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MASTER IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING WITH THESIS**

**INVESTIGATING PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS  
AND CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE  
AND INTEGRATION OF PRAGMATICS IN EFL TEACHING  
PROCESS**

**PREPARED BY**

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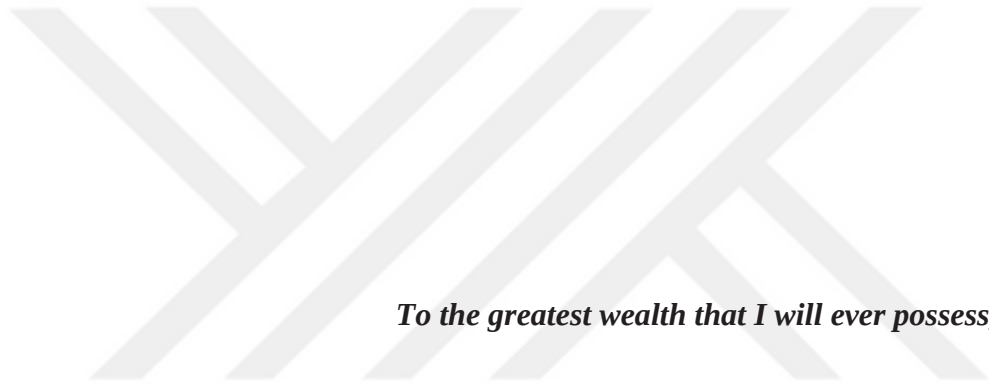
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*To the greatest wealth that I will ever possess, my family*

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## ÖZET

**FATIMA ELMEDDAHIM**

### **İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının Edimbilim Yetisi Kavramsallaştırmaları ve İngilizce Öğretimine Entegrasyonu Hakkındaki Algıları Üzerine Bir**

**Araştırma  
Başkent Üniversitesi  
Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü  
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İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı**

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İlgili literatürün gözden geçirilmesi, EFL bağlamında edimbilimsel yeterliğin önemine daha az dikkat edildiğini ortaya koyması nedeniyle bu çalışma, Türk İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının edimbilimsel yeterlik kavramını ve algılarını araştırarak, edimbilimsel yeterlik üzerine mevcut literatüre katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, bu çalışma öğrencilerin edimbilimsel yeterliğini geliştirmek için edimbilimsel bilgiyi dil öğretimine entegre etme konusundaki algılarını keşfetmeyi de amaçlar. Çalışma, karma yöntem desenlerinden yakınsayan paralel desen olarak tasarlanmıştır. Çalışmanın nicel verileri beşli bir Likert ölçek aracılığıyla, nitel veriler ise İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının edimbilimsel yeterlik konusundaki algılarını ve kavramsallaştırmalarını ve edimbilimsel özellikleri dil öğretim sürecine entegre etmeye yönelik görüş ve tutumlarını araştırmak için açık uçlu bir anket aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Nicel veriler SPSS kullanılarak, nitel veriler ise Creswell'in (2009) içerik analizi çerçevesine göre analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmanın ana bulguları, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğretmen adaylarının oldukça sınırlı düzeyde edimbilimsel yeterlik sergiledikleri için dilin edimbilimsel kullanım boyutunda yeterliklerinin düşük olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bulgular ayrıca İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının edimbilimsel bilgiyi dil öğretimi ve öğrenimine entegre etmeye yönelik olumlu bir tutum sergilediklerini ortaya koymuştur, bu da edimbilimsel yeterlik gelişimini, dolayısıyla uygun dil kullanımını sağlayan çok önemli bir faktördür. Çalışmanın sonuçları, İngilizce öğretmeni adaylarının edimbilimsel yeterlik algılarının desteklenmesi gerektiğini

de öne sürmüştür. Ayrıca, İngilizce Öğretmen Yetiştirme Programları, İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının bu anlamda yeterliklerini geliştirmeleriyle ilgili ders sayısını artırılması gerekliliği öne sürülebilir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** edimbilimsel yeterlik, dillerarası edimbilim, İngilizce öğretmen adayları, iletişimsel yeterlik, söz edimleri, nezaket.



## **ABSTRACT**

**FATIMA ELMEDDAHIM**

### **INVESTIGATING PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND INTEGRATION OF PRAGMATICS IN EFL TEACHING PROCESS**

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A review of related literature revealed that less attention was given to the importance of pragmatic competence in EFL contexts. Therefore, the present study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on pragmatic competence by investigating Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' conceptualizations and perceptions of pragmatic competence. It also aims to explore their perceptions regarding integrating pragmatic knowledge into language teaching in order to develop students' pragmatic competence. The present study was designed as a convergent parallel design as one of the mixed method research designs. The quantitative data of the study were collected via a five points Likert scale, and qualitative data through an open-ended questionnaire to better understand pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions and conceptualizations on pragmatic competence, and their opinions and attitudes towards integrating pragmatic features in language teaching process. The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS while the qualitative data were analyzed following Creswell's (2009) content-analysis framework. Major findings of the study revealed that pre-service EFL teachers had a low level of pragmatic competence. The findings further revealed that pre-service EFL teachers, however, exhibited a positive attitude towards integrating pragmatic knowledge in language teaching and learning as a crucial factor that ensures pragmatic competence development, therefore, appropriate

language use. The results of the study suggested that pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions of pragmatic competence needed to be promoted. Moreover, English Language Teacher Education Programs can be encouraged to incorporate more courses related to the pre-service EFL teachers' development of pragmatic competence.

**Key words:** pragmatic competence, interlanguage pragmatics, pre-service EFL teachers, communicative competence, speech acts, politeness.



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## ABBREVIATION LIST

|      |                                           |
|------|-------------------------------------------|
| EFL  | English as a Foreign Language             |
| ESL  | English as a Second Language              |
| ELT  | English Language Teaching                 |
| L1   | First Language                            |
| L2   | Second Language                           |
| DCT  | Discourse Completion Task                 |
| MDCT | Multiple-choice Discourse Completion Task |
| WDCT | Written Discourse Completion Task         |
| S.   | Student                                   |
| SD   | Strongly Disagree                         |
| D    | Disagree                                  |
| NS   | Not Sure                                  |
| A    | Agree                                     |
| SA   | Strongly Agree                            |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for Social Sciences   |

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0. Presentation**

This chapter introduces the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and research questions to be investigated. Then the significance of the study is also presented and discussed.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Communication can be argued to be one of the most important aspects needed for humans to thrive. However, human communication is relatively one of the most complex forms of communication (Scott-Phillips, 2014). One of the main causes of this complexity is the idea that humans usually try to convey more than what they literally say. Nevertheless, being able to communicate in a foreign language is fundamental as it helps the learners to initiate, sustain, understand and conclude conversations, in addition to reading, comprehending and producing texts appropriately in the target language. Because of that, in foreign language teaching, developing communication skills plays an essential role in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, it can be stated that having a mastery of language forms and lexical items alone is not sufficient to maintain a good communication skill in the target language (Şahin, 2011). That is, in order to be communicatively competent, EFL learners should have sufficient knowledge of linguistic forms and functional aspects of the target language. This belief is highly supported by the communicative approach (Cadlin, 1976; Hymes, 1972; Savignon, 1971).

With the emergency of this approach, the achievement of functional abilities in addition to the linguistic forms have become one of the main goals of having a full mastery of the target language. In other words, learning a language successfully comes through having knowledge of both accurate and meaningful application of grammatical rules of language and appropriate use of these grammatical forms in different social contexts.

According to the principles of the communicative approach, failure to manage so, might lead to misunderstandings as well as communication breakdowns (Jager, 2012). Therefore, acquiring functional or pragmatic knowledge is considered as a necessary factor in learning a foreign language (Savignon, 1997). Since the birth and development of the communicative approach in the 1960s, the pragmatics field has become a great deal of

interest by language scholars as they recognized that pragmatics is a fundamental component of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990).

The notion “Communicative competence” was first introduced by the anthropologist Dell Hymes (1972) to refer to the ability of knowing what to say when, how and to whom. One of the major models of communicative competence by Bachman (1990) included the term pragmatic competence as a separate component of communicative competence. It would be fair to state that he proposed the term pragmatic competence into foreign language teaching and assessments (Terzi, 2014). In the other major models of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, Thurrell, 1995), though not explicitly mentioned pragmatic competence, was inherently part of their definition of (Sociolinguistic competence or sociocultural knowledge). According to the above-mentioned experts, in order to be communicatively competent in language learning, one needs much more ability than the linguistic knowledge. In addition to language ability, EFL learners are required to know how to use the language effectively in a suitable social context (Taguchi, 2009, p.1). This gives a rise to the need of pragmatic competence in language teaching and learning process.

Generally speaking, the idea behind pragmatic competence is using linguistic knowledge that is suitable to the cultural context where the communication takes place. Taguchi (2018) further referred to this notion by stating that using language appropriately does not merely mean correct grammar, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics, but also pragmatics. Additionally, research about pragmatic competence in learning a foreign language has proved that linguistic knowledge is not sufficient on its own to lead to a good communication skill without having a solid pragmatic knowledge (e.g., Alcon & Martinez-flor, 2008; Bardovi-Harlig & Dorney, 1998). Furthermore, Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1985) claimed that even proficient foreign language learners who lack sufficient pragmatic competence ability are more likely to have communication failures. Thus, language learners need to strengthen their pragmatic competence, namely, their ability to use the target language appropriately in corresponding context, in order to get the message across meaningfully and appropriately avoiding miscommunications and pragmatic failures.

In this regard, Kim and Hall (2002) and Ji (2008) argued that the necessity for international communication requires a more precise and appropriate form of language,

and thus, EFL learners need to be well equipped with the pragmatic knowledge of the target language. Otherwise, misunderstanding between the speakers may occur due to the incomplete knowledge of norms and behaviors used in that language, which in turn may lead to other reprehensible consequences, like inter-ethnic communication breakdowns (Gumpetz, 1990).

One of the important aspects of pragmatic competence is the ability to choose an appropriate utterance within a relevant social context (Kaspir & Rose, 2002). From this point, it can be claimed that selecting one form over another in different social contexts requires a good command of politeness, speech acts, formality, directness and indirectness as a fundamental part of pragmatic competence (Kasper, 1997; Kasper & Rose, 2002).

Given the aforementioned facts, pragmatic competence should be an essential asset to foreign language learners, and it should be one of the main targets of language teaching. As it has been claimed in the past studies, there is a strong relationship between language learners' pragmatic perceptions and their pragmatic competence (Schauer, 2006). Having a clear perception of pragmatic competence enables learners to obtain a sufficient pragmatic knowledge and enhance the development of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005; Martinez-Flore & AlCon-Soler, 2007; Takahashi, 2001; Tateyama, 2001). Thereby, there is a need for more studies that shed light into EFL learners' perceptions on pragmatics and pragmatic competence in language learning and teaching. In fact, a great number of researchers (e.g., Kasper & Rose, 2001; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Roever, 2005; Thomas, 1983; Taguchi, 2002;) have called for further empirical studies concerning this area of interest. According to Jandt (2001), this area of study should be explored more in EFL context so as to get a clear understanding of the nature of inter-language pragmatics.

Needless to say, the integration of pragmatics activities in foreign language education is also necessary for pre-service EFL teachers to increase their pragmatic knowledge which enables them to become pragmatically competent language learners. Doing this the right way will empower their understanding and perception of pragmatic competence and its contribution in foreign language studies.

From this perspective, it can be observed that the importance of being pragmatically aware and competent is specifically demanded for pre-service EFL teachers since they will be teachers of English and it is important that they have sufficient pragmatic awareness as language learners themselves so that they can develop students' pragmatic competence. Yet, there are empirical studies targeting pragmatic competence in EFL context; however, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, little work seems to be done concerning the perceived pragmatic competence of pre-service EFL teachers in Turkey. Thus, the current study aims to contribute to the growth body of research concerning the pragmatic competence of Turkish pre-service EFL teachers by exploring their perceptions of pragmatic competence in language learning, and their opinions about the integration of pragmatics in EFL teaching.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Proficiency in foreign language learning is a complicated task as it requires a high level of awareness of the socio-cultural elements of the target language (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). Foreign language learners usually lack pragmatic competence in foreign language classes; as a result, they encounter difficulty in expressing an appropriate usage of the target language (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Kasper & Rose, 1999, as cited in Koran & Koran, 2017).

As a matter of fact, acquiring a foreign language needs more than a mere understanding of the grammatical rules of the target language. EFL learners are expected to use the target language appropriately considering the social and situational factors beyond the classroom environment, and in different contextual situations. Thus, developing EFL learners' pragmatic competence is of great importance as it gives them the ability to function in any situation where the target language is used. Moreover, Taguchi (2018) articulated that learning pragmatic features is a challenging task for learners because acquiring the pragmatic features of a language takes more time and therefore, language learners commit pragmatic failures when they struggle with transferring the pragmatic knowledge into practice. The problem becomes even bigger if pre- and in-service EFL teachers are not aware about the importance of pragmatic competence in language learning and teaching (Şahin, 2011). Since they are going to be teachers and responsible for developing students' pragmatic competence, it is important to call pre-and in-service

teachers' attention to the significance of pragmatic competence with regard to its positive contributions in maintaining healthy and pragmatically effective communication in foreign language education. Otherwise, they might end up utilizing inappropriate and impolite or improper language, which can be labeled as insulting or rudeness by the native speakers of the target language (Sahin, 2011).

Furthermore, pragmatic competence, which is a component of communicative competence, is reported to be given less attention in EFL learning and teaching programs in Turkey (Atay, 2005). In other words, EFL education in Turkey gave the priority to teaching linguistic competence with much emphasis on assessing and teaching grammatical structures instead of pragmatic knowledge. Consequently, it is hardly surprising that empirical studies in Turkey concerning the students' pragmatic awareness indicate a problem in having a low-level of pragmatics in general and socio-pragmatic competence in particular (Atay, 2005; Kilickaya, 2010, Mede & Dikilitas, 2015).

However, pragmatic competence is extremely needed in gaining a high level of communicative competence in English because "the mastery of these socio-cultural features ensures appropriateness in a speech situation" (Soler & Jorda, 2007, p.193). Different studies on pragmatics (Bachman, 1990; Canale, 1998; Chavarria & Bonany, 2006; Men & Liu, 2000; Zhan, 2002) has shown that pragmatic competence plays an indispensable role in developing communicative competence as the correct usage of English language in an appropriate context makes the communication continue smoothly.

Besides, in teacher-centered classrooms, learners are not provided with enough chances to practice their knowledge of pragmatics. Past studies revealed that EFL learners' (e.g., Atay, 2005; Bella, 2012; Hmouri, 2021; Hyekyung, 2016; Kausar, 2016; Kitickaya, 2010; Li, 2015; Mede & Dikilitas, 2015; Terzi, 2014) and pre-service EFL teachers' (e.g., Atay, 2005; Bektas-Cetinkaya, 2012; Caki & Herguner, 2017; Ekin & Damar, 2013; Yilmaz, 2014) pragmatic knowledge was poor, and so they might not be able to use their pragmatic knowledge in real communication. That is, they may encounter difficulties in understanding and communicating in the target language. Thereby, understanding EFL learners' perceptions of the concept pragmatic competence would typically help both teachers and learners to modify their teaching and learning objectives.

Taking what mentioned above into consideration, the core objective of the study is concerned with investigating pragmatic awareness of the Turkish pre-service EFL teachers. More specifically, it aims to explore how pre-service EFL teachers conceptualize pragmatic competence, what attitudes and perceptions they hold regarding teaching pragmatic knowledge when teaching English as a foreign language.

### **1.3. Purpose and Research Questions of the Study**

Acknowledging the necessity and significance of developing pragmatic competence in language teaching and learning, the present study aims to explore Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' awareness and conceptualization of pragmatic competence, and their perceptions regarding integrating pragmatic competence into language teaching to develop learners' pragmatic competence.

With these aims in mind, the present study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent are Turkish pre-service EFL teachers aware of pragmatic features in language teaching and learning?
  - 1.1. How do pre-service EFL teachers conceptualize pragmatic competence?
  - 1.2. What is the pre-service EFL teachers' perceived level of their pragmatic competence in English?
2. What are pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions of integrating pragmatic features in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence?

### **1.4. Significance of the study**

In the field of linguistics, little attention has been paid to the study of pragmatics (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Kasper & Rose, 2002). These studies indicated that most studies were mainly carried on teaching the linguistic structures of the target language with ignorance to the necessity of acquiring the pragmatics elements that enable the learners to produce pragmatically appropriate speech in English. Thomas (1983) and LoCastro (2003)

claimed that learners are unable to maintain good communication skills due to regional and cultural differences that have led to the breakdown of communication; consequently, there is an undeniable need to strengthen the teaching techniques of pragmatic knowledge to increase EFL learners' pragmatic awareness -the ability to infer an interlocutor's intended meaning accurately (Bardovi-Harlig & Dorney, 1998; Schauer, 2009). According to them, having a good command of pragmatic awareness guarantees that fewer cases of pragmatic failure arise.

The present study might be significant for several reasons. First, the study is believed to be insightful as it sheds light on the importance of teaching pragmatic features to help students become communicatively competent in the target language. This is important in EFL contexts in which learners' exposure to the target language is limited. In such settings, EFL learners lack the opportunities of encountering situations where real communication is involved. Thus, there is a need for more studies that concentrate on improving the pragmatic competence of EFL learners.

Second, the current study is particularly significant for the EFL field as it pays attention to enhance EFL learners' pragmatic competence in order to be able to use the target language appropriately in different contextual situations. EFL learners are targeted to learn a language in a way that allows them to communicate easily with native speakers or speakers of other languages in an effective way. Nonetheless, an appropriate application of the target language would definitely require a good level of pragmatic awareness. Therefore, it is important to stress the necessity of developing pragmatic competence in language teaching and learning starting with the future teachers who will be aiming at fulfilling this objective in their classes.

Third, the findings of the study are hoped to provide valuable data for the need of developing pragmatic knowledge in language teaching and learning programs. This research focuses on to what extent pre-service EFL teachers are aware of the pragmatic features to be considered as pragmatically competent, so the necessary topics and issues can be focused more in the course in EFL teacher education programs.

Fourth, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, there are fewer studies focusing on Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' awareness of pragmatic knowledge and what their

perceptions are about teaching pragmatic aspects of language. in their language learning process (e.g., Bektas-Cetinkaya, 2012; Terzi, 2014). It is believed that this research will contribute to shedding light on the issue.



## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0. Presentation**

This chapter provides a critical overview of pragmatics, speech act, politeness, communicative competence, pragmatic competence, and pragmatic failures. The overview also includes previous studies related to pragmatic knowledge and pragmatic competence.

### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

#### **2.1.1. Pragmatics**

The definition of pragmatics varies from one linguist to another according to their field of study (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010). It is vital to discuss the historical evolution of the meaning of pragmatics and present its subareas of studies to state clearly the impact of pragmatics in language learning. The first definition of pragmatics is attributed to the well-known philosopher Charles Morris when he referred to the pragmatics field as “the relation of sign interpreters” (Morris, 1938, p. 30). Before 1950, philosophers intended to separate meaning and context in understanding the different aspects of language. In fact, language experts during that era used to restrict the meaning to a systematic set of rules controlled by the semantics field (Arif, 2016). After this epoch, a great number of definitions were offered by different linguists who gave an insight into the role of pragmatics in creating a meaningful context (Austin, 1975; Grice, 1975; Searle, 1969; Stalnaker, 1972). Additionally, Leech (1983) came to the conclusion that pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics and he defined it as techniques of language use in communication. Then, pragmatics becomes the spot point of studies related to language teaching and language acquisition (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Kasper & Rose, 2002).

David (1997) stated that the interpreted meaning of a sentence is associated with the context and the contextual cues where it is applied. This idea was supported by Bardovi-Harlig (2013) deep definition of pragmatics as “the study of how learners come to know how to say, what to say, to whom and when” (p.68).

Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) divided pragmatics into two subareas, namely, pragma-linguistics and socio-pragmatics. The former means “the study of more linguistic end pragmatics” (Leech, 1983, p.11). Meaning to say, pragma-linguistics is used to refer to

the grammatical structures that speakers use to convey a certain message. Socio-pragmatics, on the other hand, means “the sociological interface of pragmatics” (Leech, 1983, p.10). That is to say, socio-pragmatics is concerned with social situations that drive the speaker to convey a particular communicative act. For Thomas, pragma-linguistics is used to refer to linguistic features and functions, while socio-pragmatics is about the appropriate usage of language in social context. In like manner, Mey (1993) declared that “pragmatics studies the usage of language in human communication as determined by conditions of society” (p.6). In other words, speakers use a language in accordance with society. Also, Mey (1993) stressed the importance of the social context in which speakers use language to communicate.

### **2.1.2. Speech Act Theory**

The notion of speech act was first explained by Austin (1962) in his famous book *How to do things with words*. He stated that “the issuing of the utterances is the performing of an action” (p.6). Searle (1969) also defined speech act as “talking is performing acts according to rules” (p.22). He indicated that speech acts are a way of communication; therefore, in order to have a successful communication, the kind of speech act being performed should match the type of behavior being expressed. As a prospector of speech acts theory, he added that those acts include the way people apologize, refuse, request, promise and other linguistic acts. However, the usage of these speech act functions depends on the context in which the communication takes place.

From Austin’s (1962) view, speech acts are classified into three-way taxonomy, namely: 1) a locutionary act which refers to the acting of producing a meaningful speech. 2) illocutionary act which is the act where the speaker intends to do something by uttering a sentence, such as refusing, requesting, or promising. 3) perlocutionary act which is the act produced by the hearer in relation to what the speaker has just said, such as persuading, surprising, or convincing (p. 109). He further claimed that these speech acts occur in everyday language in every speech community, and knowing them facilitates the communication between the speaker and hearer.

Seale (1976). On the other hand, classified speech acts into five illocutionary points, namely: the assertive, commissive, directive, declaratory, and expressive

illocutionary point. Speakers achieve the assertive point when they illustrate how things are in the real world, such as stating, describing, claiming, or insisting. The commissive point is achieved by the speakers who commit themselves to perform something, for instance promising, intending, or threatening. The directive point is reached when speakers make an attempt to get hearers to do something, such as ordering, defying, commanding, or challenging. The declaratory point refers to the acts in which the utterances lead to immediate change in institutional affairs, for example firing, blessing, excommunicating, or bidding. The expressive points occur when speakers express their attitudes about facts or objects that truly exist in the world, such as congratulating, thanking, welcoming, or condoling.

Speech acts in line with its classifications are considered as communicative acts that convey an intended language function. Speakers of these acts are not considered successful until the intended function they send is truly understood by listeners. According to Trosborg (1995) these speech act “has exerted great influence on functional aspects of pragmatic theory” (p.18). It has been widely used in studies related to cross-cultural pragmatics, simply because speech acts theory has a great influence on foreign language teaching and learning. Therefore, it is of great importance for EFL learners, and pre-service EFL teachers in particular, to know which speech acts that are different in the native and target language, how they differ, and which is not appropriate to use in certain contexts.

### **2.1.3. Politeness Theory**

The definition of politeness and impoliteness has been widely discussed by different scholars. It is considered as a controversial issue since it has been defined many times from different perspectives. Watt (2003) stated that “(im)politeness is a term that is struggled over at present, has been struggled over in the past and will, in all probability, continue to be struggled over in the future” (p. 9). Generally, most of the (im)politeness definitions focus on the face notion, Brown and Levinson’s (1987: 61) definition, which is stems from Goffman’s (1967) idea about face notion, is that face considered as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for herself/himself”. They further stated that any behavior that seeks to protect the face of the addressee is polite, whereas any behavior that seeks to attack the face of the addressee is impolite. Later theorization in accounting of (im)politeness notion (e.g., Arundale, 2006, 2010; Bousfield, 2008; Culpeper, 1996, 2011;

Locher, & Watts, 2005, 2008; Spencer-Oatey, 2000, 2007) have categorized the concept of face more broadly, and their categorizations have yielded a number of notions of politeness.

However, the notion of politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) is closely related to the concept of “Pragmatic competence”, and their major framework that combines the politeness strategies is regarded as a part of learning pragmatics (Sedeghghli & Niroomand, 2016). Beyond any doubt, Politeness is a necessary aspect of conduct in everyday interaction. However, the selection of the relevant social expressions in certain social contexts is affected by the face of the speaker (Lakeoff, 1973; Brown & Levinson, 1987). Brown and Levinson (1987) claimed that the face of the speaker motivates the strategies of politeness being used. They referred to it as “something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction” (p.61). Goffman (1967) further clarified the “face” as “positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by his/herself presentation” (p.5). In other words, the face is the general self-image of the speaker.

Brown and Levinson (1987) classified the politeness theory into four main strategies. These strategies are: positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on-record, and off-record/indirect. Positive politeness strategies are employed in order to avoid the threat to the hearer’s face by using facial expressions that let the hearer recognize that he/she is respected and the relationship is friendly. For instance, making jokes, being optimistic or seeking agreement. Negative politeness; however; is about minimizing the imposition on the hearer by showing respect towards the hearer’s autonomy and understanding the hearer’s desire of being respected. For example, apologizing, being pessimistic or indirectness. Bald on-record strategy refers to addressing the interlocutor immediately through imperative expressions, such as “close the door” or “I want a cup of tea”. The last strategy, off-record or indirect, is about using indirect language to minimize the pressure from the hearer, and to let the hearer infer the indirect speech by him/herself. For example, using irony, giving clues or using hints.

The above noted politeness strategies are very important in communication as they facilitate the social interaction by giving the speaker the chance to select the appropriate

choice in communication. Because of that, politeness strategies work together in order to come up with an appropriate and polite form of language use in certain social contexts.

From this perspective, it can be said that there are some pragmatic elements that play an important role in producing an appropriate speech that matches the situation and social context where the speech takes place.

#### **2.1.4. *Communicative Competence***

The term “linguistic competence” was initially proposed by Chomsky (1972). Chomsky argues that language competence has nothing to do with social context and cultural cues of the target language. As a reaction to this, Savignon (1972) claimed that mastery of a language entails the realization of grammatical knowledge as well as social context. Then, Hymes (1972) introduced the so-called communicative competence and he referred to it as an integration of both linguistic competence and cultural competence. His notion of communicative competence integrated both the linguistic with the sociolinguistic features of language. In other words, communicative competence is the interaction between language and culture.

After Hymes’ (1972) introduction to the conceptualization of communicative competence, Canale & Swain (1980) introduced a new model of communicative competence that encompasses four main aspects of communicative competence, they are, grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. The grammatical competence refers to the knowledge of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. Discourse competence is about coherence, cohesion and the usage of linking words. Sociolinguistic competence refers to the appropriate application of language in a social context. Strategic competence is about the potentiality to keep conversation going during communication breakdowns or misunderstandings.

Similar to Canale and Swain, Cecle-Murica, Dorney and Thurrell (1995) defined communicative competence based on Canale and Swain (1980) model. They just added one more component to their model, named as actional competence. Actional competence means the ability to produce and comprehend speech acts appropriately.

The two linguists, Bachman and Palmer (1996) presented another model of communicative competence that involves two broad areas; language knowledge and strategic competence. Language knowledge comprises two parts; organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. According to Bachman and Palmer, these two components complete each other in order to achieve an appropriate use of language. As for the organizational knowledge, it includes the knowledge of grammar, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. It also covers the textual knowledge, coherent and cohesion. Pragmatic knowledge contains two basic knowledge. First, pragmatic conventions knowledge, which is used to refer to the interpretation of the correct illocutionary utterance or discourse. In other words, functional knowledge. Second, sociolinguistics conventions knowledge, which means creating an appropriate utterance in a relevant context of language use. Meaning to say, the sociolinguistic knowledge.

Strategic knowledge is used to refer to metacognitive components which help speakers in getting goal setting, assessment and planning. Goal setting includes choosing one task over the other, whereas assessment includes decision of whether the context is related to the area of language use or not. Planning, on the other hand, means deciding which and how to use the knowledge of language with its components to complete the chosen task effectively.

In this study, however, communicative competence will be considered as the learners' ability to use the linguistics and pragmatics knowledge of a language to communicate in a culturally appropriate manner. Also, the present study will follow Bachman and Palmer (1996) model because it is more comprehensible than the rest of models. It is also more preferable because of its convincing and detailed explanation of communicative competence in general and pragmatic competence in particular.

#### ***2.1.5. Pragmatic Competence***

Pragmatic competence as a subfield of communicative competence was initially introduced by Bachman (1990). Since then, language experts have presented a great number of definitions to refer to pragmatic competence. Bachman (1990) divided language competence into three main categories; organizational knowledge, pragmatic knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge. As for pragmatic knowledge, it is further classified into the

subfields of functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge. The former refers to using language functions of making requests, suggestions, apologizing, greetings etc. The latter refers to the cultural background knowledge of registers, dialects, idiomatic expression, cultural references or figure of speech (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

Taguchi (2015) defined pragmatic competence as “the ability to deal with a complex interplay of language, language user, and context of interaction” (p.1). He emphasizes the necessity of having both linguistic knowledge and sociocultural knowledge in human interaction. Furthermore, Ishihara and Cohen (2010) stressed out the importance of having cultural background knowledge and that speech acts are also considered as an essential conceptualization of pragmatic competence. The two linguists articulated that in order for speakers to be able to convey a certain function, they need to have a good command of speech acts. They added that the understanding of the locutionary, illocutionary and prepositional meaning in performing speech acts requires pragmatic competence.

Similar to Ishihara and Cohen (2010), Taguchi (2006), and Celce-Murcia (2008) centered their attention to the role of speech acts in clarifying pragmatic competence. They stated that achieving a high performance of speech acts leads to pragmatically competent speakers. They further emphasize the important role of politeness theory in shaping pragmatic competence by referring to social distance, social power, directness and indirectness in addressing an appropriate speech.

Language scholars (Blum-Kulka et al 1989, Laughlin & Wain & Schmidgall, 2015) asserted that pragmatic competence entails both pragma-linguistic knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge, and that being pragmatically competent requires comprehending the connection between the meaning and the context in which the speech takes place.

In addition, Taguchi (2013) declared that pragmatic knowledge is necessary for correct comprehension and production in the speech community. He added that all the main aspects of language competence work together in order to come up with an appropriate pragmatic performance (p. 242).

In the present study, pragmatic competence is regarded as the appropriate usage of language in accordance with the context, and this in turn involves the correct selection of speech acts, register, language functions and politeness principles.

#### **2.1.6. Pragmatic Failure**

Pragmatic failure is a phenomenon that can rarely be avoided by EFL learners during cross-cultural interaction (Zheng & Huang, 2010). Thomas (1983: 91) referred to the term pragmatic failure as “the inability to understand what is meant by what is said”. According to her, the term pragmatic failure is more preferable than pragmatic error because she believes that a grammatical error can be clarified by means of prescriptive rules, whereas pragmatic failure cannot be explained by saying that the pragmatic force of a phrase or sentence is incorrect, instead, it is referred to as a failure to achieve the speaker’s purpose. From a similar perspective, Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1986) stated that pragmatic failure occurs “whenever two speakers fail to understand each other’s intentions” (p.166). It is that kind of failure that causes cross-cultural and inter-cultural miscommunication. Thus, it is vital to discover the reasons behind pragmatic failure and find solutions to avoid being unintentionally offensive due to the incorrect choice of linguistic forms.

A great deal of EFL studies (Etisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; Liu, 1995) showed that EFL learners rely mostly on the social norms of their native culture while using the target language to communicate with others. Therefore, misinterpretation or pragmatic failure occurs. Hoffman-Hicks (1999) argued that learners might also be negatively evaluated in consequence of such pragmatic failures.

From a different standpoint, Thomas (1983) claimed that EFL learners might have a good command of linguistic forms of the target language, but they might not be aware of the various functions and meanings of these forms in the target language. Consequently, pragmatic failure may not only lead to communication breakdown, but might also cause native speakers to form misjudgments or misperceptions about the beliefs, identities and attitudes of the learners.

In another attempt to discover the factors behind pragmatic failure, Bialystok (1993: 54) declared that EFL learners commit pragmatic errors not only as a result of

misunderstanding of the structures and forms, or because they do not have enough vocabulary to express their intended meaning, but also because of their unwise choice of linguistic forms. Additionally, McNamara & Roever (2006) conducted a study concerning the origins of pragmatic failure in the language learning process. The two researchers stated that there might be some difficulty in explaining the origins of pragmatic failure due to the fact that most of the time it is not possible to figure out if the speakers are not aware of the appropriate rules (socio-pragmatic failure) or if the speakers have inadequate knowledge of when, where and how to use these rules (pragma-linguistic failure).

Scarcella and Oxford (1992) further explained the origins of pragmatic failure by listing several reasons:

- (a) Learners may not have enough experience conversing with native speakers.
- (b) Learners may not receive sufficient input of the target language.
- (c) Learners may inappropriately transfer L1 features to L2.
- (d) Some conversational aspects might be learned late and they are not easily understood.
- (e) Learners may prefer to keep their own cultural behaviors.
- (f) The target culture may discourage the learners from understanding the language appropriately.
- (g) Members of L1 community may consider learners who are fluent in L2 as traitors.
- (h) Learners may think that the prejudice instead of the linguistic differences is what prevents them from achieving socio-economic power in the target language community.

Keeping in view what mentioned above, only a good mastery of pragmatic competence rules can ensure gaining a successful linguistic communication with native speakers. In this respect, pragmatics is introduced in this research as a fundamental area of study in linguistics since it cultivated EFL learners' pragmatic competence in an effective way.

## **2.2. Related Studies**

Pragmatic competence is an essential part of foreign language teaching and learning in order to achieve a high level of language competence (Bachman, 1990). In EFL field, there are studies (e.g., Alsuhaibani 2020; Aziz, Saleem, Saleem, Batool 2020;

Hyekyung, 2016; Kausar, 2016; Salimi, & Karami, 2019; Tulgar, 2016; Tulgar, Yagiz & Han, 2017; Yildirim, 2015; Yuan, 2012; Yuan, Tangen, Mills, & Lidstone, 2015; Yuray, 2013;) that investigated the perceptions of pragmatic competence, other studies (e.g., Bella, 2012; Dehghayedi, 2015; Djaber, 2019; Schauer, 2006) investigated EFL learners' pragmatic competence awareness, and (e.g., Bardis, Silman, Mohammadzadeh 2021; Barzani, Mohammadzadeh 2022; Hmouri, 2021; Li, 2015; Ozet, 2019) explored EFL learners' level of pragmatic competence, whereas (e.g., Bektas-Cetinkaya, 2012; Cakir, & Herguner, 2017; Ekin, & Damar, 2013; Terzi, 2014; Yilmaz, 2014) investigated pre-service EFL teachers pragmatic competence. These studies will be presented in the following sections.

### ***2.2.1. Past studies on EFL learners' perceptions of pragmatic competence***

Yuan (2012) conducted research on pragmatics perceptions and strategies in Chinese college English learning. The purpose of the study was to find out how Chinese learners of English perceive pragmatics and test their current level of pragmatic competence. 237 Chinese university students participated in the study. The data were collected by means of questionnaire, discourse completion task (DCT) and focus group interviews. The findings showed that Chinese learners had an advanced level of linguistic knowledge, but they signal a poor level of pragmatic knowledge.

Yuray (2013) investigated students' perceptions about their language pragmatic competence at a B.A in English. The research was set to find out the way university students perceive their pragmatic language competence. The participants of the study were three advanced level students. In order to be able to collect the data, the researcher applied semi-structured interview. The results of the research indicated that the three students' knowledge about pragmatic competence is very poor and so teachers and universities need to incorporate activities that enhance students' pragmatic competence.

Yuan, Tangen, Mills and Lidstone, (2015) carried out a research paper about learning English pragmatics in China: An investigation into Chinese EFL learners' perceptions of pragmatics. The main goal of the study was investigating Chinese English language learners' perceptions of pragmatics in the EFL learning context in China. Around 237 Chinese EFL first-year university students took part in the study. The data were

collected from a questionnaire and focus group interviews. The final outcome of the research showed that Chinese students had positive attitudes toward pragmatics knowledge and pragmatic competence in particular was high as they expressed their strong desire towards teaching and learning of pragmatics at a university level in order to become pragmatically competent language users.

The other study, which was completed by Yildirim (2015) on EFL students' perceptions of pragmatics and their level of pragmatic competence. The aim of the study was exploring the learners' perceptions and also test their level of pragmatic competence. The subjects of the study were 130 Turkish university students. The data collection tool was a questionnaire. The final outcome of the study revealed that in spite of having a positive attitude towards the importance of pragmatics in language learning, Turkish university students had limited pragmatic competence.

Kausar (2016) explored Pakistani university students' perception regarding pragmatics. The study was set to examine the participants' perceptions, and attitudes in the learning and teaching of pragmatics at a university level. A total of 30 Pakistani first-year university students were selected to answer a questionnaire. The main findings indicated that the respondents' pragmatic knowledge was inadequate, and the majority of them believed that vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar are more important for English language learning.

Furthermore, Hyekyung (2016) carried out an investigation into EFL learners' perception towards L2 pragmatic instruction. The purpose of the study was examining EFL students' perceptions towards pragmatics and pragmatic competence. A total of 52 university students participated in the study. A questionnaire and learners' reflection journals were used as the data collection instruments. The final results revealed that the participants showed minimal level of pragmatic awareness in the first data set, and that more than half of the participants declared that pragmatic instructions could enhance their pragmatic competence awareness on different language usage and intercultural differences.

Tulgar (2016) aimed to examine students and faculty members perceptions of teaching and assessing pragmatic competence in EFL context. The informants of the study were 554 EFL learners and 50 faculty members from six universities in Turkey. The data

taken from a discourse completion task revealed that both EFL students and faculty members agreed that pragmatic competence is an essential element especially in EFL context, and so it should be an integral part of foreign language education in turkey.

Likewise, Tulgar, Yagiz, and Han (2017) conducted a study which titled as an evaluation of pragmatic competence and its teaching from the perspective of faculty members and students at tertiary level. The study aimed to understand the Turkish teachers and learners' perceptions' of integrating pragmatic competence in foreign language classes. The participants of the study were 554 Turkish students and 50 faculty members from different universities in Turkey. An open-ended questionnaire was used to collect the data. The findings indicated that the participants consider pragmatic competence as a significant element in language teaching and learning as it helps them to know how to communicate effectively in the target language.

Salimi and Karami (2019) conducted a study on pragmatic competence development: Demystifying the impact of task types and EFL students' perceptions. The study was set to explore the perceptions of Iranian EFL learners regarding pragmatic and the impact of textbooks tasks on shaping their pragmatic competence. To achieve this objective, 137 senior EFL students from 12 state universities were selected to take part in the study. The three main instruments of the study were questionnaire, semi-structured interview and document analysis. The results showed that the students' pragmatic competence knowledge was limited, besides the respondents revealed that ELT textbooks lack pragmatic information.

In a similar fashion, Aziz, Saleem, Saleem, Batool (2020) examined Pakistani ESL teachers' perspectives of teaching pragmatic competence and interculturality in ESL classroom. The researchers developed a survey questionnaire to gather the data from 75 English teachers from different universities in Pakistan. The overall findings of the study encouraged integrating pragmatics and intercultural knowledge in ESL/EFL classes to develop learners' pragmatic competence and increase their intercultural awareness of the target language.

Research conducted by Alsuhaibani (2020) aims to explore EFL students' pragmatic competence: a case of compliment responses. A total of 136 university students

participated in the study. To be able to collect the data, a discourse completion test and an open-ended questionnaire were employed in the study. The main findings of the study showed that pragmatics plays an effective role in raising learners' awareness of different language use. Also, the participants highlighted the importance of having pragmatic knowledge at the university level, clarifying that it is useful, significant, and delightful at the same time.

### ***2.2.2. Past studies on EFL learners' awareness of pragmatic competence***

With an attempt to explore learners' pragmatic awareness, Schauer (2006) carried out a research paper on pragmatic awareness in ESL and EFL context: contrasted and development. The aim of this study was examining how second and foreign language German learners are pragmatically competent. The main participants of the study were 53 German learners. To be able to collect the data, the researcher used video, questionnaire tasks and semi structured interviews. The final results indicated that the level of pragmatic awareness varies between the learners, and the EFL participants showed a low awareness level towards pragmatic infelicities.

Bella (2012) examined the pragmatic awareness in a second language setting: the case study of L2 learners of Greek. The aim of this research paper was exploring the pragmatic awareness of Greek second language learners. The subjects of the study were 140 Greek advanced learners. The main instruments of the study were grammatical judgment test and pragmatic judgment test. The findings of the research revealed that the participants were unaware of most of the pragmatic elements in language learning process. He further added the respondents were aware of the grammatical violations more than the pragmatic ones, and so the researcher concluded the learners' pragmatics knowledge was insufficient.

One more interesting study was made by Dehghayedi (2015) about the relationship between language awareness and pragmatic performance: a case study of Iranian EFL learners. The purpose of this research was determining whether language awareness has an impact on Iranian learners' pragmatic performance. A total of 90 English language learners in Iranian universities participated in the study. The two main instruments were grammaticality judgment test and discourse completion task. The findings of the study

indicated that learners have a high level of language awareness which in relation had a positive effect on their pragmatic performance.

Djaber (2019) explored the role of pragmatic awareness in developing EFL learners' realization of the speech act of suggesting. The study seeks to examine the effect of pragmatic awareness in the understanding of speech acts. The subjects of the study were 50 Algerian EFL learners. Discourse completion task (DCT) was used as the only instrument of the study. The results indicated that the participants had a high level of pragmatic awareness which in relation enabled them to use language appropriately.

### ***2.2.3. past studies on EFL learners' level of pragmatic competence***

Li (2015) investigated Chinese EFL learners' pragmatic competence. The aim of the study was testing the Chinese learners' pragmatic competence. The participants of the study were 85 Chinese undergraduate students, majoring in English language. The necessary data were gathered from multiple choice discourse competence (MDCT), written discourse completion task (WDCT) and retrospective interview. The results of the study suggested that the participants' pragmatic competence was low since it is highly influenced by their L1 and Chinese culture. The learners were weak in comprehending and producing an appropriate use of language.

Ozet (2019) carried out a study on developing pragmatic competence of B level tertiary students in English preparatory classes. The main purpose of the study was to examine the effect of strategy-based instruction on raising students' pragmatic competence. The participants of the study were 62 Turkish learners of English at B level. To be able to collect the data, the researcher employed an experiment that involves pretest and posttest, open-ended written discourse completion task, oral discourse completion test and focus group interview. The final results showed that the experimental group exhibited a high level of pragmatic competence.

Bardis, Silman, Mohammadzadeh (2021) carried out a study on cross-cultural pragmatic competence in an EFL context for a sustainable learning environment. The research aimed to find the pragmatic competence level of EFL learners from different nationalities. The participants involved in the study include 230 EFL learners of different

nationalities. From a questionnaire and interviews, the study's findings revealed that the participants lack pragmatic competence knowledge, and so they need to be provided with explicit and implicit pragmatics activities to develop their pragmatic competence.

Two years later, Hmouri (2021) investigated Moroccan university EFL learners' pragmatic failure while using expressive speech acts in communication. A total of 100 EFL university students took part in the study. The necessary data were gathered by means of multiple-choice questionnaire and interviews. The research results showed that the majority of the participants were pragmatically incompetent due to committing pragmatic failures across the given sentences.

More recently, Barzani, Mohammadzadeh (2022), conducted a research paper about pragmatic competence: an imperative competency for a safe and healthy communication. The researchers aimed at examining 90 Kurdish EFL learners' comprehension of speech acts, implicatures, and situational routines as three elements of pragmatic competence. For this study, the findings revealed that the participants displayed a low level of pragmatic competence. The researchers further pointed out that integrating communicative teaching methods can enhance learners' pragmatic competency.

#### ***2.2.4. Past studies on pre-service EFL teachers' pragmatic competence***

Bektas-Cetinkaya (2012) conducted a study that aims to explore Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' pragmatic competence. 23 Turkish pre-service EFL teachers participated in the study. Discourse Completion Task (DCT) was used to collect the data. The results of the study indicated that Turkish pre-service EFL teachers lack sufficient pragmatic knowledge, and thus a close attention should be given to improve their pragmatic awareness.

In another study, Ekin and Damar (2013) carried out a study that aims to investigate the pragmatic competence of EFL teacher trainees and their difficulties in practical pragmatic application. A total of 30 EFL teacher trainees took part in the study. The data collection tools were Discourse Completion Task (DCT), interviews, and reflection papers. Major findings of the study revealed that the participants showed

inadequate pragmatic competence as they could not perform well in practical application of their pragmatic knowledge.

Terzi (2014) conducted a study to analyze the pragmatic competence of pre-service English language teachers: appropriateness of form of address. The purpose of the study was investigating the learners' level of pragmatic competence in using the address form. A total of 205 Turkish pre-service teachers took part in the study. The main data were collected from discourse completion task (DCT), scale response task (SRT) and interviews. The findings showed that the participants had a limited pragmatic competence in general, and specifically in regard to the usage of form of address.

Similarly, Yilmaz (2014) investigated Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' pragmatic competence of complaint speech acts. The researcher aimed to explore the participants' pragmatic competence through the speech act of complaint. The participants of the study were 60 non-native pre-service EFL teachers and 10 native-English-speaking teachers. The main instrument of the study was a four-item discourse completion task. The results indicated that Turkish pre-service EFL teachers recorded a poor level of pragmatic competence, which in turn negatively affects their intercultural communication.

Herguner and Cakir (2017) conducted a study that aims to investigate Turkish EFL teacher trainees' pragmatic competence in using speech acts of refusal. Discourse Completion Task (DCT) was employed to collect the data from 133 ELT teacher trainees. Major findings of the study suggested a great need for developing Turkish ELT teacher trainees' pragmatic competence in general, and in the usage of refusal strategies specifically.

The previous studies mentioned above indicated that few studies on pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions of pragmatic competence have been conducted. Thus, there is still need for more studies that shed light on pragmatic competence by focusing on pre-service EFL teachers' perceived level of pragmatic competence, and analyze their attitudes towards adapting new pragmatics techniques in EFL context. Such studies are likely to do a great service to foreign language education by raising awareness considering the significance of pragmatic competence. Building on this, the present study aims to find out whether Turkish pre-service EFL teachers are aware of pragmatic features in language

teaching and learning. It also sets out to explore the target participants' perceptions of integrating pragmatics in language teaching in order to develop their pragmatic competence.



### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0. Presentation**

In this chapter, the research design and research context are discussed. The participants, data collection tools, and pilot study are described in detail. Then, data analysis is also discussed.

#### **3.1. Research Design**

Research design is an important step of a study as “it helps the researchers to develop a plan or proposal for a research study” (Creswell, 2009: 24). It is intended to provide an appropriate framework of the study. The research design and methodology chapter show the path through which the research questions and objectives of the study are presented in line with the research findings (Sileyew, 2019). In order to be able to respond to the formulated research questions properly, a mixed method research was employed. “Mixed methods procedures employ aspects of both quantitative methods and qualitative methods procedures” (Creswell, 2009: 24). It is an ideal technique for the present study because of its functional use in complementing quantitative data with the qualitative ones. Besides, mixed method research design gives voice to the respondents’ viewpoints and ensures that the results are well-balanced with the participants’ opinions (Wisdom & Creswell, 2013) allowing the researcher for the data triangulation. The purpose behind applying the triangulation procedure in this research paper is “to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic” (Morse, 1991, p. 122). Therefore, a specific type of mixed method research design; that’s, convergent parallel design was employed. It is a one phase design in which quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed independently, then the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data is compared to find out if the data confirm or disconfirm each other (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011).

##### **3.1.1. Research Context**

The study was carried out at The English Language Teaching Program, at Baskent University, in Ankara, Turkey with undergraduate students (i.e., pre-service EFL teachers in the program). In Turkey, faculties are provided a curriculum by the Council of Higher

Education allowing a certain amount of flexibility to add and offer some field-related elective and must courses for the departments. In order to graduate from the ELT department in the context of the research, pre-service EFL teachers are required to complete the designated courses (50 compulsory courses, 16 elective courses), (See appendix D).

The English Language Teaching Program is designed to assist pre-service EFL teachers to become professional English language teachers. Graduates of this program can work as teachers at private/state schools or as instructors at foreign language schools.

### 3.2. Participants

The population of this study included Turkish pre-service EFL teachers studying in English Language Teacher Education Programs in Turkey.

Pre-service EFL teachers were chosen on purpose due to their specialization in English language teaching. The informants of the study were selected based on the convenience sampling, which is a non-random sampling technique in which the participants are selected based on convenient accessibility and closeness of the researcher (Dorneyi, 2007, p. 97).

The sample of the current study consists of 122 (39 male and 83 female) Turkish pre-service EFL teachers studying in ELT program at Başkent university, in Ankara, Turkey. The age range of the participants was 18-38.

**Table 3.1.**

*Demographic information of the pre-service EFL teachers*

| <b>Class</b> | <b>Male</b> | <b>Female</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| First year   | 12          | 13            | 25           |
| Second year  | 11          | 27            | 38           |
| Third year   | 3           | 24            | 27           |
| Fourth year  | 12          | 20            | 32           |

The demographic information questionnaire revealed that 45.1% of the participants have been abroad at least once, while 54.9% said that they have never traveled to any foreign countries. As for their proficiency level, 10.7% of the participants believed that they are in intermediate level, 44.3% of them stated that they have upper-intermediate level, while 39.3% said that they are in advanced level, and only 5.7% of the subjects identified their proficiency level as native-speaker like.

When asked about the concept of pragmatic competence, 77% of the participants assured that they have heard about this term before, whereas 23% of them stated that they have not heard about pragmatic competence before. It was also seen that 30.3% of the students have already taken courses on pragmatics, and 69.7% of them stated that they have not taken any courses on pragmatics. However, when the ELT curriculum was checked, it was seen that pragmatics was taught as a topic in linguistics course in the second year of their education. Moreover, it was seen in their transcript that almost 40% of the participants took “Pragmatics and language teaching” as a departmental elective course.

Furthermore, when the research participants were questioned about their interest in working as teachers after graduating, 54.1% agreed to become teachers, around 36.9% said that they are not sure yet, and only 9% of the students articulated that they are not going to work as teachers in the future. In general, it can be stated that more than half of the participants will be working as EFL teachers who are expected to develop students’ communicative competence, therefore, pragmatic competence.

### **3.3. Data Collection Tools**

The data of this study were collected utilizing two data collection instruments which were administered to the participants face-to-face in the class: an open-ended questionnaire, and a five-point Likert scale. The data collection procedures of the present study were conducted in the following order. First, an approval was requested from The Human Ethical Committee of Baskent University. Second, the actual data collection procedure occurred between November and December 2021 in the ELT program at Baskent University in the classroom. Then, the two questionnaires which took one hour for the participants to complete, were conducted inside their normal teaching hours after

getting the approval from the class instructors. The participants were first asked to fill out the scale questionnaire then the open-ended questionnaire. The data collection procedure was monitored by the researcher.

The qualitative data were collected from the responses to the questions of the open-ended questionnaire, whereas the quantitative data were gathered from the responses to the five-point Likert scale questionnaire. Both the open-ended questionnaire and Likert scale were mainly employed to achieve a better understanding of the research questions and increase the validity of the study. The data collection instruments were constructed and pilot tested by the researcher through adapting and reviewing the related literature. Some of the questions in the five-point Likert scale questionnaire were originally extracted from Suk Suh's (2012) questionnaire, while some of the open-ended questions were adapted from the questions that (Kausar, 2016; Tulgar, Yagiz, & Han, 2017; Yuan, 2012) used in their study. However, based on the research questions of the present study, some questions were modified, and others were added.

First bulk of the data came from the closed-ended questionnaire. The five-point Likert scale questionnaire consisted of 21 questions with a five-point rating scale with options ranging from: 1= *strongly disagree*, 2= *disagree*, 3= *not sure*, 4= *agree*, 5= *strongly agree* (See Appendix A). The use of Likert-type scales can avoid loading the respondents with immense work and guarantee getting an accurate result of the study (Yuan, 2012).

The second bulk of the data came from an open-ended questionnaire in order to explore Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions on pragmatic competence in language learning, and their opinions and attitudes towards integrating pragmatics features in language teaching process. The use of questionnaire is significant as it facilitates pre-coded answers for the researchers, and it is also an easy technique for the respondents since they do not need a lot of time to express their views (Dornyei, 2007).

With this aim in mind, the questionnaire consists of 14 questions to which the participants were required to provide written answers under each question. It was made up of three sections; (a) demographic information, (b) students' perception on pragmatic

competence, (c) students' perception on integrating pragmatics in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence (See Appendix B).

In the first section of the questionnaire, students were asked to indicate their age, gender, class, and whether they have heard about the concept "pragmatic competence" before, etc. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 8 questions concerning the students' conceptualization of "pragmatic competence" (e.g., What do you understand from the concept "pragmatic competence"?). The third section of the questionnaire contained 6 questions which represented students' perception on integrating pragmatics in EFL (e.g., How important do you think it is to teach pragmatic knowledge to EFL learners? Explain in detail.).

### **3.4. Pilot Study**

Pilot study is an essential step of the study as it ensures that it eliminates encountering any problem with the questionnaire items, like wording, order of questions, accuracy or clarity that may not let participants understand the questionnaire. Gass and Mackey (2000) further explained that pilot study "can help avoid costly and time-consuming problems during data collection procedures (p. 57). The following steps presents the data collection instrument construction process:

#### **Step 1**

To construct the data collection tool for the study, the researcher conducted excessive literature review, using journals, articles, reports and theses related to the research area of interest. Based on these previous studies, The preliminary data collection instruments were collated (See appendix C for more details).

#### **Step 2**

The first tentative copy of the questionnaires was prepared (See appendix C). Questionnaire 1 was made up of two sections: section A: demographic information (e.g., age, gender, class...etc.). The second section consists of 14 open-ended questions (e.g., what is the meaning of pragmatic competence? or how important do you think it is to teach pragmatic knowledge to EFL learners?), while the second questionnaire includes 15

closed-ended questions in a form of Likert-scale points (e.g., I think I have never heard the concept pragmatic competence.).

### **Step 3**

To ensure validity and reliability of the questionnaires' items, an expert opinion was consulted twice. They were checked by an academician with 15 years of teaching and research experience who is specialized in language teaching, teacher education, and pragmatics and interlanguage pragmatics. She examined the suitability, accuracy, phrasing, of the two questionnaires and gave the researcher feedback and suggestions on the content and layout of the two questionnaires. Some comments and suggestions resulted in the modification of the two research instruments. In the first time, the expert gave the researcher feedback, suggestions and comments on the content of the questionnaires (e.g., the second section should be divided into two separate sections; section B: students' perception on pragmatic competence, and section C: students' perception on integrating pragmatics in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence). Also, the expert suggested using the question "what do you understand from the concept "pragmatic competence?" instead of "what is the meaning of pragmatic competence?". In the second time, she briefly gave feedback about the organization of the questions (e.g., demographic information should be written in a table format, the terms like pragmatic competence or linguistic competence should be written between quotation marks etc.) Taking the feedback of the expert into consideration, the final copies of the questionnaires were finalized. (For detailed information see appendix A, B, C).

### **Step 4**

The pilot group consisted of 20 Turkish pre-service EFL teachers studying at Baskent University studying in the first, second, third-, and fourth years of their program. The pilot study showed that answering the two questionnaires and filling the demographic information section took at most one hour from the participants. The pilot test was conducted in their classrooms and it was monitored by the class instructors.

The pilot study revealed some problems regarding the wording and arrangement of the questionnaires. It was found out that administering the open-ended questionnaire first

was somehow complicated for the participants as the majority responded with sentences like *“I knew it, but I do not remember it now”*. Building on this, Likert-type questionnaire was decided applied first to the participants as it included information that helped them to remember and recognize the issue about pragmatic competence, so those who know the concept and do not remember how it was referred to could also respond.

Another problem was with the term “Pragmatic competence”, as some of the participants confused it with the terms “Sociolinguistic competence and sociocultural competence”, since these terms “Pragmatic competence” and “sociolinguistic competence, sociocultural competence,” are mostly used interchangeably at the university as the teacher educators stated. Therefore, a written note was added to the introductory part of the questionnaire (e.g. *NOTE: The term “pragmatic competence” can be used interchangeably with either “sociolinguistic competence” or “sociocultural competence”*). Besides, the question “How important do you think it is to teach pragmatic knowledge to EFL learners? was misapprehended by some of the participants because the students responded with *“yes, it is important or I think it is highly important”* without explaining how? Thus, “explain why in detail” was added to the question to avoid misunderstanding. These minor changes mentioned above were made to the originally designed questionnaires, making them ready for the real data collection procedures.

### **3.5. Data Analysis**

The quantitative data obtained from the Likert scale questionnaire were analyzed by using descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) to calculate the frequencies, and percentages. Results were presented in tables, as well as means, percentages, and standard deviations which later were described in words.

The qualitative data coming from the participants’ responses to the open-ended questionnaire were analyzed using systematic content analysis in light of Creswell’s (2009, p. 185) content analysis framework as can be seen in figure 3.1. Content analysis procedure is defined by Holsti (1969) as “technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” (p.14). In content analysis, qualitative data gathered for the study were analyzed systematically to convert it

to quantitative content. After reading through all the data, the qualitative data collected for the study has gone through four basic steps:

- 1) coding the data by using an Excel program.
- 2) categorizing the codes.
- 3) identifying themes and descriptions for the codes and categories
- 4) analyzing and interpreting the meaning of themes and descriptions in a logical way to clarify the nature of the thing being studied.

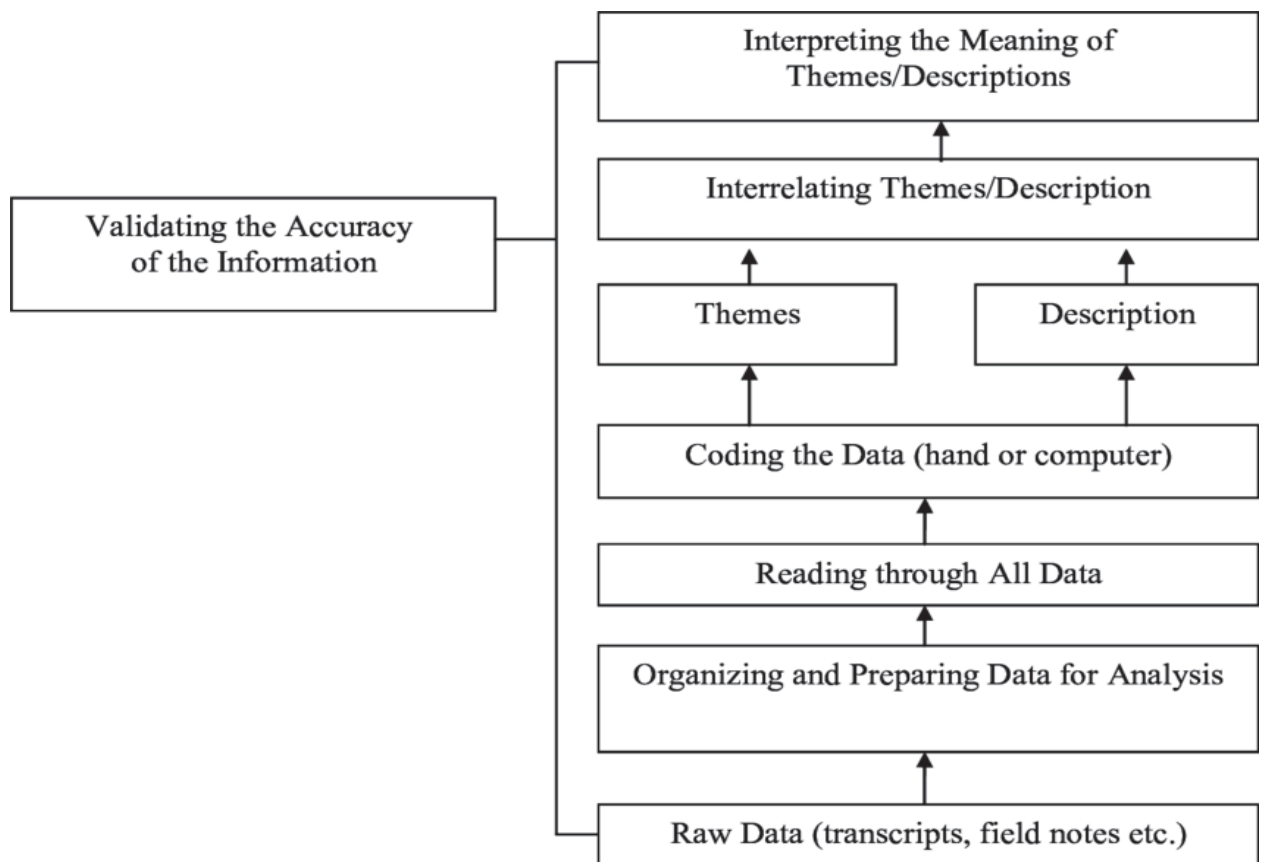


Figure 3.1. (Systematic content analysis procedure)

## 4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

### 4.0 Presentation

This section represents the results and discussion of the data analysis in line with the two main research questions and the data collection tools used to seek answers, as shown below in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1.**

*Research questions and data collection tools used to seek answers*

| Research Questions (RQ)                                                                                                                   | Data Collection Tools                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. To what extent are Turkish pre-service EFL teachers aware of pragmatic features in language teaching and learning?                     | Likert scale questionnaire<br>(Statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13)                                                                    |
| 1.1. How do pre-service EFL teachers conceptualize pragmatic competence?                                                                  | Open-ended questionnaire<br>(Questions A 1, A 1.1, A 1.2, B 1, B 1.1, B 1.2, B 1.3, B 2, B 3, B 4, B 4.1)                                               |
| 1.2. What is the pre-service EFL teachers' perceived level of their pragmatic competence in English?                                      |                                                                                                                                                         |
| 2. What are pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions of integrating pragmatic features in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence? | Likert scale questionnaire<br>(Statements 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21)<br>Open-ended questionnaire<br>(Questions C 1, C 1.1, C 2, C 2.1, C 3, C 3.1) |

With regards to the research questions, the data analysis procedure was conducted in two phases: Quantitative Data Analysis and Qualitative Data Analysis.

### 4.1. Results of the Quantitative Data Analysis

After collecting the necessary data from the research subjects, the quantitative data were transformed into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to identify the participants' perceptions of pragmatic competence and the integration of pragmatics in language teaching to develop their pragmatic competence. The following

tables will present the SPSS results in terms of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for the data set.

#### **4.1.1. Research Question 1: To what extent are Turkish pre-service EFL teachers aware of pragmatic features in language teaching and learning?**

**Table 4.2.**

*Pre-service EFL teachers' awareness of pragmatic competence in language teaching and learning.*

| <b>Question</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>NS</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>SA</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard<br/>Deviation</b> |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| St 1            | 4         | 8        | 36        | 53       | 21        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 3.3%      | 6.6%     | 39.5%     | 43.4%    | 17.2%     | 3.6         | .9                            |
| St 2            | 6         | 22       | 50        | 31       | 13        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 4.9%      | 18.0%    | 41.0%     | 25.4%    | 10.7%     | 3.5         | .9                            |
| St 3            | 0         | 3        | 22        | 58       | 39        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 0%        | 2.5%     | 18.0%     | 47.5%    | 32.0%     | 4.0         | .7                            |
| St 4            | 9         | 19       | 37        | 45       | 12        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 7.4%      | 15.6%    | 30.3%     | 36.9%    | 9.8%      | 2.8         | 1.0                           |
| St 5            | 1         | 2        | 27        | 57       | 35        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 0.8%      | 1.6%     | 22.1%     | 46.7%    | 28.7%     | 4.0         | .8                            |
| St 6            | 1         | 13       | 21        | 62       | 25        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 0.8%      | 10.7%    | 17.2%     | 50.8%    | 20.5%     | 3.7         | .9                            |
| St 7            | 1         | 2        | 35        | 47       | 37        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 0.8%      | 1.6%     | 28.7%     | 38.5%    | 30.3%     | 3.9         | .8                            |
| St 8            | 2         | 16       | 31        | 41       | 32        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 1.6%      | 13.1%    | 25.4%     | 33.6%    | 26.2%     | 3.6         | 1.0                           |
| St 9            | 1         | 4        | 26        | 55       | 36        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 0.8%      | 3.3%     | 21.3%     | 45.1%    | 29.5%     | 3.9         | .8                            |
| St 10           | 0         | 10       | 26        | 62       | 24        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 0%        | 8.2%     | 21.3%     | 50.8%    | 19.7%     | 3.8         | .8                            |
| St 11           | 2         | 5        | 34        | 57       | 24        |             |                               |
| Percentages     | 1.6%      | 4.1%     | 27.9%     | 46.7%    | 19.7%     | 3.7         | .8                            |

|             |      |       |       |       |       |     |     |
|-------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
| St 12       | 4    | 19    | 28    | 46    | 25    |     |     |
| Percentages | 3.3% | 15.6% | 23.0% | 37.7% | 20.5% | 3.5 | 1.0 |
| St 13       | 0    | 6     | 26    | 63    | 27    |     |     |
| Percentages | 0%   | 4.9%  | 21.3% | 51.6% | 22.1% | 3.9 | .7  |

Note: St= Statement, SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, NS= Not Sure, A= Agree, SA= Agree

St 1= I know what “pragmatic competence” means.

St 2= I know what “pragmatic failure” means as a concept.

St 3= Pragmatic competence is related to the appropriate use of language according to the context

St 4= I think the correct use of English is more important than using it appropriately.

St 5= I think pragmatic competence involves knowledge of social and cultural features of language

St 6= It is important to use appropriate grammatical structures to fulfill correct functions in English according to the context.

St 7= I think pragmatic competence should be part of communication abilities.

St 8= I think pragmatic errors have more negative effects on communications than grammatical errors.

St 9= Inappropriate language use leads to pragmatic failures leading to misunderstanding and communication breakdowns.

St 10= I think misunderstanding or communication breakdown tends to be caused by pragmatic errors more often than grammatical errors.

St 11= I think knowing how to express politeness is closely related to pragmatic competence.

St 12= Students usually have more difficulties in using socially and culturally appropriate English than grammatically correct English.

St 13= Students often experience difficulties in producing and comprehending speaker’s intended messages appropriately in English according to different contexts.

The Table 4.2 above provided a visual representation of the percentages of pre-service EFL teachers’ perceptions of pragmatic competence. Generally speaking, some of the participants showed a high level of awareness towards the conceptualization of pragmatic competence in foreign language learning. When giving different statements to test their understanding of the concept, the highest number of responses agreed upon using the term pragmatic competence to mean the appropriate use of language according to context.

As displayed in Table 4.2, in statement 6, 50.8% of pre-service EFL teachers stated that it is important to sound grammatically correct while communicating in order to get the message across meaningfully. Also, in number10 in which the participants were given a statement on the importance of the appropriate use of language, and how misunderstanding the speakers’ intended message leads to communication breakdowns, the responses were reported to have a general agreement by more than half of the participants towards their interpretation of pragmatic competence. Pre-service EFL teachers articulated that though grammatical knowledge is needed to fulfill certain functions in English, pragmatic knowledge plays the key role in maintaining healthy intercultural communication.

As for the second statement concerning students' conceptualization of pragmatic failure, 41% of the participants were not sure about the concept, which might be attributed to their unawareness of pragmatic failures that occur during the learning process. In contrast, in the first statement, pre-service EFL teachers argued that they already knew what the term pragmatic competence means. They further explained that it is related to having the ability to use language appropriately in different situations, as displayed in statement 3. Moreover, in statement 5, 46.7% of pre-service EFL teachers stated that the concept "pragmatic competence" involves knowledge of the cultural features of the target language. In these statements mentioned above, the participants agreed to the fact that pragmatic competence is related to the appropriate use of language in different social and cultural situations.

However, in the fourth statement where the participants were questioned about the correct versus appropriate use of language for better communication ability, the majority of pre-service EFL teachers believed that the correct use of English is more important than using it appropriately, and not vice versa. Statement 4 highlighted the fact that pre-service EFL teachers believed that linguistic skills are more important in communication than pragmatic ability.

Considering communicative competence and its connection with the term pragmatic competence, the majority of the respondents in statement 7 agreed that the two concepts are interrelated. The results of statement 8 indicated that an average of 3.6 of pre-service EFL teachers assured that pragmatic errors have more negative effects on communication than the linguistic ones. They further expressed their agreements upon the idea that pragmatic failures tend to result in miscommunication problems between interlocutors as shown in statement 9.

Additionally, In the last three statements about the necessity of having cultural and politeness principles while communicating in the target language, the participants agreed to the challenges encountered by the learners in sending culturally polite and appropriate messages according to different contexts. For example, in number 11, 57 pre-service EFL teachers stated that politeness is an indispensable part of pragmatic competence. In other words, they are required to know the politeness principles of the target language in order to become pragmatically competent learners. Moreover, in statement 12, the highest number

of pre-service EFL teachers (M. 3.5) conveyed that acquiring the cultural elements is a challenging task as it takes much more time than learning the grammatical elements of the target language. They further revealed that EFL learners experience difficulties in producing and understanding the speaker's messages effectively in different contexts as displayed in statement 13. Generally, pre-service EFL teachers participated in this study expressed EFL learners' inability to acquire sufficient politeness and cultural knowledge during intercultural communication, which in relation lead to pragmatic failures.

In addition to what mentioned above, the mean was used in the scale in order to know the central tendency or the average of the answers, whereas the standard deviation which was utilized to know the consistency of their answers to the scale. A low standard deviation indicates that the data are close to the mean, while a high standard deviation indicates that the data are spread out or far from the mean (Andrade, 2020). Generally speaking, pre-service EFL teachers' answers to the five-point Likert scale revealed that the average of their responses ranged between (Mean 2.8-4.0), whereas the standard deviation scores from 0.7 to 1 showed close values between the participants standard deviation scores and the mean scores.

In sum, although pre-service EFL teachers stated that the term "pragmatic competence" is about using the language appropriately in different cultural and social contexts, they believed that using English language correctly following particular grammar rules is by far more important than using it appropriately in communication. This might be attributed to their inadequate knowledge of pragmatic competence. Besides, the majority of the participants believed that EFL learners encounter difficulties in producing and comprehending the speakers' intended message in different cultural settings due to their incomplete pragmatic knowledge.

#### 4.1.2. Research Question 2: What are pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions of integrating pragmatic features in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence?

**Table 4.3.**

*Students' perceptions of integrating pragmatic features in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence.*

| Question    | SD   | D    | NS    | A     | SA    | Mean | Standard<br>Deviation |
|-------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-----------------------|
| St 14       | 3    | 7    | 25    | 52    | 35    | 3.8  | .9                    |
| Percentages | 2.5% | 5.7% | 20.5% | 42.6% | 28.7% |      |                       |
| St 15       | 0    | 2    | 8     | 42    | 70    | 4.4  | .6                    |
| Percentages | 0%   | 1.6% | 6.6%  | 34.4% | 57.4% |      |                       |
| St 16       | 0    | 0    | 14    | 44    | 64    | 4.4  | .6                    |
| Percentages | 0%   | 0%   | 11.5% | 36.1% | 52.5% |      |                       |
| St 17       | 0    | 0    | 11    | 46    | 65    | 4.4  | .6                    |
| Percentages | 0%   | 0%   | 9.0%  | 37.7% | 53.3% |      |                       |
| St 18       | 0    | 1    | 6     | 45    | 70    | 4.5  | .6                    |
| Percentages | 0%   | 0.8% | 4.9%  | 36.9% | 57.4% |      |                       |
| St 19       | 1    | 4    | 16    | 46    | 55    | 4.2  | .8                    |
| Percentages | 0.8% | 3.3% | 13.1% | 37.7% | 45.1% |      |                       |
| St 20       | 0    | 3    | 14    | 48    | 57    | 4.3  | .7                    |
| Percentages | 0%   | 2.5% | 11.5% | 39.3% | 46.7% |      |                       |
| St 21       | 0    | 0    | 11    | 34    | 77    | 4.5  | .6                    |
| Percentages | 0%   | 0%   | 9.0%  | 27.9% | 63.1% |      |                       |

Note: St= Statement, SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, NS= Not Sure, A= Agree, SA= Agree  
 St14= I am willing to take teachers training program if it is thought to develop students' pragmatic competence.

St15= I would teach students how to use English in a socially and culturally appropriate way.

St16= I would use interactive activities to promote students' pragmatic competence whenever possible.

St17= I would help students develop pragmatic competence to develop their communication skills in English.

St18= I would teach students how to sound polite, cooperative, and friendly according to different situations.

St19= I would teach English culture as a way to help students develop their pragmatic competence.

St20= Integrating pragmatics in language teaching process is significant in developing students' communicative competence in English.

St21= Using situations and role plays are effective ways of developing students' pragmatic competence.

Table 4.3 displays the participants' opinions about integrating pragmatics in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence. The research subjects showed a great interest towards including pragmatics in foreign language teaching curriculum as an

effective way to develop pragmatic competence. The numbers in Table 4.3 shed light into the pre-service EFL teachers' need to improve their level of pragmatic competence as they expressed their strong desire to have pragmatics as a basic element of language learning and teaching.

The findings revealed that a great number of the participants agreed to integrate pragmatics in language teaching syllabus. They believed that it will have a positive effect upon pragmatic competence development. For example, in statement 14, 42.6% of the participants expressed their desire to take teacher training programs that targeted to develop learners' pragmatic competence. In statement 16 also around 53% of the participants agreed to use interactive activities in their classes to enhance learners' level of pragmatics awareness. Furthermore, in number 17, a significant number of the respondents emphasized their willingness to teach learners how to use the language appropriately in different situations to promote their pragmatic competence. According to statement 18, 70 pre-service EFL teachers believed that teaching learners how to be polite, cooperative and friendly improves their pragmatic competence, which in turn develop their communication skills in the target language.

Taking sentences 15 into account, the participants showed an overall agreement to teach culture to ensure pragmatic competence development. Similarly, in number 19, the majority of the participants shed light into the importance of acquiring the cultural aspects of the target language. Their answers clarified that learning a language without mastering its cultural aspects is not always enough to utilize the target language appropriately. Statement 20, on the other hand, showed a general tendency (M 4.3) towards the integration of pragmatics in EFL context to develop learners' communicative competence, therefore, pragmatic competence. Furthermore, more than half of the participants expressed their agreement when they were asked about integrating different pragmatic activities, such as role play or situations as displayed in statement 21. They maintained that using pragmatic tasks play an important role in achieving proper communication in different contextual situations.

Since a low standard deviation indicates that the data are close to the mean, while a high standard deviation indicates that the data are spread out or far from the mean, in Table 4.3 the mean scores (3.8-4.5) and standard deviation scores (0.6-0.9) showed that the

participants answers were close to the means since the standard deviation scores were low which is considered as a positive statistical score in research studies (Andrade, 2020).

## 4.2. Results of Qualitative Data Analysis

Systematic content analysis procedure was utilized to analyze the qualitative data gathered from the open-ended questionnaire. After reading through all the data several times, the qualitative data were transformed to an Excel program. The researcher identified recurrent answers by coding which were further combined into other broader themes. Then, the data set was divided into two phases: *A- students' perceptions of pragmatic competence, B- students' perceptions of integrating pragmatics in language teaching to develop their pragmatic competence*. These open-ended questions are presented in Appendix B.

### 4.2.1. Research Question 1: To what extent are Turkish pre-service EFL teachers aware of pragmatic features in language teaching and learning?

**Table 4.4.**

*What do you understand from the concept "pragmatic competence"?*

| Item                      | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.Appropriacy             | 60     | 49%        |
| 2.I do not know           | 17     | 14%        |
| 3.Incorrect definition    | 15     | 12%        |
| 4.Incomplete definition   | 13     | 11%        |
| 5.Communication intention | 7      | 6%         |
| 6.I do not remember       | 6      | 5%         |
| 7.Cultural purposes       | 4      | 3%         |
| 8.Total                   | 122    | 100%       |

In respect to the first open-ended question, the students showed a variety of perceptions towards the term “Pragmatic competence”. The participants generally are aware of the concept, though they defined it differently, their answers clarify that more than half of the study respondents know the meaning of pragmatic competence. In fact, the majority of the research subjects believe that pragmatic competence is about the

appropriate use of language in different contexts, whereas the others argued that it is related to having good communication skills in language learning. Culture was also mentioned by the participants as they stated that being pragmatically competent means being able to operate in different cultural settings. However, a good number of the participants came up with a narrowed understanding of the concept. That may refer to the fact that their knowledge about the concept is incomplete yet. Also, “*I do not know*” was mentioned several times and this takes us to the fact that some of the participants have not taken pragmatics before, such as first- and second-year students.

As seen in Table 4.4, around 49% of the respondents believed that pragmatic competence is about using the language appropriately in a social context. According to them, pragmatic competence is linked to knowing what to say, when, where, and to whom in different contexts. For example, one of the participants stated:

**S.83:** “*It is the ability to use the language effectively in a contextually appropriate fashion*”

However, around 14% of the questionnaire respondents were not aware of pragmatic competence. They argued that it is their first time to hear about the conceptualization of pragmatic competence as they answered the question with:

**S.7:** “*I do not know*”

The data about the concept pragmatic competence pointed out that 12% of the participants defined the concept “pragmatic competence” incorrectly. This illustrates that the participants’ knowledge about the concept is inaccurate or faulty and confused with another concept. As one of the participants stated:

**S.6:** “*It is the ability to understand reason -conclusion relationship*”

Also, about 11% of the participants provided an incomplete interpretation of the concept pragmatic competence. Although part of their responses is correct, it is still

considered incomplete since it did not show a clear understanding of the idea behind pragmatic competence. One of the participants, for example, mentioned that:

**S.12:** *“It is the ability to comprehend utterances”*

Additionally, almost 6% of the participants perceived pragmatic competence as a concept used for communication reasons. They stated that it is a term that helps to maintain communication skills in English. Focusing on this point, one of the participants mentioned that:

**S.34:** *“Pragmatic competence is using the language for communication purposes”*

Considering the participants’ ideas about pragmatic competence, around 5% of the informants replied with *“I do not remember”*, while 3% of them defined pragmatic competence as using the language in respect to the cultural sittings. In other words, they defined it as using culturally appropriate English. One of the participants, upon this matter, mentioned that:

**S.52:** *“It is about using the language according to the target language’s culture”*

**Table 4.5.**

*What does "pragmatic competence" include? Give examples.*

| Item                    | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.I do not know         | 42     | 34%        |
| 2.Communication         | 23     | 19%        |
| 3.Linguistic components | 20     | 16%        |
| 4.Speech act            | 17     | 14%        |
| 5.Culture               | 12     | 10%        |
| 6.I do not remember     | 6      | 5%         |
| 7.Underlying meaning    | 4      | 3%         |
| 8.Total                 | 122    | 100%       |

When the students were asked about the inclusion of the term pragmatic competence, they gave different viewpoints. The Table 4.5 consists of seven main themes mentioned by the participants towards the question of what the term pragmatic competence incorporates. Though the highest number of responses was *“I do not know”*, some of the

participants believed that pragmatic competence comprises communication. They stated that the ability to understand and be understood by others while communicating is considered as the main part of being pragmatically competent. Linguistic components were also mentioned by the participants which may mean that the participants' knowledge on this term is still deficient. Furthermore, speech act, culture, and underlying meaning were also mentioned as one of the inclusions of the concept pragmatic competence.

Table 4.5 above displays that 34% of the study subjects simply replied to the question with *"I do not know"*; whereas 19% of them assured that communication is one of the main aspects of pragmatic competence. For example, A student expressed that:

**S.16:** *"Communication skill, for example, speaking with your family in a way that is different from speaking with your professor"*

Around 16% of the respondents believed that pragmatic competence includes linguistic components. They claimed that pragmatic competent learners can use the language correctly in terms of phonology, morphology, etc., As one student, for instance, stated:

**S.37:** *"Phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics"*

Also, 14% of the participants added that pragmatic competence includes *"speech act"* without giving any further explanation. Whereas 10% of them argued that culture is the main component of pragmatic competence, for example, a student pointed out:

**S.92:** *"Culture. For example, what we found appropriate in one culture, it may be found inappropriate in another culture"*

However, about 5% of the questionnaire respondents could not recall the basic components of pragmatic competence as they replied to this question with:

**S.31:** *"I do not remember"*

And only 3% of them believed that the concept pragmatic competence includes the underlying meaning of the target language. Meaning to say, pragmatic competence includes the hidden meaning of a sentence or question. As one of student explained:

**S.33:** *“Irony. For example, I’m saying it’s a little bit cold, isn’t it? But I am indicating to shutting the window or door”*

It can be concluded from the results seen in Table 4.4 and 4.5 that although 60% of the pre-service EFL teachers were revealed to have an overall understanding of the concept of pragmatic competence, when they were asked about what its components were, 42% displayed no awareness regarding its required knowledge and skills.

**Table 4.6.**

*What can a “pragmatically competent” learner of English do with the language?*

| Item                        | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.Awareness of language use | 55     | 45%        |
| 2.I do not know             | 38     | 31%        |
| 3.Communicate with people   | 23     | 19%        |
| 4.Travel abroad             | 4      | 3%         |
| 5.Learn different cultures  | 1      | 1%         |
| 6.Total                     | 122    | 100%       |

As Table 4.6 illustrates, different ideas were given by the participants in listing the things a pragmatically competent learner of English can achieve. A great deal of the answers indicated that learners with a high level of pragmatic competence are aware of the different usage of the target language. They can use the language appropriately in different situations and contexts. Nonetheless, some of the participants identified that they do not know the advantages of being pragmatically competent in English. This might be a consequence of not having sufficient knowledge about pragmatics during the language learning process. Regarding this question, a part of the research participants stated that communication abilities are one of the good qualities of pragmatic competent learners. Meanwhile, traveling abroad and learning different cultures were also mentioned by the participants as another two important things that learners with sufficient pragmatic competence can attain.

Generally speaking, 45% of the study subjects indicated their preference for “awareness of language use” as a basic thing a pragmatically competent learner of English can do. One of the participants commented on this matter as follows:

**S.27:** *“They can learn the ability to use the language appropriately in a social context”*

The results also showed that approximately 31% of the answers were *“I do not know”*, whereas, 19% of the participants explained that having a good command of pragmatic competence guarantee achieving a successful communication with different people. For instance, one of the participants added that:

**S.52:** *“They can converse with the people and understand them”*

Moreover, three percent of the respondents believed that English language learners with a high level of pragmatic competence can travel abroad easily and comfortably. Regarding this belief, a student expressed:

**S.61:** *“He/she can travel to countries where English is spoken as the first language”*

Learning different cultures was the least option mentioned (1%) by the participants as a quality of having a good level of pragmatic competence. One of the respondents, upon this matter, pointed out:

**S.13:** *“They can learn different cultures”*

**Table 4.7.**

*What happens if a learner of English has a lack of pragmatic competence? What might be the sequences?*

| Item                        | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.Pragmatic failure         | 75     | 61%        |
| 2.I do not know             | 44     | 36%        |
| 3.They cannot learn English | 3      | 2%         |
| 4.Total                     | 122    | 100%       |

Table 4.7 indicates pre-service EFL teachers' opinions on learners who lack pragmatic competence, and its sequences. A strong degree of impact can be noticed that the absence of pragmatic competence led to pragmatic failure while communicating. In other words, learners whose pragmatic ability is insufficient might use the language inappropriately, leading to misunderstandings and communication breakdowns. Some of the participants, on the other hand, were unaware of this fact as they replied with "*I do not know*". A weak degree of impact was reported to the idea that learners who are not pragmatically competent enough might not be able to learn the English language appropriately.

As can be seen in Table 4.7 above, about 61% of the responses showed that the participants specified that pragmatic failure is the consequence of lacking pragmatic competence in the language learning process. For example, one of the respondents argued that:

**S.50:** "*If a learner has a lack of pragmatic competence, he / she might be hard to communicate with people in the right way*"

Around 36% of the respondents stated that "*I do not know*", while only 2% of them indicated that the shortage of pragmatic competence might not let the learners acquire the target language appropriately. Bearing this in mind, a student explained:

**S.17:** "*She or he can't learn English*"

**Table 4.8.**

*What is the relationship between “pragmatic competence” and “linguistic competence”?*

| Item                                     | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.I do not know                          | 63     | 52%        |
| 2.A correlation between the two concepts | 33     | 27%        |
| 3.Appropriate use and correct use        | 21     | 17%        |
| 4.No relationship                        | 5      | 4%         |
| 5.Total                                  | 122    | 100%       |

With respect to the question above, the participants highlighted the unawareness of the relationship between pragmatic competence and linguistic competence. More than half of the participants claimed that they do not know the connection between the two important concepts in the use of English language. The other participants, however, appear to recognize that there is a correlation between the knowledge of pragmatic competence and linguistic competence. They pointed out the necessity of acquiring both pragmatic and linguistic competence in a balanced way for a better language learning process. Not all the participants, in fact, share the same perception about the relationship between the two concepts., as seen in the table, some of them, though not many in number, hold a negative view towards the relationship between pragmatic competence and linguistic competence as they denied the fact that there is a link between the two in language learning and education in general.

As Table 4.8 shows, 52% of the study participants replied to the question with “*I do not know*”. This might take us to the fact that the participants are not pragmatically nor linguistically well-equipped up to date. On the other hand, there was a noticeable belief that pragmatic competence and linguistic competence complete each other. As 27% of the respondents agreed that there is a correlation between the two concepts. One of the research participants, as an example, comments as follows:

*S. 2: “Pragmatic competence and linguistic competence are related to each other because without linguistic competence we cannot do anything for pragmatic competence.”*

Furthermore, nearly 17% of the participants provided definitions of the two terms when asked to mention their relationship. This might be attributed to their unctuousness of the exact relationship between pragmatic and linguistic competence. For instance, a student explained:

**S.40:** *“Linguistic competence refers to rules about the correct use of language, for example grammar, syntax, morphology, lexical knowledge, etc. but pragmatic competence is about the ability to use the language appropriately in a context.”*

4% of the respondents, though, believed that there was no relationship between the two terms. In other words, they argued that the knowledge of pragmatics and linguistics has nothing in common in English language learning. Concerning this attitude, one of the respondents wrote:

**S.14:** *“No relationship between them”*

**Table 4.9.**

*What is the relationship between “pragmatic competence” and “culture”?*

| Item                       | Number | Percentage |
|----------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.I do not know            | 62     | 51%        |
| 2.They complete each other | 55     | 45%        |
| 3.No relationship          | 4      | 3%         |
| 4.Total                    | 122    | 100%       |

When it comes to the relationship between “pragmatic competence” and “culture”, the majority of the participants expressed their unfamiliarity with the relationship between the two terms. More than half of the participants answered with *“I have no idea”*, and this might indicate that their conceptualization of the two terms is insufficient. Interestingly, some of the respondents conceded that culture and pragmatic competence affect each other. Meaning to say, there is a close relationship between the two since they are mixed together to help people from different background knowledge communicate easily. However, part of the study respondents stressed that culture has nothing to do with pragmatic competence. They claimed that there is no association between the two concepts in EFL education.

As indicated by the responses to the question above, most of the participants (51%) pointed out that they are totally unconscious about the relationship between culture and pragmatic competence. They expressed their unawareness by replying to the question with:

**S.3:** *“I don’t know”*

About 45% of the participants explained there is a close connection between pragmatic competence and culture. They clarified that culture is an inseparable part of pragmatic competence, that is, both of the two terms combined with each other to help us use English in a socially and culturally appropriate way. One of the participants, upon this matter, stated that:

**S.53:** *“Pragmatic competence includes culture within it. If you know the culture, you know how to communicate with different people, a child, lecturer, or a family member.”*

The other participants (3%), however, held the opposite view. They argued that pragmatic competence and culture have nothing in common, as they replied to the question with statements like:

**S.105:** *“There is no relationship between the two terms”*

**Table 4.10.**

*What is the role of “pragmatic competence” in foreign language learning? How and why?*

| Item                                   | Number | Percentage |
|----------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.I do not know                        | 47     | 39%        |
| 2.Better understanding of language use | 36     | 30%        |
| 3.Achieving successful communication   | 31     | 25%        |
| 4.Cross-cultural knowledge             | 6      | 5%         |
| 5.Total                                | 122    | 100%       |

Regarding the role of pragmatic competence in foreign language learning, although a great number of the respondents explained their unknowingness, some of the participants indicated that pragmatic competence helps them to understand how to use the target language in different social contexts. Because of that, pragmatic competence has a significant role in teaching the learners the appropriate way of using the language in several situations. The results indicated that there was a perceived importance and necessity for pragmatically competent learners to maintain a good communication skill. Therefore, EFL learners need to be aware of the remarkable role pragmatic competence plays in dealing with different people successfully. Cross-cultural knowledge was another important role of pragmatic competence during the language learning process. Some of the participants stressed that pragmatic competence acknowledges the learners with noteworthy information about different cultures, which is important for foreign language learners to be culturally well-resourced.

Forty-seven respondents indicated that they do not know the function of pragmatic competence in education. Their unconsciousness might be attributed to not having enough courses and materials concerning pragmatics in general and pragmatic competence in particular.

Approximately 30% of the respondents believed that learners with a high level of pragmatic competence know how to use the target language appropriately. According to them pragmatic competence plays an essential role in understanding how to use the language according to the contexts. Focusing on this attitude, one of the study participants pointed out:

**S.69:** *“When we learn a language, we should also learn in what situation to use it and how to use it effectively. So, it is very significant in the field of EFL”*

In addition, 25% of the participants assured that one of the key roles of pragmatic competence in education is that it develops students’ communicative competence in English. For example, a student stated:

**S.20:** *“When we learn a new language, the goal is to communicate with different people. Pragmatic competence delivers that accurately.”*

It further appears that 5% of the participants recognized that cross-cultural knowledge is another important function of pragmatic competence. It increases their understandings of different cultural settings, as one of the respondents added:

**S.52:** *“For me, I do not have any education about the culture or any social interaction in the target language culture. Personally, it would be much more interesting and my education would be more enjoyable with pragmatic competence”*

**Table 4.11.**

*What is the contribution of “pragmatic competence” in foreign language education?*

| Item                              | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.I do not know                   | 67     | 55%        |
| 2.Raise awareness of language use | 28     | 23%        |
| 3.Improve the communicative skill | 14     | 11%        |
| 4.Improve language proficiency    | 7      | 6%         |
| 5.Learn new culture               | 4      | 3%         |
| 6.Total                           | 122    | 100%       |

The Table 4.11 above illustrates that there are four main contributions of pragmatic competence in foreign language education. As the findings suggest, although the majority of the participants expressed their unawareness of pragmatic competence in education, raising the learner’s awareness of language use was the second most frequently chosen item by the participants. They believe that awareness of the effective use of language is a result of having complete pragmatic competence, that is why developing students’ pragmatic competence is of great importance in education. Pragmatic competence was also stated to contribute to improving the communicative skills. With the help of pragmatic competence, learners start to develop their communication ability and become skilled communicators. Improving language proficiency followed by learning new cultures were also mentioned by the respondents as further positive contributions of pragmatic competence in foreign language education.

As it can be seen from Table 4.11, *“I do not know”* was the most frequently mentioned statement by the respondents regarding the contribution of pragmatic competence in foreign language education. More than half of the research participants (55%) seemed to lack proper knowledge concerning pragmatic competence and its contribution in education. In addition, Raising the learner’s awareness of language use was the second most frequently mentioned beneficence of pragmatic competence, with twenty-three percent. According to the respondents, pragmatic competence was a great source in developing their understanding of different language use in contexts. For instance, a student pointed out:

**S.2:** *“Thanks to pragmatic competence, now we are aware of a language has a lot of property and use”*

Improving the communication skills was on the third rank. The participants believed that pragmatic competence makes the learners better communicators of the language they learn. One of the participants refers to this contribution as:

**S.114:** *“Pragmatic competence provides the students with several contributions in education. For example, enhancing the students’ communicative competence”*

Moreover, learners who are pragmatically competent are believed to have good proficiency level. That is, 6% of the respondents agreed that pragmatic competence contributes to improve their proficiency level in general. Keeping in mind this point, one of the participants stated:

**S.104:** *“It makes the students acquire a master level of the target language”*

Learning new cultures was the least mentioned contribution of pragmatic competence with only three percent. According to those responses, learning pragmatic competence allows them to expand their knowledge about the target language’s culture. For example, a student added:

**S.68:** *“The students will be able to understand the culture and traditions of the target language”*

#### 4.2.2. Research Question 2: What are pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions of integrating pragmatic features in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence?

**Table 4.12.**

*How can "pragmatic competence" be improved?*

| Item                          | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.Speaking activities         | 50     | 41%        |
| 2.I do not know               | 36     | 30%        |
| 3.Living abroad               | 9      | 7%         |
| 4.Taking pragmatics courses   | 9      | 7%         |
| 5.Watching TV or videos       | 8      | 7%         |
| 6.Reading books about culture | 7      | 6%         |
| 7.Total                       | 122    | 100%       |

Different explanations were given by the participants in listing the things that can be done to improve pragmatic competence. Generally speaking, the participants preferred to use speaking activities to increase learners' pragmatic competence. They consider speaking activities, such as role-play, acting out, or presentations as effective ways of raising their knowledge about pragmatic competence. On the other hand, some of the participants maintained that they have no idea to share concerning improving pragmatic competence. The study subjects made a comprehensive comment as they pointed out that living abroad plays a major role in developing learners' pragmatic competence. They stressed the fact that the target language environment is essential in attaining pragmatic competence for foreign language learners. The participants further mentioned taking pragmatic courses, watching TV or videos, and reading books about culture as other activities that guarantee improving learners' pragmatic competence.

As the numbers above suggest, 41% of the participants agreed upon using speaking tasks for foreign language learners to develop pragmatic competence. Referring to this viewpoint, one of the participants expressed his idea as follows:

**S.46:** *"With speaking task, it can be improved"*

Around 30% of the respondents, however, replied with *“I do not know”*. They showed their unknowingness of the things that can be made to ensure pragmatic competence development. Living abroad was preferred by 7% of the students as a basic option to improve their pragmatic competence. For example, a student stated:

**S.20:** *“By traveling to the country of the target language so they can get used to the usual situations”*

Also, taking pragmatic courses was another choice wanted by 7% of the respondents to improve their pragmatic competence. A student, concerning this idea, explained:

**S.120:** *“By integrating pragmatic courses”*

Seven percent of the respondents indicated that watching TV or videos is a solution to increase learners' pragmatic competence. For instance, a student added:

**S.116:** *“I find TV shows, movies, documentaries in the target language are very effective”*

While the least mentioned activity for pragmatic competence development was reading books about the culture with only 6%. The respondents argued that if a learner reads about the culture of the target language, their awareness increases, and so it improves their pragmatic competence. A respondent, for example, clarified:

**S.67:** *“Reading books about culture and traditions with examples improves pragmatic competence”*

**Table 4.13.**

*What might be the challenges and problems encountered when developing “pragmatic competence”?*

| Item                      | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.I do not know           | 69     | 57%        |
| 2.Cultural differences    | 32     | 26%        |
| 3.Language confusion      | 9      | 7%         |
| 4.Lack of self-confidence | 5      | 4%         |
| 5.Shyness                 | 3      | 2%         |
| 6.Total                   | 122    | 100%       |

When the participants were asked about the challenges and problems encountered while developing “pragmatic competence”, they expressed four main challenges. First, more than half of the respondents replied with “*I do not know*”. This clarifies that a big number of the university students are still unaware of the problems that they might face in order to develop pragmatic competence. Second, many of the participants claimed that the culture of the target language is the main barrier. They believed that the traditions and cultural elements that differ from their native language are the big challenge that might hinder the development of pragmatic competence. Third, confusion was also mentioned by some of the participants as a basic problem for pragmatic competence. They stated that the target language in general might cause some confusion problems, which in turn slows the improvement of pragmatic competence. Furthermore, lack of self-confidence and shyness were also believed to be two main problems of challenges that prevent the learners from developing the concept of pragmatic competence.

As Table 4.13 presents, 57% of the participants were unconscious of the challenges that might hinder pragmatic competence improvement process, as they only stated “*I do not know*”. In contrast, nearly 26% of the respondents indicated that having different cultures that express variety of language usage is often a challenge that may not allow them to have a great level of pragmatic competence. Meaning to say, challenges associated with different cultural perspectives is the reason for the reduction of pragmatic competence. Upon this believe, a student stated:

**S.76:** *“I think culture can create some obstacles because every culture has a different way from another”*

About 7% of the respondents see language confusion as another barrier for pragmatic competence. According to those responses, learners might be unable to understand the target language system, and so they get confused easily. For example, a student claimed:

**S.49:** *“Students easily confused because of the new language system”*

Additionally, lack of self-confidence was also mentioned by 4% of the participants. They argued that learners might not be confident enough to speak or share their thoughts with others, consequently, they will not be able to improve themselves in terms of pragmatic competence. A student further explained:

**S.69:** *“Maybe lack of self-confidence because students maybe they cannot produce a sentence or having a hard time for finding a word”*

Shyness was the least mentioned problem that prevented pragmatic competence development. Only 2% of the participants pointed out that learners might be shy to talk with others and prefer to be quiet in or outside the classroom. Focusing on this matter, a student commented:

**S.122:** *“EFL learners might be shy to speak and interact with others”*

**Table 4.14.**

*Do you think foreign language institutions should integrate “pragmatic features” in their language curriculum? Why or why not?*

| Item            | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------|------------|
| 1.Yes           | 81     | 66%        |
| 2.I do not know | 38     | 31%        |
| 3.No            | 3      | 2%         |
| 4.Total         | 122    | 100%       |

The participants gave their views on whether language learning institutions should integrate pragmatic competence in their curriculum or not. The majority of the respondents were in favor of having pragmatic competence in foreign language syllabi. They expressed that language institutions should add pragmatic competence to the syllabus to ensure gaining successful language learning strategies. The other respondents, on the other hand, did not know if language institutions need pragmatic competence in its future curriculum or not, while the rest of the participants expressed their rejections to have it in language institutions. They thought that the current language curriculum fulfilled the learners' needs.

As the results suggest, eighty-one participants (66%) gave a positive response. When they further questioned why, they stated that it is an importance and necessity for language institutions to include pragmatic competence in their curriculum to better help language learners improve their learning opportunities. For instance, one of the research subjects explained:

**S.73:** *“Yes, because linguistic knowledge alone is not enough to learn a language. For example, in Turkey they focus on linguistic knowledge not pragmatic knowledge and that is why no one speaks English well”*

However, 31% of the participants answered with *“I do not know”*, while only 2% of them gave negative responses. They argued that pragmatics should not be integrated in foreign language teaching curriculum as it might be a waste of time and it will just lead to confusion problems. Focusing on this negative attitude, a student stated:

**S.96:** *“I do not think it is a good idea because students will have a problem with understanding pragmatic competence”*

**Table 4.15.**

*How important do you think it is to teach pragmatic knowledge to EFL learners? Explain in detail.*

| Item                                          | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.I do not know                               | 49     | 40%        |
| 2.It enhances effective language use          | 32     | 26%        |
| 3.It is significant in EFL education          | 26     | 21%        |
| 4.It provides clear and concise communication | 13     | 11%        |
| 5.Total                                       | 122    | 100%       |

The findings reported in Table 4.15 in regards to the question “*How important do you think it is to teach pragmatic knowledge to EFL learners? Explain in detail.*” Show that there are four different viewpoints made by the participants. First of all, it seems that a high number of the participants are unaware of the important role of pragmatic knowledge in EFL learning. Whereas, some of the participants showed a great interest towards improving different language usage as a result of pragmatic knowledge in EFL learning process. In addition to this, the research subjects believed that pragmatics knowledge is significant and necessary to fit in EFL education as it helps them to avoid misinterpretations across cultures and languages. Providing clear and concise communication was another factor mentioned by the respondents concerning the importance of pragmatic knowledge in education. They pointed out that pragmatic knowledge is vital for communicating their personal ideas, thoughts, and feelings clearly.

It can be noticed that 40% of the participants could not figure out the importance of pragmatic knowledge in education since they answered with “*I do not know*”. This might be attributed to their ignorance to pragmatics and its significance in language learning and teaching. Furthermore, about 26% of the participants believed that pragmatic knowledge plays an essential role in teaching them how to use the language appropriately. For example, one of the students stated:

**S.40:** *“It is important to teach it because if students don’t know the appropriate use of language in social way, we cannot say students learnt the language well. They just learnt words and rules of the target language not how to use the language appropriately”*

Moreover, twenty-one percent of the participants mentioned the significance of pragmatic knowledge in education. They clarified that with the help of pragmatic knowledge, education becomes more successful. A student, about this idea, commented as follows:

**S.21:** *“It is significant for EFL learners in their life to learn it”*

Some of the participants (11%) added that pragmatic knowledge represents a great factor in achieving clear and concise communication. They further explained that it allows them to have effective communication skills in social situations. For example, one of the students pointed out:

**S.75:** *“It is very important because the combination of effective communication goes through pragmatic knowledge”*

**Table 4.16.**

*Do you think using pragmatics tasks in English teaching textbooks can help develop students’ “pragmatic competence”? Why or why not?*

| Item            | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------|------------|
| 1.Yes           | 78     | 64%        |
| 2.I do not know | 36     | 30%        |
| 3.No            | 8      | 7%         |
| 4.Total         | 122    | 100%       |

Considering the participants’ opinions on whether they think using pragmatics tasks in English teaching textbooks can help develop their pragmatic competence or not, it was revealed that more than half of the participants displayed a positive attitude. The other responses were either neutral or totally negative. Some of the participants, in fact, believed

that pragmatics activities are a waste of time and they never increase their pragmatic competence level.

As Table 4.16 illustrates, seventy-eight students generally hold a positive attitude towards including pragmatics tasks in teaching textbooks as a way to develop their pragmatic competence. When the participants were further questioned to write their reasons behind their agreement, they articulated that pragmatics activities hold an important contribution in language learning and education in general. For example, a student explained:

**S.71:** *“I think using tasks can help develop students’ pragmatic competence because in Turkey we do not use the language outside the classroom, as a result we will not be able to use it in real situations. So, it can be very beneficial to have such tasks”*

While 30% replied with *“I do not know”*, some of the respondents, though not many in number (7%), made a comprehensive negative comment concerning pragmatics tasks in English teaching textbooks. They expressed their reasons by claiming that these activities might not be helpful in prompting their pragmatic competence. Focusing on this point, a student stated:

**S.34:** *“No, because pragmatic competence cannot be learned from textbooks. It should be naturally”*

**Table 4.17.**

*What kind of tasks do you think are necessary to improve students’ “pragmatic competence”? Please explain.*

| Item                  | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------|--------|------------|
| 1.Speaking activities | 71     | 58%        |
| 2.I do not know       | 42     | 34%        |
| 3.Watching videos     | 7      | 6%         |
| 4.Reading activities  | 1      | 1%         |
| 5.Total               | 122    | 100%       |

Different activities were mentioned by the participants in listing the best tasks that ensure students improvement in terms of pragmatic competence. More than half of the participants suggested speaking activities since they pointed out that speaking tasks improve their pragmatic competence performance. On the other hand, some of the participants did not know the relevant activities for pragmatic competence improvement. This might be the result of unawareness of the concept pragmatic competence and its role in learning foreign languages effectively. Considering the type of tasks needed to improve learners' pragmatic competence, watching videos and reading activities were also mentioned by the participants as two further options that help learners gain a high level of pragmatic competence.

As the findings in Table 4.17 show, seventy-one students (58%) chose speaking activities as their preferred type of tasks to improve pragmatic competence. They believed that speaking activities, such as role-play or presentations play a considerable role in raising learners' pragmatic competence. One of the participants further clarified:

**S.74:** *"I think role playing activities are really important to improve students' pragmatic competence. They can give the students a chance to express themselves in different scenarios"*

While some of the participants simply stated *"I do not know"*, around 6% of them suggested watching videos as a solution to improve learners' pragmatic competence. They claimed that activities that contain watching videos are beneficial and enjoyable at the same time. For example, a student explained:

**S.121:** *"Watching videos related to these topics"*

Only one participant sees reading books about the target language culture is a great way to improve pragmatic competence. She expressed her point of view as follows:

**S.53:** *"By reading books about culture"*

### 4.3. Discussion of the Findings

This section exhibits discussions of the key findings based on the main research questions. Then, discussions are displayed in line with reference to the related studies conducted on the same area of interest in order to present the similarities and differences between the present study and the previous research.

**Table 5.1**

*Research questions and main findings*

| Research questions                                                                                                                        | Key findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.1. How do pre-service EFL teachers conceptualize pragmatic competence?                                                                  | The research subjects perceived the concept “Pragmatic competence” differently. Seven different perspectives were provided by the participants. Some of them were aware of the concept “ <i>e.g., Appropriacy, communication intention, cultural purposes</i> ”. While the others were unaware or had narrowed conceptualization “ <i>e.g., I do not know, incorrect definition, incomplete definition, I do not remember</i> ” which, in fact, signal their low level of awareness and understanding of pragmatic competence. |
| 1.2. What is the pre-service EFL teachers’ perceived level of their pragmatic competence in English?                                      | The majority of the pre-service EFL teachers were found to be unaware of pragmatic competence, even when they were asked what the concept includes, the majority of the participants answered “ <i>I do not know</i> ”. Consequently, their perceived level was low.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 2. What are pre-service EFL teachers’ perceptions of integrating pragmatic features in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence? | The participants showed positive attitudes towards the integration of pragmatics in EFL teaching and learning process. They demonstrated that pragmatic features in EFL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

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contexts play a significant factor in pragmatic competence development. They also revealed some knowledge and skills for how to develop pragmatic competence by integrating pragmatics speaking activities, such as role play or situations.

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Since pragmatic competence is important for pre-service EFL teachers who are going to be responsible for teaching pragmatic knowledge to their students in the future, it is of great importance to understand their perceptions of the term “pragmatic competence”, in addition to their perceived level of pragmatic competence. Therefore, the first research question of the present study aimed to figure out the extent to which Turkish pre-service EFL teachers are aware of the pragmatic features in language learning and teaching. The question had two sub-questions.

The first sub-research question aimed to find out pre-service EFL teachers’ conceptualization of pragmatic competence. The data needed to answer this question were collected from an open-ended questionnaire and a five-points Likert scale questionnaire to better understand pre-service EFL teachers’ perceptions of the term “pragmatic competence”. The written data collected from an open-ended questionnaire revealed that there was a general agreement among pre-service EFL teachers to address the term “pragmatic competence” as the ability to use the language appropriately in social context, at a rate of 49%. However, four items, including *“I do not know, incorrect definition, incomplete definition, I do not remember”* revealed that pre-service EFL teachers’ knowledge of the concept “pragmatic competence” is insufficient. Communication intention and cultural purposes were also mentioned by the participants as further definitions of pragmatic competence.

As for the Likert scale questionnaire, 43.4% of pre-service EFL teachers agreed that they knew what pragmatic competence means, whereas 39.5% of them were not sure of the exact meaning of pragmatic competence. It was also found in the Likert scale questions that pre-service EFL teachers addressed pragmatic competence as a term related to appropriacy, communication ability, and knowledge of cultural features of language.

The second sub-question investigated pre-service EFL teachers' perceived level of pragmatic competence. What was surprising about the qualitative data is that in five out of eight questions on pragmatic competence, the category "*I do not know*" was the most frequently written answer by the majority of the participants, including the questions "*What does pragmatic competence include? What is the relationship between pragmatic competence and linguistic competence? What is the relationship between pragmatic competence and culture? What is the role of pragmatic competence in foreign language learning? How and why? What is the contribution of pragmatic competence in foreign language education?*", and it was also rated as the second most frequently written answer in the other two questions "*What does pragmatic competence include? Give examples. & What can a pragmatically competent learner of English do with the language?*".

As for the Likert scale questions, the quantitative data revealed that "*Not sure*" was chosen as the second or third option in most of the statements about pragmatic competence. In addition, when pre-service EFL teachers were given the statement "*I think the correct use of English is more important than using it appropriately*" 36.9% of them agreed that being grammatically correct in English is by far more important than being appropriate. By contrast, in statement 8 "*I think pragmatic errors have more negative effects on communications than grammatical errors*" the majority of pre-service EFL teachers (33.6%) replied with general agreement. This confusion occurred in the two statements mentioned above showed that pre-service EFL teachers displayed a low level of pragmatic competence awareness. In addition, the majority of pre-service EFL teachers believed that misunderstanding and communication breakdown tend to be caused by pragmatic errors. That is why it is important to know the politeness and cultural aspects of the target language.

To sum up, based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the pre-service EFL teachers, one can see that most of the pre-service EFL teachers participated in the study presented an inadequate level of pragmatic awareness in language learning process. They tend to unrecognize the pragmatic elements or questions related to pragmatic competence. The main reason behind their unctuousness of pragmatic competence is most probably because they have not taken lessons on pragmatic competence in advance, especially first- and second-year students. As it was revealed in the background questions where 69.7% of the participants admitted that they have not taken any courses on

pragmatics. Therefore, the possible awareness without having a certain level of pragmatic ability is not possible to maintain and realize the pragmatic competence in language learning.

Such finding from the current study adds evidence to the findings of the previous studies carried out by (e.g., Bella, 2012; Hyekyung, 2017; Kausar, 2016; & Schauer, 2006) as these studies in addition to the present study proved that the research participants were unaware of pragmatic features in language learning process. By contrast, this particular research result was not similar to the study of (e.g., Dehghayedi, 2015; & Djaber, 2019) since these two studies came to conclusion that the participants displayed a high level of pragmatic awareness, whereas the present study revealed the opposite.

Furthermore, the findings of this study were in parallel with the findings of Barzani, and Mohammadzadeh (2022), Bektas-Cetinkaya (2012), Ekin and Damar (2013), Herguner and Cakir (2017), Hmouri (2021), Li (2015), Salimi and Karami (2019), Bardis, Silman, and Mohammadzadeh (2021), Terzi (2014), Yildirim (2015), Yilmaz (2014), Yuan (2012), Yuray (2013), in which the participants experienced a poor level of pragmatic competence. The insufficient level of pragmatic competence resulted in committing pragmatic mistakes in communication. However, the key findings of (e.g., Ozet, 2019; Yuan, Tangen, Mills, & Lidstone, 2015) were found to be different from the present study because the participants in the previous studies displayed a high level of pragmatic competence awareness, while the present study presented the opposite.

The second research question aimed to investigate the Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' opinions on integrating pragmatic features in language teaching to develop their pragmatic competence. In order to answer this question, the necessary data of the study were collected through two different instruments; an open-ended questionnaire and five-point Likert scale questionnaire as to better get a detailed understanding of pre-service EFL teachers' viewpoints of whether or not pragmatic knowledge should be merged with foreign language teaching curriculum. The results of the present study indicated a general agreement among pre-service EFL teachers that calls for new EFL syllabi that aim to promote not only the linguistic skills but also the pragmatic knowledge.

According to the responses drawn from the Likert scale questionnaire, acquiring the pragmatic features of the target language make it easier for them to develop their pragmatic competence. The data indicated that the item “*Strongly agree*” was the most frequently chosen item when pre-service EFL teachers questioned about the importance of integrating pragmatic features to develop pragmatic competence. For instance, in Table 6.2, 46.7% of pre-service EFL teachers voted for integrating pragmatic features in foreign language curriculum to develop students’ communicative competence in English. Also, the findings taken from Table 6.2 indicated that teaching the social and cultural norms of the target language were chosen to be influential factors that should be an integral part of language teaching education.

The written data collected from an open-ended questionnaire provided a similar general tendency towards the necessity of integrating pragmatic features in language teaching, as 66% of pre-service EFL teachers stressed that teaching the pragmatic elements of the target language ensures pragmatic competence development. They further articulated that learning the pragmatic elements of the target language allows them to know how to use the language appropriately in different situations. Also, pre-service EFL teachers believed that the integration of pragmatic features in language teaching curriculum has a positive contribution in foreign language education, such as raising the learners’ awareness of language use and improving their communication skills. When pre-service EFL teachers were asked about the kind of tasks needed for pragmatic competence development, 58% of them suggested speaking activities. The majority of pre-service EFL teachers articulated that using role plays and group discussions are effective ways of developing learners’ pragmatic competence.

To sum up, Lightbown and Spada (1999) explained that classroom teaching and learning of pragmatics play a key role in learning the appropriate use of English language successfully. Thus, in EFL context, a specific attention has to be dedicated to the importance of learning the pragmatic ability in order to ensure pragmatic competence development. Otherwise, pre-service EFL teachers end up being “mute” English language teachers with high awareness of the practical skills but low pragmatic competence performance (Yuan, 2012).

Since significant number of pre-service EFL teachers expressed their agreements for pragmatics' integration in language teaching, it can be realized that the findings of the present study are consistent with the findings of (e.g., Alsuhaibani, 2020; Aziz, Saleem, Saleem, Batool, 2020; Tulgar, 2016; Tulgar, Yagizad, & Han, 2017; Yuan, Tangen, Mills, & Lidstone, 2015; Yuray, 2013) where the participants showed a positive attitude towards the integration of pragmatics in language teaching and learning. The findings of the current study in line with the past studies mentioned above prove that pragmatic knowledge is a crucial factor in achieving pragmatic competence awareness.



## **5. CONCLUSION**

### **5.0. Presentation**

In this chapter, first, a brief summary of the current study is presented. Second, the pedagogical implications for learning and teaching pragmatic competence in EFL context are also drawn from the results and discussion of the study. Limitation of the study as well as suggestions for further research are also presented and discussed.

### **5.1. Summary of the Study**

This study has investigated Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions and conceptualization of pragmatic competence. The study has examined pre-service EFL teachers' level of pragmatic competence in language learning. It also explored the target participants' perceptions of integrating pragmatics in language teaching in order to develop their pragmatic competence. A mixed method research design has been employed in this thesis. The data necessary for the study were collected from 122 Turkish pre-service EFL teachers at Baskent University in Turkey. The data collection tools of the study were: a five-point Likert scale questionnaire, and an open-ended questionnaire.

Quantitative data analysis procedures for this study (i.e., five-point Likert scale questionnaire) were analyzed using IBM SPSS program to calculate the frequency and percentages of the statements related pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions of pragmatic competence, in addition to their viewpoints about integrating pragmatics in language teaching to develop their pragmatic competence.

Qualitative data analysis procedures, on the other hand, (i.e., open-ended questionnaire) were conducted using content analysis procedure proposed by Creswell (2009). The data then were transformed to Excel to run numbers and percentages needed for the descriptive analysis step concerning the research subjects' perceptions of pragmatic competence, and their attitudes towards teaching pragmatic features to develop pragmatic competence.

The final outcome of the findings, in a broader sense, revealed that Turkish pre-service EFL teachers showed a low level of pragmatic competence. When the students

were asked about the concept “pragmatic competence”, they, in fact, showed a limited level of pragmatic competence awareness. Since the students lack the basic pragmatic abilities, it was obvious that their knowledge about the appropriate language use in contexts would be inadequate. Therefore, it can be pointed out that the majority of pre-service EFL teachers were unaware of pragmatic competence, and its role in EFL education. This might be attributed to the result of having poor pragmatic ability regarding the social and cultural application of language in different contexts. Therefore, having inadequate pragmatic knowledge is sure to result in misunderstanding and in pragmatic failures in communication (Yuan, 2012).

Furthermore, regarding the participants’ perceptions of integrating pragmatics in language teaching to develop their pragmatic competence, it has been observed that the pre-service EFL teachers displayed positive attitudes and call for pragmatics integration in language teaching. As little or no attention has been paid to pragmatics teaching, the participants gave a voice to introduce pragmatics features in foreign language teaching curriculum as an effective way to promote the learners’ pragmatic competence. Salimi and Karami (2019) further explained that the integration of pragmatics plays an important role in helping the learners to practice communication in different contexts to better improve their awareness of the pragmatic features of the target language.

In sum, as the findings of the study suggest, pre-service EFL teachers displayed a low level of awareness and understanding of pragmatic competence as they operate a rather limited knowledge of the pragmatic features in language learning and teaching. Pre-service EFL teachers’ incomplete realization of pragmatic knowledge created the danger of having unqualified teachers who are not aware of the appropriate language use in different contexts (Aziz, Saleem, & Batool, 2020; Terzi, 2014). Therefore, their opinion concerning the necessity of integrating pragmatic features in language teaching and learning should be taken into consideration for better educational syllabi that empower pre-service EFL teachers with language competence, therefore, pragmatic competence in order to become more effective English language teachers in the future. More engaging of pragmatically oriented activities in EFL educational contexts is a fundamental factor in developing their pragmatic competence by becoming more efficient in language teaching and learning (Baradis, Silman, & Mohammadzadeh, 2021).

## 5.2. Pedagogical Implications of the Study

In light of the research findings, certain suggestions and implications that could be useful in EFL contexts are made. First, foreign language teaching institutions should be reconsidered in terms of integrating pragmatic knowledge in teaching syllabus. In other words, they should move beyond the linguistics emphasis to pragmatic knowledge in language teaching and learning. Pre-service EFL teachers' weakness in pragmatic competence gives a clear impression to the lack of sufficient pragmatics knowledge in EFL teaching, although the ELT program at Baskent University provided different courses that aim to develop their general language skills, therefore, pragmatics (See appendix D), it is still important to strengthen and reform some of the English language teaching curriculum in Turkey in order to ensure pragmatic competence development. Besides, EFL students generally and pre-service EFL teachers specifically have the right to be exposed to pragmatics and linguistics respectively. The integration of pragmatics in addition to the current teaching syllabi would probably increase the students' level of general language development.

Second, curriculum designers have to pay much more attention to pragmatics from the early stages at the university. Pre-service EFL teachers should have introductory knowledge about pragmatics and its important roles in language learning from the very first years. As a matter of fact, EFL learners have few chances to interact with native speakers because of that they lack pragmatic competence. For that reason, foreign language curriculum designers have to design a variety of pragmatic tasks that enhance students' pragmatic competence. There are different activities that aim to develop learners' pragmatic competence ability, for instance, acting out, situations, role play, and so on. These types of activities will help pre-service EFL teachers to be exposed to how to use the language effectively based on the contexts.

Third, EFL teachers should not neglect the necessity of developing pre-service EFL teachers' pragmatic competence in their teaching process. As it has been proved in the present study, teaching pragmatics is a crucial part of EFL teaching principles, teachers have to provide more pragmatic elements and well-designed tasks for students in the classroom to prompt their pragmatic competence ability. There are a variety of communicative activities that can be appropriately applied by the teachers inside the

classes. Moreover, EFL teachers have to move beyond teacher-centered to student-centered techniques. By applying so, they can help pre-service EFL teachers become active and efficient in different language use. Also, EFL teachers need to attend conferences and seminars that provide explicit guidelines that they can apply in order to assist students to become pragmatically competent.

Finally, since the results revealed that pre-service EFL teachers are not fully aware of pragmatic competence in language learning, they are required to enhance their ability to utilize the target language appropriately according to contexts independently. Pre-service EFL teachers have to be able to choose effective learning strategies that are suitable to their learning style in order to help them develop their pragmatics and learning potential in general. Pre-service EFL teachers need to realize that they play a fundamental role in foreign language learning process. They need to make adjustments to their current pragmatic level, and do self-assessment or peer-assessment that seeks to raise their pragmatic competence awareness. Also, they are required to actively participate in the classroom and take part in communication in order to become pragmatically competent learners.

### **5.3. Limitation of the Study and Recommendations for further Research**

The results of the study can be interpreted within the boundaries of this research context since the study was conducted as a case study in a certain educational context with a relatively limited number of participants. The course programs in other ELT programs at different universities may differ from those of this particular study along with the EFL teacher educators' approach to pragmatics and teaching pragmatics in EFL settings, which may influence the results accordingly.

One of the main purposes of this thesis was to find out Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions of pragmatic competence. It was also set out to explore their attitudes towards integrating pragmatics to enhance pragmatic competence. It did not aim to investigate the teachers' perceptions regarding the research topic. Thus, an empirical study can be conducted in the future upon the teachers' perceptions of pragmatic competence, and their attitudes towards integrating pragmatics in language teaching to develop learners' pragmatic competence.

In addition, it might also be beneficial to investigate the effect of the current environment in Turkey on the learning of pragmatics. Or, the influence of the current teaching methods applied in Turkey on developing learners' pragmatic competence.

Also, the present study did not aim to analyze the teaching materials provided by EFL institutions. Therefore, further studies can aim to analyze the university's textbooks in order to see the pragmatics knowledge available in coursebooks and whether their contents regarding pragmatic competence need to be developed or not.

Last but not least, future studies could also focus on investigating the pragmatic competence of Turkish pre-service EFL teachers in performing speech acts of criticizing, promising, expressing agreement and disagreement, and other elements of pragmatic knowledge, such as discourse analysis or turn taking.

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## Appendix (A)

### INVESTIGATING TURKISH PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND INTEGRATION OF PRAGMATICS IN EFL TEACHING PROCESS

#### *Participant's consent form*

| <b><i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| <b>Taking Part in the Project</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |            |           |
| I have read and understood the project information sheet and the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question, please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.) |            |           |
| I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.                                                                                                                                                                                                          |            |           |
| I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include closed-ended questions "Likert-type scale" and open-ended questions.                                                                                                            |            |           |
| I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw.                                   |            |           |
| <b>How my information will be used during and after the project</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                            |            |           |
| I understand my personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.                                                                                                                                |            |           |
| I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs.                                                                                                                                                            |            |           |
| I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.                                                                                        |            |           |
| I understand and agree that other authorised researchers may use my data in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.                                     |            |           |
| I give permission for the information that I provide to be deposited in this study, and it can be used for future research and learning                                                                                                                                        |            |           |
| <b>So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                              |            |           |
| I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Baskent.                                                                                                                                                        |            |           |

Name of participant

Signature

Date

Name of Researcher

Signature

Date

## Questionnaire 1

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this questionnaire. This questionnaire aims to investigate pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards pragmatic competence and integrating pragmatics in English language teaching and learning. We are interested in your personal experiences of learning and your views on teaching. Your answers to the questionnaire will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of academic research.

*Circle only one answer in the following scale.*

1= Strongly disagree    2= Disagree    3= Not sure    4= Agree    5= Strongly agree

|                                                                                                                                |   |   |   |   |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I know what “pragmatic competence” means.                                                                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I know what “pragmatic failure” means as a concept.                                                                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Pragmatic competence is related to the appropriate use of language according to the context.                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I think the correct use of English is more important than using it appropriately.                                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. I think pragmatic competence involves knowledge of social and cultural features of language.                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. It is important to use appropriate grammatical structures to fulfill correct functions in English according to the context. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. I think pragmatic competence should be part of communication abilities.                                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I think pragmatic errors have more negative effects on communications than grammatical errors.                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Inappropriate language use leads to pragmatic failures leading to misunderstanding and communication breakdowns.            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. I think misunderstanding or communication breakdown tends to be caused by pragmatic errors more                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

|                                                                                                                                                                 |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| often than grammatical errors.                                                                                                                                  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11. I think knowing how to express politeness is closely related to pragmatic competence.                                                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Students usually have more difficulties in using socially and culturally appropriate English than grammatically correct English.                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Students often experience difficulties in producing and comprehending speaker's intended messages appropriately in English according to different contexts. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. I am willing to take a teacher training program if it is thought to develop students' pragmatic competence.                                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. I would teach students how to use English in a socially and culturally appropriate way.                                                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. I would use interactive activities to promote students' pragmatic competence whenever possible.                                                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. I would help students develop pragmatic competence to develop their communication skills in English.                                                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. I would teach students how to sound polite, cooperative, and friendly according to different situations.                                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. I would teach English culture as a way to help students develop their pragmatic competence.                                                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. Integrating pragmatics in language teaching process is significant in developing students' communicative competence in English.                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. Using situations and role plays are effective ways of developing students' pragmatic competence.                                                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## Appendix (B)

### Questionnaire 2

Thank you for agreeing to take part in completing this questionnaire. The questionnaire seeks to investigate the Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' conceptualization of pragmatic competence and perceptions on integrating pragmatics into language teaching and learning. There are no correct or incorrect answers. Please provide as much detailed information as possible. You can be assured that your answers will be kept in the strictest confidentiality, and used for academic purposes only.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Section A: Demographic Information</b>                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| A1. Gender:    Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                                                 |
| A2. Age: .....                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| A3. Class: .....                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| A4. How long have you been learning English? .....                                                                                                                                                                           |
| A5. Have you ever been abroad? (If yes) Where? And how long?<br>.....                                                                                                                                                        |
| A6. How would you assess your personal level in English?<br>Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Upper-intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Native-speaker like <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A7. Have you ever heard about pragmatic competence?    Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                              |
| A8. Have you ever taken any courses on pragmatics?    Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                               |
| A9. Would you like to work as an EFL teacher when you graduate?<br>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                |

**Section B:** *Your perception on pragmatic/ sociolinguistic/ sociocultural competence*

*NOTE: The term “pragmatic competence” can be used interchangeably with either “sociolinguistic competence” or “sociocultural competence”.*

B1. What do you understand from the concept “pragmatic competence”?

B1.1. What does “pragmatic competence” include? Give examples.

B1.2. What can a “pragmatically competent” learner of English do with the language?

B1.3. What happens if a learner of English has a lack of pragmatic competence? What might be the sequences?

B2. What is the relationship between “linguistic knowledge” and “pragmatic competence”?

B3. What is the relationship between “pragmatic competence” and “culture”?

B4. What is the role of “pragmatic competence” in foreign language learning? How and why?

B4.1. What is the contribution of “pragmatic competence” in foreign language education?

**Section C:** *Your perception on integrating pragmatics in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence*

*Please answer the following questions in English.*

C1. How can “pragmatic competence” be improved?

C1.1. What might be the challenges and problems encountered when developing pragmatic competence?

C2. Do you think foreign language institutions should integrate pragmatic features in their language curriculum? Why or why not?



C2.1. How important do you think it is to teach pragmatic knowledge to EFL learners? Explain in detail.

C3. Do you think using pragmatics tasks in English teaching textbooks can help develop students' "pragmatic competence"? Why or why not?

C3.1. What kind of tasks do you think are necessary to improve students' "pragmatic competence"? Please explain.



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION**

**Appendix (C)**  
**BAŞKENT UNIVERSITY**  
**Institute of Educational Sciences**

**Questionnaire**

Thank you for agreeing to take part in completing this questionnaire. The questionnaire seeks to investigate the Turkish pre-service EFL teachers' conceptualization of pragmatic competence. There are no correct or incorrect answers, we are interested in your own experience of learning English; therefore, you can be assured that all the answers you provide will be kept in the strictest confidentiality, and used for academic purposes only.

**Section A: Demographic Information**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A1. Gender:<br><br>Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                         |
| A2. Age:<br><br>Under 20 <input type="checkbox"/> Over 20 <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                                       |
| A3. Class:<br><br>.....                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| A4. How many years have you been learning English?<br><br>.....                                                                                                                                          |
| A5. Have you ever been abroad? (If yes) Where? And how long?<br><br>.....                                                                                                                                |
| A6. How would you assess your personal level in English?<br><br>Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Average <input type="checkbox"/> I do not know <input type="checkbox"/> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>A7. Have you ever heard about pragmatic competence?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>      No <input type="checkbox"/></p>                                                    |
| <p>A8. Would you like to work as an EFL teacher when you graduate?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>      No <input type="checkbox"/>      Not sure <input type="checkbox"/></p> |

**Section B:** *Your perception of pragmatic competence*

B1. What is the meaning of pragmatic competence?

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B2. What does pragmatic competence include?

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B3. What is the relationship between pragmatic competence and culture?

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B4. What is the difference between linguistic knowledge and pragmatic knowledge?

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B5. Do you think pragmatic competence is important? Why or why not?

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B6. What is the role of pragmatic competence in foreign language learning?

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B7. What is the significance of pragmatic competence in foreign language teaching?

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B8. What is the contribution of pragmatic competence in foreign language education?

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B9. How can pragmatic competence be improved?

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B10. What are the factors that might hinder the process of pragmatic competence and its development?

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**Section C:** *Your perception of integrating pragmatic features in language teaching to develop pragmatic competence*

Please answer the following questions in English.

C1. Do you think foreign language institutions should integrate pragmatic features in their language curriculum? Why or why not?

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C2. Do you think using pragmatics tasks in English teaching textbooks can help you develop your pragmatic competence? Why or why not?

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C3. What kind of tasks do you think are necessary to improve students' pragmatic competence?

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C4. How important do you think it is to teach pragmatic knowledge to EFL learners?

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.....

**Section D:** *Circle only one answer from the Likert questions*

1= Strongly agree    2= Agree    3= Neutral    4= Strongly disagree    5= Disagree

|                                                                                                                                                   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| D1. I think I have never heard the concept “pragmatic competence” before.                                                                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D2. I think the correct use of English is more important than the appropriate use of it.                                                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D3. I think pragmatic competence involves knowledge of social and cultural functions of language.                                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D4. I think pragmatic competence should be part of communication abilities.                                                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D5. I think pragmatic errors have more negative effects on language use than grammatical errors.                                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D6. I think misunderstanding or communication breakdown tends to be caused by pragmatic errors more often than grammatical errors.                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D7. I think knowing how to express politeness is closely related to pragmatic competence.                                                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D8. I usually have more difficulties using English socially and culturally appropriately than using English grammatically correct.                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D9. I often experience difficulties both producing and comprehending speaker’s intended message appropriately according to situations in English. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

|                                                                                                                            |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| D10. I am willing to take teacher training program if it is thought to promote pragmatic competence.                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D11. I would teach students how to use English in a socially and culturally appropriate way.                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D12. I would use interactive activities to promote students' pragmatic competence whenever possible.                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D13. I would help students develop pragmatic competence as one important part of teaching communication skills in English. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D14. I would teach students how to sound polite, cooperative and friendly according to different situations.               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D15. I would teach English culture as a way to help students develop their pragmatic competence.                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND  
PARTICIPATION**

## Appendix (D)

Course Structure Diagram with Credits of ELT Program at Baskent University, in Ankara, Turkey. Available (On-line):

<http://truva.baskent.edu.tr/bilgipaketi/?dil=EN&menu=akademik&inner=katalog&birim=703>





1993

**BAŞKENT ÜNİVERSİTESİ**

**Akademik Değerlendirme Koordinatörlüğü**

11.10.2021

Sayı :E-62310886-302.14.01-69789  
(Fatma Mohamed Ahmed  
Elmeddahım)

Konu :Tez Önerisi

**EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE**

İlgi : 27.09.2021 tarih ve 65114 sayılı yazınız.

Enstitünüz İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Fatma Mohamed Ahmed Elmeddahım'ın, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Sevgi Şahin danışmanlığında yürütmeyi planladığı, "İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının Edimbilim Yetisi ve Edimbilimin İngilizce Öğretimine Entegrasyonu Üzerine Algıları" başlıklı tez önerisi değerlendirilmiş ve bilgilerinize ekte sunulmuştur.

Prof. Dr. M. Abdülkadir VAROĞLU  
Kurul Başkanı

Ek: Değerlendirme Formu

Sayı : 17162298.600-188  
Konu : Tez Önerisi

5 EKİM 2021

İlgili Makama

Üniversitemiz Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Fatma Mohamed Ahmed Elmeddahum'un, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Sevgi Şahin danışmanlığında yürütmeyi planladığı, "İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının Edimbilim Yetisi ve Edimbilimin İngilizce Öğretimine Entegrasyonu Üzerine Algıları" başlıklı tez önerisi değerlendirilmiş ve yapılmasında bir sakınca olmadığı tespit edilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımızla sunarız.

Başkent Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler ve Sanat Araştırma Kurulu

| Ad, Soyad                       | Değerlendirme              | İmza |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|------|
| Prof. Dr. M. Abdülkadir Varoğlu | Olumlu/ <del>Olumsuz</del> |      |
| Prof. Dr. Kudret Güven          | Olumlu/Olumsuz             |      |
| Prof. Ali Sevgi                 | Olumlu/Olumsuz             |      |
| Prof. Dr. Işıl Bulut            | Olumlu/Olumsuz             |      |
| Prof. Dr. Sadegül Akbaba Altun  | Olumlu/ <del>Olumsuz</del> |      |
| Prof. Dr. Can Mehmet Hersek     | Olumlu/ <del>Olumsuz</del> |      |
| Prof. Dr. Özcan Yağcı           | Olumlu/ <del>Olumsuz</del> |      |

16.09.2021

**BAŞKENT ÜNİVERSİTESİ**  
**EĞİTİM FAKÜLTESİ**  
**YABANCI DİLLER EĞİTİMİ ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞINA**

**ANKARA**

Başkent Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Programı yüksek lisans öğrencisi Fatma Mohamed Ahmed Elmeddahim, Doktor Öğretim Üyesi Sevgi ŞAHİN danışmanlığı altında yürüttüğümüz “An Investigation of Pre-Service EFL Teachers’ Perceptions of Pragmatic Competence and Integration of Pragmatics In EFL Teaching Process” adlı yüksek lisans tez çalışmamız için Başkent Üniversitesi İngilizce Öğretmenliği Programı öğrencilerinden veri toplamayı planlamaktayız. Etik kurula başvurmak üzere gereğini bilgilerinize arz ederim.

Fatma Mohamed Ahmed Elmeddahim

EK 1: Yüksek Lisans Tez Önerisi