

An evaluation of the pragmatic competence of high school students of English in Ethiopia

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Abstract

This article presents an evaluation of the pragmatic competence of high school students in the English as a foreign language context in Ethiopia. Learners in an EFL scenario often find the area of language use difficult. Teachers are advised to explicitly teach the pragmatic features of language and make use of authentic models of language to help learners practice using appropriate language in social contexts. In spite of this, data about the pragmatic aspect of language and pragmatic-focused instruction are lacking in an EFL (Ethiopian) context. Textbooks and teachers are integral part of language teaching generally in an EFL setting where there are no opportunities to learn the language informally outside the classroom. The textbooks seldom provide adequate pragmatic information for students to successfully develop their pragmatic competence as the findings of this research indicated. Most of the metalanguage explanations are simple and inadequate as well. The research followed entirely a qualitative design except that some simple statistical calculations were used to compute the frequency, mean and percentage of the numerical data. The data were drawn from the content analysis of two student textbooks (grade 11 and 12), responses of four teachers teaching grades 9-12 and self-perceived competence and pragmatic awareness test results of 183 students. The findings of this study also presented the implications for teaching pragmatics to EFL learners, the development of pragmatic-focused materials, future research and well-designed teacher training. The results of this study also showed that teachers seldom use pragmatic instruction in classrooms, and mostly students have to spend time by themselves developing pragmatic competence without explicit instruction. Overall, the pragmatics instruction was immature and needed to be developed, and teachers needed professional training to be aware of how to teach pragmatics effectively. Although the learners' self-perceived competence mean score was high, their multiple choice discourse completion test (MDCT) result was low; and this confirmed that self-perceived competence and the actual performance never matched. This is why according to Dewaele (2007) higher levels of self-perceived competence are linked to lower levels of communication which in fact has to be further investigated in the Ethiopian context.

Key Words: *Pragmatics, pragmatic competence, content analysis, self-perceived-competence, MDCT, challenges, opportunities.*

1. Background

Learning a foreign language is regarded nowadays as an essential component of the curricula at different educational levels. In particular, learning the English language has become necessary given its widespread use throughout the world according to House and Kasper (see Martinez-Flor, 2004). However, in order to make learners become communicatively competent in the English language, there is a shift from previous theoretical frameworks, which considered language as a formal system based on grammatical rules, towards a more communicative perspective (ibid). Alcaraz (see also Martinez-Flor, 2004) points out that the shift from *language usage rule* to *language use rule* was possible due to the advent of pragmatics as a specific area of study within linguistics that favoured a focus on *interactional and contextual* factors of the target language (TL).

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This study was focused on evaluating the challenges and opportunities for teaching pragmatic competence. Besides, it was the intent of this research to evaluate teachers' perception of the contents the textbooks in terms of pragmatic intent. Furthermore, it was the concern of this study to look at what teachers thought were the impediments for them to deliver pragmatic instructions in the EFL setting. Moreover, the students' self-perceived competence and their ability to choose appropriate language based on a given context was another concern of this research.

2. Statement of the Problem

In the Ethiopian context, English has been used as a medium of instruction from grade 7 upwards, but problems in contextualized learning and teaching English have been observed ever since (Jarvis, as cited in Amlaku, 2010). Amlaku also points out that '[teachers] at schools and employers in industries have been complaining about the low level English language competence of students and graduates, respectively' (p.9). Many high school students often find expressing themselves extremely difficult in social context though they may know the grammar of the English language. But what are the challenges that held back language learners not to competently communicate in a social context? What are the opportunities if the society does speak the language? The current research, therefore, evaluated the challenges and opportunities in developing the pragmatic competence of high school language learners in the EFL context and presents the ways forward. Although there have been studies about communicative language teaching in Ethiopian schools, the investigation on pragmatic information in English textbooks used in Ethiopia has not yet been conducted. Similarly, whether there exist any additional pragmatic features in teacher's book as a resource for teachers has not been questioned. Likewise, whether English language teachers bring in outside materials to help learners develop pragmatic competence has not yet been investigated in the setting of the current research. The current research, therefore, looks into the challenges and opportunities to developing pragmatic competence of language learners in the EFL context.

3. Objectives

This study was aimed to:

- analyse English textbooks on the basis of thanking, apologizing, complimenting, complaining, refusal and requesting strategies as presented in Aijmer (1996) and Ishihara and Cohen (2007),
- evaluate the pragmatic competence of high school learners of English in the Ethiopian context,
- describe the challenges teachers in EFL setting, particularly those in high schools, face in teaching pragmatic aspects of the English language.

Considering these concerns, the aim of this study was two-fold: to deal with those theoretical approaches that inform the process of learning speech acts in particular contextual and cultural settings; and secondly, to present a variety of methodological proposals, grounded on research-based ideas, for the teaching of the major pragmatic features in foreign language classrooms.

4. Related Literature

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics which studies the ways in which context contributes to meaning. It studies how the transmission of meaning depends not only on the linguistic knowledge (e.g. grammar, lexicon etc.) of the speaker and listener, but also on the context of the utterance, knowledge about the status of those involved, the inferred *intent* of the speaker (Kasper, 2004), and so on. In this respect, pragmatics explains how language users are able to overcome apparent *ambiguity*, since meaning relies on the manner, place, time etc. of an utterance (Cohn, 2008). The ability to understand another speaker's intended meaning is called *pragmatic competence* (Kasper, 1997). An utterance describing

pragmatic function is described as *metapragmatic* (Verschuere, 2000). Pragmatic awareness is regarded as one of the most challenging aspects of language learning, and comes only through experience. Hence, learners of EFL context face challenges in understanding the interplay of language, language users and their intentions, and the social context.

In a foreign language context, teachers are non-native speakers of English language and they need to be well-prepared for teaching the pragmatic aspect of knowledge of language. In addition to this fact there are no sufficient, or no course, is offered to teachers either during pre-service or in-service education programs in the area of pragmatics. This situation is what El-Okda (2010) calls as 'paucity of pragmatic courses in both pre-service teacher education programs and in-service professional development' (169). If the student teachers or those teachers that are handling the teaching of English language are provided with the pragmatic courses, '[they] can help their students see the language in context, raise consciousness of the role of pragmatics, and explain the function pragmatics plays in specific communicative event' (Brock and Nagasaka, 2005, p.20).

The second pillar in developing the pragmatic competence of learners is ELT material. Language teaching materials need to frequently include pragmatic materials so as to help learners develop pragmatic competence, because 'teachers in EFL settings, where there are relatively few opportunities for students to use the language in communicative contexts' (Brock and Nagasaka, 2005), will make use of textbooks as the major source of pragmatic knowledge. However, the attempt of including very few mini-dialogues for certain speech acts and that are contrived and de-contextualized does not help the learners develop their pragmatic competence or does not represent the reality outside the classroom (El-Okda, 2010:180). Let alone the external environment, 'many students do not know how to make polite requests in English in the classroom' (Brock and Nagasaka, 2005:21). In addition, teachers in most cases complain for the unmanageable class size. Large classes, limited contact hours and little opportunity for intercultural communication are some of the features of the EFL context that hinder pragmatic learning (Eslami-Rasekh et al., 2004; Rose, 1999).

Additionally, understanding teachers' perceptions and beliefs is important because teachers heavily involved in various teaching and learning processes, are practitioners of educational principles and theories (Jia, Eslami & Burlbaw, cited in Eslami and Fatahi, 2008). In most cases teachers do not give attention to pragmatic/communicative functions in the classroom. Omaggio (see in Uso-Juan, and Martinez-Flor, 2008) gives the following three reasons for neglecting intercultural/pragmatic competence in the language class: 'teachers usually have an overcrowded curriculum to cover and lack the time to spend on teaching culture, which requires a lot of work; many teachers have a limited knowledge of the target culture and, therefore, afraid to teach it; and teachers are often confused about what cultural aspects to cover' (p.165).

What opportunities are offered for pragmatic learning? The research works have made mention of such opportunities as: opportunities for pragmatic input: teacher talk (Kasper, 1997; Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1996; Nikula, 2008), textbooks (Salazar, 2007; Uso-Juan, 2007) audio-visual material (Alcón, 2005; Fernández Guerra, 2008; Martínez-Flor, 2008) and local vs. target culture, (Devo and Yasemin, 2010; Jie, 2010; Regmi, 2011).

In line with these research works, the present researchers found out that there has been little or no research work which evaluated the pragmatic competence of high school students of English in the Ethiopian context. Both the teaching materials and the syllabus give negligible attention to the appropriateness of English to the various social contexts.

5. Research Methods

A descriptive research method was chosen as it is used to specify or describe a phenomenon without conducting an experiment. The study was principally designed to be qualitative. Questionnaires, observations, discourse completion tests and content analysis seemed to be appropriate instruments to collect relevant data for the study since these tools can help objectively record teachers and students behaviours such as actions, utterances and verbal expression of their attitudes (opinions) towards the concept (Mc Arthur 1983). This study consisted of the following methodological steps: stating the problem, analysing the situation (conducting pre-test), stating the objectives, reviewing the relevant discourses, designing tools and selecting samples, collecting data, analysing and interpreting data, and drawing conclusions and forwarding recommendation along with the research implications.

The research subjects were grades 10 and 11 students at St. Joseph School in Ethiopia. In the present research the researcher employed two stage schemes of sampling: the first one was a purposive sampling only focusing on high achiever students. This was to test the extent to which the learners were aware of pragmatic/functional aspect of the target language. Doing this in turn helped the researcher to proceed with the research work as designed with some minor modification when the need arose. During the first stage sampling, only 15 students were selected and tested. The second and final sampling was systematic random sampling so as to include all students: low, medium and high achievers as the aim was not to distinguish between these groups of students. Therefore, 183 students were selected using a systematic random sampling method out of 339 students of the school based on the table statistics for maintaining level of confidence. All teachers who are teaching 9th-12th grades were part of the research.

Table 1: Data Representing the Research Participants

Participants	Students	%	Teachers	%
Males	102	55.73	3	75
Females	81	44.25	1	25
Total	183	99.98	4	100

Grade 10 and 11 English student textbooks were sampled for content analysis. Since it was difficult to observe all contents, the researcher was forced to sample from available content for coding pool. Units of analysis may differ from units of observation. Sample selection depends largely on unit of analysis. Generally, content analysis involved the following methodological steps: preparing coding sheet, coding units of observation, categorizing the units, counting, tabulating, describing and analysing, and finally interpreting the data collected from the textbooks.

Secondly, sample questionnaires were designed and administered to teachers who were teaching English the same grade level at selected school. Feedbacks were obtained that there were no difficulties to comprehend the message of the questionnaire. Similar questionnaires with minor modifications were administered to elicit teachers' perception of the students' textbooks with regards to pragmatic content and their own pragmatic background knowledge. Whereas, questionnaire for self-perceived competence were newly developed for the students in addition to the discourse completions test that was completely changed from open ended format to multiple choice. The change was made to alleviate the difficulty that might occur in analyzing the data and MDCT is gaining its prominence to test learners' pragmatic proficiency in EFL (Setouguchi, 2008:1) and to mitigate its effect on the result.

Classroom observation has always been considered as one of the tools for data collection in language acquisition researches, because it allows the study of a phenomenon or behavior at close range with many of the contextual variables present (Waxman, 2011). Thus, the researcher observed classrooms to ascertain the prevalent challenges to teach pragmatics in EFL classroom as indicated by the teachers.

Discourse completion tests are used to elicit the pragmatic awareness of learners. Hence, the researchers employed DCT/MDCT to cross check what students replied in self-perceived competence questionnaires with what language they selected in MDCT. Beside the DCT/MDCT, some questions were added at the end of the test paper so that students can give what they believed as regards to the sources of their current knowledge of pragmatics.

6. Results and Discussion

The research findings showed that based on the inventory made pertaining to the presence and absence of the pragmatic features in the students' textbooks, there was a dearth of language use contents in the plethora of other linguistic features that almost constituted above 90% of the textbooks contents. It was also evident from the data analysis that the pragmatic elements that were only given less considerations were also given insufficient metapragmatic and metalanguage explanations. Hence, it was one of the challenges to teaching pragmatics in Ethiopian EFL context.

The other research result was that teachers did not bring in outside materials to complement the paucity of pragmatic contents of the English language textbooks so as to facilitate the opportunities for teaching and learning pragmatics in the classroom. Evidence for this was 100% of the teachers responded unanimously that they never supplemented the textbooks with additional materials to instruct pragmatics in EFL setting where there were rare opportunities to learning pragmatics outside the classroom.

The data showed that the majority of the students scaled that most of the communicative acts or social functions of language that they were tested for were difficult. As a result of which most of them scored below average in multiple choice discourse completion test (MDCT). The classroom observation results were also consistent with what was detected from the textbooks inventory as shown below, teachers' responses and that of students' responses that there were no lessons or interactions directed to the development of pragmatic competence in the classrooms.

Table 2. Sample Communicative Acts in the Textbooks

Communicative	Topic /types strategies	Examples or strategies or realization of strategies	Book 1	Book 2
Refusal	Direct refusals	(e.g. 'No', 'I can't', 'I don't think I can')	x	x
	Statement of regret	(e.g. 'I'm sorry')	x	x
	Statement of positive opinion	(e.g. 'I'd love to', 'I wish I could')	x	x
	Excuse, reason, explanation	(e.g. 'I have to study for the test')	x	x
	Gratitude	(e.g. 'Thank you')	x	x
	Statement of future acceptance	(e.g. 'Perhaps some other time')	x	x
	Indefinite reply	(e.g. 'I'm not sure', 'I don't know')	x	x
	Statement of alternative	(e.g., 'How about the movies')	x	x
	Statement of empathy	(e.g. 'No offence to you')	x	x
Ap	Explicitly apologizing	(e.g. I apologize)	√	x

Offering/presenting one's apologies	<i>(e.g. I present my apologies)</i>	x	x
Acknowledging a debt of apology	<i>(e.g. I owe you an apology)</i>	x	x
Expressing regret	<i>(e.g. I'm sorry, I'm regretful ...)</i>	√	x
Demanding forgiveness	<i>(e.g. Pardon me, forgive me, excuse me...)</i>	x	x
Explicitly requesting the hearer's forgiveness	<i>(e.g. I beg your pardon,)</i>	x	x
Giving an explanation or account	<i>(e.g. I'm sorry "The bus was late," it's so unusual...)</i>	x	x
Self-denigration or self-reproach	<i>(e.g. How stupid of me, how awful, I ought to know this)</i>	x	x
Minimizing responsibility	<i>(e.g. I didn't mean to..., I thought this was...,)</i>	√	x
Expressing emotion	<i>(e.g. Oh, I'm so sorry...)</i>	x	x
Acknowledging responsibility for the offending act	<i>(e.g. It's my fault...)</i>	x	x
Promising forbearance from a similar offending act	<i>(e.g. I promise you that will never happen again)</i>	x	x
Offering redress	<i>(e.g. Please let me pay for the damage I have done)</i>	x	x

Adapted from Aijmer 1996; Ishihara and Cohen, 2007

Most lessons were insubstantial and that there were no metapragmatic explanations provided. For example, we can see the following lesson presented in grade 11 students' book under the title 'apologizing'.

"How would you say sorry to someone? Look at the expressions:

- Sorry, I didn't mean to...
- I am sorry but...
- I apologize for...
- I hope you will forgive me but...
- I seem to have made a mistake. I'm really sorry...
- I am sorry for misunderstanding...
- I hope you will understand..." (p. 62).

Another lesson that has to do with **compliments** as presented in 11th grade English textbook on pages 85 and 91, has got similar deficiency. For example,

'Mercy is a good person'
 'You are good at Maths' (p.85).
 Tesfaw is so good at speaking English.
 Tesfaw is such a good English speaker (p.91).

In this excerpt there is no clear instruction for the learners to further practice the language feature and there is no explicit metalanguage or metapragmatic explanation given. Similarly, with the intention to say 'no' or refusal to requests for sex, the following expressions are presented merely in name in 11th grade English language textbook. No metapragmatic explanation is provided.

*'I would really rather not...
 If you don't mind, I'll say 'no' to that.*

*I don't want..., if you don't mind.
I'm sorry, but I've said 'no' and I'm not going to change my mind.
I'd prefer to.../I'd rather...
Why don't we... instead?' (p.103).*

Likewise, a topic about 'tourist complaint' that is presented in grade 11th English textbook page 128 must have left learners with unsolved puzzle. That is to say complaining being important feature of pragmatics, ample metapragmatic explanations and scenarios must have been provided. No authentic context for practice and use of the intended language feature is provided. No scenarios or situations were presented so that the learners would learn how the expressions are used in a real life like simulations. The objective of the lesson states 'by the end of the lesson you will be able to learn to apologize to someone' however there are no practice activities to assess learners' behavior.

Table 3. Frequency of Communicative Acts in Each Textbook

Type of Communicative Acts	Grade 10 textbook				Grade 11 textbook			
	f	# of pages	Total # of pages	% of pragmatic pages	f	# of pages	Total # of pages	% of pragmatic
Request	74	17	327	9.5	48	9	251	6.4
Apology	13	5			3	1		
Compliments	10	3			11	2		
Complaints	-	-			1	1		
Refusing	4	3			7	1		
Thanking	4	3			2	2		
Total	105	31			72	16		

The above table represents the quantity of pragmatic information contained in the student textbooks. In this case even phrase was counted so as to include the most possible data in the process of enumeration. As one can see from the table above, only few pages have gone for scantily explained and discussed pragmatic language features. Almost all pages or the lion's share have gone for grammar, vocabulary, passages, and other language skills. This is somewhat paradoxical in that where the most important source of pragmatic aspect of language is said to be textbook, particularly in EFL setting and where there is meagre opportunities for learners to develop their pragmatic competence, scantiness of such pragmatic contents in the textbooks can highly debilitate learners' communicative competence.

According to literatures, textbooks can be either opportunity or challenge to teaching pragmatics in EFL context. What do St. Joseph's School teachers think of textbooks' pragmatic contents? See the table below. (Inadequate=1, fairly adequate=2 and adequate=3)

Table 4. Challenges Related to Student Textbooks

Statements		Inadequate	Fairly adequate	Adequate
Teachers' views about the pragmatic contents of their guide and students' textbooks:				
I. explanation of pragmatic aspects of English	N	4	-	-
	Mean	1	-	-
	%	100	-	-
	N	2	4	-

II.	activities that help learners learn to use language or pragmatics	Mean	1.5	1	-
		%	50	50	-
III.	how to teach pragmatic aspects of English language	N	4	-	-
		Mean	1	-	-
		%	100	-	-
IV.	how to test pragmatic aspect of English language	N	4	-	-
		Mean	1	-	-
		%	100	-	-

As shown in the table above, regarding the explanation of pragmatic aspects of English language presented in textbooks or their guide, the teachers responded unanimously (100% of them) that the contents were inadequate. Pertaining to the activities presented in the students' textbook to help learners learn to use language, 50% of the teachers contend 'fairly adequate' and the quarter part of them asserted 'inadequate'. While with regards to the method of teaching and testing pragmatic aspect of language, all the respondents commonly said that the textbooks were 'inadequate'.

Table 5. Why teachers do not teach pragmatic aspect of English language?

Statements		Ratings				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Lack of extra time	N	-	3	-	1	-
	%	-	75	-	25	-
Limited knowledge of target culture and language	N	2	2	-	-	-
	%	50	50	-	-	-
Confusion with which aspect of pragmatics to cover	N	1	2	1	-	-
	%	25	50	25	-	-
Lack of training	N	2	1	1	-	-
	%	50	25	25	-	-
Insufficient materials	N	1	3	-	-	-
	%	25	75	-	-	-
Students' language level	N	2	2	-	-	-
	%	50	50	-	-	-
Teachers' language level	N	4	-	-	-	-
	%	100	-	-	-	-
Type of language assessment	N	1	2	1	-	-
	%	25	50	25	-	-

As shown in the table above, the three most common challenges the teachers reported that they are encountering in teaching pragmatics were lack of training as stipulated by Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor, (2003:1) 'Pragmatics does not receive the attention in language teacher education programs that other area of language do', large class sizes and time allotment. Students' language level and insufficient materials are the next most frequent difficulties for teachers to teach pragmatics. In a similar way, all subjects (100%) commented that teacher's language level could be a factor that influenced pragmatic teaching. Finally, type of assessment, which in fact aimed at passing exam, has significant impact up on the pragmatic lessons according to the teachers' response. This is as Kasper (2000), puts forward, 'Unless teachers also know about methods to evaluate students' progress in pragmatics, they may be reluctant to focus on pragmatics in their teaching.'

Table 6. General Perception of Teachers about Opportunities for Learning Pragmatics in EFL Context

Statements		Agreement scales/rates				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Teacher's talk in the classroom is important...to help learners acquire pragmatic knowledge	N	-	3	-	1	-
	%		75	-	25	-
2. The current English textbook discusses and identifies pragmatic areas of the students' needs...	N	-	-	1	3	1
	%	-	-	25	75	25
3. Methods and techniques of teaching CL and pragmatics are supposed to be different	N	-	-	1	2	1
	%	-	-	25	50	25
4. Teaching pragmatic competence is not as important as teaching communicative ability	N	-	-	-	3	1
	%	-	-	-	75	25
5. Teachers rarely bring in outside materials related to pragmatics	N	-	4	-	-	-
	%	-	100	-	-	-
6. Learning and teaching pragmatics from textbooks is impossible	N	-	1	1	1	1
	%	-	25	25	25	25
7. Textbooks are inadequate in presenting authentic pragmatic samples, but teachers can overcome shortcomings of textbooks	N	1	3	-	-	-
	%	25	75	-	-	-
8. Textbooks cannot be counted as reliable resources of pragmatic input	N	-	2	-	2	-
	%		50		50	

As shown in the table above that the idea of teacher's talk in the classroom to help learners be aware of language pragmatics was accepted by 75% of the participants, while 25% rejected it. Pertaining to the statement, 'Methods and techniques of teaching CL and pragmatics are supposed to be different', 25% of the teachers are in dilemma, and 50% of them, however 'disagreed' and the remaining 25% 'strongly disagreed' with the statement. In reference to the item 'Teaching pragmatic competence is not as important as teaching communicative ability', 75% of the participant teachers responded that they disagree with the statement and the remaining 25% of them 'strongly disagree'. With regards to the statement 'Teachers rarely bring in outside materials related to pragmatics', the respondents (100%) of them all together have witnessed that they agree with the statement. What was surprising to the researcher was that in table 7 the teachers responded that they include pragmatic aspect of the English language in their daily lesson. The sixth item aimed at eliciting teachers' perception about the possibility of learning and teaching pragmatics from the learners' textbooks. Hence, 25% of them 'strongly agreed, 'agreed', 'undecided', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagreed' with the statement respectively.

Classroom Discourse Observation

Analysis of classroom discourse was difficult because the manifestation of pragmatic features in the classroom discourse was far short of existence as there was paucity of pragmatic elements in the students' textbooks. The lesson consisted of mostly teacher fronted activities and individual work. This might be caused by the presence of the researcher that could be misunderstood by those teachers that were trying to show off their English standing in front of the classroom all the way through 45' minutes. During the teacher-fronted activities, the teachers addressed the class as a whole almost exclusively of learners' direct participation. When they addressed individual students, they did so in

brief, using formulaic language relating to the contents of the lesson, i.e. grammar and reading passages. None of the students asked a question during the presence of the researcher and they did not interact much with each other except for brief comments which were not audible. The paucity of interaction in English during non-teacher-fronted activities was somewhat common in the classes observed by the researcher; it was impossible to determine whether the students used English with one another. This was because the researcher overheard some students diverting to Amharic (the national language of Ethiopia) and talking some other business when he was sitting by some students during classroom discourse observation.

Table 7. Classroom Observation Results

Key: DCT =discourse completion test, ODCT=oral discourse completion test, MDCT=multiple choice discourse completion test or WDCT=written discourse completion test

Items category	Subcategories	Spotted	Unspotted
Classroom Activities	1. drills		√
	2. translation		√
	3. discussion		√
	4. presentations	√	
	5.conscious raising activities		√
	6.explicit instruction of pragmatics		√
	7.awareness-raising activities		√
	8.guided practice		√
	9. game		√
	10. role plays		√
	11. DCT, ODCT, MDCT or WDCT		√
Participant organization	1. teacher to students	√	
	2. student to students or student to the classroom	√	
	3.group work	√	
	4. individual work	√	
Content or explicit focus on language	1. form/grammar	√	
	2. discourse		√
	3. usage	√	
	4. use/function: complaining, complimenting, refusing		√
Materials used	1. written		√
	2. audio		√
	3. visual		√
	4. stories		√
	5. dialogues	√	
	6. scenarios/situations/authentic language samples or models		√
Communicative features	1. use of target language	√	
	2. information gap		√
	3. sustained speech		√
	4. reaction to code or message		√
	5. incorporation of preceding utterances		√
	6. discourse initiation		√
	7. relative restriction of linguistic form/semantic formula		√

Classroom discourse and textbook use were observed because the classroom is the ideal place for teachers to help learners interpret language use. A classroom discussion of pragmatics is also a good place to explore prior impressions of speakers (Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor, 200, p. 38).

The aim of observing the classroom activities was to spotlight on turn-taking behavior of students and teachers, cross-cultural comparisons in the use of communicative acts, treatment of learners' pragmatic errors, the nature of linguistic input provided by the teachers, style shifting in the classroom, direct or indirect influence of the teachers and techniques that are used to address pragmatics in the classrooms.

As to the organization of the participants, the aim was to see whether the teacher working with the whole class and/or individual students, whether the students were divided into groups or were engaged in individual seat work, or if they were engaged in group work, how was it organized etc. because as indicated in many literatures, group work is considered to be an important factor in the development of fluency skills and communicative skills. Observation results revealed that students were typically involved in whole-class instruction with rare interaction with their teacher or other students. Students were just watching or listening to the teachers. The teachers typically focused on the content of the task or assignment, responded to students' signals, communicated the task's procedures, and checked students' work.

As it can be seen from the table, all of the teachers never used any scenarios or situations to activate students' pragmatic awareness by explaining the meaning of different language functions or uses. Beside this they never used any role-play activities to observe students' pragmatic competence or failure. This might be due to huge number of students that ranges from 62 to 65 in a classroom. The researcher never observed the teachers asking their students to collect pragmatics information from outside the classroom from TV, movies, magazines, novels, etc. that were either naturally occurring or closer to authentic language use. As far as the researcher's classroom observation was concerned, none of the teachers happened to include pragmatic topics such as refusing, thanking, apologizing, complaining, complimenting, in their lesson.

With reference to materials used, the aim was to make a note of authentic/unauthentic materials that stimulate real-life communicative situations. Many advocates of the communicative approach have claimed that authentic materials are essential in order to prepare students for the kinds of discourse they will encounter outside the classroom. Nevertheless, no teacher was found to use any additional materials to help learners with the theme of lessons delivered, except textbook contents.

Although some teachers claimed in the questionnaire that the pragmatic lesson they brought into the classroom from outside world was 'fairly adequate', none of them found to have included pragmatics related issues; rather they were heavily depending on the contents of the textbooks all the way through while the researcher was observing their behavior in the classroom. To further find out about the contradictions, the researcher talked to those teachers informally after the classroom sessions as to why they were not bringing in outside materials. They responded that there were no materials that they could make use of for the same purposes and on the other hand they were bringing materials related to grammar and vocabulary teaching.

Learners' Self-perceived Communication Competence

The self-perceived communicative competence (SPCC) rubrics was developed to find out about participants (students') perception of their own competence in different communication contexts and given different types of receivers. The scale was intended to let the respondents define their own communicative competence. Since people make decisions with regard to communication (for

example, whether they will even engage in it), it is their own perception that is important, and not that of an outside observer. It is important that readers of this measure recognize that this is not a measure of actual communication competence; it is a measure of perceived competence. Knowledge of communication strategies empowers individuals to communicate, express themselves, perform many different functions, and attain satisfactory outcome. It was just to test learners' beliefs with respect to practicing English anytime anywhere so as to be able to use the language effectively. It is believed that practice makes perfect in all aspects of language including non-linguistic features.

In order to solicit how learners perceive their communicative competence, the following rubrics was designed and distributed to them before the discourse completion test was administered. Some items were taken from 11th grade English textbook (p. 42-43 and 88).The rubrics were made of five models of communicative competence along with description: sociocultural competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, grammatical competence, and pragmatic competence. The last one in fact took the lion's share for the main reason that the research's theme revolved around it. The Likert scale was also part of the rubrics along with values attached to each description (Strongly agree=5, agree = 4 neither agree nor disagree=3, disagree=2, and strongly disagree=1). The mean score were rounded to the nearest mathematical values.

Table 8. Learners' Self-perceived Discourse Competence

	Discourse Competence		5	4	3	2	1	Total	Mean Score
1	I usually practice many grammar drills in order to improve my English.	f	49	61	50	16	7	183	3.5
		%	26.8	33.3	27.3	8.7	3.8	100	
2	I will ask myself to express my thoughts in a comprehensive and correct manner in English.	f	38	69	52	18	6	183	3.58
		%	20.7	37.7	28.4	9.8	3	100	
3	I perceive that I can express my ideas naturally in spoken English.	f	27	65	50	28	13	183	3.33
		%	14.8	35.5	27.3	15.3	7	100	
4	I will try to talk to native speakers to strengthen my spoken English.	f	47	64	36	25	11	183	3.59
		%	25.6	34.9	19.7	13.7	6	100	
5	I perceive that I feel more comfortable to express my ideas in written English.	f	45	58	38	29	13	183	3.48
		%	24.6	31.7	20.8	15.8	7	100	
6	I will read different grammar books written by different authors to improve my grammatical competence.	f	37	57	39	28	22	183	3.29
		%	20.2	31.1	21.3	15.3	12	100	
7	I am expected to be able to use extended utterances where appropriate.	f	48	62	38	26	9	183	3.59
		%	26.2	33.9	20.8	14.2	4.9	100	
8	I need to have the ability to maintain coherent flow of language over several utterances.	f	34	70	55	16	8	183	3.56
		%	18.6	38.2	30	8.7	4.4	100	

Under the discourse competence, students reacted to statement, "I will ask myself to express my thoughts in a comprehensive and correct manner in English" in different ways. For instance, 20.7% of the subjects claimed that they 'strongly agree', 37.7% showed that they 'agree', 28.4% of them pointed out they 'neither agree nor disagree' or they are in favour of no view, 9.8% of them preferred 'disagree' and the last 3% contended they 'strongly disagree' with the statement. The sum total of

their mean was 3.95=4 (agree), that is the majority of the students asked themselves to express their thoughts in a comprehensive and correct manner in English.

Students were also asked, under the discourse competence item 3 to rate their self-perceived competence as in the following statement. "I perceive that I can express my ideas naturally in spoken English". This was intended to solicit views of the subjects about their own flow of idea when they tried to speak in English. Accordingly, 14.75%, 35.5%, 27.3%, 15.3% and 7% of the subjects replied they 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' respectively. The mean score showed that the majority of the respondents 'neither agree nor disagree' with the statement. They were not sure as to whether their language naturally flows when they write or speak or not.

Subsequent to the discourse competence test, learners rated their self-perceived pragmatic competence. Their responses frequency and percentage as well as the mean score were presented in the separate table below.

Table 9. Learners' Self-perceived Pragmatic Competence

	Pragmatic Competence		5	4	3	2	1	Total	Mean
1	I know what to say, when to say and how to say and rule of talking when talking with other people in English	f	24	60	64	17	18	183	3.23
		%	13.1	32.7	34.9	9.2	9.8	100	
2	I pay special attention when I make requests	f	47	69	38	21	8	183	3.66
		%	25.6	37.7	20.7	11.4	4.3	100	
3	I pay special attention to other people making requests	f	47	65	45	17	9	183	3.65
		%	25.6	35.5	24.5	9.2	4.9	100	
4	I pay special attention to other people when I refuse	f	36	63	54	16	14	183	3.47
		%	19.6	34.4	29.5	8.7	7.6	100	
5	I pay attention to other people's feeling, status and age when I complain	f	52	67	44	14	6	183	3.78
		%	28.4	36.6	24	7.6	3.2	100	
6	I know when I should use modal verbs such as can, could, would, or may when apologizing, requesting, refusing, thanking, inviting, suggesting ,etc.	f	60	71	34	8	10	183	3.86
		%	32.8	38.7	18.5	4.3	5.4	100	
7	I know taking turns in conversation	f	44	77	44	11	7	183	3.75
		%	24	42	24	6	3.8	100	
8	I know how to do rephrasing when misunderstood	f	27	68	59	20	9	183	3.42
		%	14.8	37	32.2	10.9	4.9	100	
9	I have the skill as to how to use verbal and nonverbal signals	f	15	60	71	24	13	183	3.19
		%	8	32.7	38.7	13.1	7	100	
10	I know how close to stand to someone when speaking	f	39	65	49	18	12	183	3.53
		%	21.3	35.5	26.7	9.8	6.5	100	
11		f	35	74	47	16	11	183	3.55

	I have the skills as to how to use facial expressions and eye contact	%	19	40.4	25.6	8.7	6	100	
12	I know the giving background information to unfamiliar listener will help	f	34	59	60	24	6	183	3.48
		%	18.6	32.2	32.8	13.1	3.3	100	
13	I know speaking in a classroom is different from speaking on a playground	f	72	63	24	14	10	183	3.92
		%	39.3	34.4	13.1	7.6	5.4	100	
14	I know how to address and talk to people whose age and status are different from mine	f	58	64	32	16	13	183	3.73
		%	31.6	34.9	17.4	8.7	7	100	

Under the pragmatic competence, various questions (items) were posed to the participants so as to grasp the general pictures of their self-perceived competence. Language is not only a means of teaching but it is a means of learning as well. Therefore, opportunities should be given to students, particularly at the secondary schools levels, to relate school work to the skills required in employment and adult life. Concerning this, a question that was posed to the subjects was *'whether they are aware of what to say when and how to say; and whether they think that they have sufficient knowledge about rules of turn taking when talking to others in English.'* Then, 13.1% replied that they 'strongly agree', 32.7% responded that they 'agree' 34.9% of them contended they 'neither agree nor disagree', 9.2% of them claimed that they 'disagree' and the rest 9.8% said that they 'strongly disagree' with the statement. The mean score of their responses was 3.23, which means 'the majority of the respondents 'neither agree nor disagree' with the statement. This implies that they neither know what to say, when to say, how to say nor rules of talking to other people in English.

In the second statement under pragmatic competence which goes *"I pay special attention when I make requests"*, 25.6% of the subjects 'strongly agreed' that they pay special attention when they make requests, while 37.7% preferred 'agree', 20.7% of them voted for 'neither agree nor disagree', 11.4% of them indicated that they 'disagree', and 4.3% of them said that they 'strongly disagree' with the statement that was posed to see their awareness about people's social status, relation they have with me, power, age, etc. when they make requests.

With respect to the statement *"I pay special attention to other people's requests"*, those participants who replied 'strongly agree' were about 25.6%, those who said 'agree' were around 35.5%, those who replied 'neither agree nor disagree' accounted for 24.5%, while 9.2% of them selected 'disagree' and the 4.9% responded they 'strongly disagree' with the statement. The mean score was 3.65 closer to Likert scale 'agree'.

"I pay special attention to other people's status, age, sex, power, etc. when I refuse", was the fourth statement that was presented to the subjects. Consequently, 19.6% of them replied 'strongly agree' 34.4% of them 'disagreed' 29.5% of them said they 'neither disagree nor disagree' whereas, 8.7% 'disagreed', and the remaining 7.6% of them selected 'strongly disagree'. The mean score was 3.47 which means 'neither agree nor disagree'.

Concerning, the statement *"I pay attention to other people's feeling, status and age when I complain"*, 28.4 of the participants responded 'strongly agree' 36.6% of them 'agreed', while 24% of them said 'neither agree nor disagree', 7.6% of them replied 'disagree' and the rest 3.2% of them 'strongly disagreed' with the statement. The mean score of their responses was 3.78 which imply that the majority 'neither agree nor disagree' with the statement.

For some, milder example of impoliteness is that language speakers or EFL learners may not understand the differences of how and when to use such modals as 'can' and 'could' versus the conditional 'would'; the latter of which carries a more imperative meaning than the two modals in respect to making requests (Jung in Dash, 2010). In connection to this "*I know when I should use modal verbs such as can, could, would, or may when apologizing, requesting, refusing, inviting, suggesting, etc.*" was one of the statements forwarded to the subjects. As a result, 32.78% of them said they 'strongly agree', 38.7% of them 'agreed', 18.5% of them 'neither agreed nor disagreed', 4.3% of them 'disagreed', and 5.4% of them 'strongly disagreed' with the statement. The score of their mean was 3.86.

The other item was "*I know how to take turns in English conversations.*" Related to this statement, 24% of the of the respondents replied 'strongly disagree', 42% of them said they 'agree', 24% of them indicated they 'neither agree nor disagree', 6% of them claimed they 'disagree', and 3.8% of them 'strongly disagreed'. The mean score is 2.76 which implied disagreement.

The other statement presented to the subjects was "*I know how to do rephrasing when misunderstood in English*". Pertaining to this statement, 14.8% of them replied 'strongly agree', 37% responded 'agree', 32.2% of them answered 'neither agree nor disagree', while the rest 10.9% and 7% responded 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' respectively. The mean score was 3.42 which imply the majority of the respondents 'neither agree nor disagree' with the statement.

Speech acts or communicative acts (Celce- Murcia, 2007) are also called social acts which can be judged as appropriate and/or inappropriate according to specific and secrete rules of communication in a given context, culture, or norm. These feature of language have also linguistic formula that interlocutors are expected to use based on a particular norm, culture, or general social context.

It is commonly believed that the goal of language learning is communication. The goal of language teaching is therefore teaching students to communicate in the language they are learning so that they can use it successfully to perform a variety of functions. Learning will take place consciously if students perceive the need for it. That need or gap can be observed from these data in relation to various language functions. In the majority of the cases, participants rated those communicative acts (functions) such as invitations, refusal, requests, apologies, commands, compliments, complaints, and giving advices-as difficult. If students have only learned English to pass an examination, then the language they might have acquired is probably transitional and focused on that need for the test.

As to why they have rated those communicative acts the way they have rated them, participants forwarded the following justifications. Note that the words of the participants were typed exactly the way they were written down.

- 'because of the English language very hard language'
- 'Because some of them are not giving tention in our society so we don't use them frequently. That's why!'
- 'b/c of my experience that when I mate foreign speakers those actions are very difficult to me'
- 'sometime those kinds of action is faced when I go one step further in my life and those makes me stressed to reply on English'
- 'giving advice is more difficult to me b/c I don't have much words to give advice or I'm not naturally have more vocabulary'
- 'Thanking someone is easy to me b/c I learnt starting from Grade 0 OR that is the easiest word from all other things'
- 'Because I didn't got most of the chance to try them or practice them in real'

- 'b/c it is so complicated'
- 'because I amn't speaking always'
- 'because I don't speak them frequently'
- 'I may be run out of vocabulary for complaints.'
- 'b/c it need high skill in speaking'
- 'except refuzing most actions are not hard to do'
- 'actually, All of them are not much difficult for me'
- 'because English is not mother tang language of mine and I'm not native for English'
- 'because when I say Apologies I feel that I make my self Inferior but if I Invite some one I am happy with that'
- 'I must be polite so it is difficult for me to talk using polite words'
- 'b/c I feel it is difficult'
- 'it is difficult b/c you don't know which is difficult to people what it is easy for you to say things by your own- you think that it may make them fell bad'
- 'for me giving advise is most difficult if it's personal and thanking is not difficult for me'
- 'b/c the expression that I indicate as a least difficult are more familiar for me and I used them always the most difficult one are not familiar for me'
- Because sometimes I forget some words I don't have enough vocabularies to express my feelings'
- 'b/c those are the difficulties that I get when I speak English with others'
- 'because I use them rarely and some of them frequently'
- 'I just said that because those things are even hard in Amharic.'
- 'b/c of that I knew that from my life cycle for example I have difficult situation in complaints'
- 'b/c the words are not usually used in social or in other places that is why' - thank you'
- 'b/c they need more explanation and experience on it'
- 'b/c things are difficult when we talk in English'
- 'b/c I have no enough vocabulary to express my feeling'
- 'because I have less developed English speaking ability so I can't talk to much English'
- 'thanking someone is the easiest thing b/c thanking people for their help is the right thing'
- 'b/c I didn't practice such kind of things before and the light ones are the things I practice most times and see on films'

In spite of the fact that these statements are ungrammatical, there are some facts as one reads all the way through the statements. In connection to this, Amlaku (2010) argues 'English in Ethiopia is a medium of instruction from secondary school through higher education but the learners' proficiency remains always poor and the effectiveness of English language teaching remains always questionable, despite the efforts being undertaken by the Ethiopian government and concerned institutions' (p.10). Students affirmed that the English language itself is difficult for them. There are no such language aspects as requesting, complaining, complimenting, apologizing, etc. in their day to day social language practices. Using these pragmatic aspects demanded them of some sort of efforts. Students were not familiar with those language aspects, and those aspects of language did not receive enough attention in the learning and teaching process. However, Cenoz, (2007:7) in other section has argued that being central to language use, and language learning, pragmatic issues must be addressed in language classroom, because English is mainly used in the classroom and EFL learners thus have significantly fewer opportunities to engage in English based communications outside the classroom. Therefore, English classroom becomes the central place for their development of pragmatic competence.

MDCT Scores and Descriptions

There are six types of methods for pragmatic knowledge assessment that so far have been identified by researchers according to Jianda (2006). These methods are the Written Discourse Completion Tasks (WDCT), Multiple-Choice Discourse Completion Tasks (MDCT), Oral Discourse Completion Tasks (ODCT), Discourse Role Play Talks (DRPT), Discourse Self- Assessment Talks (DSAT) and Role-Play self-assessments (RPSA).

MDCTs are used to elicit data by giving speakers scenarios that describe a situation and having speakers write down or role-play what they would say in that situation (Ishihara and Cohen, 2010). The MDCTs used for this study consisted of 20 situations with their respective choices in which learners had to choose socially acceptable language with an ideal interlocutor. The situations varied based on the relative power of the two people (interlocutors), their social distance, and the degree of imposition created by the intent (action). The DCT was chosen as the data elicitation tool because it was the most expedient way to collect the relatively large amount of data. There were three to four months between the pre- and post-test. The pre-test format was WDCT.

All the students who took part in the research were given a sociolinguistic test. This test was devised to measure degrees of politeness, formality, appropriateness, and register variation in the spoken mode. For each item, a sociocultural context was provided, and the participants needed to choose from a list of four or five alternatives the most appropriate way to respond to that particular situation representing the appropriate use of language based on the NS perspective and the remaining options were distracters. The scoring for this test was based on native-speaker responses to the items. A sample question is as follows: "You are taking dinner with your friend's family. The food that your friend's mother has prepared is delicious, and you want some more. You've decided to say something in order to get some more. Which of the following, do you think, is the most appropriate?"

- A. *"You are a great cook."*
- B. *"Please, give me more food."*
- C. *"This food sure is delicious."*
- D. *"Could I have some more?"*

Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative data were involved. The quantitative data were collected through MDCT; while the qualitative data were obtained through the analysis of the responses of MDCT.

In order to eliminate the pre-test effect on the test results, the test format was changed from open ended to multiple choice and the tests were administered to all learners at the same time and collected back in the same time. The time allotted for the test was 35 minutes. Respondents did it independently without discussion with their classmates and they were encouraged to ask any questions if they were not clear with the vocabulary or expression. After the participants submitted the questionnaire, the researcher checked the answers to avoid any unchecked or not unanswered responses. If it did happen, the students would be required to complete them again.

The scores were tabulated and tallied and finally calculated so as to interpret them. Mean and percentages for the correct answer and other distracters were calculated in the following table. Immediately after the participants finished doing the test, there was a section of the question paper that required them to indicate what was/were the sources of their current pragmatic knowledge. Personal relationships between the interlocutors, their level of imposing rank, their power, specifically their age, gender, and social distance between interlocutors were point of pragmatic parameters when designing the MDCT.

Table 10. MDCT Score Description

Scenarios		Choices for MDCT						Total
		A	B	C	D	E	F	
Situation 1	f	96	28	26	25	8		183
	Mean	.52	0.15	.14	.136	.04		.98
	%	52	15	14	13.3	4		100
Situation 2	f	9	30	31	105	8		183
	Mean	.05	.163	.169	.57	.04		.99
	%	5	16.3	16.9	57	4		100
Situation 3	f	85	14	61	13	10		183
	Mean	.46	.08	.33	.07	.05		.99
	%	46	8	33	7	5		100
Situation 4	f	12	54	86	16	9	6	183
	Mean	.07	.29	.46	.08	.049	.03	.95
	%	7	29	46	8	4.9		100
Situation 5	f	64	82	12	14	10		183
	Mean	.34	.44	.065	.076	.05		.97
	%	34	44	6.5	7.6	5		100
Situation 6	f	90	53	15	13	12		183
	Mean	.49	.28	.08	.07	.065		.98
	%	49	28	8	7	6.5		100
Situation 7	f	138	13	12	8	11		183
	Mean	.75	.07	.065	.043	.06		.98
	%	75	7	6.5	4.3	6		100
Situation 8	f	13	21	130	19	-	-	183
	Mean	.07	0.114	.71	.103	-	-	.99
	%	7	11.4	71	10.3	-	-	100
Situation 9	f	9	116	18	27	11	-	183
	Mean	.049	.633	.098	.147	.06	-	.97
	%	4.9	63.3	9.8	14.7	6	-	100
Situation 10	f	30	40	27	73	13	-	183
	Mean	.163	.218	.147	.398	.07	-	.99
	%	16.3	21.8	14.7	39.8	7	-	100
Situation 11	f	32	31	26	86	8	-	183
	Mean	.174	.169	.142	.469	.043	-	.99
	%	17.4	16.9	14.2	46.9	4.3	-	100
Situation 12	f	12	32	68	40	27	4	183
	Mean	.065	.174	.371	.218	.147	.021	.99
	%	6.5	17.4	37.2	21.8	14.7	2.1	100
Situation 13	f	24	30	65	43	21	-	183
	Mean	.131	.163	.355	.234	.114	-	.99
	%	13.1	16.3	35.5	23.4	11.4	-	100

Situation 14	f	7	15	123	22	16	-	183
	Mean	.038	.08	.672	.12	.087	-	.98
	%	3.8	8	67.2	12	8.7	-	100
Situation 15	f	25	98	21	26	13	-	183
	Mean	.136	.535	.114	.142	.07	-	.98
	%	13.6	53.5	11.4	14.2	7	-	100
Situation 16	f	24	41	33	66	19	-	183
	Mean	.13	.224	.18	.36	.103	-	.99
	%	13	22.4	18	36	10.3	-	100
Situation 17	f	9	21	132	21	-	-	183
	Mean	.049	.114	.72	.114	-	-	.98
	%	49	11.4	72	11.4	-	-	100
Situation 18	f	25	29	41	88	-	-	183
	Mean	.136	.158	.224	.48	-	-	.98
	%	13.6	15.8	22.4	4.8	-	-	100
Situation 19	f	29	20	34	100	-	-	183
	Mean	.158	.109	.185	.546	-	-	.97
	%	15.8	10.9	18.5	54.6	-	-	100
Situation 20	f	118	14	20	31	-	-	183
	Mean	.644	.076	.109	.169	-	-	.97
	%	64.4	7.6	10.9	16.9	-	-	100

With reference to the first situation, 52% of the examinees selected the correct answer (A). The remaining sum total of them i.e. 48% were distracted. The implication is that their pragmatic awareness is questionable. The deviation from the mean score is 0.042. Relating to the second question, 43% of the examinees were distracted from the right or correct answer while the remaining 57% of them have chosen the correct answer (D). The deviation from the mean score is 0.045. With regards to the third scenario, the subjects accounting for about 33% selected the right answer (C), and the rest 67% were misled by other distracters. The deviation from the mean score is 0.042. Pertaining to the fourth situation, 46% of the participants have chosen the correct option. The remaining sum total of them i.e. 54% were distracted by the other options.

Table 11. The MDCT score of the students by group

Scores	Frequency	%	Mean
1-5	48	26.2	.26
6-10	69	37.8	.37
11-15	53	28.9	.27
16-20	13	7.1	.071
Total	183	100	.99

As it can be seen from the data presented above, the majority of the participants scored between 6 and 10 (37.8%). The average scorers were still not negligible that constitute for 28.9% scoring points between 11-15 out of 20 points. The top scorers were between 16-20 accounting for 7.1% as compared to the other ones. This indicated that the majority of the participants did not have sort of awareness about pragmatics and pragmatic test. This might be the case that their grammar knowledge must have helped them than their pragmatic knowledge.

Summary of Research Results

The research findings showed that based on the inventory made pertaining to the presence and absence of the pragmatic features in the students' textbooks, there was a dearth of language use contents in the plethora of other linguistic features that almost constituted above 90% of the textbooks contents. It was also evident from the data analysis that the pragmatic elements that were only scarcely presented in the textbooks were given insufficient metapragmatic and metalanguage explanations. Hence, it is one of the challenges to teaching pragmatics in Ethiopian EFL context. The other research result was that teachers did not bring in outside materials to complement the paucity of pragmatic contents of the English language textbooks so as to create the opportunities for teaching and learning pragmatics in the classroom. Evidence for this is that 100% of the teachers responded unanimously that they never bring in outside materials to instruct pragmatics in EFL setting; where there are rare opportunities to learning pragmatics.

Further research result was that the majority of the participant students scaled that most of the communicative acts or social functions that they were tested for were difficult. As a result of which most of them scored below average in MDCT. The classroom observation results were also consistent with what was detected in the textbooks inventory, teachers' responses and that of students' responses that there were no lessons or interactions directed to the development of pragmatic competence in the classrooms.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusions

In the modern communication and communication oriented terminology we are interested in the process of providing language and its procedures, not just in the end-product, rather language use. 'Pragmatics is needed if we want fuller, deeper and generally more reasonable account of human language behavior' (Mey, 2001). Furthermore, outside of pragmatics, no understanding; sometimes, a pragmatic account is the only language use that makes sense (ibid). Further magnifying the essentiality of pragmatics and pragmatic competence lesson some pronounce 'Pragmatic competence is not a piece of knowledge additional to the learners' existing grammatical knowledge, but is an organic part of the learners' communicative competence' (Kasper as qtd in Edwards and Csizer, 2004). With the growing demand to communicate in a foreign language, both the teacher education and language teaching process require specific attention not only to form and meaning but also to the pragmatic features of a language as pragmatic competence is one of the most important component of communicative competence. Hence, based on the findings of this research the following conclusions were drawn:

The current English textbooks for Ethiopian upper high schools, i.e. grade 10 and 11 are containing only meagre features of pragmatics. By implication they are challenges to teaching socially acceptable language or pragmatics to students. Being the most important source of developing communicative competence, they do not cooperate with learners to help them develop pragmatics. The findings indicated that there is a scarcity of pragmatic information contained in the English for Ethiopia, and the variety of pragmatic information is limited. Most of the metalanguage explanations are very shallow and there are no metapragmatic explanations at all.

It is fairly possible to infer from the teachers' response that well-designed teacher training and teaching materials should be in place for teachers to develop students' pragmatic competence. Moreover, the teaching hours to cover the issue of pragmatics; thus, to properly manage each lesson may solve the current problem of teaching pragmatics in the classroom.

The results of this study also showed that teachers seldom use pragmatic instruction in classrooms,

and mostly students have to spend time by themselves developing pragmatic competence without explicit instruction. Overall, the pragmatics instruction is immature and needs to be developed, and teachers need professional training to know how to teach pragmatics effectively.

Although the learners' self-perceived competence mean score was high, their MDCT result was low; and this confirmed that self-perceived competence and the actual performance never match. This is why according to Dewaele (2011) higher levels of self-perceived competence are linked to lower levels of communication which in fact has to be further investigated in our own context.

In the end, the findings of this study provided information about the current state of pragmatic instruction, challenges of teaching pragmatics in real classrooms, and teachers' awareness of teaching pragmatics.

6.2. Recommendations

There is no doubt that effective teaching in Ethiopian EFL classrooms can improve students' pragmatic knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary for the textbook writers to write user friendly textbooks in terms of providing pragmatic information to both the teachers and students. The researcher has a strong belief that future EFL textbook would include immense presentation of a variety of linguistic forms along with explicit metapragmatic explanations and contextually rich and authentic opportunities for students to practice those forms.

More importantly, there is a high expectation for aspiring teachers' trainers and textbook writers to improve their own knowledge of pragmatics and pedagogy for optimal students learning outcomes. Teachers also should be able to receive sufficient knowledge in the area of pragmatics while they are on job or taking undergraduate courses.

The findings of this study have implications for classroom teaching, future research, and curriculum design.

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