PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TEACHING COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS IN TURKISH EFL CONTEXT

Edimsel Yeti ve Görev-Temelli Dil Öğretimi: İletişimsel İşlevlerin Türk Yabancı Dil Öğretimi Bağlamında Öğretiminin Önemi

Rıdvan TUNÇEL[1]
Özlem UTKU [2]
Aslı AKÇAY[3]
Eylül SÖZEN[4]

Abstract

This descriptive study aims to shed light on how to implement Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching pragmatic competence in Turkish EFL classrooms. The study of the development of L2 pragmatics is a promising and a vibrant area of investigation since in many of the L2 environments, Turkey being an example, communicative competence is a neglected area with the focus being on grammatical competence. What language teachers are doing in classrooms is often the teaching of grammar rules, undeniably important but never ensure the teaching of effective communicative skills alone. The teaching of "structural, functional and affective" power of the language in actual use through student projects and classroom discussion of both on the structure, the function and the effect may well help learners to become effective communicators. After the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in 1980s, today, at least in the last three decades, people in the field are in search of improving the shortcomings of CLT. Though a number of methods have been introduced on overcoming the limitations of CLT, they only serve to complement a very small area of the gap attributed to CLT. On the other hand, TBLT, introduced to language teaching market by Prabhu, embraces quite a large area that CLT has left behind. This specific study will, thus, search for ways to raise awareness of Turkish EFL teachers through course book analysis

---

[1] Yrd. Doç. Dr., Anadolu Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bölümü, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Ana Bilim Dalı, rtuncel@anadolu.edu.tr

[2] Arş. Gör., Bayburt Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bölümü, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Ana Bilim Dalı, ozlemutku@bayburt.edu.tr

[3] Okt., Anadolu Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu, Temel Yabancı Diller Bölümü, asliakcay@anadolu.edu.tr

[4] Okt., Anadolu Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu, Temel Yabancı Diller Bölümü, eylulsozen@anadolu.edu.tr

and classroom observations. In the short term, the current study will present solutions to overcome the problems arising as a result of "Focus on FormS" understanding of language teaching.

Keywords: Pragmatic Competence, Communicative Functions, Task-Based Language Teaching, Communicative Language Teaching

Özet

Bu betimleyici çalışma, İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğrenildiği sınıflarda, Görev-Temelli Dil Öğretiminin nasıl uygulanacağına ışık tutmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çoğu yabancı dil öğretimi alanında ve Türkiye'de de olduğu gibi iletişimsel yeti göz ardı edildiği ve sadece dilbilgisi yetisi önemsendiği için yabancı dil öğretiminde edim bilim çalışmaları çok gelişen ve canlı bir araştırma alanına sahiptir. Yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin sınıfta çoğunlukla yaptığı şey sadece dilbilgisi öğretimidir, bu her ne kadar inkâr edilemez şekilde önemli olsa da etkili iletişim becerilerinin öğretimini olası kılmamaktadır. Öğrenci projeleriyle sınıf içi tartışmalarla hem yapı, işlev ve de etkinin doğal dil kullanımıyla dilin "yapısal, işlevsel ve etkisel gücünün öğretimi, öğrencileri etkili iletişim kurabilenler haline getirebilir. 1980 lerde İletişimsel Dil Öğretimi ortaya çıktıktan sonra, günümüzde, en azından otuz yıldır, bu alanda uğraşan insanlar İletişimsel Yaklaşımın eksikliklerini giderme peşindedirler. İletişimse yöntemin eksikliklerini gidermede pek çok metod üretilmiş olmasına rağmen, İletişimsel yöntemin çok az bir bölümüne katkı sağlamıştır. Diğer yandan Prabhu tarafından dil öğretimi çevrelerine sunulan Görev-Temelli Dil Öğretimi İletişimsel yöntemin geride bıraktığı eksiklikleri tamamlamada geniş bir alana hitap etmektedir. Bu nedenle, bu özel çalışma, ders kitapları analizi ve sınıf gözlemleri aracılığıyla Türk Yabancı Dil Öğretmenlerinin farkındalığını artırmanın yollarını arayacaktır. Kısa vadede, mevcut çalışma "Yapı Öğretimine Odaklanma" dil öğretiminin sonucunda ortaya çıkan sorunların üstesinden gelmek için çözümler sunacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Pragmatik Yeterlilik, İletişimsel İşlevler, Göreve Dayalı Dil Öğretimi, İletişimsel Dil Öğretim

1. INTRODUCTION

What we language teachers are doing in classrooms is often the teaching of grammar rules, undeniably important but never ensure the teaching of effective communicative functions and skills alone. Though, generally accepted in the related literature, pragmatics is "the study of invisible meaning", pragmatics investigates and explores how people are able to accomplish matching their utterances with the always-changing context. In course of time, the definition of communicative competence has undergone some other modifications. Lyle Bachman (1990) schematize language competence into two basic competence areas of organizational competence and pragmatic competence. We, human beings, have the ability to use the language appropriately in rapidly changing situations in every minute of our social life. For this reason, teaching forms of a foreign language may not work in real life or outside the classroom with the ignorance of pragmatic competence. For this reason, the ultimate aim in a language classroom is to encourage learners to perform in the target language for communicative purposes. Studies in the field suggest the inclusion of communicative activities such as group works, role-plays, simulations, discussions, drama, observation tasks, individual/group projects and many others to engage students in different social roles and to gain experience in the target language for communicative purposes. Although many of the activities in the course books provide opportunities to practice the pragmatic skills, there is a need to help learners be involved in classroom practices and modify activities and topics to teach and strengthen learners' pragmatic competence.

After the adoption of the communicative language teaching, both Audio-lingual and classical classroom procedures have been thrown to dustbin and, primary importance have been attached to the achievement of functional abilities in language learning. As Thomas (1983) states, the final purpose of understanding and producing language that is appropriate to communicative situations in accordance with specific sociocultural parameters is of great significance. Failure to do so may cause misunderstandings and sometimes communication breakdowns as well as the stereotyping of the FL learners as insensitive, rude, or inept. In the last three decades, there has been an increasing debate on the teachability of pragmatic competence, if possible, how and why to teach it to EFL students.

Kasper (2002) states that there is a lack of a clear, widely accepted definition of the term though pragmatic competence has been recognized as one of the vital components of communicative competence. He maintains that, in Bachman's model, language competence is divided into two areas consisting of 'organizational competence' and 'pragmatic competence'. Organizational competence comprises knowledge of linguistic units and the rules of joining them together at the levels of sentence ('grammatical competence') and discourse ('textual competence'). Pragmatic competence consists of illocutionary competence, that is, knowledge of speech acts and speech functions, and sociolinguistic competence. Tuncel (2014) reviews Austin and Searle's speech act trio (locution-illocution-perlocution) from language learning/teaching point of view and states that a locutionary act is an utterance properly formed, acceptable and meaningful, and called "*structural competence*"; an illocutionary act called "*functional competence*" may do one of a number of functions: announce, assert, admit, warn, request, apologize, criticize, thank, promise, regret, complaint and many others to be included in the core contents of language courses at all levels. As for perlocutionary act, "*affective competence*", it brings about or achieves some other condition or effect on the hearer through convincing, amusing, deceiving, encouraging, persuading, deterring, and surprising and so on. As Austin and Searle state that "When you say something to somebody, you do three things together". Thus, the big question of "How do we teach those three things of *structural*, *functional* and *affective* competences at the same time to language learners?" will always be one of the core issues to be dealt with in the coming decades.

An important issue is whether learners are in need of acquiring pragmatic competence, or rather, "functional competence". Research on the pragmatic competence of adult foreign and second language learners has demonstrated convincingly that the pragmatics of learners and native speakers are quite different. Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989) report 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.' Therefore, there is a need for FL instruction to focus on the pragmatics of the language, and researchers generally point out the positive impact of instruction aimed at raising learners' pragmatic awareness.

Most of the foreign language teachers, at least in our country, Turkey, are very much stick to the course books, most of which are designed far from the real needs of learners. Thus, there is a need to modify course contents towards practical classroom applications to grasp the pragmatic competence (PC) in foreign language. As Fotos & Ellis (1991) state "a task-based approach to language pedagogy can provide the opportunities for the kind of interaction which has been suggested to promote acquisition," because, as stated by Nunan (2001), task-based teaching represents a particular realization of communicative language teaching. To be clear about task-based instruction, we need to be clear about what task is however, as Bygate, Skehan and Swain, (2000) point out, the definition of task is context free and for that reason, alone ran into problems (Cited in Ellis, 2000). Task is defined in "Webster's New World Dictionary (1995)" as "…. a piece of work assigned to or demanded of a person." As terminology in ELT, Willis (2000) defines task as, "goal-oriented activity with a clear purpose." In other words, language learning should be based on using the forms of language meaningfully according to the needs of the situation. According to Willis, doing a task means, "achieving an outcome, creating a final product that can be appreciated by others."

As it has been pointed out by Ellis (2003), the definitions above generally cover six critical features: *scope* (e.g., primarily meaning focused language use), *perspective* (e.g., that of task designers or participants), *authenticity* (i.e., real-world tasks), *linguistic skills* (i.e., any of the four language skills), *cognitive processes* (e.g., comprehending, linking, classifying, deducing, comparing, evaluating, and producing), and *outcome* (i.e., a clear

communicative goal or outcome). Tasks' including a clear communicative goal or outcome has especially a crucial role in learners' gaining pragmatic competence since an environment in which learners can use the language meaningfully and purposefully is created thanks to the tasks. At this point, the question of how to implement the tasks in language classrooms arises. A variety of task-based instruction frameworks on how to implement tasks have been put forward by a number of authors (e.g., Nunan, 2004; Willis & Willis, 2007). However, regarding planning a task sequence, Willis and Willis's (2007) framework presents a simple way to plan and sequence that involves: (1) identifying a topic based on learners' needs; (2) deciding on a target task (e.g., a task engaged in the real world) and facilitating tasks (e.g., any priming tasks to prepare learners for the target task); and (3) sequencing the tasks into a three task-cycle phase: pre-task or priming, task cycle, and post-task.

In the current study, the researchers put emphasis on how to implement Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching pragmatic competence in Turkish EFL classrooms by analyzing the books used in state schools and suggesting tasks to teach pragmatic competence since in Turkey most of the teachers are bound to use the course books as it has been mentioned previously, and there is a need for modification of course books suggested by Ministry of National Education in order to let learners gain pragmatic competence.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In today's world, English is the language used for international communication, and people have a large variety of reasons to learn it since English is the language of globalization, commerce and trade, the music, and the media (Ma, 2013). More specifically, nowadays English is regarded as a lingua franca, that is, in recent years, people speaking different first languages can communicate thanks to English. When considered from this point of view, communicating in English and gaining pragmatic competence come into prominence rather than learning structures of the language since as Ma (2013) has noted, pragmatic competence refers to the ability to comprehend, construct, and convey meanings that are both accurate and appropriate for the social and cultural circumstances in which communication occurs. So, gaining pragmatic competence will allow learners to become more effective, fluent and successive communicators in the target language.

Motivated by the globally crucial duty of English, and the importance of pragmatic competence in target language context, a number of researchers have conducted studies on how to teach pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig and Griffin, 2005; Soler, 2005; Allami and Naeimi, 2011, House, 2013). For instance, Soler (2005) investigates whether instruction works for learning pragmatics in the EFL context. More specifically, to what extent two instructional paradigms – explicit versus implicit instruction – affected learners' knowledge and ability to use request strategies is examined. The researcher conducted the study with three groups of participants: explicit, implicit and control. One hundred and thirty-two students participated in the study, and they were exposed to excerpts including requests taken from different episodes of the TV series *Stargate* in 15 self-study lessons. The explicit group received a focus on forms instruction based on the use of explicit awareness-raising tasks on requests, and provision of metapragmatic feedback while the implicit group was provided with a focus on form instruction by means of input enhancement on pragma linguistic and sociopragmatic factors involved in requesting, and made use of implicit awareness-raising tasks, and the control group did not receive any instruction on the use of requests. At this point, from the viewpoint of communicative tasks, the distinction between 'focus on form' and 'focus on forms' can be enlightened: in a 'focus on form' instruction, all classroom activity needs to be based on

communicative tasks whereas communicative activity is the underlying priority of the classroom in a 'focus on forms' instruction. Moreover, Sheen (2003) states that a 'focus on form' approach assumes any treatment of grammar should arise from difficulties in communicating any desired meaning, but a 'focus on forms' approach assumes that given the great difficulty of learning the grammar and vocabulary of a foreign language, these cannot be learnt effectively as a by-product of communicative activity, or simply by carrying out problem-solving activities. After making 'focus on form' and 'focus on forms' clear, the results of Soler's (2005) study can be discussed. The results of Soler's (2005) study indicates that that learners' awareness of requests benefit from both explicit and implicit instruction, but at the same time the results illustrates that although an improvement in learners' appropriate use of requests did take place after the instructional period, the explicit group showed an advantage over the implicit one. So, it can be concluded that there is a need for instruction if there is a wish for enabling learners to develop pragmatic competence.

Similarly, Koike and Pearson (2005) conducted a study aiming to examine the effectiveness of teaching pragmatic information through the use of explicit or implicit pre-instruction, and explicit or implicit feedback. However, unlike Soler (2005), Koike and Pearson (2005) conducted a delayed posttest besides conducting a pretest and a posttest. Thanks to the delayed posttest, it has become possible to ascertain the long-term effect of explicit and implicit instruction, which has already been suggested by Soler (2005). The results of Koike and Pearson's (2005) study are highly encouraging for the use of pragmatic instruction in the classroom to develop a greater pragmatic competence: the results of the posttests indicate that those groups that received instruction and feedback, whether explicit or implicit, appear to become aware of a greater number of options to express suggestions, and also of a need for pragmatic mitigation, more quickly than the control group. To be more precise, the findings of the study indicated that the explicit instruction and feedback has beneficial effects in helping learners to read, interpret, and select the most appropriate pragmatic choices in the multiple choice sections of the tests. On the other hand, implicit feedback and possibly implicit instruction led to an effect in these learners' open-ended responses in a dialogic context. However, unfortunately, the delayed posttest revealed that such gains are not clearly retained in the longer term. Although, the long-term effects of instruction and feedback cannot be seen clearly in Koike and Pearson's (2005) study, the idea that supports pragmatic instruction in the classroom is reinforced, and led us to conduct the current study in order to give suggestions for teachers of English on how to teach pragmatics in an EFL classroom.

Additionally, a variety of studies have been conducted on pragmatic awareness and gaining pragmatic competence both in a foreign language environment and second language environment, and have revealed promoting results for future research. Ifantidou (2013), for example, conducted a study on pragmatic competence and explicit instruction, and as Ifantidou (2013) states, the study provided evidence for significant, positive effects of systematic, prolonged explicit instruction, effects of a global, dynamic context and effects of high-level L2 proficiency on learners' ability for pragmatic inference. Bardovi-Harlig and Griffin's (2005) study is also one of these encouraging studies: the results of the study indicated that learners in a second language environment develop a certain degree of pragmatic awareness about the second language even without specific instruction.

Thanks to the studies discussed previously, it can be seen that learners of English can develop pragmatic competence both through explicit and implicit instruction, and even without specific instruction. However, at this point, the crucial point is how to do this, that is, how to help learners develop pragmatic competence, how to use the course books in this process or how to bring new life into the course books. Vellenga's (2004) study can

be regarded as a guide on learning pragmatics from the course books. Specifically, Vellenga (2004) conducted the study with the aim of analyzing textbooks to determine the amount and quality of pragmatic information included in the books. Eight textbooks were analyzed, and specifically the use of metalanguage, explicit treatment of speech acts, and metapragmatic information, including discussion(s) of register, illocutionary force, politeness, appropriacy and usage were the points focused. The findings of Vellenga's (2004) study have indicated that there is a dearth of metalinguistic and metapragmatic information related to ways of speaking in textbooks. What's more, it has been noted that although the amount of pragmatic information is small across all texts, a larger percentage of pages of EFL texts are comprised of pragmatic information; however, the quality of pragmatic information is better in terms of number of speech acts presented and amount of metapragmatic cues in ESL texts.

The study of Vellenga (2004) serves as a guiding study on analyzing textbooks in terms of pragmatics. However, unfortunately, in Turkey there are not such studies conducted to analyze the textbooks with regards to pragmatic information included. So, from this point of view, the current study can be a guiding study conducted in Turkey, in an EFL environment, in order to both analyze the course books and suggest a variety of tasks and improvements for a better use of the course books, for the sake of learners' developing pragmatic competence.

METHODOLOGY

In this present study, the researchers tried to find out answers for the following research questions, which were initially inspired from a study by Vellenga (2004):

1.   What kind of pragmatic information is included in language course books?

2.   How do EFL course books differ in amount of pragmatic information?

3.   How can the course books be improved to attain Task-Based Language Teaching?

3.1. Selection of the Course Books

The study took part in three cycles. As a first step, the course books were selected. While selecting the course books, the researchers made sure that the books were still in use in the state schools, the books were free and available for all teachers and students, and that there were course books from different levels. Primary school levels were excluded because there were not enough classroom hours and instruction was only at an introductory level, which means, subjects covered were mostly the alphabet, greetings and introducing oneself. Similarly, eighth grade course books were also excluded because of the fact that students are preparing for TEOG exam, which is the transition exam from primary education to secondary education. Thus, they do not only use the state schoolbooks, instead they benefit from a wide selection of sources such as test books, printouts from various websites. As a result, 5th, 6th and 7th grade course books were chosen for the present study. Table 1 indicates the details of the course books selected:

Table 1. Descriptive information about the course books selected.

Name of the Book	Number of the Units	Number of the Pages	Publishing House	Publishing Date
5th Grade Student's Book	10	208	Ministry of National Education	2016
English Net 6th Grade Student's Book & Workbook	10	152	Evrensel İletişim	2016
English Route 7th Grade Student's Book	10	133	Pasifik	2016

As seen in Table 1, all three books consist of 10 units and they all were published in 2016. However, they differ in the pages and the publishing house. 5th grade student's book and 6th grade book include several additional materials such as puppets, stickers, flashcards and list of resources, yet in 7th grade book there are no other materials except for a word list. So, the reason of their including different number of pages can be the additional resources and materials they have. Additionally, 5th grade book was published by Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and it consists of more pages than the other two books. The reason of its having 208 pages may be affected by the publishing house, that is, MoNE is the leading institution regarding the selection of the books used in state schools, so there may be an intention of setting the other publishing houses an example.

However, when all three books are compared to each other to see whether there are any discrepancies regarding the length and number of units, it can be seen that the quantity of information in each book is considered to be a confirmation for the detailed analysis of the content. So, it is concluded that each book is from the same genre and similar to each other in length and chapter divisions.

3.2. Analysis of the Course Books

Once the course books had been identified, collected and compared, all the books were examined by each researcher to find out to what extent general pragmatic knowledge was included in the units. Vellenga's (2004) study was adopted for analysis of the course books. Topics related to politeness, appropriacy, formality, register and culture were considered as some of the subcategories found in the books. Counts and descriptions of different kinds of pragmatic information were obtained through performing a page-by-page analysis of the course books.

Examination of teachers' manuals and focus group interviews were performed to find out how textbook authors envisioned the use of the course book in the classroom. To be able to find out the similarity between teachers' manuals and course books in terms of exploiting general pragmatic knowledge, they were cross-referenced. The researchers also used their own insights and experiences as both teachers and students, and discussed how to bring upon topics related to pragmatics in the classroom environment using the textbooks selected. They discussed the importance of issues of formality, politeness, and usage through the course of the research process. As a result, they came up with solutions, which they call 'healing solutions', to problems arise during the incorporation of pragmatics into the skills lessons. The solutions suggested by the researchers will be discussed after the results, analysis of the course books revealed, were given.

RESULTS

As mentioned before, the researchers adopted the way Vellenga (2004) used in her study to analyze the course books, and analyzed the book page by page to gather information on whether the book includes any activities which aim to help learners gain pragmatic competence. Specifically, they focused on speech acts. In this part of the study, the results of the course book analysis will be given, and discussed respectively. Table 2 reflects the results the course books' analysis revealed.

Table 2. Counts and descriptions of speech acts the course books include.

	5ᵗʰ Grade Student's Book	English Net 6ᵗʰ Grade Student's Book & Workbook	English Route 7ᵗʰ Grade Student's Book
Accept invitations	X		X
Accept requests	X	X	X
Apologize			
Ask Permission	X		
Complain			
Correct	X	X	
Give Advice	X	X	X
Give Instructions		X	
Invite	X		X
Make Excuses			
Make Introductions	X	X	X
Make Suggestions	X	X	X
Offer	X	X	X
Order			
Promise			
Refuse Invitations	X		X
Refuse Requests	X	X	X
Express Regret			
Request	X	X	X
Threaten			
Wish			X
Total	**12**	**9**	**11**

As it is indicated in Table 2, the course books used in state schools in Turkey currently are not so poor with regards to speech acts. The curriculum also makes communicative functions and skills to be taught clear. To be more precise, in the curriculum, there is a table with 4 columns for each unit. Thanks to the tables given, teachers can easily make sure of what to teach and how to teach since they include (1) communicative functions and skills, (2) suggested lexis & language use, (3) suggested text and activity type, and (4) assessment. So, indeed, the curriculum lets teacher teach pragmatics in the classroom, yet the activities in the course books do not support teachers all the time. In other words, even though the curriculum includes descriptive information and suggestions on teaching pragmatics in a classroom setting and the course books do not lack of activities aiming to help learners gain certain speech acts, using same types of activities again and again will possibly cause boredom. Teachers should bring some other activities and materials to the classroom environment so as not to have bored students. In the following part of the study, the researchers suggested tasks and activities for better use of the course books. The following part can serve as an example and inspire teachers who want to have a more interesting, fun and motivating teaching environment.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BETTER USE OF THE COURSE BOOKS

As a common theme emerging during the focus group interviews, the researchers mentioned that one of the problems with the implementation of the activities focusing on pragmatic knowledge is that teachers are presented with few practical ideas to apply to

their classrooms. With this idea in mind, the researchers decided to choose one unit from each book, and tried to suggest a task for each unit explaining how to implement the outcomes related to the pragmatic knowledge of the chosen unit. The following section will explain the task cycles in detail.

5th Grade, Unit 2 – My Town

The outcomes related to pragmatic knowledge of this unit in the book are describing places, talking about locations of things and making simple suggestions. Although, the outcomes sound very productive and fancy, there is only one activity in the book which is finding places on a given map. After a short discussion about the weak and strong points of the given activity, the researchers came up with the following activity:

The suggested task: Prepare a city guide for your city!

• **Pre-task:** The teacher brings a number of city guides to the classrooms and distribute them. The students in groups look through the city guides, and then T asks questions about the cities presented and the city guides: whether there is a museum/zoo/library/mosque in City A, what they can eat in City B, etc.

• **Task cycle:** The students in groups prepare a city guide for the city they live in.

• **Post-task:** The students present the city guides to the class, and share what to see and what to do in the city.

Learners' needs were also considered while suggesting these activities. Luckily, are a lot of sources that teachers can make use of rather than course books only. With a little use of authentic materials and help of technology, students will be able find ways to express their creativity through meaningful activities which have aims related to their daily lives.

6th Grade, Unit 10 – Democracy

The outcomes related to communicative functions and skills are "promising", "talking about future plans", "reasoning", "expressing choices and describing". The first activity in the book suggests students to form groups and talk about classroom president elections by asking them to describe the process rather than being involved in it. The second activity in the book is a project-based poster preparing activity. In this activity, the students are required to come together and talk about their rights as citizens and the things they can do to respect others' rights. Later they need to find an attractive slogan for each of the actions and write them as slogans onto the poster they work on collaboratively. The tasks the researchers suggest is also aiming to work on the same skills by combining the strongest points of each task, but designing the final result in a more communicative way:

The suggested task: Election Day

• **Warm-up:** The teacher (T) shows some pictures about election and revises the vocabulary about democracy and election.

• **Brainstorming:** Students make a list about qualifications which the president should have and the teacher writes them on the board. T says she also need an assistant for English lessons. The candidates are identified and T writes their names on the board.

• **Election campaign speech:** The candidates prepare a campaign speech for election. They can get help from the list on the board or their friends. T shows an example before the candidates prepare their own speech.

• **Preparing poster:** T wants students to prepare a poster for the candidate that

they support. Then each student talks about his or her own candidate.

-        Who is your candidate?

-        My candidate is ....

•   **Group work:** After each student says his/her candidate, they split up according to the candidate that they support. Each group prepares a speech why they choose that person.

•   **Selecting the president:** Every student writes his/her own candidate on a paper and place his/her ballot in the ballot box. T explains the stages one by one while the students are voting.

-        Write their candidate's name on a paper.

-        Put into the ballot box.

After selecting the president, the president makes a speech for the last time.

•   **Whole-class activity:** The students repeats what to do when selecting their classroom president, and evaluates the process of election.

7th Grade, Unit 7 – Superstitions

The outcomes related to communicative functions and skills in this unit of the book are "making suggestions", "asserting conditionals" and "making future predictions". The activity found in the book asks as a warm-up activity, that the students work with a pair and role-play a fortune-teller and a client situation by giving out the grammatical structures required. After that the students need to write their predictions about a friend or a relative in a given box next to the fortune-telling activity. What is missing in this activity is that there are no task cycles and the activities are not continuous. Instead, the researchers suggested the following activity to be implemented in the classroom:

The suggested task: Paper Plane

•   The teacher draws a picture of a student on the board, and wants the students to guess who he/she is.

•   After that, T draws thinking bubbles and writes 'if clauses' in them.

He/She acts as if the student was thinking something about his/her future.

T does the same thing on a piece of paper. However, this time, T draws himself and writes sentences about himself. Then, he makes a paper plane and let it fly.

•   T gives a piece of paper to each students, and wants them to do the same thing:

1.   Drawing themselves

2.   Drawing thinking bubbles

3.   Writing sentences made with 'if'

•   Then, the students make paper planes and let them fly. T gives instructions to help the students make paper planes:

1.   Fold in half lengthwise and then unfold.

2.   Fold the top corners in so they meet at the center crease.

3.   Fold the entire top down so that it resembles an envelope.

4.   Fold the top corners in so they meet at the middle.

5.   Fold that small triangle up to hold those previous folds in place.

6.   Fold in half, but make you sure you fold it outwards on itself, not inwards.

7.   Fold the wing down so its edge meets the bottom edge of the airplane. Repeat on the other side.

•   After flying the paper planes, each student picks up a paper plane of somebody else, and the students try to find the owner of the plane by walking around, asking questions and discussing.

•   Once the students find the owner, he/she asks questions about the other's future plans and ideas.

•   T asks questions to learn the students' future plans, and encourages the students both to discuss their future plans, whether they have the same plans in general, and to evaluate the paper plane task.

DISCUSSION

The results of this specific study clearly show that despite the fact that course books are a crucial part of the syllabus and classroom applications accordingly, it is of utmost importance to offer a variety of activities to foster the use of the target language while planning lesson plans based on the course books in use. To be able to address the situation in Turkey better, the analysis of the before mentioned course books in terms of the pragmatic aspect of the language sheds more light into the issue of developing pragmatic competence in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. Moreover, the analysis, without doubt, prove that pragmatic functions are not completely ignored in course books. This does not necessarily mean that the materials in use are perfectly designed for the development of pragmatic competence, rather what is meant here is that although there is always space for improving the materials, the way the current material is utilized in classrooms by teachers plays a crucial role as well. The suggestions provided by the researchers also serves as an example on how to implement the course books in classrooms while designing activities that can help students develop pragmatic competence on the way of being fluent, competent speakers of English language.

At this point, it can also be said that if teachers are required or asked to prepare engaging, authentic activities to develop pragmatic competence in a better way with the course books they have in hand, they should also be given the necessary in-service training if they feel the need. It is an undeniable fact that faculties that are in charge of educating future teachers in Turkey do their best to help their students be qualified teachers in future, but there is never an end to professional development in teaching. Furthermore, as pragmatic competence has been a little bit neglected until recently, it may be a beneficial and practical idea to conduct training or workshops in designing activities to foster the pragmatic aspect of the language. The exchange of ideas and the collaborative nature of such sessions will certainly lead to more motivation and consciousness on part of language teachers in Turkey in developing pragmatic competence.

CONCLUSION

As the body of literature puts forward clearly, pragmatic competence is and should not be seen as an extra component of language in EFL classes. To be able to achieve effective communication in any target language, pragmatic competence should be developed at least at a moderate degree. The need for EFL instruction to focus on the pragmatic aspect

of the language is obvious. In an ideal EFL classroom, having learners use target language for communicative purposes should be seen as the ultimate aim and course books and teachers as well should be behaving accordingly.

When it comes to address the situation in Turkish EFL context, it can be said that in the last years course books have gone under a considerable change in terms of providing practical ideas and content for many different pragmatic functions. Yet, if teachers make use of course books as a guideline for grammatical points to be covered, all the value of them disappear and learners, despite knowing the structures needed to perform certain tasks, cannot use the target language for communicative purposes.

From this point forth, this study aimed to analyze the current course books in use in Turkey and suggest a variety of tasks for some specific units in those books with the purpose of guiding EFL teachers use the books better and providing the learners as many opportunities as possible to develop their pragmatic competence and thus become an effective and successful user of the target language. This kind of effort is crucial in EFL contexts when the English language classroom is almost the only atmosphere in which the learners can really use the language.

It should also be pointed out that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) offers a great opportunity for the learners in their classroom to promote acquisition by making them be involved in the language. This, naturally, brings in more pragmatic competence on part of the learners and thus more effective communicators of language.

In an overall perspective, it is of utmost importance to raise awareness in both the teachers and learners about the role pragmatic competence plays in the journey of acquiring English language in EFL contexts. Teachers should make the necessary changes in the course books they use and create a learning atmosphere where the learners have enough opportunities to experience with the language itself. At this point, TBLT proves itself as an applicable and effective method in fostering learner autonomy, real communication goals and a cognitive processing.

REFERENCES

Allami, H., & Naeimi, A. (2011). A cross-linguistic study of refusals: An analysis of pragmatic competence development in Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43, 385-406.

Arıkan, A. (2016*). Ortaokul İngilizce 5. Sınıf Student's Book.* Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları.

Bachman, L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in Language Testing.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Griffin, R. (2005). L2 pragmatic awareness: Evidence from the ESL classroom. *System*, 33(3), 401-415.

Barron, A. (2005). Variational pragmatics in the foreign language classroom. *System*, 33(3), 519-536.

Belz, J. A., & Kinginger, C. (2003). Discourse Options and the Development of Pragmatic Competence by Classroom Learners of German: The Case of Address Forms. *Language learning*, 53(4), 591-647.

Blum-Kulka, S., & House, J. G. Kasper. (1989). Investigating cross-cultural pragmatics: An introductory overview. Blum-Kulka, S. House, J. & Kasper., G. (eds.), Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies, 1-36.

Brock, M. N., & Nagasaka, Y. (2005). Teaching Pragmatics in the EFL Classroom? SURE You Can! *TESL reporter*, 38(1), 17-26.

Deda, N. (2013). The role of Pragmatics in English Language Teaching. Pragmatic Competence. Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies, 2(4), 63.

Fotos, S., & Ellis, R. (1991). Communicating About Grammar: A Task-Based Approach. *TESOL quarterly*, 25(4), 605-628.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching.* Oxford University Press.

House, J. (2013). Developing pragmatic competence in English as a lingua franca: Using discourse markers to express (inter)subjectivity and connectivity. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 59, 57-67.

Ifantidou, E. (2013). Pragmatic competence and explicit instruction. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 59, 93-116.

Kaldar, E. B. (2016). *Middle School English Route 7 Student's Book.* Pasifik Yayınları.

Kasper, G. (1997a). Can pragmatic competence be taught? (Network #6) [HTML document]. Hono-lulu: University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center. Retrieved from the World Wide Web: http://www.nflrc.hawaii.edu/NetWorks/NW06/

Koike, D. A., & Pearson, L. (2005). The effect of instruction and feedback in the development of pragmatic competence. *System*, 33(3), 481-501.

Ladegaard, H. J. (2004). Politeness in young children's speech: context, peer group influence and pragmatic competence. *Journal of pragmatics*, 36, 2003-2022.

Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based Language Teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ohta, A. S. (2005). Interlanguage pragmatics in the zone of proximal development. *System,* 33(3), 503-517.

Paradis, M. (1998). The other side of language: Pragmatic competence. *Journal of Neurolinguistics*, 11(1-2), 1-10.

Rose, K. R. (2005). On the effects of instruction in second language pragmatics. *System*, 33(3), 385-399.

Soler, E. A. (2002). Relationship between teacher-led versus learners' interaction and the development of pragmatics in the EFL classroom. International Journal of Educational Research, 37, 359–377.

Soler, E. A. (2005). Does instruction work for learning pragmatics in the EFL context? *System*, 33(3), 417-435.

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2000). Task-based second language learning: The use of the first language. *Language teaching research*, 4(3), 251-274.

Şilit, G. (2016*). Middle School English Net 6 Student's Book and Workbook.* Ankara: Evrensel İletişim Yayınları.

Takahashi, S. (2005). Noticing in task performance and learning outcomes: A qualitative analysis of instructional effects in interlanguage pragmatics. *System*, 33(3), 437-461.

Thomas, J. (1983). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. *Applied linguistics*, 4, 91-112.

Tuncel, R. (2015). Philosophical and Practical Significance of the Inclusion of the Speech Acts in English Language Teaching Curriculum. International Journal of Information and Education Technology, 5(11), 851.

Vellenga, H. (2004). Learning Pragmatics from ESL & EFL Textbooks: How Likely?. Tesl-Ej, 8(2), n2.

Willis, D. and Willis, J. (2001). *Task-based language learning.* In R. Carter and D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.* Cambridge University Press.

Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching.* Oxford University Press.