
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Representation of Pragmatic Knowledge in Moroccan High School English Language Teaching (ELT) Textbooks

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| ABSTRACT

Studies in the domain of English language teaching reveal a significant disparity between pragmatic findings and the approaches employed in English language instruction (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010). Investigations into the effectiveness of textbooks for teaching communicative skills, mirroring real-life conversations, show that English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks often lack clear and thorough explanations of English conversational dynamics (Berry, 2000; Burns, 1998; Cane, 1998; Grant & Starks, 2001). According to the available literature on EFL/ESL textbooks, speech acts, and other pragmatic elements are largely neglected in both quality and quantity (e.g., Vellenga, 2004; Salazar Campillo, 2007; Neddar, 2010). Therefore, this study examines how textbooks cultivate pragmatic competence and evaluates the pragmatic content in EFL textbooks used in Moroccan high schools from 2006-2007. It aims to assess the depth and quality of pragmatic information covered in these textbooks. In addition to concentrating on metapragmatic details, the study discusses register, illocutionary force, politeness, appropriateness, and usage, as well as how textbook authors present speech acts. However, the study findings reveal that the selected textbooks provide insufficient pragmatic information. This underscores the necessity of supplementing EFL textbooks with more authentic materials and ample meta-pragmatic information. It is also essential to consider pragmatics during the textbook design process and enhance teachers' abilities to incorporate them into their classrooms.

| KEYWORDS

Pragmatic competence, pragmatic content, textbook evaluation, Speech acts, Moroccan high school

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1. Introduction

The textbook plays a substantial role in shaping learners' pragmatic competence. In today's communicative language teaching, the textbook's role goes beyond merely developing learners' linguistic skills; it extends to their ability to use language in context appropriately. Therefore, textbooks should equip learners with the requisite pragmatic knowledge and should raise the learners' awareness of cultural and situational factors that may influence their choice of linguistic forms in face-to-face communication situations. More importantly, there is a pressing need for a substantial improvement in the quality of textbooks to truly signify a departure from traditional approaches. In the same vein, the design of textbooks must take into account learners' intellectual abilities and actively promote communication skills.

Communication competence is a significant factor in developing effective communication skills in the classroom. Within communicative competence, pragmatic competence holds particular importance as it centers on the connections between spoken expressions and the specific purposes speakers intend to achieve with those expressions (Taguchi 2015).

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Despite the acknowledged importance of pragmatic competence, described as the ability to "select appropriate linguistic forms to achieve communicative goals in context" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p. 7), and the increasing focus on pragmatics in English language instruction by scholars (Bachman, 2000; Bachman & Palmer, 2010), along with the overall priority of nurturing communicative competence in classrooms (Bardovi Harlig, 1996; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010; Kasper & Rose, 2002; Rose, 2005; Taguchi, 2015; Tatsuki & Houck, 2010; Vellenga, 2004), it seems that pragmatic knowledge is frequently neglected or dismissed in the teaching and learning of English, especially in EFL textbooks. From this perspective, Harwood argues that pragmatics should not be considered a mere 'optional extra' in textbook syllabi (2014: 7). Conversely, there are apprehensions regarding the portrayal of pragmatics in textbooks, particularly in relation to speech acts. Cohen and Ishihara (2013) have highlighted that a majority of educational materials fail to illustrate the pragmatic application of the target language.

Pragmatic content should be incorporated into EFL textbooks, and this investigation assumed that it should not be overlooked. Research conducted by Ren and Han (2016) and Vellenga (2004) indicates that, despite the widespread use of ESL/EFL textbooks, they frequently exhibit omissions or occasionally provide misinformation that may hinder the learners' communicative competence improvement. This raises a specific concern for Moroccan EFL learners, as they predominantly acquire their target language from classroom textbooks. Moroccan EFL students face additional hurdles in grasping English pragmatics, given the specific cultural and social disparities between the Moroccan dialect/Arabic language and English. These challenges extend to communication strategies, politeness strategies, the appropriate level of directness, the selection of speech acts, and the level of politeness.

This study examines whether pragmatic knowledge has changed within Moroccan high school English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks. An investigation into meta-pragmatic aspects will cover illocutionary force, politeness, appropriateness, and usage. ELT textbooks are scrutinized in particular for the way they approach speech acts, given their importance in the development of instructional materials, as emphasized by Cohen and Ishihara (2010).

When textbooks are designed appropriately, they serve as vital tools for learners to meet educational standards. Besides, to ensure that students learn what they should learn, textbooks must align with content standards. The Ministry of National Education (2007) has urged textbook designers to incorporate the five standard areas, namely Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities, into their work during textbook design.

The focus on content standards is rooted in the conviction that both teachers and students should possess a comprehensive understanding of lessons throughout the academic year. This emphasis is endorsed by diverse sources including the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, 1996), Jibreel (2015), and Wiggings & McTinghe (2005). Such prioritization stems from the recognition of inherent imperfections in textbooks, which may exhibit biases on various issues. Consequently, assessing the pedagogical impact of textbooks becomes imperative.

In English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks, language content is presented in a way that enhances students' linguistic competence. Evaluators play a crucial role in assessing how these textbooks fulfill the requirements of learners, teachers, and curriculum standards. These textbooks must address the needs, interests, and expectations of learners, fostering the development of foreign language competence. Simultaneously, they should aid teachers in effectively delivering lessons and guiding students through their learning journeys. Importantly, textbooks must align with curriculum objectives, providing content that is comprehensible to both teachers and learners, thereby contributing to the successful attainment of these objectives.

It is therefore important to examine whether and how English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks conform to the pedagogical principles embedded in the curriculum's theoretical framework. In recent years, textbook evaluation studies have been focusing increasingly on pedagogical content in ELT textbooks. Numerous researchers have demonstrated a keen interest in this area, highlighting its significance in the evaluation process.

2. Literature Review

Evaluation encompasses a range of activities, including assessing, measuring, testing, and accounting. According to Brown (1995), it involves the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information about a language product, such as a textbook, syllabus, or curriculum, to gain a better understanding of its effectiveness. Patton (2008) describes textbook evaluation as the methodical gathering of data regarding the activities, features, and results of programs. This process is aimed at making informed judgments, improving program effectiveness, guiding decisions regarding future programming, and increasing understanding.

Evaluation plays a crucial role in identifying both positive and negative aspects of the subject under assessment, as Scriven (1986) emphasized the evaluators' responsibility to determine what is effective and what is not.

2.1 Textbook Evaluation Approaches

Approaches to evaluating textbooks can be diverse, encompassing various methods and perspectives. Three fundamental approaches encapsulate the essence of textbook evaluation:

2.1.1 Impressionistic versus in depth-evaluation

Distinguishing between impressionistic and in-depth evaluation, McGrath (2002) outlines two fundamental approaches for assessing teaching materials. Impressionistic evaluation involves a general overview of the material, encompassing an examination of the features mentioned in the course book. On the other hand, in-depth evaluation seeks to provide a detailed assessment by analyzing each section of the course book, with the goal of examining its suitability for learners' levels. In this regard, Cunningsworth (1995) emphasizes the need for an in-depth evaluation, characterized by a more penetrating approach.

For-potential versus for suitability evaluation

Cunningsworth (1995) suggested two methods for assessing textbooks: potential evaluation and suitability evaluation. Potential evaluation involves making a general assessment of the textbook without a predetermined purpose. On the other hand, suitability evaluation entails comparing the textbook against specific criteria, such as learner objectives and available resources, to determine its appropriateness for the intended use.

Predictive versus retrospective evaluation

According to Ellis (1997), textbook evaluation can be classified into two types: predictive evaluation and retrospective evaluation. Predictive evaluation seeks to assess the suitability of materials for use and selection, aiding decision-making regarding which materials are appropriate. In contrast, retrospective evaluation concentrates on scrutinizing materials that have already been used, offering insights into their effectiveness and appropriateness after implementation (Ellis, 1997, p.36).

Types of textbook evaluation

According to Cunningsworth (1995), Ellis (1997), Tomlinson (2003), and Mukundan (2007), textbook evaluation is typically divided into three stages: before, during, and after use.

2.1.2 Before use evaluation

Tomlinson (2003) explains that the before-use evaluation consists of "making predictions about the potential value of materials for their users" (p.23). Essentially, this type of evaluation is impressionistic and somewhat unreliable, as teachers swiftly review a book to form an initial impression of its content. Despite its limitations, before use evaluation holds significant importance in the material selection process (as cited in Alkhadri, 2010, p.286).

2.1.3 While-use evaluation

The while-use evaluation entails the assessment of materials during their actual use or the observation of how they are being used. Unlike pre-use evaluation, while-use evaluation uses measurement rather than prediction, making it "more objective and reliable" (Tomlinson, 2003). This type of evaluation allows for the presentation of general insights into the textbook's usage by teachers.

2.1.4 Post-use evaluation

As noted by Tomlinson (2003), post-use evaluation is one of the most crucial types of assessment because it allows for the measurement of the actual impact of materials. This form of evaluation is particularly effective in assessing both short-term effects, such as motivation, and long-term effects, including lasting learning and application. Cunningsworth (1995), as cited in Alkhadri (2010, p.288), emphasized that post-use evaluation aims to identify the positive sides and negative sides of a textbook after it has been used.

RQ: What kind of pragmatic information is included in the selected textbooks?

Appropriateness / Politeness/ Use/ Register/ Cultural information

Metalanguage

Speech Acts

evaluation of each work.

3. Methodology

In this study, quantitative and qualitative methods were used to evaluate both the amount and the quality of explicit pragmatic information contained within textbooks. The primary goal is to assess the content of six Moroccan English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks currently used in public schools to teach students in the first and second years of the Baccalaureate, as well as those in the common core level. The study comprises two distinct methodological phases: 1) the selection of textbooks, and 2) the analysis of textbooks. Each of these phases will be elaborated upon in the following sections.

3.1 Textbook selection

This study specifically focuses on the examination of six textbooks designed for the instruction of English as a Second Language. The chosen textbooks are as follows: "Visa to the World" (2005), "Outlook" (Yacine, Oulbouch, 2005), "Gateway to English 1" and "Gateway to English 2" (Hassim, Blibil & Rasmy, 2007), and "Ticket to English 1" and "Ticket to English 2" (Hammani, Ahssen & Tansaoui, 2007). These textbooks are used interchangeably across Moroccan public high schools and serve as the prescribed national resources for educating students at the Common Core, First, and Second-year Bacallaureate levels.

Textbook		Year of publication
Gateway to English 1	For first year Bacallaureate students	2006
Ticket to English 1		2007
Gateway to English 2	For first year Bacallaureate students	2006
Ticket to English 2		2007
Visa to the World	For common core students	2005
Outlook		2005

Table 1: Textbooks Used in Analysis

3.2 Textbook Analysis

After identifying and collecting the textbooks, the study proceeded to assess the quantity of information contained in each, aiming to determine if there were significant differences in length among them. This comparison entailed examining both page numbers and unit quantities, sometimes including several lessons or chapters within a single unit.

There was a thorough analysis performed following this study, focusing specifically on pragmatics, instruction of speech acts, and intra-lingual pragmatic variability. Specifically, the research aims to examine how texts depict diverse speech acts such as requests, apologies, refusals, invitations, etc. Various subcategories of a given speech act were consolidated as a cohesive speech act; for instance, 'refuse invitations' and 'refuse requests' were subsumed under the overarching term 'refusal.' A thorough examination of all six textbooks was meticulously conducted, encompassing both numerical counts and comprehensive descriptions on a page-by-page basis.

3.3 Findings and discussion

This section provides a summary of and discourse on the results pertinent to the research questions. The analysis starts with investigating the pragmatic content present in the textbooks, followed by an exploration of the varieties of speech acts covered and the methodologies used for their presentation. Furthermore, this section explores the degree to which the textbooks take into account intralingual pragmatic variation.

3.4 Pragmatic information

In this section, the findings pertaining to the primary research question are discussed, highlighting the integration of pragmatic information into textbooks. Table 2 provides a visual representation of both the quantity and the percentage of pages that contain pragmatic information in each textbook.

Textbook	Pages with pragmatic information	Total number of pages	percentages of pages with pragmatic information
Gateway to English 1	18	160	11.25%
Ticket to English 1	23	160	14.38%
Gateway to English 2	23	176	13.07%
Ticket to English 2	22	176	12.50%
Visa to the world	33	136	24.26%
Outlook	19	136	13.97%
Total	138	944	14.62%

Table 2: Pragmatic information in textbooks

Table 2 shows that pragmatic information constitutes a modest portion of textbook content. On average, 14.62% of the pages in the textbooks incorporated some form of pragmatic information. As pointed out by Cohen and Ishihara (2010), this finding aligns with prior research in the field, suggesting that pragmatics is often inadequately represented in English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks. It's important to understand that the data, which indicate the number of pages featuring pragmatic information, do not reflect the depth or comprehensiveness of the information on each page. Certain pages may offer only a brief amount of pragmatic knowledge or a limited number of expressions for performing speech acts.

In this analysis, the percentage of pages containing pragmatic information serves merely to highlight the presence and extent of such content in each textbook. As a result, this percentage might not accurately convey the actual portion of the textbook allocated to pragmatic content.

In the textbooks, pragmatic information was incorporated differently. "Visa to the World" stood out with the highest percentage, incorporating 24.26% of pragmatic information. Notably, this textbook is designed for beginners in the common core. Conversely, the textbooks for first-year and second-year Bacalaureate students fell below the average, failing to exceed 15% in pragmatic information. The absence of pragmatic content in these publications suggests that the textbooks' design did not prioritize pragmatic competence, despite the typical emphasis on communicative competence in the oral English classes for which they were intended. Moreover, this section explores the findings related to the research question, emphasizing the variety of speech acts and their presentation style in textbooks. Table 3 provides an overview of the distribution of speech acts covered in the textbooks.

3.5 Explicit mention of speech acts in textbooks

SPEECH ACTS	TEXTBOOKS						TOTAL
	COMMON CORE		FIRST YEAR BACCALAUREATE		SECOND YEAR BACCALAUREATE		
	Visa to the world	Outlook	Gateway to English	Ticket to English	Gateway to English	Ticket to English	
Making introductions and identifying oneself	x	x					2
Apologizing and forgiving			X	X	x	x	4
Making request					x	x	2
Complaining and criticizing			X	X	x		3
Greeting and leave taking	x	x					2
Expressing thanks and acknowledging gratitude							0
Responding to good and bad news					x	x	2
Expressing interest, preference and indifference		x	X	X			3
Asking for and giving information	x						1
Making offer and Invitation	x	x					2
Complimenting and congratulating							0
Regretting					x	x	2
Asking for and giving opinions	x	x	X	X	x	x	6

Agreeing and disagreeing	x	x	X	X	x	x	6
Showing satisfaction							0
Expressing lack of understanding and Asking for clarification					x	x	2
Asking for and giving advice			X	X	x	x	4
Giving orders and warning							0
Asking for and giving permission	x	x					2
Expressing wishes, hopes and Plans			X	X		x	3
Making suggestions	x		X	X			3
Blaming and accusing							0
Expressing feeling and emotions			X	X			2
Admitting and denying							0
Promising			X	X			2
Expressing Surprise			X				1
Asking for and giving directions	x						1
TOTAL	9	7	11	10	9	9	55

Table 3: Explicit mention of speech acts in textbooks

The textbooks under examination collectively featured a total of 55 speech acts, averaging 9.6 acts per book. This average indicates that most textbooks cover a relatively limited range of speech acts. When considered as a whole, all textbooks encompass a diverse array of speech acts. Table 3 demonstrates that the quantity of speech acts in each textbook ranges between ten and seven. The diverse presentation of speech acts in the textbooks implies the lack of a standardized approach in the development of English Language Teaching (ELT) materials concerning the integration of speech acts.

Table 3 shows that the most commonly used speech act is "asking for opinions, agreement, and disagreement," followed by "apologizing and forgiving," "giving advice or suggestions," and "expressing complaints." There are specific speech acts that are explicitly covered in textbooks, such as accepting requests, accepting invitations, making introductions, and refusing invitations. However, several speech acts are entirely omitted from any textbook. Examples encompass expressing thanks, acknowledging gratitude, complimenting and congratulating, giving orders, blaming, accusing, admitting, and denying.

3.6 Explicit Meta-pragmatic Cues

SPEECH ACTS	TEXTBOOKS						
	COMMON CORE		FIRST YEAR BACCALAUREATE		SECOND YEAR BACCALAUREATE		Metapragmatic information
	Visa to the world	Outlook	Gateway to English	Ticket to English	Gateway to English	Ticket to English	
Making introductions and identifying oneself	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Apologizing	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Making request	0	0	0	0	1	1	0

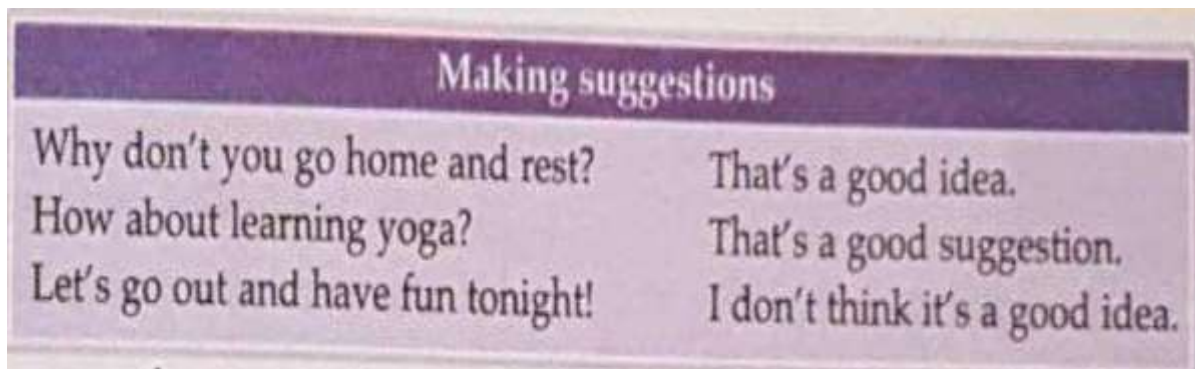
Complaining and criticizing	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
Greeting and leave taking	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Expressing thanks and acknowledging gratitude	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Responding to good and bad news	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Expressing interest, preference and indifference	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Asking for and giving information	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Making offer and Invitation	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Complimenting and congratulating	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Regretting	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Asking for and giving opinions	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Agreeing and disagreeing	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Showing satisfaction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expressing lack of understanding and Asking for clarification	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Asking for and giving advice	0	0	1	1	1	1	2
Giving orders and warning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asking for and giving permission	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Expressing wishes, hopes and Plans	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Making suggestions	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Blaming and accusing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expressing feeling and emotions	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Admitting and denying	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Promising	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Expressing Surprise	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Asking for and giving directions	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	9	7	11	10	9	9	4

Table 4: Metapragmatic Information

Table 4 provides an overview of the explicit reference to speech acts and the accompanying metapragmatic information discovered in the textbooks. It is noticeable that metapragmatic discussion of speech acts is lacking in the majority of books. It is apparent from the table above that most speech acts were introduced without any contextual information or commentary. Speech acts are frequently explicitly described by listing a number of expressions in nearly all textbooks analyzed. A set of these expressions is usually presented after a phrase indicating a specific speech act. They are often organized in a table or box without explanations. Furthermore, certain textbooks simply designate the speech act as the lesson's title, proceeding directly to practical exercises without providing any formal presentation. Alternatively, speech acts are often featured under the section named 'Useful

expressions' and accompanied by some hints, as seen in Gateway 1, for instance. Extracts 1, 2 and 3 serve as illustrations of these three methods of presenting speech acts.

Extract 1 Visa to the World (Unit 6, page 71)



Extract 2 Ticket to English 2 (Unit 7, page 101)

Advice please!

1. Here is an imaginary dialogue where Mr is asking for advice and the singer is giving advice.

The singer : Can't you see the children dying ?
Mr. : What do you think I should do ?
The singer : I think you should help them.
Mr. : What do you suggest to help these children ?
The singer : Maybe you should help feeding them and curing their illness.
Mr. : What would you do in this situation ?
The singer : If I were you, I would participate in building shelters and hospitals for them.

2. Underline expressions of 'asking for and giving advice'.
 3. With your peer, complete the following dialogues and act them out.

The singer : Isn't that your oil in the sea ?
Mr. :
The singer :
Mr. :
The singer :

The singer : Isn't that your pollution in the air ?
Mr. :
The singer :
Mr. :
The singer :

Extract 3 Gateway to English 2 (Unit 2, page 28)

E. Here are some expressions used to give advice.

Regular advice: You should/should not...

Friendly advice: Why don't you + bare infinitive (Infinitive without to)...?
 How about + noun or verb + ing...?
 If I were you, I'd (would) ...
 If I were in your position, I'd (would) ...
 If I were in your shoes, I'd (would) ...

Strong advice: You'd (had) better + bare infinitive
 You ought to

It has been observed by Vellenga (2004) that both English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks tend to emphasize the modal 'should' whenever advice or suggestions are given. According to her, students' pragmatic repertoires would not be sufficiently developed if they were asked to use forms and functions exactly. When compared to

Vellenga's study, our textbooks provide students with a range of linguistic choices in order to express themselves in different ways. Still, it is noted that the methods used in presenting speech acts in the analyzed textbooks lack meta-pragmatic explanations regarding the differences between the listed expressions. As a result of these findings, Moroccan EFL learners of various proficiency levels—beginning and intermediate—face significant challenges in developing pragmatic competence, as textbooks do not incorporate meta-pragmatic explanations of speech acts.

3.7 Intra-lingual pragmatic variation

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), intra-lingual pragmatic variation pertains to variations in the use of pragmatic features within a single language, namely English, as it is learned and utilized by non-native speakers. Pragmatics, the study of how context influences the interpretation of meaning, encompasses intra-lingual pragmatic variation, which investigates how speakers of a language may employ language differently based on factors like social context, regional distinctions, or individual communication styles.

Essentially, variations in the production of speech acts (such as apologizing, refusing, requesting) are evident among speakers depending on the region, culture, or background. Moreover, individuals may perceive speech acts differently, interpret and express politeness in diverse manners, and display distinct interactional patterns during conversations, encompassing greetings, opening and closing sequences, turns, and laughter.

There may be different norms and expectations regarding politeness, indirectness, and formality in different cultures. English learners may incorporate their cultural communication styles into their English usage, resulting in pragmatic differences. Also, the way language is used can have a profound impact on the pragmatic choices we make. When a learner is in an academic setting, they might use formal language, while in casual conversation they might use informal language.

Cohen and Ishihara believe that understanding pragmatics requires an understanding of the intra-lingual pragmatic variation. They advocate incorporating this aspect into English Language Teaching (ELT) materials. However, it is evident in this study that textbooks analyzed are largely unconcerned with intra-lingual variations in pragmatic performance.

It is important to note that the analyzed textbooks were especially designed for beginners and intermediate learners. There could be a concern by the authors about overwhelming learners with excessive information, which may explain the omission of intra-lingual pragmatic variation in these textbooks.

It could be advantageous for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to initially understand intercultural and inter-lingual differences before exploring intra-lingual variation. Despite this, Moroccan learners may not be aware of intra-lingual pragmatic variations in English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks, resulting in a potential problem in intercultural communication.

3.8 Implications for Educators and Authors of Educational Materials

The present study was undertaken to investigate the presentation of pragmatic knowledge in Moroccan English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks utilized in high schools. In spite of some positive changes in how ELT textbooks present pragmatic knowledge, there's a big gap between what students in EFL contexts need and what textbooks provide them. Developing pragmatic competence is an important element of learning any language, as it refers to how to use the language in a social context effectively. For effective communication, integrating pragmatic competence into textbooks is equally important as focusing on grammar, vocabulary, and other linguistic elements. Thus, textbook authors must include authentic materials like dialogues, videos, audio scripts, or texts that enable learners to engage in real-world interactions in order to enhance students' pragmatic awareness. This will enable students to learn how to utilize natural language in a wide variety of contexts. Furthermore, teachers should engage students in role-playing exercises so that they can practice using language in different social contexts. In addition, teachers need to incorporate interactive activities like debates, group discussions, and collaborative projects that require effective communication into their lessons. This hands-on approach helps them apply pragmatic principles to their everyday lives. In this way, students can be encouraged to consider pragmatic aspects of language. It is also recommended that textbook writers reconsider the way they present speech acts in the examined textbooks and offer more pragmatic information about them, such as politeness, appropriateness, and formality. In this regard, to teach English as a foreign language effectively, textbook authors must design well-structured lessons that provide abundant pragmatic resources. Moreover, for the effective teaching of speech acts in EFL settings, textbook authors should incorporate real-life examples of speech acts and offer thorough meta-pragmatic explanations. Moreover, a supplemental website containing recent research findings contributed by applied linguists may be considered by textbook writers. As a result, educators will have access to current research insights, which will allow them to select materials that will be tailored to the needs of their classrooms.

4. Conclusion

Numerous studies investigating the effectiveness of English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks in improving communicative skills consistently highlight a common limitation: the lack of thorough explanations regarding English conversational dynamics (Berry, 2000; Burns, 1998; Cane, 1998; Grant & Starks, 2001). Current literature on EFL/ESL textbooks points to a deficiency of information concerning speech acts and other pragmatic elements, both in terms of quality and quantity (e.g., Vellenga, 2004; Salazar Campillo, 2007; Neddard, 2010). Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the role of textbooks in cultivating pragmatic competence and to evaluate the pragmatic content within the current national EFL textbooks utilized in Moroccan high schools since 2007. The primary objective was to assess both the quantity and quality of pragmatic information provided in these selected textbooks. The analysis, with a specific focus on meta-pragmatic information, covered discussions on illocutionary force, politeness, appropriateness, and use, as well as how speech acts are presented by textbook authors. However, the study's findings reveal that the analyzed textbooks offer insufficient pragmatic information. These results underscore the need for EFL textbooks to be complemented with more authentic materials and additional meta-pragmatic information. Admittedly, based on the current evaluation, various speech acts are inadequately addressed in textbooks from a pragmatic perspective. Learners are sometimes presented with models of speech acts in various forms, including audio recordings or, more commonly, printed dialogues or examples. However, these models often lack background information and explicit meta-pragmatic discussion. Additionally, the assessed textbooks frequently introduce linguistic expressions for specific speech acts without accompanying meta-pragmatic explanations. Even when expressions are categorized by formality levels, there is a lack of illustration to help students understand why certain expressions are considered more formal than others. It's important to note that the current evaluation focused on the intermediate level, and it is conceivable that advanced-level textbooks may offer more meta-pragmatic information or provide greater insights into intra-lingual pragmatic variation. This study acknowledges this limitation and suggests further research on ELT textbooks that explicitly address pragmatics.

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