

Considering Pragmatics in Foreign Language Writing Instruction: Teachers' Attitudes and Practices

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Abstract:

The present study aims to investigate whether pragmatics has any place in the teachers' writing instruction. It is based on the assumption that teaching target language pragmatics would promote the learners' writing skill. Therefore, this study attempts to unveil the teachers' practices as to whether they consider any pragmatic features of the target language in their writing classes. It also seeks to probe their attitudes towards integrating explicit pragmatic instruction into their writing classes. To this end, a questionnaire was administered to a sample of eleven teachers of writing at the Department of English at the University of Jijel, Algeria. The findings revealed that most teachers do not consider the target language pragmatic norms in their teaching, although they recognize the effect of native language norms on their students' writing. In addition, the majority of the teachers voiced their positive attitudes towards integrating pragmatics in their writing instruction and expressed their willingness in adapting existing materials to attain the set objectives of foreign language writing.

Keywords: foreign language writing, pragmatics, native language norms, teaching pragmatics, target language norms, writing instruction.

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Learning to write is a vital skill for foreign language (FL) learners as much as for them using their native language (NL). Being able to write in a FL is not only a desirable skill, but is a fundamental skill for the fulfillment and advancement of the learners. Training the learners to write thus requires the care and attention of language teachers. FL learners need to be taught processes and strategies for successful writing given the complex nature of FL writing. They clearly need help with the choice of linguistic forms as well as the communicative functions they perform. More importantly, attention should be drawn to the organization of texts since these differ from one language to another.

Research in Contrastive Rhetoric has shown that writers from different languages organize their texts differently (Kaplan, 1966). In this regard, Raimes (1983) made a point in stating that learners who are able to write well in their native language have to develop as well the ability to formulate their ideas in English for English-speaking readers. This note also raises attention to the fact that proficiency in ones' native language does not guarantee good writing in a FL, another proof that justifies the complex nature of FL writing. For this reason, we believe that Algerian learners of English are not exception to this situation. They seem to struggle in achieving the goals of the writing assignment and fail to produce appropriate texts that meet the requirements of academic writing and the target language (TL) audience. In order to address this problem and to raise the learners' awareness of the TL norms, it is important to teach its pragmatics. More precisely, pragmatic awareness raising tasks and activities can be easily embedded in FL classrooms. Therefore, considering the pragmatic aspects of the TL is of paramount importance for learners to achieve efficient written communication.

Because research has shown that teaching TL pragmatic norms explicitly to FL learners proved effective in promoting their writing skills (White, 2001; Kasper & Rose, 2002; Rose 2005), we attempt in this paper to reveal whether teachers of writing consider any pragmatic norms in teaching writing as well as their attitudes towards integrating pragmatics in their writing instruction. The present research raises the following questions, accordingly:

1. Do teachers consider teaching the target language pragmatic norms to improve their students' writing?
2. What are the teachers' attitudes towards integrating pragmatics in their writing classes?

2. Literature Review:

The emergence of CR has had a significant impact on the development of research in L2 and FL writing contexts. This impact has led researchers to investigate the processes that writers adopt as well as the factors that influence the texts they produce. Because culture is at the core of CR research and pragmatics as well, it is necessary to explore the relationship between pragmatics and writing. The following is a review on the nature of FL writing, the research studies conducted in the field and the basic considerations for the teaching of writing in FL contexts. The importance of incorporating explicit pragmatic instruction is also highlighted in addition to the studies that investigated the impact of pragmatics on the writing skill.

2.1. Foreign Language Writing

Writing in English is particularly difficult for FL learners as they are expected to produce native-like pieces of writing. Part of this difficulty stems from the fact that first language (L1) and second language (L2) writing are different. Research into L2 and FL

writing has shown that FL learners usually fail to meet the expectations of the TL reader. Such failure could be attributed again to differences in FL writing, as Connor (2002, p. 504) reported that differences stem from “multiple sources including L1, national culture, L1 educational background, disciplinary culture, genre characteristics, and mismatched expectations between readers and writers”. Therefore, consideration of native culture, language proficiency, audience background and the type of writing is significant for both teachers and learners. That is, learners can benefit from awareness raising tasks that target those differences so they can analyze the writing assignment. On the other hand, teachers should select and design appropriate instructional materials to achieve this aim.

Writing in a FL, as already stated, is a complex task and so is the teaching process because writing in L1 is significantly different from FL writing. Conceivably, contrasting the two is probably the best way to appreciate this complexity. Research into FL writing highlighted some of the discrepancies and explained its nature (Connor & Farmer, 1990; Cumming, 1990; Silva, 1992; Casanave, 1995; Leki, 1995; Connor, 1996; Hyland, 2003). These studies revealed that FL writers differ in terms of the features of the texts they produce, the composing processes and the social context in which writing takes place. Some other factors such as individual differences, language and strategy differences, and cultural differences also play a role in developing writing proficiency (Weigle, 2002; Hyland, 2003). The learners differ in their aptitudes, motivation and meta-cognitive knowledge that influence their acquisition of the writing skills. They are also distinguished by their proficiency level, lack of vocabulary or grammar. These factors constitute an obstacle for learners to convey their ideas appropriately and correctly in English. Probably cultural differences distinguish the foreign learners’ writing from those of the native speakers more than other aspects. The learners’ cultural values are carried out through language; however, differences in expectations and beliefs render communication in writing more challenging for them (Hyland, 2003). These are some considerations that should be highlighted for the sake of improving FL writing instruction.

2.1.1. Research in Foreign Language Writing Contexts

The fact that L1 and FL writing differ from one another reveals that FL writing is taught differently in various contexts. This fact calls for considering certain variables in teaching writing in foreign language contexts. Understanding research, the current trends and approaches would enable teachers to structure their courses and programs in order to improve their learners’ writing skills. Considering research, Sasaki (2009) adopted a socio-cognitive design to investigate Japanese learners’ cognitive and social aspects that may influence their writing ability and motivation. The findings revealed that L2 metaknowledge and writing practice were particularly useful in improving the learners’ writing ability. In addition, living in an English-speaking country was a motivational factor in that learners who spent some time abroad were motivated to enhance their L2 writing ability. On their part, Schoonen et.al (2009) investigated the linguistic and cognitive demands of FL writing of Dutch students writing in English. Their study showed that writing proficiency is strongly connected to processing speed as well as linguistic knowledge. Additionally, grammatical knowledge and speed of processing have shown to be heavily connected to writing proficiency than to their lexical proficiency. Both fluency and revision processes were paid more attention in FL writing as compared to L1 writing, particularly to the linguistic features of their texts. Another study was conducted by Manchon, Roca De Larios and Murphy (2009) to inquire into the cognitive activity of writing by Spanish learners. They also attempted to highlight the potential differences in the writers’ processes and strategies when writing in their L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English). The results reported that writers with a high L2 proficiency make

more strategic decisions throughout the writing process; formulation and revision increase as the writing process progresses.

2.1.2. Instructional Considerations for Teaching Foreign Language Writing

In respect of instructional considerations, Hyland (2003) suggested that teachers need to determine their learners' needs first, then select and organize the elements they need to learn on that basis. They are also required to provide them with opportunities for writing and monitor their learning. When preparing a writing course, identifying needs of learners is essential for an effective course as Hyland (2003) maintained. Although these needs may be quite difficult to determine, teachers are advised to distinguish between what learners know and what they have to learn to make the process easier. In other words, teachers need to collect information about current knowledge and abilities of the learners as well as their future skills and the linguistic knowledge they are supposed to gain. Moreover, Hyland emphasized that teachers should take into consideration the learning context in which the writing course will operate. This consideration involves the educational background of the teachers, the methods adopted, accessibility of materials and facilities, in addition to the relationship of the writing course to its immediate context (Hyland, 2003). However, this learning context may either support the implementation of the writing course ensuring its success as it may determine its failure. For example, the teachers' experience and expertise, the availability of the teaching materials and the priority given to writing in the curriculum all contribute to its success or failure.

Once learners' needs and learning context are analyzed, course goals and objectives are formulated. Course goals refer to the outcomes that the course aims to achieve and are centered on the learners' needs and the learning context. Hyland (2003, p. 86) claimed that "goals can vary in their emphasis on affective, learning, language, and cognitive outcomes, but they should seek to reflect skills that can be described, practiced, and assessed in the course". Goals are broad statements and are translated into more specific instructional objectives. Objectives in turn provide information about what learners are expected to do by the end of the course. Having the course goals set, the content, tasks, and assignments are then determined. Decisions about these involve not only the course goals and objectives but they also reflect the teachers' philosophy of teaching in general and writing in particular. Almost the same principles and considerations are stated by Kroll (2001) in the design of any course and program to teach writing in a FL or L2 context. The first consideration to address in preparing a given course is to assign students a placement test. The aim of this test is to measure the students' proficiency level in writing which in turn permits the teacher to establish the course goals, select the teaching materials and the methodologies to be used in their writing classes. Having students placed into classes based on their performance in the test, the principles of the writing curriculum are then established. Hence, the goals set will vary depending on the level and skills of the students involved.

In designing any writing syllabus, Kroll emphasized that teachers should take into consideration curricular goals and the students' needs and skills. The syllabus generally reflects the teachers' philosophy of teaching writing. Regardless of these philosophies, teachers should consider some aspects in planning a course. Some of these considerations, as Kroll outlined, include the amount of assignments to complete and the time allocated for them, the composing processes to be presented and grammar patterns to address, the amount of reading to be covered and assessment decisions. Another significant component of a writing class is the writing assignment, according to Kroll (2001, p. 225) "all assignments and the topics they contain must be carefully designed, sequenced, and structured so that the teacher knows exactly what the learning goals of each paper is and the student gains something by working on any given assignment". Whether teachers adopt a certain teaching

philosophy or another, assignments must be carefully designed to promote the students' writing skills and to achieve the goals of the writing syllabus.

2.2. The Significance of Teaching Pragmatics in Foreign Language Writing Classrooms

It has been noted that differences between L1 and FL writing are attributed to many factors. Some of these factors are related to the learners themselves in terms of their attitudes, motivation and educational and cultural backgrounds (Weigle, 2002, Hyland 2003). Social and cultural factors shape the learners' knowledge and their understanding of the world and hence may influence their learning and communication. It is important to consider that the learners' transition from L1 writing to FL writing is challenging because "when we move between languages, we also move between pragmatic norms and this can be a minefield for learners of a language" (O'Keeffe, Clancy & Adolphs, 2011, p. 100). Therefore, what is more challenging might be to understand the use of certain linguistic forms and to acquire them because some FL features could be clear on the surface while the pragmatic norms underlying them are more difficult to discover. It is then argued that teaching pragmatics to foreign language learners is inevitable to develop their pragmatic competence in the TL.

Pragmatics is defined as "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (Crystal, 1985, p. 240). This definition encompasses all the participants involved in communication, their linguistic choices, the challenges they face in using language and interpreting meaning as well as the effects of those choices. With regard to writing, Cohen (2010) maintained that developing knowledge about pragmatics and the ability to use it is important for FL learners. On the one hand, "as writers, we need to know how to write our messages intelligibly, again paying attention to level of politeness, directness, and formality, as well as considering issues of rhetorical structure" (Cohen, 2010, p. 4). On the other hand, Cohen added that "as readers, we need to comprehend written messages, identifying the rhetorical structure of the message and catching sometimes subtle indications of tone or attitude in the communication" (2010, p. 4). He further highlighted the fact that research on pragmatics has dealt with the spoken medium, but little attention was devoted to writing. Consequently, little is known concerning the ability of the learners to function appropriately in written language and how they develop it. This is one of the gaps that the present research attempts to address.

Speech acts and culture are core concepts in the field of pragmatics. Speech acts theory was advanced by Austin in 1962 and posits that the function of an utterance is not restricted to conveying information but to perform actions as well. Speech acts like invitations, refusals, requests, offers and suggestions do not only occur in spoken communication but also in written communication. However, most research on speech acts realization emphasized on the spoken interaction, as maintained earlier by Cohen (2010). Speech acts were also investigated in relation to cultural differences. That is, speech acts are performed differently in different cultures, so they are culture-specific. This fact raises problems and challenges for FL learners as these differences may result in misunderstandings. Therefore, addressing cultural differences in FL classrooms might improve learners' cultural awareness.

In addition to speech acts and culture, the cooperative and politeness principles are two fundamental concepts in pragmatics. The cooperative principle was proposed by Grice (1975), it explains the general rules for effective and efficient communication. He generated four maxims within the principle which are: quantity (amount of information), quality (true information), relation (relevance of information) and manner (clarity and organization of information). Although the principle was initially developed to control spoken discourse, but it could be equally adopted to written discourse (White, 2001). The politeness principle was

developed by Brown and Levinson (1987), it states that people maintain and navigate social relationships through language. In other words, it examines how individuals use linguistic resources to signal politeness. For example, the use of formal language in specific contexts indicates politeness. In addition, the use of hedges is also viewed as a strategy to sound less direct and more polite (Hyland, 1998). Therefore, the choice of any linguistic expression or tone depends on the context, the purpose and the audience. The politeness principle then can also be embraced to teaching writing in FL contexts.

Teaching pragmatics in FL classrooms is considered valuable for learners for two main reasons. First, research has shown that there is a need for teaching pragmatics, and second because it has been proved that teaching pragmatics is effective in that it resulted in successful learning (Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Celce-Mercia & Olshtain, 2000; Rose, 2005; Cohen, 2008; Ishihara & Cohen 2010). In this respect, Kasper and Rose (2002) reviewed a number of research studies in the field and concluded that foreign language pragmatics can be taught and it has to be taught explicitly in language classrooms. Moreover, Rose (2005) also observed that learners who received explicit instruction in pragmatics exhibited a remarkable performance than those who did not. Schmidt (1993) argued that pragmatic information has to be noticed for learning to occur. That is, his hypothesis suggests that learners need to attend to language forms and the factors governing their choice. More importantly, learners need to notice the linguistic forms and understand why they are used, because mere exposure is not enough for learning to take place.

2.2.1. Research Studies on the Effects of Pragmatics on the Writing Skill

Research studies that actually investigated the effect of teaching pragmatics on the learners' writing skills are very scarce. Wyatt and Nunn (2018) designed a course for first-year undergraduate students at a university of science and technology in the Middle East that aimed to develop their writing, reading and analytical skills. The course revolved around humanities and social sciences topics to manifest the students' academic level and interest. Central to this course was Grice's (1989) maxims; the aim was to engage students in analyzing texts in relation to these maxims and producing academic texts that reflect their understanding of the maxims. The students were also asked to write their reflections on the course and assess their own learning. Findings from this course, centered on textual analysis, proved the benefits of such approach. That is, Gricean pragmatics has proved effective in developing the students' academic writing skills. Similarly, White (2001) suggested that Grice's maxims, while originally formulated to define successful spoken communication, could be adapted to the teaching of academic writing. Using a sample letter of adjustment, White maintained that there are cultural differences in writer-reader expectations. He also claimed that they differ in their applications of the maxims. For example, some readers expect sincerity and truthfulness, brevity and clarity of writing, while some writers would prefer length, complexity and ambiguity. However, failure to meet the readers' expectations would result in unsuccessful communication. In another study on the effect of pragmatics on writing ability, Faghih and Ansari (2013) conducted a quasi-experimental research to explore whether pragmatics improves the students' writing as compared to more traditional methods. The study was conducted to enhance the writing skill of Iranian high school students of English. The experimental group received a treatment in pragmatics while the control group was taught following the traditional method. They concluded that the students' writing ability was significantly different in that the scores of the experimental group were better than those of the control group. The students were able to identify target language features and produce native-like writing.

3- Method:

3.1. Research Approach

As the major aim of the present study is to investigate teachers' practices in teaching writing and their attitudes towards integrating pragmatics in their writing instruction, a quantitative approach is adopted to achieve this aim. Since attitudes, beliefs and practices are best investigated using questionnaires, a questionnaire was designed and administered to the teachers of English at the University of Jijel, Algeria.

3.2. Population and Sampling

In the current study, the target population consists of teachers of English at the Department of English. Because the present research is interested in investigating the teachers' writing practices, the researcher selected teachers of writing on the basis of convenient sampling. The sample in this study consists of eleven teachers of writing, they have varying academic degrees and experience in teaching English in general and writing in particular.

3.3. Data Collection Procedures

To achieve the aim of this research, a questionnaire was designed and administered to teachers of writing as stated above. The questionnaire was shared online with the respondents. It consists of fifteen questions that attempt to inquire into their writing practices and attitudes towards incorporating explicit pragmatic instruction in their writing classes.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected was quantified and displayed in tables, while the respondents' answers to open questions were analyzed qualitatively by providing a summary of their own responses.

4-Results:

In this section, the data generated by the questionnaire is quantified and analyzed in order to answer the research questions raised in the introduction.

Q1. Cultural factors may affect the way students write and organize their writing. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the statement?

Table 1: Teachers' Opinions about the Effect of Culture on Students' Writing

Options	N	%
Strongly agree	5	45.45
Agree	5	45.45
Neutral	0	0
Strongly disagree	1	9.1
Disagree	0	0
Total	11	100

As displayed in table 1, five teachers representing 45.45% strongly agreed that cultural factors might shape students' writing, while 45.45% also of the respondents expressed their agreement with the statement. However, one teacher (9.1%) strongly disagreed with the statement.

Q 2. To what extent is your students' knowledge of their native language and culture reflected in their writings?

Table 2: Reflection of Students' Native Language and Culture in their Writing

Options	N	%
Very much	7	63,6
Not much	4	36,4
Undecided	0	0
Total	11	100

Table 2 shows that slightly more than half the respondents (63.6%) claimed that students' knowledge of their native language and culture is reflected very much in their writing. However, four respondents (36.4%) declared that it is not much reflected in the students' writing.

Q 3. What kind of (native language) knowledge do they reflect?

Table 3: The Kind of Knowledge Reflected in the Students' Writing

Options	N	%
Cultural knowledge	1	9.1
Linguistic knowledge	4	36.4
Both	6	54.5
Total	11	100

The table above indicates that 54.5% of the respondents believed that both linguistic knowledge and cultural knowledge are reflected in the students' writing. Four teachers representing 36.4% argued that only linguistic knowledge was reflected. Only one teacher (9.1%) believed that students reflect cultural knowledge in their writing.

Q 4: Do you think that your students are able to distinguish between writing in their L1 and writing in target language?

Table 4: The Students' Ability to Distinguish between Writing in L1 and the TL

Options	N	%
Yes	1	9.1
No	4	36.4
Undecided	6	54.5
Total	11	100

The respondents' responses as displayed in the table reveal that 54.5% were undecided about whether their students were able to distinguish between writing in their L1 and writing in the target language. Four teachers (36.4%) believed that their students were not able to distinguish them, while only one teacher (9.1%) declared that students can distinguish between writing in their L1 and in the TL.

Q 5: Do you provide your students with contrastive cultural examples? (For example, different ways of making a request, an apology, and a disagreement in English and in Arabic)

Table 5: Teachers' Practices Regarding Providing Contrastive Cultural Examples

Options	N	%
Yes	8	72.7
No	3	27.3
Total	11	100

Table 5 shows that approximately the majority of the respondents (72.7%) claimed that they provide their students with contrastive cultural examples, while three teachers representing 27.3% declared that they do not provide those examples.

Q 6: Argumentation is linked to other speech acts that express a standpoint, like agreement and disagreement; are your students able to use appropriate strategies to perform these speech acts in writing?

Table 6: Students' Ability to Perform Speech Acts Appropriately

Options	N	%
Yes	2	18.2
No	7	63.6
Undecided	2	18.2
Total	11	100

With regard to speech acts, the table indicates that 63.6% of the respondents believed that their students are not able to use appropriate strategies to perform speech acts in writing. Two teachers (18.2%) declared that their students use appropriate strategies, while two teachers (18.2%) were undecided about that.

Q 7: Do they display an appropriate level of politeness, formality and directness in their arguments while writing?

Table 7: Students' Ability to Display Politeness, Formality and Directness

Options	N	%
Yes	0	0
No	8	72.7
Undecided	3	27.3
Total	11	100

In statistical terms, 72.7% of the respondents declared that their students do not display an appropriate level of politeness, formality and directness in their arguments while writing. However, three teachers (27.3%) remained undecided about whether students show such ability.

Q 8: Do they use discourse markers appropriately in writing?

Table 8: Students' Use of Discourse Markers in Writing

Options	N	%
Yes	3	37.3
No	8	72.7
Total	11	100

With regard to the use of discourse markers, 72.7% of the respondents maintained that students do not use discourse markers appropriately in their writing. On the other hand, three teachers (37.3%) believed that students use them correctly.

Q 9: Do they use appropriate epistemic stance markers (think, suppose) to express their position towards a topic?

Table 9: Students' Use of Epistemic Stance Markers

Options	N	%
Yes	4	36.4
No	4	36.4
Undecided	3	27.2
Total	11	100

Table 9 indicates that 36.4% of the respondents believe that students use appropriate epistemic stance markers to express their position towards a topic. Likewise, 36.4% of them declared that students do not express their opinions with appropriate stance markers. However, three teachers (27.2%) did not decide whether they use them correctly or not.

Q 10: Does the target pragmatic feature (target cultural/linguistic norms) occur frequently enough for students to notice?

Table 10: The Occurrence of the Target Pragmatic Feature

Options	N	%
Yes	3	27.3
No	5	45.5
Undecided	3	27.3
Total	11	100

As displayed in table 10, 45.5% of the teachers declared that target pragmatic features do not occur frequently for students to notice. Three teachers, however, representing 27.3% confirmed that those pragmatic features occur frequently unlike three teachers (27.3%) who remained undecided.

Q 11: Are your students analytic enough to be able to discover the target pragmatic norms?

Table 11: Students' Ability to Discover Pragmatic Norms

Options	N	%
Yes	1	9.1
No	7	63.6
Undecided	3	27.3
Total	11	100

More than half of the teachers (63.6%) attested that students are not able to discover the target pragmatic norms on their own. Only one teacher (9.1%) believed that students are analytic enough to discover those norms in contrast to some respondents (27.3%) who did not decide.

Q 12: Do your students know why they should learn the target language pragmatics and value the development of their pragmatic competence?

Table 12: Students' Awareness of the Importance of Learning the Target Language Pragmatics

Options	N	%
Yes	1	9.1
No	7	63.6
Undecided	3	27.3
Total	11	100

Table 12 shows that slightly more than half of the respondents (63.6%) claimed that students do not know about the importance of learning the target language pragmatics and developing their pragmatic competence. Only one teacher (9.1%) stated that students are aware that they need to learn pragmatics and promote their pragmatic ability. The remaining teachers (27.3%) could not make a decision.

Q 13: Are you interested in integrating pragmatics in your writing instruction?

Table 13: Teachers' Opinions about their Interest in Integrating Pragmatics in their Writing Instruction

Options	N	%
Yes	10	90.9
No	1	9.1
Total	11	100

The vast majority of the respondents (90.9%) expressed their interest in integrating pragmatics in their writing instruction. However, only one teacher (9.1%) pointed out that he/she was not interested in teaching pragmatics.

Q 14: If yes, are you willing to adapt the materials you have to address pragmatics more effectively/explicitly?

Table 14: Teachers' Willingness to Adapt the Materials to Teach Pragmatics

Options	N	%
Yes	10	90.9
No	1	9.1
Total	11	100

Again, the results revealed that the majority of the teachers (90.9%) endorsed the adaptation of the teaching materials to address pragmatics explicitly in their writing classes. Yet, one teacher (9.1%) emphasized his/her unwillingness to change the materials to teach pragmatics.

Q 15: What would you suggest (kind of activities/materials) to raise the students' awareness of the target language norms and their pragmatic competence (to improve their writing)?

All the respondents (100%) provided suggestions to integrate pragmatics in foreign language writing classes. They are summarized as follows:

1. Exposing the students to write different genres by providing them with authentic materials.
2. Highlighting the pragmatic norms involved in writing different genres and inviting students to analyze texts and imitate them.
3. Providing the students with reading materials and model essays; these could be read and analyzed in order to produce comparable essays.

4. Organizing role-plays as they allow students to use language in various contexts with differing levels of formality.
5. Reintroducing the subject of pragmatics in the curriculum and discussing what pragmatic aspects should be involved in the writing instruction.

5-Discussion:

The teachers' responses to the questionnaire revealed some differences in their beliefs and practices with regard to the teaching of pragmatics. Almost all teachers agreed that culture might influence the students' writing, they also declared that students reflect both their L1 linguistic and cultural knowledge when they write. Because students may produce a writing that does not meet the expectations of the target language audience, there is a need to reconsider the writing instruction that the students receive. Leki, Cumming and Silva (2006) stated that the purpose of teaching L2/FL writing is to allow students to promote their ability to write meaningful texts, to acquire effective composing processes in addition to producing written texts that are appropriate to the social contexts to which they are intended. These three aspects are supported by several theoretical foundations such as rhetorical theories, psychological theories and sociocultural or pragmatic theories. The latter seeks to describe and explain cultural values and interaction in students writing within a particular social context. Contrasting L1 and TL writing might also be helpful in raising the students' awareness of the differences between the two since most teachers reported that students are not able to distinguish L1 from TL writing; these differences need to be acknowledged in order to treat these students fairly and teach them effectively (Silva, 1993). It is also maintained that an awareness of the differences between L1 and TL thinking patterns would permit students to use English the way native speakers do. Therefore, teachers should explicitly introduce these cultural thinking patterns to help the students develop the habit of thinking and writing in English (Sun, 2010).

Other differences in the teachers' practices are shown in the teaching of speech acts. Most teachers declared that they provide their students with contrastive cultural examples in realizing speech acts while some of them do not. Most speech acts are culture-specific; hence, this area is problematic for FL learners. An awareness of the different ways in which speech acts are performed in Arabic and in English would reduce the negative transfer from the students' L1 norms. Cultural differences should be addressed because language cannot be separated from its culture. However, teachers seem to focus more on language forms while ignoring the pragmatic application of language (Sun, 2010). This claim might be justified by the teachers' opinions concerning the students' inability to use appropriate strategies in performing speech acts in writing. The majority of the teachers reported that their students' arguments lack an appropriate level of politeness, directness and formality. It is assumed that teaching language use with a focus on the appropriateness of linguistic forms would promote students' pragmatic competence. In this context, we suppose that teachers provide contrastive cultural examples without considering the different social contexts in which they occur. Moreover, we believe that the appropriateness of the linguistic expression to the social context is more important than the expression itself.

Another area in which students seem to encounter difficulties, according to the teachers, is in the use of metadiscourse. Although there was no consensus in the teachers' responses, the difficulty of using discourse markers and stance markers is apparent. The use of these markers is a critical feature of good academic writing. In FL writing contexts, the ability to use metadiscourse is essential for students, because "writing is a culturally situated social activity and effective metadiscourse use is critically dependent on a rhetorical context and the writers' observation of appropriate interpersonal and intertextual relationships" (Hyland,

1998, p. 438). Teachers should address the use of metadiscourse more by acquainting students with their various types and functions and explaining their effects on the text.

The analysis of the teachers' responses also revealed that most of them do not consider teaching the TL pragmatics in their classes. A good number of teachers maintained that the TL pragmatic features do not occur frequently enough for students to notice. In addition, students are not able to discover those norms on their own. Research has shown that pragmatic norms need to be taught explicitly for students to notice and understand (Ishihara, 2010; Schmidt, 1993). Research in this area has also proved that pragmatics is teachable and that pragmatic competence can be promoted through explicit instruction (Kasper & Rose, 2002; Rose, 2005). We understand that the reality of the classroom and the existing curriculum represent a challenge for teachers; still we believe they are responsible for guiding students through the experience of learning the TL pragmatics. Teachers also claimed that students do not realize the importance of learning TL pragmatics and value their pragmatic competence development. For this reason, teachers are advised to acquaint themselves with the necessary pragmatic knowledge that enables them to develop instructional strategies and assessment measures (Ishihara, 2010).

With reference to the teachers' attitudes towards integrating pragmatics in their writing instruction, the majority of them expressed their positive attitudes and their readiness to integrate it. They also voiced their willingness to adapt the existing teaching materials to address pragmatics more effectively. Because teaching pragmatics has proved effective in developing writing ability (Wyatt and Nunn 2018, White 2001), the teachers and students alike should give more weight to the development of pragmatic competence instead of focusing on grammatical accuracy. Writing is not only a process of generating ideas and constructing sentences, but it is a medium of communication that is shaped by several cultural factors and constraints. Finally, the teachers' suggestions with regard to the activities that could be used to integrate TL norms revealed their skills and abilities to accomplish this task and improve their writing instruction. They suggested that reading authentic materials is a valuable source for pragmatic norms but we emphasize that they should be explicitly highlighted to students for learning to occur. Additionally, introducing different genres is also significant as it allows students to discover a variety of discourse norms, levels of formality and politeness that would ultimately improve their writing ability in general.

6- Pedagogical Implications:

Teaching pragmatics is crucial for developing writing skills, particularly because it involves understanding how language is used in context, which can significantly enhance clarity, coherence, and appropriateness in writing. The following are some key implications of teaching pragmatics for writing development:

1. Pragmatics teaches students how cultural differences can affect communication. This awareness is particularly important in writing for international audiences. By understanding cultural norms and expectations, students can avoid unintentional misunderstandings or offenses in their writing.
2. Knowledge of different speech acts (e.g., requests, apologies, suggestions) can enhance persuasive writing, helping students construct more compelling arguments.
3. Learning about politeness strategies and levels of formality can help students write more appropriately in different situations, whether it is an academic paper, a business email, or a casual message.
4. Understanding the context helps students choose the right tone, style, and register for their audience, making their writing more effective.

5. Pragmatics helps students understand how to use discourse markers and connectors appropriately to ensure their writing flows logically. Proper use of referencing (e.g., pronouns, definite articles) and metadiscourse (e.g., questions, directives) can make texts more coherent, interactive and engaging.
6. Understanding pragmatics encourages writers to consider their audience's background, expectations, and prior knowledge. This awareness allows them to tailor their writing to meet the needs and expectations of different audiences, making their writing more engaging and relevant.
7. Many writing errors stem from pragmatic misunderstandings rather than grammatical ones. Teaching pragmatics can help reduce these errors, leading to clearer and more accurate writing.
8. Different genres have distinct pragmatic conventions. By teaching pragmatics, educators help students recognize and adhere to these conventions, which is essential for producing texts that meet genre-specific expectations.

To ensure that teachers integrate pragmatics in their writing instruction effectively, we suggest these practical applications:

1. Design writing tasks that require students to consider different contexts and audiences.
2. Analyze texts for pragmatic features, discussing how language use changes with context.
3. Provide feedback not just on grammar and vocabulary but also on the pragmatic appropriateness of students' writing.

Incorporating pragmatics into the writing instruction is essential for developing proficient writers who can communicate effectively across different contexts. By understanding and applying pragmatic principles, students can enhance their writing skills, making their texts clearer, more coherent, and more engaging.

7-Conclusion:

The present study investigated the teachers' attitudes and practices in teaching pragmatics in their writing classes. The teaching of the TL pragmatic norms seem to be underestimated; conceivably, most of the teachers can barely recognize the importance of pragmatics to writing. The results demonstrated that the majority of the teachers have positive attitudes towards integrating pragmatics explicitly in their writing instruction. It is recommended that teachers reconsider the place of pragmatics in FL teaching curriculum in general and writing in particular. As it has been suggested that FL writing is a challenging task for students, writing instruction should no more focus on the composing process, grammar and mechanics. This critical situation requires (1) explicit and appropriate inclusion of the target language pragmatic knowledge and (2) awareness- raising of the differences between TL writing and L1 writing. The insights drawn from this study also invite foreign language writing teachers to reflect on their own writing instruction and reconsider the place of pragmatics in their teaching.

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