Aspects of Information Structure Teaching and Learning in ESL classes in Saudi Arabia

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2021

Abstract

This study examines a group of Saudi L2 learners' use of English syntactic constructions through which information structure (IS) is achieved and the teaching of these constructions in second language learning. Many researchers have stressed the need for teaching pragmalinguistics, i.e. IS, in the ESL classroom in order to develop students' ability to communicate properly in the second language (see Kasper, 2001; Bardovi-Harlig, 1999; Kasper and Rose, 2002).The lack of IS concepts and a discourse approach in ESL curricula, however, have led to limited awareness of the appropriate use of pragmalinguistic structures, so pragmatics is considered to be one of the barriers to second language acquisition. Pragmalinguistic structures, i.e., Focus, Given and Topic, are vital to any text where information cannot be emphasized by prosodic constructions. They are also important with respect to stylistics and idiomaticity, and hence, a perfect topic for an incorporation of literature and linguistics in the ESL classrooms. Saudi university learners of English were given several tasks before teaching to assess their awareness about pragmalinguistic structures, and then they were taught using different literary texts in which pragmalinguistic structures abound, and finally they were given the same tasks to assess their awareness and ability to use these structures after teaching. The findings show that even advanced L2 learners have only basic awareness of IS functions, and their awareness of Focus constructions is very low before teaching, however, their awareness of these structures have increased after teaching. The findings highlight that teaching can play a major role in promoting learners' awareness of the pragmalinguistic structures of a second language.The paper demonstrates the pedagogical implications of these findings and argues for explicit and implicit methods to the teaching of IS to raise learners' awareness for the basics of IS. While such awareness leads to stable knowledge, however, it is not without shortcomings, as it can give rise to overproduction.

Keywords: Information structure, language awareness, explicit and implicit methods of teaching, second language learning.

جوانب تدريس وتعلم بنية المعلومات في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية في المملكة العربية السعودية

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ملخص الدراسة

تبحث هذه الدراسة في استخدام مجموعة من متعلمي اللغة الثانية السعوديين للتركيبات النحوية للغة الإنجليزية والتي يتم من خلالها تحقيق بنية المعلومات (IS) وتدريس هذه التركيبات في تعلم اللغة الثانية. شدد العديد من الباحثين على الحاجة إلى تدريس علم اللغة العملي ، أي IS ، في فصل اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية من أجل تطوير قدرة الطلاب على التواصل بشكل صحيح باللغة الثانية (انظر Kasper، 2001 ، Bardovi-Harlig؛1999 ، Kasper and Rose، 2002). ومع ذلك ، أدى الافتقار إلى مفاهيم نظم المعلومات ونهج الخطاب في مناهج اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية إلى الوعي المحدود بالاستخدام المناسب للهياكل اللغوية البراغماتية ، لذلك تعتبر البراغماتية أحد العوائق التي تحول دون اكتساب اللغة الثانية. تعتبر الهياكل اللغوية البراجمالية ، أي التركيز والمعطى والموضوع ، حيوية لأي نص حيث لا يمكن التأكيد على المعلومات من خلال الإنشاءات العامة. كما أنها مهمة فيما يتعلق بالأسلوب والاصطلاحية ، وبالتالي فهي موضوع مثالي لدمج الأدب واللغويات في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية. تم تكليف متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعات السعودية بعدة مهام قبل التدريس لتقييم وعيهم بالتراكيب اللغوية البراجمالية ، ثم تم تعليمهم باستخدام نصوص أدبية مختلفة تكثر فيها الهياكل اللغوية البراجمالية ، وأخيراً تم تكليفهم بنفس المهام لتقييم وعيهم وقدرتهم على الاستخدام. هذه الهياكل بعد التدريس. تُظهر النتائج أنه حتى متعلمي اللغة الثانية المتقدمين لديهم وعي أساسي فقط بوظائف نظم المعلومات ، وأن وعيهم بتركيبات التركيز منخفض جدًا قبل التدريس ، ومع ذلك ، فقد زاد وعيهم بهذه الهياكل بعد التدريس. تسلط النتائج الضوء على أن التدريس يمكن أن يلعب دورًا رئيسيًا في تعزيز وعي المتعلمين بالتراكيب اللغوية البراجمالية للغة ثانية ، وتوضح الورقة الآثار التربوية لهذه النتائج وتدافع عن طرق صريحة وضمنية لتدريس نظم المعلومات لزيادة وعي المتعلمين. لأساسيات تنظيم الدولة. في حين أن هذا الوعي يؤدي إلى معرفة مستقرة ، إلا أنه لا يخلو من أوجه القصور ، حيث يمكن أن يؤدي إلى زيادة الإنتاج.

الكلمات المفتاحية: بنية المعلومات ، الوعي اللغوي ، طرق التدريس الصريحة والضمنية ، تعلم اللغة الثانية.

1. Introduction

One of several possible factors that makes students' writings and conversations regularly sound odd or differ from native speakers' writings and conversations is their lack of awareness of the suitable use of syntactic means in accordance with their functions in different contexts, i.e. information structure. This IS concept has come to be known as discourse-pragmatic or pragmalinguistic structures, defined as 'a structuring of sentences by morphological, prosodic, or syntactic means that arises from the need to meet communicative demands of a particular context or discourse' (Vallduv´ı and Engdahl, 1996, p. 460). English offers several linguistic constructions that can be utilised to organise and emphasise information in discourse. Aside from prosodic and lexico-grammatical devices, word order patterns and more complex syntactic means, such as clefting and preposing, are also necessary and are commonly utilised to structure and emphasise information in written and spoken discourse. Interestingly, native speakers do not randomly utilise particular syntactic constructions. They select from various alternatives to serve their communicative intentions in discourse. For example, they use it-clefts to correct misunderstanding and a pseudo or wh-clefts to highlight new information at the end of discourse[1]. Hence, the study of syntactic constructions is important because it would raise L2 learners' awareness about information structure and its pragmatic functions in discourse, which would help them understand and communicate effectively in a target language. The necessity for syntactic constructions used to encode IS are highlighted in Kuno (1972), who mentions, 'as there is no sentence without syntactic structure, there is no sentence without information structure' (ibid., p. 16).

In the field of second language acquisition (SLA), there is relatively little studies on second language (L2) learners' competence and use of specific syntactic constructions of IS. Recent research shows that the appropriate use of syntactic construction through which IS is achieved is a potential learning barrier for even proficient second language learners in both written and spoken mode, and suggest that the lack of awareness of pragmalinguistic structures causes this problem (Lorenz, 1999; Callies, 2006).

This paper focuses on Saudi ESL learners' awareness and use of syntactic English constructions in their writings, where such constructions are particularly relevant.This study intends to explore whether teaching is effective in helping L2 students acquire knowledge of IS and whether teaching is an effective method for helping L2 students retain this knowledge over time.

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[1] Syntactic constructions of IS will be discussed in detail part 2 of this study.

As an English trainer at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia, I have noticed that both ESL teachers and L2 learners express concerns about the incomprehensibility and inaccuracy of their language use. More specifically, I have taught varying levels of English at the university, from beginner to advanced, and have noticed that although students are studying at an advanced university level, their outcomes in writing are similar to those of novice students, with their writing regularly seeming odd and incomprehensible.

The six ESL teachers interviewed in this study stated that students still have difficulties in acquiring English skills[2], particularly in writing. Students at advanced stages still produce odd sentences even after they have mastered most of the grammar, have a solid vocabulary and have been taught English since primary school. ESL teachers often feel that they are incapable of finding the reasons for this barrier to native-like fluency. They attribute these difficulties to the way of teaching grammars away from their functions in the ESL classrooms as well as the lack of information structure in ESL curricula. According to the teachers, L2 learners need to know how to package information in accordance with the IS principles of the target language to overcome this challenge. The teachers interviewed in this study agree that discourse pragmatics are one of the fundamentals of language acquisition. Unfortunately, there are no studies investigating how ESL learners regard IS in a Saudi context, how different information structure categories are realised when using English. The under-representation of these structures in ESL curricula has encouraged me to investigate this barrier that faces ESL students when learning the target language aiming to find useful solutions to cope with it.

This research is a useful source of information for both SLA and linguistic theories. It could help in raise ESL teachers' awareness of the importance of teaching IS to successfully overcome challenges in acquiring ESL. ESL teachers who recognise English IS can help L2 learners to acquire English IS functions more easily than teachers who are unaware of the language's IS. They will be able to introduce appropriate language materials to their classrooms to help learners practice the pragmalinguistic structures of the target language in discourse so that they can later use them successfully in their spoken or written discourse. In essence, integrating IS functions into ESL curricula would facilitate the acquisition of difficult linguistic characteristics L2 learners face.

A group of university students (in both stages early and advanced stages of learning English) were given several tasks before teaching to assess their awareness about pragmalinguistic structures, and then they were taught using different classroom activities and literary texts in which pragmalinguistic structures abound, and finally they were given the same tasks to assess their awareness and ability to produce such structures after teaching. The central research questions are:

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[2] The English skills are reading, listening, writing and speaking.

Research Q1: What effect can the use of implicit and explicit instructions have on L2 learners' acquisition of IS? Are there any differences between the learners at early and advanced stages before and after they are taught IS?

Research Q2: Will the teaching and acquisition of pragmalinguistic knowledge result in stable knowledge?

Research Q3: What is the current situation regarding IS in ESL curricula in Saudi Arabia?

The paper is structured as follows. First, a very brief overview of IS properties and its three major categories (Topic, Given, Focus) will be addressed. This is followed by a review of previous studies on syntactic devices through which IS is achieved in SLA research, and the presentation and treatment of such devices in ESL teaching materials. After that, the methodological design of the study and the findings will be discussed. Finally, pedagogical implications of the study on IS will be presented.

2   An Overview of Information Structure

This section presents the basic terminology and concepts used in the empirical exploration.Then, it presents different categories of IS (i.e., Focus, Given and Topic) and focuses on the selected syntactic constructions in English, including a concise study of the relevant literature.

'Information packaging' was coined by Chafe (1976) in reference to how a speaker/writer is able to express what he/she is saying or writing in a particular context. Interestingly, packaging in Chafe's (1976) view is how the message is sent, 'just as the packaging of toothpaste can affect sales in partial independence of the quality of the toothpaste' (ibid., p. 27-28), as illustrated in (2.1).

(2.1)   a. Maria peeled the banana.

b. It was the banana that maria peeled .

c. The banana Maria peeled.

This example shows that packaging refers to different ways a message can be sent and structured depending on the context. Surprisingly, each sentence in the example above uses a different syntactic structure (i.e., it-cleft in 2.1b and preposing in 2.1a, which will be further discussed below) to refer to pragmatic functions. Chafe (1976) states, 'I have been using the term packaging to refer to the use of syntactic means to serve communicative needs' (ibid., p. 28), for example, correcting a misunderstanding, or attracting the interlocutors' attention to make a task easier to understand (Callies, 2009; Miller, 2006).

Lambrecht (1994) also states that 'the information structure of a sentence is the formal expression of the pragmatic structuring of a proposition in a discourse' (ibid., p. 2). In essence, he is arguing that particular characteristics of sentences cannot be entirely comprehended without looking at the contextual discourse, which is why grammar and discourse are frequently identified as 'discourse pragmatics'.

It has been argued that information structure is an area of linguistic research with the most overlapping, diverse and confusing notions (Levinson,1983). What these previous research (see Halliday, 2004; Chafe, 1976; Kuno, 1980; Vallduví, 1993) have in common, however, is the idea that the description of an utterance or a sentence can be divided into two parts; the first part contains Given information (alternatively termed Theme, Topic or Presupposition) that relates to the preceding context, and the second part contributes New information to the context (Rheme, Comment, or Focus). Cross-linguistically, the organisation of information in context follows the IS principle that Given information is followed by New information (Biber et al. 1999, p. 896). Given information, typically appears first, but this is not a fixed principle. The most important factor is Given information should be recoverable from the discourse, either directly or indirectly (via inferences). New information is not recoverable from the preceding context and often receives prominence and comes at the end of a sentence, i.e., end-focus. This can be seen in examples (2.2)

(2.2) a. When did you wake up today?

b. [Given I woke up] [Focus at 8:00 am].

This principle of IS seems psycholinguistically and psychologically feasible, since Given information normally helps the speaker or the writer process New information (Clark,1977). It facilitates both the writer/speaker's planning process and the reader/hearer's understanding, consequently developing the overall cohesion of the context (Féry, 2006).

IS is associated with three essential features: Focus, Given and Topic. Focus is the most prominent constituent in discourse that has not been formerly mentioned (Halliday, 1967b). It has been divided into two types: Information Focus (IF), which is used to realise the right answer that corresponds to a wh question (Lambrecht, 1994), and Contrastive Focus (CF), which is used to specify information among other alternatives (Kiss, 1998; Féry, 2007). In addition, Focus involves syntactic devices, such as preposing (as in 1.3 and 1.4), in which a canonically postverbal phrasal element appears in a preverbal place (Birner and Ward, 1998, p. 31), and clefts, which split a sentence into two clauses in order to focus on a certain sentence element (Callies, 2009, p. 40). Clefts has also three different kinds: it-clefts, wh-clefts and reverse wh-clefts.

With it-clefts, the speaker/writer highlights important information in the initial position of the sentence (as in 2.5); wh-clefs, however, serve to highlight important information at the end of the clause in order to achieve cohesion and contrast (Prince, 1978; Erdmann, 1988; Collin, 1991; see example 2.6). The reverse or inverted wh-clefts (rwh-clefts) reverses the order of wh-clefts and it is similar to it-clefts in which it presents initial focusing (Callies, 2009). See example (2.7).

(2.3) Customer: *A large pizza* and a coke, please.

   Waiter: <u>A large pizza</u> you ordered?

(2.4) I have two best *friends*, <u>Jimmy and Mofeed</u> their names are.

                                                      (adopted from Callies, 2009)

  (2.5) It was [$_{it\text{-}clefts}$ Sara] whom Maria visited yesterday.   (Focus on object)

  (2.6) What we need is [$_{wh\text{-}clefts}$ moral support].   (Focus on object)

  (2.7) [$_{rwh\text{-}clefts}$ Moral support] is what we need.   (Focus on object)

 These Focus constructions carry additional pragmatic characteristics in discourse such as contrastiveness and clarification. In English, however, the contextual use of preposing is more restricted than the use of clefts.

Second, Given is old information that relates to previous information in a discourse (as mentioned earlier). Given is associated with some sort of means that indicate to the reader/listener that there is Given information in the context,

such as with pronouns and deleted grammar (Holes, 1995). See example (2.8).

(2.8) Maria went to school. [Given She] found a lizard [Given there].

In (2.8), the forms 'she' and 'there' indicate their denotations are Given since they refer to something before.

 Third, Topic is widely viewed as one of the most complex overlapping terms in IS because it involves two meanings: first, Topic carries Given information and second it indicates what the clause is referencing—also known as the concept of 'aboutness'—and carries different communicative needs, such as correcting or emphasising (see Robert, 1996 and Büring, 2003; see example 2.9).

(2.9) a. Where does your sibling go?

     b. [$_{Topic}$ My [$_{CT}$ brother]], [$_{Comment}$ he goes to [$_F$ Manchester]] and [$_{Topic}$ my [$_{CT}$ sister]], [$_{Comment}$ she goes to [$_F$ London]]**.**

In example (2.9), it is clear in the sense that the CT clarifies the proposition about who siblings are (sister or brother) which is similar to what CF always does: narrowing down the alternatives.

It is feasible to accept that information structure is a level of representation that exists in all human languages. However, the way IS is encoded, and the explicit linguistic devices used to express pragmatic functions differ across different languages (Foley, 1994). English and Arabic have the same communicative functions of IS and share some basic IS rules, but each language has its own ways of realising the pragmatic functions of IS. Arabic has free word order, so information can easily be organised and focused by moving it into first position within a sentence. In contrast, English word order is rigid, with preposing being highly restricted contextually. Therefore, it seems plausible that the reasons for different linguistic structures between Arabic and English can be traced back to the (in-)flexibility of the canonical word order patterns in the two languages[3].

3 IS in SLA Research and in Second Language Teaching Materials

Overall, IS plays an essential role in SLA. L2 learners do not acquire some basic pragmatic aspects of IS such as 'Topic first' and 'Focus last', as the sequencing of these discourse types is considered a universal principle of IS (Klein and Perdue, 1992). What is lacking in their interlanguage, however, is the syntactic constructions, lexico-grammatical and phonological means of IS.

IS organisation is an essential but problematic part of the L2 competence of non-native speakers, and they face challenges in organising information in discourse in accordance with IS and in highlighting the most important constituents in a sentence and deemphasising the others using different syntactic structures of the target language. Syntactic constructions of information organisation in the mother language may influence the target language acquisition in terms of overproduction/transfer (Boström Aronsson, 2003) or avoidance (Plag and Zimmermann, 1998). Many researchers (see Thompson, 1978; Givón, 1984; Jung, 2004) argue that in early stages of L2 acquisition learners transfer L1 functions to L2, and in advanced stages of L2 acquisition, learners gradually develop the use of syntactic IS constructions in their L2 production. However, core IS principles remain a constant problem and a frequent barrier for second language learners.

Acquiring the pragmalinguistic aspects of a second language is quite different than other language aspects because although the pragmalinguistic aspects are somewhat universal (e.g., 'Given first' and 'Focus last'), the way these aspects are encoded is language-specific and differs across languages (as stated earlier). Specifically, L2 learners have to find out the specific form-function mapping rules that are most essential and common in the target language beside the pragmatic system that has already been acquired from the mother language (Thompson, 1978; Givón, 1984; Jung, 2004).

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[3] For more details about Arabic IS see Alzaidi (2014).

Therefore, noticing in a natural context is essential to facilitate the acquisition of the pragmalinguistic structures of a second language. Through noticing, L2 learners can understand similarities and differences between L1 structures and L2 structures, which leads to comprehensible and stable knowledge. Macis (2011) mentions that L2 learners can achieve the stability of knowledge once the second language becomes sufficiently comprehensible.

ESL teachers can direct their students' attention to language structures either explicitly by focusing on forms or implicitly by focusing on form. This determines how language input is introduced in the ESL classroom. There is debate in the field of SLA about the role of 'focus on form' and 'focus on forms[4]' in the ESL classroom. 'Focus on form' was first proposed by Long in 1996 and refers to the idea that the acquisition of a second language happens best when learners' attention is drawn to language elements when they are needed for communication. Long (1991) defines 'Focus on form' as directing learners' attention 'to language items as they arise incidentally in the ESL classrooms whose essential focus on meaning or communication' (ibid., p. 45); it is about shedding light on particular language items to be noticed by L2 learners. On the other hand, 'focus on forms' refers to an explicit focus on language items in the classroom, with the ESL teacher adopting traditional teaching methods[5] such as repeating, memorising and (present, practice, produce; PPP) methods[6] that teach language forms separately from their functions (Sheen, 2002).

Apparently, L2 teachers need to use implicit (focus on form) methods and the explicit (focus on forms) methods to teach the pragmalinguistics of a second language. In the implicit method, noticing happens in natural context, which helps learners acquire the discourse pragmatics of the target language; in the explicit method, noticing happens though explicit instruction, which is necessary for the acquisition of difficult structures. The raises the question of how the former pedagogical methods (both explicit and implicit) can increase learners' awareness of the pragmalinguistic structures of a second language, thereby resulting in stable knowledge.

Research on the teachability of the discourse pragmatic knowledge of a second language in classrooms (i.e., Blyth, 2000; Kasper, 2000; Katz, 2000; Kerr, 2002; Callies and Keller, 2008) has shown that the target language IS is teachable not only to early learners but also to advanced learners. However, there are few studies that explicitly address teaching and pedagogical aspects of pragmalinguistic structures that help increase L2 learners' awareness about these structures.

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[4] 'A focus on forms' approach is also called a form-to-function approach.

[5] An example of a 'focus on forms' method is when L2 learners are given a grammar rule with an example, are told to memorise it and are asked to apply the rule to another example (Larsen-Freeman, 1986, p. 12).

[6] For more details about traditional methods of teaching, see Jarvis (2015) and Manko et al. (2010).

Both implicit and explicit teaching methods seem to be essential to the pragmalinguistic development of learners. The implicit method is essential in the ESL classroom because the pragmalinguistic structures of a second language develop through the creation of natural context (Trillo, 2002). This natural context helps notice and use the language forms along with their functions, which is essential in language acquisition. Furthermore, the central factor of this method is that learners should explore language by themselves to increase their awareness of structures and their functions in the second language; this is known as meta-linguistic awareness, which 'the development in learners of an enhanced consciousness to the forms and functions of language' (Carter, 2003, p. 64). Some examples of implicit methods that help notice and extract different syntactic structures are communication-based activities, watching English movies and reading English books and articles, which successfully facilitate using the language. Macaro (2003) argues that using the implicit method helps build communicative competence, which is the foundation of SLA. Blyth (2000) takes a similar point of view:

'focus on form exercises seek to create the ideal conditions for grammar learning, the "teachable moment" as it were, when a learner has a communicate need that can be achieved only by a specific syntactic form, to put it differentially, the moment when a form becomes communicatively salient'. (ibid, p.192)

In addition, one important kind of implicit methods is using authentic materials[7] in the ESL classroom (also called a discourse method) in order to help L2 learners notice the language forms along with their functions in a natural context. Some researchers (i.e., Blyth, 2000; McCarthy, 1991) suggest that different canonical word orders are best taught contextually in terms of their functions. McCarthy (1991) argues that 'contextual awareness helps in the recognising of choice' (ibid., p. 268).

A discourse-focused technique, such as confronting L2 learners with literary text types (natural contexts; Maley, 2001), results in consciousness-raising and initial awareness of forms and their functions in a second language, thereby positively enhancing L2 learning (Van Lier, 2001, p. 162). Callies and Keller (2008) propose using literary texts such as poems and letters in teaching (see Appendix B). These literary texts focus L2 learners' attention on the forms within meaningful contexts, which may serve as a useful starting point for learning the pragmalinguistic structures of the target language.

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[7] Authentic materials are any materials written in English that were not generated for intentional use in the ESL classrooms.

On the other hand, explicit teaching (focus on forms) is no less important, as it makes learners aware of syntactic patterns that cannot be easily learned implicitly. As mentioned earlier, explicit teaching is more useful in circumstances where there are differences between the first language parameters and the second language parameter, as is the case with Arabic and English in this study. Similarities between the pragmalinguistics of the two languages may also lead to problems such as overuse of specific structures (as will be seen in part 4), so the explicit method is necessary to help L2 learners understand similarities and differences between the first and the second languages. Mueller (2010) argues that explicit teaching methods raise L2 learners' attention to any specific linguistic forms.

As far as ESL learning materials are concerned in this study, it has been argued by many researchers (see Gass, 1984; Blyth, 2000; Callies, 2006) that functional notions of language use that connect to IS tend to be under-represented in ESL curricula for early stage and advanced stage L2 learners. For instance, ESL curricula do not shed light on IS concepts (New and Given) and their specific syntactic devices in written and spoken English. Klein (1988) also argues that ESL curricula exhibit great deficits English Focus devices and their communicative functions. Another problem in ESL curricula is the lack of discourse-focused approach, so the English forms in ESL curricula are presented as grammatical rules that are separate from their functions.

Some observations were made by recent researchers such as Bos, Hollebrandse and Sleeman, (2004), who argue that all different ESL subjects such as grammar and phonology have individual structural properties and therefore have no interaction with pragmatics. Callies and Keller (2008) also examined recent popular grammar and textbooks that are regularly used in German high schools for ESL instruction and found that these textbooks, such as *English Grammar 2000*, still show considerable deficits.

In sum, the lack of ESL curricula that address the functional notions of language use in connection with IS along with the lack of publications that explicitly present teaching and pedagogical methods of discourse pragmatics have led to limited awareness of the appropriate use of pragmalinguistic structures in a second language. As a result, IS (discourse pragmatics) is one of the barriers to learners acquiring a target language successfully.

4   Research Methodology

The participants in this study were 10 native speakers of English, six ESL teachers and eighty ESL learners. These forty ESL learners were chosen from one of the universities in Saudi Arabia and were divided into two groups(forty students each). The first group is considered as pre-intermediate learners of English (stage One) based on the language proficiency test run by the university upon their arrival at the university, while the second group of students (stage Two) are advanced language learners. The participating group of native speakers was included in the experiment since 'it is a general practice in most experimental studies in L2 research… a group of native speakers serves as the basis for the comparison' (Sorace, 1996, p. 385).

A mixed methods design was used in this study; the quantitative methods consist of IS tests (the completion task) and the qualitative methods consist of teachers' interviews and their reflective journals.

The study went over two phases: the first phase was conducted in three stages: pre-experimental, experimental, and post-experimental. In pre- experimental stage, the IS test conducted before the teaching process (the experimental stage) to examine L2 learners' pragmalinguistic competence before they were taught pragmalinguistic structures. English native speakers and L2 learners in both stages took the IS test in order to compare their results together.

The experimental stage began directly after the administration of the pragmalinguistic tests. Forty L2 learners in S1 and S2 were taught discourse pragmatics within the university-required syllabus, since one of the objectives of this study was to help L2 learners acquire the target language more effectively. After finishing the teaching period, all L2 learners were tested again. As referenced in part 1 of this study, one of the aims of this study was to compare L2 learners' performance before and after teaching to investigate whether teaching was a useful tool in helping L2 learners acquire the discourse pragmatics of the target language.

During the teaching period, the research design involved using different activities based on a discourse-focused approach (see part 3) in order to help L2 learners notice the pragmalinguistic structures of the target language. The research design also involved using implicit methods of teaching first followed by explicit methods of teaching [8]. Then, different authentic materials were used to increase the learners' awareness about IS (see Appendix B).

Thus, L2 learners first dealt with literary texts, such as poems (see Appendix B, Part 1) in which the syntactic realisation of information structure categories abounds, to help them notice how information is foregrounded or emphasised. The researcher was interested in observing how L2 learners were able to identify and describe writers' use of information structure categories such as Topic and Focus without engaging the L2 learners in straightforward syntactic IS questions i.e., explicit teaching of terminology and rules. Next, the L2 learners were explicitly taught pragmalinguistic structures along with explanations and examples. The L2 learners were then given some written texts based on real situations similar to the real situations in the discourse completion tasks used in the pragmalinguistic tests (for similar exercises, see Appendix A, Section A; Katz, 2000, p. 260; Sammon, 2002, p. 23) and were asked to answer questions related to these situations.

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[8] For more details about explicit and implicit methods of teaching, see section 3 of this study.

The L2 learners were also given pragmatically odd written texts and were asked to re-write these texts to make them sound more natural (see Appendix B, Part 2). All these different tasks are considered valuable means for exploring L2 learners' explicit competence in the pragmatic characteristics of a target language (Ellis, 2004). We used implicit methods to focus on context and meaning (van Lier, 2001, p. 162) and explicit methods to explain and draw attention to difficult structures, such as the rules of preposing; these methods help explain formal and functional aspects of language in ESL classrooms and lead to stable knowledge and language competence.

The ESL teachers were also asked to teach information structure to their students outside of the research sample and documented their observations in reflective teaching journals for use in answering the subsequent interview questions.

After three months of teaching, L2 learners were tested for a third time using the same information structure tests to see whether their final responses differed from their previous responses; this also tested the stability of second language IS. As mentioned earlier (see part1 of this study), this study aims to explore the usefulness of teaching in building stable L2 knowledge of IS.

The pre- experimental stage which consisted of interviews with ESL teachers in Saudi Arabia, began after the experimental phase was completed. The results of the quantative data (IS tests) and the qualitative data (interviews and reflective journals) are displayed next.

The data analysis in IS tests (the quantative data) is divided into three sections: L2 learners' pre-teaching knowledge; L2 learners' post-teaching knowledge; and L2 learners' post-teaching knowledge after two months.

For the purpose of numerical accuracy, two categories—Focus and Topic—were presented which were expected to be used by participants.

1. Topic: this IS category has a topicalisation (topic fronting) device that carries pragmatic meaning, such as correcting or emphasising.
2. Focus: this IS category is divided into contrastive focus and information focus:
   a. Contrastive focus: this includes three devices: 1) wh-clefts, which present the emphasised information in the final position; 2) it-and reverse clefts, which display the focused constituent in sentence-initial position; and 3) preposing (focus fronting), which also displays the focused constituent in sentence-initial position.
   b. Information focus: this shows the difference between Given and New information in a sentence that all languages have.

Pre-teaching competence, the first quantitative analysis (in the completion task) shows L2 learners in both stages realised IS categories syntactically in the discourse completion task in order to answer part of the first research question in this study (Are there any differences between the learners at early and advanced stages before and after they are taught IS?). The L2 learners' results in both stages were compared to native speakers' results since native speakers' results serve as the basis for the comparison (as stated earlier).

Highly interesting and significant differences emerged between the NSs and L2 learners (S1 and S2) in their use of pragmalinguistic structures. While few L2 learners in both stages used non-canonical word orders, such as clefted structures and topicalisation, more NSs used them (see Figure 4.1). This may tentatively be interpreted as the result of L2 learners' lack of awareness about the pragmalinguistic structures of English. Consequently, unlike NSs, L2 learners preferred to use safe word orders in both stages. Some typical examples for preposing, it-clefts, rwh-clefts and topicalisation used by the NSs are shown in (4.1).
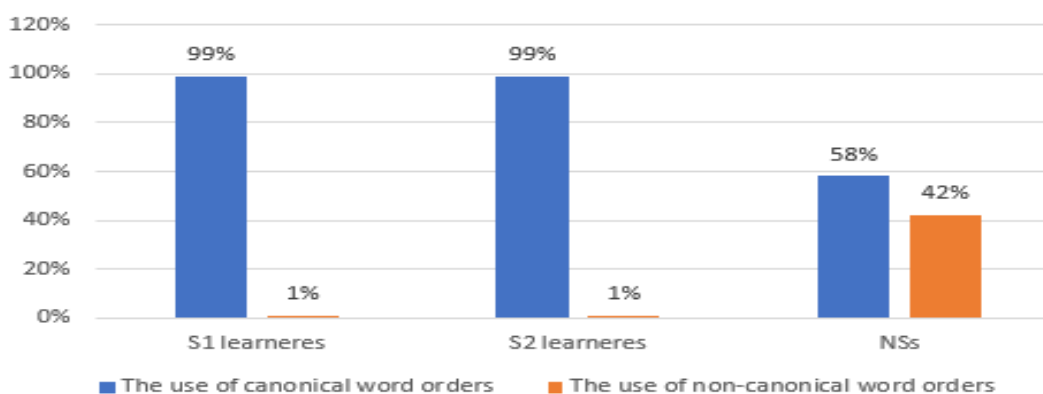

Figure 4.1: Cumulative pre-teaching performance.

(4.1)

Situation 16: A burger I ordered please.   Preposing

Situation 14: It is the Maths teacher.   It-clefts

Situation 9: Sara was the one who made the cake.   Rwh-clefts

Situation 8: . . . books about animals I read a lot.   Topicalisation

For the information focus, both NSs and L2 learners showed very similar frequency distributions for the use of canonical word orders to present information focus (see Table 4.1). All the L2 learners' responses (S1 and S2) were almost like the NSs' responses.

This result is consistent with Klein's and Perdue's (1992) studies which suggested that L2 learners do not acquire basic pragmatic aspects of IS such as 'Topic first' and 'Focus last', since the sequencing of discourse parts is directed by universal IS principles already present in both the L1 and L2 languages (as mention in part 3).

Table 4.1: The use of IF by participants.

	S1 (40 students)	S2 (40 students)	10 NSs
IS categories			
Information Focus (IF)			
Canonical word orders	40 (100%)	40 (100%)	10 (100%)
Non- canonical word orders	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Non- canonical word orders	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Nevertheless, one of the observed differences between the NSs and L2 learners (in both stages was) the NSs used a phrase or a small sentence as an introduction to a sentence and moved the important/new information to the last part of the sentence; this emphasised the idea that end-position is NSs preferred option for showing prominence. Some typical examples of the NSs' and learners' responses are presented in (4.2).

(4.2) Situation 1: a. What is this noise?

Native speaker 1: The noise is next door, maybe [IF *they* are building a tree house].

Native speaker 2: It might be that [IF *they* are building a tree house].

Learner 1: [IF My *neighbour* is building a tree house].

Situation 13: a. What is your neighbour building again?

Native speaker 1: This time, *she* is building [IF a storage room].

Learner 1: *Maria* is building [IF a storage room].

Also interesting in the examples in (4.2) is that the NSs used pronouns to present Given[9], while most of the L2 learners in both stages used proper nouns to present Given (i.e., Maria and neighbour). It is important to mention here that Arabic also uses pronouns to present Given; however, L2 learners avoided using pronouns in the L2 as a result of a lack of expectation of such similarity between the two languages and fear the lack of confidence in making any change or amendment which may cause an error.

Post-teaching competence, the indicator differed significantly post-teaching in the experimental groups, showing that instruction gave students a basic idea of the language's structures (see Table 4.2). The majority of the L2 learners in both stages who had neither explicit knowledge of certain syntactic patterns of IS nor the knowledge of how to use them used many syntactic constructions after teaching such as topicalisation and it-clefts (see examples in 4.3). This finding suggests that teaching plays a major role in raising students' awareness of pragmalinguistic structures since, similar to NSs, L2 learners used many syntactic constructions post-teaching. However, L2 learners used non-canonical word orders to a significantly higher degree than before, and their responses highly exceeded NSs' responses (see Table 4.2 again).

Table 4.2: Cumulative performance pre- and post-teaching.

The pragmalinguistic test	S1 learners		S2 learners		NSs
	Pre-teaching	Post-teaching	Pre-teaching	Post-teaching	
The use of non-canonical word orders	1%	68%	1%	68%	42%
The use of canonical word orders	99%	32%	99%	32%	58%

(4.3)   Situation 16: A burger I ordered please. Preposing

Situation 6: No, it was Wonder that I watched yesterday, not Peter Rabbit.   It-clefts

Situation 9: Sara was the one who made the cake by herself.   Rwh-clefts

Situation 4: …the chicken Sara said it was tasty. Topicalisation

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[9] Given information were written in Italic and underlined in the examples in (4.2)

In addition, all L2 learners' responses pre- and post-teaching were similar to the NSs' responses in relation to information focus, and all participants preferred to use canonical word orders to present information focus because, as stated earlier, the sequencing of discourse aspects are directed by universal principles of IS already present in both languages.

Two months post-teaching, L2 learners in both stages (in the experimental groups) took the IS test for the third time to answer the second research question; will the teaching and acquisition of pragmalinguistic knowledge result in stable knowledge? Interestingly, L2 learners' responses in both stages were close to each other post-teaching and also two months post-teaching (see Table 4.3), which means they became aware of the linguistic devices of the target language. These findings suggest that teaching is a useful tool for building pragmalinguistic knowledge and helping L2 learners keep this knowledge stable in their mind. However, they still used most of the IS devices more than NSs, so the need for more explicit and implicit training and practice in these structures in ESL classrooms is evident to make their written productions closer to those of NSs.

The pragmalinguistic test	S1 learners		S2 learners		NSs
	Post-teaching	Two months post-teaching	Post-teaching	Two months post-teaching	
The use of canonical word orders	32%	33%	32%	35%	58%
The use of non-canonical word orders	68%	67%	68%	65%	42%

Table 4.3: L2 learners' performance post-teaching and two months post-teaching.

For information focus, L2 learners two months post-teaching used canonical word orders productively to present Given and Focus information. Also, similar NSs, they frequently used pronouns to present Given information and effectively continued to shift Focus to the second part of a sentence to package information in accordance with IS principles.

For the qualitative data, the ESL teachers were asked to write some of their views and thoughts on teaching the pragmalinguistic structures in their reflective teaching journals throughout the semester. The ESL teachers were also expected to document their in-class experiences, including successes and difficulties, any materials they used during teaching and any insights they had about their students. These reflective journals were used to help them answer the interview questions. Moreover, the researcher kept a reflective journal during her teaching in order to answer the research questions most effectively.

In this way, the quantitative findings are supported by quotes from the interviews and reflective journals that explain the role of teaching in the acquisition of the pragmalinguistic structures and the current status of IS in ESL curricula in Saudi Arabia from the ESL teachers' and researcher's perspectives. These quotes help the researcher explore the validity of the research as they give, according to Geertz (1973), a 'thick description' of the information.

Some comments from the researcher's reflective journals about the current status of IS in ESL curricula in Saudi Arabia were as follows:

> *'From the large amount of learning materials that was examined for this study, textbook neither explicitly take up the terms of information structure, emphasis and correction nor deal in-depth with several syntactic and lexico-grammatical means used to achieve IS'.*

> *'No textbooks adopt a discourse focused technique to the teaching of syntactic constructions. For example, the investigation of one book series for Saudi learners of English 'Q: Skills for Success 1 Listening and Speaking' and 'Q: Skills for Success 1 Reading and Writing'—a series which is frequently used at Saudi universities—shows that there are still considerable curricula deficits. Although some topics in this book series begin introducing lexico-grammatical constructions such as the emphatic 'do' and emphatic reflexives (yourself, herself), these structures are presented as grammar and their functional impact on IS in discourse is not addressed'.*

Excerpts from teachers' interviews and reflective journals were also selected to shed light on our discussion of how pragmalinguistic structures become one of the barriers L2 learners face when learning English as a second language.

Regarding the challenge faced in the learning and teaching of the English IS, most ESL teachers believed that IS instruction is totally ignored or does not even exist. One teacher explained as follows:

> *'Although the teaching of English IS is important, it is totally ignored in ESL classrooms. In other words, students are provided with basic second language materials such as reading and writing which do not shed light on IS'.*

Other ESL teachers offered similar explanations or remarked on difficulties in instruction:

> *Actually, all language structures are taught as a grammar and not according to their functions in discourse . . .'.*

> *'The teaching of information structure is challenging because of the large number of exceptions and inconsistencies governing the system'.*

These challenges led us to the reasons behind L2 learners' use of canonical word orders in English, and the ESL teachers made various suggestions on how educators can help these learners comprehend pragmalinguistic structures:

> *'I think it would be great if we had certain criteria that could be used when we assessed learners' oral and especially written performances. Among these, it would be helpful to have items about information structure. Students could be informed in advance about these criteria to draw their attention to how to organise information in accordance with the IS principles'.*

Other suggestions included the idea that pragmalinguistic structures should be taught both explicitly and implicitly, as demonstrated in this study, and that students should receive regular feedback from their teacher about their use of these language structures:

> *'You know, if students had the chance to notice the rules of information structure in context, use them and then receive feedback, especially in their writing, they would certainly be better off'.*

> *' . . . these structures should be taught should be taught explicitly, implicitly and continuously during the semester . . . because I have noticed from my reflective journals that students from different levels of learning English after teaching started to be able to emphasise the most important elements in a sentence correctly and at the correct time in their speech and writing. Many used pronouns to show Given information . . . several syntactic devices of information structure were also regularly used such as different types of clefts, mainly it-clefts, in order to emphasise information, and I had never noticed them using these structures in their speech or writing before teaching. Their sentences are becoming clearer and easier to understand . . . There is no point teaching students the language without its pragmatic functions'.*

5   Interpretation the Results of the Study

According to the research Q1 (What effect can the use of implicit and explicit instructions have on L2 learners' acquisition of IS? Are there any differences between the learners at early and advanced stages before and after they are taught IS?), the data show that native English speakers used significantly more non-canonical patterns than L2 learners and that the responses of both L2 groups (S1 and S2) were very similar before teaching in their non-use of non-canonical word orders on the pragmalinguistic test. This supports the idea that high grammatical ability does not make L2 learners' performance similar/closer to the native speakers in relation to information packaging. However, after teaching the pragmalinguistic structures of English, this changed significantly.

There was a radical change in S1 and S2 learners' responses after teaching using explicit and implicit methods. Similar to the native speakers, L2 learners in both stages used many syntactic constructions to achieve IS, and the frequency of these syntactic devices was almost equal for both groups (S1 and S2) in the IS test. These findings suggest that teaching plays an important role in raising students' awareness of the pragmalinguistic structures and they echo the results of previous studies (Palacios, 2006; Sleeman, 2004) that show positive transfer across L2 structures that are taught in ESL classrooms. However, the data clearly shows that most of these pragmalinguistic structures were actually overused by L2 learners compared to the native speakers. This supports findings by Boström Aronsson (2003) and Schachter and Rutherford (1979) that suggest that syntactic devices which are frequently used in the first language are more transferable and are therefore overused in the target language. However, through explicit teaching and classroom activities that focus on the contextual use of preposing, L2 learners can be made gradually aware of its constraints. Sleeman (2004) also suggests that although L2 learners face challenges learning difficult structures of the target language, positive transfer happens of these structures occurs when they are made an essential part of ESL classroom instruction. Furthermore, the data show that, similar to the native speakers, both stages of L2 learners continued to present IF using canonical word orders even after teaching. Also, they began to use pronouns to present Given information and effectively tried to shift the Focus to the second part of a sentence to package information in accordance with English IS principles. These findings confirm that teaching plays an important role in increasing L2 learners' awareness of English pragmalinguistic structures, encouraging and enabling L2 learners to use many syntactic constructions after teaching (even though these structures are often overused).

In support of the quantitative data, the qualitative data also suggest that English pragmalinguistic structures are problematic even for proficient Saudi learners. In light of learners' avoidance of non-canonical word orders, input that focuses solely on grammar and vocabulary teaching is not effective in helping ESL learners become successful communicators in English and is unlikely to create a sufficient basis for L2 competence. These findings suggest that teaching IS using both implicit and explicit methods plays a significant role in increasing students' knowledge and skill in the use of different pragmalinguistic English structures. The qualitative data supports recent studies (Blyth, 2000; Kasper, 2000; Katz, 2000; McCarthy, 1991, 1998; Callies and Keller, 2008) that have shown how the grammar and pragmatics of an L2 are best taught together in discourse. According to McCarthy (1998), this pedagogical technique attempts to focus students' awareness on a form within discourse:

> 'analysing grammar as an aspect of discourse rather than as something that operates only within the boundaries of the clause or sentence . . . the types of choices that writers or speakers commonly deal with in production.' (ibid., p. 263)

The implicit method such as providing authentic materials and encouraging communication in the ESL classroom results in raised awareness and initial noticing of forms and their functions and positively enhances L2 learning (long, 1991; Van Lier, 2001). Callies (2008) argues that using literary texts (similar to these implemented in this study; see Appendix B) help L2 learners notice how information can be foregrounded, highlighted or made more prominent because these types of text (short stories, letters, poems etc.) are full of pragmalinguistic examples. In addition, the explicit method was also implemented to help learners notice any specific linguistic forms and complex patterns of the L2 that are hard to learn implicitly. For example, explicit methods were used to provide detailed explanations and examples of English IS principles, particularly the constraints of preposing.

In sum, both stages of Saudi learners of English preferred to use safe word orders before teaching due to their lack of their awareness of similarities in the structures of the two languages, so the responses were similar between the S1 and S2 groups. After IS instruction using both explicit and implicit methods, the learners' responses in both stages were also similar in terms of packaging information according to IS principles, and their responses were also similar to the native speakers. For example, many of the constructions used to achieve IS were used by the L2 learners in the different pragmatic scenarios after teaching, suggesting that the instruction had a positive impact on students' awareness of pragmalinguistic English structures. However, the influence of the first language still play a role in the acquisition of the target language even after teaching.

In reference to the research Q2 (Will the teaching and acquisition of pragmalinguistic knowledge result in stable knowledge?), the data from the discourse completion task two months after the IS instruction show that both stages of L2 learners continued to use different structures in the target language, showing that IS instruction facilitates stable pragmalinguistic knowledge. However, there was a significant increase in both groups' use of these structures. L2 learners also continued to productively organise information in sentences in accordance with the IS principles two months after the teaching. For example, they frequently used pronouns to present Given information and effectively shifted the Focus to the second part of a sentence. Their continued use of syntactic devices two months after the IS instruction suggests that their knowledge of IS remained stable and had been stored in long-term memory.

Teaching using explicit methods and implicit methods focuses learners' attention on the pragmalinguistic structures of the target language, and this form of 'noticing' is essential to move knowledge to long-term memory, and Schmidt (2010) notes that 'input does not become intake for language learning unless it is noticed' (ibid., p. 721).By implementing these two methods in the ESL classroom, teachers can trigger learners' notice that leads to both stable knowledge and language competence.

According to the research Q3 (What is the current situation regarding IS in ESL curricula in Saudi Arabia?), although past researchers (Gass, 1984; Klein,1988) and more recent researchers (Carroll et al., 2000; Kerr, 2002; Callies 2009) have argued that information structure has been under-represented in ESL curricula, more recent textbooks in Saudi Arabia have not been improved in this regard. Even across the large amount of learning materials examined for this study, textbooks do not explicitly discuss information structure, clarification and correction or deal in-depth with the syntactic and lexico-grammatical means used to realise information structure. ESL curricula for Saudi learners exhibit a great deficit in this regard, as they do not devote significant attention to the fundamental principles of IS packaging or the structures and functions of the most essential syntactic constructions. Moreover, no textbook adopts a discourse/functional approach to the teaching of IS constructions. For example, the lexico-grammatical constructions (i.e., the emphatic 'do', the emphatic reflexives 'yourself and herself' and the pragmatic markers 'really and actually') are presented as grammar; their functional impact on IS in discourse is not addressed. The lack of pragmalinguistic topics in ESL curricula at Saudi universities presents a barrier to learners' successful acquisition of the target language. It causes the avoidance non-canonical word orders and using a form according to its function, leading to ill-formed or awkward sentences.

Given this shortcoming, I argue that L2 learning materials should explicitly address information structure and should deal with their pragmatic constructions in depth. These materials should adopt a functional/discoursal model for the teaching of these structures and should be designed to raise L2 learners' awareness of the target language's pragmalinguistic structures. Furthermore, I argue that both explicit and implicit teaching methods should also be used in ESL classrooms to help L2 learners notice and use pragmalinguistic structures. Ideally, by combining these methods and providing the proper contextual setting along with detailed explanations, L2 learners will no longer perceive variant word orders or linguistic constructions of discourse pragmatics (IS) as ill-formed or even stylistically awkward.

Also, since IS information is largely absent in ESL curricula in Saudi Arabia, I searched internationally for ESL books containing discourse pragmatics that could be used at Saudi universities. Out of the large number of ESL materials I examined, I only found two books that were valuable. These texts explicitly discuss IS and clearly detail related pragmatic constructions. Furthermore, these two books adopt a discoursal approach to the teaching syntactic conductions used to achieve IS, which I recommend.

The first text, *The Grammar Dimensions*, focuses on a communicative approach to grammar and on the function and meaning of linguistic forms. This textbook series was designed for the American market and is utilised in ESL classrooms in different American institutes.

The fourth volume of the series (Frodesen and Eyring, 2000) includes excellent converge of the functional and grammatical characteristics of Focusing means, particularly correlating them to the use of Focus for contrast and clarification. The textbook divides IS into individual topics such as 'Focusing and Emphasising' (it-clefts and wh-clefts), 'Frontings Structures for Focus and Highlighting' (preposing) and Emphatic Structures' (emphatic do). These different units contain detailed illustrations, various examples and numerous activities related to these structures.

The other text that is an excellent reference for the ESL teachers in the United States is *The Grammar Book* (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999). This book has a section dedicated to 'Focus and Emphasis' that describes various ways to accomplish Focus. This section presents phonological means (i.e., intonation and stress), lexico- grammatical means (i.e., emphatic reflective and emphatic do) and syntactic means (preposing and it-clefts) for achieving IS. This book is very useful for ESL teachers in general because it discusses the meaning and use of these means in detail, outlines teaching ideas/activities and recommends further reading.

6   Pedagogical Implications

The qualitative data analysis offers several suggestions for how ESL teachers can help students acquire a L2 successfully. First, IS should not be neglected in ESL classes, and ESL teachers should have knowledge of IS and its important in SLA. Yates (2010) states pragmatic structures cannot be taught unless teachers consciously know how these structures are understood in different discourses of language use[10].

ESL teachers should also use pedagogical teaching methods to raise L2 learners' awareness of how a language works. Explicit and implicit teaching methods can be used to focus learners' attention on the target language's pragmalinguistic structures which facilitate the acquisition of these structures and the stability of information. Explicit methods make L2 learners aware of syntactic patterns that cannot be easily learned implicitly (Dekeyser, 2003), but implicit methods help learners use language in a natural context. According to Trillo (2002), discourse pragmatics have their own features in each language and 'their development demands a natural context' (ibid., p. 770).

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[10]ESL teachers should be consciously aware of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic terms of communication to be able to explain the formal and functional features of the L2 in the classroom. For more details on pragmatics in SLA, see Trosborg (2010) and Yates (2010).

ESL teachers should bring authentic language materials to their classrooms and let their students notice and practice the syntactic means of the pragmalinguistic structures in different contexts so that they can utilise them successfully in their spoken or written discourse. The use of authentic language materials, such as a variety of literature, is more beneficial than the use of non-authentic, graded and simplified materials. Practice with these materials helps L2 learners notice and use English language structures in natural contexts.

When dealing with writing or grammar, L2 learners have to be taught how to emphasise new or unfamiliar information and deemphasise given or old information through various syntactic structures such as clefts, preposing and active and passive structures. When L2 learners learn how to formulate these syntactic means, they also need to learn their functional impact on contextual IS (i.e., the discourse method). As noted in 1, what make students' writings and conversations regularly sound unidiomatic (odd) or different from native speakers' sentences (both writing and speech) is their failure to use various syntactic constructions used to achieve IS. For example, students must learn that passive means are not only grammatical but also functional in emphasising the most important contextual element. Finegan and Besnier (1989) highlight novice writers' misunderstandings about passive means:

> What makes a sentence like '*A good time was had by all'* humorous is the fact that it is passive without a reason. Such passive structures happen regularly among novice writers, who appear to labour under the miscomprehension that passive structures are more literary than active ones.' (ibid., p. 233)

7 The Conclusion

In ESL classes, simply teaching vocabulary and grammar is insufficient for making students successful communicators in the target language. Pragmatic aspects of the target language should also be combined with instruction in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, writing. listening, speaking and reading. Therefore, we advocate an integrated teaching approach to heighten learners' awareness across the curriculum through a fruitful integration of literature and linguistics.

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Appendixes

Appendix (A) IS Tests – English Version

Section A: The Discourse Completion Task

Part I

In this section, you will be given some real situations and questions related to these situations. There is usually more than one way to form an answer. How we answer it relies on many aspects, such as correcting, confirming and clarifying what we think is the most essential piece of information.

For each given passage, your friend will make a wrong or right assumption or will ask you a question related to a particular piece of information that you may need to clarify, correct or present.

Please imagine each situation and give <u>a complete answer</u> according to the context. There are no wrong or right answers, just follow your intuition.

Situation 1:

Your neighbour is building a tree house. Then, your friend (Maria) visits you and hears a loud noise.

Maria: What is that noise?

Your response: _____

_____

Situation 2:

You always go to school by car.

Your friend: I bet the school bus is very crowded. How do you go to school every day? By bus?

Your response: _____

_____

Situation 3:

You are sitting with your friends and one of them (Sara) is talking about how your sister is an active girl who likes all kinds of sports. You tell Sara the opposite, that your sister is actually not active and does not like sports, but quite oddly . . .

(cricket, likes, she, a lot)

Complete the passage above by using the words between the brackets above if possible.

_____

_____

Situation 4:

You invited your three friends (Sara, Maria, Dania) to have dinner at your house. Your mum prepared a variety of tasty foods such as chicken, steak, soup and pastries, and then she left the house.

All your friends came to your house and had dinner with you. They told you that the food was tasty. Sara told you that she ate all the chicken because it was particularly good.

Your mum (the next day): How was the dinner yesterday? Who ate the steak?

Your response: Well, I do not know about the steak, but_____

Situation 5:

Your friend (Sara) comes to visit you, and your neighbours are building a tree house.

Sara: What a noise! What are your neighbours building?

Your response: _____

_____

Situation 6:

You tell your friend (Sara) at school about some newly released kids' movies such as *Peter Rabbit* and *Wonder*. You tell her that you watched Wonder yesterday and that it was amazing.

Sara: Sorry, which movie did you watch yesterday? *Peter Rabbit*?

Your response: No, _____

_____

Situation 7:

You told your friend that you are going shopping to look for a scarf. Then, you went to a shop and bought one.

Your friend (days later): Remind me again, what did you want to buy?

Your response: _____

_____

Situation 8:

In general, you do not like reading; however, you are interested in reading books about animals.

One day, your neighbour saw you reading books about animals in front of your house.

Your friend: I guess your favorite hobby is reading!

Write your response using brackets words below if possible.

    (books about animals, enjoy, I , a lot)

Your response: No, my favorites hobby is not reading but_____

Situation 9:

Your younger sister (Sara) baked a cake by herself. Then, your friend (Maria) came to your house, tasted your sister's cake and really liked it.

Your friend: Wow, who made the cake? I do not believe that Sara made the cake!

Your response: Yeah, I know it is hard to believe, but_____

_____

Situation 10

Your dad is very angry because someone crashed his car.

 Your friend: Why is your dad angry?

Your response: _____

_____

Situation 11:

Your friend (Sara) knew that you were going to meet either your mum or dad today.

 In the morning, you met with your mum, and you had lunch with her before the evening.

In the evening, Sara phoned you.

Sara: Did you meet either of your parents today?

Your response: _____

_____

Situation 12:

You do not know who ate your sister's sandwich, but you saw your younger brother (Jusuf) eating her sweets.

Your sister: What happened to my sandwich? Who ate it?

Your response: I do not know about your sandwich, but_____

_____

Situation 13:

Your friend (Sara) knows that your neighbour (Maria) always likes to build things like tree houses and bird houses.

One day, Sara comes to visit you while your neighbour (Maria) is building a storage room.

Sara: What is your neighbour building again?

Your response: _____

_____

Situation 14:

You are telling your friend that, although you do not like your Maths teacher, you respect her for all her effort.

Your friend: I bet some people are born teachers. Who is it again that you respect for her teaching? Your Science teacher?

Your response: _____

_____

Situation 15:

You told your friend that, after you graduate from college, you are going to go to either Paris or Madrid. After your graduation, your mum gives you a ticket to Paris.

Your friend: Hey "bro" will you go to Paris or Madrid?

Your response: _____

_____

Situation 16:

You went to a fast food restaurant and ordered a burger.

The assistant: Sorry, what was your order again? A pizza, or a burger?

Write your response by using the brackets words below if possible.

(please, a burger, ordered, I)

Your response: _____

_____

Appendix (B) Some Teaching Materials Used in the Study

Part 1: Poem of John Donne's Aire and Angells

Twice or thrice had I loved thee,

 Before I knew thy face or name;

So in a voice, so in a shapeless flame,

 Angells affect us oft, and worship'd bee,

 Still when, **to where** thou wert, I came,   wert=were

Some lovely glorious **nothing** I did see.

 But since **my soule**, whose child love is,

Takes limes of flesh, and else could nothing doe,   limmes=limbs

More subtile than the parent is,   subtile=subtle

Love must not be, but take **a body** too,

 And therefore what thou wert, and who,

 I bid Love aske, and now

That it assume **thy body**, I allow,

And fixe it selfe in thy lip, eye, and brow.

Whilst thus to ballast love,

I thought, (to a ship)

And so more steddily to have gone,

With wares which would sink admiration,

I saw, I had loves pinnace overfraught,

Ev'ry haire for love to worke upon

Is much too much, **some fitter** must be sought;

For, nor in nothing, nor in things   (Donne, 2001, p 19)

Part 2: A Letter

Form a (An odd written text)

Dear Sana Jussif,

Me, I am sitting here up in my bed writing to you.

 What is outside my window is a massive backyard surrounded by trees and it is a rose carpet that is in the middle of the backyard.

When it was full of pink and golden roses was in the spring. Here you would love it. It is you who should come and spend some time with me; what I have got is plenty of rooms.

Best wishes,

Sara Ali

 (Adopted from McCarthy, 1991, p. 53)

Form b (A natural written text)

Dear Sana Jussif,

I am sitting here up in my bed writing to you. A massive backyard surrounded

by trees is outside my window and a rose carpet is in the middle of the backyard.

It was full of pink and golden roses in the spring. You would love it here.

You should come and spend some time with me; I have got plenty of rooms.

Best wishes,

Sara Ali

 (Adopted from McCarthy, 1991, p.53)