Interactive Effect of Pragmatic Eliciting Tasks on EFL Pre-intermediate Learners' Speaking Proficiency

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Abstract

The present study investigated the effect of pragmatic eliciting tasks on EFL pre-intermediate learners speaking proficiency. Thus this study aimed at comparing the English language learners who practiced pragmatic eliciting tasks and the ones who used traditional speaking activities such as questions and answers, discussion, etc. In doing so, 40 learners out of 80 were selected through Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT) with the band score of 30 to 39. Then they were non-randomly divided into two equal experimental and control groups through convenience sampling method. Both groups took a teacher-made pre-test on speaking proficiency and the scores were recorded. The experimental group received pragmatic eliciting tasks including explicit uses of pragmatic functions of speech (i.e., greeting, thanking, etc.) while the control group received these pragmatic tasks implicitly. Finally, both groups took a posttest which was the modified pre-test. Data were analyzed through independent and paired sample *t*-tests and the results showed that explicit instruction on pragmatic eliciting tasks were effective than the implicit ones in the control group. Implications of the study suggest that the learners should learn pragmatic eliciting tasks for effective uses of language functions in their conversations.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Speaking proficiency, Interactive effect, Eliciting tasks, Proficiency

Introduction

In the last four decades, English has become the most important foreign language in the world. On the one hand, it is the language for international communication, advertising, science, commerce, intercultural connecting, diplomacy and transmitting, advanced technology, international travel and entertainments (Azadi, Aliakbari, & Azizifar, 2015). Thus the role of classroom interaction on improvement of speaking proficiency among Iranian EFL learners may be important. On the other hand, communication functions are interactive processes of constructing meaning that involves receiving, producing and processing information (Brown, 2007). Speech forms and meanings are dependent on the context in which it occurs, the participants themselves, their experiences, the physical environment and the purposes for speaking (Burns & Joyce, 1997).

Speaking skills like language accuracy and fluency play an important role in the curriculum of language teaching, and this makes the skills important objectives of assessment as well. Thus, the students evaluate their success in language learning and their effectiveness in English classes based on their improvement in spoken language proficiency (Richards, 2008). It is clear that all of us communicate through interaction and speaking. People also exchange information, get known with each other's culture and talk about their needs (Burns & Joyce, 1997).

In English as a foreign language (EFL) conditions, due to lack English exposure, there is a need to focus more specifically on the interactive nature of speaking proficiency in the

classroom. Also it is significant to provide a real situation to make the learners interact and communicate the language in their classroom. Communication and speaking proficiency can be pragmatically significant (Nugroho, 2011). Pragmatics includes the study of how the interlocutors use the utterances and interpretations based on their social, cultural and linguistic knowledge of the real world; and how the speakers use the understandable speech; or what are the relationships between two speakers influencing the structure and the intention of the sentences (Nugroho, 2011).

According to Houck and Tatsuki (2011), pragmatics does not deal with language as a product, but with interrelationship between language forms (i.e., communicated message and language users) to see why people choose something to say in one way rather than another. It deals with how people interact with each other more than what the words or phrases of their utterances might mean by themselves (Schmitt, 2010). Pragmatics plays an important role in explaining how the ideas expressed by a given utterance on a given occasion (Kroll, 2002). Teachers, for example, need to consider whether it is appropriate to train students to say "Bless you" when someone sneezes, whether they should call the learners by their first name. when the students sociocultural norm is to show respect by using the title plus last name or whether they should encourage students to say "Thank you" in response to a complement out of modesty (Thomas, 1983).

Eliciting task is a term which describes a range of techniques like understanding the language forms, meanings and functions which enable teachers to provide the learners with eliciting information for appropriate conversation (Rose & Ono, 1995). Eliciting tasks help to develop a learner-centered classroom and a simulating environment while making learning memorable by linking new and old information. Eliciting is not limited to language and global knowledge. The teacher can elicit ideas, feelings, meaning, situations, associations and memories. For the teacher, eliciting tasks is a powerful diagnostic tool, providing the learners with key information about what the learners know or do not know which a starting point is for lesson planning (Rose & Kasper, 2001).

Eliciting tasks also encourages teachers to be more flexible rather than dwell on information which is already known (Brown, 2007). The success of eliciting depends largely on the attitudes of teachers and learners to their respective roles. Ideally it promotes the notion of an exchange of information, helps to break down traditional teacher-centeredness, and begins to establish a variety of interaction patterns in the classroom. It is also fundamental to the inductive approach to teaching language and to learning through tasks and self-discovery, and a simple and effective way of getting learners to produce language (Newton, 1993).

This study

Interactive pragmatics is essentially concerned with dynamic aspects of language use and their conditions of language use, In particular, the negotiable character of interlocutor utterances during communicative exchanges of conversations (Brown, 2007). Interactive pragmatics will secure the learners of a good level of speaking proficiency. So shedding more light on the interactive effect of pragmatic eliciting tasks on the EFL pre-intermediate learners' speaking proficiency seems to be necessary (Felix-Brasdefer & Omar, 2006).

This study aims to examine the interactive effect between using the pragmatic eliciting tasks and English language proficiency to communicate more efficiently and appropriately. This study may help EFL learners to perform speech fluently. For the teachers, it would enable them to understand the utterance meaning easily. One of the concerns of the English language teachers is how to convey the meanings of the words which are used by the learners to express their

intended meanings in the proper context and occasion (Khatibi, 2014). Learners can avoid the ambiguity and vagueness of the utterances through giving eliciting tasks by the teacher. Learners with the stronger motivation for communication and higher speaking proficiency are more likely to notice the target pragmatic features (Takahashi, 2001). Therefore, teaching speaking comprehension effectively may help EFL learners to understand the meaning and avoid the ambiguity in their conversation.

Research Questions

With the general scenario of teaching and learning of pragmatics and speaking proficiency, the present study set out to answer the following research questions:

Q1. Do pragmatic eliciting tasks have any interactive effect on pre-intermediate learners' speaking proficiency?
Q2. Is there any difference between the learners who are either explicitly or implicitly taught pragmatic eliciting tasks?

Literature Review

Pragmatics and Interaction

Pragmatic studies deal with the language functions from the point of view of the language users, especially the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in an act of communication (Bashir, Azeem & Dogar, 2011). This definition analyses pragmatics from the perspective of the users. It takes into account the different choices that speakers are able to make when using the target language, depending on the social interaction of their communication. The notion of choice leads to another aspect into consideration useful to language learners, namely, developing the ability to make the right choices among a variety of pragmatic elements (Yule, 1996).

The greatest difficulty that learners encounter in attempting to speak is not multiplicity of sounds, words, phrases, and discourse forms that characterize any language, but rather the interactive nature of most communication. As Nunan (1996) notes, conversations are collaborative which presents a further complication in an interactive discourse. Nunan (1996) calls this the interlocutor effect or the difficulty of a speaking task as gauged by the skills of one's interlocutor. In other words, one learner's performance is always colored by that person (interlocutor) he or she is talking to.

Eliciting Tasks

Eliciting task refers to teaching a second/foreign language that seeks to engage learners in an authentic language use by having them perform a series of tasks. It aims to both enable learners to acquire new linguistic knowledge and to process their existing knowledge (Ellis, 2003). The main characteristics of eliciting tasks are the following (Ellis, 2003):
a) Natural or naturalistic use of language.
b) Learners-centered rather than teacher controlled learning.
c) Focus on form (attention to form occurs within the context of performing the task; intervention while relating naturalness)
d) Tasks serve as the means for achieving natural use of language.
e) Traditional approaches are ineffective.

Cole and Anderson (2001) believed that the ESL learners who use of downgrades in request remained the same over a ten-month study in New Zealand and Canada. They suggest that complexity of linguistic forms is required for the target language speaking proficiency affects rates of the pragmatic gains over time. Bouton's (1992) study revealed that ESL learners still had problem with indirect criticism (i.e., 5 out of 33 test items over a study period of four and a half years. Similarly, Taguchi's (2008) two studies revealed that ESL learners had a larger gain in speed (measured in response time) than in accuracy of pragmatic comprehension during a study of interactive pragmatic in speaking proficiency. In terms of types of implicatures (i.e., degree of conventionality), significant gains were found in both accuracy and response time for comprehension of indirect refusals (conventional). All findings suggest that learners in the study, cannot achieve equal gains in different aspects of pragmatic comprehension (i.e., degree of directness and conventionality, accuracy and accurately). Not all pragmatic interactions can develop to the same degree or at the same pace over the same study period (Cole & Anderson, 2001). This is in part due to the nature of pragmatic features (e.g., complexity of linguistic forms; degree of directness and conventionality, accuracy and speech act). These findings call for future studies to investigate different gains across different aspects of pragmatic competence, which may shed light on how the study of the foreign language affects the development of pragmatic competence reflected in different constructs of pragmatic interaction. Previous findings also support the claim that exposure to target language benefits pragmatic development.

Learners often engage in a variety of informal interactions (e.g., chatting with native-speaker friends, dinner talk with host families, and talking with people in service encounters). Because of these ample opportunities to practice target language speech in informal situations, learners might overuse informal linguistic forms and underuse formal linguistic forms (Iwasaki, 2010). Interaction in pragmatic development is likely to be affected by all of these individual difference factors, qualitative studies that provide a rich description of context, learners background, engagement in interaction, and other individual experiences are necessary in future research (Kinginger & Farrell, 2004).

In summary, research findings show that interactive effects of pragmatics on speaking skills offer an opportunity for authentic learning in the classroom. Moreover, it does not only emphasize meaning over form, but also caters to learning the form. In addition, it is intrinsically motivating and may be compatible with a learner-centered educational philosophy. Finally, it caters to the development of communicative fluency while paying attention to accuracy, and can be used alongside more traditional procedures (Faridatusolihah, 2012). Therefore, interactive effects of pragmatics on speaking skills motivate students and promote higher levels of speaking proficiency. It also creates a low-anxiety learning environment in which students can utilize their ideas and practice their language to develop their self-confidence and a cooperative learning community.

Methodology
Participants
The participants who took part in the research were chosen from among 80 male and female EFL learners studying at "Hermes Language Institute" in Memco, Mahshahr, based on their scores of Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT, 2001). Those 40 participants whose scores fell between 30 and 39 were selected as the pre-intermediate participants of the study. They were non-randomly divided into experimental and control groups through convenient sampling method. Each group consisted of 20 participants.

Instrumentation

Three instruments were employed in the present study. The first one was OQPT (2001). This test was developed by Oxford University Press and its reliability and validity were reported by the Oxford University through a pilot study. It was designed to the optimal level for students entering English programs. The test takes approximately from 40 minutes to complete, during which the students answers the questions. The test consisted of grammar, vocabulary, reading and listening skills. All the skills of the test were designed to complement one another and together provide a comprehensive picture of students' language ability. Thus 80 students took the test and 40 of them who get the scores between 30 and 39 were selected as the pre-intermediate level participants.

The second instrument was a teacher-made pre-test which composed of 20 multiple-choice items extracted from the participants' materials "Four Corner 2". The pre-test was administered to discover the students' level of knowledge about the interactive effect of pragmatic eliciting tasks on speaking proficiency at the beginning of the research period. Its reliability index was met through KR-21 formula as (r=.73) after administrating a pilot study on 10 learners at the same proficiency level in the other classes. This test could be compared to the participants' knowledge on the use of pragmatic tasks with the posttest at the end of the research period.

The third instrument was the posttest which consisted of 20 multiple-choice items. It was designed based on the modification of the items in the pre-test. The items were also chosen from the book "Four Corner 2". The posttest was given to the participants to determine the participants' performance on their knowledge of the pragmatics tasks in speaking proficiency at the end of the research period.

In order to evaluate the feasibility and validity of both pre- and posttest s and to improve their designs, prior to administration, each test was checked by the researchers. Finally, the ambiguous items were removed and the final tests were designed. The reliability index of the posttest was met through KR-21 formula as (r=.69) after piloting it on 10 students at the same level of proficiency in other classes. The face validity of both pre- and posttest was confirmed by two experts in the field of teaching EFL.

Materials

This study investigated the use of pragmatic eliciting tasks including class activities like free discussion and oral summery in the classroom. The students talked about the given topics that were selected from their textbook "Four Corner 2" developed by Richards and Bohlke, 2012). The book included of six parts: grammar, vocabulary, functional language, listening and pronunciation, reading and writing, and speaking.

All topics, in both the training and test session, were of general interest to the student population at the language institute and included topics such as "What do you think about pets?" and "Who is your favorite artist?". The topics were followed by a few additional questions in order to give students more suggestions for the contents of their speech, such as; "How do you feel about pets? Do many people have pets in your country? How are they treated, in general?" or "Who is your favorite artist? Talk about a person (artist) who was important to you in the past! Who was this person? Why was this person important to you?" Each learner spoke about a given topic which was chosen from their text book in the speaking parts for two to three minutes and they were taught how to use interactive pragmatic functions in their speech during 10 sessions.

Procedure

This study was conducted in "Hermes Language Institute" in Memco, Mahshahr. The first step was to make sure of the participants' homogeneity of language proficiency. Thus, the researchers administered OQPT to 80 learners in order to select 40 participants. Those participants whose scores fell between 30 and 39 were selected and randomly divided into two groups, namely, the control and experimental groups. Each groups included 20 participants. Then a pre-test was administered to measure the level of students' speaking proficiency on the interactive effect of pragmatic tasks of discussion and summary on speaking proficiency to understand and use the pragmatic functions like empathy, greeting, thanking, complaining, etc. The pretest included 20 multiple-choice items.

During the treatment period, the participants in the experimental group received the interactive eliciting tasks through free discussion and oral summary and practiced the language functions like greetings, requests, complaining, thanking, etc. They learn how to use pragmatic functions of language in the appropriate contexts and how to understand these language functions explicitly. However, the control group learned the implicit interactive pragmatic tasks through listening comprehension and question and answer activities in the classroom. The control group also used oral performances through working on the textbook activities and exercises in the classroom. The treatment period lasted for 10 sessions.

The classes lasted for 10 sessions, two sessions for each week in both groups. After five weeks of treatment, the participants took the speaking proficiency posttest which assessed their speaking proficiency. Finally the data were collected to compare the results of the two groups through paired and independent samples t-tests.

Results

After administering the OQPT for each group, the data were analyzed separately in order to evaluate the learners' proficiency level. The pre- and posttest mean and standard deviations of the scores in each group were estimated through SPSS software, version 17. Paired and independent samples t-tests were employed to estimate the differences between the control and experimental groups at the significant level ($p<0.05$). The results are presented in the following tables:

Table 1. *One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*

		Experimental Pre-test	Control Pre-test	Experimental Posttest	Control Posttest
N		20	20	20	20
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	11.8000	12.8500	16.4500	12.4000
	Std. Deviation	2.78341	3.75955	3.20321	2.79850
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0.213	0.197	0.172	0.142
	Positive	0.213	0.197	0.134	0.142
	Negative	-0.125	-0.166	-0.172	-0.124
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		0.953	0.881	0.770	0.635
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0.324	0.419	0.594	0.814

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

Table 1 shows the data of test distribution are normal which makes the use of independent or paired sample statistics possible. The number of the students in two groups was 40. Initially, each student's pretest score on the proficiency test was obtained. Then, the test distribution was calculated from the data which showed that the test distribution was normal. In this case, we could use parametric data analysis like *t*-test data analysis.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test)*

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	20	11.8000	2.84492	0.65267
Control	20	12.8500	3.75955	0.84066

Table 2 shows that the mean is 11.80 and the standard deviation is 2.84 for the experimental group. In the case of control group, the mean and standard deviation are 12.85 and 3.75, respectively. The mean and standard deviations of the two groups are not similar on the pretest. The data were put into independent samples *t*-test analysis to show any possible difference between the experimental and control groups on the pretest. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3. *Independent Samples t-test (pre-test)*

	t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	-1.038	38	0.306	-1.113	1.071	-3.285	1.058
Equal variances not assumed	-1.046	35.2	0.303	-1.113	1.064	-3.273	1.046

Table 3 reveals that the observed *t* (-1.03) is less than critical *t* (1.68) which is taken from the statistic books of the critical indices regarding the df=38. Thus, the difference between the experimental and control groups was not significant at ($p<0.05$).

Table 4. *Descriptive Statistics (Posttest)*

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	20	16.4737	3.28918	0.75459
Control	20	12.4000	2.79850	0.62576

Table 4 shows that the mean is 16.47 and the standard deviation is 3.28. The mean and standard deviation of the control group are 12.40 and 2.79, respectively. The mean and standard deviation of the two groups are not similar on the posttest. However, to arrive at the significant difference between the two groups, independent samples *t*-test was run. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. *Independent Samples t-test (posttest)*

t-test for Equality of Means

	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	4.173	38	0.000	4.073	0.976	2.095	6.051
Equal variances not assumed	4.156	35.4	0.000	4.073	0.9800	2.084	6.062

Table 5 shows the result of the independent samples *t*-test of the posttest for the experimental and control groups. The observed *t* (4.17) is greater than the critical *t* (1.68) with df = 38. Thus, the difference between the groups is significant ($p<0.05$). In other words, it can be inferred that the two groups are not similar on the posttest and the experimental group outperformed the control one in the posttest of speaking proficiency.

Table 6. *Descriptive Statistics (Pre vs. Posttest s in both Groups)*

	Tests	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test Experimental	11.8000	20	2.78341	0.62239
	Posttest Experimental	16.4500	20	3.20321	0.71626
Pair 2	Pre-test Control	12.8500	20	3.75955	0.84066
	Posttest Control	12.4000	20	2.79850	0.62576

Table 6 shows the pre- vs. posttests in both groups. The pre- and posttest of the experimental group's means are (11.80) and (16.45) and the pre- and posttests of the control group' means are (12.85) and (12.40). Paired samples *t*-test was used to compare the pre- and posttest of each group's collected data. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. *Paired Samples Statistics (Pre vs. Posttest s in both Groups)*

Paired Differences				*t*	df	Sig. (2-

| | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | | | tailed) |
		Mean	Std. Devia tion	Std. Erro r Mea n	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-vs. Posttest Experimental	-4.65	4.54	1.01	-6.77	-2.52	-4.575	19	0.000
Pair 2	Pre-vs. Posttest Control	0.45	4.92	1.10	-1.85	2.75	0.409	1 9	0.687

Table 7 indicates that the observed t in the pre- and posttest of the experimental group *t* (4.57) is greater than the critical *t* (1.72) with df=19. Thus the difference between the pre- and posttests is significant in pair1. Since the observed *t* (0.40) is less than the critical *t* (1.72) with df=19 in the pre- and posttests in the control group, the difference is not statistically different at the significant level (p<0.05) in pair 2.

Discussion
The first research question asks whether pragmatic eliciting tasks have any interactive effects on pre-intermediate learners' speaking proficiency. One of the main aims of this study was to find out whether teaching the pragmatic eliciting tasks like discussion, oral summary, seminar, explicitly affect EFL pre-intermediate learners' speaking proficiency.
The results of the independent samples *t*-test showed that there was a little difference between the experimental and the control groups' means in terms of speaking proficiency on the pre-test. Findings also showed the results of the independent and paired samples *t*-test of the posttest for the two groups. Results indicated that the difference between the groups' means of the oral speaking posttest was significant (p<0.05), so it can be inferred that the two groups were not similar on the posttest .
Considering the results obtained from the analysis of the related data, it can be argued that the method used in teaching speaking skill through using pragmatic eliciting tasks in our setting were effective in the experimental group. Instructors teach speaking through free discussions, letting the students sort the new words and expressions, putting them in specific groups, using them in sentences, making oral summaries, explaining of language functions, using pragmatic examples of language, etc. Consequently, the language learners got familiar with interactions of language uses of intended meaning. Another reason for these results may be the focus of the experimental class on dealing with the explicit method of teaching pragmatic eliciting tasks in the classroom. However, the control group dealt with implicit instruction on learning conversation and speaking skill on the same materials and time. In other words, both groups were significantly different in gaining scores on using pragmatic functions in their speech. The participants showed that they did not have enough knowledge in using interactive eliciting tasks in their speech on the given topics at the beginning of the study. This result was totally different at the end of the

treatment period since the experimental group outperformed the control one in terms of using the appropriate pragmatic functions in their speech on the posttest . They could use the functions of thanking, greeting, complaining and apologizing in their discussion and summary activities.

The results are in line with the researchers (e.g., Nunan, 2006; Willis, 1996) who noted that while performing the tasks, learners engage in certain types of language use and mental processing that are useful for acquisition. In speaking proficiency, learners also use the language for a communicative purpose. Bygate's (1996) findings also matched with the results of the study and noted that speaking proficiency and the role of pragmatic functions that enhance the students' oral discourse in terms of utterance length or complexity, fluency and accuracy, and then communication is promoted. Foster and Skehan's (1997) studies are in line with the results of this study. They note that students who use speaking instructions can learn English more effectively because they use the language to perform tasks, access information, solve problems, and talk about personal experiences.

The second research question asks whether there is any difference between the learners who are taught the pragmatic eliciting tasks explicitly or implicitly. The results of independent samples *t*-test of the posttest for the two groups showed the difference. Consequently, it can be said that in the experimental group, there was an increase in the use of pragmatic eliciting tasks of the posttest compared to the results of the pre-test on the speaking proficiency. Moreover, as mentioned before, the difference between the two groups, the experimental and control, in the posttest was significant. The findings of the second research question can be due to one of the following reasons:

The students were provided with enough instruction on dealing with interactive pragmatic on speaking techniques in the experimental group. They also pay much attention to understand the form and the meaning beyond the words and sentences as they discuss or summarize their ideas in the classroom. They might have felt that they can use the pragmatic functions beyond the sentences and expressions and learn what they are supposed to participate in conversations in the classroom. They also work on speaking activities in peer discussion groups and practice the eliciting tasks in the classroom. Omer (2014) agrees with the results of the study and notes that as long as the students take the responsibility of their interaction since they are totally independent and have full authority and freedom to discuss and speak, this might be the first experience for some of them, and so lack of knowledge in this field might affect their performance. Finally, the length of instruction term can be one of the causes for the deficiency of the instructions. Thus if the classes were run in the longer periods, the results could be more effective than this. Thus the course cannot be less than 10 sessions since it may possibly ineffective.

Since the experimental group was explicitly taught the pragmatic eliciting tasks, they were able to have conversations with the teachers and learners to discuss their ideas and concerns on the different topics extracted from the participants' textbook. The results indicated that learning the pragmatic functions of language cannot be done through implicit teaching activities. The learners need to gain knowledge on the functions of language expressions and the role of each utterance in conveying the meaning in the appropriate context. Since the speech forms and meanings depend on the context in which it occurs, the findings are in line with Cunningham (1999) who stated that speaking proficiency requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (linguistic competence) but also they need to understand when, why and in what ways to produce language.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that the interval between the posttest affects the EFL learner's speech achievement. Despite the critics that the students may be unwilling to interact

freely, the results of this research showed that through speaking students' fluency and accuracy improved significantly. This might be attributed to the fact that the teachers planned tasks well according to the topics of the discussions. The results of this study show that interactive effect of pragmatics improves students' oral social interaction. This result confirms that speaking proficiency could be one of the most appropriate teaching procedures that may help students to communicate accurately and fluently with other speakers of English with the help of teachers.

Concerning the effectiveness of pragmatic functions of language in daily language interactions, the results of the present study showed an improvement of the Iranian EFL learners' speech in the posttest . It is also found that the interactive eliciting tasks like free discussion and oral summaries were effective among the participants in the study. It should be stated that the learners need to improve their pragmatic knowledge in speaking of the classroom interactions. Speaking proficiency is an important part of the curriculum in language teaching, and this makes it a vital objective in learning and teaching EFL.

It can finally be concluded that interactive effect of pragmatic eliciting tasks can improve Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' oral practice in the appropriate context. The significant difference between the posttest of both groups showed that the EFL learners' interaction with eliciting pragmatic tasks can boost their communication, particularly in making the relationships between sentences, context and situations in which the speech is used.

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