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Teachers' Perceptions Toward Pragmatics and Pragmatic Teaching

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Abstract

In the last few decades, pragmatic competence has become one of the issues that captured academic attention in education settings. Yet, teachers' perceptions of pragmatics and teaching pragmatics has yet to be closely investigated in the context of Moroccan higher education and therefore remains uncharted in literature. To address these gaps, the present study explored how Moroccan university professors view pragmatics and pragmatic teaching. It also explored how they use their pragmatic knowledge in the classroom. A total of 10 university professors (6 males and 4 females) from two public universities (Moulay Ismail and Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah) in Morocco participated in the current study. Quantitative data were collected by completing an anonymous questionnaire, while qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Participants expressed their perceptions and described experiences of the importance of teaching pragmatics, issues related to culture and identity in teaching English as a Foreign Language, and materials and tasks in teaching pragmatics. The findings yielded that linguistic knowledge is as essential as pragmatic knowledge. Thus, striking a balance between pragmatic and grammatical competence and teaching them simultaneously is crucial. Learners with advanced grammatical knowledge may fail to use the target language appropriately. As such, the results indicated that some teachers are unaware of the importance of introducing pragmatics to students in the early stages of learning English. Their skills are enough to be good at transmitting cultural knowledge and suitable language competence to students. Practical implications for future research and practice are also discussed.

Keywords: grammatical competence, pragmatic competence, pragmatic teaching, teachers' perceptions

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Introduction

Being an essential part of language, pragmatic competence has become one of the issues that captured the attention of scholars in language teaching and learning. To avoid misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication, using language effectively takes more than knowing the proper morphology, phonology, syntax, and semantics. It also involves knowing pragmatics or, more specifically, cultural knowledge. In Morocco, where English is taught as a foreign language, this topic is attracting attention. Teaching students pragmatics has therefore gained popularity and importance. It is clear that pragmatics, which encompasses knowledge and abilities, must be taught in the classroom. Additionally, the process of imparting pragmatic information to English language learners in a foreign language setting must also be covered.

However, there is currently a lack of research in the literature about professors' perspectives on pragmatics and pragmatics instruction in the context of Moroccan higher education. The present study sought to investigate Moroccan university instructors' perspectives on pragmatics and pragmatic teaching. It also sought to investigate how they applied their pragmatic knowledge in the educational setting.

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1) How do university professors view pragmatics and pragmatic teaching?
2) How do university professors use their pragmatic knowledge in the classroom?

Two hypotheses are intended to be tested in this study. 1) It is hypothesized that university professors perceive linguistic knowledge to be more crucial than the knowledge of how to use the language. 2) It is also hypothesized that university professors' practices are affected by traditional approaches to language teaching and learning.

Literature Review

Defining Pragmatics

It is necessary to see how scholars in the field have defined the term pragmatics. There are many definitions for the concept of pragmatics. Kasper (1993) stated that the study of pragmatics focuses on how individuals understand and use language in context. More recently, Crystal (1997) stressed that pragmatics is the study of language from the perspective of its users, with a focus on the decisions they make, the barriers they face while utilizing language in the social context, and the impacts their language use has on other participants in a communication act.

Crystal thus focused on the users of the language. It examines pragmatics from the viewpoint of the user. It considers the various decisions speakers can make in the target language based on the social context in which they communicate. The definition of pragmatics is the socio-cultural context-based study of communication action (see Amiri & El Karfa, 2021).

Context in Pragmatics

Communication is a complicated process that entails certain factors to be successful. Such factors involve the tool of communication (language), participants (speaker and hearer), the purpose of communication (function), and the context in which functions are used. Yule (1996)

argued that understanding how people communicate is not merely interpreting what speakers say but also what they mean. To understand what people mean, it is necessary to know the context in which they speak. The context designates the temporal and spatial conditions linked to speech, along with other 'accessories' included in the situation (Garric & Calas, 2007). Besides, the meaning of a word or a phrase remains ambiguous until the context is known. Although a dictionary can provide one definition or more for a single word, it is the context that enables one to identify the different meanings of the word. Thus, it is worth pointing out that studies conducted on this front showed that context plays a critical role in the teaching-learning process (Amiri & El Karfa, 2021).

Speech Act Theory

Traditionally, the central area of pragmatics focus in language teaching has been speech acts. A tremendous body of research on the acquisition of L2 pragmatics has concentrated on speech acts, and this has been the aim of most second language (L2) pragmatics-based instruction (Félix-Brasdefer, 2013; Roever, 2010; Taguchi, 2011). Therefore, it is necessary to discuss how theorists theorize speech act theory since the present research is about teaching pragmatics in EFL. Speech act theory is related to the functions and uses of language. That is, speech acts are those acts we perform when speaking and the things we do when we speak. Speech encompasses most human activities. We use language to build bridges, consolidate political regimes, carry on arguments, convey information from one person to another, and entertain, in short, to communicate (Schmidt & Richards, 1980).

The study of speech acts has captured the attention of many scholars in the field. The father of pragmatics, Austin, developed a theory in 1962. Searle then refined it, leading to some fascinating advancements in the field between 1969 and 1975. According to Austin's (1962) theory, a language utterance can be considered a speech act because speakers tend to use language to accomplish specific tasks rather than just say things. He argues that the smallest possible unit of human communication is the speech act. Rather than being a language utterance, it embodies the performance of certain acts. When we speak, we perform acts such as giving reports, making statements, asking questions, giving warnings, making promises, approving, regretting, and apologizing. While tackling these pragma linguistic phenomena, it is necessary to mention a helpful distinction between speech situations, speech events, and speech acts made by Hymes (1972). The speech act is already defined in the above section. As for speech situations, they are those socially contextual settings where speech acts take place. A quarrel, a wedding ceremony, fights, hunts, and meals are only some instances of speech acts. Before Hymes and other researchers recognized the importance of speech situations in the understanding and analyzing speech acts, Austin (1962) proposed that speech acts can take one of the following meanings: a speech situation is any spatial, temporal, or psychological situation in which a speech act is expressed. Austin's reference to space and time elements is evident in that it indicates observable

locations where a speech act can be articulated −for instance, the act of greeting in a train station. By psychological speech situation, Austin means the unobservable space.

Speech events like Ph. D defences, interviews, and religious sermons are then activities characterized by exclusive use of language. Although a distinction between speech act, speech situation, and speech event has been made, this research will focus only on the elaboration of pragmatics in the EFL context. The following section is meant to provide a deep understanding of how speech acts are categorized and theorized by speech act theorists. Austin divides a speaking act into three parts, which he calls the locution, the illocution, and the perlocution, and offers a three-fold system to explain each. His suggested method states that the locution is the speaker's words, while the illocution is the force or motive behind the speech, such as an order, a request, a promise, an apology, a complaint, etc. The final element, perlocution, refers to the response (verbal or nonverbal) of the interlocutors.

Teaching Pragmatics

The present research investigates teachers' perceptions of teaching pragmatics in EFL and teachers' practices in teaching pragmatics. Furthermore, it also tries to elicit how EFL Moroccan students can adapt to contextual demands when performing speech acts. This section will mainly focus on the crucial aspects of teaching pragmatics, including the significance of teaching pragmatics, critical approaches to teaching pragmatics, and the role of teachers.

The importance of teaching pragmatics was pinpointed by Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991): "Teaching pragmatics empowers students to experience and experiment with the language at a deeper level, and thereby to participate in the purpose of language – communication, rather than just words" (p. 13). Students can communicate in the target language appropriately if they know its pragmatic features. Regarding the value of teaching pragmatics, Kasper and Rose (2001) stressed that because certain pragmatic elements are universal and others can be effectively transferred from their native language, adult learners already absorb L2 pragmatic information without formal instruction. People in many groups, for instance, adhere to the same values, such as the Cooperative Principle (Grice, 1975) and civility (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Additionally, Kasper and Rose (2001) claim that "Learners may also get particular pragma linguistic knowledge for free if there is a corresponding form-function mapping between L1 and L2, and the forms can be used in corresponding L2 contexts with corresponding effects" (p. 6). Nevertheless, using the knowledge that students already know is not always the case. According to Kasper and Rose (2001), instruction is required to develop L2 pragmatic proficiency.

Within native speakers' speech communities, one may find a variety of expressions and pragmatic routines. According to Ishihara (2006), there is no universally accepted definition of what language behaviors are "right" or "wrong" in a certain scenario since native speakers differ from one another in how they carry out pragmatic routines in a given discourse situation. The significance of teaching pragmatics will be discussed with evidence from the current research.

Crucially, Several scholars have proved the importance of teaching pragmatics, as this study will highlight. However, the question that must be posed is the following: What are the most effective approaches for teaching L2 pragmatics? Explicit/deductive and implicit/inductive are the two methods. When students get language input with pragmatic information conveyed, this is called explicit instruction. Implicit instruction, on the other hand, involves giving students input devoid of metapragmatic knowledge so they can progressively pick up pragmatic rules by practice (Ishihara, 2006). Rose (2005) determined that explicit teaching is typically more effective than implicit teaching after reviewing several studies on the impacts of explicit and implicit education. Schmidt (1990; 1993) argues that teachers must explicitly teach pragmatics in teaching English as a foreign language in settings like Morocco, where there is a shortage of a language environment and where exposure to the language alone is deemed insufficient. Given this, to become pragmatically competent, teachers' duties in imparting pragmatic information are crucial.

In this respect, it is preferable to give a brief definition to understand *pragmatic competence*. In the field of pragmatics, the ability of second or foreign-language learners to generate or perceive communicative acts that are appropriate for the context can be described as pragmatic competence. Two categories of knowledge are considered a part of pragmatic competence regarding speech acts. These are socio-pragmatic knowledge, which is knowledge of the sociocultural conventions governing language use, and pragma linguistic knowledge, which is knowledge of the linguistic resources required for performing specific speech acts, such as the use of ability questions "Can you/could you" or the bi-clausal structure "I wonder if" for realizing requests (Thomas, 1983). The current study offers empirical data regarding how academic instructors impart pragmatic knowledge in a university setting.

Direct Instruction and L2 Pragmatic Development

Some experts in the field think that when English is spoken as a second language, learners have limited access to pragmatic input. Instruction provides students with the majority of their input. The function of instruction in L2 pragmatic development is the primary topic of this section. Regarding pragmatic instruction, the primary focus of this issue's research is threefold:

(a) If pragmatic specific traits are teachable;

(b) If pragmatic instruction is essential and required; and

(c) If different approaches lead to differential results (Rose, 2005).

Research on pragmatics also looks at variables including proficiency level, duration of stay, pragmatic transfer, and learning context. Most studies on how input affects pragmatic development are predicated on Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis. Schmidt (1990) pinpointed that "what learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning" and available for further mental processing (p. 20). He claimed that awareness is required for all learning. Furthermore, He also argued that for input to become intake and then be processed, students must recognize or pay attention to a specific input form.

The question of how instruction contributes to L2 pragmatic development is the subject of many research studies. The most widely adopted approach in the previous studies is experimental, consisting of a pretest, an instruction test, and a posttest, either with or without a delayed posttest. Such studies that fall into one of three categories about the role of instruction in L2 pragmatic development will be covered in the section that follows.

Teachability of Targeted Pragmatic Features

Experts in the field think it is beneficial to teach students the intricate details of the English-speaking act of apologizing. Olshtain and Cohen (1990) conducted research to explore the efficacy of this notion. In their study, eighteen adult Hebrew-speaking English learners participated in a teaching program where they completed pre- and post-teaching questionnaires before and following three 20-minute sessions of instruction. Eleven native speakers of American English completed the same questionnaires as the eighteen English learners, providing data to create native norms for the study's scenarios.

The qualitative results from Olshtain and Cohen's (1990) study revealed the need for teaching the subtle aspects of speech act behaviour, such as types of downscaling and intensification, minute variations in plan realisations, and situational awareness. Practically every study that has been done has some sort of limitations. The small treatment period (20-minute sessions) and narrow scope of Olshtain and Cohen's study are some of its limitations. According to Kasper and Rose (2002), students are deemed incapable of mastering the complex components of apology in a 20-minute session. Additionally, the study's validity may have been affected by the small and homogeneous sample size and the use of the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) as the only data collection tool.

LoCastro (1997) conducted further studies in speech acts in addition to Olshtain and Cohen's work. In his book Pedagogical Intervention and Pragmatic Competence Development, LoCastro describes the intense English program he ran for forty-two Japanese first-year university students at a liberal arts university in Tokyo over nine weeks. The purpose of the study was to determine how explicitly teaching politeness strategies—such as asking questions, leading conversations, and seeking consensus—affects group discussions about developing pragmatic competence. The results showed that following the education session, there were no improvements in the subjects' language use. Two of the few studies that refute the case for the efficacy of explicit teaching are LoCastro (1997) and Olshtain and Cohen (1990). The absence of instructional effects in this study might be attributed to the metrics used by LoCastro to evaluate learners' learning, which was based on transcripts of a group discussion to determine whether education addressing politeness strategies was useful (Rose, 2005).

To determine the degree to which the level of input enhancement influences the learning of target request strategies and whether or not learners' confidence in generating their request strategies is influenced by the form of input circumstance, Takahashi (2001) investigated 138 Japanese students divided into four groups, each group received one input situation. It was found

that explicit teaching outperformed meaning-focused input in terms of effectiveness. It was also found that the consciousness-raising exercises carried out with the form-comparison and form-search groups were less successful. The study yielded that learners most successfully picked up pragmatic features when they received explicit meta-pragmatic information along with a comparatively high level of input augmentation.

In addition to previous research that thoroughly explored the crucial topics in teaching and learning, including emotions (e.g., Amiri et al., 2022; Amiri et. al, 2023; Amiri & El Karfa, 2023; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014), research mentioned avove highlights how crucial it is to give students pragmatic knowledge. Regarding the reviewed studies, some of them did not emphasise how teachable specific pragmatic qualities are. Nonetheless, it was discovered that pragmatic qualities might be taught if training was adequately delivered and assessed.

In a nutshell, this research paper's theoretical framework begins by outlining the discipline of pragmatics and how context influences communication. Since speech acts have been the primary focus of pragmatics in language teaching and the aim of the majority of L2 pragmatics teaching, the theoretical framework deals with speech act theory and how it is theorized by theorists such as Austin and Searle. Besides, this section tackles pragmatics and politeness, including the notion of face and face-saving strategies. Then, it discusses how to teach these pragmatic features in EFL classrooms by mentioning approaches related to teaching pragmatics.

Methodology

Research Approach

A mixed methods study, mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches, is used in the present study. The quantitative approach will be beneficial in eliciting teachers' perceptions towards teaching pragmatics and their classroom practices. On the other hand, the qualitative approach will be helpful in eliciting more in-depth explanations about the reason behind those perceptions and practices. Mixing both approaches will increase the validity and the reliability of the data, and thus the quality of the findings.

Participants

In this study, the population sample was chosen by ten university professors (6 males and 4 females) from two public universities (Moulay Ismail and Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah) in Morocco. This population was chosen since it represents the ones who will be involved in teaching and learning Pragmatics. Random sampling was used to select a representative sample of university teachers. This technique of sampling was chosen because it is more objective and it gives the chance to everyone to take part in the study.

Research Instruments

Questionnaire

The first data collection tool used in this study is an open-ended questionnaire. It is a quantitative data collection instrument used to measure the quantity, amount and frequency of something. In this study, questionnaires were used, as the main tool, to investigate university professors' perceptions of pragmatics and their pragmatic practices. Ten university professors of English at the Department of English, faculty of letters and Humanities Dhar El-Mahraz and Moulay Ismail completed the questionnaires.

Interview Guide

Since one of the weaknesses of the questionnaire is its limitation to elicit in-depth answers from the respondents, interviews will also be used to collect data. This qualitative data collection procedure allows respondents the time and freedom to talk about their opinions on a particular topic. It enables the investigator to extract comprehensive data regarding the topic. Conducting interviews is a highly effective method for gathering data that allows participants to understand social phenomena (Dornyei, 2007; Fontana & Frey, 2003).

Data collection procedures:

The first data collection tool that was used to collect quantitative data was the questionnaire. It is composed of two parts 1) the participants' background information and 2) university professors' perceptions of pragmatics and their pragmatic practices. Demographic information, including gender, teaching experience, and practical knowledge acquired during training, is requested in Part 1 of the questionnaire. Twelve items comprised Part 2, five of which dealt with the professors' opinions about pragmatic teaching. This section also covers tasks that teachers utilize, challenges that arise when teaching pragmatic knowledge, and strategies for fostering pragmatic competence. The questionnaires were administered in person in the two faculties, with the researcher giving the respondents instructions on filling them out and collecting the completed forms. The researcher could fully comprehend the questions by providing the participants with relevant explanations during the in-person distribution and questionnaire completion. The focus of the questionnaire was on how university teachers perceive pragmatic knowledge and their ways of teaching pragmatics in their classrooms. One of the strengths of using a questionnaire in this study is to elicit quantitative data related to the teachers' perceptions of teaching pragmatics and their classroom practices.

Semi-structured interviews were also used to investigate how professors view pragmatics and how they apply it in the classroom. Eleven questions comprised the interview, and they included many topics, including the value of teaching pragmatic knowledge, correcting pragmatic errors, mimicking the accent and language use of native speakers, the influence of the mother tongue, problems with culture and identity when teaching EFL, and exercises and resources for

teaching pragmatics. The questionnaire addresses these topics and is designed to gather comprehensive data regarding penetration, exploration, and justification.

Results

Teachers' Perceptions Towards Pragmatics and Pragmatic Teaching

The research question encompasses the following categories: teachers' perspectives on imparting pragmatic knowledge, teachers' assessments of grammatical and pragmatic errors and how to rectify them, teachers' opinions on mimicking the accent and language use of native speakers, identity and culture in English instruction, and the impact of mother tongue.

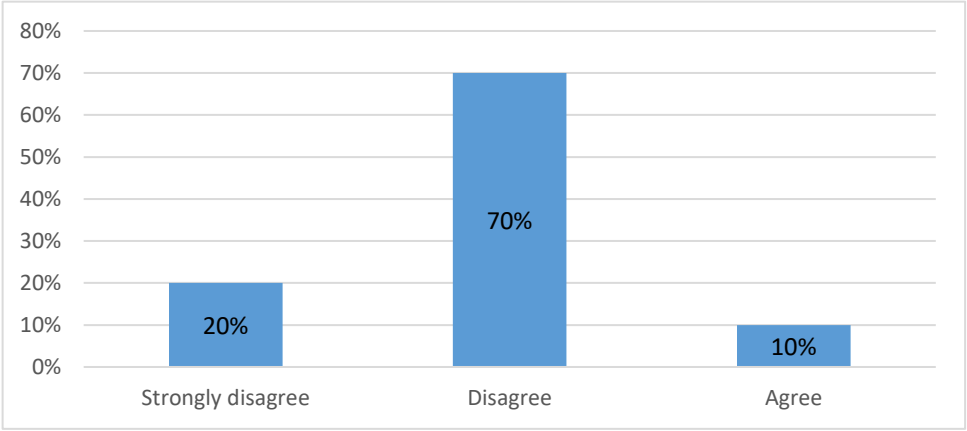


Figure 1. Teaching linguistic knowledge vs pragmatic knowledge and teaching English communicatively

The result of statement 4, *'I believe learning English means learning grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation'*, shows that only 10% of the respondents agree that learning English means learning grammar, pronunciation, and, vocabulary, while 70% disagree and about 20% strongly disagree. This quantitative data shows that the teachers agreed that learning English does not only mean mastering the linguistic features of the language. When asked about what it meant to learn English, one of the interviewees stated that "We cannot deny the fact without grammar students cannot speak and write accurately… Em, but, the use of language is governed by other rules that depend on culture, for example".

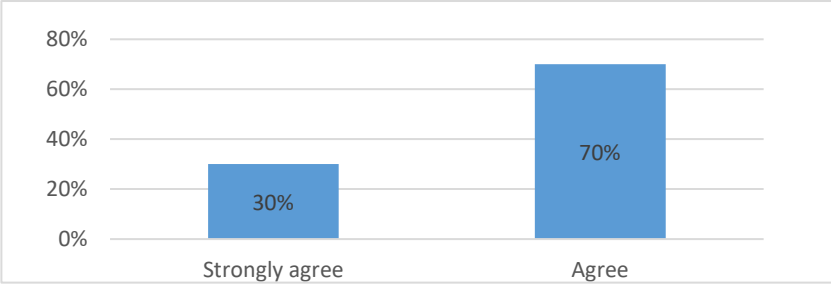


Figure 2. Linguistic knowledge vs pragmatic knowledge

The results of statement eight suggested that that 70% of participants agreed with the statement and 30% strongly agreed. The participants thought that language knowledge was just as necessary as pragmatic knowledge. This indicates that the participants understood the value of imparting practical knowledge. This aligns with Ji's (2007) discovery that over 70% of the instructors polled felt that pragmatic knowledge was just as significant as linguistic knowledge. This view also reinforces a finding from earlier research that suggests it is critical to balance pragmatic and grammatical ability because even highly proficient language learners may not utilize the target language appropriately (Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998). This idea is also confirmed by the present research. One of the interviewed teachers states that:

> "Professors should equip their students with pragmatic and cultural knowledge so that they can use their English in native-like contexts. As you know language doesn't mean mastering the vocabulary, the meanings, and the structures. You have to know how to use it appropriately. So, I think it's very crucial."

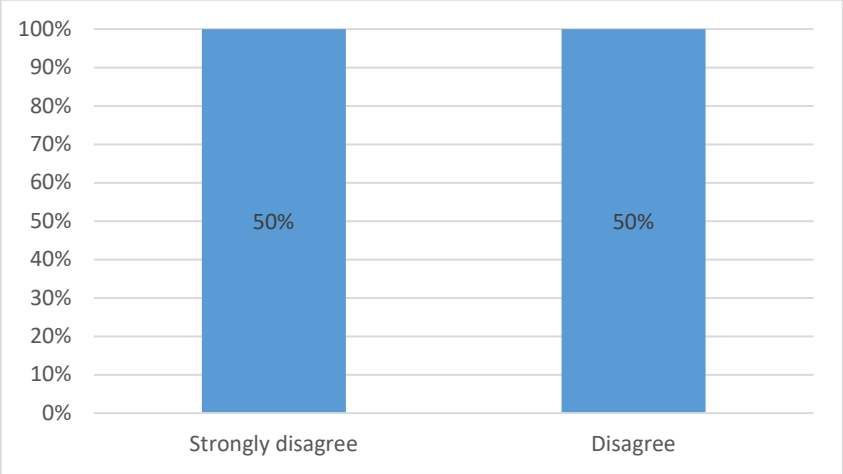


Figure 3. Teaching linguistic knowledge vs teaching English communicatively

As mentioned in the above graph, 50% of the respondents strongly disagree with the statement (I think teaching English communicatively is not as crucial as teaching grammatical points and vocabulary items) and 50% disagree. This quantitative data suggests that university teachers think communicative English instruction is just as important as teaching grammatical rules and vocabulary. This belief can be seen as a favorable opinion of teachers in the context of teaching English as a foreign language in Morocco (see Amiri & El Karfa, 2021), where teachers and students generally place a higher emphasis on teaching language skills because of the pressure of exams that primarily consist of grammar and vocabulary questions. Focusing solely on the linguistic aspects of English frequently produces generations of students who are proficient in grammar and vocabulary but cannot effectively communicate in the language (Celcia-Murcia, 2001).

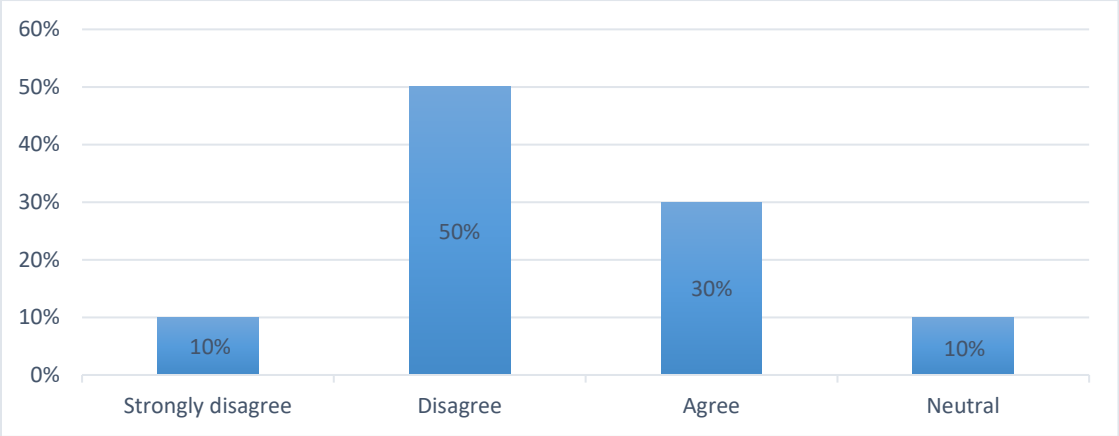


Figure 4. Teaching pragmatic knowledge when students reach a certain level of language proficiency

Teachers' opinions about when to impart pragmatic knowledge to EFL students are depicted in the above graph. The statement "I believe that teachers should teach pragmatic knowledge when students reach a certain level of language proficiency" is disagreed with by half of the respondents, compared to 10% who strongly disagree and the same amount who decided to remain neutral. About 30% of the respondents, however, believe that pragmatic information needs to be introduced to students only after they have attained a particular degree of competency. The results show that some educators are ignorant of how crucial it is to teach pragmatics to students who begin to acquire the language.

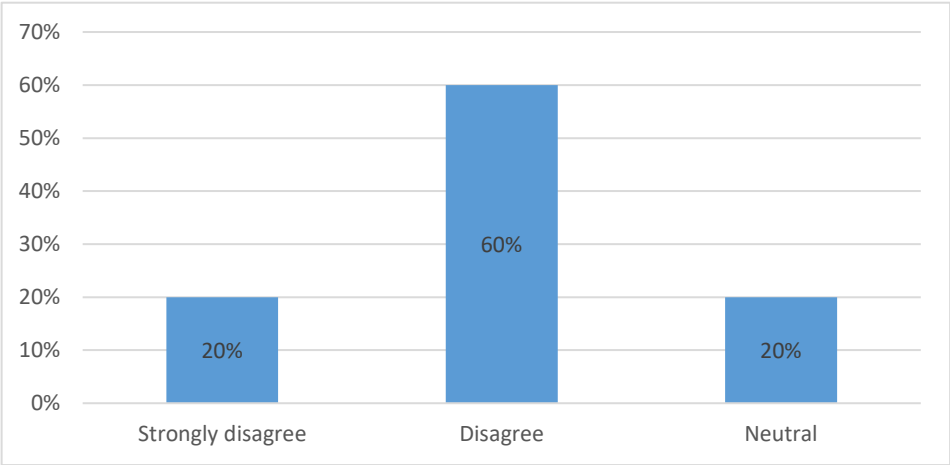


Figure 5. Teachers' cultural knowledge and appropriate language use

Teachers were also asked to indicate how they agreed with the statement (I do not think I know how to provide students with cultural knowledge and appropriate language use). Figure 5 shows that 60% of the participants stated that they had an idea about how to teach pragmatic knowledge and, only 20% chose to be neutral. It can be inferred that teachers think that their teaching

experience is enough to be good at transmitting cultural knowledge to students. This is what a university teacher states when asked about whether she knows how to provide his students with cultural knowledge and appropriate language use: "Any university professor should be aware of new methods and approaches that can be used to integrate cultural and pragmatic knowledge in their courses." However, some interviews did not support this quantitative data. When asked about teaching pragmatics, a teacher states that "Sometimes, I do teach pragmatics to my students without having any intention to teach it".

Discussion

The purpose of the current paper has been to investigate teachers' perceptions towards teaching pragmatics and their classroom practices. The paper has raised two questions that it answered by using different data collection instruments.

The second research question depicted how university professors use their pragmatic knowledge in the classroom. Almost all the surveyed teachers opt for explicit instructions to teach cultural knowledge and general pragmatic information to their students. For instance, teachers explain explicitly what native speakers would say in a given situation. This explicit explanation can be in the form of lecturing that is rejected by the new approaches to language teaching and learning. However, many scholars found that employing an explicit approach helps students acquire the target communication norms effectively. Besides, Moroccan university teachers focus on communicative skills rather than linguistic features. This means that they become aware of the needs and the interests of the 21st-century students. These needs and interests can be seen in students' will to be fully integrated into the target culture and to effectively communicate using native-like pronunciation. The idea of students' needs and interests, which shifts teachers' ways of teaching, has changed teachers' roles from being the source of knowledge to the guide, facilitator, and monitor. The present research finds that teachers do not employ new strategies and techniques to teach language use. They only rely on lecturing and provide students with explicit explanations to teach them communication and pragmatic norms. Because of many conditions (e.g., overcrowdedness), teachers do not employ new strategies in their teaching.

The conclusions of studies by Bardovi-Harlig (2001), Kasper (1997), and Ji (2007), which suggested that teachers should impart pragmatic information to students regardless of proficiency level, are not supported by this finding. These authors found that learners who are grammatically competent may misuse language and do not meet the demands of the target language's pragmatic norms. Simultaneous instruction of pragmatic and grammatical knowledge is crucial. Developing pragmatic competence is not a prerequisite for learning grammatical competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998). According to Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989), even proficient language learners make pragmatic errors or fail to transmit the desired meaning in interactions. Even L2 advanced learners frequently exhibit an imbalance in their pragmatic and grammatical competencies (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990; 1993). To address the disparity between grammatical and pragmatic acquisition, Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor (2003) proposed to include pragmatics in the English teaching curriculum from the early stage.

The findings also support the assertion made by Kasper and Rose (2002) that even when pragmatic information is not meant to be taught, learners can acquire pragmatics through exposure to input and tasks and activities completed in class. However according to Schmidt (1993), learners frequently fail to detect pragmatic functions because they are not relevant to them. Hence, exposure to the target language alone may not be adequate for acquiring second-language pragmatic knowledge. Teachers would then need to concentrate on teaching pragmatic aspects rather than imparting them "accidentally". It may be inferred that the teaching of pragmatics was not prioritized and that pragmatic knowledge was not purposefully imparted.

It is possible to conclude from the quantitative findings that teachers were unable to teach pragmatics perfectly because they were not competent in the subject. This confirms the findings of Ji's 2007 study, which indicated that Chinese College English professors struggled to teach pragmatics due to a lack of pragmatic competency.

Implications

The findings of the present study have led to implications and suggestions on how teachers should teach pragmatics, and how to train and develop teachers professionally.

Teachers must adopt a new perspective regarding the primary goal of teaching English. Teachers believe that students must be equipped with the skills and information necessary to converse with native speakers. Moroccan EFL teachers must understand the broader goal of teaching English in light of the evolving circumstances. Because of this, Moroccan EFL teachers must thoroughly comprehend the need to incorporate a variety of styles into their future instruction—raising awareness alone will not be enough. As a result, teacher training programs must incorporate the idea of diversity into their curricula (Suzuki, 2011).

Additionally, it has been noted that learners benefit from pragmatic instruction. Moroccan EFL teachers must have a critical stance when instructing pragmatics. Although teaching pragmatics can be done using either of the two methods (implicit and explicit) described in the theoretical framework, language acquisition is a lifelong process. Educators must convey to their students the value of pragmatics. When students understand the value of using language appropriately and figure out how to accomplish their goals, they learn better. Teachers must first provide direction and support for their students to communicate effectively and appropriately in the target language.

The primary responsibility of teachers is not only restricted to teaching students how to perform a speech act, but more significantly it is to help people become more observers and conscious of the pragmatic functions that language—more specifically, discourse—has so that as learners, they can be more cognizant of these functions (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996). In other words, teachers should not adopt traditional approaches to language teaching and learning by only being the main source of information through lecturing. Instead, they should be advisors and monitors who give learners information on the strategies to learn pragmatics. They should direct them to websites where they can select the pragmatic resources and learn based on their interests (Cohen,

2008). Adopting a critical approach when teaching languages also entails teachers reflecting on their methods and devising plans to give students chances to learn new things.

Limitations

As with any research, the present paper has some limitations. The first has to do with the small number of the participants. Due to access, availability and time constraints, this research does not employ observation as an instrument to collect the data. Besides, to have a clear idea of how pragmatics is taught and learned, it would be better to have students take part in the data collection process, to compare both teachers' and students' perspectives on the matter.

Conclusion

the present study explored how Moroccan university professors view pragmatics and pragmatic teaching. It also explored how they use their pragmatic knowledge in the classroom. The results showed that language proficiency is just as valuable as pragmatic proficiency. Because learners with extensive grammar knowledge may not utilize the target language effectively, it is imperative to achieve an equilibrium between pragmatic and grammatical competence and teach them simultaneously. As a result, the findings showed that some university professors believe that teaching pragmatics to students, when they are still learning the language, is irrelevant. They possess sufficient abilities to impart cultural understanding and appropriate language proficiency to students effectively.

Numerous inferences can be made in light of the results and the discussion that followed. Regarding educators' views on pragmatics and pragmatic instruction, the quantitative and qualitative data show that teachers understand the value of imparting pragmatic knowledge and think that pragmatic mistakes are more significant than grammatical ones. Teachers also understand that teaching English communicatively is more vital than teaching grammar rules and structures and that linguistic knowledge is just as crucial as pragmatic information. Some educators are ignorant of how important it is to introduce pragmatics to students when they are still learning English. They think that pragmatics should be taught to students who have reached a certain level of proficiency in English.

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