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Formulaic Language in the Acquisition of L2 Pragmatic Competence in a Community-based Classroom

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Abstract

Pragmatic formulas have been recognized as linguistic building blocks necessary for successful speech act performance. Current approaches to speech act teaching overlook pragmatic formulas, promoting an incomplete view of pragmatics instruction. This paper reports on the results of a classroom-based study in which a formula-enhanced treatment focusing on both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic components of pragmatic ability was tested. Seven students from the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program participated in four lessons involving pre-, post- and delayed post-test measures. During the treatment, the students were exposed to target formulas from four interaction contexts. A qualitative utterance analysis was conducted to determine how pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic abilities of the students evolved after the teaching intervention. Additionally, three expert judges evaluated students' pragmatic performance. The results indicate that improvements in both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic abilities of the students were associated with the use of target-like formulas in their speech acts.

Keywords: pragmatic competence, speech acts, instructional pragmatics, formulaic language.

Pragmatic competence is an integral component of linguistic ability in a second language (L2) (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Celce-Murcia, 2007), and the relationship between pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge is fundamental to defining and assessing L2 pragmatic competence. *Pragmalinguistic knowledge* is knowledge of linguistic resources (i.e., language forms) for performing communicative functions (i.e., speech acts), whereas *sociopragmatic knowledge* is knowledge of rules and conventions guiding contextual use, an ability to adequately assess the context in which linguistic resources are implemented and adjust language accordingly (Leech, 1983; Bardovi-Harlig, 2017). Taguchi's (2016) integrated model of pragmatic competence is the most comprehensive, including three components: knowledge of linguistic forms and their functional meanings; sociocultural knowledge; ability to use this knowledge to create a communicative act in interaction.

Acquiring pragmatic competence is time-consuming and after many years in a target language environment, certain pragmatic features remain non-native-like (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986). Nevertheless, research suggests that it is possible to enhance L2 learners' pragmatic competence through explicit instruction of pragmatics, which appears to be more effective than implicit instruction (Taguchi, 2015). It is clear that successful communication in L2 requires facility with *formulaic language* or *formulaic sequences* (Wray, 2000; Weinert, 2010). The value of formulas for both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic development in L2 lies in their capacity to serve as linguistic 'building blocks' necessary for successful speech act performance (Bardovi-Harlig, 2012); formulas equip learners with socioculturally-appropriate utterances and facilitate pragmatic fluency during interaction (Bardovi-Harlig et al., 2008; House, 1996). Because researchers have studied formulas from different fields (Kecskes, 2010), various labels have been employed, including situation and stylistic formulas (Yorio, 1980), routine formulae (Cowie, 1998), situation-bound utterances (Kecskes, 2000), conventional expressions and pragmatic routines (Bardovi-Harlig, 2012, 2014). In the present study, the term *pragmatic formula* is used. A pragmatic formula (hereafter, PF) is a recurrent multiword combination whose occurrence, discourse function, and use are bound to a given communicative situation (i.e., speech event).

Research on interlanguage pragmatics has revealed that native and non-native speakers have different speech act realization patterns, which may cause pragmatic failures (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Cohen & Olshtain, 1993). This is because native speakers within a speech community share sociocultural knowledge which non-native speakers may not (Cohen, 2005). L2 learners' communicative performance and interpretation of target language implicatures may suffer due to negative transfer from their first language (L1), on both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic levels (Kasper, 1992). Insufficient control over pragmalinguistic knowledge may cause learners to struggle with target-like lexical-grammatical structures when performing speech acts in a second language (L2) (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). Since PFs are widely shared and accepted by members of a speech community when performing speech acts, placing PFs at the center of instruction would seem to be a logical way of enhancing L2 pragmatic production.

Review of Classroom-based Research

Despite wide recognition of the importance of formulaic language for successful L2 comprehension and production, "surprisingly little effort has been put into investigating how to teach it, particularly to second language learners" (Wood, 2015, p. 139). In formulaic language pedagogy, awareness-raising teaching methods such as the Lexical Approach (Lewis, 2008), primarily based on the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990), are most commonly researched (e.g., Boers et al., 2006; Webb & Kagimoto, 2010; Peters, 2012). While such methods may help raise awareness of formulaic language by directing attention to lexical items, forming durable mental representations in long-term memory should involve deep cognitive engagement with both meaning and form (Wood, 2015). Deep cognitive processing [2] is based on semantic or structural elaboration which requires engagement in mental activity related to target lexical item(s) and stimulates cognitive processing mechanisms beyond noticing. This is likely more effective for long-term retention of formulaic language (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2009). Classroom-based studies on deep cognitive engagement have targeted collocations and idioms (e.g., Eyckmans et al., 2016; Bui et al., 2020). Unlike collocations (e.g., *garage sale*) or idioms (e.g., *make both ends meet*, *kick the bucket*), the use of PFs is determined by a particular social interaction context, especially in everyday spoken language (e.g., *Can you look into it?*; *I wish I could help; Thanks*

for your understanding). Moreover, most PFs have a sentence-like (Pawley, 2007), discontinuous or semi-fixed composition (Wray, 2002), which makes their acquisition and processing challenging. To ensure better acquisition of such formulas, teachers are encouraged to use such techniques as ethnography and speech act analysis (Cohen, 2005), contextualized input tasks (Bardovi-Harlig & Vellenga, 2012), metapragmatic discussions (Kasper, 2001), and pragmalinguistic recasts (Fukuya & Zhang, 2002) in combination with awareness-raising methods.

Most classroom-based studies on acquisition of PFs have targeted factors like the role of language proficiency (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Xu et al., 2009) and the role of study abroad experience and/or length of residence in a target language community (e.g., Taguchi, 2013; Roever, 2012; Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos, 2012) in the production of pragmatic formulas. PFs have also gained significant attention from research on cross-cultural pragmatics (e.g., Olshtain & Cohen, 1990; Cohen & Olshtain, 1993; Cohen et al., 1986; Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Beebe et al.,1990). However, little has been done to investigate PFs from the perspective of *interlanguage* pragmatics. Studies investigating interlanguage PFs show that L2 learners seem to creatively construct such formulas at initial stages of acquisition and tend to first use PFs accurately in an unanalysed form (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009; Bardovi-Harlig & Vellenga, 2012). Later, as grammatical competence increases, learners start to analyse the constituent elements of formulas, which results in inaccurate and non-nativelike forms. Finally, they are acquired in target-like form, usually after pedagogical treatments and/or long-term exposure to and active participation in the target language environment (Bardovi-Harlig & Stringer, 2016). For example, Taguchi et al. (2013) showed that L2 learners go through stages of development, or 'patterns of change' (i.e., change toward target formula; change toward target-like slot-and-frame pattern; change toward non-target formula; stabilized non-target formula use). Clearly, more longitudinal studies are needed on interlanguage development patterns in the acquisition of pragmatic competence and tracking the emergence of target formulas in L2 speech (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig, 2006; 2009).

Few classroom-based studies have merged key principles of formulaic language and pragmatics pedagogy in instructional sequence to test the efficacy of teaching PFs for enhancing L2 pragmatic competence. Most such studies were conducted in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) settings (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig et al., 2008; Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos, 2011; Bardovi-Harlig & Vellenga, 2012; Bardovi-Harlig et al., 2015). Just a few classroom-based studies (e.g., Zavialova, 2016, 2017; Zeldenrust, 2017) have focused on L2 pragmatic competence through focused instruction of PFs in a community-based setting for immigrants, such as Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC). Unlike EAP programs which attract students with relatively high levels of proficiency and strong educational backgrounds, the LINC student population consists mostly of students with basic levels of education and L2 proficiency (Dempsey et al., 2009). While finding employment in Canada is not the primary goal of EAP students, it is of vital importance for most LINC students. Therefore, pragmatic competence is crucial for newcomers' social and economic integration into Canadian society. Unfortunately, non-EAP programs such as LINC rarely receive attention from researchers of instructional pragmatics. The LINC curriculum lacks a comprehensive research-informed model of speech act teaching. Although the CLB Support Kit (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012) provides a list of resources to help instructors incorporate pragmatics, they draw on models for university level programs, such as the 6R approach of Martínez-Flor and Usó-Juan (2006) which are often too academic-oriented for non-EAP learners. Furthermore, major approaches to speech act teaching (e.g., Cohen, 2005; Martínez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2006, 2010) employ explicit meta-pragmatic explanations aimed at drawing learners' attention to sociopragmatic factors, such as degrees of power, distance, and imposition.

This places a stronger emphasis on sociopragmatics, while overlooking the pragmalinguistic value of PFs as linguistic building blocks of speech acts.

To address gaps in classroom-based research, the present study has two main objectives. First, it makes a case for a more refined, formula-enhanced approach to teaching L2 pragmatic competence with a pedagogical treatment that places equal emphasis on pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic components of L2 pragmatics. The second objective is to implement this treatment program in a LINC classroom and investigate its effectiveness for enhancing L2 pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic abilities. The paper hopes to fulfill these goals while answering the following research questions:

1. How will the formula-enhanced treatment contribute to students' interlanguage development?
2. Will the formula-enhanced treatment help mitigate both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic violations in student-produced speech acts? If yes, in what way?

A Description of the Study

This exploratory mixed-methods study was a quasi-experiment with an intervention and pre-, post- and delayed post-test measures (Creswell, 2015). The collected data were qualitative in nature and underwent an interpretative analysis (Grotjahn, 1987). Moreover, for the purposes of credibility and transferability of the qualitative data analysis, the researcher used a combination of thick description methods and quantification of qualitative data to illustrate emerging trends when reporting the results (Mackey & Gass, 2005). The study received ethics clearance from the author's university research ethics board.

Formulae Elicitation Procedures

To develop a formula-enhanced treatment program, a Corpus of Pragmatic Formulas (CPF) was collected from 35 native speakers of Canadian English who responded to 12 written Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs). The DCTs scenarios covered social, workplace, and customer service interaction contexts and were adapted from LINC 5-7 Curriculum Guidelines document (Hajer et al., 2007). Analyzing the responses for target PFs was done in two cycles. During the first elicitation cycle, the researchers compiled selection criteria and applied them to the utterances in the CPF to identify PFs. These criteria were adapted from those suggested in literature on formulaic language identification, with an emphasis on PF identification (Myles, Hooper, & Mitchell, 1998; Bardovi-Harlig, 2009, 2012; Wray & Namba, 2003; Kecskes, 2010). During the second elicitation cycle, five trained applied linguists were designated as expert judges and analyzed the formulas selected from the 12 scenarios in the first cycle to confirm or refute the researchers' own intuitive judgement. The judges used a checklist (see Appendix A) containing seven diagnostic criteria primarily based on Wray and Namba's (2003) diagnostic list, and others (i.e., Pawley, 2007, 2009; Kecskes, 2010). The target PFs were selected from four target speech events (see Appendix B for DCTs scenarios):

- Extending invitations (social interaction);
- Rescheduling appointments (customer service interaction);
- Making inquiries (customer service interaction);
- Refusing requests (workplace interaction).

These speech events were selected for their relevance to the newcomers' needs as recommended by the LINC Curriculum Guidelines. When selecting the target formulas to be taught to learners, the researchers included a variety of formula types presented in the corpus. These included both fixed and semi-fixed formulas, as well as those that were semantically opaque and could be challenging for L2 learners (e.g., *How is it coming along?* or *Can you look into it?).* The final list included a total of 34 PFs (see Appendix C).

Teaching Intervention

Participants

Seven students and one teacher from a LINC program in Ottawa participated in the Teaching Intervention phase. The participants were selected using a convenience sampling method (Dörnyei, 2007) as they were the only students in that school who agreed to participate in the study for the entire duration of the experiment. The students were placed in LINC levels 4/5, corresponding to Canadian Language Benchmarks (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012) levels 5-7 or Stage 2 (Intermediate Language Ability). Stage 2 roughly corresponds to B1 or lower-intermediate proficiency level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2018). The students' names are replaced by numerical codes in this paper. All were recent immigrants to Canada from diverse linguistic, cultural, and professional backgrounds. A brief description of each participant is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. ***Student participants***

Student	Country of origin and L1	Occupation
Student 1	China, Mandarin Chinese	Communications engineer
Student 2	China, Mandarin Chinese	Mechanical engineer
Student 3	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Swahili	Car mechanic
Student 4	Syria, Arabic	Sales associate
Student 5	Eritrea, Tigrinya	Gas station operator
Student 6	Burundi, French	Organizational manager
Student 7	Ivory Coast, French	Teacher of mathematics

The formula-enhanced teaching intervention in the present study consisted of four 2-hour lessons. Lesson 1 was dedicated to social interaction (i.e., *Extending invitations*); Lessons 2 and 3 were dedicated to customer service interaction (i.e., *Rescheduling appointments* and *Making inquiries*); Lesson 4 was dedicated to workplace interaction (i.e., *Refusing managerial requests*). Lessons were one week apart. Before the intervention, the researchers had taught a two-hour model lesson

for the host teacher to observe. The host teacher taught the four main lessons using provided lesson plan notes with an answer key, copies of teacher's and student's booklets, and a list of target PFs.

The students were tested before the intervention (pre-test), immediately after the intervention (post-test), and two weeks after the intervention (delayed post-test). Each test lasted 20 minutes, and the students had advance notice. During each test, the students responded to four open-ended oral discourse completion role-plays (DCRPs, see Ishihara & Cohen, 2010) targeting the four speech events. A researcher conducted the role-plays and audio-recorded and transcribed them. Below is a detailed description of each phase of the pedagogical sequence.

Description of the Formula-enhanced Treatment

Phase 1: Guided Noticing (30 minutes). This phase consists of two exercises. Exercise 1, *Warm-up and Predicting*, activates background knowledge in preparation for Phase 2. The teacher gives examples of target PFs from each scenario and asks the students to predict situations where they may occur. Exercise 2, *Exploration through Written Contextualized Input* (Bardovi-Harlig and Vellenga, 2012), stimulates noticing of target formulas. The students read responses elicited from the DCTs data and underline word combinations similar to those in Exercise 1.

Phase 2: Deep Cognitive Engagement and Stimulating Retention (60 minutes). This phase consists of three exercises. Exercise 1, *Form-comparison* (Takahashi, 2005) and *Metapragmatic Explanation,* engages learners in intentional, conscious learning of target PFs based on exemplars from input (Takimoto, 2007). The students receive the lists of PFs from the researchers' corpus and compare them with the expressions they underlined in Phase 1. The teacher circulates to check progress. The class receives explicit explanation about the formulaic nature of the target formulas and their value for fluency and pragmatic competence (teacher's script is provided in her version of the booklet). Exercise 2, *Understanding the Implied Meaning of the Target Formulas,* consists of two parts (reviews), and provides opportunities to stimulate deep cognitive engagement as well as retention in long-term memory. Review 1 (see Figure 1) targets the pragmalinguistic aspect. For this review, only semantically ambiguous target PFs like 'Hope you can make it' or 'It would be great to have you' were pre-selected. The *hints* (see examples below) under each formula help avoid 'blind guessing' and stimulate more conscious learning (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2009). The students study the formulas and the hints and then match formulas with paraphrased non-formulaic versions. The teacher reviews the hints with the students to ensure they correctly interpret pragmatic implicatures (i.e., communicative meaning).

Exercise 2. Understanding the implied meaning of the target formulas and explicit metapragmatic explanation

Review 1. Match the pragmatic formulas with their best paraphrased versions. Pay careful attention to the hints provided for you.

Hope you can make it!

Hint: the verb 'make' doesn't mean 'make something with your hands' in this context

Would love it if you could ____ + [verb: join]

Hint: the phrase 'would love it' doesn't mean 'have romantic feelings for somebody' in this context

It would be great to have you there!

Hint: the verb 'have' doesn't mean 'own/possess' in this context

Please feel free to come on ___ + [date]!

Hint: the phrase 'feel free' doesn't refer to freedom in the literal/direct sense in this context

It would be a great pleasure for me if you come

It would be great if you are going to be present at my party

I hope you are able to come to/join my party

Come to the party if you like

Note: Note that these paraphrased versions are the interpretations of the author; teachers may want to create their own paraphrases.

Figure 1. A sample of Exercise 2 in Phase 2 of Lesson 1.

Review 2 (see Figure 2) targets sociopragmatics (i.e., contextual meaning). In Review 2, the students review the formulas and evaluate their directness on a scale from very direct to very indirect; the teacher provides explicit metapragmatic explanation about sociopragmatic factors (i.e., social distance, power, and imposition) that affect the language choices to help the students with their evaluation. The objective here was to review the target formulas to facilitate retention in long-term memory, enhance understanding of form-function-context connections (Schmidt, 1993), and promote awareness of multiple means for expressing degrees of directness, depending on contextual factors.

Review 2. Review each pragmatic formula again and decide whether each pragmatic formula is a direct or an indirect speech act.

In other words, how direct was the speaker when he/she invited his/her neighbour to the party?

Very direct Somewhat direct Somewhat indirect Very indirect

Circle or underline the chosen answer.

Hint: Direct speech acts is when the speaker says exactly what he/she means. Indirect speech acts is when the speaker means more than he/she says in reality. Indirect speech acts are generally considered more polite in English.

I'm having a ___ + [noun: barbeque party]

How direct was the speaker when he/she invited his/her neighbour to the party?

Very direct Somewhat direct Somewhat indirect Very indirect

Figure 2. A sample of Exercise 2 in Phase 2 of Lesson 1.

In Exercise 3, *Speech Act Analysis* (see Figure 3), the students identify and analyze pragmatic patterns in the examples and then write equivalents. This provides another opportunity to 'recycle' and review the target formulas; it targets both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of pragmatic competence and prepares for the *Practice* phase.

Exercise 3: Speech act analysis

Instructions: Read each response and divide it into meaningful components (parts). Next, find a phrase that matches speaker's communicative strategy, as shown in the example. Check your answers with the rest of the class.

Example: Hi, I'm planning a barbeque on [date and time], would you and your family like to come? Feel free to bring a salad or dessert.

Part 1	*Part 2*
Hi, I'm planning a barbeque on [date and time]	Would you and your family like to come?

Part 3

Feel free to bring a salad or dessert

Speaker's strategy		Phrase
Greeting + context	→	Hi, I'm planning a barbeque on [date and time]
Invitation	→	Would you and your family like to come?
Additional information	→	Feel free to bring a salad or dessert

Figure 3. A sample of Exercise 3 in Phase 2 of Lesson 1

Phase 3: Practice (30 minutes). During the Practice phase, students participate in a communicative activity to repeatedly use the target formulas to achieve a communicative goal (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 2005). The objective is to stimulate repeated exposure to and use of the target formulas and promote automatization. The students receive role-play scripts with task instructions. They role-play in pairs and then in front of the class, while the teacher provides feedback on both pragmalinguistic (the use of formulas) and sociopragmatic (directness, politeness, power, distance, and imposition factors) aspects.

Data Analysis

Two complementary data analysis methods were used to address the study's overarching research question and determine whether there were observable improvements in students' pragmalinguistic and/or sociopragmatic abilities as a result of the treatment: qualitative utterance analysis and expert judgement. These are explained in more detail below.

Qualitative Utterance Analysis

To determine how the formula-enhanced treatment contributed to interlanguage development, the researchers performed a qualitative analysis of students' utterances elicited via oral DCRPs during pre-, post, and delayed post-tests. The analysis was done in two cycles using NVivo 12 software, as shown in Figure 4.

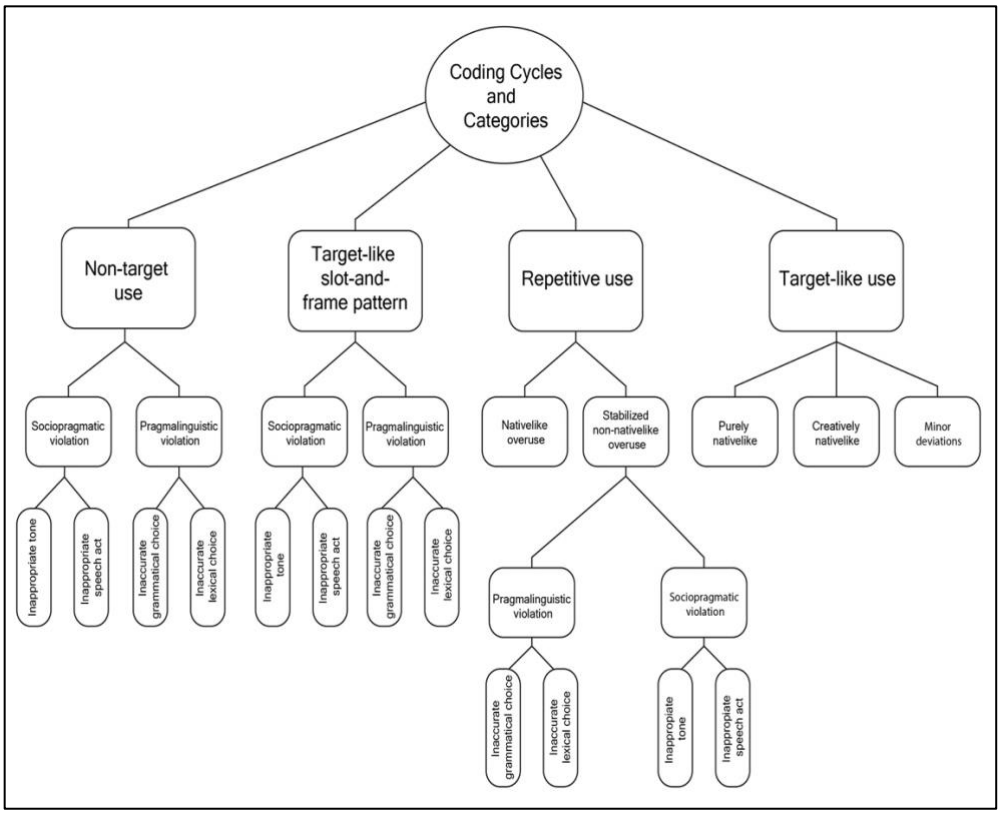

Figure 4. Analytical framework for the qualitative utterance analysis.

During the first cycle, the researchers used a pre-defined list of categories to code patterns of interlanguage formula development in student-produced speech acts before and after the treatment. Several coding categories were adapted from Taguchi et al. (2013). Authentic PFs selected from

the CPF served as a baseline. An utterance directly matching the target list was coded as *target-like* (e.g., 'Would you and your family like to come?', *Invitations*), while an utterance slightly modified or with some deviations from the target norm was coded as *target-like slot-and-frame* (e.g., 'It will be great if you come', *Invitations*). The same formula repeated multiple times and in more than one speech event was coded as *repetitive use*. A complete deviation from the target was coded as a *non-target* (e.g., 'Do you like to take my invitation to be part of my organization?', *Invitations*). Next, the total numbers of utterances corresponding to each category were calculated for each target speech event. Finally, the total sum of occurrences recorded in all four speech events was calculated for each coding category.

The second cycle of utterance analysis was used to determine whether and how PFs can help mitigate both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic violations in student-produced speech acts. During the second cycle, students' utterances from each of the four patterns of interlanguage formula development identified during the first cycle were analysed for pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic violations. Utterances with inaccurate lexical or grammatical choices within the 'non-target use' category and the 'target-like-slot-and-frame pattern' category were coded as *pragmalinguistic violations*, while instances of inappropriate tone (e.g., too direct or too indirect) or inappropriate speech act (e.g., a request instead of an invitation) were coded as *sociopragmatic violations.* Utterances in the' repetitive use' category were divided into two sub-categories: *nativelike overuses* and *stabilized non-nativelike overuses*. The former were produced multiple times across speech events by at least one student and directly corresponded to any of the target forms from the CPF, whereas the latter were repetitive utterances which contained lexical or grammatical violations that impeded the communicative function (e.g., 'Please come over'; 'Please, can you come you and your family?', *Invitations*). Finally, the 'target-like use' category was broken down into three sub-categories: *purely nativelike*, *creatively nativelike*, and *minor deviations*. An utterance coded as 'purely nativelike', had to precisely match one of the PFs in the CPF; if a formula produced by a student was not in the CPF but was acceptable, it was coded 'creatively nativelike' (e.g., 'I'm planning to organize a party for my birthday', *Invitations*). Utterances including discrepancies such as a misuse of a preposition or a lack of an indefinite article before a noun were coded as 'target-like with minor deviations' since the communicative function was not impeded.

Expert Judgement

To complement the qualitative utterance analysis, three trained expert judges with backgrounds in applied linguistics assessed each student's sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic ability before and after the teaching intervention using a diagnostic rubric with two components. Component 1 (pragmalinguistic ability) included five diagnostic criteria:

1. Does the response contain inaccurate grammatical choices that negatively affect the meaning/impede comprehension?
2. Does the response contain inaccurate lexical choices that negatively affect the meaning/impede comprehension?
3. Does the response contain a target-like pragmatic formula?
4. Does the response contain a target-like slot-and-frame pattern?
5. Does the response contain a word string that seems to be a derivation from and/or adaption of another word string that can be considered formulaic?

The first four criteria were based on the codes from the qualitative analysis and the fifth was adapted from Wray and Namba's (2003) diagnostic list. Criterion 3 and Criterion 4 each included a sub-criterion (3a and 4a) aimed at eliciting more information about the role of PFs in the students' pragmalinguistic performance. When evaluating the formulaic aspect of utterances (criteria 3-5), the judges were prompted to choose only the criterion which best matched the type of the formula present in each response (if any) and put 'not applicable' for the remaining criteria. Component 2 (sociopragmatic ability) included five diagnostic criteria borrowed from Hudson et al. (1995). These diagnostic criteria dealt with levels of formality, directness, politeness, appropriateness, and amount of provided information in a given speech act. Analysis of these results was done in two cycles. In the first cycle, scores were calculated for each student, for the pragmalinguistic component and the sociopragmatic component of the rubric in all three tests. Mean group scores were computed on the raw scores assigned to each student by each judge in the pre-, post-, and delayed post-tests. The second cycle of analysis determined how each student's pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic abilities evolved after the treatment.

Findings

Qualitative Utterance Analysis

The first cycle of the qualitative utterance analysis revealed two major trends in interlanguage formulae development after the formula-enhanced treatment. Firstly, there was a shift towards nativelikeness in utterances recorded in post- and delayed post-tests. Figure 5 shows the total number of utterances corresponding to each pattern of development before and after the teaching intervention, combined for all four target speech events. Multiple responses produced by the students to each role-play were counted, and the utterances were combined for all four speech events to highlight the overall trends observed in students' interlanguage development before and after the treatment. In some instances, however, a student did not produce any utterance in response to a given scenario, therefore no counting was done.

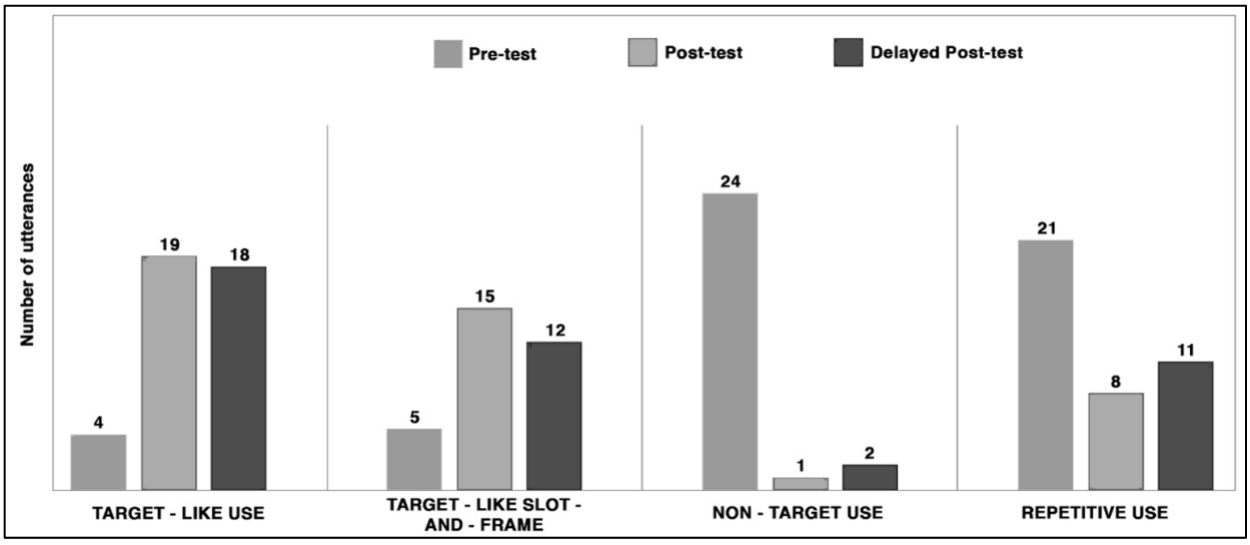

Figure 5. Patterns of interlanguage formulae development

The results of the analysis suggest that there was a general increase in the target-like category after the intervention: 19 instances were recorded in the post-test, 18 instances in the delayed post-test. A similar result is evident regarding the target-like slot-and-frame category: 15 were produced

immediately after the intervention, and 12 in the delayed post-test, much higher than the pre-test. Secondly, the number of utterances in the non-target category and the repetitive use category considerably decreased after the intervention. While 24 non-target utterances were recorded across speech events in the pre-test, only one instance was recorded in the post-test and two instances in the delayed post-test. Similarly, the number of repetitive utterances decreased from 21 instances in the pre-test to eight instances in the post-test and 11 instances in the delayed post-test.

Similar interlanguage improvements were observed across all four speech events. As can be seen in Table 2, a noticeable shift towards nativelikeness occurred to various extents in each speech event. However, the manual utterance count suggests that it was more challenging for the students to retain the target PFs in a purely nativelike form in certain speech events even after the teaching intervention, which led to more utterances falling under target-like slot-and-frame category as opposed to target-like category (e.g., *Refusing requests*). The speech event of *Rescheduling Appointments* seemed to present fewer difficulties for the students and yielded the highest number of target-like utterances after the teaching intervention. Finally, some speech events yielded more utterances in the repetitive use category (e.g., *Making inquiries),* even after the teaching intervention.

Table 2. ***Distribution of codes in the first cycle of the qualitative utterance analysis***

Pattern of interlanguage formulae development	Pre-test number of utterances	Post-test number of utterances	Delayed post-test number of utterances
Extending invitations			
Target-like use	0	6	6
Target-like slot-and-frame	0	4	5
Non-target use	7	1	0
Repetitive use	6	2	5
Rescheduling appointments			
Target-like use	2	6	6
Target-like slot-and-frame	5	6	5
Non-target use	6	0	0
Repetitive use	1	1	1
Making inquiries			
Target-like use	2	4	4
Target-like slot-and-frame	0	0	0
Non-target use	4	0	0
Repetitive use	8	3	3
Refusing requests			
Target-like use	0	3	2
Target-like slot-and-frame	0	5	2
Non-target use	7	0	2
Repetitive use	6	2	2

Examples of utterances containing target-like PFs produced by the students include:

- 'I'm planning to organize a party for my birthday' (Student 1, *Extending invitations*, post-test)
- 'I need to reschedule, please' (Student 4, *Rescheduling appointments*, post-test)

Examples of utterances that were coded as the ones containing the target-like slot-and-frame pattern include:

- 'If you can come, I will be happy' (Student 2, *Extending invitations*, post-test)
- 'Please if you can find another date for me, for another appointment, it will be good for me' (Student 7, *Rescheduling appointments*, post-test)

Examples of utterances that contained deviations from the target norm (non-target uses) include:

- 'I'm inviting you for… I have birthday party' (Student 5, *Extending invitations*, pre-test)
- 'Can you explain how is going on?' (Student 6, *Making inquiries,* pre-test)

Finally, some examples of repetitive uses include:

- 'I want to invite you and your family to come' (Student 2, *Extending invitations*, pre-test)
- 'Please, can you cancel, please?' (Student 5, *Making inquiries*, pre-test)

Pragmalinguistic improvements

The second cycle of the qualitative utterance analysis has revealed that the main source of pragmalinguistic violations before the intervention and across speech acts was inability to accurately use modal verbs in the context of a speech act. For example, a tendency to misuse or overuse modal verbs 'would/would like', 'can', and 'could' was observed across speech events. The largest number of such misuses was recorded in *Making Inquiries*. These non-nativelike utterances were associated with incorrect placement or overuse of the intensifier 'please', as in 'Please, can you cancel, please?' (Student 5, pre-test) or 'Please, could you check to tell me why he didn't come?' (Student 7, post-test). At the same time, the nativelike overuses were associated with repetition of the utterances containing the modal verb 'can', as in 'Can you tell me why?' (Student 2, post-test) or 'Can you check for me what happened?' (Student 3, delayed post-test).

A higher degree of grammatical accuracy was observed in utterances recorded after the intervention. Students started using a variety of modal verbs, in addition to 'can'. Examples include 'Who *could* I speak about it?' (Student 1, post-test) or 'So, who *should* I speak to about these things?' (Student 1, delayed post-test). Moreover, most participants attempted to use PFs containing the Subjunctive mood structures in *Extending Invitations* and *Refusing Requests*, which signaled pragmalinguistic improvements. Notably, these two speech events contained PFs of the semi-fixed (discontinuous) type with complex grammatical and syntactic structures (e.g., I could ____ + [promise of future action], if that would help; I would usually ___ + [help], but ___ + [excuse]), which presented the biggest interlanguage challenge for the students both before and after the intervention; consequently, no participant was able to fully use pure target-like forms. Although overall quality of the utterances improved after the intervention, several minor pragmalinguistic violations were recorded when students attempted to reproduce semi-fixed PFs in post- and delayed post-tests. These were associated with errors in the second conditional structures and inappropriate word order, as in 'If you *can* come, I *will* be happy' (Student 2,

Invitations) or *'It is possible if I can* work overtime next week on Monday?' (Student 6, *Refusals*). Although these utterances were not purely target-like, they contained minor lexical or grammatical discrepancies which did not impede meaning. They were coded as 'target-like slot-and-frame pattern' and were considered positive signs of interlanguage formulae development.

Prior to the intervention, limited lexical resources had impeded the communicative meanings of the students' speech acts, resulting in awkward sounding utterances such as 'Which is condition to cancel insurance?' or 'Can you explain how is going on?' (Student 6, pre-test). In addition, multiple instances of repetitive utterances produced in the pre-test were observed and coded as 'nativelike overuses'. In *Extending Invitations*, for example, students tended to use the verb 'want' (e.g., 'I want to invite you to join us', Student 1, pre-test). After the intervention, they started producing more target-like utterances (e.g., 'I am planning to organize a party for my birthday', Student 1, post-test or 'We are having a birthday party for my son', Student 6, post-test). Similarly, in *Rescheduling Appointments*, students' utterances contained more context-specific vocabulary like 'reschedule', 'availability', and 'available'. Compare, for example, Student's 6 pre-test utterance, 'But if is possible, I can have another time, another appointment in future?', to his post-test utterance, 'Do you have any availability next week?'.

Sociopragmatic improvements

Most sociopragmatic violations prior to the teaching intervention involved not using mitigation devices except for the repetitive 'Can you/could you [please]' formula in speech events implying higher degrees of social distance, power, and imposition (i.e., *Making Inquiries* or *Refusals*) as in 'Can you change the day please for me because it can't for me today' (Student 5, pre-test). Additionally, students tended to pose direct questions when formulating requests, sounding slightly aggressive in English: 'Why you are not cancelling?' (Student 5, pre-test), 'Why do you take some money in my account' (Student 7, pre-test), or simply 'What happened?' (Student 3, pre-test). The analysis revealed that the participants started utilizing target PFs containing hedges and mitigation devices such as 'I was wondering' or 'I hope' after the intervention, which made their speech acts appear less direct (e.g., 'I was wondering what happened, Student 3, post-test'; 'I hope that you can help me', Student 2, delayed post-test). Finally, in *Refusals*, there were improvements in the students' sociopragmatic ability using PFs containing mitigators like 'possible/possibly' or 'unfortunately' (e.g., 'It is possible if I can work overtime next week on Monday?', Student 6, post-test; 'Unfortunately, I'm unable to take part in your project', Student 2, delayed post-test; 'Oh, sorry, unfortunately I have a job' (Student 5, delayed post-test).

Expert Judgement

Overall, the students demonstrated gains in both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects after the teaching intervention. Moreover, they showed strong potential for long-term retention of the target PFs, as confirmed by the high mean scores earned in the delayed post-tests for most target speech events (see Tables 3-6). Note that proficiency levels for the pragmalinguistic component described below can be classified as Low: 0-8, Average: 9-16 and High: 17-24, and for the sociopragmatic component, Low: 0-14, Average: 15-20 and High: 21-30.

Table 3. Extending Invitations

Pragmalinguistic component (*a*= .86)									
	Pre-test			Post-test			Delayed post-test		
N= 7	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3
Mean	12.43	8.00	14.86	21.00	17.14	19.57	19.71	12.86	18.29
Std. Dev.	6.45	4.12	3.23	3.26	3.93	2.44	3.86	5.61	4.95
Minimum	4	4	12	16	12	16	15	4	12
Maximum	21	15	20	24	22	24	24	21	24
Sociopragmatic component (*a*= .65)									
Mean	13.86	16.29	14.43	22.57	22.14	19.43	20.43	26.57	19.71
Std. Dev.	7.17	7.11	1.90	5.28	7.17	4.03	8.32	5.02	5.40
Minimum	9	5	11	15	14	14	10	18	15
Maximum	29	25	17	30	30	25	30	30	28

Table 4. Rescheduling Appointments

Pragmalinguistic component (a=.81)									
	Pre-test			Post-test			Delayed post-test		
N= 7	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3
Mean	19.00	13.29	17.29	19.86	16.00	19.43	22.43	19.57	21.14
Std. Dev.	5.00	6.49	5.12	2.79	4.83	2.44	1.13	5.35	1.86
Minimum	11	5	9	15	10	15	21	12	19
Maximum	24	23	24	24	23	22	24	24	24
Sociopragmatic component (a= .62)									
Mean	21.86	21.71	17.71	20.43	23.57	18.29	22.71	27.00	21.57
Std. Dev.	2.54	4.07	4.23	5.02	5.44	4.71	1.70	3.87	5.41
Minimum	18	17	12	10	15	14	21	20	15
Maximum	26	28	25	24	30	25	25	30	30

Table 5. Making inquiries

Pragmalinguistic component (*a*= .86)									
	Pre-test			Post-test			Delayed post-test		
N= 7	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3
Mean	13.71	7.43	14.29	19.14	13.29	18.57	20.43	15.57	19.43
Std. Dev.	3.25	2.87	3.14	5.46	6.87	4.57	3.91	5.02	3.73
Minimum	9	5	12	8	5	13	13	6	12
Maximum	19	12	20	23	24	24	24	21	22
Sociopragmatic component (a= .80)									
Mean	14.00	17.86	13.71	21.14	19.14	19.71	23.29	27.14	21.00
Std. Dev.	4.76	6.33	3.49	4.84	6.86	4.99	1.97	2.47	4.08
Minimum	10	9	10	15	9	13	20	24	15
Maximum	24	26	18	28	26	27	25	30	25

Table 6. Refusing requests

Pragmalinguistic component (a= .91)									
	Pre-test			Post-test			Delayed post-test		
N= 7	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3
Mean	12.00	11.71	16.14	17.57	13.14	18.71	18.71	15.86	19.14
Std. Dev.	2.82	4.38	3.84	5.09	4.45	4.49	5.21	7.26	4.41
Minimum	7	6	12	8	6	10	10	6	14
Maximum	15	18	20	24	18	24	24	24	24
Sociopragmatic component (a= .78)									
Mean	14.71	21.43	15.00	17.43	24.71	20.57	23.29	22.86	21.57
Std. Dev.	3.30	3.91	3.51	6.32	5.09	5.09	3.54	6.09	4.86
Minimum	11	15	11	10	18	15	17	14	16
Maximum	19	25	20	25	30	30	29	30	29

As can be seen from the descriptive statistics, the standard deviations were quite large for almost every speech event. In addition, there were large differences between minimum and maximum scores within the same judge's evaluation across the three tests. It was, therefore, important to consider these individual differences to better align the results of the expert judgements with the findings that emerged from the qualitative utterance analysis. The need for a more robust qualitative analysis of individual students' scores was also justified by the small sample size of the student participants, which made it unreasonable to perform inferential statistical analysis. To make the presentation of the results more concise, the evaluations of several prominent student

cases [2] are presented below for the speech event of *Making Inquiries*. Tables 7 and 8 contain the individual scores earned by each student for pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic components before and after the teaching intervention. Three prominent individual student cases selected from this speech event are: Student 1, Student 3, and Student 7. The pre-, post-, and delayed post-test verbal responses produced by these three students are presented in Table 9.

Table 7. Individual scores: Making Inquiries, Pragmalinguistic Component

Student	Pre-test score			Post-test score			Delayed post-test score		
	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3
Student 1	9	11	16	23	11	19	24	17	22
Student 2	19	6	12	8	5	13	24	19	21
Student 3	14	5	12	22	18	24	22	21	20
Student 4	13	7	12	21	7	17	22	17	22
Student 5	11	9	17	28	23	27	21	29	25
Student 6	11	12	12	16	10	13	18	17	17
Student 7	14	6	16	21	24	20	13	6	12

Table 8. Individual scores: Making Inquiries, Sociopragmatic Component

Student	Pre-test score			Post-test score			Delayed post-test score		
	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3	J1	J2	J3
Student 1	14	16	12	15	9	13	24	30	24
Student 2	24	25	12	21	11	21	25	24	16
Student 3	15	26	17	21	26	25	25	30	23
Student 4	11	21	18	15	18	17	24	25	24
Student 5	11	9	17	28	23	27	21	29	25
Student 6	13	13	10	25	21	16	24	26	20
Student 7	10	15	10	21	26	19	20	26	15

The diagnostic assessment of the pragmatic ability of these three cases suggests that there was a general increase in both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic scores after the teaching intervention. However, there were some differences in individual scores. Student 1 improved pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic performance after the teaching intervention, especially in the delayed post-test, where the judges unanimously evaluated it as 'high'. In the immediate post-test, Judge 2 evaluated his response as 'low average' in the pragmalinguistic component and 'very low' in the sociopragmatic component. Analysis of judges' comments revealed that the low scores on both components were caused by very lengthy explanation as part of his request. For example, in her qualitative comments, Judge 2 noted that a reference to the World Cup made by Student 1 in

his request was a confounding factor (see Table 8 for this student's verbal response). As a result, all three judges chose 'very inappropriate' when marking criterion 5 of the rubric (i.e., 'Is the amount of information given appropriate for this context?'). Student's 3 pragmalinguistic scores increased dramatically after the intervention from very low (according to Judge 2) or average (according to Judges 1 and 3) in the pre-test to high or very high in the post- and delayed post-test (according to all three judges). For the sociopragmatic component, the judges agreed that sociopragmatic performance was quite high in all three tests, although scores were higher after the intervention due to use of target-like formulas, which made responses more conventionally indirect ('I was wondering what happened', post-test; Can you check for me what happened', delayed post-test). Assessment of Student 7 showed strong improvement in pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics in the post-test. For Judges 1 and 2, the student's utterance 'Please could you check to tell me why he didn't come?' contained a target-like slot-and-frame pattern similar to the one in the target formula 'Can you please check if + __ [any meaningful completion of the phrase]'. In the delayed post-test, this student received lower scores for the pragmalinguistic component. According to the judges 'I call you to check if you can do something' partially resembled the target formula 'Could you check and see if + __ [any meaningful completion of the phrase]?' with grammatical discrepancies impeding comprehension. These did not impact the judges' assessment of the sociopragmatic component, and they unanimously evaluated this student's performance as high in the delayed post-test.

Table 9. Verbal responses: Making inquiries

Student	Pre-test response	Post-test response	Delayed post-test response
Student 1	Why do you withdraw my money from my checking account? Please give me a reason.	Yes, I want to know why no person come here for installing my cable? Do you know, the World Cup will be start. Could I speak about it?	I use your internet, but several days your internet is very slowly. I can't open the browser. So, who should speak to about these things?
Student 3	Please, can I [you] help me? I cancelled my insurance last month or last week, then I went to the bank, and they still take my money. What happened?	I have appointment today with technician. They didn't show up. I was wondering what happened?	Hi, my name is __. My internet is going slow. Can you check for me what happened?
Student 7	Why do you take some money in my account? So, I cancelled your insurance, and you take the money for this month in my account. Why?	Hello, I have an appointment with one of your technician. Please could you check to tell me why he didn't come?	I call your agency before next week about my internet, so it is very slow. I call you to check if you can do something.

Discussion

The Evolution of Students' Pragmalinguistic Abilities

The present study provides evidence to support the claim that PFs play a crucial role in successful speech act realization in L2, which has long been suggested in the literature (Coulmas, 1981; Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; House, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig, 2006, 2012; Bardovi-Harlig et al., 2008; Boers & Lindstromberg, 2009). The results of the present study confirm that formulas equip learners with accurate and contextually appropriate language to appear proficient and facilitate acceptance into the target language community. The qualitative utterance analysis revealed multiple improvements in both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic abilities after the teaching intervention. Likewise, the expert judges' assessment revealed that those students who used the target PFs or utterances containing target-like slot-and-frame formulaic patterns received higher scores on both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic components.

Despite multiple interlanguage improvements observed in pragmatic performance after the teaching intervention, the findings revealed that PFs of the semi-fixed type with complex grammatical and syntactic structures as part of their formulaic frames (e.g., I was wondering if ___+ [any meaningful completion of the phrase]) presented the biggest acquisitional challenge in the pragmalinguistic aspect, and only few PFs of this type were fully retained by the students after the intervention. The learners were able to recall these units as chunks of language but were unable to use them with proper syntactic adjustments. This supports the current belief that PFs appear to be stored in the learner's mental lexicon which can be viewed as a continuum with more fixed expressions placed on the holistic end, and expressions that allow for certain variations placed on the opposite end of the continuum (Wood, 2015). At the same time, the accurate production of complex semi-fixed formulas typical of these speech events may require advanced levels of grammatical competence.

Previous research suggests that underdeveloped grammatical competence may impede successful realization of L2 speech acts, resulting in utilization of "existing grammatical competence to convey the pragmatic information" (Pearson, 2006, p. 476). In the present study, the shift towards production of nativelike formulas of better lexical and grammatical quality was observed in the students' responses after the intervention. Even though not all utterances produced by the students after the teaching intervention were purely target-like, these utterances, coded as target-like slot-and-frame patterns, contained only minor lexical or grammatical discrepancies, which did not impede speech act realization. This could be considered a sign of development of both interlanguage grammar and pragmatics. This finding suggests that focused instruction of PFs can not only enhance pragmatic competence, but also improve grammatical competence, which is in line with the emergentist or usage-based model of SLA (Ellis, 2012).

The Evolution of Students' Sociopragmatic Abilities

Cross-cultural differences in speech act production by native and non-native speakers usually reflect the degree of indirectness, with English speakers tending to utilize more conventionally indirect strategies compared to speakers of other languages (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Cohen & Olshtain, 1993; Félix-Brasdefer, 2005; Ishida, 2013). Previous research has established that L2 learners tend to rely on direct strategies for face-threatening speech acts (e.g., requests, apologies) by using illocutionary devices such as 'I'm sorry', 'Can you', or 'Please' at initial stages of acquisition; at later stages, L2 learners use a wider variety of internal modifications, such as 'I was wondering if you could possibly' (Ishida, 2013). The present study shows that a formula-enhanced

approach may help learners progress to more advanced sociopragmatic stages by using target PFs when performing speech acts. As suggested by the qualitative utterance analysis, the students started producing more nativelike formulas with downgraders such as 'I was wondering' or 'I hope' after the intervention. This had a positive impact on the assessment of their sociopragmatic performance.

Previous research on interlanguage pragmatics established that deviations from native speaker norms in utterance length might be a cause of pragmatic failure since L2 learners are not always aware of socio-cultural and socio-linguistic conventions. As a result, non-native speakers use more grounders (i.e., reasons and justifications) when formulating requests compared to native speakers (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986). In the present study, the judges' assessment of the sociopragmatic component revealed that students who provided lengthy justifications as part of their speech acts received lower scores, specifically on diagnostic criterion 5 (i.e., 'Is the amount of information given appropriate for this context?'). This finding again highlights the key role of PFs in successful sociopragmatic performance and suggests that, if used appropriately, such formulas can contribute to the efficacy of interaction since they can serve as 'short-cuts' or 'effort-savers' (Wray, 2000; Wray & Perkins, 2000) and help L2 learners formulate utterances that adhere to sociopragmatic conventions of the target language.

Earlier studies also found that L2 learners tend to resort to the same formula(s) due to limited language proficiency, negative transfer from L1, or inability to correctly interpret communicative functions of the target formula(s), which can lead to pragmatic failures (Cohen & Olshtain, 1993; Kasper, 1992; Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). In a similar vein, the present study suggests that the lack of adequate pragmalinguistic resources needed to perform a given speech act can lead to formula overuse, which often causes sociopragmatic violations. In this study, the highest number of utterances containing sociopragmatic violations caused by the repetitive use of the same formula or illocutionary device were in the speech event *Making Inquiries.*

Conclusions, Implications, and Future Directions

The present study makes important contributions to pragmatic competence teaching research. The innovative formula-enhanced approach presented in this study has helped address four challenges for pragmatics instruction, particularly in a non-EAP context: limited theoretical support for curricular development; lack of authentic input in teaching materials; lack of instructor knowledge; and lack of reference books and resources (Bardovi-Harlig, 2017). Currently, pragmatics lesson plans offered in the current LINC 5-7 Curriculum Guidelines (Hajer et al., 2007) simply present very limited lists of 'stock phrases' to the learners without providing any additional tools to help with acquisition and retention of such lexical items. This study offers teaching materials using authentic examples of PFs; furthermore, it provides a pedagogical framework for teaching L2 pragmatics informed by recent classroom-tested research. The versatile nature of the instructional sequence makes it adaptable for many learning environments such as community-based programs for refugees, professional communication courses for recent immigrants, or study-abroad programs. Even though L2 learners may acquire some PFs through exposure to the target language community, it is risky to leave the process to chance. Previous research has shown that in a study-abroad experience it is not the length of stay but the intensity of interaction with target-language speakers in a variety of social settings that matters (Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos, 2011; Roever, 2012; Deng & Ranta, 2019). Since PFs can equip L2 speakers with linguistically and socioculturally

appropriate strings of language, focused instruction of such FSs as part of a study abroad program may help learners connect to the 'inner circle' speech community.

As for future research directions, 'reuniting' grammar and pragmatics (Bardovi-Harlig, 2003) and integrating the state-of-the-art principles of form-focused instruction (Ranta & Lyster, 2018) as well as task-based language teaching principles into the existing models of speech act teaching should be explored further. The results of this study revealed that more fine-tuned form-focused instruction techniques are needed when dealing with PFs containing grammatically complex structures as part of their slot-and-frame patterns. While this study explored the potential of cognitive approaches to teaching pragmatics (Takimoto, 2020) by applying deep cognitive engagement to vocabulary teaching (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2009), this method may be modified and reinforced in a future study, specifically for teaching PFs. Although the teaching method described in this study seemed to be effective when dealing with semantically ambiguous PFs (e.g., 'I can't make it') due to hints aimed at aiding with the comprehension of the implied meanings of the target PFs, the current version of the instructional sequence does not include any specific form-focused activities that could facilitate the acquisition of semi-fixed PFs by taking into account their complex syntactical structure. Future research studies may also consider investigating the degree to which students would be able to transfer their use of the target PFs in real world situations more complex than those of the DCRPs used in this study.

Finally, it is worth acknowledging that the study is a first step in analyzing and examining the efficacy of a formula-enhanced approach to facilitating acquisition of pragmatic competence. Due to imprecision in definition of key terms, issues of saliency and frequency, 'fuzzy' borders of formulaicity, and vague empirical evidence on mental processing of formulas (Wray, 2012; Wood, 2015), all claims made about how the participants of this study processed and acquired the target PFs are difficult to generalize. More longitudinal studies employing psycholinguistic research tools such as response latencies or eye-tracking are needed to uncover mental processing of formulae and interlanguage development patterns. In addition, retrospective methods such as think-aloud protocols or stimulated recalls could be utilized to collect data on learners' cognitive processes during the formula-enhanced treatment. These types of studies, especially if involving a control group and a larger sample size, would provide great insight into how formula-enhanced teaching can facilitate acquisition of pragmatic competence.

Notes

1. Deep cognitive processing is based on the notion of elaboration which requires the learner "to engage in a cognitive activity with regard to a particular lexical item that goes beyond this item merely being noticed." (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2009, p. 22).

2. Individual students were considered prominent if their pragmalinguistic and/or sociopragmatic performance was low in the pre-test but considerably improved after the teaching intervention, as indicated by the expert judgements.

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Appendix A

Diagnostic criteria for justifying intuitive judgements about formulaicity

1. By my judgement, the pragmatic meaning of this word string is closely tied to/associated with this particular communicative situation (each speech event will be evaluated separately). In other words, this word string is 'charged' by this situation only.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know or n/a Agree Strongly agree

2. By my judgement, if this word string is used out of this communicative/interactional context, its discourse function will change.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know or n/a Agree Strongly agree

3. If I were to respond to the same situation, I would use this precise formulation.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know or n/a Agree Strongly agree

4. If I were to pronounce this word string, I would articulate it fluently and in a non-hesitant manner. If needed, I would also emphasize some parts with my intonation.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know or n/a Agree Strongly agree

5. By my judgement, the speaker has marked this word string grammatically or lexically/ or this word string is marked grammatically or lexically in a way that gives it special status as a unit.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know or n/a Agree Strongly agree

6. Based on my intuitive judgement, I have encountered this precise formulation multiple times in communication from other people in the same communicative context.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know or n/a Agree Strongly agree

7. By my judgement, although this word string is novel, it is a clear derivation, deliberate or otherwise, of something that can be demonstrated to be formulaic in its own right. In other words, this is speaker's unique adaptation of a more commonly used expression.

Strongly disagree Disagree Don't know or n/a Agree Strongly agree

Based on my judgement, this expression is a pragmatic formula:

Yes No

Appendix B

DCTs scenarios

Extending Invitations

Pre-test scenario: You are organizing a barbeque party and would like to invite five families from the street. What would you say to invite one of your neighbours?

Post-test scenario: You are planning a birthday party at your house and would like to invite some friends you've made since you moved to Canada. What would you say to invite one of your Canadian friends?

Delayed post-test scenario: You are planning to host your child's party in your house. You are calling/talking to the parents of the kids your child is friends with to invite them to the party. What would you say in this situation?

Rescheduling Appointments

Pre-test scenario: You have a dental appointment that you need to cancel/reschedule. You are calling your dentist's office. What would you say in this situation?

Post-test scenario: You have an appointment with your financial advisor, but you need to cancel/reschedule that appointment. You are calling your bank. What would you say in this situation?

Delayed post-test scenario: You have an appointment with your family doctor, but you cannot keep this appointment anymore. You are calling your doctor's office to cancel/ reschedule it. What would you say in this situation?

Making inquiries

Pre-test scenario: You cancelled your insurance plan (e.g., health, travel, home insurance) last month. However, your insurance company charged your chequing account for the same insurance plan this month. You are calling the insurance company to try and resolve this problem. What would you say in this situation?

Post-test scenario: You have arranged for a technician from a cable company to come to your home at a certain time on a specific day, but they didn't show up. You still want the cable installed. You are calling the cable company to resolve this problem and explain what you want done about it. What would you say in this situation?

Delayed post-test scenario: You've been having very slow internet at home for the past couple of days. You decided to call your service provider to see what can be done to fix this issue. What would you say in this situation?

Refusing Requests

Pre-test scenario: Your manager is asking you to stay for several extra hours after work today. However, you have other things planned, so you can't stay. What would you say in this situation?

Post-test scenario: Your manager is asking you to come to the office and work this Saturday because your company is understaffed at the moment. You have other things planned, so you can't stay. What would you say in this situation?

Delayed post-test scenario: Your manager is asking you to work on a new project, but you are still working on a project that had been assigned to you earlier. You are not sure if you can handle two projects at the same time. What would you say in this situation?

Appendix C

Target PFs selected for the teaching intervention

Lesson 1

Would you and your family like to come?
I'm/We're having a ____ + [noun: barbeque party]
Please feel free to come on ___ + [date]!
Would love it if you could ___ + [verb: join]It would be great to have you there!
Would be happy if you could ____ + [verb: come]
Hope you can make it
Come by if you're free
Lesson 2

I would like to cancel my appointment on ___ + [date]
I need to reschedule/cancel [my appointment]
Something's (has) come up
I will not (won't) be able to make it
I'm afraid I need to reschedule my appointment
I'm calling to reschedule my appointment
Do you have any availability____ + [suggest date range]?
Could we reschedule?
I was wondering if it would be possible to ___ + [any meaningful completion of the phrase]?
I can't make it
Lesson 3

Who should I speak to about ____ + [any meaningful completion of the phrase]?
Could you check ___ + [noun/pronoun] *and see if* ___+ [any meaningful completion of the phrase]?
Can you please check if___ + [any meaningful completion of the phrase]
I was hoping you can help me
Can you look into it?
I was wondering why this happened
I'd like this corrected, please
Please make sure that __ + [any meaningful completion of the phrase]
Lesson 4

Unfortunately, I am unable to stay
I wish I could stay and help out, but ____ + [excuse]

I'm afraid I can't do it
I would love to help, but ____ + [excuse]
Is there another way I could help?
I could ___ + [promise of future action], *if that would help*
I would usually ___ + [help], *but* ___ + [excuse]
I would be happy to ____ + [work overtime] another day