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Implicit and Explicit Pragmatic Learning Strategies: Their Factorial Structure and Relationship with Speech Act Knowledge

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Zia Tajeddin
Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran
tajeddinz@modares.ac.ir

Marzieh Bagherkazemi
Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch, Iran
<m_bagherkazemi@azad.ac.ir>

Abstract

Research into second language (L2) pragmatics has addressed a number of learner variables likely to implicate in speech act knowledge. Subscribing to the same line of research, the present study addressed the development and validation of a pragmatic learning strategy inventory (PRALSI), and the relationship between English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' pragmatic learning strategy (PLS) use and their speech act knowledge. A total of 245 Iranian English-major undergraduates, ranging in age from 19 to 31, participated in PRALSI's validation study. Of these, 117 further participated in the second phase of the study to unearth the relationship between PLS use and speech act knowledge, measured through a 24-item written discourse completion test (WDCT). Principal component analysis confirmed the 3-factor structure of PRALSI, comprising implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit strategies. The inventory contains 41 strategies for the learning of three main aspects of pragmatic competence: speech acts, implicature, and conversational routines. Two one-way ANOVAs also showed strategy use, particularly the use of explicit strategies, to be positively correlated with speech act knowledge. The findings reveal the implications of the implicit/explicit learning dichotomy for pragmatic development and strategy use, and the potentially greater advantage explicit strategies offer for pragmatic knowledge.

Keywords*: Pragmatics, Speech Act, Pragmatic Learning Strategies (PLSs), Pragmatic Learning Strategy Inventory (PRALSI)*

Learning strategies are "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations"

(Oxford, 1990, p. 8). The concept of learning strategies gained conceptual grounding in applied linguistics research in the 1970s, and formal recognition in models of communicative competence under the rubric 'strategic competence' in the 1980s and 1990s (e.g., Canale & Swain, 1980). This was simultaneous with the incorporation of 'pragmatic competence' in such models, defined as the ability to perform L2 pragmatic features, including speech acts, in accordance with the target community's pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic norms (Kasper & Roever, 2005). Despite the considerable momentum built up by learning strategies on the one hand, and L2 pragmatics on the other, the implications of the concept of learning strategies for the development of L2 pragmatic competence have been explored in only a handful of studies (Cohen, 2005, 2014, 2018; Cohen & Ishihara, 2005; Cohen & Sykes, 2013; Malmir, 2020; Malmir & Derakhshan, 2020; Sykes & Cohen, 2018; Taguchi, 2018; Taguchi, Tang, & Maa, 2019; Tajeddin & Malmir, 2015). Research evidence alludes to the significance of researching and teaching PLSs in three respects: (a) classroom discourse and interaction fail to induce L2 pragmatic competence compared with naturalistic settings, (b) focused pragmatic instruction can attend to only few L2 pragmatic features in any course, and (c) L2 instructional materials are more conspicuously weighed with L2 lexical and grammatical, rather than pragmatic, features (see Taguchi et al., 2019). There are also studies of strategies-based pragmatic instruction (SBPI), which have unraveled a relationship between the use of specific strategy types and learners' L2 pragmatic development (e.g., Taguchi et al., 2019). For one, in a study conducted within the direct/indirect strategy framework (Oxford, 1990), Bouziane Sabria (2018) found instructed direct strategies more facilitative of L2 learners' L2 pragmatic development.

There are scant attempts at framing PLSs in accordance with second language acquisition (SLA) theory and research (e.g., Cohen, 2005, 2010; Cohen & Ishihara, 2005; Taguchi, 2018; Tajeddin & Malmir, 2015). The few existing studies have drawn upon established general language learning and communication strategies classifications, including Oxford's (1990) direct and indirect language learning strategies (e.g., Tajeddin & Malmir, 2015), or Oxford's (2017) strategic self-regulation model (S^2R) (e.g., Taguchi, 2018). This is while the conceptualization of implicit and explicit pragmatic learning strategies with reference to mainstream implicit and explicit instructed pragmatics research and practice could potentially better capture the unique essence of L2 pragmatics and its development. The rationale for framing PLSs in relation to L2 Pragmatics research, rather than general language learning strategies research, is three-fold. First, there is research showing that language learners' general L2 proficiency and pragmatic proficiency are uncorrelated (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). Second, the distinctiveness of social and cognitive PLSs, as put forth by Tajeddin and Malmir (2015) in their PLSs' six-way classification based on Oxford (1990), is to be questioned. Compared with strategic general L2 development, strategic pragmatic development in L2 can be argued to more visibly involve the simultaneous engagement of learners' socio-affective and cognitive resources owing to the more sociocultural and value-laden attachments of pragmatics. Third, L2 pragmatics is as of yet under-represented in language learning materials and syllabi, in comparison with other L2 areas. Accordingly, PLSs' theoretical framing within Schmidt's noticing hypothesis (1993) would hinge on learners' direction of their attention and awareness resources in the absence of focused instruction, and as such suit their strategic pragmatic development. An additional issue with existing research is its juxtaposition of learning and use strategies vis-à-vis each other as if they were inseparable, and the delimitation of its scope to speech acts (e.g., Cohen, 2005, 2010; Cohen & Ishihara, 2005; Malmir & Derakhshan, 2020).

For one, Tajeddin and Malmir's (2015) inventory includes both cognitive (learning) and compensatory (communication) strategies. Along the same lines, Malmir and Derakhshan's (2020) classification of socio-pragmatic, lexico-grammatical, and cognitive strategies centers on only speech act comprehension. Given this, a PLS inventory (a) focusing exclusively on L2 pragmatic learning, rather than use, (b) framed with reference to mainstream instructed pragmatics research and Schmidt's noticing hypothesis, and (c) addressing implicature and conversational routines in addition to speech acts, as the three main aspects of L2 pragmatics (Yamashita, 2008) would make a unique contribution to pragmatic research.

Against this background, the present study involved the conceptualization of PLSs in accordance with their implicitness/explicitness, drawing on Oxford and Lee's (2007) similar classification of grammar learning strategies. Implicit/explicit PLSs theoretically reflect the traditional dichotomy of instructed pragmatics approaches (see Taguchi, 2011, 2015), and are thus more representative of mainstream L2 pragmatics research. Finally, the relationship between self-report frequency use of implicit and explicit PLSs and L2 pragmatic knowledge, more specifically speech act knowledge, was also investigated. This aim was set to contribute to research on the significance of individual differences for L2 pragmatic development (see Taguchi, 2015), and the relationship between use of specific strategy types and L2 pragmatic knowledge and development (e.g., Bouziane Sabra, 2018; Malmir & Derakhshan, 2020; Tajeddin & Malmir, 2015).

Literature Review

Since the recognition of pragmatic competence as a key aspect of communicative competence, multitudinous efforts have been expended in delineating its nature, with some explicitly recognizing pragmatic competence as one of its key constituents (e.g., Bachman, 1990). The general understanding is that being pragmatically competent in language use is on a par with being adept at using language in a socially, culturally, and conventionally appropriate way (Kasper & Roever, 2005). In the domain of second language acquisition, L2 pragmatics has been defined as "the study of nonnative speaker's use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language" (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993, p. 3). Among L2 pragmatic features, speech acts have received the most attention, which, according to Cohen (2008), are "the patterned, routinized language that native and pragmatically competent non-native speakers and writers in a given speech community (with its dialect variations) use to perform functions such as thanking, complimenting, requesting, refusing, apologizing, and complaining" (p. 214). Successful performance of an L2 speech act invokes knowledge of both related linguistic means (pragmalinguistics) and sociocultural norms of the target community (sociopragmatics) (Kasper & Roever, 2005). L2 pragmatic research has brought to light the implications of a number of learner-related variables for speech act production (see Taguchi, 2011, 2015, 2018). However, there is a research gap regarding the conceptualization of PLSs. In view of (a) the inadequate treatment of L2 pragmatics in EFL teaching materials, and (b) teachers' emphasis on the linguistic, rather than pragmatic and intercultural, aspects of communicative competence in Iran (Ekstam & Sarvandy, 2017), researching strategic and autonomous L2 pragmatic development gains salience.

Language learner strategies are "conscious or semi-conscious thoughts and actions deployed by learners, often with the intention of enhancing their knowledge of, and facility with an L2" (Cohen, 2010, p. 228). Cohen (1998, 2005) made a distinction between language learning and language use strategies, postulating that "use strategies" facilitate the use of "material that has

now been learnt *to some extent*" Cohen (2005, p. 277; emphasis added). In a similar vein, Cohen and Sykes (2013) pointed to the interrelationship between L2 pragmatic 'learning' and 'performance' (i.e., use) strategies, implying that use strategies can be viewed as learning strategies only if they are deployed with the intention of advancing learning. While the concept of learner strategies found its way in SLA research in the 1970s, the first three decades of learning strategy research were totally oblivious to pragmatic learning and performance strategies, at least explicitly, and calls for addressing this under-represented construct began to be voiced in the mid-2000s (Cohen, 2005, 2010, 2018; Cohen & Ishihara, 2005; Sykes & Cohen, 2018; Taguchi, 2018). As the use of speech acts entails both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic control, Cohen (2005) deemed it necessary to guide learners in their strategic efforts to learn and perform complex speech acts and speech act chains. Likewise, Cohen (2010) emphasized the need for research into PLSs in his discussion of the "actual strategizing" (p. 227) that learners do when they try to learn and perform L2 speech acts.

There are only a few taxonomies of PLSs in the existing literature, the first of which was developed by Cohen and Ishihara (2005) in their study of the speech act knowledge of university students of Japanese. This goal-directed inventory contains 20 speech act learning and use strategies, which are categorized into (a) speaker-addressee relationship strategies, (b) strategies focusing on language forms and non-verbal cues, (c) monitoring strategies, (d) compensatory strategies, and (e) learning strategies. In another pioneering study, Cohen (2005) offered a taxonomy of strategies comprising the three major categories of (a) speech act learning strategies, (b) speech act use strategies, and (c) metapragmatic considerations, each subsuming related strategies. In a later work, Cohen (2010) asserted that Oxford's (1990) triarchic cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective learning strategy taxonomy constituted the functional underpinnings of his taxonomy. He further relabeled the first category as strategies for the initial learning of speech acts, implying a learning potential for performance strategies. An inspection of these three strategy framings indicates that they contain both pragmatic learning and use strategies and address, among all L2 pragmatic features, only speech acts. Moreover, they separate monitoring or metacognitive strategies from learning strategies; this is while the former can have some learning potential as well, and their distinctiveness stands to reason.

Along the same lines, drawing on Cohen's (2010) strategy taxonomy and Oxford's (1990) direct and indirect strategy types, Tajeddin and Malmir (2015) developed a PLS inventory. It comprises (a) memory, (b) cognitive, (c) social, (d) affective, (e) metacognitive, and (f) compensatory strategies. This study, too, is delimited to speech acts, and the separability of cognitive and social learning strategies underlying its proposed framing cannot be taken for granted, owing to the concurrent engagement of both in the learning of L2 pragmatics as an inherently social and cultural domain. In addition, despite the inventory's title (i.e., Interlanguage Pragmatic Learning Strategies (IPLS) Inventory), no demarcation has been made between learning strategies (e.g., *I practice the conversational gambits for the related speech acts with other learners*) and use strategies, for some of which no learning potential can be posited (e.g., *I avoid talking when I cannot use the speech act properly*).

The distinction between pragmatic use and learning strategies was elaborated in a recent study by Taguchi (2018), who explicated cognitive and metacognitive PLSs, drawing on the cognitive/metacognitive component of Oxford's (2017) S^2R model. Cognitive PLSs in her model include (a) activating context-specific L1 pragmatic knowledge, (b) inductive and

deductive reasoning in accordance with context and intentions, and (c) categorizing expressions, and synthesizing context-specific form-function mapping information. She further subsumed three strategies under metacognitive PLSs: (a) focusing on and setting goals for attending to L2 pragmatic concepts, (b) obtaining resources for communicative acts and opportunities for participating in them, and (c) evaluating the performance and interpretation of communicative acts. Taguchi conceived of metacognitive strategies as language use-related, and cognitive strategies as language learning-related, and called for further research to validate the taxonomy. In a similar study, Sykes and Cohen (2018) went beyond cognitive/metacognitive strategies and the prevalent concern with pragmatic knowledge and analysis in SBPI. In their goal-directed model of PLSs, they added the dimensions of subjectivity and emotional awareness, which reflect the affective and social components of S^2R.

Unlike most of the existing inventories, the inventory developed and validated in the present study addresses the learning of speech acts, implicature, and pragmatic routines as the three main aspects of pragmatics (Yamashita, 2008), which would better meet the needs of EFL learners where opportunities for use are far too limited. Moreover, the strategies are conceptualized and categorized based on their implicitness/explicitness (as implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit PLSs), which echoes the preoccupation of instructional pragmatics research with the implicit/explicit distinction (Taguchi, 2011, 2015; Takahashi, 2010). The distinction between implicit and explicit learning strategies was spelled out by Oxford and Lee (2007) in their discussion of grammar learning strategies. Categorizing learning strategies on the basis of their implicitness/explicitness brings to the fore the user's level of awareness (Schmidt, 1994): 'awareness as noticing' implied in implicit strategy use, and 'metacognitive awareness' implied in explicit strategy use. This categorization also reflects the distinction between implicit and explicit pragmatic instruction prevailing mainstream L2 pragmatics research. More specifically, designation of instructional pragmatic approaches in terms of their implicitness/explicitness theoretically originates in Schmidt's (1994) noticing hypothesis and Dekeyser's (2003) classification of instruction into implicit and (deductive and inductive) explicit types. Taguchi (2011) articulated the implication of the noticing hypothesis for pragmatic development: "Speakers' attention to linguistic forms, functional meanings, and relevant contextual features is a necessary condition for pragmatic input to become intake" (p. 291). There is ample research evidence that form-function-context mappings can be brought into learners' consciousness and further cemented through implicit and explicit pragmatic instruction (see Taguchi, 2011, 2015 for a review). In line with the existing literature on implicit/explicit learning (e.g., Dekeyser, 2003; Ellis, 2008; Oxford & Lee, 2007; Schmidt, 1994), implicit PLSs entail noticing upon exposure in the sense of intentional focus-on-form, with form designating relevant pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic features. By contrast, rule orientation underlies explicit strategies in two respects: inductive explicit strategies reflect intentional instance-based pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic rule discovery, while deductive explicit strategies embody intentional rule search and subsequent attention to relevant examples. It follows that the distinction has its roots in cognitive psychology, as do predominant learner strategy classifications, such as Oxford (1990).

Finally, along with the growing interest in researching the construct of PLSs, research has been carried out on whether their use is related to learner variables. For one, Malmir and Derakhshan (2020) found PLSs' use, as measured through Tajeddin and Malmir's (2015) interlanguage pragmatic learning strategy (ILPS) inventory, to be unrelated to EFL learners' gender. In another study, Malmir (2020) substantiated the predictability of EFL learners' L2 social

identity based on their self-reported use of ILPSs. To contribute to this line of research, and as a preliminary step in sketching the implications of pragmatic learning strategy use for pragmatic proficiency, the study explored the relationship between the participants' strategy use type and frequency based upon PRALSI and their speech act knowledge.

The Study

Purpose

The present study was designed for two main purposes. First, it involved the development and validation of a pragmatic learning strategy inventory comprising implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit items, targeting the various aspects of L2 pragmatics. PLSs were conceptualized in terms of their implicitness/explicitness to reflect the main trend of instructed pragmatics research with its focus on implicit and explicit instructional approaches. Second, capitalizing on the three speech acts of request, refusal, and apology, the study addressed the relationship between L2 learners' PLS use and their speech act knowledge. Speech acts have served as the main instructional pragmatics research targets since such research took momentum (Taguchi, 2015). Moreover, the three mentioned speech acts were selected as the targets of this phase of the study given their frequent use in daily interactions and abundant research evidence on their cross-culturally different realization patterns (Taguchi, 2011; Takahashi, 2010). Accordingly, two questions were formulated:

1. Is PRALSI a valid measure of implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit PLSs?
2. Does the use of PLSs make any significant difference in EFL learners' speech act knowledge?

Participants

A total of 245 Iranian Persian-speaking EFL students selected based on the convenience sampling procedure participated in the first phase of the study to develop PRALSI. They were all English-major B.A. students, studying English language teaching or English translation, and formally expressed their willingness to take part in PRALSI's validation study in a consent form. As for their general English proficiency, the results of the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) showed that the participants were at or above the intermediate level (M = 50, SD = 3). From this pool, 117 students (males = 51 and females = 66) agreed, in a further consent form, to participate in the second phase of the study in order to investigate the relationship between PLS use and speech act knowledge. They included sophomore, junior, and senior students who ranged in age from 19 to 31, averaging 22. As sample-related variance in terms of speech act knowledge was desirable given the second purpose of the study. The 117-member sample was selected from three different years of study. As university students of English, they were taking different specialized courses and studying different textbooks in translation and language teaching but no courses in pragmatics. Moreover, an initial informal survey indicated that none had ever resided in an English-speaking country, nor were they in contact with native English speakers for a considerable amount of time. The participants in both phases of the study were not identified by name. Moreover, OPT, PRALSI, and WDCT results were made available upon request.

Instruments

Three instruments were used for the purpose of the present study: Oxford Placement Test (OPT), PRALSI, and WDCT. Details of these three measures are presented in this section.

Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The participants' proficiency was measured through the paper-and-pen version of the Oxford Placement Test (Oxford University Press, University of Cambridge, & Association of Language Testers in Europe, 2001). The whole test (Parts I and II) took about 30 minutes to complete. Given the linguistic difficulty level of PRALSI and the WDCT, only those at or above the intermediate proficiency level were included in the study based on the results of the OPT. The internal consistency of the participants' scores was shown in an acceptable Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .87.

PRALSI. The main purpose of the study was the development and validation of a 41-item PLS inventory, namely PRALSI (see Appendix A). The main characteristics of PRALSI are outlined as follows:

1. PRALSI encompasses a set of strategies exploited by EFL learners to learn, rather than use, the pragmatic features of English as a foreign language, with the few use items primarily aiming to enhance the user's pragmatic fluency.
2. PRALSI targets the three main aspects of pragmatics, following Yamashita (2008): speech acts (i.e., actions performed through language use, e.g., complaining, apologizing, etc.), implicature (i.e., the implied meaning of an utterance), and conversational routines (i.e., fixed expressions or speech strategies meeting certain communicative ends, e.g., 'I wonder if you could…' or 'How is it going?'), with an eye to (a) linguistic, social, and politeness rules underlying their use; and (b) cross-linguistic differences.
3. PRALSI embodies three sets of PLSs distinguishable in terms of the learners' preferred learning approach: implicit items, inductive explicit items, and deductive explicit items.

The numbers and percentages of items in implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit categories, differentiated in terms of the types of pragmatic features (speech acts, implicature, routine formulae) they target are displayed in Table 1. As evident in the table, items targeting 'speech acts' constitute the largest category (43.7%), while 'implicature' and 'routine' items make up 24.6% and 31.7% of the items, respectively.

Table 1. Frequencies and Percentages of PRALSI's Item Types.

	Implicit items		**Inductive explicit items**		**Deductive explicit items**		**Total**	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Speech acts	5	12.1	6	14.6	7	17	18	43.7
Implicatures	4	9.8	2	5	4	9.8	10	24.6
Routine formulae	5	12.1	4	9.8	4	9.8	13	31.7
Total	14	34	12	29.4	15	36.6	41	100

Note. n = number of items; % = rounded valid percentage.

The development and validation of PRALSI involved six major phases:

1. General content specification in terms of pragmatic features and learning approaches;
2. Initial item sampling in two main phases: (a) a small scale qualitative study with 29 intermediate English-major sophomores, in which they orally brainstormed their personal PLSs, and (b) the development of a bank of 48 closed-ended items upon consulting Oxford and Lee (2007) and Cohen (2010), and student-provided information, comprising 16 implicit, 16 explicit inductive, and 16 explicit deductive items, around the three mentioned targets;
3. Three rounds of expert review and revision;
4. Piloting and factor analysis of the first version of PRALSI: (a) piloting the initial version of the inventory on 245 English-major students; and (b) subjecting the results to two exploratory factor analyses: a two-factor solution which substantiated the implicit-explicit distinction, and a three-factor solution which indicated the distinction among implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit factors;
5. Final content and language revisions of those items failing to load on intended factors (N = 12), and omission of items failing to load on any of the three factors (N = 7), following think-aloud protocols obtained from 9 of the 245 respondents; and
6. Piloting and factor analysis of the revised version of PRALSI of which the results are presented in the results section.

PRALSI respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which they used each of the strategies along a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = usually, and 5 = always), and the questionnaire took about 40 minutes to complete. Despite the prevalence of questionnaires as learning strategy identification instruments, they are admittedly self-report measures, and as such might not indicate what strategies learners deploy in practice.

Written Discourse Completion Test (WDCT). The speech act knowledge of the participants was measured through a 24-item WDCT, comprising 8 situation prompts on each of the three speech acts of 'apology,' 'request,' and 'refusal' (see Appendix B). The situations were sampled by the researchers in such a way to:

1. reflect plausible situations in the life of university students, based on an initial survey of 29 English-major sophomores, following the 'exemplar generation' phase of Liu's (2007) pragmatics test development; and
2. represent sufficiently varied combinations of the three social context variables (SCVs) of 'power' (i.e., the interlocutors' power relationship), 'distance' (i.e., the interlocutors' degree of familiarity with each other), and 'imposition' (i.e., the weightiness of the situation), following Brown and Levinson (1987). Examples include situations which require apologizing to one's close friend for spilling a few drops of coke on his clothes at the college cafeteria (equal power, small distance, low imposition) and to one's strict new professor for being repeatedly late for the class (higher power, great distance, high imposition). The WDCT representing the former situation is as follows:

You are having lunch with your close friend in the college canteen. While getting yourself some coke, you spill a few drops on his/her clothes. How do you apologize?

The WDCT was developed based on a bank of apology, request, and refusal situations obtained from a group of English-major students. Following the designation of the situations in terms of the distribution of the three social context variables, the prompts were developed, reviewed by a native English speaker and a non-native expert, and piloted on 30 EFL learners. Finally, revisions were applied in view of their comments and feedback.

Responses were rated on a 6-point Likert scale developed by Taguchi (2006), which places a premium on three aspects of speech act knowledge: situational appropriateness, grammatical soundness, and discoursal felicity. The WDCT took about 50 minutes to complete, and proved to have a high internal consistency in the present study, as indicated by a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .94. In addition, 30 of the participants were randomly selected and their DCTs were rated by a native English speaker. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient of .97 was obtained, indicating perfect inter-rater reliability. However, despite their popularity and versatility, WDCTs do not represent real interaction, so interpretations regarding the respondents' online speech act production ability should be made cautiously. In other words, WDCTs measure pragmatic knowledge, rather than pragmatic ability, and this makes their authenticity a somehow irrelevant concern (McNamara & Roever, 2006). Comparing written with oral discourse completion tasks, Eslami and Mirzaei (2014) question the validity of the former "not only because the response is produced in a test-like rather than real-life situation, but because the respondent's spoken performance is intended to be elicited indirectly through the written mode" (p. 152).

Data Collection and Analysis

The study was conducted in two main phases: (a) the development and validation of PRALSI and the WDCT, and (b) the administration of these two measures to investigate the relationship between PLS use and speech act knowledge elicited through the WDCT. Prior to the two main phases, the participants' proficiency was measured by administering the OPT. It was followed by the first main phase of the study which was aimed at the development of PRALSI and its validation which involved initial item sampling, many rounds of review and revision, piloting, and factor analysis. The second main phase was centered on the development of a 24-situation WDCT and its administration to the participants. The collected data were then subjected to a series of one-way ANOVAs to test the effect of PLS use on WDCT performance. As the participants were categorized into three groups of low, moderate, and high strategy users, post-hoc comparisons, using the Tukey HSD test, were applied to investigate the location of differences among the three groups.

Results

The Construct of PLSs

The first purpose of this study was to model the construct of PLSs. Reponses to PRALSI by the 245 participants in PRALSI's pilot study were subjected to two factor analyses. Given the number of finalized PRALSI's items (N = 41), an approximate 6:1 subjects-to-items ratio seemed appropriate (Field, 2009). Prior to factor-analyzing the data, the distributional normality of scores on PRALSI was investigated. Ratios of skewness and kurtosis to their associated standard errors fell within the range of -1.96 and +1.96 in all cases, which was taken

as an indication of normality at the .05 level of significance (Goerge & Mallery, 2010). Moreover, no extreme mean scores (near either end of the 5-point Likert scale) were observed for any of the 41 items, nor did any items show an unusually high degree of variability (see Appendix C for Univariate Descriptives). Table 2 contains descriptive statistics on PRALSI's total items.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Total PRALSI Scores: PRALSI's Pilot Study.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Statistic	SE	Statistic	SE
PRALSI	245	1.63	4.49	3.168	.547	.001	.15	-.183	.31
Valid N	245								

The data were also checked for factorability. An inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above. Moreover, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value for sampling adequacy was .94, exceeding the criterion value of .6. Bartlett's Sphericity value for goodness of fit also reached statistical significance [$\chi^2 = 1.11$, df = 820, p = .00]. The next step was to evaluate the instrument through unrestricted factor analyses. Principal component analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation was performed to assess the match between the three hypothesized sets of strategies (viz. implicit pragmatic learning strategies, inductive explicit pragmatic learning strategies, and deductive explicit pragmatic learning strategies) and observed factors. The determinant of correlation turned out to be above .00001 and positive (9.35E-022), indicating lack of multicollinearity. Communalities of the 41 variables (except for Item 7 with a communality of .23) ranged between .54 to .86, which indicated that they could be retained.

An inspection of the scree plot revealed a clear break after the third component, justifying the retention of three factors (see Figure 1). PCA produced a three-factor solution with eigenvalues greater than one, explaining 72.63% of the total variance (34.46%, 21.09%, and 17.07%, respectively). Table 3 shows the component matrix. An inspection of the rotated component matrix revealed the presence of a simple structure and a precise correspondence with the hypothesized three-factor structure: All the 15 deductive explicit items (viz. Items 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 18, 21, 23, 28, 31, 34, 36, 39, 41) loaded on Factor 1; all the 12 inductive explicit items (viz. Items 1, 2, 6, 10, 15, 20, 24, 25, 30, 33, 37, 40) loaded on Factor 2; and all the 14 implicit items (viz. Items 4, 5, 9, 11, 14, 17, 19, 22, 26, 27, 29, 32, 35, 38) loaded on Factor 3. Loadings on each factor were strong, exceeding .7, except for item 7, which showed the weakest, though still acceptable, loading.

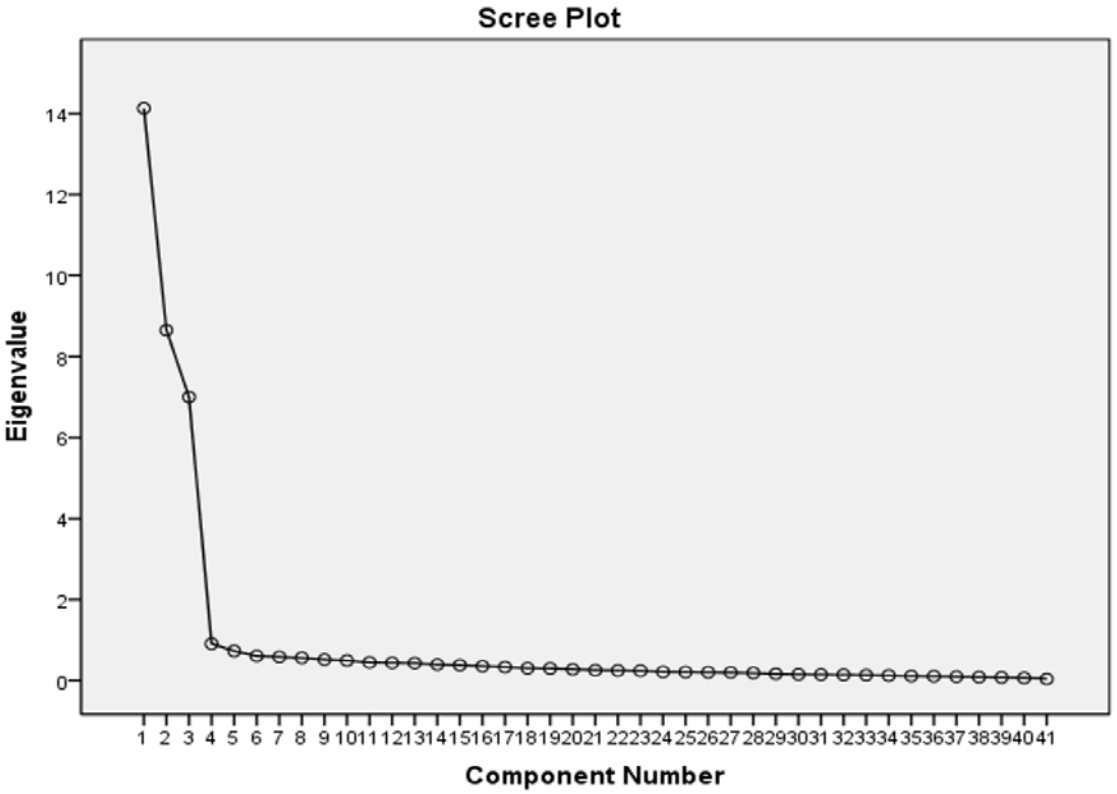

Figure 1. Scree Plot of Orthogonal and Oblique Solutions in PRALSI's Factor Analysis.

Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix for PRALSI.

Item	Component		
	Component 1	**Component 2**	**Component 3**
	Deductive Explicit Learning Strategies	Inductive Explicit Learning Strategies	Implicit Learning Strategies
1	.140	**.901**	.013
2	.147	**.910**	-.030
3	**.837**	.049	-.093
4	-.153	-.007	**.787**
5	-.065	-.113	**.826**
6	.090	**.886**	-.012
7	**.351**	.211	.267
8	**.905**	.048	-.122
9	-.070	-.095	**.791**
10	.140	**.900**	-.047
11	-.026	-.006	**.775**
12	**.894**	.069	-.117
13	**.894**	.068	-.059
14	-.059	.090	**.783**
15	.124	**.899**	-.046
16	**.893**	.150	-.056
17	-.175	.040	**.774**
18	**.880**	.109	-.101
19	-.051	.039	**.826**
20	.126	**.895**	-.064
21	**.903**	.155	-.078
22	-.077	-.023	**.825**
23	**.865**	.124	-.110
24	.158	**.914**	-.036
25	.147	**.905**	-.037
26	-.123	-.013	**.763**
27	-.020	-.101	**.768**
28	**.881**	.072	-.119
29	-.082	-.062	**.800**
30	.132	**.883**	-.006
31	**.878**	.136	-.091
32	-.049	-.059	**.775**
33	.114	**.899**	-.010
34	**.841**	.167	-.166
35	-.051	-.055	**.817**
36	**.819**	.188	-.066
37	.135	**.884**	-.054
38	-.072	.002	**.773**
39	**.809**	.184	-.053
40	.164	**.847**	-.019
41	**.713**	.183	-.057

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

The reliability indices of the instrument and its three subscales were also investigated. Coefficient α reached .97 for the *Deductive Explicit* subscale (N = 15, where N is the number of items), .98 for the *Inductive Explicit* subscale (N = 12), and .95 for the *Implicit* subscale (N = 14). Moreover, the entire instrument showed an internal consistency coefficient of .92. Overall, the results indicated that PRALSI measures three kinds of PLSs reliably: implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit strategies:

1. **Implicit strategies**, used more frequently by learners whose pragmatic learning efforts are primarily meaning-focused, with a predisposition to notice linguistic features of interest upon exposure (e.g., 'I pay attention to the way different people make and respond to apologies, requests, and refusals, and then imitate'.);
2. **Inductive explicit strategies**, used by learners inclined to discover linguistic and social rules underlying the use of English pragmatic features based on the input they are exposed to (e.g., 'I try to discover the politeness rules and considerations underlying the use of such expressions as "thank you," "please," etc. based on examples of their use'.); and
3. **Deductive explicit strategies**, used by learners inclined to seek explicit rules underlying the use of English pragmatic features in various sources (e.g., 'I collect information from different sources about Persian-English rule differences in terms of the way apologies, requests, refusals, etc. are made in different situations').

Pragmatic Learning Strategy Use and Speech Act Knowledge

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the relationship between general PLS use and speech act knowledge. The participants were divided into three user groups according to their self-report general pragmatic strategy use frequency: Group 1: low users with a mean score below 3 on PRALSI ($M1<3$, N = 50); Group 2: moderate users with a mean score between 3 and 3.5 on PRALSI ($3\leq M2<3.5$, N = 33); Group 3: high users with a mean score above 3.5 on PRALSI ($3.5\leq M3$, N = 34) (see Table 4 for the three groups' descriptive statistics).

Table 4. WDCT Descriptive Statistics for Low, Moderate, and High Strategy Use Groups.

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	Min	Max
Low users	41	3.05	.43	.06	1.96	3.92
Moderate users	38	3.58	.55	.00	1.54	4.33
High users	38	3.96	.29	.04	3.04	4.46
Total	117	3.52	.58	.05	1.54	4.46

Table 5 displays the ANOVA results. There were statistically significant differences at .05 level for the three strategy user groups [F (2, 114) = 42.67, p = .00]. The actual magnitude of the mean difference was found to be large, as indicated by an effect size of .42.

Table 5. ANOVA of WDCT Scores for Low, Moderate, and High Strategy Use Groups.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	16.72	2	8.36	42.67*	.000
Within Groups	22.33	114	.19		
Total	39.05	116			

*. The F-ratio is significant at the .05 level.

Post-hoc comparisons, using the Tukey HSD test, indicated statistically significant differences among all the three groups: moderate users achieved a higher mean score than low users (*Mean difference* = .52, p = .00), and high users achieved a higher mean score than both low users (*Mean difference* = .91, p = .00) and moderate users (*Mean difference* = .38, p = .00).

A second one-way between-groups ANOVA was conducted to probe the relationship between the use of each category of PLSs (i.e., implicit, inductive, and deductive strategies, and speech act knowledge). The participants were divided into three groups based on their strategy use. Each participant's mean scores on the three sets of strategies were calculated to place them in the group for which they had achieved the highest mean score (Group 1: participants using mainly implicit strategies, N = 50; Group 2: participants using mainly inductive strategies, N = 33; Group 3: Participants using mainly deductive strategies, N = 34) (see Table 6 for the three groups' descriptive statistics).

There were statistically significant differences at the .05 level for the three groups [F (2, 114) = 9.09, p = .00] (see Table 7). The actual magnitude of the mean difference was found to be rather large, as indicated by an effect size of 0.13.

Table 6. WDCT Descriptive Statistics for Implicit, Inductive Explicit, and Deductive Explicit Strategy (Str.) Users.

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min	Max
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Implicit str. users	50	3.27	.58	.08	3.10	3.44	1.96	4.33
Inductive str. users	33	3.67	.54	.09	3.48	3.86	1.54	4.38
Deductive str. users	34	3.73	.47	.08	3.57	3.90	2.58	4.46
Total	117	3.52	.58	.05	3.41	3.62	1.54	4.46

Table 7. ANOVA of WDCT Scores for Implicit, Inductive Explicit, and Deductive Explicit Strategy Users.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.37	2	2.68	9.09*	.000
Within Groups	33.68	114	.29		
Total	39.05	116			

*. The F-ratio is significant at the .05 level.

Post-hoc comparisons, using the Tukey HSD test, indicated statistically significant differences between the WDCT scores of those using implicit and inductive PLSs [*Mean difference* = .39, $p = .00$], and between the WDCT scores of those using implicit and deductive strategies (*Mean difference* = .46, $p = .00$). The speech act knowledge of those using inductive and deductive strategies, though, was not significantly different (*Mean difference* = .06, $p = .08$).

In summary, the higher levels of speech act knowledge proved to be associated with more frequent strategy use. Moreover, explicit, both inductive and deductive, strategy users outperformed implicit strategy users on speech act knowledge.

Discussion

The present study was designed to develop a pragmatic learning strategy inventory and to explore the relationship between PLS use and speech act knowledge. The first question was related to the construct of PRALSI. The results of factor analysis indicated its three-factor construct. Accordingly, three sets of PLSs, differentiated on the basis of the learners' preferred or more frequently deployed learning approach, underlie PRALSI: implicit strategies, inductive explicit strategies, and deductive explicit strategies. High loadings of all items related to each of the three learning approaches on one factor and the absence of cross-loadings show their distinctiveness to learners.

Inductive and deductive explicit PLSs are similar to Taguchi's (2018) inductive and deductive reasoning. In her model, she subsumed these two strategy types alongside L1 pragmatic knowledge activation and conceptualization under cognitive strategies; on the other hand, metacognitive strategies were assigned a control-of-learning and primarily use-related function. As in Taguchi's taxonomy, PRALSI addresses cognitive and metacognitive strategies in Oxford's (2017) S^2R model, but differs from it in three respects:

1. It assigns metacognitive strategies (e.g., seeking opportunities for use) some learning potential, and merges them with cognitive strategies, as put forth by Taguchi, in the same item. This is while Taguchi (2018) viewed them as "independent, but intertwined" (p. 58).
2. PRALSI classifies PLSs in terms of whether they involve a concern with explicit pragmalinguistic rules and sociopragmatic norms, rather than whether they are more use or learning-related. It is more function-oriented, than goal-directed.
3. In addition to cognitive and metacognitive strategies, PRALSI involves a concern for noticing and inferring aspects of the sociocultural context (namely the three SCVs) in both implicit and explicit PLSs. While this concern is exclusive to

sociocultural-interactive strategies in S^2R, Sykes and Cohen (2018) admitted the cruciality of context in addition to cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and contextual concerns in the use of the same PLS.

The implicit/explicit distinction can be thought of as only one part of a coherent theoretical framework for studying PLSs. The theoretically under-represented construct of PLSs, as conceptualized in PRALSI, should be further explored and delineated in terms of factors likely to influence L2 learners' choice of implicit and explicit strategies. In line with Oxford and Lee's (2007) enumeration of such factors for grammar learning strategy use, three sets of factors are likely to mediate L2 learners' choice of implicit and explicit PLSs, though the nature and extent of this mediation needs to be substantiated in further research. The first set includes learners' own language (pragmatic) learning beliefs and goals, (i.e., the extent to which they believe in the significance of L2 pragmatic features, and view such features as rule/principle-governed), which might act to resist the teacher's mode of instruction (Canagarajah, 1999). These are related to affective and meta-affective strategies in Oxford's (2017) S^2R. To date, Sykes and Cohen (2018) have shown an explicit concern with emotional awareness and learner identity as a constituent aspect of PLS use. They argued for the benefits of the strategy of visualizing the perlocutionary effect of performing a given speech act in a certain way for raising learners' affective and identity awareness. The second set of factors encompass learners' age and stage of development, with adults and highly proficient learners more clearly opting for explicit (i.e., rule-based) learning (Dekeyser, 2003). Third, the inter-relation of implicit and explicit learning of L2 pragmatic features might lead to the 'chaining' (i.e., consecutive use) or 'clustering' (i.e., simultaneous use) of implicit and explicit PLSs (e.g., Cohen 2007). These and other potential influences need to be taken into account in formulating a coherent theory of PLSs, based on the implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit learning/instruction distinction.

As for the relationship between PLS use and speech act knowledge, ANOVA results indicated that (a) more frequent PLS use is associated with better speech act knowledge, and (b) explicit PLS use likely better predicts speech act knowledge than implicit PLS use. That strategy use implicates in acquiring pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of speech act knowledge is supported by the few studies carried out in this regard (e.g., Cohen & Sykes, 2013; Sykes & Cohen, 2018; Yuan, 2012). Strategy use frequency and speech act knowledge were also shown to be positively correlated in Tajeddin and Malmir (2015). This finding echoes the significance of strategic second language learning. Over two decades ago, Oxford and Cohen (1992) enumerated four acquisitional benefits of language learning strategies: increasing attention, enhancing rehearsal, improving information encoding and integration, and promoting information retrieval for language use. At this point, it should be noted that strategic learning is not necessarily on a par with frequent strategy use (Dörnyei, 2003).

The observed tie between implicit learning strategy use and speech act knowledge probably indicates that the use of such strategies entails some degree of 'learning intentionality' and 'awareness as noticing' of relevant pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of speech act knowledge. This type of awareness has probably led to processes, though not totally conscious, of pragmatic knowledge integration and restructuring. The study also showed that learners would be better off using more explicit strategies. In the L2 pragmatics domain, the word 'explicit' implies the development of a memory housing metapragmatic knowledge acquired through the conscious processes of induction or deduction (Ellis, 2008). The two elements of

'learning as a totally conscious process' and 'metapragmatic awareness', implied in explicit strategy use, might account for the superior performance of explicit strategy users. The observed benefits of explicit learning strategy use corroborate the existing empirical evidence as to the greater effectiveness of explicit instruction in comparison with implicit instruction (see Kasper & Rose, 2001; Taguchi, 2011, 2015 for reviews). In sum, it seems that in the face of insufficient exposure to authentic L2 input in EFL contexts, L2 learners' use of rule-based (i.e., explicit) PLSs can be most effective in pragmatic acquisition, while implicit strategies, too, would aid learners in their endeavors to acquire L2 pragmatic features.

Conclusion

As an important aspect of SLA research, L2 pragmatic development can be particularly challenging in EFL contexts, where exposure to authentic L2 input is minimal. Given this, what learners themselves can contribute to the process of their L2 pragmatic development gains an increasing saliency. Among learner-related factors, learning strategies stand out. The development and validation of PRALSI, hinging on three learning approaches (implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit) was a primary purpose of this study. This study also involved the investigation of the relationship between PLS use and speech act knowledge.

From the findings, a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, PRALSI comprises implicit, inductive explicit, and deductive explicit PLSs. Second, more frequent PLS use is associated with improved speech act knowledge. Third, explicit PLS use probably implies better speech act knowledge in comparison with implicit PLS use. Theoretically, the findings can be taken as a preliminary step in advancing a theory of PLSs on the basis of the distinction between implicit and explicit learning/instruction. Pedagogically, administration of PRALSI prior to pragmatic instruction would benefit both teachers and learners. The results would provide an account of the learners' PLS choice and use frequency. Teachers can subsequently adapt their approach, in terms of (in)directness, to the majority's preference, or preferably offer instruction that caters for individual preferences. As for learner-related benefits, PRALSI can be assigned an awareness-raising function, potentially heightening the learners' awareness of the significance of learning L2 pragmatic features, which can in turn contribute to the efficacy of instruction. Moreover, by exposing learners to a variety of PLSs, PRLASI can function to enhance strategy use versatility, (i.e., strategy clustering or chaining) among those learners who have a so-called 'one-track' mind, using mainly implicit or explicit strategies. It needs to be admitted that the participants in the study came from an Eastern culture (i.e., Iran) with considerably different pragmatic norms from those of the Western culture. Speech act realization strategies have been shown to be sharply different across Persian and English in terms of politeness, power distribution, and situational imposition (e.g., Daneshpazhooh & Shahrokhi, 2016). It remains to be seen if this classification also suits other contexts where pragmatic norms do not stand in such a sharp contrast to those featuring in English. This said, the present study was carried out in Iran as an EFL context, and thus its validated PLSs' classification can be most likely applied to other EFL contexts. In this regard, Ellis (2008) refers to the significance of the learning context (EFL vs. ESL, as a macro-difference related to the learning environment) for language learning strategy use.

In addition, if overall PLS use is associated with speech act knowledge, strategies-based instruction (SBI) can be designed to help L2 learners in their endeavors to develop pragmatic proficiency in the target language. The benefits of explicit instruction of PLSs have also been substantiated in previous research (e.g., Cohen, 2010, 2018; Cohen & Sykes, 2013; Sykes &

Cohen, 2018). Moreover, if explicit learning strategies can more effectively arbitrate speech act knowledge, SBI can be designed accordingly. For Cohen (1998), SBI has the potential to eventually bring the learning process under the control of learners, freeing them from total dependence on teachers, and moving them toward autonomy. These and other benefits accruing from SBI are particularly important for L2 pragmatic development in EFL contexts where L2 pragmatic features do not seem to constitute a main target of instruction and non-native teachers themselves lack the necessary knowledge and skills for teaching L2 pragmatics even when textbooks embody L2 pragmatic features.

As a final note, conclusions regarding strategy use elicited from self-report questionnaires such as PRALSI should be made cautiously, as learners do not necessarily use the strategies they report. According to Dörnyei (2003), respondents might report desirable rather than actual behaviors, feelings, or beliefs, and the problem is more serious with strategy questionnaires which assess internal mental, rather than observable, processes; however, as Dörnyei states, it is because of the versatility and cost-effectiveness of questionnaires, including strategy inventories, that they top the list among data collection instruments in SLA research. Further research can involve the investigation of the extent to which learners actually use PRALSI strategies, and the efficacy of strategies-based instruction for L2 pragmatic development in comparison with implicit and explicit approaches to pragmatic instruction. Moreover, research could be conducted on the use of implicit and explicit PLSs by learners at proficiency levels lower than intermediate.

About the Authors

Zia Tajeddin is Professor of Applied Linguistics at Tarbiat Modares University. His main areas of research include L2 pragmatics and language teacher education. He is the co-editor of two international journals: *Second Language Teacher Education* (Equinox Publishing) and *Applied Pragmatics* (John Benjamins). He has numerous published works in international journals and has recently published two edited books, including *Lessons from Good Language Teachers* (Cambridge University Press, 2021) and *Pragmatics Pedagogy in English as an International Language* (Routledge, 2021).

Marzieh Bagherkazemi is Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch, Iran, where she has been teaching M.A. and Ph.D. courses in Second Language Acquisition Theory and Research, ELT Research Methodologies, and Discourse Analysis in Language Education. Her research mainly focuses on interlanguage pragmatics and discourse analysis, language learning strategies, and language learning epistemologies.

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Appendix A

Pragmatic Learning Strategy Inventory (PRALSI)

	Item	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Usually	Always
1	Through communicating with native speakers and/or more proficient learners, I try to find out how different social roles and positions may influence the way one makes and/or responds to requests, apologies, compliments, etc.					
2	I pay special attention to frequent apologies, refusals, requests, etc. in different situations, and try to discover the related social norms and rules.					
3	I collect information from different sources about Persian-English rule differences (linguistic and social) in terms of the way apologies, requests, refusals, etc. are made in different situations.					
4	I note frequent structures and sentences used by more proficient learners and native speakers to make and/or respond to requests, apologies, compliments, etc. in English.					
5	I take notes when someone (e.g., my English teacher) gives me the corrected version of the erroneous apologies, requests, refusals that I make, and try to improve what I have said.					
6	I participate in discussions about the social norms and rules underlying English requests, apologies, complaints, etc. we come across in class.					
7	I ask my English teacher, more proficient learners and/or native speakers about the social rules and norms underlying such actions as making apologies, compliments, refusals, etc. in English.					
8	I check the Internet and other informative sources for the set of strategies English people use when apologizing, requesting, complaining, etc. (e.g., offering reasons or promising to make up while apologizing).					
9	I compare my requests, refusals, apologies, etc. in English with those of more proficient learners and native speakers to see how I can improve what I say.					
10	When I create a hypothesis about the social norms and rules underlying requests, apologies, complaints, etc., I check it with my English teacher or more proficient learners.					
11	I pay attention to the way different people (of different ages, social positions and different degrees of familiarity) make and respond to apologies, requests, and refusals, and then imitate.					

12	I try to apply in context the rules provided by the book or the teacher underlying requests, apologies, suggestions, etc. in English as soon as possible.
13	When I see the vocabulary and grammar rules and social norms underlying apologies, requests, refusals, etc., I record them somewhere, e.g., in my notebook.
14	I take note of sentences and expressions with interesting implied or hidden meanings, and try to use them in context (e.g., "'When pigs fly," when someone means something is impossible).
15	I create rules in my mind about how the choice of words and grammar influences the way implied or hidden meanings are expressed, and then apply them in my own speech (e.g., when someone says "Nothing doing!" or "It might have been possible before," to mean there is definitely no way something can be done.).
16	I look for rules relating to the relationship between vocabulary and grammar choices and the expression of implied meanings and intentions in relevant sources (e.g., when someone says "It might have been possible yesterday," to mean there is definitely no way something can be done today.).
17	I notice how listeners react or respond to the implied or hidden meaning of the speakers' utterances (e.g., a woman tells her husband with anger "I'm going on a trip with my friends tomorrow, and nobody can stop me,", and the husband shows his disapproval by saying "Let's wait and see.").
18	I ask my teacher or more proficient learners about when and how to use sentences with implied or hidden meanings (such as "Can't complain," in answer to "How are you?").
19	I notice and try to improve those English utterances of mine which fail to convey my intended meaning in conversations.
20	I create rules in my mind about how gestures, eye contact, tone of voice, etc. are used to covey more clearly what is meant in English.
21	I refer to informative sources (e.g., my teacher, the textbook, the Internet, etc.) for the rules underlying the use of body language and tone of voice by English native speakers to convey more clearly what is meant.
22	I pay attention to the way native speakers use eye contact and tone of voice to convey more clearly what they mean, and then imitate.
23	I read about the rules of "politeness" related to making requests, refusals, complaints, etc. in different sources, and pay attention to relevant examples which I encounter.

24	I listen carefully for any feedback (linguistic and/or social) my English teacher provides on the politeness of my apologies, requests, refusals, etc., or those of my classmates, and try to form rules in my mind.	
25	I try to discover the politeness rules and considerations underlying the use of such expressions as “thank you,” “please,” etc. based on examples of their use.	
26	I notice (and remember) the way people with different social roles and positions make polite requests, refusals, complaints, etc.	
27	I take note of such polite expressions as “My pleasure,” which seem to be important and which are frequently used.	
28	I search informative sources for information about the appropriate use of such polite words and expressions as “please,” “Thank you,” “sir,” etc.	
29	I notice (and remember) routines such as “I’m sorry to bother,” and “I was wondering if…” which are frequently used in English conversations.	
30	I pay attention to frequent routines such as “I’m sorry to bother,” or “I wonder if …” in conversations, trying to discover the grammatical rules and social norms underlying their use.	
31	I ask my English teacher, more proficient learners and other informative sources about the grammatical and social rules underlying the use of frequent routines such as “I’m sorry to bother” or “I was wondering if …”	
32	I notice (and remember) how more proficient learners and native speakers begin, maintain and finish their conversations with different people and in different situations.	
33	I pay attention to conversation openings and closings in the English language, and then try to discover the related linguistic and social principles.	
34	I consult informative sources (e.g., my teacher, the textbook, the Internet, etc.) on how to open and close English conversations with people of different social positions in different situations.	
35	I notice when an English routine like “I was wondering if I could …” or “I happened to …” differs from or is nonexistent in Persian.	
36	I refer to the Internet and other informative sources to find interesting examples of indirect talk in English, and discussions of its related linguistic and social rules.	

37	To sound more fluent in English, I try to use generally useful expressions such as “How is it going?” in appropriate contexts based on the rules and conditions of their use I have discovered.
38	I keep repeating to myself important and frequent sentences and phrases such as “I mean…” or “Kind of sort of” which will make me sound fluent and native-like in English conversations.
39	I try to apply the rules provided by the book or the teacher regarding the use of important and frequent sentences and expressions such as “How are things?” in context as often as possible since this will help me become more fluent in English.
40	When I come across apologies, requests, refusals, etc. in English, I try to infer how the speaker and hearer’s age, social positions and degree of familiarity with each other might have influenced how they are expressed.
41	I ask my English teacher and/or other informative sources for differences in the rules of making apologies, requests, refusals, etc. with people of different ages and social positions.

Part A (Implicit learning items):
4, 5, 9, 11, 14, 17, 19, 22, 26, 27, 29, 32, 35, 38
Part B (Inductive explicit items):
1, 2, 6, 10, 15, 20, 24, 25, 30, 33, 37, 40
Part C (Deductive explicit items):
3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 18, 21, 23, 28, 31, 34, 36, 39, 4
8, 31, 34, 36, 39, 41
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Appendix B

Written Discourse Completion Test

Participant background

1. **First Name: Family Name:**
2. **University Degree:**
3. **Major:**
4. **Gender: Male Female**
5. **Residence in an English-speaking Country: No Yes (for……years)**
6. **Native Language:**

Dear Participant: *Below you will find a number of situations in which you are supposed to make either an apology, a request or a refusal. Please imagine that you are in these situations, and then write down what you would typically say in each.*

1. You are out shopping. Your sick father calls from home and asks you to buy him some tablets on your way back. When you get home, you realize you have forgotten to get him the tablets and the drugstore is now closed. What would you say to apologize?
2. One of your professors is walking on the campus, but you fail to recognize him. Once he is past you, you realize it was your professor. You run to him to apologize for failing to greet. What would you say?
3. You have been absent for two sessions in the literature class, and an exam is due in two weeks. One of your intimate classmates, who is very fussy with her stuff, has taken notes in the class. How would you ask her for the notes?
4. You are at the university with your classmates whom you have known for a long time. They are all planning to go out for lunch and suggest you go with them, but you never eat out. How would you refuse their suggestion?
5. You are a teacher of adult English learners at a language school. You realize one of your current students, who is older than you has a movie you would really like to watch. How would you ask him to bring you the DVD?
6. A close friend asks you for 500 dollars; you have the money but you are unwilling to lend it to her since you know she won't pay it back. How would you refuse her request?
7. You are having lunch with your close friend in the college cafeteria. While getting yourself some coke, you spill a few drops on his clothes. How would you apologize?
8. You go to the university library to study for your final exam. In the library, the mobile phone of another student whom you don't know repeatedly vibrates. You decide to ask him to turn the vibration mode off. What would you say?
9. You are a teacher of adult English learners at a language school. Toward the end of the course, one of your students who is older than you comes to you, and complains that you haven't been paying enough attention to her. You feel she is right. How would you apologize?
10. You are out at university. Your mother calls and asks you to buy some grocery on your way back, but you have decided to take a walk back home and carrying the grocery would be too difficult. How would you refuse her request?
11. It is a spring day and you are at university. One of your new classmates who you do not really feel comfortable with asks you to take a walk with him down the street after the class, but you don't really feel like spending time with him. How would you refuse his suggestion?

12. You are watching a football game. Your brother, who is about the same age as you, comes and stands just in front of you blocking your view. You want to ask him not to block your view. What would you say?
13. You are revising for your final exam, but your parents are watching their favorite series on TV with the volume so high that you cannot concentrate. How would you ask them to turn it down?
14. You need money twice the amount of your monthly pocket money this month, since you and your classmates have arranged a one-day trip. How would you ask your father for that extra money?
15. You are a teacher of adult English learners. You had given your new students a mid-term exam and promised to announce the results in one week. Having failed to check the papers due to lack of time, the next week you go to the class and find the students eagerly waiting for the results. How would you apologize?
16. You have just passed the driving test, and your classmates insistently ask you to treat them all to coffee, but you really cannot afford the money. How would you refuse their request?
17. As an English-major senior student, you are working hard on your term projects. Your father, whom you have never turned down, asks you to give him a ride to his friend's place, but you do not really have the time to. How would you refuse his request?
18. Your professor whom you have known for a couple of weeks asks you to bring him one of your books which he has been looking for since last year. You forget to get him the book for two sessions. At the end of the second session, he asks you about it. How would you apologize?
19. Your new teacher, who is somewhat flexible, has taught you some new grammatical point, but you haven't quite understood it. You want to ask her to elaborate more on the point. What would you say?
20. You are an English-major senior student. A freshman at your university comes to you and asks if he can ask you a few questions about the courses and professors, but you are really tired of such questions. How would you refuse his request?
21. One of your intimate classmates whom you have known for 2 years asks you for your notes two days before an important exam. You yourself want to review your notes and refuse her request, though she has always helped you with her notes. After the exam, you realize she has taken offence. How would you apologize?
22. Your professor whom you have known for a month asks you to bring her one of your books which she desperately needs. You hate to lend any of your books to anybody. At the end of the class, she asks you about it. How do you refuse her request?
23. Your older sister, who has been married for a while, invites you and your parents over for dinner, but you cannot make it since you have to study hard for an upcoming exam. How would you apologize?
24. You have bought a T-shirt, but once you take it home, you realize it doesn't really suit you. You go back to the shop assistant to see if he will change it with another shirt. What would you say?

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Appendix C

PRALSI's Univariate Descriptives

PRALSI items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean		SD	Skewness		Kurtosis	
				Statistic	SE		Statistic	SE	Statistic	SE
Item1	245	1.00	5.00	3.318	.067	1.061	-.106	.156	-.774	.310
Item2	245	1.00	5.00	3.302	.067	1.055	-.144	.156	-.717	.310
Item3	245	1.00	5.00	2.975	.081	1.283	.128	.156	-1.050	.310
Item4	245	1.00	5.00	3.179	.055	.868	-.054	.156	-.246	.310
Item5	245	1.00	5.00	3.220	.057	.896	.033	.156	-.532	.310
Item6	245	1.00	5.00	3.330	.067	1.052	-.078	.156	-.771	.310
Item7	245	1.00	5.00	3.142	.069	1.086	-.171	.156	-.577	.310
Item8	245	1.00	5.00	3.040	.081	1.282	.041	.156	-1.086	.310
Item9	245	1.00	5.00	3.171	.058	.920	-.030	.156	-.434	.310
Item10	245	1.00	5.00	3.293	.068	1.069	-.102	.156	-.770	.310
Item11	245	1.00	5.00	3.175	.056	.890	-.001	.156	-.490	.310
Item12	245	1.00	5.00	3.057	.078	1.226	.092	.156	-.983	.310
Item13	245	1.00	5.00	3.016	.079	1.247	.058	.156	-.990	.310
Item14	245	1.00	5.00	3.138	.058	.908	-.047	.156	-.474	.310
Item15	245	1.00	5.00	3.375	.071	1.111	-.152	.156	-.803	.310
Item16	245	1.00	5.00	3.069	.079	1.247	-.043	.156	-.992	.310
Item17	245	1.00	5.00	3.163	.058	.922	-.077	.156	-.119	.310
Item18	245	1.00	5.00	3.061	.076	1.194	.041	.156	-.880	.310
Item19	245	1.00	5.00	3.187	.059	.935	.102	.156	-.569	.310
Item20	245	1.00	5.00	3.338	.069	1.088	-.090	.156	-.781	.310
Item21	245	1.00	5.00	3.073	.079	1.249	-.013	.156	-1.030	.310
Item22	245	1.00	5.00	3.138	.061	.956	-.055	.156	-.306	.310
Item23	245	1.00	5.00	3.028	.076	1.192	.062	.156	-.928	.310
Item24	245	1.00	5.00	3.318	.065	1.030	-.149	.156	-.647	.310
Item25	245	1.00	5.00	3.318	.068	1.065	-.193	.156	-.697	.310
Item26	245	1.00	5.00	3.142	.059	.932	-.136	.156	-.221	.310
Item27	245	1.00	5.00	3.253	.058	.910	.035	.156	-.247	.310
Item28	245	1.00	5.00	3.061	.080	1.261	.045	.156	-1.040	.310
Item29	245	1.00	5.00	3.183	.058	.911	.053	.156	-.369	.310
Item30	245	1.00	5.00	3.330	.065	1.032	-.112	.156	-.699	.310
Item31	245	1.00	5.00	3.049	.076	1.203	.048	.156	-.953	.310
Item32	245	1.00	5.00	3.134	.057	.902	-.134	.156	-.283	.310
Item33	245	1.00	5.00	3.322	.066	1.043	-.153	.156	-.707	.310
Item34	245	1.00	5.00	3.040	.078	1.230	.068	.156	-1.036	.310
Item35	245	1.00	5.00	3.167	.056	.891	.189	.156	-.393	.310
Item36	245	1.00	5.00	3.028	.075	1.185	.064	.156	-.887	.310
Item37	245	1.00	5.00	3.298	.066	1.034	-.108	.156	-.764	.310
Item38	245	1.00	5.00	3.142	.056	.891	-.110	.156	-.287	.310
Item39	245	1.00	5.00	3.008	.078	1.228	.078	.156	-.964	.310
Item40	245	1.00	5.00	3.285	.069	1.086	-.124	.156	-.742	.310
Item41	245	1.00	5.00	3.012	.081	1.275	-.035	.156	-1.092	.310

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