



Research Paper

EFL Learners' Pragmatic Motivation Development via Exposure to Movie- Watching

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ABSTRACT

An aspect responsible for lack of suitable communicative skills is inappropriate level of motivation among the learners. The goal of this study was to consider the impact of using film watching on the pragmatic motivation of EFL learners. To this purpose, an experimental study was carried out with medical students. The sample of the study was composed of 60 nursing students aged 19 to 24. To ensure that the participants English proficiency, Quick Oxford Placement Test (OQPT) was run. Finally, 54 participants established the subjects of the study; then, being randomly classified into two equal groups of experimental (EG=27) and control (CG=27). Pre and post Pragmatic Motivation Questionnaire (Tajeddin and Zand-Moghadam, 2012) were used to collect the data. The results of the study indicated that watching films by the EFL learners could impact their level of motivation significantly. The achievements suggested the extensive use of movies in the language classes that could lead to both pragmatic knowledge and the subjects' level of pragmatic motivation.

Keywords: EFL; Film watching; Pragmatic motivation

INTRODUCTION

In everyday relationships and communication, people exchange a lot of knowledge and information using different tools and thus language conveys our ideas, emotions, knowledge to achieve desired communication (Saadatmandi et al., 2018). Any misunderstanding and confusion that might happen in terms of cultural differences and lack of tendency to communicate, it can lead to communication breakdown. This is one of the hurdles that both teachers and learners encounter, especially in EFL context where the required opportunity is not provided for all of the learners equally (Saadatmandi et al., 2018). One of the causes of this type of failure is the inappropriate acquisition of pragmatic skills. It has been asserted that poor pragmatic development can lead to pragmatic failure, which can lead to ambiguity in intercultural communication.

As Wannaruk (2008) asserted, due to various perceptions and interpretations of language, a “breakdown” in communication can be initiated in cross-cultural communication and the absence of WTC. This lack of knowledge and ability can be challenging for the interlocutors in the settings where a language is being taught de-contextually and as a result English is limited to formal classroom practice and teaching activities proposed by the teaching systems, current textbooks, and traditional view toward teaching English. Thus, teachers will have to equip and use the functions and characteristics of the first language (L1) to serve language acquisition, and learners will have to adapt to new changes and implement them. them satisfactorily in their long-term learning process.

Cutrone (2020) also argues that although EFL students may have perfect grammatical and pronunciation skills, they often encounter major obstacles at the pragmatic level, especially when engaging in conversation with native speakers, and therefore they do not come to the level to improve their WTC appropriately. Cutrone (2020) further asserts that there are two types of pragmatics that learners may fail to achieve: linguistic pragmatics and sociopragmatics, failure of the former indicating errors that are corrected by 'solutions'. grammatical preference while the second form indicates alignment with cultural norms and parameters.

Pragmatic Motivation

An aspect responsible for lack of suitable communicative skills is inappropriate level of motivation among the learners. Motivation is assumed to contribute to L2 pragmatic development because it is connected to awareness about the features of the target language (Gardner & Macintyre, 1992, 1993a). It has been already proved that motivation basically impact the rate and success of language learning. However, it is necessary to discuss the role of motivation in the pragmatic awareness of the EFL learners (Kasper & Rose 2002, Kasper & Dahl. 1991). Research on the relationship between motivation and pragmatic competence has focused on the issues of second pragmatic use and that few of them set to discuss and explore whether motivation can promote the development of pragmatic competence and how to develop learners' pragmatic competence by improving learners' motivation. This aspect needs more research and elaboration since lack of the required motivation in the given area can lead to lack of tendency in pragmatic acquisition (Tagashira, Yamato & Isoda, 2011, Takahashi, 2005, 2012, 2013).

Language learners should come to the level to know their interlocutor(s) as well as the communicative context and sociocultural environment if they mean to achieve the ability to appropriately communicate



with others in a suitable manner. The ability to utilize language in different situation can be a fundamental quality of most patterns in communicative competence (Timpe-Laughlin et al., 2015). This kind of knowledge and ability are commonly identified to be pragmatic knowledge, and it is what the speakers of the language should be able to have mastered appropriately and suitably, but we already know that the current text books and teaching methods lack the kind of authenticity and skill to improve this aspect of language among the learners (Schauer, 2010; Taguchi, 2014) because as stated before, the instructional materials, particularly for EFL learners, is still to some degree restricted and ill-formed, which may take off English-language learners ill-prepared for pragmatic challenges within the English-medium contexts; additionally, lack of authentic research on pragmatics issues is another serious problem.

In fact, enough study is required to unfold the main limitations and drawbacks of both textbooks and teaching methods and procedures especially for Iranian English language learners so as to overcome the pitfalls in the use of speech acts and communicative competence of their learners.

Regarding the limitations and drawbacks of the current teaching procedures and textbooks considering lack of authenticity and the capability to improve pragmatics motivation and the problems of teaching approaches and methods, this study aims at introducing movie as a suitable substitute that can overcome the deficiencies in terms of both the pragmatic competence and motivation of the EFL learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last few years, pragmatic instruction has been known to be one of the most recent paradigms that has called for a great number of research in many classroom-based studies that aimed to discover the effectiveness of pragmatic instruction in EFL contexts. Some of these studies are now available (Eun, & Tadayoushi, 2006; Rose, 2005; Belz, 2007; Cohen, 2008). Moreover, several studies have focused on pragmatics instruction in EFL classrooms conducted in the past (Reuda, 2004; Sawako, 2007; Jernigan, 2007; Mwinyelle, 2005; Vellenga, 2008).

Students' motivational level plays an important role in the development of their language. Many studies in socio-educational situations have explored the role that motivation plays in EFL and its crucial effect in creating individual differences in second language acquisition (Gardner & Macintyre, 1992, 1993a). Takahashi (2001, 2005) argues that motivation is the most influential factors that can explain differences in learners' perception of pragmatic L2 input. Research indicates that those learners who are highly motivated have more pragmatic knowledge than those who are less motivated. However, depending on the linguistic field studied, motivation has specific effects.

Yang and Ren (2019) investigated the extent to which L2 students' motivation could influence their pragmatic cognition. 498 Chinese students from EFL universities responded to an online survey. A total of 12 participants were interviewed. Quantitative results of the study proved that knowledge on pragmatic positively correlated with the learners' attitudes toward the L2 society and planned learning effort. Furthermore, a model that combines planned learning efforts, idea toward the L2 community and learning English can be an important predictor of their pragmatic cognition. Additionally, the researcher found that there was a controversy between the students linguistic need for language learning and their performance in acquiring pragmatic knowledge. This may contribute to the lack of relationship between overall levels of motivation for language learning and pragmatic cognition.



Motivation has been an important topic of research in the field of applied linguistics over the last five decades. Numerous studies from several theoretical perspectives have provided empirical evidence for the important role of motivation in language learning. Nonetheless, the topic has been examined in relation to L2 pragmatics only in a few studies.

Takahashi (2005) investigated the effect of motivation and proficiency on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' ability to recognize target request expressions in written dialogues. Participants completed a motivation questionnaire and an oral task on English request forms after receiving an implicit instructional treatment on the target pragma-linguistic features. Results showed that learners with more intrinsic motivation noticed more target forms and had more awareness of target pragmatic forms than less-motivated learners. In another study on the effects of learner profiles on pragma-linguistic awareness and learning, involving 154 Japanese EFL learners, Takahashi (2015) also found that learners with stronger communication-oriented motivation noticed more bi-clausal request forms (e.g., I am wondering); however, motivation was not associated with L2 pragmatic production. Tagashira et al. (2011) investigated how Japanese EFL learners' patterns of motivation influenced their pragmatic awareness.

A total of 162 intermediate-level EFL learners in a Japanese university completed a questionnaire measuring their motivation as well as pragmatic and grammatical awareness. The results showed that motivation accounted for differences in recognition of pragmatic errors, but not grammatical errors. Additionally, the more self-determined or intrinsically motivated learners showed a better perception of the appropriateness of the utterances. Tajeddin and Moghadam (2012) investigated EFL learners' general and speech-act-specific motivation (motivation for using requests, refusals, and apologies) on one hand, and their performance on the specific speech acts using a written discourse completion task (DCT) on the other hand. Results showed a significant impact of speech-act-specific motivation on learners' speech act production, while the general pragmatic motivation did not predict learners' production significantly.

Concentrating on L1-Mandarin Chinese speakers, Yang and Ren (2020) investigated the relationship between Chinese EFL learners' L2 motivation and their pragmatic awareness by adopting the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) questionnaire (Taguchi et al., 2009). The results showed that the intended learning efforts, attitudes toward the L2 community, and attitudes toward learning English significantly predict levels of pragmatic awareness. However, there was no significant correlation found between pragmatic awareness and ideal/ought-to L2 self.

For this study, the following questions were designed:

What is the effect of movie-watching on EFL learners' pragmatic motivation?

The Study

Population

The sample of the study was composed of 60 nursing students aged 19 to 24 all being homogeneous in terms of their culture. To ensure that the participants of the study were at almost the same level of English proficiency, the researchers applied Quick Oxford Placement Test (OQPT) during the first session of the project. Based on the result of OQPT, 6 ones whose level appeared to be too above or below the average



based on the Z score were eliminated and the other 54 established the subjects of the study; then, they were randomly classified into two equal groups of experimental (EG=27) and control (CG=27).

Instrumentation

Two instruments were used to collect the data of this study: Quick Oxford Placement Test and pre and post administration of Pragmatic Motivation Questionnaire (PMQ). It was designed and used by Tajeddin and Zand-Moghadam (2012). It was made up of 30 items. These items tested the familiarity of the EFL learners on the cultural issues, the politeness behaviors, familiarity with speech acts, and the strategies that focused on. The learners had to choose one of the five-point Likert scales of strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Data analysis

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Time	Variables	Control (N=27)		Experimental (N=27)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
	General Pragmatics Motivation	25.52	3.74	25.89	2.82
	Specific Pragmatics Motivation	17.41	3.50	17.44	4.14
	General Pragmatics Motivation	26.22	5.96	38	6.28
	Specific Pragmatics Motivation	17.60	3.74	29	9.28

According to the information in table 1, the GPMQ of CG was (M=25.52, SD=3.74) and for the EG, it was (M=25.89, SD=2.82); moreover, the mean and standard deviation for the pre-test of SASMQ of CG was (M=17.41, SD=3.50) and it was (M=17.44, SD=4.14) for the EG. As it can be seen, the means of the two groups for the pretest was almost in the same level.

As far as the data of the posttests for both groups are concerned, the mean and standard deviation of GPMQ for the CG was estimated to be (M=26.22, SD=5.96) slightly higher than pretest. But GPMQ for EG was calculated to be (M=38, SD=6.28) significantly higher than the pretest for this group; besides, the mean and standard deviation of SASMQ for the CG was (M=17.60, SD=3.74), with little difference between the pretest. And finally, the SASMQ for EG was estimated to be (M=29, SD=9.28), much higher than the pretest. In fact, the difference between the mean of the EG from pre to posttest is clearly the effect of the treatment of watching films by the subjects in the EG. It can support the idea that the use of films can clearly lead to the pragmatic improvement of the learners' motivation towards the two speech acts of requests and refusals. In the following, the figures present almost the same type of relationship. In every part of the figures, it can be observed that the EG outperformed the CG using the two speech acts of refusal and requests, the success that was achieved as a result of exposure to the given films.



Figure 1
General Pragmatics Motivation in Two Groups (CG & EG)

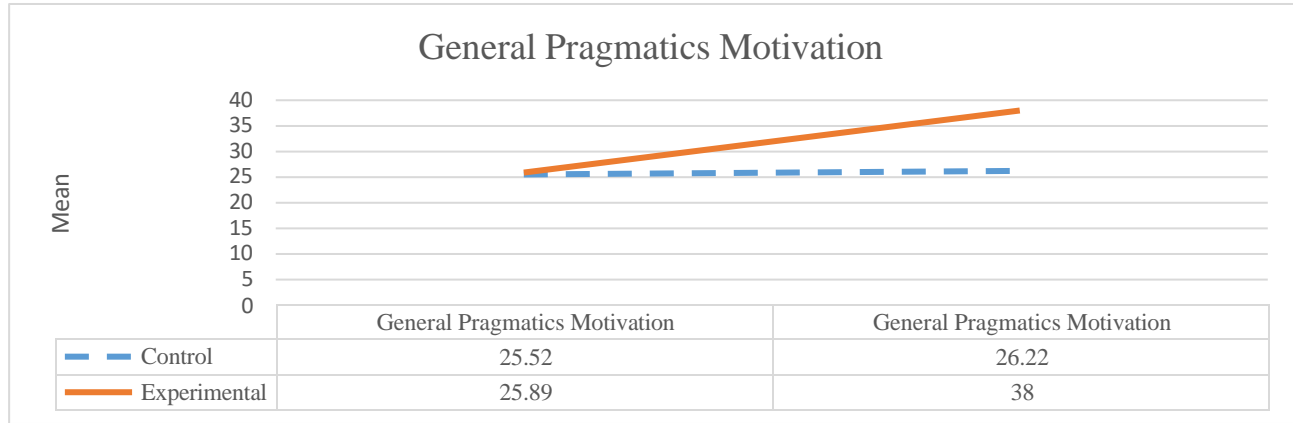


Figure 2
Specific Pragmatics Motivation in Two Groups (CG & EG)

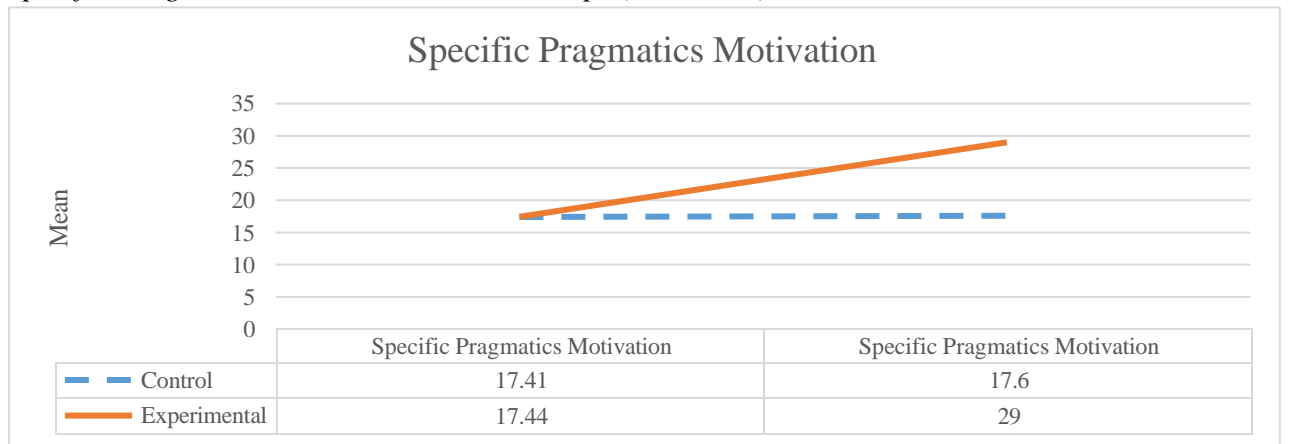
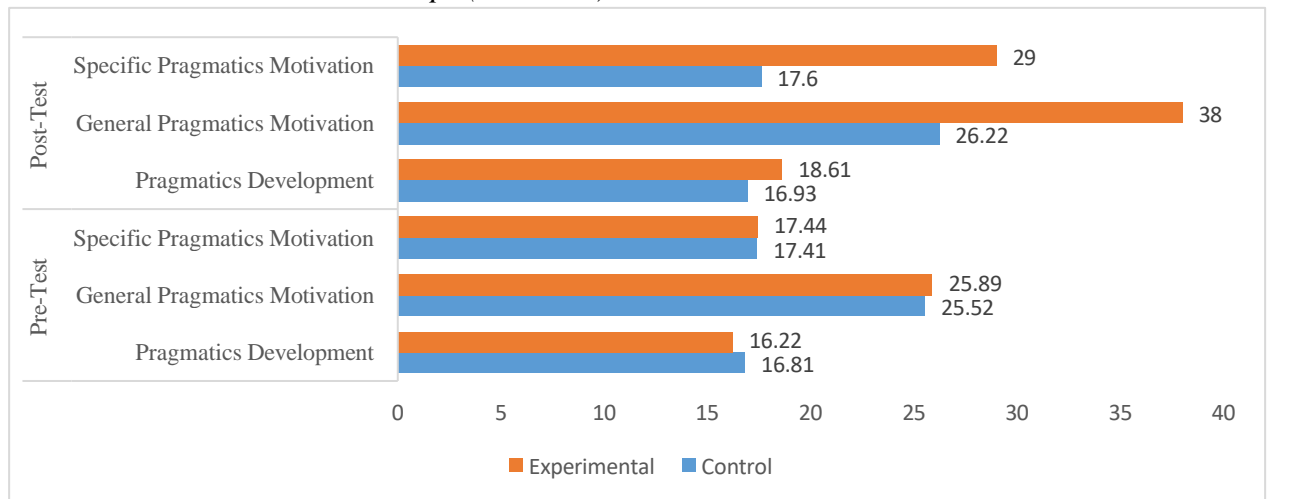


Figure 3
Research Variables in Two Groups (CG & EG)



The data in table 2 shows there was not a significant difference in the mean scores GPM in the pre-test of CG ($M=25.52$, $SD=3.74$), and pre-test of EG ($M=25.89$, $SD=2.82$) $t=-0.41$, $df=48.37$, $p>0.05$, and the result also confirmed there was not a significant difference in the mean scores SASM in the pre-test of CG ($M=17.41$, $SD=3.50$), and pre-test of EG ($M=17.44$, $SD=4.14$) $t=-0.04$, $df=50.62$, $p>0.05$.

Table 2

Independent sample T-Test of Research Variables (Pre-test)

Variable	Group	N	Mean	St. Deviation	T-Test	df	P-Value
General Pragmatics Motivation	Control	27	25.52	3.74	-0.41	48.37	0.68
	Experimental	27	25.89	2.82			
Specific Pragmatics Motivation	Control	27	17.41	3.50	-0.04	50.62	0.97
	Experimental	27	17.44	4.14			

According to the data in table 3, the result strongly confirmed a significant difference in the mean scores for GPM in the post-test of CG ($M=26.22$, $SD=5.96$), and post-test of EG ($M=38$, $SD=6.28$), $t=-7.07$, $df=51.85$, $p<0.01$. Moreover, the result confirmed a significant difference in the mean scores for SPM in the post-test of CG ($M=17.60$, $SD=3.74$), and post-test of EG ($M=29$, $SD=9.28$), $t=-5.93$, $df=34.25$, $p<0.01$. The effect size of Pragmatics Development was calculated to be 1.02 and $r=0.46$, but the effect size for the General Pragmatics Motivation was calculated to be 1.92 and $r=0.69$. In the same manner, the effect size for Specific Pragmatics Motivation was estimated to be 1.61 and $r=0.63$. As a result, it can be concluded that the magnitude of the effect size for all research variables in this study was moderate and acceptable.

Table 3

Independent sample T-Test of Research Variables (Post-test)

Variable	Group	N	Mean	St. Deviation	T-Test	df	P-Value
General Pragmatics Motivation	Control	27	26.22	5.96	-7.07	51.85	.000
	Experimental	27	38	6.28			
Specific Pragmatics Motivation	Control	27	17.60	3.74	-5.93	34.25	.000
	Experimental	27	29	9.28			

The result of table 4 confirmed there was not a significant difference in the mean scores General Pragmatics Motivation in the pre-test ($M=25.52$, $SD=3.74$), and post-test of CG ($M=26.22$, $SD=5.96$) $t=-1.14$, $df=26$, $p>0.05$, and the result confirmed there was not a significant difference in the mean scores of SPM in the pre-test ($M=17.41$, $SD=3.50$), and post-test of CG ($M=17.60$, $SD=3.74$) $t=-1.31$, $df=26$, $p>0.05$.



Table 4*Paired Sample T-Test of Research Variables (CG)*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	St. Deviation	T-Test	df	P-Value
General Pragmatics Motivation	Pretest	27	25.52	3.74	-1.14	26	0.27
	Posttest	27	26.22	5.96			
Specific Pragmatics Motivation	Pretest	27	17.41	3.50	-1.31	26	0.20
	Posttest	27	17.60	3.74			

The result of table 5 confirmed there was a significant difference in the mean scores of GPM of the pre-test (M=25.89, SD= 2.82), and post-test of EG (M=38, SD= 6.28) $t=-8.60$, $df=26$, $p< 0.01$; thus, the result confirmed there was a significant difference in the mean scores SPM in the pre-test (M=17.44, SD= 4.14), and post-test of EG (M=29, SD= 9.28) $t=-7.00$, $df=26$, $p< 0.01$.

Table 5*Paired sample T-Test of Research Variables (EG)*

Variable	Group	N	Mean	St. Deviation	T-Test	df	P-Value
Pragmatics Development	Pretest	27	16.22	1.91	-7.84	26	.000
	Posttest	27	18.61	0.96			
General Pragmatics Motivation	Pretest	27	25.89	2.82	-8.60	26	.000
	Posttest	27	38	6.28			
Specific Pragmatics Motivation	Pretest	27	17.44	4.14	-7.00	26	.000
	Posttest	27	29	9.28			

DISCUSSION

The goal of the study was to observe the effect of movie-watching on the pragmatic motivation of the EFL learners of the study. Nursing students need English for two reasons: to be able to read a great deal of English material as a part of their ESP courses and also to be able to communicate in English if they have the opportunity to immigrate to English-speaking countries as an immigrant. All these require them to learn everyday English and improve high communicative skills. For all these, they will need to be highly motivated to improve their pragmatic motivation that is an essential factor for the development of their general language ability. However, not all these particular participants are successful to achieve this goal since they face various theoretical and practical restrictions. To overcome some parts of the problem that they face, this study was carried out by introducing movie-watching in their curriculum and calling attention to several factors. The first assumption for the implementation of movies into the language classes was exposing the learners into everyday language and improve their pragmatic competence. To undertake such a purpose, it is required for the learners to be motivated enough since psychologically



they need to nurture their positive feelings towards spending their time on watching the recommended movies and practice the use of everyday language. According to the difference between the pre and post means of the two questionnaires, it is confirmed that the participants succeeded to have improved their motivation towards pragmatic competence after being instructed using films.

Considering Christopher and Ho (2006) views, foreign movies/videos can be more motivating than other forms of authentic material. They provide another reason that such movies can be entertaining for language learners. Also, music and setting elements can make an enjoyable experience for them. More importantly, video movies provide topics and ideas for language learners to discuss. In order to choose video material for the classroom, topics must be chosen based on the students' interest and their level of English proficiency. As Nunan (2003) stated that the designing of suitable activities is an important consideration, which involves selecting the content of the video and dividing it into sections for presenting in stages to students. Instructors can design such activities in which students can participate profitably. The instructors can also be a reflective observer in order not to distract the students' attention from the film. Therefore, it would be very beneficial for instructors to select appropriate video materials which are conducive to language learning and learners would be more motivated to cope with the instruction when given the opportunity to study with the use of video materials.

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