ± 7.55 and 19.73 ± 8.67 respectively. It can be seen that there is not a significant difference between the values for pragmatic and grammatical severity. Based on these scores, it can be concluded that while student participants could not identify the exact problems with the sentences and provide appropriate solutions to replace them, they could sense that there was a problematic situation in those sentences. Taking the issue from a different angle, it can also be stated that although linguistic competences of the language learners are better than their pragmatic competences, they consider pragmatic infelicities more important than grammatical mistakes.

5.2.2. Inferential statistical results

This part shows the results related to the differences in participant performances taking their gender, grade and learning experiences into consideration. Pearson Correlation analysis was adopted in order to find out whether there is a correlation among pragmatic appropriateness, grammatical appropriateness, pragmatic severity, grammatical severity and control scores Table 5.7 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 5.7.

Pearson Correlation Results for Pragmatic Appropriateness, Grammatical Appropriateness, Pragmatic Severity, Grammatical Severity and Control Scores

		Pragmatic Appropriateness	Grammatical Appropriateness	Pragmatic Severity	Grammatical Severity
Grammatical appropriateness	PearsonCorrelation Sig. (2-tailed)	.019 .647	1		
PragmaticSeverity	PearsonCorrelation Sig. (2-tailed)	.671** .000	.079 .063	1	
GrammaticalSeverity	PearsonCorrelation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.052 .218	.820** .000	.157** .000	1
Control	PearsonCorrelation Sig. (2-tailed)	.601** .000	.403** .000	.527** .000	.344** .000

(**) $p < 0.001$

Table 5.7 shows that there are positive correlations between pragmatic appropriateness and pragmatic severity as well as control scores. Positive correlations are also observed between grammatical appropriateness and grammatical severity as well as control scores. The correlations between pragmatic severity and grammatical severity as well as control scores are also meaningful.

In order to identify whether there are differences between student participants based on their genders in terms of their pragmatic appropriateness, grammatical appropriateness, pragmatic severity, grammatical severity and control scores, independent-samples t-test was conducted. Table 5.8 presents these results below:

Table 5.8.

Independent Samples T-Test Results for Gender Differences

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
PragmaticAppropriateness	Male	173	2.70	1.514	-.768	.443
	Female	380	2.81	1.605		
GrammaticalAppropriateness	Male	173	4.52	1.949	1.375	.170
	Female	380	4.28	1.865		
PragmaticSeverity	Male	173	15.08	6.965	-2.749	.006
	Female	380	16.97	7.739		
GrammaticalSeverity	Male	173	19.58	8.712	-.235	.814
	Female	380	19.77	8.658		
Control	Male	173	1.43	.772	.062	.950
	Female	380	1.43	.811		

The analysis of the table reveals that there is a significant difference between genders based on their pragmatic severity scores ($p < 0.05$). The scores of female students were higher compared to male students in terms of pragmatic severity. Based on this difference, it can be concluded that females rate pragmatic errors more seriously compared to their male counterparts. This might be because females pay more attention to the appropriate usages of the L2. However, except for pragmatic severity, there is not a significant difference between genders based on the other variables ($p > 0.05$). A more detailed examination of the data reveals that, apart from grammatical appropriateness, female participants obtained slightly higher scores compared to their male friends. It might be commented that female learners can focus on language studies more than male learners.

One-way ANOVA was adopted in order to analyze the differences among student participants' pragmatic appropriateness, grammatical appropriateness, pragmatic severity, grammatical severity and control scores based on their grades. The results are presented in Table 5.9 below.

Table 5.9.

One-way ANOVA Results for the Differences Among Grades

	Grade	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Pragmatic Appropriateness	First Year	131	2.80	1,661	1,134	.335
	Second Year	160	2.61	1,574		
	Third Year	185	2.81	1,579		
	Fourth Year	78	3.00	1,405		
Grammatical Appropriateness	First Year	131	4.00	1.584	2.405	.067
	Second Year	160	4.59	1.785		
	Third Year	185	4.38	2.250		
	Fourth Year	78	4.42	1.567		
Pragmatic Severity	First Year	131	16.42	7.911	.117	.950
	Second Year	160	16.61	7.067		
	Third Year	185	16.14	7.974		
	Fourth Year	78	16.50	6.939		
Grammatical Severity	First Year	131	19.02	7.737	.723	.539
	Second Year	160	20.49	7.620		
	Third Year	185	19.63	10.356		
	Fourth Year	78	19.60	7.785		
Control	First Year	131	1.47	.844	.601	.614
	Second Year	160	1.38	.875		
	Third Year	185	1.41	.718		
	Fourth Year	78	1.51	.734		

The analysis of Table 5.9 reveals that there are not significant differences among grades based on their pragmatic appropriateness, grammatical appropriateness, pragmatic severity, grammatical severity and control scores ($p > 0.05$). This table displays some increases and decreases in certain variables as the learners' grades change. Considering pragmatic appropriateness, the average scores of the learners showed some increase except for the sophomores. It can be proposed that as learners' knowledge and competence regarding the target language and the proper ways of using L2 increase, they can produce more appropriate language. However, despite the increase, the pragmatic appropriateness scores are still lower than those of grammatical appropriateness. The consideration of grammatical appropriateness scores presents a sharp increase for the second grades. It may be because of the possibility that sophomores become more aware of the language rules after they receive an extensive language education in their first years. Therefore, their linguistic knowledge expands and this may be reflected in their linguistic performances. Another considerable increase from the first year to the second is also observed in grammatical severity scores while

there is a slight increase in pragmatic severity scores. Likewise, it can be sated that as their linguistic knowledge increases, second-year learners consider grammatical errors as more serious than pragmatic errors.

An independent-samples t-test was adopted so as to find out whether there are differences between learners based on their learning experiences in their appropriateness and severity ratings. Table 5.10 displays the results related to the experience variable.

Table 5.10.

Independent Samples T-Test Results for the Differences Considering Learning Experience

	Experience	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pragmatic Appropriateness	Less than 10 years	81	2.16	1.427	-	.000
	Equal or more than 10 years	473	2.88	1.577	3.854	
Grammatical Appropriateness	Less than 10 years	81	4.36	2.008	.012	.990
	Equal or more than 10 years	473	4.36	1.873		
Pragmatic Severity	Less than 10 years	81	14.38	8.040	-	.009
	Equal or more than 10 years	473	16.74	7.414	2.606	
Grammatical Severity	Less than 10 years	81	19.48	8.274	-.280	.780
	Equal or more than 10 years	473	19.77	8.745		
Control	Less than 10 years	81	1.25	.799	-	.026
	Equal or more than 10 years	473	1.46	.794	2.239	

Table 5.10 shows that based on students' years of learning the target language, the results considering pragmatic appropriateness, pragmatic severity and control scores show statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$). On the other hand, grammatical appropriateness and grammatical severity scores do not show statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$). Further analysis reveals that student participants with learning experiences of more than 10 years got higher scores for pragmatic appropriateness, pragmatic severity and control items than the students with learning experiences of less than 10 years. Therefore, it can be seen that while there does not occur a statistically significant change between these two groups in terms of their grammatical appropriateness and severity scores, their pragmatic appropriateness and pragmatic severity scores show statistically significant improvement. Based on these numbers, it can be commented that the students with more than 10 years of learning experience have improved their pragmatic abilities compared to the other group. The main reason

for this difference can be the fact that the more learners engage in language studies, the better their not only linguistic but also pragmatic competences become. Once learned, it may be easier to produce linguistically appropriate language as the rules of the L2 mostly does not change according to different contexts or interlocutors. However, there are some contextual, social and personal variables that are influential in the way language should be used and pragmatic competence is based on these variables. Thus, pragmatic competence requires more time for development compared to the linguistic side of the target language.

A general overview of the quantitative results reveals that, considering faculty members, increasing teaching experience and pursuing academic development enhances the academics' level of pragmatic awareness. The more experience they get in their professional lives, the higher importance they attach to pragmatic competence in language education. In a similar vein, as their academic experiences increase, their realization of the value of pragmatic instruction and assessment also increases. The consideration of the data from the student participants shows that there are not statistically significant differences between genders in terms of their general linguistic and pragmatic performances except their pragmatic severity scores. Taking the grade variable into account, the results also revealed that there were not significant differences among the grades though the scores generally increased in the second year for most of the items. The results pertaining to learning experiences of the student participants showed that pragmatic appropriateness and severity scores were higher for those students with more than ten years of learning experience. Based on this result, it can be concluded that pragmatic competence requires time for development.

CHAPTER SIX

6. DISCUSSION

This section presents discussions of some of the crucial results based on the qualitative and quantitative data. The discussion is presented in line with references to the relevant research conducted on the issue under discussion in order to display similarities and differences and, therefore, contribute to the literature and offer some pedagogical implications as well. First the results based on the qualitative data are discussed. The second part of the section presents the discussion of the quantitative data.

6.1. Discussion of Qualitative Results

This part includes the discussion of the qualitative results. The presentation is organized based on the main research questions in the present study: the perceptions of students and faculty members considering the importance and teaching of pragmatic competence, the factors affecting EFL learners' pragmatic competence in Turkey and the perceptions of students and the faculty regarding pragmatic assessment. There are also some references to the relevant literature in order to make some comparison between the present study and those in the previous research.

6.1.1. How do language learners and faculty members perceive teaching pragmatic competence?

The consideration of the qualitative data which were collected from the faculty and the student participants revealed some common points. Taking the perceptions of the participants related to the significance of pragmatic competence into account, one can see that most of the faculty members and the student participants regarded pragmatics as an essential part of language instruction. The main reason why they value pragmatic competence as significant is most probably because having pragmatic skills enables learners to communicate messages appropriately in the target language in

diverse situations as also stated by Ishihara and Cohen (2010) and Kasper and Röver (2005). The possible realization that without having at least a certain level of pragmatic competence it is not possible to establish and maintain efficient interactions leads language learners and teachers to consider pragmatic ability as a crucial component in general language competence (Einstein & Bodman, 1993; Padilla Cruz, 2013; Shi, 2014). A great percentage of student participants and the faculty noted that pragmatic competence is critical for successful communication and it is necessary and essential to include pragmatics in general language instruction. That is why, they indicated that pragmatic instruction should be an integral part in language teaching and learning. The finding from the present study adds evidence to the results of the previous studies that pragmatic instruction is significant (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Félix-Brasdefer, 2006; Kasper, 1996; Jeon & Kaya, 2006; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; LoCastro, 2003; Rose, 2005; Takimoto, 2008; Vyatkina, 2007). For example, Kasper (1996) and Kasper and Schmidt (1996) underline the importance of pragmatic instruction stating that what should be discussed is not whether to teach it or not; instead, what is essential is discussing how to teach it more effectively. In order to emphasize the value of pragmatics instruction, Jeon and Kaya (2006) maintain that mere exposure to certain pragmatic patterns does not enable the learner to learn the items; therefore, pragmatics instruction is necessary for more effective learning of the target features. What was commonly emphasized is the indispensable nature of including pragmatics in language instruction and without necessary instruction, learners cannot fully and efficiently develop their pragmatic competence. What is commonly stated by these researchers is the contributory and valuable nature of instruction in pragmatic development. Taking the necessity of pragmatics instruction into account, it would be better to provide more examples of the studies conducted upon the issue and further discuss the benefits of instruction based on the literature.

Research on the effects of instruction shows that, either explicit or implicit, instruction brings potential benefits to the process of language education by expanding learners' knowledge and improving their performances (Alco'n Soler & Guzmán Pitarch, 2010; Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2010; Dewaele, 2004; Fordyce, 2014; Ifantidou, 2013; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Martines-Flor & Fukuya, 2005; Martines-Flor & Alco'n Soler, 2007; Takimoto, 2005; Uso'-Juan & Marti'nez-Flor, 2008; van

Compernelle, 2011). With a purpose of investigating the effectiveness of deductive and inductive approaches in teaching pragmatics, Takimoto (2005) found that the three experimental groups receiving pragmatic instruction performed significantly better than the control group. Another study related to the teachability of pragmatics was carried out by Tello Rueda (2004). The results of this quasi-experimental study revealed that pragmatics instruction improved participants' pragmatic competence and; as a result, they were able to produce the language more appropriately and accurately. The results of the present study lend support to those of Tello Rueda (2004) in that the participants in this study also highlighted the significance of pragmatics instruction in their written responses to open-ended questions. There is a significant similarity between these two studies and the present one because they are all conducted in settings where English is taught and learned as a foreign language.

A recent example of a study in an EFL context belongs to Farshi and Baghbani (2015). The results of this experimental study showed that the instructional groups were better than the control group, highlighting the positive contribution of instruction on oral production. The consideration of the results and related suggestions of these studies reveals that instruction in pragmatics is beneficial in language education in a foreign language context as stated by the participants in the present study. On the other hand, there is also the ESL side of the issue in which learners can learn the target language in an environment where it is the spoken language in the setting.

The relevant literature shows that there are also some studies conducted in ESL settings in addition to the studies conducted in EFL contexts. Holmes and Riddiford (2011) conducted a study in an ESL setting with the purpose of examining the effectiveness of classroom activities on sociopragmatic skills. The results revealed that the participants benefited from instruction, even if it lasted only for six weeks, by improving their conscious learning. Moreover, the opportunities for social interaction also enabled the participants to develop their sociopragmatic skills. The positive contributions of pragmatics instruction are also mentioned by most of the student participants and faculty members in the present study.

Another study conducted in an ESL setting belongs to Bucher Barbosa da Silva (2012). Investigating the relationship between instruction and pragmatic knowledge in

an experimental study, the researcher found that the experimental group gained benefits from instruction compared to the control group. Basing their study on a similar purpose with the afore-mentioned studies, another experimental study was recently conducted by Bardovi-Harlig, Mossman and Vellenga (2014). The examination of the efficiency of instruction on the acquisition of pragmatic features revealed that the productions of the experimental group outperformed those of the control group. The researchers shared the view that the participants benefited from pragmatics instruction in their acquisition of the appropriate forms and were able to improve their production.

Based on the results of these studies and the suggestions of the researchers, it can be advised that instruction in pragmatics, either in an EFL or and ESL context, is not only necessary but also helpful for language learners in the process of developing their pragmatic skills. The comments from previous studies that there is a strong relationship between pragmatics instruction and pragmatic development are also encountered in the remarks of the participants in the present study. The student participants made it clear that they need pragmatics instruction in order to develop their communicative skills. Another point that was highlighted was that language instruction should go beyond the provision solely of linguistic features of the target language. This view is also referred to by Chen (2011) who expressed his opinions regarding the necessity of pragmatics instruction by stating that teaching the structural features of the target language is not enough for a whole language development. Instead, language teachers should integrate pragmatics into their language content as a significant part.

On the other hand, some research also revealed that instruction in pragmatics is not essential in language education. As to the necessity of instruction for pragmatic development, not all researchers share the same views. While a higher percentage is in favor of pragmatics instruction, some researchers, though not many in number, remark, putting forward the results of their studies, that explicit instruction in pragmatics is not actually essential (Nikula, 2008; Ohta, 2001). The group of researchers who propose the perspective that pragmatics instruction is not needed argue that learners can pick up the appropriate language forms during classroom activities and interaction. Aiming to investigate the acquisition of alignment and acknowledgement expressions in L2 Japanese, Ohta (2001) found that learners could progressively reach the appropriate levels of language production through conversations with their peers. Therefore, it can

be concluded that collaborative peer-works or interactions can facilitate the development of pragmatic competence even without explicit instruction. With repetition, learners can have the chance of practicing the language forms over and over again and this enables them to pay their attention to the same form at different times. It can be discussed that instead of receiving explicit instruction on pragmatics, learners can benefit from the classroom interactions through incidental exposure to the target forms and their accurate usages. Considering the results of the present study, this view was shared by only few of the faculty members in the written responses. They commented that providing explicit instruction on pragmatics is not necessary; instead, through communicative tasks, learners can pick up the appropriate ways of using the target language.

In a similar vein, another study suggested collaborative dialogues as a means of enriching the development of pragmatic competence though not denying the significance of pragmatics instruction in the educational process. As a result of an experimental study investigating the effectiveness of collaborative dialogues in learning requests as a speech act, Taguchi and Kim (2014) found that the first group receiving instruction and following dialogue activities performed better than the instruction-only group. The researchers commented that the main reason for this difference was that during their engagement in dialogue construction activities, the learners paid attention to pragmatic forms. Focusing their attention on the activity collaboratively not individually helped the participants increase their pragmatic awareness while improving their pragmatic abilities as well. The results of this study also support those of the present study because the faculty and a favorable percentage of the student participants also suggested collaboration and working with dialogues as ways to improve learner performance. The possible benefit of working in collaboration is that while engaging in the given tasks together, learners not only produce the language themselves but also observe how the language is produced by their peers. In addition, in group work, learners can revise and improve their language production through self-feedback and peer-feedback as well. Therefore, in the discussion related to teaching pragmatics, it can be stated that, as Solak and Bayar (2015) maintain, language lessons should be designed on a practice-basis instead of a theory-basis in order to promote language development.

6.1.2. What factors affect the level of English pragmatic competence of EFL students in Turkey?

The examination of mainly the qualitative data has revealed that there are different factors that impact the development of pragmatic competence and most of the participants considered these factors as challenges in the process of language education. The existing education system was the factor that almost all the participants in the present study referred to when they were mentioning the challenges in pragmatic instruction and development. They underlined the problem that there was and, there still is, a great emphasis on linguistic instruction while pragmatic competence remains a neglected component of the target language. At this point, it can be noted that, based on the student participants' comments, Grammar-Translation Method –GTM- is one of the most commonly preferred methods of language teaching in the existing education system in Turkey. The student participants complained that most of their instructors conduct the classes with either grammar or reading activities with little attention to pragmatic aspects. This problem with language education is also expressed by Park (2012) who recently conducted a study in Korean context as an EFL setting. The researcher commented that the education system in Korea produces an imbalanced language education because of the emphasis placed in grammar and reading skills. However, students are not the only ones who are not pleased in this system.

The faculty members are also not pleased with the education system and its requirements. They stated that they are not supplied with enough opportunities for providing pragmatics instruction because the design of their curriculum and the materials do not promote such a conduct. In order to cover the materials in a given period, they claimed that they cannot find the available time and opportunities for instructing pragmatics. This creates a learning environment in which the teacher is in the center of education and learners depend on the teacher as an agent to control the educational procedures. Moreover, while learners' linguistic knowledge generally develop (Mondal, 2012), their communicative skills do not reach at the desired levels. (Abbas & Ali, 2014; Shih-Chuan, 2011). Despite some drastic changes and related suggestions in the ways and methods which can yield more beneficial results in language learning and teaching, traditional systems are still commonly applied.

Therefore, learners still see the teacher as the director of their language education and rely mostly on what the teacher does and gives instead of pursuing further opportunities for development in L2 themselves.

The findings of the present study reveal that the problematic side of language education also reflects itself in the examination system in Turkey. Language examinations mostly focus on the assessment of linguistic knowledge, reading skills and vocabulary repertoire of learners. Even in exams that are carried out nation-wide, pragmatic knowledge and skills of test-takers are not evaluated as the exams do not include appropriate questions particularly designed for pragmatic assessment. This conclusion lends support to that of Russell and Grizzle (2008). These researchers also maintained that pragmatic ability is not a part of most of the general measures of language competence. In their examination of the frequency and scope of the questions for assessing pragmatic competence in TOEFL, IELTS and TOLIMO examinations, Karbalaei and Rahmazade (2015) concluded that these exams include elements of pragmatic assessment other than cultural aspects of the target language. The researchers suggested that paying attention to including elements of the pragmatic side of the language into exams should be essential. Based on the results of these studies, it can be concluded that if national and official exams are not at a satisfactory level to evaluate pragmatic competence, then it should not be surprising that classroom examination of pragmatic knowledge is not adequate.

To accomplish essential changes in the evaluation and assessment system, first of all, the education system should push both language teachers and learners to pursue pragmatic development. A language curriculum with the purpose of improving pragmatic competence integrated with other skills for whole language development should be designed and followed in language education. A similar suggestion was also provided by Limberg (2015), who proposed that foreign language learners should be offered a context in which integration of all language skills is maintained accompanied with varied activities designed for appropriate contexts. It can be discussed that language curriculum already includes rules for skills integration and instruction in pragmatic knowledge and competence. However, it seems that theory has not turned into practice in most of the educational settings including tertiary levels in Turkey. Therefore, it can be suggested more frequent and effective inspections should be carried

out. In addition, language teachers can be provided with seminars to increase their awareness of the importance of pragmatics instruction. With increased controls and opportunities, the drawbacks of the education system would be easier to overcome. The realization and awareness that pragmatic development is an indispensable part of language education can naturally motivate the participants of the educational process to follow proper ways to improve pragmatic competence. The more learners realize the importance of pragmatics in language learning, the higher their consciousness concerning pragmatic development becomes.

Another point of concern was the language materials utilized in language education. Taking the teaching and learning setting into consideration, some of the faculty members and students mentioned their concerns about the materials. One of the greatest concerns of the faculty members was that the textbooks are, mostly, not satisfactory to cover a wide range of speech acts. What is offered by most of the language materials is the structural aspects of the target language accompanied by a number of repetitive activities. On the other hand, as to the pragmatic features of the L2, materials do not offer many examples and explanations for learners to benefit from and develop their pragmatic skills. In other words, materials, especially textbooks as materials that are mostly used, do not present an adequate diversity of language forms and usages. Crandall and Basturkmen (2004) expressed that textbooks offer some items mostly in a list format. The researchers further commented that textbook producers “wrongly assume that learners know when and how to use” (p. 44) pragmatic items in an appropriate way. McConachy and Hata (2013) discussed that textbooks do not include a wide range of speech acts and pragmatic forms. The researchers explained the inadequacy of the materials by stating that there is a stereotypical presentation of some basic pragmatic forms. Another point that is underlined by the researchers is related to the relationship between pragmatics and culture. As it is mostly related to the interactional side of the language, pragmatic competence is inevitably tied up with the culture of those who participate in interaction. What is sometimes problematic with textbooks is that they try to provide culture-specific examples to textbook-users. In other words, materials match some particular language usages with some cultures. When learners encounter these examples, it might be possible that they can assign some precise language productions to a specific culture. Taking the issue of cultural

reflections into account, another possible problem may occur. Learners might not pay attention to some cultural features and assume that the same form can be used with all interlocutors from different cultures with different social status. This can be regarded as a possible drawback of the pragmatic presentations of textbooks.

With the thought in mind that dictionaries may be used as a teaching material in the process of language learning, Yang (2007) focused on the evaluation of publication of a dictionary based on the provision of pragmatic information. The researcher found that this dictionary was at a pleasing level since it provides a substantial amount of pragmatic information at lexical, syntactic and discourse levels. However, despite his appreciation of the material, he still maintained that there should be room for further development in terms of presenting pragmatic characteristics of the L2. One other study recently carried out and focused specifically on teaching materials for business English was conducted by Pullin (2015). The researcher stated that the presentation of these materials might be adequate to offer a variety of approaches to culture; however, they are not sufficient to cover the complexity and diversity of the features of intercultural communication. Moreover, the integration of these aspects into general language teaching is not at a satisfactory level. Based on these results, it can be concluded that without basic requirements of the interactional contexts and related cultural features of the target language, it is not easy for learners to attain the desired level of pragmatic awareness and development. It can be suggested that language materials should provide their users appropriate but not excessive language examples regarding the presentation of culture.

The discussion of the appropriateness of language materials, particularly textbooks, also includes the authenticity of the layout and content of the material. Based on his examination of the integration of pragmatic knowledge in three high school English books in Iranian EFL context, Gholami (2015) concluded that little emphasis has been provided during the formation and development of these materials to include elements for the pragmatic side of the language. The researcher remarked that the inefficiency of pragmatic presentations results in the artificiality of the materials and suggested that with the purpose of decreasing this artificiality, “textbook developers should blow pragmatic soul to the syntactic skeleton of the books” (p. 50). The findings of these studies and those of the present one represent similarities at this point. The

issue of authenticity in language materials was also mentioned in the statements of some of the faculty and student participants. They expressed their discomfort with the way language is displayed referring to the lack of the presentation of pragmatic knowledge and appropriate language usages. As a result, it can be assumed that pragmatic representations are of great significance for maintaining the authenticity of the language material. In other words, the more appropriate and adequate the provision of pragmatic knowledge and language usage is, the more authentic the material becomes.

Sharing a similar perspective with Gholami (2015), Belz (2007) also pointed at the authenticity of instructional materials. The researcher proposed *telecollaboration* as a way to increase the authenticity of the material. Suggesting the utilization of some particular web-sites, the researcher also commented that telecollaboration provides learners with a broad range of discourse patterns in the target language. Through exposure to these forms, learners can increase their understanding of proper language forms. The consideration of these findings and relevant suggestions can help the betterment of the language materials and; as a result, increase learner motivation and success as well as meeting the demands of not only the learners but the instructors as well.

In addition to the issue of the education system and some other related points, another point that was highlighted by most of the student participants in this study was that language learning in Turkey sometimes becomes difficult because the environment is an EFL setting. The participants referring to this point commented that they cannot find many chances to be exposed to the target language and culture outside the classroom context. They, in a way, complained that they cannot practice the target language since there are few native speakers of the L2 around them. It can be drawn from what they said that the lack of opportunities for interaction with native speakers can create negative consequences for learners in EFL contexts and limited opportunities for interaction decrease learners' chances of practicing the target language.

The review of relevant literature shows that learning environment has great effects on language learning experiences (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Matsumura, 2003; Schauer, 2006; Schmidt, 1983). There are mainly two learning environments learners can participate in: ESL vs. EFL context.

When the nature of educational environments is looked on in learning a target language, there are some presumed differences between second language and foreign language environments. In a second language learning environment, learners can have opportunities of contact in and exposure to target language outside the classroom. However, in a foreign language learning environment, the percentage of having a chance of interaction in the target language is not that high. Therefore, in EFL environments, the need for instruction regarding different aspects of the target language is felt more. The point that the development of pragmatic competence is not easy in the EFL context in Turkey is also mentioned by the student participants and the faculty members. Since EFL contexts do not offer learners as many chances of practicing the target language as those in an ESL setting, this sometimes becomes problematic for learners when they try to improve their pragmatic skills. Without the necessary chances of language contact and practice, it becomes difficult for learners to progress their communication abilities.

One of the studies carried out in an EFL setting can be provided as it shares similar results with the present study. Examining the pragmatic strategies that a Chinese L2 learner of English employed during his productions of L2 refusals, Tian (2014) discussed that lack of chances for practicing the target language results in deficiencies in language proficiency in general and pragmatic competence in particular. Participants in the present study, like that in Tian's (2014), also favored that language setting should offer learners an appropriate pragmatic environment in which students can practice the target language by interacting their peers. Furthermore, the researcher suggested that language instruction should include elements of pragmatic aspects of the target language beyond its linguistic features.

On the other hand, the results of some of the studies revealed that learning a language in an EFL context does not bring disadvantages (Spada, 1986; Ahn, 2007; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004). These studies showed that the high chances of having interaction in the target language do not always guarantee high levels of language success. Although the participants in the present study expressed their concerns related to learning the target language in an EFL setting because of the lack of opportunities for language contact, the results from some of the previous research did not support the advantage of having chances for contact in the target language. For example, in an

earlier study, Spada (1986) investigated whether there is a correlation between speaking performances and the amount of contact in the target language. The results revealed that there was not a correlation between these two variables. Another comparatively recent example is provided by Segalowitz and Freed (2004) who studied with American learners of Spanish. Based on the results of their study, the researchers concluded that there was not a strong and significant relationship between contact in the target language and participants' oral performances.

With a general aim of finding the impact of motivation, amount of contact and length of residence on pragmatic development, Ahn (2007) carried out a study in an ESL context and found that there was a weak and insignificant relationship between the development of pragmatic competence and the amount of contact in the target language. The researcher commented that contrary to the expectations that learners can improve their pragmatic skills in an ESL environment compared to an EFL setting, the findings did not prove the assumption. Unlike the results of the present study in which the participants referred to the necessity of having chances of contact in the target language, the findings of these three studies showed that even if there are opportunities for language contact, it might not be adequate for full and successful development of pragmatic competence. Therefore, it can be argued, at this point, that what is essential is not the *quantity* but the *quality* of language contact. Based on the results of the previous studies demonstrating that language contact is not a definite determinant of pragmatic success, other factors which can potentially influence pragmatic development should be considered.

Considering the inadequate nature of only being exposed to the target language and having chances of contact, Schmidt (1993) maintains that mere exposure to the appropriate and necessary input does not guarantee the acquisition of pragmatic competence in the target language. The researcher argues that contextual factors are also influential in communication and sometimes these factors may not be as important for the interlocutors as they actually are. At this point, it would be helpful to mention the concepts of *attention* and *noticing* (Gass, 2003) as significant parts of successful learning in general and pragmatic competence in particular. Attention can be basically described as a notion that enables language users and learners to identify the significant aspects of input and to further analyze the input for a more advanced understanding of

the language. On the other hand, conscious awareness of the language forms which can be called noticing is necessary for language learning and development. Without conscious attention to language, it might not be possible for learners to recognize the essential features of language input and develop their pragmatic skills based on their language awareness.

The concepts of attention and awareness are, in a way, mentioned in the comments of the faculty members in the present study. Some of the instructors maintained that their students do not exhibit the necessary level of attention to the appropriate usages of the target language. In addition to the issue of attention, they also referred to learners' language awareness as a matter that can sometimes be problematic in the process of language education. These instructors complained about the low levels of language awareness on the part of some learners and attributed the decrease in the level of success and motivation to these low levels of awareness. In the relevant literature, there is also some research investigating pragmatic awareness in language education (Lee, 2010). In order to assess the effect of pragmatic awareness on language learning, Lee (2010) focused on the connection between learning strategies and pragmatic awareness. Working with Taiwanese EFL learners, the researcher found that there is a significant correlation between these two variables. As both Lee's study and the present one have been conducted in an EFL context, his suggestions can be applicable to the present study. Therefore, it can be proposed that the variation in learning strategies can promote pragmatic awareness. The more different strategies learners have to employ, the higher their language awareness, in general, and pragmatic awareness, in particular, gets. However, language awareness was not the only factor that impacts the process of language development.

Other than learners' levels of pragmatic awareness, their proficiency levels were also among the matters that were highlighted as challenging in language education by the faculty members in this study. Most of them stated that a great percentage of their students do not possess the adequate level of general language knowledge and competence. These low levels of language competence negatively influence their pragmatic abilities. In a study conducted in an EFL context, Babaiel and Shahrokhi (2015) aimed to compare the performances of Iranian learners and English native speakers in their production of offering. Based on the results of DCTs, the researchers

concluded that while native speakers over performed the EFL learners, non-native learners of English with higher proficiency levels also obtained better scores than those with lower proficiencies.

Similar to the above-mentioned study in EFL settings, a study designed by Roever and Al-Gahtani (2015) in an ESL setting, Saudi Arabia, revealed that there is a significant correlation between the level of language proficiency and learners' pragmatic performances. Therefore, the findings of the present study add evidence to some previous research which also underlined that learners' proficiency levels influence their pragmatic competence. Based on the comparison of these results, it can be assumed that general language proficiency provides learners with the necessary forms and knowledge that they can utilize during language production. If learners' proficiency levels are at the desired level, there are available tools for them to make use of and to choose from. The high levels of language competence offer learners the chance of having a repertoire with the help of which they can improve their pragmatic skills to further levels.

A great percentage of the studies conducted on the effect of instruction and language proficiency on pragmatic performance and success have claimed that these two factors are influential in pragmatic development (Babaiel & Shahrokhi, 2015; Tian, 2014). For example, Bardovi-Harlig (1999) stated that linguistic competence may not be enough but it is necessary for a full development of pragmatic competence. However, there are some studies in the relevant literature which are in disagreement with the notion that there is a correlation between general language knowledge and pragmatic performance. One of the most remarkable figures who held a contrary perspective is Schmidt (1993). Referring to his examination of famous Wes's performance, the researcher concluded that the inadequate level of grammar did not hinder the participant from maintaining interactions with native speakers. Therefore, Schmidt (1993) claimed that linguistic development is not a pre-requisite for pragmatic development. Schmidt's proposal is contrary to the comments of some of the faculty in the present study that maintained that learners' general language competence, especially their levels of linguistic knowledge, has an impact on their pragmatic performance.

In the process of pragmatic development, there is also the issue of learner motivation to be handled within the framework of student-related factors in the present study. Most of the faculty and student participants commented that learners do not possess the satisfactory level of motivation in the process of learning the target language, especially developing their pragmatic competence. The present study echoes the results of some relevant literature (Schmidt, 1993; Tateyama, 2001) and indicates that motivation, though not being the only factor, has a considerable impact on learners' willingness to follow language studies. This result might not be surprising since motivation has been claimed and shown to be a significant aspect in the process of language education. For example, Takahashi (2001) and Kasper and Rose (2002) considered motivation, which is expressed as integrative motivation by Schmidt (1993), as one of the most effective variables that can influence learners' attention and awareness to different language forms.

The consideration of low levels of learner motivation, as referred to in the present study, can be attributed to different factors. For example, some basic differences in the personality traits of learners can create problematic cases during language education. To make the point more understandable, all students cannot be expected to possess the same personality traits. While some of them are open to learning and therefore, willing to pursue the chances of interaction, some are not extraverted enough to use the target language even in the classroom environment. In addition, as there are personality differences, there are also differences among learners regarding their learning strategies (Chu, Shia Huang, Shih & Hsin Tsai, 2012; Green & Oxford, 1995; Li, 2010; Yilmaz, 2010). Murray (2015) suggested that learners should be motivated and encouraged to employ all the possible ways and strategies that can help them progress in their language learning. At this point, learner motivation seems to be critical if the education process is expected to run smoothly.

A further basic factor regarding learner motivation can be the fact that students, in the present study, are engaging in language studies in a foreign learning environment. Since they do not have much chance of being directly exposed to the features of the target language and its culture, learners themselves might not be willing to follow opportunities for language development. Following their language studies might seem difficult for them as it requires more effort on their part because almost all learners are

used to the situation in which the teacher directs teaching and learning process. This is especially observed in classes where Grammar-Translation Method is employed as also valid in most of language education settings in Turkey.

On the other hand, based on the results of the present study, not all factors that have negative impact on pragmatic development are related to learners or the education system: there is also the teacher-side of the issue. Some of the student participants criticized their language teachers because of their low language competence levels and their lack of teaching skills. They expressed that many of their language teachers do not possess the ability to teach the target language in an effective manner. They claimed that some of those teachers are not qualified enough to teach the target language because of their comparatively low levels of pragmatic competence. In her discussion of the impact of instruction on pragmatic development, Tello Rueda (2004) expressed that despite the growing awareness of the significance of pragmatic competence, language teachers most of whom are non-native speakers still have some hesitation to include pragmatics into their language instruction possibly because they are not confident about their pragmatic skills. A current study on the examination of learners' perspectives concerning their language teachers' pragmatic competence levels and their awareness, though not all, shares some of the results of the present study. In a recent study, Bagheri (2015) found that learners think their teachers possess a good level of pragmatic competence and awareness. However, the language teachers are not capable of showing their competences and capacities in their teaching practices. They do not focus on pragmatic instruction; even if they do, they do not go beyond covering textbook representations and correcting errors. As this study and the present one were conducted in EFL settings, it might be assumed that in EFL contexts, language education follows similar patterns -teachers conducting their lessons in a relatively traditional way though possibly having high levels of language competence and awareness. Pursuing the traditional teaching methods results in lack of pragmatic instruction and this hinders pragmatic development.

These comparable cases might be indirectly attributed again to the education system. Language teachers were once students and they went through a process in which language teaching basically focused on the linguistic aspects of L2 giving little or no emphasis on pragmatic features. As they have been used to such a system, they

inevitably apply the same or, more or less, a similar system when they are on the stage as language teachers. Another discussion might be related to the willingness of teachers to improve their language proficiency and their teaching skills as well (Perin, 2011). It might be difficult for some of them to accept that they need further development in order to be effective and successful teachers. At this point, though accepting this may not be easy, it can be suggested that teachers' awareness should be increased concerning the significance of their language competence and teaching skills. This awareness is essential as teachers are one of the most prominent figures to contribute to the process of language education.

Some examples from previous research can be given as examples considering the teachers' pragmatic competence and their teaching experiences. To find out the relationship between language teachers' pragmatic competence and their teaching experiences, Park (2012) conducted a study with five Korean non-native English speaking teachers. The researcher concluded that although the levels of their pragmatic competence influenced their teaching performances, all the participants with one exception were willing to improve their teaching as they realized their performances were not at the desired level. It can be concluded that even if a teacher does not possess the essential skills, it is important to be open to change and progress. Only in this way can teachers develop themselves in their profession. The comments of the student participants in the present study, too, indicate that language teachers should be aware of the significance of having the necessary qualifications and competence to be helpful for their learners in their journey of learning a foreign language.

6.1.3. How do language learners and faculty members perceive assessment of pragmatic competence?

In addition to the above-mentioned points, the assessment of pragmatic competence was among the issues under discussion in the present study. Most of the student participants and faculty members stated that assessment of pragmatic competence can contribute to the development of pragmatic skills with the identification of problematic areas as well as raising awareness. However, a great percentage of them also maintained that in general language assessment, pragmatic competence is not given the necessary importance. Put it another way, while linguistic aspects of the target

language are assessed based on different criteria, pragmatic knowledge is not mostly evaluated. Several reasons can be regarded as effective for the lack of pragmatic evaluation. First of all, it can be stated that the instruments to assess pragmatic competence may not be as developed as those to assess linguistic knowledge (Brown, 2001; Lui, 2007). There may be some lack of valid and applicable ways for assessing pragmatics (Aufa, 2013). The education system mostly leads learners and teachers to follow the traditional ways of language education and accordingly similar procedures in the assessment process. The focus on grammar instruction increases the necessity of linguistic evaluation as it is the main focus of education. The greater emphasis on linguistic assessment naturally results in the development of different ways to assess this type of knowledge. While there is a need to improve the instruments to evaluate grammatical knowledge, there is little need to assess pragmatic competence since it is sometimes considered as a neglected skill.

Another reason for the inadequacy of pragmatic assessment might be the fact that some of the language teachers themselves do not possess the necessary levels of language competence as claimed above (Bagheri, 2015; Park, 2012). These teachers prefer to employ traditional ways of assessing language competence instead of evaluating learners' pragmatic knowledge. In fact, they may not be open to improve themselves to keep up with the demands of the profession and may prefer to follow the procedures they were exposed to when they were students themselves.

Another component of the issue, the preparation of the appropriate instruments for pragmatic assessment is not an easy process. The issues of validity, reliability, diversity and authenticity should be paid great attention in order for the instrument to be valid and applicable. Therefore, designing pragmatic assessment instruments is not as unproblematic as it seems to be (Aufa, 2013) especially in EFL contexts because of the authenticity concern. So, even if language teachers possess the essential qualifications, preparing instruments may be more difficult for them compared to instructing pragmatics and employing the available tools for evaluation. Hence, there should be a group of professionals who can concentrate on developing and progressing tools of pragmatic assessment.

An additional dimension of pragmatic assessment about which the participants provided brief comments was the scope of assessment; in other words, whether to assess pragmatic competence separately or integrate its evaluation with other competencies. The views of the participants were divided into two; some in favor of pragmatic assessment as an independent component and some as an integral part of general language assessment. There may be some advantages and disadvantages in the application of these two perspectives. The independent evaluation of pragmatic knowledge can be more comprehensive compared to the integral form; however, in this way, the purpose of whole language development may not be realized. On the other hand, integrating pragmatic assessment with the evaluation of other language competencies can be more appropriate for the nature of whole language development as it combines all the language skills instead of separating them. Yet, in this way, pragmatic evaluation may not be as inclusive as when it is conducted as a separate evaluation system. However, whether it is conducted in an independent or integrated way, pragmatic assessment should be a crucial component of language education and should be given the value it deserves (Grabowski, 2009; Lui, 2007; Roever, 2005; Walters, 2007).

As pragmatic assessment is expected to be a central part in language evaluation, the instruments and tools for pragmatic assessment are also included in the comments and suggestions of the participants. Authentic communicative tasks, role-plays and dialogues are among the most frequently suggested ways of assessing pragmatic competence in the present study. They require learners to produce the language based on different criteria. Making use of role plays and dialogues can be especially helpful in EFL contexts because, in this way, learners can become acquainted with diverse communicative situations with different interlocutors. Although most of the classroom-based activities and evaluation procedures do not meet authenticity, these can still be efficient to present diversity for learners. Pomerantz and Bell (2007) propose these tools as favorable since they offer chances of language use and participation and comment that they contribute to the betterment of learners' interactional skills. It can also be suggested that assessing pragmatic competence with role plays or dialogues is advantageous because in this way evaluation is carried out over a process instead of a single set.

Discourse Completion Tasks were also proposed as effective instruments for pragmatic evaluation. As these instruments include a diversity of possible situations which require the employment of different forms of discourse, they can be preferred in pragmatic assessment (Lui, 2007). Aufa (2013) advises WDCTs (Written Discourse Completion Test) explaining that this instrument expects learners to produce answers in which they show their pragmatic competence and linguistic knowledge. Therefore, employing DCTs can be considered as the *one stone two birds* instrument: evaluating linguistic and pragmatic competence at the same time. Regarding language evaluation, Qinghua and Di (2015) recommend assessment over a period as it promotes improvement in L2. Instead of judging and marking learners' development based on a single activity, it is more logical to make an observation and evaluation through different performances because language competencies, especially pragmatic abilities, develop in time.

6.2. Discussion of Quantitative Results

As the number of the participants who contributed to the present study was high, the qualitative side of the study was rich in different examples and related discussions. On the other hand, this section should also include some discussion of the quantitative results as they can lead to different comments and implications. However, the discussion concerning the quantitative results may not be as comprehensive as that of the qualitative data because some of the issues have already been mentioned.

The quantitative results obtained from the student participants revealed that there are significant differences among participants based on the gender variable. The results revealed that female students got higher scores for identifying pragmatic severity of the items included in the questionnaire. Yet, for the other scores from pragmatic and grammatical appropriateness besides grammatical severity, this gender difference was not observed. This difference between male and female students in their pragmatic severity scores might be attributed to the notion that female learners pay more attention to language forms and their appropriate usages compared to the male learners. In other words, it can be suggested that female learners' levels of pragmatic awareness are comparatively higher than those of male ones. In a recent study investigating whether there were gender differences considering pragmatic awareness, Bagheri (2015)

concluded that while the levels of pragmatic awareness were high both for male and for female participants, females showed more pragmatic awareness than males. On the other hand, though they can better realize the pragmatically problematic usages, female learners did not perform better in providing the correct options. They could not replace the problematic items with better and more appropriate statements. Bagheri (2015) also expressed that the participants in his study admitted not to have enough competency to produce pragmatically appropriate language though they exhibit awareness concerning the significance of pragmatic competence. These results can stem from the lack of pragmatic instruction in language education. Since learners are not mostly provided with opportunities to be exposed to and practice the target language, they find it difficult to offer proper usages. The focus on linguistic teaching neglecting pragmatic instruction results in the inadequacy of dealing with the communicative side of the language on the part of learners.

Based on the above-mentioned data, what might seem surprising is that despite the claims and complaints of both the faculty members and student participants that there is a great emphasis on grammar instruction in language education in Turkey, the identification of both male and female students of the grammatical mistakes in the given scenarios was not very high. If learners are provided with extensive linguistic instruction instead of focusing on the pragmatic aspects of the target language, it is natural to expect that their grammatical performances would be at a pleasing level. However, the results revealed somewhat contrary evidence. The students in the present study claimed that they were taught the same things over and over again for many years and have developed their linguistic competence instead of their pragmatic skills. Most of the student participants also added that they know almost all the rules of the target language and complete grammatical activities successfully. However, this was not reflected in their performances in the DCT. The learners could recognize half of the grammatical mistakes. Therefore, average of the scores for providing appropriate alternatives to the given cases was not that high.

Another unanticipated result of the present study might be that there was not a big difference between the averages of identifying grammatical and pragmatic mistakes in the statements. As commented above, learners are expected to identify the mistakes, offer more proper options and get higher results from the items with grammatical

mistakes because they received extensive linguistic instruction. Because of the lack of pragmatic instruction, it might not be expected that learners could get high points for the recognition of pragmatic mistakes. However, the results showed that the average scores from the identification of grammatical and pragmatic mistakes were not much different from each other. In other words, student participants got more or less similar scores for recognizing grammatical and pragmatic infelicities though the scores of the former was comparatively higher than those of the latter. Thus, it can be stated that learners might have received excessive linguistic instruction while they were learning the target language, yet the extensiveness of this type of instruction may not be enough in terms of language success. Instead, learning similar things over and over again may result in loss of attention to the content of the instruction. A similar case, loss of attention and learning motivation, can also be observed within the concept of assessment. In order to just pass the exams, learners are possibly to learn or memorize the linguistic aspects of the target language because most of the language exams, as the participants mentioned, include questions evaluating linguistic knowledge. To sum, the present state of the education system can explain these low scores for grammatical severity and appropriateness as well as pragmatic appropriateness.

Another variable in quantitative data in this study was the grades of the student participants. The results revealed that there were not significant differences among the grades in the scores they got for grammatical and pragmatic appropriateness as well as grammatical and pragmatic severity. It might be expected that as learners go further in their language studies, they progress their language capacities including their linguistic and pragmatic knowledge. However, the results did not support this claim. The analysis of the results showed that though there are some increases in grades for some items, there are not statistically significant differences. This outcome can once more be attributed to the education system. Even if learners pass classes, they still seem to have more or less a similar level of general language competence. Though it might not be an encouraging comment, it is possible that they graduate from the related departments without having the necessary competence and qualifications.

As regards the amount of time learners have spent for learning the target language, the pragmatic appropriateness and pragmatic severity scores showed significant differences between the student participants who continued with their

language studies under and over ten years. Those who have been learning the target language for more than ten years outperformed the other group. There was not a significant difference between both groups in grammatical appropriateness and severity. Thus, it can be commented that learning the linguistic aspects of the language can be easier than learning its pragmatic features. Though a student can learn the linguistic points on his own since most of them are based on some stable rules, it is difficult to learn the pragmatic side of the language by himself because it is related with different components such as context and culture. In addition, the better performance of the group with more than a ten-year learning experience can be considered as evidence that pragmatic development requires much more time compared to linguistic development.

In addition to the learners, there were also the faculty members who contributed to the quantitative results of the present study. The discussion will be related to two variables. These variables are the academic degrees and the teaching experiences of the faculty members. The results revealed that there were not statistically significant differences among the participants concerning their academic degrees and years of experience. This demonstrates that they have similar viewpoints regarding pragmatics and its assessment. It is also seen that those participants with further academic progress and with more instructional experiences show more awareness about the importance of pragmatic competence and its evaluation. Therefore, it can be considered that as they go further with their academic studies, the instructors also improve professionally as a result of their teaching experiences. Dealing with the aspects of the target language as professional instructors and researchers, these instructors naturally realize that language has many dimensions including pragmatics. This professional development gives them the perspective that language instruction should not be based only on teaching the linguistic features but should also comprise of pragmatics instruction.

To sum up the whole discussion, it can be stated that there are various aspects to take into consideration regarding pragmatic competence and assessment in Turkish EFL context. There are some factors that are problematic for language learners and instructors in the process of pragmatic instruction and evaluation. What is essential is, therefore, to be aware of these challenges and try to suggest possible ways of solving the problems in language education, especially language education in foreign contexts.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. CONCLUSION

This section presents a summary of the study including its methodology and results. It continues with pedagogical implications that are based on the results of the present study and those of the previous literature. Some limitations of the study are also presented followed by possible suggestions for further research.

7.1. Overview of the Study

This study was conducted with the purpose of understanding the perceptions, attitudes and self-evaluations of language learners and instructors at tertiary level in Turkish EFL context regarding pragmatic competence and assessment. The data were collected through a DCT, questionnaire and open-ended questions from language learners and the faculty in six state universities in Turkey. The results, in a broader sense, revealed that there are different factors that cause challenges in the process of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence. The qualitative results showed that the faculty members and student participants considered the education system as the main challenge that makes their language learning difficult. The participants portrayed a critical assessment of Turkish Foreign Language Education System. The existing language education focuses on teaching and evaluating linguistic aspects of the target language without paying necessary attention to pragmatic development. Accordingly, the examination style which is based on the requirements of language education also places more emphasis on grammatical evaluation than pragmatic assessment. The lack of pragmatic instruction, inadequacy of materials in presenting appropriate language usages in terms of pragmatics and their authenticity and shortage of diversity in their contents were also among the issues that student participants regarded as problematic. Most of the student participants also maintained that although some of their language instructors are aware of the significance of pragmatic competence, most of them do not have the essential knowledge and qualifications to enable them to teach pragmatics to

their learners. Moreover, in terms of assessing their learners' language knowledge and performances, those instructors focus on linguistic assessment more than pragmatic evaluation.

The examination of the qualitative and quantitative data obtained from the faculty demonstrated that though most of them esteem pragmatic competence as a significant component of general language development, they sometimes neglect pragmatics instruction because of the curricular content they are expected to cover. Those instructors commented that evaluating pragmatic performances of language learners is important but they pointed out some challenges in the process of pragmatic assessment. One of the main issues is that there are not as many instruments to assess pragmatic knowledge as those used to evaluate linguistic competence. The lack of authentic tools for pragmatic evaluation hinders instructors from conducting a whole language assessment in the educational process. The following table can present a summary of the research questions, data sources, analysis procedure and main findings.

Table 7.1.

A Summary of the Study

Research questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do language learners and faculty members perceive teaching pragmatic competence? 2. How do language learners and faculty members perceive assessment of pragmatic competence? 3. What factors affect the level of English pragmatic competence of EFL students in Turkey? 4. Is there a relationship between these factors and learners' pragmatic development?
Data sources	<p>Quantitative instruments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. In order to gain an understanding of students' levels of pragmatic competence, A Discourse Completion Task which was originally formed by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) and later expanded and validated by Xu (2009) was adopted. b. A questionnaire was adopted from the study of Huang, Sheeran, Zhao and Xiong (2014) in order to understand the faculty members' perceptions of pragmatic competence and its assessment. <p>Qualitative instruments: Six open-ended questions were formed in order to obtain information from the students and the faculty regarding teaching and assessing pragmatic competence.</p>

Tablo 7.1. (Continued)

Analysis procedure	For the analysis of quantitative data, the descriptive and inferential statistics were followed. For the analysis of the qualitative data, content analysis was adopted.
Main findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pragmatic competence is an essential component of general language competence. - Pragmatic instruction is significant especially in EFL context as there are not many opportunities for language exposure and practice. - There are many challenges in the process of developing pragmatic competence including the existing education system, instruction style, examination system, learning the target language in an EFL context, the lack of opportunities for practicing the target language, the inadequacy of most of the available language materials, students' levels of language proficiency, their low levels of pragmatic awareness as well as some instructors' low levels of pragmatic abilities and teaching competences. - Assessment of pragmatic competence is essential to evaluate pragmatic abilities identify problematic areas.

7.2. Pedagogical Implications

Based on the results of the present study and relevant literature, this section provides some pedagogical implications. These implications are expected to contribute not only to the literature on pragmatic assessment but also to language education by increasing awareness towards pragmatic competence and the issues about its assessment. Additionally, some areas of further investigation will be suggested and possible limitations of the study will be discussed.

The results and comments of the participants in this study revealed that the education system is the main challenge hindering pragmatic development of language learners. General language education focuses on linguistic instruction and its assessment despite the major changes in language agenda. The drawbacks of the system are especially evident in EFL contexts. The examination style applied to serve the purposes of educational policies is reflected among these problems. Therefore, what can be suggested at this point is to turn the theory that is proposed in language education into

practice in terms of emphasizing communicative aspects of the target language. In other words, policy makers or curriculum designers should be aware of the fact that while some adjustments supporting the use of pragmatic competence have been made, the instruction in real language classrooms is not reflective of these changes. Observations and controls in classrooms are necessary to identify what the root of the problem is in language lessons. It can be suggested that if these fundamental challenges are made to the education system, then it is possible that other related problems such as the conduct of lessons or examination style can be ameliorated step by step.

Another significant issue pertaining to the development of pragmatic competence is 'language materials'. A considerable percentage of the participants complained that language materials especially textbooks are not of good quality. They include many grammatical activities and reading texts, but there are not substantial presentations of pragmatic knowledge accompanied with activities capturing the attention of learners. At this point it can be proposed that textbook producers should pay attention to the authenticity of the language materials and how these materials are presented (Gholami, 2015). Authenticity and diversification are essential in designing language materials because many times those materials are the only exposure that language learners are receive to the rules and appropriate usages of the target language in EFL contexts (McConachy & Hata, 2013).

Considering the utilization of a variety of activities and materials, it can also be recommended that language teachers can make use of visual materials or videos. Although videos are not totally authentic and they cannot guarantee success, they can display rich language usages in different contexts to learners. Moreover, if possible and available, teachers can utilize e-mails, interactive videos or teleconferencing in order to enrich opportunities for genuine interaction and to enable learners to engage in language communication and production with different interlocutors. Learners can both receive language input and attempt to produce language with these tools. In this way, they can be motivated and encouraged to keep on further development of their language competencies including pragmatic skills. Being motivated is critical for learners to continue with their language studies and to direct their attention to what they are being exposed to. Additionally, by interacting with different people from a variety of possible contexts, learners can also improve their understanding of the social and cultural aspects

of the target language and expand their world views. The adoption of this strategy can also improve the process of language education by producing a more active and dynamic learning and teaching environment.

The main point that should be paid attention to improve learners' level of pragmatic competence is to increase their awareness considering pragmatic competence if the aim is to benefit from the changes in the education system and from the employment of a variety of different activities and tools. To help learners understand the importance of pragmatic competence in their language studies, teachers can also make use of pragmatic awareness raising activities, also known as *pragmatic consciousness raising* activities. These activities, besides increasing learners' sensitivity to sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic features of the target language, provide learners with the chance to improve the analytic skills that they can employ in their further language studies. By developing their analytic skills, it is more likely that students can be autonomous in the process of language learning utilizing opportunities for development in L2 outside the classroom. Therefore, teachers should be aware of the importance of language consciousness and consider using these types of activities as a part of their language instruction.

The possible implications should not be only for learners, some suggestions can also be provided for language teachers to improve language education in Turkey. Student participants stated that some of their language teachers do not possess a satisfactory level of language competence, particularly pragmatic competence, and thus do not have the skills to convey what they know to their students. Though it is disappointing to note that some language teachers lack the necessary qualifications required in their profession, there are ways to diminish or, if possible, terminate the disadvantages of this reality. First of all, it is essential to raise teachers' awareness of the importance of their profession. Language teachers should be given the respect they deserve and understand their indispensable role in the educational process. This can be done by giving them voice in the process of preparing language curriculum and materials. Seeing that they can be contributors to the plans of language education, teachers can feel that they are valued members of the educational community. This will evoke interest in them to develop themselves professionally in the process.

It is also essential to inform language teachers regularly about the developments and changes that take place in language education. As commonly proposed activities, seminars or more comprehensive conferences can be organized in order to enlighten teachers about the possible ways, materials or techniques they can utilize in their language instruction. Graduating from a university and possessing a related degree is not the end of professional development. Therefore, it should be remembered that being a teacher requires a never-ending effort, desire and motivation for professional development. Only in this way can teachers be helpful for their learners and continue being productive members of the educational process.

In terms of language assessment, the results revealed that pragmatic evaluation is not mostly conducted in language classes. The faculty members referred to the lack of appropriate instruments for assessing learners' pragmatic competence and performance. In order to overcome this problem, it is necessary, again, to raise instructors' and students' awareness concerning pragmatic competence. Unless learners and students consider pragmatic knowledge and abilities as an essential part of general language competence, they will not lay emphasis on its assessment. Increasing the levels of awareness of pragmatic competence among instructors and students is critical to make it a significant component of general language assessment. If students and instructors advocate for pragmatic assessment, test designers will have to care about the production of such materials. Language teachers and test developers can, then, work in collaboration to determine the most effective ways to assess pragmatic competence.

To conclude, the results of this study revealed that there is a discrepancy between what *is happening* in classrooms and what *should be happening* considering pragmatic instruction and its assessment in Turkish EFL context. In light of the results and suggestions of the previous literature and the findings of the present study, suggestions have been provided for the betterment of teaching the target language. These suggestions apply not just to learners but are equally important for language instructors. If it is expected that language education in Turkey will reach a better and more productive state, then the educational community needs to contribute to the process not just through criticism but through direct action to improve upon what is currently available.

7.3. Limitations of the Study

This study was based on a mixed methods research design. For the purposes of this study, qualitative and quantitative data were collected both language learners and faculty members at tertiary level from six universities located in cities in different parts of Turkey. The main reason for conducting a mixed methods study was to avoid any possible limitations stemming from the research design. The qualitative data were supported by quantitative data. The participants included not only the students but also the instructors in order to eliminate any possible bias on the part of one group considering their perceptions about the issue under discussion.

One of the possible limitations of this study may be related to the extraneous variables such as the language proficiencies of the student participants. The student participants' levels of language proficiencies were not identified before collecting data from them. Therefore, the potential differences among the participants could negatively impact their performances in the DCT. Another problem may be the cultural differences among learners. As the study included participants from universities in different regions, the cultural background of the learners could possibly influence their performances and perceptions.

Another limitation of the study is that the data collection instruments included many items to provide answers on the part of students and faculty members. The main reason why the instruments consisted of many items was to obtain comprehensive data about the perceptions of participants. However, it may be possible that while answering the questions, the participants lost their attention or concentration, which might negatively influence their answers. Therefore, though not much applicable, the data could be collected in two phases –qualitative data at one set and quantitative data at another.

In addition, instead of gathering the qualitative data through interviews, the researcher used open-ended questions. This could also be considered as a limitation as interviews can provide more comprehensive data.

7.4. Further Research

The results of the study suggest areas for further research. First of all, the context of investigation can be expanded. In other words, a replication of the present study can be conducted in different educational settings such as high schools or other universities. In this way, more comprehensive data can be collected and the analysis of the data can lead to more detailed understanding of the issue. The increase in the amount of available data can contribute to the generalization of the findings.

Although the present study included both qualitative and quantitative data, additional methods of data collection such as observations or focus-group interviews could also be utilized for further research. In order to find out whether there are differences between what is claimed and what is actually done, classroom observations can be conducted over a period of time to get an idea of the actual applications in real settings. Similarly, interviews could be conducted with some participants to enrich the data at hand.

This study investigated the factors that influence learners' development of pragmatic competence and the results revealed some basic dynamics impacting the developmental patterns of learners regarding their pragmatic skills. Further investigation can also focus on the effects of these variables on learners' pragmatic knowledge and performance. There have already been different experimental studies investigating the impact of different variables on pragmatic competence. However, most of those studies examined the influence of only one or two factors at a time. Thus, experimental studies can focus on examining more than one or two of these variables from different angles.

Because pragmatics is a significant issue needing further investigation, some cross-cultural examinations of pragmatics can be conducted outside of Turkey. Obtaining data from participants from different countries may allow a comparison not only between different cultures but between different educational opportunities as well. Identifying similarities and differences between diverse language settings can contribute to the understanding of advantages and disadvantages of a variety of applications.

Further investigation can also concentrate on the teacher-side of the issue of pragmatic competence and instruction. Most of the studies have focused on learners and

gathered information from them concerning pragmatics. However, there is a scarcity of the information from the perspectives of teachers on pragmatics and pragmatic competence. This study was a starting point in acknowledging instructors role in pragmatics, but more research is necessary from this vital perspective if a clearer understanding of the challenges and solutions are to be discovered in the field.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: The questionnaire and the open-ended questions for the faculty members

THE FACTORS AFFECTING EFL LEARNERS' PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF PRAGMATIC ASSESSMENT

Communication is one of the building blocks of a society and language is an indispensable medium in the act of communication. It is thanks to the language that people can accomplish a wide collection of communicative acts that involve different participants in a variety of settings and circumstances. However, communication requires more than just a set of words. In addition to lexicon and grammatical knowledge, a person should also have the knowledge of pragmatics in order to establish and maintain healthy communication and relationships (Bachman, 1990). Language users should follow pragmatic rules of the society they participate in.

Pragmatic competence can be principally described as the capability to use language in effective and appropriate manners as well as understanding and interpreting messages based on contextual information. In other words, pragmatic competence involves the ability to know what to say, whom to say, when to say, where to say and how to say (Bloomer, Griffiths, & Merrison, 2005). Based on this brief definition of pragmatic competence, you are kindly required to provide, to the following questions, your opinions considering pragmatic assessment.

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Thank you for helping us with this study. We appreciate your participation. The following questions will help us know your ideas of pragmatic assessment better. In this questionnaire, there are three parts. The first part includes questions of demographic information. In the second part, there are 20 statements of 5 Likert-scale items. In the third part, there are open-ended questions.

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Part 1

1. Gender: Male ___ Female _____

2. Degree: Bachelor's _____ Master's _____ PhD. _____

3: Student Currently Taught: English majors _____ Non-English majors _____

4: Age: <30 years old _____
31-39 years old _____
40-49 years old _____
>50 years old _____

5: Years of Teaching: <5 years _____ 6-9 years _____ 10-19 years _____ >20 years _____

Part 2

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Linguistic competence alone is not sufficient for effective communication in the target language.					
2. Linguistic competence and pragmatic competence are the two components of successful foreign language learning.					
3. Pragmatic transfer (i.e., applying L1 cultural norms to the use of L2) can lead to pragmatic failure.					
4. Pragmatic failure occurs when two speakers fail to understand the intentions of each other due to a difference between cultures and/or linguistic backgrounds.					
5. Speakers who do not obtain pragmatic competence in the target language have the risk of being misinterpreted when they are in conversation with native speakers of the target language.					
6. Since foreign language education is about teaching students how to communicate in a target language, the culture of that language should be taught in the classroom.					
7. In general, there is insufficient pragmatic teaching in my English classrooms.					
8. I find it challenging to develop my students' English pragmatic competence because they are not exposed to English language use and English culture.					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
9. In general, I focus on assessing students' linguistic competence in the classroom.					
10. Assessing students' English pragmatic competence in the classroom is very difficult and challenging.					
11. It is unclear what aspects of pragmatic competence should be assessed in the classroom.					
12. It is unclear how pragmatic competence should be assessed in the classroom.					
13. The large-scale standardized tests such as YDS, TOEFL or IELTS focus on testing students' linguistic competence.					
14. It is unclear what aspects of pragmatic competence should be tested in such large-scale standardized tests.					
15. It is unclear how pragmatic competence should be tested in such large-scale standardized tests.					
16. Pragmatic competence should be included in both classroom-based assessments and large-scale standardized English tests.					
17. Pragmatic competence assessments should assess students' ability to use a wide variety of speech acts in the target language such as making requests, giving advice, making offers or invitations, etc.					
18. Pragmatic competence assessments should assess students' ability to understand conversational implicatures, i.e., what is implied but not said by the speaker.					
19. Pragmatic competence assessments should assess students' ability to understand routines, i.e., the language that is used in different situations.					
20. It is important to have a sound framework for the assessment of Turkish EFL students' pragmatic competence					

APPENDIX B: The DCT and the open-ended questions for the students

THE FACTORS AFFECTING EFL LEARNERS' PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF PRAGMATIC ASSESSMENT

(İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN EDİMBİLİMSEL KABİLİYETLERİNİ ETKİLEYEN FAKTÖRLER VE AKADEMİSYENLERİN EDİMBİLİMSEL DEĞERLENDİRME ALGILARI)

İletişim, gerek günlük hayatımızın gerekse akademik hayatımızın en önemli ve en etkili parçalarından biridir. İletişimi sağlamadaki en önemli araçlardan birisi dildir ve dil sayesinde insanlar farklı ortamlarda farklı katılımcılarla etkileşim halinde olabilirler. Ancak, hayatımızın bu kadar büyük bir kısmında etkili olmasına rağmen, iletişim kelimelerin ardarda sıralanmasından çok daha ötedir. Söylediğimiz herhangi bir ifade dilin yapısına tamamen uygun olabilir; ama kullanım özelliği olarak hiç de uygun olmayabilir.

Herhangi bir ifadenin doğruluğunu belirleyen iki temel etken vardır. Biri, yapısal (grammatical) doğruluğu diğeri ise edimbilimsel (pragmatic) doğruluğudur. Yapı bakımından doğru olan bir ifade, kullanım bakımından yanlış olabilir. Ünlü dilbilimci Chomsky'nin bu konuyu vurgulamak için oluşturduğu cümleyi örnek vermek konuyu daha anlaşılır hale getirebilir:

“Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.”

Bu cümle gramer olarak tamamen doğru olmasına rağmen anlam olarak hiçbir şey ifade etmemektedir. Dolayısıyla, iletişim kelimelerin birbiri ardına sıralanmasından daha ötedir.

Bu çalışma, siz değerli öğrencilerin *edimbilimsel yetenekle (pragmatic competence)* ilgili algılarını ve düşüncelerini öğrenmek üzere yürütülmektedir. Anket üç temel bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm kişisel bilgilerinizi içerir. İkinci bölümde 20 adet ifadenin doğruluk derecelerini (grammatical or pragmatic) belirlemeniz ve yanıltısa, doğru formunu vermeniz istenmektedir. Son bölümde açık uçlu sorulara kendi dil öğrenim deneyimlerinize dayanarak cevap vermeniz istenmektedir. Çalışmaya yapacağınız samimi katkılarınız çok değerlidir. Şimdiden teşekkürler...

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Part 1

1. Gender: Male ___ Female _____

2. Grade: 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____

3. Years of learning English: _____

Instruction

Thank you for helping us with our research. In this questionnaire you are going to read Anna and Peter talking to classmates and teachers. Their English will sometimes be correct but sometimes there will be a problem. Your job is to decide how well Anna and Peter use English in different conversations. Please decide whether you think there is a mistake or not and mark your answer.

Let's look at an example:

John: Good morning, Anna.

#Anna: Good night, John.

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the last part appropriate/correct?	Yes	No
If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?		
Not bad at all _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ Very bad		
If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?		
(<u>Good Morning, John.</u>)		

Anna's answer is obviously not good. So in the example on your answer sheet put an *X* in the box marked *No*. After this, you decide how big the mistake is. Put an *X* somewhere on the line between *not bad at all* and *very bad*. For a small mistake mark the second or third slot; for a serious mistake mark the last slot. Accordingly, you may revise it like Good morning, John.

Remember: This is not a test; we are interested in what you think.

If you have a question, please ask.

Scenarios

[Grammatical errors are indicated by *, pragmatic inappropriateness by #, some with no marks. It's up to you to decide if they are correct or not.]

1. The teacher asks Peter to help with the plans for the class trip.

(*Class Trip Scenario*)

T: OK, so we'll go by bus. Who lives near the bus station? Peter, could you check the bus times for us on the way home tonight?

P: #No, I can't tonight. Sorry.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____: _____:_____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

2. Peter and George are classmates. George invites Peter to his house, but Peter cannot come.

G: Peter, would you like to come over to my house tonight?

P: *I'm sorry, I just can't. I'm very tired. I couldn't sleep on last night.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____: _____:_____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

3. Peter goes to the snack bar to get something to eat before class.

(*Snack Bar Scenario*)

F: May I help you?

P: #Would you be so kind as to give me a sandwich and a yogurt please?

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____: _____:_____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

4. George is going to the library. Peter asks him to return a library book.

G: Well, I'll see you later. I've got to go to the library to return my books.

P: Oh, if you are going to the library, can you please return my book too?

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

5. Peter is talking to his teacher. The conversation is almost finished.

T: Well, I think that's all I can help you with at the moment.

P: *That's great. Thank you so much for all the informations.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

6. Anna is talking to her teacher in his [sic] office when she knocks over some books.

A: (knocks over some books) Oh no! I'm really sorry! Let me help you pick them up.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

7. It is Anna's day to give her talk in class, but she is not ready. (*Not Ready Scenario*)

T: Thank you Steven, that was very interesting. Anna, it's your turn to give your talk.

A: # I can't do it today but I will do it next week.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____: _____:_____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

8. Anna goes to the snack bar to get something to eat before class.

F: May I help you?

A: A cup of coffee, please.

F: Would you like some cream in it?

A: *Yes, I would like.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____: _____:_____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

9. Anna has borrowed a book from a classmate, Maria. Maria needs it back, but Anna has forgotten to return it.

M: Anna, do you have the book I gave you last week?

A: * Oh, I'm really sorry but I was in a rush this morning and I didn't brought it today.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____: _____:_____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

10. Anna needs directions to the library. She asks another student.

(*Direction Scenario*)

A: Hi.

S: Hi.

A: #Tell me how to get to the library.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____: _____:_____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

11. Peter is going to George's house. He is quite late. (*Late Scenario*)

P: Hi George.

G: Hi Peter. I've been waiting for over half an hour. Weren't we supposed to meet at 4?

P: #I couldn't come earlier. And anyway, we don't have to hurry anywhere.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____: _____:_____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

12. Peter and George meet before class. They want to do something before class starts.

G: Hey, we've got 15 minutes before the next class. What shall we do?

P: *Let's to go to the snack bar.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____: _____:_____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

13. Peter goes to see his teacher at his office. When he arrives, his teacher is busy.

(*Busy Teacher Scenario*)

P: (knocks on the door)

T: Yes, come in.

P: Hello, Mr. Gordon. Are you busy?

T: Erm...I'm afraid so. Could you come back later?

P: #OK, I'll be here tomorrow morning at 8.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

14. Peter asks his teacher for a book.

P: Mr. Gordon?

G: Yes?

P: *Could I possibly borrow this book for the weekend if you not need it?

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

15. Peter's teacher wants to talk to Peter about the class party. Peter makes arrangements to come back.

T: Peter, we need to talk about the class party soon.

P: Yeah, if tomorrow is good for you, I could come any time you say.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

16. Anna goes to ask her teacher to fill in a questionnaire. She knocks on the office door. (*Questionnaire Scenario*)

A: (knocks on the door)

T: Yes, come in.

A: #Hello. My name is Anna Kovacs. If you don't mind, I would like you to fill this in for me.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

17. Maria invites Anna to her house but Anna cannot come.

M: Anna, would you like to come over this afternoon?

A: I'm sorry, I'd really like to come but I have a difficult history test tomorrow.

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

18. Anna needs directions to the library. She asks another student.

A: *Excuse me, could you tell me where is the library?

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

19. Anna has borrowed a book from her teacher. Her teacher needs it back, but Anna has forgotten to return it.

T: Anna, have you brought back the book I gave you yesterday?

A: *Oh, I'm sorry, I completely forgot. Can I giving it to you tomorrow?

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

20. Anna meets her classmate, Maria, after school. They want to go somewhere.

A: Maria, are you doing anything this afternoon?

M: No, I've already prepared for tomorrow's classes.

A: #Then I say we go to the cinema. OK?

Is the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there is a problem, how bad do you think it is?

Not bad at all _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ Very bad

If you think it is not appropriate, how would you revise it?

(_____)

5. Edimbilimsel yetenek hangi yönleriyle değerlendirilmelidir? (Değerlendirme kriterleri hangi maddeleri içermelidir? Örneğin, ifadelerin doğruluğu neye göre belirlenmelidir; yapısal doğruluk / edimbilimsel doğruluk / her ikisi de)

6. Edimbilimsel yetenek nasıl değerlendirilmelidir? (Değerlendirilme yapılırken, hangi ölçme yöntemleri kullanılmalıdır?)

CURRICULUM VITAE

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