Developing pragmatic awareness of suggestions in the EFL classroom:
A focus on instructional effects

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The role of instruction to develop learners' pragmatic competence in both second and foreign language contexts has recently motivated a great deal of research. However, most of this research has adopted an explicit instructional approach with only a few studies attempting to operationalise a more implicit condition for pragmatic learning. In order to further explore how both explicit and implicit treatments can be operationalised, the aim of this study is to ascertain the instructional effects of these two types of teaching conditions on learners' pragmatic awareness of suggestions. The participants consisted of learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) distributed into three intact classes: group A ($n = 24$) worked on awareness-raising and production tasks receiving explicit metapragmatic explanations on suggestions; group B ($n = 25$) was taught the use of suggestions by means of input enhancement and recast techniques; and group C ($n = 32$) was a control group that did not receive any instruction on suggestions. The study adopted a pre-test and a post-test design to measure the effects of instruction on participants' awareness of suggestions. Results from our analysis showed the positive effects of instruction on learners' pragmatic awareness of suggestions. In addition, our findings illustrate the benefits of both explicit and more implicit instructional approaches to developing learners' pragmatic awareness in the EFL classroom.

Récemment, le rôle de l'enseignement dans le développement de la compétence pragmatique des apprenants, aussi bien dans un contexte de langue étrangère que de langue seconde, a fait l'objet de nombreuses recherches. Cependant, la majeure partie de ces recherches s'est axée sur un mode d'enseignement explicite, et seules quelques études ont tenté d'opérationnaliser un apprentissage pragmatique d'un type plus implicite. Afin d'explorer en profondeur la manière d'opérationnaliser les traitements explicites et implicites, la présente étude cherche à déterminer les effets de ces deux types d'enseignement sur la conscience pragmatique qu'ont les apprenants des suggestions. Les participants étaient des étudiants d'anglais langue étrangère (ALE), répartis en trois classes intactes : le groupe A ($n = 24$), après avoir

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reçu des consignes métapragmatiques explicites concernant la formulation des suggestions, a travaillé sur des tâches de conscientisation et de production ; le groupe B ($n = 25$) a appris à formuler des suggestions en utilisant les techniques de reformulation et de mise en évidence des inputs ; le groupe C ($n = 32$), qui était le groupe témoin, n'a reçu aucune consigne concernant les suggestions. L'étude comportait un pré-test et un post-test pour évaluer chez les apprenants les effets de l'enseignement sur la conscience qu'ils ont des suggestions. Les résultats de notre analyse ont montré les effets positifs de cet enseignement sur la conscience pragmatique des suggestions. D'autre part, nos conclusions illustrent les avantages des approches tant explicite que plus implicite de l'enseignement sur le développement de la compétence pragmatique chez les apprenants d'ALE.

Introduction

The role of instruction and instructional approaches to language learning have stimulated a lot of debate both in the field of language pedagogy and in current second language acquisition theories. On the one hand, throughout the history of language teaching, different teaching traditions have focused on instruction in different ways (Howatt, 1984; Richards and Rodgers, 1986). In the Grammar Translation and Cognitive Code methods, language instruction was based on the assumption that perception and awareness of language forms were best achieved by means of explicit instruction. In contrast, Natural and Communicative approaches favoured implicit learning and suggested that grammar instruction should be integrated into meaningful communication. On the other hand, over the last twenty years, different second language acquisition theories have shown an interest in explaining how second languages are acquired in instructional contexts. Those theories, such as the Monitor Model (Krashen, 1985) or the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996), address the role of instruction in acquiring a second/foreign language (L2). Moreover, in contrast to Krashen's non-interface position (Krashen, 1985), and due to analyses of learners in grammar-free immersion L2 programmes (Lightbown, Spada and White, 1993), empirical investigations have been designed to assess the effectiveness of L2 instruction. From this perspective, Norris and Ortega's (2000) meta-analysis of studies on the effect of instruction on learning shows the positive and durable effect of instruction, as well as the advantage of explicit over implicit types of instruction. Results of this meta-analysis also seem to suggest that, regardless of whether an explicit or implicit approach is adopted, instruction needs to ensure that learners focus on language form. Such attention to language has been explored on the premise that attention precedes language learning and as part of the debate of the role of awareness in the process of language learning. In order to contribute to this line of research and examine different types of instruction, the aim of this paper is to focus on

the instructional effects of two types of teaching conditions, namely those of explicit and implicit treatments, on learners' pragmatic awareness of the particular speech act of suggestions.

Theoretical Background

In the field of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), Schmidt's (1993) Noticing Hypothesis is relevant to gaining a further understanding of the role of pragmatic awareness in the classroom. According to Schmidt (1993), attention to linguistic forms, functional meanings, and the pertinent contextual features are required for the learning of L2 pragmatics. Schmidt (1995, 2001) also suggests that since many features of L2 input are likely to be infrequent or non-salient, intentionally focused attention is a necessity for successful language learning. From this perspective, while Schmidt (1993) proposes a consciousness-raising approach, which involves paying conscious attention to relevant forms, their pragmalinguistic functions and the sociopragmatic constraints these particular forms involve, other studies have examined the role of input enhancement in developing L2 pragmatic competence. In this regard, Sharwood Smith (1991, 1993) suggests that input enhancement techniques, such as stress and intonation in teacher talk or colour enhancement in printed texts, can be effective ways of directing learners' attention to form without explicit teaching. Following Sharwood Smith's definition of input enhancement, empirical investigations provide evidence that elaborated levels of attention-drawing activities are more helpful than exposure to positive evidence. For instance, in Takahashi (2001), different degrees of input enhancement were set up to measure Japanese EFL learners' learning of target request forms. The author found that, although explicit teaching was the most effective instructional condition, several learners under implicit input conditions also noticed the target request forms and used them in the post-test. Both Schmidt's (1993, 1995, 2001) Noticing Hypothesis and the subsequent research motivated by this work in relation to morphosyntactic features (Rosa and O'Neill, 1999; Leow, 2000; Rosa and Leow, 2004) suggest that selective attention and awareness of language facilitate the process of language learning. However, in the realm of pragmatics in language teaching, the debate focuses on the way selective attention and awareness of pragmatic issues can be activated, an issue which has often been viewed in terms of the effect of instruction on pragmatic learning.

Similarly to research conducted into the effect of instruction at the morphosyntactic level (see Norris and Ortega, 2000 for a review), ILP research has explored instructional effects on the development of learners' pragmatic competence. From this perspective, research conducted in foreign language contexts suggests that instruction is both necessary and effective (Olshtain and Cohen, 1990; Morrow, 1995; Safont, 2005; see also the collection of papers in Rose and Kasper, 2001 and Martínez-Flor Usó-Juan and Fernández-Guerra,

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2003). More specifically, ILP research has explored the effects of instruction on learners' development of L2 pragmatic competence within the framework of explicit versus implicit learning. For instance, results of the studies reported in House and Kasper (1981a), House (1996), Rose and Ng Kwai-Fun (2001), and Takahashi (2001) seem to indicate that explicit metapragmatic instruction appears to be more effective than implicit teaching. However, the operationalisation of an explicit versus an implicit approach is relevant to a further understanding of the effectiveness of different teaching approaches in the pragmatic realm. As suggested by DeKeyser (2003), explicit teaching involves working with the rules of language, which can be done deductively or inductively. While in the former case explanations of the rules of languages are provided, in the latter case learners are asked to examine examples from a text and to formulate the rules of the target language. In contrast, when there is no focus on the rules of language, the approach is described as implicit. DeKeyser (2003) also states that the combination of implicit and inductive is clear in cases where children acquire the first language without being conscious of this process. However, he acknowledges that the combination of implicit and deductive learning is not so obvious. The difficulty of establishing clear differences between explicit and implicit in the deductive and inductive dimensions also applies to the teaching of pragmatics in the classroom, especially in the realm of implicit teaching.

The distinction between explicit and implicit teaching has also been addressed by Doughty (2003). According to her, explicit teaching involves directing learners' attention towards the target forms with the aim of discussing those forms. In contrast, an implicit pedagogical approach aims to attract the learner's attention while avoiding any type of metalinguistic explanation and minimising the interruption of the communicative situation. Thus, as Doughty (2003, p. 265) states, in all types of explicit instruction rules are explained to learners, whereas in implicit instruction there is no overt reference to rules or forms. From this perspective, a few studies have examined the effect of implicit instruction for pragmatic learning using different implicit techniques. Taking into account that higher levels of awareness can be achieved by manipulating input, the studies conducted by Fukuya, Reeve, Gisi and Christianson (1998) and Fukuya and Clark (2001) aim to show that learners' intake of pragmatic target forms can be enhanced, even in implicit conditions. On the one hand, Fukuya *et al*. (1998) implemented recasts as implicit feedback on learners' production of requests. The authors employed an interaction enhancement technique consisting of showing a sad face to indicate a sociopragmatic error followed by repetition of the student's inappropriate utterance with a rising intonation. Results of the study did not support the hypothesis that this implicit feedback would be more efficient in comparison to the explicit group, which received explicit instruction on the sociopragmatic factors that affected

appropriateness of requests in different situations. On the other hand, the study conducted by Fukuya and Clark (2001) used input enhancement techniques to draw learners' attention to the target features. In this study, English as a Second Language learners were randomly assigned to one of three groups, namely focus on forms, focus on form, and control. While explicit instruction on the sociopragmatic features affecting mitigation of requests was provided to learners in the explicit treatment group, typographical enhancement of the mitigators appeared in the version presented to the implicit group. Findings from the three groups' performance on listening comprehension and pragmatic recognition did not reveal any significant differences in learners' pragmatic ability. The authors claimed that a different operationalisation of the implicit input enhancement technique may have resulted in differences as far as the potential of saliency is concerned. Izumi's (2002) suggestion of using a combination of implicit techniques to help learners notice the target features could be added to their explanation.

Following Izumi's (2002) suggestion, the present study makes use of a combination of two implicit techniques to analyse their effect on learners' pragmatic awareness of suggestions. In addition, explicit instruction on pre-selected target forms was carried out to determine whether instruction was effective in a continuum of explicit and implicit conditions (DeCoo, 1996).[1] In so doing, we also aimed to find out whether more implicit conditions, which seem to have been ineffective in previously researched teaching contexts (House, 1996; Fukuya and Clark, 2001; Takahashi, 2001), are effective in a culturally and linguistically different teaching environment such as the one presented in this study: a Spanish university classroom where English is compulsory. To this end, the following research questions were investigated:

- Does learners' pragmatic awareness of suggestions improve after instruction?
- Which type of instruction (i.e., explicit or implicit) is more effective to develop learners' pragmatic awareness of suggestions?

Method

Participants

Participants were all computer science students enrolled in three EFL classes at Universitat Jaume I in Castellón, Spain. There were 69 males and 12 females whose ages ranged between 19 and 25 years old, the average age being 20.69 years. Concerning the length of time spent studying English, 68% had studied it between 7 and 10 years, 25% between 2 and 6 years, and only 7% for more than 10 years. The participants had an intermediate level of English according to the Department of English Studies placement test administered to them prior to the present study.

Our research was conducted in three intact classes. For the purposes of the study, two of them were the experimental groups with a specific treatment condition. These two groups will be referred to as the explicit group, group A ($n = 24$), and the implicit group, group B ($n = 25$), while the control group, that is group C ($n = 32$), did not receive any kind of instruction on the use of suggestions. Two non-native English instructors from the Department of English Studies also participated in the study: the instructor who conducted the treatment taught both experimental groups for two hours a week, and a second instructor was in charge of the control group.

Instrument

The instrument employed in the present study consisted of a rating assessment test, which involved eight different situations that varied according to two sociopragmatic factors, namely status and social distance. However, although our initial purpose was to pay attention to these two variables dealing with politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987), after several stages of piloting the test with a group of learners from the same discipline (i.e., computer science), it was found that some realisations for suggestions overlapped between the two sociopragmatic factors. For this reason we decided to focus exclusively on the variable of status, on the basis of previous studies which had considered only status as a factor affecting the choice of the linguistic form for suggestion (Hinkel, 1994, 1997; Matsumura, 2001, 2003). Thus, we paid attention to two levels of status, namely those of equal status (student to student) and higher status (student to professor). Furthermore, given the fact that all our participants were university students, we followed the guidelines developed by Hudson, Detmer and Brown (1995) and set all the situations at the university, as a familiar context to our participants. We also took gender and age factors into account and told participants to consider that the students appearing in the situations were the same gender and the same age as them, whereas the professors were the same gender and about 40 years old. Additionally, before presenting the rating assessment test to the students, and following Matsumura's (2001, p. 646) suggestions, we asked them to imagine that they were in an American university, in an attempt to make them understand that having knowledge of the sociocultural rules in the target speech community is important to establish a link between the appropriate use of the language and the perception of social status.

As can be observed in example (1), the eight situations presented a dialogue between two interlocutors, and the final response by one of them was a suggestion. In each situation, participants had to use a 5-point rating scale (1 = inappropriate; 5 = appropriate) to assess whether the suggestion was appropriate or not depending on the situation, which varied in terms of the status of the participants. Furthermore, on the basis of previous research (Safont, 2005),

we asked students to underline the inappropriate part of the suggestion and provide an alternative in the cases in which they found the speech act formulation inappropriate for the context, and to justify their evaluation in those cases in which they found the suggestion appropriate to the situation (i.e., examining learners' metapragmatic awareness). As illustrated in the example, the instructions were given in Spanish since we believed that a full and clear understanding of what they had to do was essential for task performance:

(1) Situation 5 (from the pre-test):

You are talking to one of your new classmates during a class break. Your class-mate is looking for a job.

Classmate: You know … I need a job, but I've got all this studying to do, too.

☞ *You: Yeah, I hear you … if you want, you can just look at the classifieds in the newspaper. I have a friend who found a great part-time job that way.*

Totalmente inapropiada   Totalmente apropiada
[*Completely inappropriate*]   [*Completely appropriate*]

1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

a) Si marcas 1 o 2 (inapropiada), subraya la parte que crees que es inapropiada y escribe una expresión que en tu opinión sería más apropiada en esta situación:

[*If you rate 1 or 2 (inappropriate), underline the part in that utterance that makes you think it is inappropriate and write down an alternative expression you think would be more appropriate for the situation:*]

b) Si marcas 3 (neutra), 4 o 5 (apropiada), indica por qué crees que es neutra o apropiada:

[*If you rate 3 (neutral), 4 or 5 (appropriate), write down why you think it is neutral or appropriate.*]

The final version of this instrument, after the pilot stages, was administered to all learners as a pre-test two weeks prior to the start of the study. Similarly, a post-test consisting of eight parallel situations was administered two weeks after the treatment had finished. The purpose of this final post-test was to examine the effects of instruction on learners' pragmatic awareness of suggestions.

Target forms selected for instruction
The specific pragmatic feature examined in this study was the speech act of suggestions, a directive speech act which involves an utterance in which the

speaker asks the hearer to do something that will benefit the hearer (Searle, 1976; Rintell, 1979). We chose this speech act for both empirical and theoretical reasons. On the one hand, we decided to focus on suggestions on the basis of the results obtained in a previous small-scale study (Martínez-Flor, 2003) which showed that EFL learners in both high school and university settings had problems in identifying and producing appropriate suggestions depending on different situations. Moreover, we also found that learners transferred the linguistic forms for making suggestions from their mother tongue to English. Thus, we observed a lack of variety of linguistic realisations employed in order to express suggestions as well as the non-use of any kind of modification device when suggesting. On the other hand, the fact that the existing literature on interlanguage realisations of suggestions in the foreign language setting is rather scarce and that, to our knowledge, no previous study has analysed the effects of pragmatic instruction on this particular speech act also contributed to our choice of suggestions as the instructional target feature.

In order to deal with the wide range of suggestion expressions available in English, a taxonomy was elaborated on the basis of different theoretical frameworks (i.e., speech act theory and politeness theory), previous literature in the ILP field (e.g., Koike, 1994, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1996; Alcón and Safont, 2001), and data concerning suggestions identified in native-speakers' (NSs) oral and written production. However, since it has been claimed that specifically selected items are more effective to maximise the efficacy of an instructional treatment (Doughty and Williams, 1998; Doughty, 2003), twelve target forms for suggestions were selected in this study (see Table 1). Apart from the selection of target forms for the head act of suggestions, we also retained seven target forms of downgraders (House and Kasper, 1981b) that appear in italic type in Table 1. Bearing in mind the influence of sociopragmatic aspects for an appropriate use of the selected pragmalinguistic forms, they were distributed into two different combinations depending on the sociopragmatic factor of status (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Hinkel, 1994, 1997; Matsumura, 2001, 2003). The decision to distribute the twelve target forms into these two different combinations was made for instructional reasons. In contrast to the explicit teaching condition, in which we could present the general taxonomy with an overview of different suggestion expressions and explain that the appropriate choice will depend on the situation, context, or relationships amongst participants (i.e., status, social distance), we needed to select only a few forms to be able to present them systematically in the implicit teaching condition.

Treatment and procedure
The treatment lasted for 16 weeks and consisted of six 2-hour sessions. During the instructional sessions, the two experimental groups (i.e., explicit and

Table 1: Target forms for suggestions selected in our study

Combination 1 (equal status)	Combination 2 (higher status)
– Why don't you … ?	– I would *probably* suggest that …
– Have you tried … ?	– *Personally*, I would recommend that …
– You can *just* …	– *Maybe* you could …
– You might want to …	– It would be helpful if you …
– *Perhaps* you should …	– *I think* it might be better to …
– *I think* you need …	– *I'm not sure, but I think* a good idea would be …

implicit) received two different types of instructional treatment accompanied by specific material elaborated for each treatment, whereas a third group did not receive any instruction on suggestions (control group). The two types of instruction, aimed at raising learners' awareness of the appropriateness of suggestions in several situations, and their operationalisation were as follows.

The explicit teaching condition followed a sequential method which consisted of a sequence of activities ranging from awareness-raising tasks to production tasks (see Appendix A). In the first session, students were first presented with two videotaped situations that involved American NSs interacting in different computer-related situations (i.e., one situation involving an equal status relationship and the other a higher status relationship). We then introduced awareness-raising tasks that focused on sociopragmatic aspects implied in the situations they had watched on the video. Learners' awareness was raised through questions such as *What is happening? Where are the participants? What is their relationship?* or *What is the topic of the conversation?* (see example 1 in Appendix A). Learners' attention was also directed to the pragmalinguistic aspects involved when making suggestions. To this end, they were provided with the written scripts of the videotaped situations, and the task questions directed them to different linguistic forms for suggestions (see example 2 in Appendix A). Along with these two tasks, learners were also provided with metapragmatic explanations regarding the appropriate use of the selected target forms to make suggestions in different situations. After presenting students with another two different computer-related videotaped situations and engaging them in the same type of activities, in the third session learners watched the four videotaped situations again and their attention was drawn to several examples from these situations that contained suggestions. At this point, they received explicit instruction on suggestions in relation to the table that included the target forms selected for the present study (see Table 1) and were provided with multiple-choice tasks allowing them to practise those forms (see example 3 in Appendix A). In the fourth and fifth sessions, two different videotaped situations were presented and several tasks

involving students' individual written production on suggestions were introduced as semi-practice activities (see example 4 in Appendix A). Finally, in the sixth session students were presented with the last videotaped situation and they were given opportunities to practise the use of suggestions in pairs by performing a variety of role-plays (see example 5 in Appendix A).

The treatment for the implicit teaching condition consisted of a parallel method which involved the combination of two implicit techniques, that is, input enhancement through the video presentation and video scripts, and recasts during the role-play practice. The systematic combination of both pedagogical techniques in a parallel way throughout all the instructional sessions was employed following the assumption that the use of just one technique might not be enough to make the implicit condition effective in enabling learners to acquire the pragmatic aspect under instruction (Doughty and Williams, 1998; Izumi, 2002). Thus, the students receiving the implicit treatment were engaged in three types of tasks during each of the six instructional sessions (see Appendix B). The first task was designed as a listening comprehension activity that merely focused on the content of the videotaped situations students had watched (see example 1 in Appendix B). These videotaped situations were the same as those presented to the students in the explicit teaching condition, although this version was altered by including captions in bold-face that addressed both the target forms for making suggestions (pragmalinguistic aspects) and the sociopragmatic factors involved in each situation (sociopragmatic aspects). Similarly, in order to do the second task, which consisted of a reading comprehension activity (see example 2 in Appendix B), students were required to read the forms for suggestions that also appeared in bold in the video scripts of the videotaped situations prepared for this teaching condition. The purpose of using the input enhancement technique by means of highlighting the twelve selected target forms was to help learners become aware of the pragmalinguistic forms, function (i.e., to suggest), and appropriate usage of these forms depending on different situations. Regarding the third task, a series of role-plays were created in order to be able to recast learners' inappropriate or inaccurate use of suggestions (see example 3 in Appendix B).[2] When this happened, the instructor recast learners' utterances by using one of the twelve selected instructional forms depending on the status involved in the situation. The following example shows one of the recasts made in the role-play situation illustrated in Appendix B, which involves a higher status interlocutor:

(2)   **Student:** definitely you have to change your computer
      Instructor: definitely you have to ↗ You said? ↗ personally, I would recommend that you change your computer. OK ↗

First, we repeated only the conventional part (*definitely you have to*) of an inappropriate suggestion, not the whole utterance, with a rising tone (↗). Then, we added *You said?* also with a rising tone. With this focused recast,

we intended to indicate an implicit contrast between inappropriate and appropriate pragmalinguistic forms of suggestions. After stating this expression, we employed an appropriate target form selected from Combination 2 presented in Table 1 (*personally, I would recommend that you change ...*). Finally, we added *OK* with a rising tone. All the recasts were systematically done in the same way and the role-plays were organised in such a way that all students had the opportunity to perform both equal and higher status role-plays in front of the class. In the former case, the role-plays were performed with other students while the instructor provided recasts, whereas in the latter case all role-plays were performed with the instructor, who also recast learners' utterances when necessary. Additionally, a sheet was prepared on which the instructor marked each target form that was used when recasting, so that the number of target forms employed could be controlled and equalised.

Coding and statistical analysis

In order to analyse the data obtained from the rating assessment tests, we paid attention to our participants' performance by examining their judgments when rating the appropriateness of the suggestions employed in the different situations on a 5-point rating scale (1 = inappropriate; 5 = appropriate). The tests were created in such a way as to offer four appropriate situations (situations 1, 5, 6 and 8) and four inappropriate situations (situations 2, 3, 4 and 7). Therefore, the rating we expected to be accurate in the appropriate situations was 5 and the correct rating in the inappropriate situations was 1. These values were confirmed after piloting the tests with NSs, whose answers tallied with the scores we had predicted as being accurate.[3] Furthermore, the responses given by learners to justify the rating of each situation were also taken into account for a qualitative analysis.

As far as the statistical analysis is concerned, all the data were coded and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 11.0) for Windows, and an alpha level of $p < .05$ was chosen as the significance level. We started by examining normality tests to find out whether our data were normally distributed. Results from the Kolmogorov–Smirnov z showed a probability of .000, which indicated the need to resort to non-parametric tests in the study.[4] We chose a Wilcoxon test to answer our first research question, which focused on whether there was any improvement from the pre-test to the post-test because of instructional effects. In this sense, we were comparing the performance of each group (i.e., explicit, implicit and control) in relation to two different moments in time, that is, before and after the instructional period. Regarding our second research question, which centred on the effectiveness of the treatments employed (i.e., explicit and implicit) in developing learners' awareness of suggestions, we made use of a Mann–Whitney test.

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Results and discussion

The first research question of the present study asked whether both experimental groups receiving either an explicit or implicit type of instruction would improve their pragmatic awareness of suggestions. In order to answer this question, the learners' judgments in the rating assessment tests were compared for both the pre-test and the post-test to ascertain whether the instructional treatments had been effective. The results shown in Table 2 reveal a significant difference in learners' awareness of suggestions when comparing the performance of each group for both the pre-test and the post-test ($p < .01$). The significance of the median scores for both the explicit and the implicit groups points to an increase in their awareness after having received instruction on suggestions (from 3.50 to 4.38 in the case of the explicit group and from 3.63 to 4.25 in the case of the implicit group). In contrast, the median scores for the control group indicate that their recognition of appropriate suggestions decreased significantly in the post-test (from 3.75 to 3.50).

Table 2: Differences as regards awareness of suggestions in the pre-test and post-test within the three groups

Group	Time	n	Mean Rank	Mean	Median	Sig.
Explicit	Pre-test	24	12.20	3.41	3.50	.000*
	Post-test		7.50	4.31	4.38	
Implicit	Pre-test	25	14.05	3.57	3.63	.000*
	Post-test		7.50	4.14	4.25	
Control	Pre-test	32	13.00	3.66	3.75	.006*
	Post-test		15.64	3.48	3.50	

*$p < .01$

In addition, a qualitative analysis of our data was also carried out. To this end, we examined both learners' awareness of pragmatically appropriate suggestions and their metapragmatic awareness when justifying their choices.[5] On the one hand, we focused on learners' identification of the inappropriate part of the suggestion in a particular situation and the alternative expressions provided for that situation. On the other hand, we also took into consideration what types of reasons were provided when the suggestion was appropriate and whether those reasons were related to sociopragmatic factors.

Figure 1 illustrates the performance of learners in the explicit treatment condition when involved in the evaluation of suggestions in both the pre-test and post-test. In this case, learners seemed to perform better after having received instruction on suggestions. Regarding the identification of the inappropriate parts of the suggestions in the post-test, it appears that learners tended to identify them accurately. Similarly, in the situations where an alternative
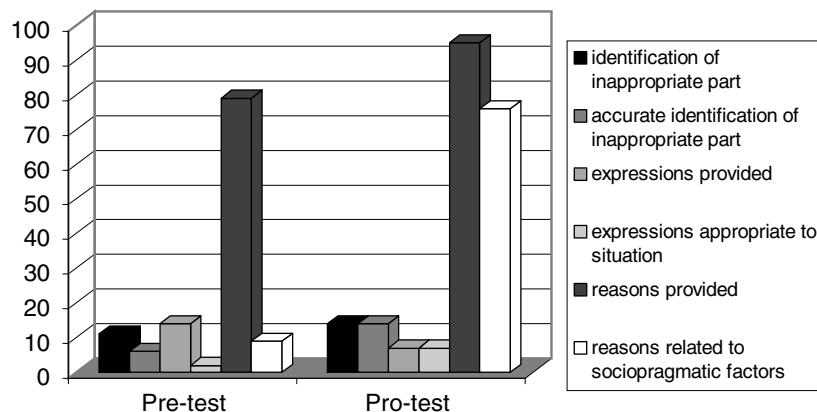
Figure 1: Pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness in the Explicit Group before and after receiving instruction

expression was provided, it was made in an appropriate way for that particular situation. Finally, learners provided more reasons when rating the suggestion as appropriate in the post-test than in the pre-test and, additionally, as illustrated in example (3), most of those reasons were related to sociopragmatic factors (see the last column in Figure 1):

(3) Situation 6 (from the post-test):

You are working as an assistant in the departmental office. A new professor arrives and asks you about setting up the email account.

> *Professor: Excuse me, I am new at the University and I don't know how to set up my email account. Could you explain to me how to do it?*
>
> ☞ *You: I am not sure about it, but I think a good idea would be to call the HELP desk at the computer centre.*

Student's reason:

This is appropriate because the professor is a higher status than me.

In example (3), which illustrates a situation of a higher status relationship between the participants, the learner rated it as appropriate and, thus, gave a reason justifying his choice based on the sociopragmatic factor of status.

A similar improvement was also observed in learners from the implicit treatment condition, which is shown in Figure 2. This figure indicates that learners from the implicit group improved slightly in the identification of the inappropriate part of the suggestion. Furthermore, the alternative expressions provided when the suggestion was inappropriate and the number of reasons in general, as well as those related to sociopragmatic factors in particular, seemed
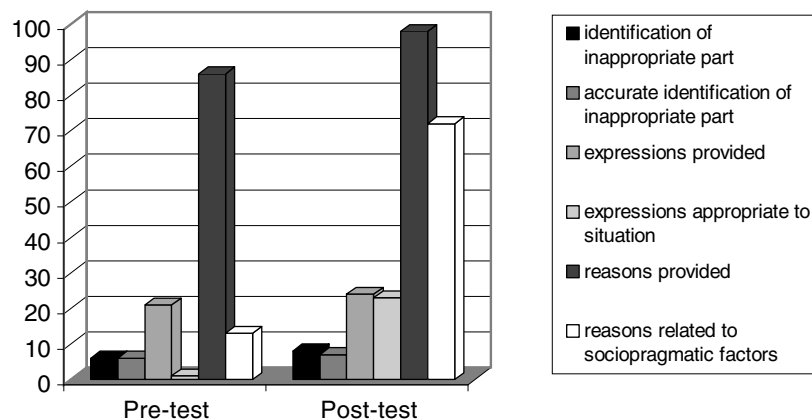
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Figure 2: Pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness in the Implicit Group
before and after receiving instruction

to have improved considerably in the post-test. In those cases, learners from
this instructional condition provided alternative expressions for the situations
rated as inappropriate by using the target forms addressed during the treatment.

In contrast to the behaviour of the two instructional groups, learners' per-
formance from the control group did not show a similar development, as shown
in Figure 3. It seems that the control group improved in identifying the inap-
propriate part of the suggestion in the post-test. Nevertheless, learners in this
group provided fewer alternative expressions in the post-test and almost none
of them were appropriate to the situation. Concerning the number of reasons
given in situations that had been rated as appropriate, learners from the con-
trol group also provided more reasons in the post-test. However, the number of
those reasons related to sociopragmatic factors was very low and remained the
same as in the pre-test. This seems to indicate that students who had already
performed appropriately in the pre-test, that is, who already had a certain level
of pragmatic awareness at the beginning of the study, performed similarly in
the post-test. Nevertheless, the rest of the students who did not participate in
any of the instructional treatments did not appear to have improved. Therefore,
no overall variation could be appreciated in the two different moments as far as
their pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness are concerned. In fact, the fol-
lowing example extracted from both the pre-test (example 4) and the post-test
(example 5) illustrates that most of the reasons provided by these learners were
based on the content of the suggestion rather than on sociopragmatic factors
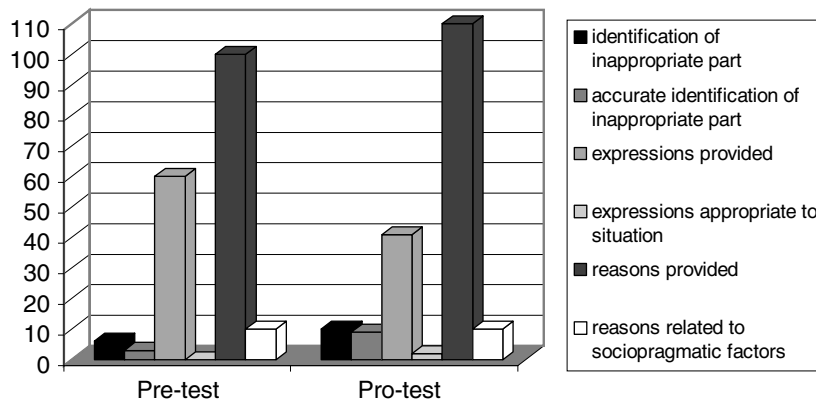(i.e., the relationship between the participants):

Figure 3: Pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness in the Control Group before and after receiving instruction

(4) Situation 1 (from the pre-test):

You are talking to one of your best friends who is studying Computer Science Engineering. Both of you are talking about your plans for the next semester.

	Friend:	*I am thinking of taking Computer Architecture next semester.*
	You:	*I have heard that this subject is very difficult and you are also doing the internship, aren't you?*
	Friend:	*Yes, I'm starting my internship next month.*
☞	*You:*	*That's a lot of work. Why don't you wait until next year for that subject?*

Student's response:
That's a lot of work. I think is appropriated take it next year.

(5) Situation 1 (from the post-test):

You see your best friend working on a laptop in the library at the university.

	You:	*Hey, what's up?*
	Friend:	*Not much. I've been working on this paper all day.*
	You:	*You look tired!*
	Friend:	*Yeah, I'm quite tired and my eyes have been aching since this morning.*
☞	*You:*	*Well, no wonder! Look how dim your screen is. Why don't you brighten it?*

Student's response:
Because is a right solution to the problem.

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   In relation to the first research question, our findings revealed that instruction proved effective in developing learners' pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness of suggestions. These results are in line with previous research that has shown the efficacy of instruction to develop learners' ability to produce or comprehend different pragmatic aspects (Olshtain and Cohen, 1990; Morrow, 1995; Liddicoat and Crozet, 2001). Focusing on learners' gain in awareness, our data seem to support Schmidt's (1993, 1995, 2001) Noticing Hypothesis, which implies that learners have to be provided with opportunities to pay attention to the target features in order for learning to take place. In the present study, learners in the two treatment conditions, in contrast to the control group, received a particular type of instruction that may have helped them to notice the specific target forms for suggestions and, as a result, this fact may have promoted learning. Thus, in a similar way to previous studies that have suggested that selective attention and awareness to language facilitate the process of language learning in relation to particular morphosyntactic features (Rosa and O'Neill, 1999; Leow, 2000; Rosa and Leow, 2004), our study appears to indicate that instruction in pragmatics also contributed to developing learners' awareness of specific target forms for suggestions in particular situations. Moreover, our results seem to support Safont's (2005) study, which found a positive effect of instruction on learners' identification of appropriate and inappropriate request forms. In fact, the conclusions to be drawn from the qualitative analysis of our study provide insights into the role of instruction in developing learners' pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness. More particularly, it seems that when learners were not provided with instruction on suggestions, their metapragmatic comments were focused on the content of the situation rather than on the pragmatic issues implied when making suggestions. This observation seems to corroborate previous research into pragmatic development (Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei, 1998), which shows that learners in EFL classroom settings appear to be more aware of grammatical errors or the propositional meaning of the situations than of the pragmatic aspects underlying the appropriateness of a particular speech act. Consequently, in line with Kasper (1997, 2001) and Bardovi-Harlig (2001), our study illustrates that instruction is effective in developing learners' pragmatic awareness in the context of the foreign language classroom, where learners' chances to be in contact with the target language are limited.

   The second research question of the present study concerned the effectiveness of both treatments (i.e., explicit and implicit) in fostering learners' development of their pragmatic awareness of suggestions. First, in order to ascertain whether there were any differences before the instruction took place, we compared the performance of the three groups not only on the post-test but also on the pre-test.[6] As illustrated in Table 3, the differences between the three groups in the pre-test are not statistically significant, which indicates that

Table 3: Differences between the Explicit, Implicit and Control groups as regards the awareness of suggestions in the pre-test and post-test

Time	Group	N	Rank	Mean	Median	Sig.
Pre-test	Explicit	24	33.00	3.56	3.63	.113
	Implicit	25	42.20			
	Control	32	46.06			
Post-test	Explicit	24	56.77	3.93	4.00	.000*
	Implicit	25	49.06			
	Control	32	22.88			

*$p < .01$

their awareness of appropriate suggestions before the instructional period took place was at the same level.

However, a statistical level of significance ($p < .01$) between the three groups was found in the post-test. By comparing the rank between them, it can be observed that the learners in the control group attained the lowest rank, which may explain why statistically significant differences were obtained. For this reason, in order to examine more accurately whether this difference is related to the performance of the two treatment conditions, we compared these two particular groups' scores for awareness of suggestions. The differences between these two groups are presented in Table 4, which indicate that there are no statistically significant differences between the two instructional groups either in the pre-test or the post-test.

Table 4: Differences between the Explicit and the Implicit groups as regards their awareness of appropriate suggestions in the pre-test and post-test

Time	Group	N	Rank	Mean	Median	Sig.
Pre-test	Explicit	24	22.40	3.49	3.50	.209
	Implicit	25	27.50			
Post-test	Explicit	24	27.44	4.22	4.38	.239
	Implicit	25	22.66			

Similarly, we also compared the differences between the explicit teaching condition and the control group, on the one hand, and the implicit treatment and the control group, on the other hand. Findings from this analysis showed that there were significant differences in learners' awareness of suggestions between these two pairs of groups in the post-test ($p < .01$). Specifically, both the explicit and implicit treatment conditions significantly outperformed the control group after the study took place.
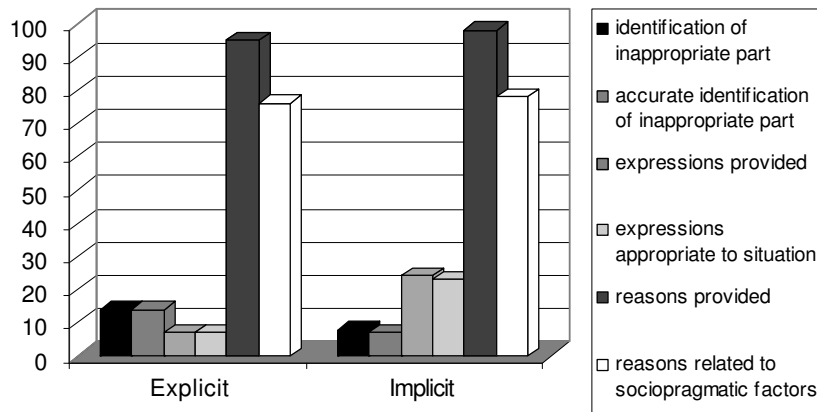
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Figure 4: Pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness between the Explicit and the Implicit groups in the post-test

Apart from this quantitative analysis that revealed no significant differences between the two teaching conditions as far as their awareness of suggestions is concerned, we also carried out a qualitative analysis of the data obtained from both treatment groups when evaluating the suggestions in the post-test. In this way, we were able to detect whether the efficacy of both types of instruction could also be supported by learners' responses in each situation. As previously explained, if learners rated a suggestion as inappropriate, they were asked to formulate an expression that they considered to be appropriate for that situation. On the contrary, if the suggestion was regarded as appropriate, they had to write down the reasons supporting their choice. Figure 4 presents learners' performance in both treatment conditions regarding their pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness.

As shown in Figure 4, when learners were asked to identify the inappropriate part of a suggestion, learners from the explicit group seemed to accurately identify those parts in a higher number of suggestions than learners from the implicit group. In contrast, it appears that learners from the implicit treatment condition provided more alternative expressions for those inappropriate suggestions than learners from the explicit condition. Learners from the implicit group seemed to perform slightly better than their counterparts when it came to the reasons they provided when justifying a suggestion that was rated as appropriate. However, the number of reasons that were justified on the basis of sociopragmatic factors was somewhat higher in learners from the explicit group. This result, in line with the findings reported by Rose and Ng Kwai-fun (2001) and Alcón (2005), may have been due to the fact that learners engaged in a training period consisting of explicit metapragmatic explanations are more

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capable of providing reasons based on the influence exerted by variables, such as status, on the use of specific target forms for suggestions. However, as illustrated in example (6), learners from the implicit teaching condition were still able to provide reasons related to sociopragmatic factors by employing other expressions they had available to them:

(6) Situation 7 (from the post-test):

You see one of your best friends in the library.

	You:	*Hey, what's up?*
	Friend:	*Not much. I've been looking for one of my new professors all day, but I haven't been able to find this professor.*
	You:	*Did the professor have office hours today?*
	Friend:	*That's the problem, there aren't any office hours posted on the door.*
☞	*You:*	*Personally, I would recommend that you send this professor an email to make an appointment.*

Student's response (from the explicit group):

Why don't you send him an email to make an appointment?

Student's response (from the implicit group):

You can send him an email. or *You might want to send him an email.*

In this situation, the learners from both the explicit and implicit groups rated the suggestion as inappropriate and underlined the first part as being what made it inappropriate (i.e., *personally, I would recommend . . .*). Then, learners from both groups suggested alternative expressions employing the target forms addressed during the treatment in an appropriate way. In addition to this, they justified their responses by using sociopragmatic factors. The learner from the explicit group mentioned that the suggestion was "*inappropriated because you are of the same status, so it is better something like . . .*", whereas the learner from the implicit group justified her response by saying " '*I would recommend you' is a formal phrase, it is not used in an informal conversation. The connector 'personally' is formal too. It would be better to say . . .*", and she gave the two different possibilities that have been reported above.

As can be concluded from these comments, learners from the implicit group did not make use of any metapragmatic explanations as the explicit group did. However, while learners from the explicit group justified their responses by employing the metapragmatic terms they had been taught, such as *equal status, higher status, participants' relationship* or *downgraders*, learners from the implicit group still justified their choices by employing expressions such as *formal/informal, colloquial vocabulary, it is too serious, you can talk*

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with a friend more friendly or *this expression is very rude*. In sum, a closer examination of learners' data seems to reveal the positive effect of both types of instruction on learners' pragmatic and metapragmatic awareness. On the one hand, it was observed that learners from both groups were able to give alternative expressions employing the appropriate target forms adopted during the treatment while, on the other hand, they also justified their responses on the basis of politeness issues taught in class.

Drawing on these outcomes related to the second research question posed in the present study, we may claim that both teaching conditions proved effective in fostering learners' awareness of suggestions. These findings seem to differ from previous research that has compared explicit with implicit instruction and reported the advantage of the explicit instruction over implicit conditions for learning (House and Kasper, 1981a; House, 1996; Tateyama *et al.*, 1997; Rose and Ng Kwai-fun, 2001; Takahashi, 2001). However, it is important to point out that the conceptualisation of the implicit conditions in these studies was based on either excluding metapragmatic explanations or just providing additional examples together with practice activities. Studies employing the first type of implicit treatment were those conducted by House and Kasper (1981a) and House (1996), in which implicit instruction was characterised by the lack of metapragmatic information. Other researchers operationalised the implicit teaching condition by exposing learners to film excerpts and additional examples (Rose and Ng Kwai-fun, 2001), making them read transcripts of role-plays between NSs and then answer some comprehension questions (Takahashi, 2001) or making them simply watch video clips (Tateyama *et al.*, 1997). In our opinion, having provided learners with simple exposure to pragmatic examples in implicit conditions may have been the reason why no significant results were obtained for this type of instruction.

In fact, there are few studies that have compared different teaching approaches by operationalising implicit pragmatic instruction by using implicit techniques such as input enhancement (Fukuya and Clark, 2001) or a combination of input enhancement together with the provision of corrective feedback (Alcón, 2005). In Fukuya and Clark's (2001) study, which compared the effectiveness of two types of instruction in improving learners' ability to recognise the appropriate use of mitigators (i.e., explicit explanations for the explicit group vs. typographical enhancement for the implicit group), the explicit group outperformed the implicit group. Some explanations for these results were attributed to the brevity of the treatment (i.e., only a 48-minute video) and a failure to make the mitigators pragmalinguistically salient for learners by using only the input enhancement technique. However, Alcón (2005) reported no significant differences in learners' production of requests under explicit and implicit conditions. Some of the differences in the studies by Fukuya and Clark (2001) and Alcón (2005) may have been due to the duration of the instructional

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treatments and the combination of implicit techniques. In the present study, and similarly to Alcón's (2005) investigation into the effect of instruction on learners' awareness of request strategies, our treatments were carried out throughout a whole semester, in which learners had ample exposure to suggestions through the use of videotaped situations as well as opportunities to practise the instructional target feature. For this reason, the length of the instruction in which different activities were implemented for both groups may have contributed to the effectiveness of the two treatments in the present study. Moreover, in line with Alcón (2005), the combination of two implicit techniques (i.e., input enhancement and recasts) seemed to be effective in promoting noticing, since the systematic use of both of them provided learners with the three theoretical conditions necessary for language acquisition (i.e., input, output and feedback). Firstly, learners were presented with appropriate input through the use of the videotaped situations that contained suggestions between participants with different status relationships. Secondly, opportunities for learners' output were also arranged by making them enact role-plays during all the instructional sessions and, finally, the role-plays also facilitated the provision of feedback on learners' inappropriate and inaccurate use of suggestions when necessary.

To sum up the results related to our second research question, it seems that the two instructional treatments in our study proved to be effective in developing learners' awareness of appropriate suggestions in particular situations. In this sense, it should be pointed out that learners in our implicit teaching condition were taught not only the target forms as pragmalinguistic expressions in isolation, but also the connections among such forms, situations, functions (i.e., to suggest), and the sociopragmatic variables affecting their use, such as status and familiarity.

Conclusion

Our research has shown the benefits of instruction on the development of learners' pragmatic awareness of suggestions in the EFL classroom. Thus, it has provided support for Schmidt's (1993, 1995, 2001) Noticing Hypothesis, which claims that learners' noticing of the target features is a requirement for further second language development. In particular, the learners in the present study gained in their awareness of suggestions as a result of the treatments that aimed at drawing their attention to the target forms. We may therefore claim that our study contributes to previous research that has suggested that instruction does make a difference (Norris and Ortega, 2000; Doughty, 2003) and, more specifically, to research that has examined the teachability of different pragmatic features (Kasper and Rose, 2002). In addition, this study has widened the range of pragmatic learning targets addressed in instructional studies by focusing on the speech act of suggesting.

The current study has also demonstrated the effectiveness of the two different treatment conditions (i.e., explicit and implicit), which were operationalised by adopting a sequential method consisting of a variety of activities ranging from awareness-raising tasks to production tasks for the explicit condition, and a parallel method which involved the combination of two implicit techniques, namely input enhancement and recasts, for the implicit teaching condition. In this regard, we may state that an implicit teaching condition may also be effective in developing learners' pragmatic ability in the Spanish educational context, in contrast to other culturally and linguistically different teaching environments such as in Germany (House, 1996) or in Japan (Takahashi, 2001), where a more implicit instructional approach proved to be ineffective.

Pedagogical implications and future research

Some pedagogical implications may be proposed in light of the results obtained in the present study. First, our study has shown that integrating specific instructional treatments may foster our learners' pragmatic ability in the target language. This issue is particularly relevant in foreign language contexts, where great emphasis has been placed on the instruction of linguistic competence rather than teaching pragmatic aspects. This fact has consequently led to pragmatics remaining a marginal component of target language instruction, as demonstrated by its place in textbooks (Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan and Reynolds, 1991; Mandala, 1999; Alcón and Tricker, 1999). However, our study has presented the elaboration and design of lessons which were tailor-made for computer science students in an attempt to integrate pragmatics within a university course. The underlying assumption was to show that it was possible to focus on pragmatics as part of the language teaching syllabus, together with the lexical and grammatical competencies (see also Martínez-Flor and Usó-Juan, 2006, for a proposal as to how to integrate pragmatics into particular foreign language contexts).

Second, the type of techniques adopted in our study to operationalise the implicit teaching condition present new challenges for pragmatics in language teaching contexts. In fact, the lack of naturally occurring input and the provision of pertinent feedback in this type of instructional context make the task of pragmatic language learning especially difficult. Thus, it would be advisable for instructors to know the principles underlying these techniques as well as other types of techniques, such as input flood or negative feedback, so that they could be employed as effective resources to help learners' acquisition of different pragmatic features.

The present study is also subject to some limitations that lead to a number of issues to be examined in future research. First, twelve particular expressions for suggestions were selected as the instructional target forms. Although

we were aware of the fact that these forms represented only a small part of the overall range of possibilities when suggesting, choosing a certain number of target forms was a requisite in order to maximise the effectiveness of the implicit type of instruction, which should be consistent and based on those pragmalinguistic forms. Moreover, it is important to mention that the focus of the instruction relied not on these forms in isolation but on the connections among such forms, the different situations, the function (i.e., to suggest), and the sociopragmatic variables affecting their use, such as status and familiarity. Bearing in mind these assumptions, it should be interesting to analyse whether the selection of other target forms would lead to similar results.

Second, although our study has shown the effect of instruction on pragmatic learning, it should be mentioned that due to institutional constraints, no delayed post-test could be administered. Consequently, we cannot be sure whether the effectiveness of both treatments would have been retained several months after the instruction was implemented, so this is an issue that should be explored in future research. Third, the institutional constraints were also the reason why the instructor of both treatment groups and the instructor of the control group were not the same person. Thus, although the instructor of the control group was specifically instructed not to deal with any aspect related to pragmatic issues, her personality as well as her teaching style may have had an effect on learners' participation and motivation towards the activities implemented in the classroom. It would therefore be interesting to examine in future research whether a particular instructor's style may exert an influence on learners' pragmatic performance.

Fourth, our study reports evidence of the role that awareness plays in learners' pragmatic language learning. However, the use of particular instruments that assess attention and awareness in a more direct way, such as introspective interviews or think-aloud protocols, should be included in further research. By employing these sorts of methods, the researcher could examine learners' pragmatic development more deeply by paying attention to their planning and thought processes when assessing or producing a particular pragmatic feature (Tateyama, 2001). Finally, the design of the situations in which suggestions were to be elicited in the present study was created separately for the student-professor relationship and for the student-student relationship. However, further research is needed to determine whether other factors, such as the content of the situation, constitute intervening variables which may influence the effects attributed to the status factor.

It is our belief that consideration of all these aspects in further empirical and qualitative research would allow us to extend our understanding of how pragmatics can be integrated in particular instructional contexts.

Notes

[1] In our study, we have followed DeCoo (1996), who points out that the differences between explicit and implicit instruction or deductive and inductive learning are to be understood as part of a continuum rather than as opposite terms. From this perspective, in this paper, learners in the explicit learning conditions are instructed to look for rules of language use, while in the implicit learning group conditions for learning are created through manipulation of the linguistic input.

[2] The content of the role-plays prepared for the implicit teaching condition was the same as that employed for the elaboration of different activities implemented with the explicit instructional approach (i.e., multiple-choice, written productive activities, role-plays).

[3] Rose and Kg Kwai-fun (2001, pp. 157–158) also relied on NSs' "correct" responses as a way to analyse their data on a metapragmatic assessment questionnaire. We also believe that, since the instructional videos employed in our study were based on American NSs' interactions, piloting the tests with them would be an appropriate means of comparison.

[4] We have included the median when reporting our results since this has been regarded as the most appropriate measure of central tendency when the data are not distributed normally.

[5] Although we are aware of the fact that the implicit and control groups did not receive any metapragmatic explanations as the explicit group had, we were interested in examining which terms they employed when justifying their choices.

[6] We made use of a Kruskal Wallis test for K independent samples because we compared the three groups on one independent measure, that is, their pragmatic awareness when judging the appropriateness of suggestions in different situations.

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Appendix A:
Examples from the activities used with the explicit teaching condition

1. Example of a question in one of the awareness-raising tasks that draws learners' attention to sociopragmatics
   – What is the relationship between the participants?
   ☐ Stranger–stranger
   ☐ Doctor–patient
   ☐ Friend–friend
   ☐ Professor–student

2. Example of a question in one of the awareness-raising tasks that draws learners' attention to pragmalinguistics
   – What is Vanessa doing in lines 12, 25, 27, 59, 92, 107 and 115?
   ☐ She informs Anthony about new databases in the library.
   ☐ She suggests different places where Anthony can look for Multimedia information.
   ☐ She tells Anthony that she is doing a very important project.
   ☐ She invites Anthony to go to a talk.

3. Example of one situation in the multiple-choice tasks
   Internet relay chat

   Your best friend would like to contact people from other countries in order to know other customs and be able to practise the English language. You think that using IRC (Internet relay chat) is a very good and fast way of meeting people from all over the world. What would you say to your friend?
   ☐ Why don't you try using Internet relay chat?
   ☐ Personally, I would recommend that you try using Internet relay chat.
   ☐ It would be helpful if you try using Internet relay chat.

4. Example of one situation in the written production tasks
   Read the following situations and write what you would say in those situations:

   > A. You want to adapt your PC for a multimedia application, since you would like to design a programme integrating animated images, sound and motion pictures for a final project. However, you do not know how to deal with the hardware components of your computer. You have heard that one of your new classmates is very fond of multimedia technology, so one day you decide to ask him/her for help.
   > ....

   > B. You are new in the class. One of your classmates wants to adapt the PC for a multimedia application. This classmate asks you for help. You know several things that are necessary in order to set up a multimedia system:
   > – use of multimedia upgrade kits
   > – necessary hardware components (processor, peripherals)
   > – software sources
   > ....

5. Example of one of the role-plays

Prepare the following role-plays in pairs:

> A. You want to buy a new computer because yours is very old. You have heard that one of your new classmates bought one last week. You think that this classmate will have some information about different types of computers and prices, so you decide to ask him/her.
>
> . . . .

> B. You are new in the class. You bought a new computer last week and now you have a lot of information about different models and prices (see brochures). One of your classmates also wants to buy a new one. This class-mate asks you for help. You suggest different options:
>
> – PC vs. Macintosh
>
> – laptop vs. desktop
>
> – normal screen vs. flat screen
>
> – hardware and software
>
> . . . .

Appendix B:
Examples from the activities used with the implicit teaching condition

1. Example of a question in one of the listening comprehension tasks
   – Which web browser does Vanessa first mention to Anthony?
      ☐ Yahoo
      ☐ Google
      ☐ Netscape

2. Example of a question in one of the reading comprehension tasks
   – What kind of information does Anthony need?

3. Example of one of the role-plays
   Prepare the following role-plays in pairs:

   > A. One of your new English professors does not have a computer because it broke down when the professor was moving to this city last week. Your professor's computer was very old, so she does not want to repair it, but buy a new one. Your professor knows that you are studying computer science, so she asks you for suggestions. You suggest different options:
   > – PC vs. Macintosh
   > – laptop vs. desktop
   > – normal screen vs. flat screen
   > – hardware and software

   > B. You are a new professor at this university. Your computer broke down last week and you want to buy a new one. You ask one of your computer science students for help.