Learning Pragmatics from ESL & EFL Textbooks: How Likely?

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Abstract

The textbook is the center of the curriculum and syllabus in most classrooms; however, rarely does it provide enough information for learners to successfully acquire pragmatic competence. This paper reports on a qualitative and quantitative study of 8 English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks to determine the amount and quality of pragmatic information included. Detailed analysis focused specifically on the use of metalanguage, explicit treatment of speech acts, and metapragmatic information, including discussion(s) of register, illocutionary force, politeness, appropriacy and usage. Findings show that textbooks include a paucity of explicit metapragmatic information, and teachers' manuals rarely supplement adequately. Teacher surveys show that teachers seldom bring in outside materials related to pragmatics, and thus, learning pragmatics from textbooks is highly unlikely. Implications suggest that textbook developers could include authentic examples of speech acts and sufficient metapragmatic explanations to facilitate acquisition of pragmatic competence.

Introduction

The textbook plays an important role in English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom where it provides the primary (perhaps only) form of linguistic input (Kim & Hall, 2002). Research into the adequacy of textbooks to teach communicative practices that are reflective of authentic conversation has found that ELT textbooks rarely include adequate or comprehensible explanations of how conversation works in English (Berry, 2000; Burns, 1998; Cane, 1998; Grant & Starks, 2001). The current study reports the methodology and results of a qualitative and quantitative study of 8 ELT textbooks, which indicates acquisition of pragmatic competence in English through textbooks is highly unlikely, given the amount and quality of pragmatic information provided. [-1-]

Previous ELT textbook research has focused on the authenticity of language samples included in textbooks as well as explanations of appropriate usage, typically using speech acts as units of analysis. Despite a decade of complaints of the inadequacy of textbooks' language (Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan & Reynolds, 1991; Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Cane, 1998; Grant & Starks, 2001; Wong,

2001), little seems to have changed in the authenticity of language samples. Bardovi-Harlig points out that "it is important to recognize, that, in general, textbooks cannot be counted on as a reliable source of pragmatic input for classroom language learners" (2001, p. 25). Criticism deals primarily with the omission or disregard for authentic language samples in language textbooks, and researchers argue that language samples in textbooks need to more closely approximate results found in studies of conversation analysis. Oftentimes, pragmatic rules governing native speakers' speech act performance are not intuitive, and therefore require analysis of naturally occurring language samples, just as presentation of grammatical forms necessitates analysis of authentic language (Biber & Reppen, 2002; Garcia, 2004). Presentation of language (including grammatical forms and conversational norms) is problematic at best when invented scripts and intuition are used to create and explain language samples. "Only through materials that reflect how we really speak, rather than how we think we speak, will language learners receive an accurate account of the rules of speaking in a second or foreign language" (Boxer & Pickering, 1995, p. 56).

Explicit discussion of conversational norms and practices is another element missing from ELT texts, which often fail to adequately portray communicative practices or ideological constructs in the target language appropriately (Berry, 2000; Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Burns, 1998; Cane, 1998; Grant & Starks, 2001; Gray, 2002). Particularly in EFL contexts, the only opportunity students have to learn targetlike conversational norms comes from either authentic language models or comprehensible metalinguistic descriptions that represent actual ways of speaking. Students are frequently not given the tools in textbooks to recognize and analyze language in a variety of contexts, and therefore, not equipped to be polite or rude intentionally (Grant & Starks, 2001).

Most criticism of ELT texts has continued to focus on the role of the teacher in the classroom and articles include specific teaching ideas to supplement textbooks, such as collecting and analyzing authentic language samples (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 1991; Boxer & Pickering, 1995; Cane, 1998; Grant & Starks, 2001; Wong, 2001). The general sentiment is that most textbooks are inadequate, but an effective teacher can overcome the shortcomings of a text:

Textbook authors and classroom teachers need to make corresponding changes in approaches to L2 teaching, since the limitations imposed by the textbook and the classroom on pragmatically appropriate input hinder the learner from becoming truly proficient in communicating in the target language (Koike, 1989, p. 287).

Despite its shortcomings, the textbook is considered to be the most important tool used in the classroom (Altbach, 1991). Connections between the textbooks and language use, curriculum and lesson planning in the classroom need to be established for a more complete description of the use of ELT textbooks. Drawing on previous studies of pragmatics in textbooks, the current study was undertaken to see what kinds of pragmatically relevant input and explicit metapragmatic information was provided in ELT textbooks. Eight textbooks were analyzed in order to determine the amount and quality of pragmatic information using the following three research questions: [-2-]

RQ1: What kind of pragmatic information is included in language textbooks?

- Politeness/Appropriacy/Usage/Register/Cultural information
- Metalanguage
- Speech act information

RQ2: How do ESL and EFL textbooks differ in amount of pragmatic information?

RQ3: How do teachers incorporate, modify, and supplement course texts in terms of pragmatics?

Methodology

This study consisted of three methodological steps: 1) textbook selection, 2) textbook analysis and 3) classroom use investigation, each of which will be discussed in some detail in this section.

Textbook selection

Informal surveys of major publishers, including Cambridge University Press, Houghton Mifflin, Oxford University Press, Pearson Education, and Prentice Hall Regents were performed in order to select the textbooks used in this study. Customer service representatives were asked for titles of top-selling ESL and EFL books for university-aged adult students, both in North America and worldwide. In cases where customer service representatives were unfamiliar with sales figures, they were asked for their opinion about which books seemed to

be top sellers. The only textbook not selected through this process was *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, because it had been pre-identified as a book that contained a good amount of metapragmatic information.

Four EFL books and four ESL books were chosen. The approximate level, as defined by the publisher, was consistent among all eight books: intermediate to upper-intermediate. [1] The EFL texts selected were all integrated skills textbooks, which are representative of those used in most university settings abroad. Many overseas universities have established English requirements for all students, and the courses typically focus on general communication in English, so integrated skills books are typically selected. The ESL texts selected were all grammar texts. In most university ESL situations, especially Intensive English Programs (IEPs) that focus on English for Academic Purposes (EAP), there is no separate conversation or communication class. Typical IEP curricula involve separate courses in discrete skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar. In addition, because of the significant variation across curricula, a grammar text was felt to be appropriately representative of the ESL situation because all IEP students would likely have a grammar course or some explicit grammar instruction. The eight books used in this analysis are shown in Table 1, below.

Table 1 Textbooks Used in Analysis

Integrated Skills Textbooks (EFL)	Grammar Textbooks (ESL)
• *Headway Upper Intermediate,* Oxford • *Interchange 2,* Cambridge • *Passages 1,* Cambridge • *Voyages 2* , Prentice Hall Regents (*New Vistas,* Longman) [2]	• *Focus on Grammar High-Intermediate*, Pearson Education • *Grammar Links 3*, Houghton Mifflin • *Intermediate Grammar: From Form to Meaning and Use*, Oxford • *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, Longman

Although the textbooks are analyzed in separate categories of ESL and EFL, it is of key importance to note that the categories do significantly overlap. Many ESL programs use texts that, in this study, are deemed characteristic of EFL contexts and vice versa. [-3-]

Textbook Analysis

Once the textbooks had been identified and collected, the quantity of information included in each was noted to see whether any textbook was markedly longer than the others. Comparison of page numbers and numbers of units (sometimes with multiple lessons or chapters within a single unit) was used to confirm that the selected textbooks of each genre were similar in length and in chapter divisions.

After this cursory comparison, all textbooks were examined for information about general pragmatic information, as well as metalanguage style, speech acts and metapragmatic directives. General pragmatic information was determined to be a broad category encompassing a variety of topics related to politeness, appropriacy, formality, register and culture. Metalanguage style focused on the use of different sentence types (declarative, imperative, interrogative) when introducing topical units, particular linguistic forms, usage information, or student instructions. Use of personal pronouns in this metalanguage was also noted, i.e., *we* or *you,* because metalanguage style may affect learner processing and acquisition (Berry, 2000). Investigation of speech acts in each of the eight books focused on explicit mention and metapragmatic description of speech acts such as requests, apologies, complaints, etc. Counts and descriptions of different kinds of pragmatic information were obtained through performing a page-by-page analysis of the eight books.

Classroom Use

To determine how textbook authors and series developers envisioned the use of the textbook in the classroom, examination of teacher's manuals and teacher interviews were performed. Teachers' manuals were cross-referenced with the textbooks to examine the pragmatic information. Four teachers with both ESL and EFL teaching experience were asked about the textbooks used in this study, how they incorporated elements of pragmatics into grammar and conversation courses, and how important they felt issues of formality, politeness, and usage were to ESL and EFL students.

Results

Textbook Analysis

Comparison of the number of pages and units in each of the eight books shows that books are similar in terms of length. Because each group of textbooks was comparable in terms of length and number of units, the researcher could progress with relative certainty that comparisons among the books within a group were justified. See Table 2 below for details about the pages and units for each of the eight texts. [-4-]

Table 2 Pages and Units in Integrated Skills and Grammar Textbooks

Textbook	Number of Units/ Chapters	Number of Pages	Mean Number of pages
Integrated Skills (EFL)			
Headway	12	134	$\bar{X}$=*131.5*
Interchange 2	15	134	
Passages 1	12	120	*(sd=7.9)*
Voyages 2	10 (30 lessons)	138	
Grammar (ESL)			
Focus on Grammar	29	432	
Grammar Links 3	11 (23 chapters)	446	$\bar{X}$=*469* *(sd=43.8)*
Intermediate Grammar: From form to meaning and use	17	531 [3]	
Understanding and Using	20	437 + 30 [4]	
English Grammar			

For integrated skills (EFL) textbooks, the mean number of pages is $\bar{X}$ = 131. 5 (sd=7.9), and for grammar (ESL) books, the mean number of pages is $\bar{X}$ = 469 (sd= 43.8). The greater variability in grammar books could be a result of the longer overall book length. A corpus analysis of word counts may show that the variability is related to print style or font size, rather than actual amount of text. Once the textbooks were determined to be approximately equivalent in terms of language level and length, page by page analysis of the textbooks was performed to investigate the amount and quality of pragmatic information included.

In both groups of texts, pragmatic information accounts for merely a small portion of text. As mentioned above, any information related to culture, context, illocutionary force, politeness, appropriacy and/or register was coded as pragmatic information. For example, a brief statement of little value in explicit pragmatic instruction was coded as pragmatic information, such as "USAGE NOTE: In informal speech people say *Me too* to express agreement with an affirmative statement and *Me neither* to express agreement with a negative statement" (*Focus on Grammar,* 2000, p. 106). [5] This statement discusses appropriacy in a particular register, informal speech. Although it fails to define the extralinguistic contextual variables associated with informal speech, the extract was counted as having provided some pragmatic information. It is also important to note that for the majority of cases, the information consists of only 1-2 phrases on a page, such that the percentages shown below are highly inflated. Table 3 below shows the distribution of pragmatic information tabulated by number of pages.

Table 3 Pragmatic Information in Integrated Skills (EFL) and Grammar (ESL) Textbooks

Textbook	**Pages which include pragmatic**	**Total number of pages**	**Percentage of pages which include pragmatic**

	information		information
Integrated Skills (EFL)			
Headway	26	134	19.4%
Interchange 2	24	134	17.9%
Passages 1	35	120	29.1%
Voyages 2	21	138	15.2%
Grammar (ESL)			
Focus on Grammar	19	432	4.4%
Grammar Links 3	18	446	4.0%
Intermediate Grammar: From form to meaning and use	35	531	6.6%
Understanding and Using English Grammar	24	467	5.1%

Note that while the raw counts of pages containing pragmatic information of both groups of texts is comparable, $\bar{X}$= 26.5 (sd= 6.0) for integrated skills (EFL) texts and $\bar{X}$ = 24.5 (sd= 7.8) for grammar (ESL) texts, the length of the grammar texts makes the percentage of pages containing pragmatic information much lower. See Table 4 below for descriptive statistics including means, ranges and standard deviations for both groups of texts. [-5-]

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics on Amount of Pragmatic Information in Integrated

Skills (EFL) and Grammar (ESL) Textbooks

	mean	range	min	max	standard deviation
Pragmatic Pages					
Integrated Skills	26.5	14	21	35	6.0
Grammar	24	17	18	35	7.8
Total Pages					
Integrated Skills	131.5	18	120	138	7.9
Grammar	469	99	432	531	43.8
% Pragmatic Info					
Integrated Skills	20.4%	13.9%	15.2%	29.1%	6.1

Grammar	5.1%	2.6%	4.0%	6.6%	1.1

After determining the general amount of pragmatic information provided in ELT textbooks, specific areas of interest were selected for analysis: metalanguage, speech acts, and explicit metapragmatic cues. A discussion of both groups of textbooks in each of the three areas follows below.

Metalanguage in Textbooks

Although previous analyses of metalanguage in textbooks have found that consistent pronominal use (or lack thereof) across the text affects learners (Berry, 2000), it remains a largely unexplored area of textbook analysis. The entire contents of a textbook, by its very nature, can be considered metalinguistic; therefore, only the text used to preface activities and explain grammatical points was chosen for analysis. Text within examples, exercises and reading passages (except those related to cultural norms) was ignored. Metalanguage in textbooks can be another important source of linguistic input for learners, particularly in EFL situations (Kim & Hall, 2002). Functions of metalanguage were coded according to four types: Description, Instruction, Introduction, and Task-related. Description included any element of explicit metalanguage about a particular form: how to construct it, typically accompanied by example sentences: "Tag questions consist of a statement and a tag" (*Focus on Grammar*, 2000, p. 92). Instruction metalanguage refers to language that gives usage or topical information about a particular form, i.e., information about a grammatical form that does not involve linguistic description of that form: "Small talk is informal conversation with friends and acquaintances at school, on the job, or on social occasions" (*Passages*, 1998, p. 48). Introduction metalanguage describes any element that seemed to prepare students for some activity by focusing their attention on a particular topic or theme: "When you are sick, do you go to a doctor?" (*Voyages 2*, 1999, p. 68). Task-related metalanguage is explicit information on how to perform the practice activity, which, for integrated skills textbooks, could involve listening, speaking, reading or writing, usually with some group or pair interaction: "Choose three problems and talk about them like this" (*Interchange 2*, 1993, p. 58). [-6-]

Examining metalanguage is important for two reasons: input and content. Metalinguistic information can serve as a source of input and model of language use, which may be detrimental if only declarative and imperative sentence types are used. If students are not shown that directives are often accomplished through the use of modals and questions in English, they may use declarative and imperative sentences and convey undesired illocutionary force through unintentional language choices (Grant & Starks, 2001). Metalanguage can also serve an important function as the source of explicit metapragmatic information for learners. The explanatory nature of metalanguage can provide students with rich extralinguistic information such as interlocutor status, cultural information, usage notes and other relevant contextual information.

In all the integrated skills books, metalinguistic information is primarily in the form of imperative directives for students to do some activity in the book. Only rarely does metalinguistic information (directions, descriptions, etc.) include metapragmatic or usage information, most often in Instruction Metalanguage, typically realized as declarative sentences. The imperatives or declaratives used for Description or Task-related metalanguage are characterized by the relative absence of pronominal reference, except for isolated cases of *we*, such as, "We are predicting a *future event*, and saying how *probable* it is" (*Headway*, 1996, p. 64). There are also rare occurrences of *you/your* in Task-related metalanguage: "Listen to the conversation and compare it to your own" (*Headway*, 1996, p. 65). Many times it is hard to distinguish whether the "you" is the general "you" or refers to the student personally: "You can make your sentence sound softer and more tentative by using imaginary **if** sentences instead of the modals should and ought to" (*Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, 1996, p. 347). Pronominal reference in grammar books is similar to that of the integrated skills texts: metalinguistic and metapragmatic information is presented in declarative or imperative sentences with infrequent pronominal reference. For example, "Use *should have* and *shouldn't have* to express regret" (*Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, 1996, p. 231). Pronominal use in metalanguage is another source of input that warrants further analysis for its pragmatic consequences. More detailed quantitative analysis is required to determine the sentence types most frequently used in metalanguage, as well as the pronominal distribution in metalanguage. In any case, the metalanguage used in the eight textbooks examines provides neither a pragmatically appropriate source of linguistic input nor explicit metapragmatic information that would help learners acquire pragmatic competence.

Speech Act Treatment

The treatment of most speech acts in the textbooks is, for the most part, pragmatically inadequate. Students are only occasionally given models (either in audio recordings or more commonly, as printed dialogues or examples) of the speech acts with very little contextual information or explicit metapragmatic discussion. Particularly in the grammar texts, textbooks provide an association between a speech act and a particular grammatical form, which may lead students to think that is the only option for constructing an utterance. The range of speech acts among most of the textbooks is quite limited; between 3 and 20 unique speech acts are presented in each of the ELT texts

examined. Table 5 shows the distribution of treatment of speech acts in both integrated skills and grammar textbooks. [-7-]

Table 5 Explicit Mention of Speech Acts in Integrated Skills (EFL) and Grammar

(ESL) Textbooks

	Integrated Skills Textbooks (EFL)					**Grammar Textbooks (ESL)**			
	Headway	Interchange 2	*Passages1*	Voyages 2	ALL EFL	Focus on Grammar [6]	Grammar Links 3	*Intermediate Grammar* [7]	*Understanding & Using English Grammar*
Accept Invitations				X	1				
Accept Requests		X			1				
Apologize		X			1				
Ask Permission					0		X	X	X
Complain		X	X	X	3	X		X	
Correct	X				1			X	
Give Advice			X	X	2	X	X	X	X
Give Instructions					0	X*		X	
Invite				X	1	X*			X
Make Excuses		X		X	2				
Make Introductions				X	1				
Make Suggestions	X	X	X		3		X	X	X
Offer					0		X	X	X
Order[8]					0	X*	X	X	
Promise		X			1		X	X	
Refuse Invitations				X	1				
Refuse Requests		X			1		X		
Express Regret	X		X		2	X	X		

Request		X			1	X*	X		
Threaten					0		X	X	
Wish					0			X	X
Total	**3**	**8**	**4**	**7**	**22**	**7**	**10**	**20**	**6**

EFL texts include 22 speech acts, whereas ESL texts include 43 different speech acts, nearly double in part due to the plethora of speech acts included in one text (*Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*). Descriptive statistics for speech acts by textbook type are presented in Table 6 below. [-8-]

Table 6 Descriptive Statistics for Speech Acts by Textbook Type

	sum	mean	range	min	max	standard deviation
Integrated Skills	22	5.5	5	3	8	2.38
Grammar	43	16.7	14	6	20	6.39

Integrated skills (EFL) textbooks present an average of 5.5 speech acts per textbook, whereas grammar (ESL) textbooks present an average of 16.7 different speech acts. The distribution of speech act types across ESL and EFL textbooks did not appear to be patterned, nor based on frequency of speech act occurrence in natural language, and often seems counterintuitive. For example, the speech act *threaten* was mentioned in two texts (ESL), though the importance of teaching learners how to threaten is questionable when they do not get input about learning what might be considered more practical speech acts such as apologizing, making introductions, or refusing invitations. The speech act *apologize* only occurred once among all 8 texts; however, the apology is a speech act quite frequently realized in naturally occurring language and data collection and analyses of apologies have been performed in the fields of interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989; Garcia, 2004). *Apologize* was mentioned in an integrated skills (EFL) text. Other speech acts, such as *accepting requests, accepting invitations, making introductions,* and *refusing invitations,* were also mentioned only once across all of the texts, all in EFL texts. The aforementioned speech acts were not mentioned in any grammar ESL texts. Only one ESL text included speech acts that were not included in EFL texts, presenting an interesting case of complementary distribution, as shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7 Distribution of Unique Speech Acts by Textbook Type

	Integrated Skills Textbooks (EFL)	Grammar Textbooks (ESL)
Accept invitations	1	0
Accept requests	1	0
Apologize	1	0
Make introductions	1	0
Refuse invitations	1	0
Ask polite questions	0	1
Accuse	0	1
Agree	0	1
Compliment	0	1

Criticize	0	1
Deny	0	1
Disagree	0	1
Remind	0	1
Warn	0	1

Note that this table is somewhat misleading because all of the speech acts in ESL texts come from a single textbook: *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*; whereas, speech acts in EFL texts are from two titles: *Interchange 2 and Voyages 2*. It is no surprise that one text accounted for so many speech acts in ESL texts, as that textbook had been pre-identified as containing rich pragmatic information. The most frequently appearing speech acts are *make suggestions* and *give advice,* which appear in 6 of the 8 texts: 3 occurrences each in ESL and in EFL texts. Both speech acts are associated with the modal *should*, which is only one of the possible ways speakers realize those speech acts. Part of the challenge in acquiring target language pragmatic competence is learning to choose from a variety of forms which perform similar functions and then choosing appropriately (Bardovi-Harlig, 2002). If students are provided with a one-to-one correspondence between language forms and functions, they are not able to develop a pragmatic toolbox with which to make choices about language and convey intentional illocutionary force. [-9-]

An independent samples t-test performed on the individual speech acts across the two text groups showed significant difference between the two groups. Of the 30 cases of individual speech acts selected for analysis, the mean number of times a particular speech act occurred per book type (i.e., *apologize*) was x =0.73 for EFL and x =1.43 for ESL texts, which demonstrated a statistically significant difference: $t(58) = 2.73$, $p < .01$ (two-tailed). The textbooks examined show that ESL texts touch on a greater variety of speech acts than EFL texts. Because treatment varied among speech act type, textbook type, and because textbooks categorized as ESL and/or EFL may not be absolutely representative of that context, the presentation of each speech act was examined in order to determine the amount of associated metapragmatic information related to usage, including politeness, illocutionary force, register, appropriacy, as well as cultural and extralinguistic contextual information.

Explicit Metapragmatic Cues

There is, in most books, a lack of metapragmatic discussion related to speech acts. Speech acts may be mentioned or modeled without any commentary on usage or contextual references. Table 8 shows the distribution of explicit mention of speech acts and corresponding metapragmatic information. In the integrated skills books, a total of 22 different speech acts are presented, but metapragmatic information is only included for 2 cases. In the grammar books, of the 43 different speech acts, only 6 include metapragmatic information.

Table 8 Metapragmatic Information by Textbook Type

	Integrated Skills Books (EFL)	Metapragmatic information	Grammar Books (ESL)	Metapragmatic information
Accept Invitations	1	0	0	0
Accept Requests	1	0	0	0
Ask Permission	0	0	3	0
Apologize	1	1	1	0
Complain	4	1	1	0
Correct	1	0	1	0
Give Advice	2	0	3	1
Give Instructions	0	0	2	0

Invite	1	0	1	0
Make Excuses	2	0	1	0
Make Introductions	1	0	0	0
Make Suggestions	3	0	3	3
Offer	0	0	3	0
Order	0	0	3	0
Promise	1	0	1	0
Refuse Invitations	1	0	1	0
Refuse Requests	1	0	1	0
Express Regret	2	0	2	0
Request	1	0	3	2
Threaten	0	0	2	0
Wish	0	0	2	0
Total	**22**	**2**	**43**	**6**

For most types of speech acts, there is no metapragmatic discussion on politeness or appropriacy. Because each speech act could be performed using a variety of different linguistic forms that vary greatly in terms of illocutionary force, this lack of information puts learners, particularly EFL learners with little target language exposure, at a disadvantage in terms of acquiring pragmatic competence. The following discussion deals with three major areas of metapragmatic information: 1) politeness (including appropriacy and illocutionary force), 2) register and 3) extralinguistic contextual and cultural information. [-10-]

Though there is some valuable metalinguistic and metapragmatic information in the texts, it represents only a small portion of the total information contained in the book. Terms such as formal and informal, polite and impolite are used throughout all eight texts, though descriptions of situations which may require formal or polite usage in terms of social relationships between interlocutors, status differences, or other contextual factors are rarely included. The richest grammar book in terms of metalinguistic and metapragmatic information is *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use.* Also included in *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, is discussion of different forms in realizing speech acts (requesting, complaining, etc.), as well as notes on how they vary in terms of politeness and clues about when students may want to use particular expressions. In addition to the formality discussions characteristic of grammar metalanguage, it includes directives relevant to polite expression as well as warnings against rudeness:

Imperatives can easily sound rude or angry, depending on the situation and your tone of voice. Please helps to soften a command. Using modals (such as would and could) is a more polite and indirect way to tell someone to do something. (*Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, 1996, p. 37)

Although students need not follow the metapragmatic directives included in the textbooks, they should have a certain level of awareness about the target language norms so that they can make appropriate choices as their level develops. The majority of politeness commentary co-occurs with lessons on modals, and in some cases, specific sections on social modals. In *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, students are asked to decide “which sentence is stronger” (1999, p. 164) and “discuss the meanings that the modals convey” (1999, p. 185). *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use* includes a significant amount of metapragmatic information concerning the use of social modals:

Modals (also called modal auxiliaries) change the meaning of the main verb in many ways. Modals are used to make requests, ask for permission, ask for advice, and offer suggestions. They also express what is necessary or not necessary, and what is not allowed. Social modals express politeness, formality, and authority in different kinds of social situations. Often there are several modals you can use in a particular situation. The modal you choose can make what you say sound more polite or less polite, more formal or less formal. Your

situation and your relationship to the listener may help you decide which modal to choose. Consider, for example, how well you know the listener. Is there a difference in your ages? Is one of you in a position of greater authority or power? Is one of you the boss? (*Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, 1996, p. 163).

In *Interchange 2*, samples of language for refusing a request are given without any mention to the significant differences in utterances in terms of illocutionary force (see Figure 1 below).

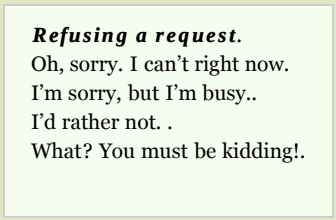

Figure 1. *Interchange 2* (Richards, Hull & Proctor, 1991, p. 36)

Although *What? You must be kidding!* does indeed indicate refusal, i.e., the speech act performance would be considered successful (the speaker refused), use of this phrase is not considered polite and would result in pragmatic tension, failure, or worse. The classroom teacher would (hopefully) point out the differences among each refusal form presented, but this cannot be guaranteed. The student is not given the explanatory tools to be able to make intentional choices about being rude and/or polite (Grant & Starks, 2001). [-11-]

Discussions of illocutionary force are often concentrated on modals: "modals can convey strength of attitudes" (*Understanding and Using English Grammar*, 1999, p. 151). In *Focus on Grammar*, there is discussion of formality, register variation, and indirect speech acts which primarily consist of reported speech: "Usage Note: should is more formal than ought to" (2000, p.229). In most textbooks, students are informed that the use of modals imply different meanings: "meaning ranges in strength from suggestion to responsibility" (*Understanding and Using English Grammar*, 1999, p. 160). Occasionally, modals are linked explicitly to particular speech acts, as shown in *Focus on Grammar* : "1. modals are auxiliary ('helping') verbs that we use to express... social functions such as giving advice" (2000, p. 228). The association of speech act functions to particular forms limits the range of language students have available to perform a certain speech act. A key element of acquiring pragmatic competence involves selection from multiple forms to convey illocutionary force; if students have only one form available, they are essentially not making pragmatic choices (Bardovi-Harlig, 2002). In *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, the negative form of *will* is described as "used to make refusals" (1996, p. 86). However, there are other and often, more pragmatically appropriate and polite, ways to refuse. Not explaining to students the ramifications of using a particular form, or that there exist several forms to convey the same speech act ultimately does them a disservice and can result in pragmatic tension or pragmatic failure.

Register discussions frequently occurred in grammar textbooks, distinguishing usage in written and spoken language: "[W]e often use can't instead of must not to express prohibition in spoken English" (*Focus on Grammar,* 2000, p. 230). In *Grammar Links 3*, a section included in several (but not all) chapters entitled "Talk the Talk" provides information contrasting spoken and written forms of English, and generally consists of warnings not to use spoken forms such as g*onna* or contractions in written work, although the discussion of social modals includes a section which encourages students to consider authority in relation to politeness when giving advice. In three of the four grammar textbooks, issues of formality and the differences between speaking and writing are mentioned; however, quite infrequently and without any contextual information which would indicate appropriate contexts (social or otherwise) which would require formal usage, nor any discussion of the differences between formality and register.

In some cases, the focus on speech acts in textbooks may actually be pragmatically inappropriate for students. For example, in 3 of the 4 integrated skills books that examined, complaining comprised several sections and activities, whereas empirical studies have shown that direct complaints are quite rare in conversation, and in most cases, are often sociopragmatically inappropriate (Arent, 1996; Boxer & Pickering, 1995). Imagine the pitfalls for a population of learners who think direct complaints are the norm in English! All of the integrated skills books that include discussion of complaints include activities of writing a letter of complaint, which would differ in important ways from oral complaining. There is also little contextual variation in the examples: most books present failed service encounter situations, without explanation of how such an act, i.e., complaining, could be appropriately extended to other situations. In *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use,* students are told that "comparatives are frequently used to give compliments" (1996, p. 317). While this might be true, the subsequent activity encourages students to "Make positive comments about changes in appearance of the people in the situations...using the comparative form of the suggested adjectives," the example item given is "You look much better now" (*Intermediate*

grammar: From form to meaning and use, 1996, p. 317). Native speakers may interpret this kind of compliment as an insult (how did I look before?), but no metapragmatic explanation of this possible interpretation is made, nor is there any discussion of when complimenting is appropriate. Similarly, the speech acts of making suggestions/giving advice consisting of *should* or *had better* are typically associated topically with medical units. Students may not be able to simply transfer this linguistic form to other contexts appropriately. [-12-]

Some texts do include extralinguistic and contextual information that is pragmatically relevant. Contextual factors discussed include the linguistic context, as well as the "situation and the speaker's and listener's knowledge" (*Grammar Links 3*, 2000, p. 146).In *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, students are given language samples with description of status or interlocutor information, such as "Two strangers in an elevator" or "Two friends" (*Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, 1996, p. 163). *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use* also frequently encourages students to consider the interpersonal context of the utterance: "will is more formal than be going to...[its use] depends on the situation and the relationship between the speakers" (*Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, 1996, p. 86). Incorporation of comments related other extralinguistic contextual information, such as situation and tone of voice are exemplified in *Intermediate grammar: From form to meaning and use*, as well:

Imperatives can easily sound rude or angry, depending on the situation and your tone of voice. Please helps to soften a command. Using modals (such as would and could) is a more polite and indirect way to tell someone to do something (1996, p. 37).

In *Interchange 2,* there is an introduction to apologizing that makes use of metapragmatic information, ending with the statement, "In North America, people usually apologize and explain, or apologize and offer to do something about it" (1996, p. 37). Introducing students to the semantic moves associated with a particular speech act in a certain context (English-speaking North America) is pragmatically helpful. The activity on apologies continues with a discussion activity which asks students, "How do people usually apologize in your country?" (*Interchange 2*, 1996, p. 37), which would encourage contrastive analysis and perhaps raise pragmatic awareness. In *Passages 1*, Unit 6 is entitled "Interpersonal Communication" and begins with an activity that has students define six types of conversational styles: *bragger, complimenter, wandering eye, bore, interrupter and conversation starter*. Then, students are to discuss poor conversationalists after reading prompts like: "Asking about other people's personal business is impolite, but he does it anyway" (1998, p. 46). The grammar activity which follows has students fill in the blanks with adjectives (*acceptable, appropriate, customary, important, polite, unusual)* "to complete the sentences about typical or appropriate behavior" is followed by a writing activity where students describe "what is typical or appropriate" in their own culture (*Passages 1,* 1998, p. 47). These focus on appropriate physical behaviors (shaking hands, kissing on the cheek, etc.) and appropriate topics.

Ideally, the teacher would explain the different contexts appropriate for each utterance during class, but in many EFL (and ESL!) situations, the book is taken at face value and the non-native speaker teacher may have little knowledge of what is appropriate in certain situations.

Although texts categorized as EFL examined in this study devote a larger percentage of text space to pragmatic information, the metapragmatic information in ESL grammar texts is richer, particularly by providing students more variety of forms to accomplish a particular function, and more explicit metapragmatic discussion. [-13-]

Classroom Use

In addition to the analysis of pragmatic information presented in textbooks themselves, it is crucial to examine what teachers actually do with those textbooks in language classrooms. Teachers manuals, where available [9] , were consulted in order to see how textbook developers or publishers envisioned lessons' structure, and what kinds of supplemental information was included. Several publishers included online activities as well as links to outside sources of input; however, this rarely included explicit metapragmatic usage information. Chapters which provide implicit or explicit discussion of speech acts, formality, politeness or other pragmatic information were examined to see whether additional usage information was included in the teacher's manual. Unfortunately, teachers' manuals consisted of little else than answers to listening and grammar activities, and when politeness was concerned, teacher directives included no metapragmatic information or extensions beyond what was provided in the textbook.

Short telephone and email interviews with four teachers (2 American, 2 Canadian; 2 male, 2 female) who had both EFL and ESL teaching experience involved three major questions:

1. Which of the 8 textbooks in this analysis have you taught with/ are you most familiar with?
2. How well do these textbooks present language in context? (issues of appropriacy, politeness, social relationships, status, etc.)

3. Do you supplement textbook information in terms of politeness and usage? If so, how? Do you correct students when they use pragmatically inappropriate forms?

Answers to these general questions showed that *Interchange* and *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, both parts of series, were the best known by respondents. None of the teachers were currently using any of the texts, though several expressed experience using the two textbooks above, as well as books from the *Voyages* and *Passages* series. When asked about pragmatic issues in texts, all respondents said they felt that integrated skills texts, because of their organization, probably provided more information on politeness than grammar texts. Three respondents said that they bring outside activities to supplement textbook activities, but that those activities rarely include specific information on politeness or other pragmatic topics. The only time they remembered politeness coming up was in the use of different forms for greeting (*hi* vs. *good morning*) and the use of different modals in making requests (*can* vs. *may*; *can* vs. *could/would*). All respondents said that in role-play activities, issues of interlocutor relationships occasionally come up, though they don't remember making explicit comments about using particular forms depending on status. One respondent said that isolated grammar drills seem insufficient for her students to really learn English usage, but is not sure how to raise students' pragmatic competence. The interviews show that textbooks do provide the majority of input, and that even professional teachers rarely have the time, inclination, or training to include supplementary pragmatic information in their lessons. Further study is needed in terms of classroom observation and more detailed teacher interviews to determine how the textbook is incorporated into the students' learning process. [-14-]

Conclusion

This analysis of eight ELT textbooks shows there is a dearth of metalinguistic and metapragmatic information related to ways of speaking in textbooks. Although the amount of pragmatic information is small across all texts, a larger percentage of pages of EFL texts are comprised of pragmatic information; however, the quality of pragmatic information is better in terms of number of speech acts presented and amount of metapragmatic cues in ESL texts. However, even when metapragmatic information is included, it is frequently limited in the range of options for expression presented to students. The effect of metalanguage as learner input cannot be fully determined; however, textbook metalanguage serves as a poor model for pragmatically appropriate speech act realization. The fact that this study used a small sample of textbooks, and that pragmatic information was so broadly defined present limitations to the current study. Implications of this study, however are clear: more investigation into the use of textbooks in the classroom needs to be done to determine the efficacy of textbooks for acquisition of pragmatic competence. Research in the fields of conversation analysis, cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics can also positively contribute to textbook development so that future textbooks would include presentation of a variety of linguistic forms along with explicit metapragmatic explanations and contextually rich opportunities for students to practice those forms. A pragmatically friendly textbook might involve pragmatic awareness raising activities, extralinguistic contextual information for all language samples, provision of a variety of language forms to accomplish a certain speech act to enable pragmalinguistic choices, and rich cultural information to enable sociopragmatic choices.

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Notes

[1] The definition of intermediate by the publisher is somewhat problematic, as there is a wide range of abilities encompassed under the term “intermediate.”

[2] *New Vistas* and *Voyages* are the same texts, but *New Vistas* is the ESL (North American) title, and *Voyages* is marketed overseas.

[3] Although this text may seem longer than the others, the amount of information per page is less because the book is much smaller (7″ x 10″) than the others (8.5″ X 11″).

[4] 30-page appendix numbered separately.

[5] Textbook citations are cited by textbook, rather than author, for reader convenience.

[6] Speech acts marked with asterisks are only mentioned as related to expressing indirect speech through the use of infinitive. No explicit discussion of speech acts or usage is presented, though examples of each are included:

a. instructions	“Come early,” said the doctor.	The doctor told her to come early.
b. commands	“Lie down.”	The doctor told her to lie down.
(*Focus on Grammar,* 2000, p. 392).		

[7] In addition to the speech acts included in the table above, only *Intermediate Grammar* included the following speech acts: *ask polite questions, accuse, agree, compliment, criticize, deny, disagree, remind, warn*. Because this text includes so many more than the others, this data was not included in the table.

[8] *command* was included with *order* because the semantic and pragmatic distinction is vague; usually the same form is used to express both speech acts (imperative)

[9] *Interchange 2, Passages 1, Voyages 2, Focus on Grammar* (2nd Ed.) and *Understanding and Using English Grammar* (3rd Ed.).

[10] Per the APA Manual, 5th Ed., sources used in meta-analysis should be integrated within the References section, and identified by preceding them with asterisks (p. 222). Though this study is not a meta-analysis, all textbooks used for analysis are preceded by an asterisk.

Editor's Note: Dashed numbers in square brackets indicate the end of each page for purposes of citation..

[-18-]