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Coordinator: Maria Luz Celaya Villanueva (G3)

L2 Pragmatics Teaching:

The Impact of Pedagogic Tasks on the Acquisition of L2 Pragmatic Competence

STUDENT: Laia López i García

TUTOR: Roger Gilabert Guerrero

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UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

Coordinació d'Estudis
Facultat de Filologia

Gran Via
de les Corts Catalanes, 585
08007 Barcelona

Tel. +34 934 035 594
fil-coord@ub.edu
www.ub.edu

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Abstract

In second language teaching the main focus has not always been communication teaching of formal aspects of language such as grammatical structures and voca The learning of such parts of a language is of course important but communication is key when talking about SLL and SLA. One of the approaches thaL2 Pragmatics Teaching: The Impact of Pedagogic Tasks on the Acquisition of L2 Pragmatic Competencet has been claimed to potentially promote second language pragmatics learning in instructional settings is Focus on Form (FonF) through TBLT and TSLT. Therefore, this essay aims to underline the relevance of L2 pragmatics and to consider the effectiveness of using tasks to teach L2 pragmatics. To do so, this paper will draw from research studies on the acquisition of L2 pragmatics and will move from more theoretical to more practical aspects to showcase the advantages that L2 learners would gain from being taught through tasks.

Keywords: L2 pragmatics, FonF, TBLT, communication, SLA

Resum

A l'hora d'ensenyar una segona llengua, sempre ha adquirit més importància l'ensenyament dels aspectes formals d'una llengua, com poden ser les estructures gramaticals i el vocabulari, que no pas la comunicació. L'aprenentatge dels aspectes d'un idioma és, per descomptat, important, però la comunicació és essencial quan es parla de l'ensenyament d'una segona llengua i l'adquisició d'una segona llengua. La focalització en la forma (FonF) a través de tàctiques d'ensenyament com poden ser l'ús de tasques pedagògiques amb instrucció explícita (TSLT) o no (TBLT) és un mètode reconegut per la seva gran utilitat pel que fa a l'aprenentatge de la pragmàtica d'una segona llengua. És per això que l'objectiu d'aquest treball és ratificar la importància d'aprendre la pragmàtica d'una segona llengua i provar l'efectivitat d'utilitzar tasques per ensenyar-la a classe. Així doncs, aquest treball es fonamenta en estudis de recerca sobre l'adquisició de la pragmàtica d'una segona llengua i utilitza punts de vista teòrics i pràctics per defensar els avantatges d'ensenyar la pragmàtica d'una segonL2 Pragmatics Teaching: The Impact of Pedagogic Tasks on the Acquisition of L2 Pragmatic Competencea llengua per mitjà de tasques pedagògiques.

Paraules clau: pragmàtica d'una segona llengua, focalització en la forma, TBLT, comunicació, aprenentatge d'una segona llengua

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1. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the instruction of second languages has put its emphasis on the explicit teaching of formal aspects such as grammatical structures and vocabulary. Even though their learning is important when studying a second language, most of the time they are taught in isolation and without contemplating real life contexts. When it comes to second language learning and second language acquisition, it is essential to consider the ability to communicate and interact in the L2. As González-Lloret (2019, p. 348) puts it, in order to acquire a second language, learners need to become “not just linguistically competent but also interactively appropriate in the L2”. Therefore, one of the methods that has been proved effective in classroom settings to teach L2 pragmatics is FonF. From this methodological point of view, lessons should be learner-centred and should provide input which resembles real-world communication. To accomplish this, lessons should not be structured according to linguistic units but considering learners’ needs. In this sense, although each approach applies tasks differently, Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Task-supported Language Teaching (TSLT) have been claimed to provide the proper contexts for focus on form to occur in educational settings. While in TBLT “attention to form arises *incidentally* while learners are performing the task”, in TSLT “students are *directed* to attend to a pre-determined form” which – contrary to TBLT – they have been explicitly taught in advance (Ellis, 2018). As these methodologies have been proved successful for SLA in many research studies, this essay will focus on the teaching of L2 pragmatics through pedagogic tasks and FonF approaches. In order to do so, this text will first define and provide a brief historical reference on pragmatics as it plays a central role in communication. After focusing on pragmatics and some of its sub-fields, the important relationship between SLA and L2 pragmatics will be explored. In that sense, the challenging character of acquiring L2 pragmatic competence will also be addressed. Then, the paper will define speech acts and politeness because they are two of the most influential areas of study in L2 pragmatics due to their language-specific nature. The following section will focus on cognitivist-oriented and socially-oriented SLA theories which have provided FonF teaching approaches with essential data on L2 pragmatic acquisition. Thereafter, the following section will introduce theories on L2 pragmatics instruction to then move towards FonF approach and how focus on form occurs during task development. After exploring the effectivity of FonF and focus on form techniques, the penultimate section will eventually focus on TBLT and TSLT because they have been claimed to successfully promote L2 pragmatics learning in educational settings. Finally, the last section of this paper will offer an L2 pedagogic pragmatic task proposal which will gather some of the key features that will be discussed throughout this essay. All in all, this essay's goal will be to underline the importance of L2 pragmatics in SLA and to discuss the effectivity of tasks and FonF teaching approaches on L2 pragmatic competence acquisition.

2. PRAGMATICS

Because pragmatics is concerned with the factors that affect the negotiation of meaning between two speakers in interaction, it is of utmost relevance to Task-based Language Teaching. Therefore, this section will provide a brief historical reference on pragmatics: from Morris' definition (1930s) until Crystal's (1997) contributions. Afterwards, cross-cultural, intercultural and interlanguage pragmatics will be addressed to illustrate how they provide SLA with valuable clues for L2 pragmatics acquisition.

2.1. The term 'pragmatics'

The term *pragmatics* was first introduced by Charles Morris in the 1930s. Morris (1938) first defined pragmatics as "concerned with what the speaker means by the utterance and how the hearer interprets it" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.13). This definition was further developed by Levinson, Mey and Thomas (1983;2001;1995) who introduced other essential elements that had to be considered such as "context, agency, and social action" (p.13). Depending on the context, the speaker must choose a specific register to convey the message. This is also related to the idea of agency, which is concerned about the power of words and how language can be used to attain personal goals in a given context. This involves social action in the sense that the same interaction between speakers entails a negotiation of meaning. The latter is key to understand the full significance of the utterance in a given "context" and with a concrete intention ("agency"). All these elements are included in Crystal's (1997, p.301) definition of pragmatics as:

> "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of 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".

Therefore, according to Taguchi & Roever (2017, p.14), pragmatics could be defined as the use of linguistic forms to perform a communicative act while taking into account how this act is not only being realized but also perceived in a social context.

All these definitions highlight that pragmatics plays a central role in interaction and communication because it is concerned with the factors that affect the negotiation of meaning between speakers. This is in fact one of the main aspects considered by Focus on Form approaches: meaning-driven tasks are used for the learners to negotiate meaning and form in TBLT and TSLT.

2.2. Cross-cultural pragmatics, intercultural pragmatics, and interlanguage pragmatics

Three pragmatic sub-fields that should be considered when talking about the acquisition of pragmatic competence through tasks are cross-cultural, intercultural and interlanguage pragmatics. Although just interlanguage pragmatics belongs specifically to the field of SLA, they all examine instances of negotiation of meaning in interaction from different points of view.

Cross-cultural pragmatics takes into account the linguistic and non-linguistic means when it comes to achieve a communicative act. The main premise of this field is that the way speakers of a given community speak is linked to their "system of cultural rules" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.14). Furthermore, cross-cultural pragmatics studies also require the contrast between different language groups. In fact, a study conducted by Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989) observed and contrasted the different linguistic expressions that were used in seven languages. They examined two specific speech act realizations - requesting and apologizing – to gather data about the number of various expressions in the targeted languages, the directness or indirectness of the utterances and how they were modified depending on the context (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.15).

Another important perspective in the field of pragmatics that has attracted considerable attention is that of Intercultural Pragmatics. It focuses on how speakers with different L1s and cultural backgrounds make use of a common language to communicate: a lingua franca (Taguchi & Roever, 2017). In the 1980s, this sub-field mainly focused on the miscommunication and misunderstanding that took place in intercultural situations. The documentary-film *Crosstalk* was made to showcase instances of miscommunication: due to the lack of pragmatic knowledge, "an Indian applicant failed miserably at a job interview for a British library because he was not aware of interview conventions specific to British culture" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, pp.16-17). Nonetheless, more contemporary authors have been emphasizing the need of creating a common ground between intercultural speakers rather than just focusing on the cultural differences among them (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, pp.16-17). This can be seen in recent studies (Firth, 2009; House, 2010; Hynninen, 2013; Kecskes, 2012; Verschueren, 2008) which illustrate how "participants either interpret utterances based on their knowledge of their interlocutor's culture, or they create an entirely new standard of communication" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p. 17).

More specifically in the field of SLA, interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) has been classically defined as "a language learner's developing system of target language which they are learning" (Selinker, 1972 in Taguchi & Roever 2017, p.17). In the 1990s, ILP was first redefined by Kasper and Dahl (1991) focusing on the "'nonnative speakers' (NNSs') comprehension and production of speech acts, and how their L2-related speech act knowledge is acquired'" (p.216). Then, Kasper and Schmidt (1996) went further with the definition not only focusing on speech acts but also on "the development and use of strategies for linguistic action by "non-native speakers" (p.150). A short time ago, Bardovi-Harlig (2010) provided a more straightforward definition. She claimed that ILP was a "bridge" which connected and related the "system side of language and the use side" (Bardovi-Harlig, 2010, p.1). Taking everything into consideration, ILP can be defined as a branch of SLA which is concerned not only about the development of the target language as a system, but also about how the learner is able to use the language to perform everyday social functions in the real life.

All in all, it is key to establish a link between these pragmatics' sub-fields and their relevance for SLA and task-based language teaching of L2 pragmatics. First, cross-cultural pragmatics can provide SLA with information on L1 transfer, which refers to how "L1 pragmatic behaviours and interactional practices […] (are) transfer(red) to L2" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.18). Linked to this, focus on form techniques draw attention to mismatches between input and output when L2 learners are performing tasks. In that sense, learners may transfer L1 meanings to L2 contexts. Cross-cultural studies research confirms that the same strategy, for example using imperatives when making a request, may not work in all languages and their respective cultures. This translated to real life communication may lead L2 speakers to experience communicative breakdowns. Second, intercultural pragmatics focuses on "how learners negotiate and interact to achieve a mutual understanding with their interlocutors" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.9). This can provide SLA with clues on the strategies L2 learners use to negotiate meaning in contexts where they do not share the same cultural background. Finally, the fact that interlanguage pragmatics looks at the development of non-native speakers' strategies in communication provides FonF teaching approach with essential information to create tasks which promote attention to pragmalinguistic forms. For instance, it is in communicative tasks when L2 learners may notice gaps in their interlanguage and try to look for solutions in subsequent input. Therefore, from different perspectives, the three pragmatics sub-fields observe how speakers negotiate meaning in interaction to reach a common understanding, which can also be examined while learners are performing communicative tasks.

To conclude with a further reflection, in order to achieve more successful outcomes in real life communication, the information provided by the three sub-fields must be considered since they complement each other. Being aware of the difference between languages, for example, knowing how politeness works in the target language, could help learners to be more successful in future interactions with native speakers and to integrate better in the new community. It is not the same for L2 speakers to apologize to their boss in the USA (in American English) than in Korea (in Korean): even if both (employer and employee) speak the same language, the cultural conventions of the countries are different, and so are their expressions. Thus, the teaching of L2 pragmatics could be complemented with information about the culture of the target language to reduce the cultural shock and promote context-sensitivity and adaptability. This could be done in educational settings through TBLT and TSLT by presenting the learners with tasks which situate them in target language contexts. Such a teaching method will promote pragmatic appropriateness, a key variable that has received attention recently in SLA studies and will be discussed later in the eighth section of this paper.

3. SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND L2 PRAGMATICS

As the purpose of this paper is to highlight the importance and the positive effects of teaching L2 Pragmatics, this section will discuss why pragmatic competence is essential for SLA, the challenges of learning L2 pragmatics and why this is demanding for the learners. As Taguchi (2019, p.1) remarks:

> "Learning sociocultural conventions and norms of language – what to say or not to say in a certain situation, how to convey intentions in a contextually fitting

> manner, and how to achieve a communicative goal collaboratively with others – is a crucial part of becoming a competent speaker in L2."

Hence, as stated in the previous section, teaching information about communicative rules is valuable for L2 learners. Not knowing about the social conventions of the community of speakers' target language can lead to problems in a communicative exchange.

3.1. Pragmatic competence: its challenges and what it involves

Becoming pragmatically competent in a second language is crucial for second language acquisition in order to be successful in real communicative contexts. Nonetheless, L2 pragmatics acquisition has been currently ignored in the teaching area due to its difficulty. In this sense, L2 pragmatic teaching is more demanding for teachers since they have to approach lessons in a more communicative way through tasks which promote interaction instead of giving teacher-centred classes. The fact that teaching L2 pragmatics has been usually disregarded by the educational system also reinforces the claim about its challenging character.

First, the issue of L1 negative transfer may prevent L2 learners from learning or using new pragmatic structures. For instance, they may rely on translating expressions instead of learning how to make requests in the L2. Although sometimes translating strategies may work, some speech acts do not always translate. L1 transfer causes difficulties especially to adult learners. Because they have previously acquired pragmatic knowledge in their mother tongue, the possibility of negative L1 pragmatic transfer increases. As concepts like politeness or formality vary from language to language, learners "need to develop processing control over pre-existing pragmatic representations while re-learning new connections between linguistic forms and the social contexts in which they occur in L2" (Bialystok, 1993). This can be solved in educational settings by exposing the differences between cultures and later teaching how this affects the way people speak and the structures they use in specific contexts.

The second challenge is related to the "sociocultural nature of pragmatics as a learning object" (Taguchi, 2019, p.2). The fact that forms and conventions of a given language differ - sometimes even in the same community – and are not salient further complicates pragmatics learning (Taguchi, 2019, p.2). As Taguchi (Wolfson, 1989 in Taguchi, 2019, p.2) argues: "it is often difficult for learners to notice what linguistic means are used to project appropriate levels of politeness or formality in a situation". In that sense, in educational settings, useful language-specific tools for L2 communication are usually left out when teaching a second language to focus on the formal linguistic aspects. This makes it difficult for second language learners to acquire pragmatic competence.

Another difficult aspect for the acquisition of L2 pragmatics is related to *pragmalinguistics* and *sociopragmatics* knowledge. The first one refers to the necessary linguistic resources to perform a communicative act and the second one to the "cultural rules and norms, role expectations and appropriate conduct" that are connected with the act (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.20). Both kinds of knowledge are required for L2 learners to become pragmatically competent. As Taguchi (2019, p.2) puts it, "L2 learners need a range of linguistic resources, as well as the ability to evaluate contextual information, select appropriate resources, and use them efficiently in a real-time interaction". Therefore, linking these ideas to the educational settings, L2 learners should be provided with the necessary linguistic resources and enough opportunities to practice them in context. This will lead them to understand the new form-context mappings and to be able to use them competently in real communicative situations.

Nevertheless, although linguistic properties and contextual factors are interrelated, their relationship is not seen as a "fixed, stable construct" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.20). In real communication, speakers constantly adapt their speech to the situation. This leads us to define the form-context relationship as "fundamentally adaptive and contingent" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.20). Elements such as "setting, relationship, affect, attitudes, and stance" are totally on the speakers' behalf (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.20). Additionally, "learners are viewed as social beings with their own values, beliefs, and perceptions of the world" (Taguchi, 2019, p.4). Hence, it is important to highlight speakers' agency when choosing linguistic forms. After L2 learners have acquired L2 pragmatic knowledge, whether their choice of linguistic forms is appropriate or not within the L2 community conventions is a decision they make. In fact, proficient L2 speakers can styleshift in the same conversation for personal purposes or because the context changes. For instance, in a context in which two people meet for the first time, speakers may use polite linguistic forms of a language at the beginning of the encounter and then as the conversation progresses they may shift into more informal forms. Relating this to the main objective of this paper, once a given speech act is taught and practiced through tasks, L2 learners can be given more freedom in terms of how to use the pragmatic knowledge they have acquired. Thus, in future communicative acts with native speakers, learners will be able either to make use of pragmatic knowledge accurately or to use specific expressions to achieve personal goals.

To sum up, for the purpose of this paper, L2 pragmatic knowledge not only enhances the competence of L2 speakers but also helps them to be able to play with the language or to notice misunderstandings in communicative acts with native speakers. Thus, although it entails effort, it is entirely worthy to consider the cultural differences between communities which can also be seen in their articulation of speech acts and politeness.

4. TWO KEY FIELDS OF STUDY IN L2 PRAGMATICS

As it has been argued in the previous sections, each speaking community has its own cultural conventions which are reflected in the way people speak. In that sense, as this section will put forward, L2 pragmatics research has focused on speech acts and politeness because they are key elements to consider when it comes to communication. Since they are language specific, they are relevant for the purpose of this paper and should be taken into consideration in second language instruction.

4.1. Speech acts

A key field of study to consider in SLA and L2 pragmatics are speech acts. As cross-cultural pragmatics studies have shown, speech acts are language-specific and very linked to the cultural conventions of a community. Since they are essential L2 communicative tools, they should be considered in educational settings and put in practice through meaningful tasks. Given these points, this essay will offer an overview of speech acts to highlight their importance in SLA and in the teaching of L2 pragmatics.

To begin with, a pioneer in studying speech acts was J.L. Austin (1962). He was the first one to underline the fact that language is not just for conveying messages, but for getting things done by those messages; for performing. He developed the “Speech Act Theory” (1962), which consisted on the following: for performative utterances to be such (to perform an action by saying) they had to fulfil some “felicity conditions”. For example, for the sentence “I pronounce you married” to be felicitous and therefore communicatively appropriate in order to effectively lead to action (performative), the act had to be performed by the right person, with the right intentions, in the right place, at the right time and with the right words. Hence, these conditions related utterance and context: “the idea that the context of a utterance determines what that utterance means, what force it has, and how it affects the world is fundamental to speech act theory” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.34). However, the fact that you order someone to pick up something, for example, does not assure that this person is going to do it: the use of a performative utterance does not guarantee that the action is performed. This was one of the objections of his theory, among others. This is why he finally distinguished between locutionary acts (truth-conditional aspect of the words), illocutionary acts (the intended real-world meaning of the statement), and perlocutionary acts (the actual real-world effect of the utterance on the speaker as well as the reaction the speaker expects from the hearer).

Later, Searle (1969, 1976) further developed on Austin’s Speech Act theory and made a further classification into five groups: directives (requests, commands, suggestions), declaratives (declarations, official acts), representatives (complaints, claims), expressives (apology, gratitude, sympathy) and commissures (promises, pledges). These speech acts have a straightforward relationship with second language pragmatics and therefore SLA. How learners “perceive and perform requests, apologies, refusals, […] etc.” in different languages have been one of the main topics in second language pragmatics studies (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.37). Although pragmatics is not just about speech acts, they are crucial. As cross-cultural pragmatics would defend, they are linked to the cultural conventions and norms of a country. Therefore, every language has their own, and this is why they have been considered in second language pragmatics and taught following FonF approaches.

4.2. Politeness

Together with speech acts, politeness has also been a great contribution to SLA that should be taken into account when teaching L2 pragmatics. Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) were pioneers in studying this area. They argued that there were “three main factors” which determined the choice of the level of politeness in context and “had a tremendous influence on research in L2 pragmatics: power (P), social distance (D), and ranking of imposition (R)” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.40).

First, the power variable (P) refers to the situation of power the speaker and the hearer are in. If the speaker finds him/herself in a position of more authority than the hearer, the former has more power (P+) than the second one (P-). (P+) would be translated into less requirement to be polite while (P-) into “having to use more politeness” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.42). Nevertheless, sometimes the relationship is not straightforward: speaker’s agency to choose a politeness strategy plays a role. In that sense, if a teacher

(P+) uses polite forms to address a student who does not usually bring the homework (P-), she is probably making use of politeness to sound sarcastic. In addition, the power factor is very linked to cultural conventions and therefore to cross-cultural pragmatics. For instance, in cultures such as the "Indonesian, Chinese, and Japanese" there is no requirement for people in higher power positions "to use negative politeness with lower-power hearers" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.42). This means that a boss might give direct orders to employees, without using any linguistic form which could imply equality such as "Would you mind…?". This among other reasons is why L2 pragmatics should be taught. In every community there are linguistic specificities that – taught/learnt in advance – could help the non-native speaker to be communicatively competent and avoid misunderstandings.

Second, the social distance (D) variable refers to the extent to which the interlocutors know each other. When social distance is low, (D-) is used; when social distance is high, (D+) is used; and the mark used for medium social distance is (D+/-). The latter is especially interesting in L2 pragmatics since it may cause the speakers to shift the degree of politeness in the same conversation, which involves agency and putting into practice a variety of linguistic forms from the learner's part.

Ranking of imposition (R) is the last variable and it makes reference to the "'cost' to the hearer of performing what the speaker requests […] (and) how much the hearer has to go out her way to do what the speaker asks" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.42). Therefore, depending on the request, it would be (R+) or (R-). A petition can go from asking for a high amount of money to borrowing a pencil. In fact, this variable shows how all variables are interconnected in communication: it is not the same to borrow a pencil from a friend than from a stranger. (+/-P) and (+/-D) variables will also play a role to react to this request (+/-R).

To conclude, Brown and Levinson's classification is crucial within L2 pragmatics. The importance of politeness factors should be considered when teaching L2 pragmatics because they are intrinsically linked to speech act production. Hence, a speech act is going to be produced in a more or less polite way depending on the contextual factors involved – which will determine the factors previously defined. Consequentially, speech acts and politeness are intertwined. As argued before, because they are very linked to the cultural conventions of a speaking community, they should be taught and practiced through communicative tasks in educational settings for L2 learners to improve their pragmatic competence. Finally, as these cross-cultural reflections may be accused of being individualistic, it is key to remark that they do not have to be taken as deterministic. As it has been argued before, “there is a large degree of speaker agency in linguistic choice” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.45). In that sense, agency can still be performed once L2 learners have acquired L2 pragmatic knowledge. However, the key issue in this paper is to promote a prior L2 pragmatics teaching to emphasize the singularity of languages and their pragmatics, since they are interrelated: language pragmatics reflects the culture of its community of speakers.

5. SLA THEORIES ON PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

As for how pragmatic competence is developed, there are several theories that investigate what influences the process of acquisition and examine its development. As the aim of the research is to consider the teaching of pragmatics, this paper will focus on SLA theories which promote L2 pragmatic competence acquisition. Hence, cognitivist-oriented explanations of SLA will be first addressed to later complement their views with a more socially oriented approach.

5.1. Cognitivist-oriented models

5.1.1. The noticing hypothesis and the importance of feedback

Schmidt’s (1993) hypothesis has contributed substantially to SLA because it “capitalizes on the role of consciousness and attention in learning” (Taguchi, 2019, p.7). According to this theory, “attention to linguistic forms, functional meanings, and relevant contextual features are all necessary conditions for pragmatic input to become intake” (Schmidt, 1993). It is important to distinguish between attention and awareness, as being aware of a linguistic feature does not always mean letting it enter our consciousness – attending to it (Schmidt, 1995). This would explain why despite being acquainted with the formal linguistic features, L2 learners sometimes find it difficult to articulate them appropriately in communicative acts.

Additionally, Schmidt made a more specific distinction between “noticing” and “understanding” which contributed to L2 pragmatics studies. On the one hand, noticing consists on being aware that depending on the situation a determined linguistic structure is used. For instance, noticing as an L2 learner that when you need your teacher to take a look at your paper, you should use particular linguistic forms to be polite because you have seen (therefore noticed) your classmates doing so: “I’m terribly sorry to bother you, but if you have time could you look at my paper?". On the other hand, being able to relate various linguistic forms together with the specific contexts in which they tend to be used is a matter of understanding. For example, relating "sorry to bother you" is used together with "could" when making a request to someone who is in a position of power over you (Schmidt, 1993). Therefore, for L2 pragmatics learning to take place, learners must be able to notice "form-function connections along with their contextual requirements" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.56).

Another important process that needs to occur for learners to retain a new mapping into their pragmatic repertoire and guarantee its acquisition, is called "internalization" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.56). Ellis' model (1997) clearly illustrates this process:

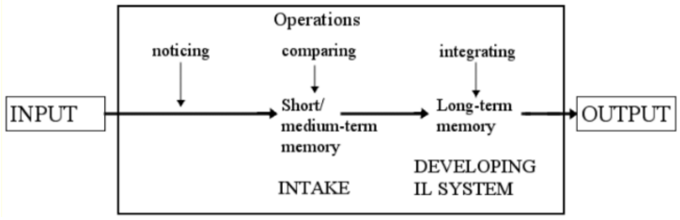


Figure 1: The process of learning implicit knowledge (p. 119)

First, formal linguistic structures together with conceptual and contextual features are noticed in input. Then, they need to be processed in "short term memory" (therefore *understood*) for them to become intake for learning ("candidates for a long-term memory"). Finally, if the intake has been absorbed into the learner's interlanguage it will be stored in long-term memory and therefore learnt (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, pp.57-58). According to this explanation, although noticing "might be the pre-requisite to learning", it does not assure acquisition (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.58). This means that not all the input that learners receive is stored in long-term memory.

For L2 pragmalinguistic knowledge to be processed and retained, feedback is necessary. Hassall's (2006) longitudinal study on his own acquisition of "leave-taking expressions in Indonesian" illustrates this claim:

> "the author wrote (in his diary study) that the native speaker's implicit feedback promoted his noticing of the new pragmalinguistic form (*permisi*). Since the new form occurred in tandem with the familiar form (*dulu*) in the precise context of leave-taking, the author was able to notice the form-function-context association and process it in short-term memory. The new expression eventually entered the author's long-term memory and led to learning" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.57).

Hassall's experience proves how naturalistic contexts promote L2 pragmatics learning and specially acquisition since L2 learners receive more input and find more opportunities to produce output and test pragmalinguistic hypotheses. Nonetheless, implicit and explicit feedback can also occur in a classroom context through task-based teaching approaches. For instance, another study which involved German learners showed how they did shift "from the formal *V*-form to the informal T-form of solidarity" after receiving peer explicit feedback (Belz and Kinginger, 2003). Therefore, both studies support that "there has to be some mechanism […] that directs learners' attention to the pragmalinguistic forms and sociopragmatic factors to facilitate their understanding" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.57).

All in all, this model indicates that pragmatics learning is a process in which many factors – noticing, understanding and feedback – play an important role. Moreover, this model suggests that L2 pragmatics acquisition is a process which involves interaction for pragmalinguistic forms to make sense. Therefore, while all these studies point to the challenging character of L2 pragmatics acquisition, they also provide clues to the ways in which it could be taught in formal contexts.

5.1.2 Skill acquisition theories

As it has been observed, the cognitive models aforementioned give valuable information on the process of acquiring the "declarative knowledge dimension of pragmatic knowledge" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.66). Nonetheless, for the purpose of this paper it is also essential to contemplate learners' outcome. In that sense, skill acquisition theories must be taken into account as they "inform how learners progress from the initial stage of conscious rule-learning to the end point where learners are able to use rules consciously" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.64). Hence, linking this to the research title, task-based approaches can lead learners to stabilize pragmalinguistic features and become more fluent in production.

Accordingly, Anderson et al.'s (2004) made a distinction between declarative and procedural knowledge. The first one refers to the knowledge of the formal aspects of the language. For instance, knowing that -ed is the suffix used to mark the past tense in English (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.64). Therefore, "form-function mappings" are stored in chunks which follow a "condition-action rule": "if in this situation when performing this function, use this pragmalinguistic form" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.65). This indeed involves noticing, but skill acquisition theories particularly emphasize the process of proceduralization. Hence, procedural knowledge refers to the knowledge of 'how':

how learners “fast and error-free” come to use the “past tense verbs fluently in narrative” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, pp.64-5). Nonetheless, the shift from declarative to procedural knowledge is not as simple. Anderson (1993) distinguished between “three consecutive stages” for skill acquisition: cognitive, associative and autonomous. As their names indicate, the first one refers to explicit knowledge about the rules, which become “chunks of declarative knowledge”. The second one refers to the gradually “proceduralization” of these chunks through practice. Finally, the third one implies the learner reaching a level in which “performance becomes fluent and automatic” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.65). Therefore, according to Anderson, the key element for this shift is a huge amount of practice, which can be done through tasks in educational contexts.

All in all, skill acquisition theories highlight systematic practice “as a vehicle for developing pragmatic competence” and at the same time provide information on how L2 pragmatic instruction should be designed (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.66). Accordingly, L2 pragmatics instruction should follow the previously mentioned “consecutive stages” for the shift to take place. This can be done in instructional settings through task repetition as later it will be discussed.

5.2 Socially oriented model: collaborative dialogue

Another SLA theory that has made great contributions to FonF approaches is collaborative dialogue, which “conceptualizes pragmatics learning in interaction as a socially situated activity” (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p. 69). In that sense,

> “collaborative dialogue serves as a window to examine learning in progress during interaction, and is defined as a dialogue that occurs between speakers as they engage in problem-solving and knowledge-building” (Swain, 1998, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1998; in Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p. 70).

While L2 learners are participating in a task which promotes collaborative dialogue it is likely that they notice gaps in their interlanguage. This will lead them to discuss about the language while they are engaged in a meaningful task. Swain & Lapkin (1998, p.326) referred to “any part of a dialogue where the students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use, or correct themselves or others” as language-related episodes (LREs). As learners are pushing their interlanguage during this process, collaborative dialogue and LREs give an insight for understanding second language learning.

A notion that derives from collaborative dialogue and should be considered more specifically for the purpose of this paper is "metapragmatic discussion" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.70). As its name reflects, during a collaborative task, "learners engage in a dialogue about pragmalinguistic forms, sociopragmatic factors, and the connection between them, and eventually develop a joint understanding of the principles underlying the connection" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, pp.70-71). Hence, the fact that "learners (need) to think through the rules and explicitly verbalize their thoughts" to understand each other while they complete a task stimulates L2 pragmatics acquisition (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.71).

Regarding metapragmatic discussion's units of analysis, Taguchi and Kim (2016) coined the term 'pragmatics-related episodes' (PREs) as a parallel for LREs in their study. PREs refer to "any part of language production where learners talk about the pragmalinguistic forms they are producing and the sociopragmatic factors they are attending to" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p. 72). For this study, L2 English learners in a junior high school in South Korea were asked to participate in a collaborative dialogue task to examine the learning and production of English request forms. Accordingly, the collaborative group received explicit metapragmatic instruction on the speech act. For the performance of the task, they were given different contexts by means of pictures so that they had to build a dialogue by using the most appropriate request form. The resulting PREs of this task clearly exemplified the processes which promote L2 pragmatics development and acquisition. As Taguchi and Roever (2017, p.74) put it,

> "while interacting around a task, both learners attend to each other's form, negotiate over form, provide feedback and correction, and scaffold each other. They generate hypotheses, assess hypotheses, and apply the resulting knowledge to solve a linguistic problem. During this process, the target pragmalinguistic form becomes salient."

Additionally, collaborative dialogue tasks give room to the opportunity of receiving and providing peer feedback on the output they produce. Hence, learners have the chance to test pragmalinguistic knowledge, which will also clarify their hypotheses.

Taking everything into consideration, both cognitivist-oriented models and collaborative dialogue are concerned with SLA and specifically the acquisition of L2 pragmatics. In fact, this latter theory shares notions with both noticing hypothesis and skill acquisition theories. It has been demonstrated how from an interactionist point of view both noticing and practice of pragmalinguistic forms are mechanisms that lead to pragmatics learning. To conclude, all the theories exposed, and particularly collaborative dialogue due to its interaction-based point of view, have provided L2 pragmatics instruction with essential information to consider when it comes to task design as this paper will explore in its last sections.

6. INTRODUCTION TO L2 PRAGMATICS INSTRUCTION

As discussed in the third section of this paper, becoming pragmatically competent in the L2 is not an easy task because of all the factors it involves. Among these factors there are “the ability to manage a complex interplay of language, language users, and context of interaction” (Taguchi, 2011, p.291). Considering this complexity, Gabriele Kasper at the 1997 TESOL Convention in Orlando, Florida, posed the following question: ‘Can Pragmatic Competence Be Taught?’. This was the question which entitled the paper she gave as a plenary, which highlights one of the main issues that this paper aims to answer: “whether we can arrange learning opportunities in such a way that they benefit the development of pragmatic competence in L2” (Kasper, 1997). After that, the possibility of learners benefiting from L2 pragmatics instruction seemed more plausible. Many researchers were inspired and started publishing papers about possible instructional methods and learning opportunities together with guides and resources for teachers with the aim to prove that “instruction is better than noninstruction for pragmatic development” (Taguchi, 2011, p.290-1). In that sense, this section will first establish a connection between the previously mentioned cognitively oriented theories’ main notions and L2 pragmatics instruction. Afterwards, the incidental character of L2 pragmatics learning will be briefly addressed. This will actually lead the paper to the conclusion that for L2 pragmatic competence development to occur in classroom settings it seems better to follow FonF approaches.

6.1. Theoretical notions within L2 pragmatics instruction studies

As Taguchi (2011) claims, Schmidt’s (1993,2001) noticing hypothesis has been of utmost importance for L2 pragmatics teaching field. The fact that speakers attend pragmalinguistic forms and contextual features is essential for their acquisition (Schmidt, 1993). Relating this to instruction, several studies have compared the effects of explicit and implicit instruction when it comes to noticing a “target form-function-context mapping” (Taguchi, 2011, p.291). As their names indicate, the difference remains in the previous explanation of target features (explicit) or lack of it (implicit) before engaging in a task. Both Alcón-Soler (2007) and Takahashi (2010) have proved greater effects in the post-tests when learners were given metapragmatic explanations. In both studies, the explanation to the advantage of explicit instruction when noticing target forms has been attributed to the fact that learners had to identify the target request forms on their own. Consequently, they had to make a greater cognitive effort than the implicit group, who performed the same task but was guided through input enhancement. Thus, these studies have demonstrated how previous instruction can help direct learners' attention to target form-function-context mappings. Due to the awareness and effort of the explicit group, target forms will be better processed and understood, and this will lead learners to a development of their L2 competence.

Another guiding framework for the teaching of pragmatics has been skill acquisition theories and the systematic practice they promote. In that sense, as discussed in section five, following a process of task repetition, form-function-context mappings would become proceduralized. Li (2012) investigated the impact that practice has "in the development of accurate and speedy performance of the speech act of requests" in L2 Chinese (Taguchi, 2011, p.294). Her "results showed that a larger amount of practice in receptive skills led to more accurate and fluent recognition of the request forms" (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, pp. 66-67). Nonetheless, these studies show how pragmatic skills automatization is "highly domain-specific" because a larger amount of practice did not translate to more fluent outcomes. Therefore, the claim "procedural knowledge requires a greater amount of practice to develop than declarative knowledge" is proved to be true, but this does not mean that it is unattainable (Taguchi & Roever, 2017, p.68). As Taguchi puts it, "whether or not instruction helps promote development of procedural knowledge as well as declarative knowledge […] is an original question that should be explored further in future research" (2011, p.295).

The last and most recent theoretical paradigm is the input processing theory developed by VanPatten (1996, 2007). This model "makes a number of claims about strategies that learners use to understand form-meaning connections or to parse sentences" (Taguchi, 2011, p.292). A teaching model called "processing instruction" comes from this theory. Lee and VanPatten defined structured input as "input that is manipulated in particular ways to push learners to become dependent on form and structure to get meaning" (2003, p.142). Hence, learners are taught target features explicitly and then they move step by step forward working in different ways with the same input. Takimoto (2009) explored this method with a study on the acquisition of requests through structured input-processing tasks. The task was "structured" in the sense that learners had to first listen to a conversation filled with target request forms which they needed to comprehend to later assess their appropriateness and eventually perform productive and receptive tasks based on the same input they received. Although the results were not conclusive in the post-tests, this model points to the importance of pre-task activities and provides researchers with information about the effects of focus on form techniques such as input flooding before task performance.

6.2. The possibility of having incidental L2 pragmatics learning in class

Although this paper focuses on the teaching of L2 pragmatics, the possibility of learning L2 pragmatics incidentally in a classroom also needs to be addressed. Ortega (2009, p.94) defined incidental learning as "learning without intention, while doing something else". Following a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, learners benefit from more exposure and are able to practice speech acts in a naturalistic way while learning the subject-matter. In that sense, "students use L2 to request information, to negotiate misunderstandings and disagreements and to display epistemic positions" (Tateyama, 2019, p.403). Nikula (2008) tested CLIL's effectivity by analysing pragmatic language in classroom discourse and practice in seventh-grade physics and biology lessons. Although it proved to be effective, communicative intentions in CLIL are usually limited to the subject-matter framework and L2 English works as a lingua franca. Even if in another study (Ohta, 2001) collaborative peer-peer interaction opened up a range of opportunities for students to use target forms that they have learnt before – L2 Japanese acknowledgements – cultural conventions may not be salient enough in these contexts for learners to develop L2 pragmatic competence. Thus, one instructional alternative to approaches like CLIL could be the implementation of tasks within the syllabi to promote focus on pragmalinguistic forms.

Finally, taking into account SLA theoretical notions and studies which have informed L2 pragmatics teaching and having also considered the effectivity of instruction over non-instruction even in CLIL approaches, focus on form techniques and task-based syllabi seem to be the most appropriate ways to teach L2 pragmatic competence.

7. FOCUS ON FORM APPROACHES: TEACHING THROUGH PEDAGOGICAL TASKS

As this paper has been arguing, for learners to learn a given pragmalinguistic form it is necessary that they notice and use the target feature in interaction. Therefore, this section will define Focus on Form since it follows the theories previously discussed and it has been proved that it potentially promotes second language pragmatics acquisition in classroom settings specially through TBLT. Then, the paper will address the role of selective attention, cognitive comparison, and the memory systems because they have provided valuable information for the basis of focus on form techniques. Finally, focus on form techniques will be exposed in relation to their applicability to TBLT.

7.1. Defining Focus on Form

Michael Long was the first to define the term "focus on form" in the late 1980s as a "key feature of second language instruction because of the salience it brings to targeted features in classroom input" (1988, p.136). Long defined FonF as an approach to SLT and afterwards in 1991 and 1997 he contrasted it with Focus on Forms (FonFs) and Focus on Meaning (FoM) approaches. Whereas FonF "overtly draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is meaning or communication", FonFs stems from a more traditional view of teaching in which linguistic units organize the syllabus and are meant to be learnt and practiced in isolation (Long, 1991, p.45-46). The case of FoM is very different from FonFs because as Long explained in his article (1997) the former one is incidental and it can be done through content-based instruction, such as the previously discussed CLIL, or immersion programmes where learners' focus is entirely on meaning. After establishing the differences among the three approaches, because FonF induces the conscious attention to forms – underlining Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis – Long highlighted the benefits of FonF over FonFs and FoM (Long, 1996, 1997; Long & Robinson, 1998). Furthermore, Long also underlined that focus on form could only take place in interaction and that it occurred mainly incidentally. These first observations were revised in Long's recent book *Second Language Acquisition and Task-Based Language Teaching* (2014, p.27) in which he updated Focus on Form definition as follows:

> "*Focus on form* involves *reactive* use of a wide variety of pedagogic procedures (PPs) to draw learners' attention to linguistic problems in context, as they arise during communication (in TBLT, typically as students work on problem-solving tasks), thereby increasing the likelihood that attention to code features will be

synchronized with the learner's internal syllabus, developmental stage and processing ability."

Therefore, FonF is a teaching of second or foreign languages approach that seeks to attract or direct learners' attention to "language form and form-meaning connections during a sequence […] in which the primary focus is on meaning" (Long, 2015, p.317). In that sense, while learners are engaged in a task, they may switch attention from meaning to form in "response to a difficulty" (Long, 2015, p.317). At that moment, focus on form can be motivated by a variety of FonF techniques which will also be discussed in this section. As Long remarks, in FonF "intentional learning is brought to the aid of incidental learning, thereby improving the likelihood that a new form-meaning association will be perceived or perceived more quickly" (2015, p.317). Hence, as Ellis (2016, p.5) argues, focus on form "entails various techniques designed to attract learners' attention to form while they are using the L2 as a tool for communicating".

7.2. Selective attention, cognitive comparison, and memory

Before explaining the different focus on form techniques, it is essential to understand how the brain functions when learners are taught linguistic or pragmalinguistic features through focus on form techniques. This will provide key information to take into account for the creation of pre-task and post-task activities and tasks in TBLT.

First, learners might shift their focus of attention – voluntarily or not – from meaning towards specific linguistic forms while they are performing a focus-on-form task. This cognitive process is called "selective attention" and it usually takes place when learners notice a gap or a 'hole' (Swain, 1998) in their "existing L2 knowledge which prevents them from expressing what they want to say" (Ellis, 2016, p.8). In fact, Mackey (2006) points out that when the noticing of this 'hole' takes place, the likelihood of learning the attended form increases. This probability depends on the salience of the linguistic feature. As Ellis argues, "features that are non-salient and communicatively redundant (e.g. 3rd person -*s*) may only be acquired if they are explicitly noticed" (2016, p.8). This information is relevant when it comes to deciding which focus-on-form technique must be used depending on the target form. "Recasts", which are an implicit kind of focus on form, may promote the "acquisition of salient/non-redundant features", but "explicit correction may be needed for non-salient/communicatively redundant features" (Ellis, 2016, p.8). Nonetheless, other factors rather than the salience of the target feature should be considered. In fact, when the target item is remediable at the moment and does not require a long-winded explanation, a recast can solve the problem without stopping the flow of communication in a less intrusive way than corrective feedback might do.

After learners receive corrective feedback to focus on an erroneous form they have produced, they can compare the differences between their utterance and the target language correction with the input they are provided with. Thus, if learners notice the difference, a link between the input in the temporary perceptual store (also called short-term memory) and the already stored L2 knowledge can be established. The effects of "cognitive comparisons" for L2 acquisition were first studied by Schmidt and Frota in 1986. Their research focused on Schmidt's acquisition of L2 Portuguese. They observed that comparing and analysing the difference between the incorrect and the correct utterance promoted the "restructuring of the L2 system" (Ellis, 2016, p.9). Nonetheless, the fact that Schmidt was a researcher could have had an influence on the results. In fact, as Ellis points out, cognitive comparison "in interactive focus-on-form episodes may lead to 'detection' without any conscious awareness" and "for such restructuring to take place, the learner will need to engage in some analysis of the recast" (Ellis, 2016, p.9). In that sense, Doughty and Williams (1998a) suggested that for cognitive comparison to have a positive effect in communicative tasks, learners should not last more than forty seconds to "rehearse what they have heard in their perceptual memory" (Ellis, 2016, p.9). This observation indicates that cognitive comparison would take much longer in non-interactive focus on form since there would not be instant feedback. Therefore, if teachers want cognitive comparison to occur, they should bear in mind that it is more likely to take place while learners are engaged in communicative activities.

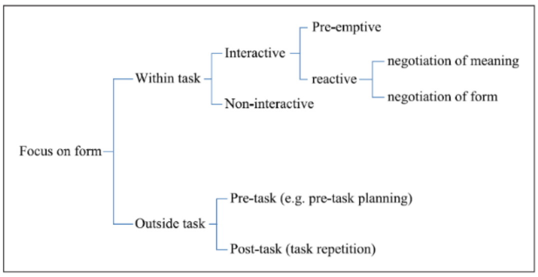
Doughty (2001) also investigated the issue of timing in focus on form in interaction and how the different moments in which it could occur have a different impact on SLA. As Ellis (2016) summarized, Doughty pointed out that there were four possibilities for focus on form to occur. It can occur simultaneously, in the sense that learners attend to form while they are attending to meaning; it can occur after the target form has been pre-taught to facilitate its noticing; it can occur due to a shift of attention while learners are engaged in a communicative task, as already stated when defining selective attention, and it can finally be provoked with a recast, which might lead to a cognitive comparison and therefore to learning. Nonetheless, none of the timings is better than the other. As Ellis (2016, p.10) stated, every attempt to focus on form has "merit" and to know more about their effectivity further research is needed.

Last but not least, the role of working memory must be taken into consideration in relation to how learners attend to form, independently of being product of selective attention and cognitive comparison. As Ellis' model (1997) clearly illustrated, target forms must be processed first in short-term memory to become internalized and enter long-term memory. Related to this, Ellis (2016, p.11) acknowledges that the difficulty of attending form and meaning simultaneously can be attributed to the limited nature of working memory. Hence, as internalization of target features is key for their acquisition, previous focus on form in the pre-task stage can help learners in the process: "planning may enable learners to activate their existing linguistic resources in working memory, thus enabling ready access to these again when they perform the task" (Ellis, 2016, p.11).

7.3. Focus on form techniques to attract attention

Having considered information about the functioning of learners' brain when their attention is directed through focus on form techniques, this section will draw from Ellis' (2016, p.7) adaptation of Doughty and Williams' (1998a) focus on form classification to explain the different ways in which focus on form can occur within pedagogical tasks. Despite the fact that Ellis focuses on general teaching of a second language, the following realizations of focus on form are equally applicable to the teaching of L2 pragmatics.

Figure 1. Types of focus on form activities



To begin with, focus on form can take place before, during or after a communicative task. Although this paper will focus on the important role of interactive tasks for the acquisition of L2 pragmatics, non-interactive steps must also be considered. In that sense, within the pre-task stage, input enhancement can be effective because it directs learners' attention to the target features before carrying out the task. Hence, learners might be asked to process either oral or written input where target features have been highlighted. Input enhancement can be combined with input flooding, which refers to a higher presence of target items without rendering the task artificial. These two strategies can be part of a guided pre-task planning to "alleviate the problems that learners face in L2 production due to the limited capacity of their working memories" (Ellis, 2016, p.15). Nonetheless, as Ellis noted, aspects such as “the nature of the task, the length of planning time and the learners’ level of L2 proficiency” could cause variations in the effects pre-task focus on form has on task performance (Ellis, 2016, p.15).

Focus on form can also occur while learners are engaged in a communicative task. Depending on the nature of the task, focus on form will be more or less interactive. The more interactive the task, the more opportunities for reactive focus on form – negotiation of meaning or form – will occur. For instance, it is more likely to have learners negotiating meaning in a split, two-way task (Ellis, 2012) than in a shared information task. In the first case, since learners would have different parts of the information, they would have to exchange information to complete the task. However, in the second case, as they would share information, the likelihood for interaction to occur would decrease. In fact, leader students may speak more, thereby inhibiting weaker and shy students, who would interact less. Furthermore, while negotiating meaning or form in interactive tasks, corrective feedback, which is a reactive kind of focus on form, can take place. As Ellis (2016, p.14) states, it “involves a number of different strategies that can be classified in terms of whether they are (1) implicit/explicit and (2) input-providing/output-prompting strategies. Many researchers have claimed that explicit corrective feedback such as repetitions or clarification requests have greater impacts on SLA. As these strategies prompt the learners to repeat or repair their utterances, they ensure the likelihood of selective attention to form, and therefore, noticing. In that sense, feedback might be provided by the teacher or by the same learners during an interactive task. In fact, it has been demonstrated how learners might also benefit from learner-generated corrective feedback, especially while they are engaged in pair tasks. Adams (2007) proved this claim by reporting that over 60% of language related episodes led to learning. Hence, corrective feedback between learners can take place when they notice a “hole” (Swain & Lapkin, 1998) in their interlanguage which subsequently leads to a metapragmalinguistic discussion between them. Regarding the effectivity of corrective feedback, Ellis remarks that trying to find the most effective strategy is vain because it has been proven by sociocultural theorists (Aljaafrehh and Lantolf, 1994) that “different strategies may prove effective for learners at different developmental levels” (2016, p.14).

Concerning post-task, focus on form can occur by repeating the same task again. In that sense, the first performance would be seen as a planning for the post-task. Hence, learners might focus more consciously on form in the repetition. Nevertheless, the effectivity of such focus on form technique is still unclear. Bygate (1996, 2001) noticed that when learners repeated the task a few days later, their production was more accurate and complex, but this did not translate into fluency. He concluded that a high amount of repetition practice was needed in order to see important transfer-effects to a new task.

To conclude this section, taking into account the limited nature of working memory, focus on form must occur in moments which allow learners to process target features enough so that they can learn them and internalize them through intensive practice. In that sense, all the techniques described can be applied to teaching approaches such as task-based language teaching. As Ellis (2016, p.18) concluded, "central to all kinds of focus-on-form instruction, however, is some kind of meaning-focused task that provides the context for the focus on form. Thus, focus on form is integral to task-based language teaching".

8. TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING AND TASK-SUPPORTED LANGUAGE TEACHING TO TEACH L2 PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

Heretofore, researchers have underlined the importance of L2 pragmatics and the beneficial effects of its instruction. Nonetheless, teachers do not usually incorporate pragmatic instruction accurately: "most L2 curriculums ignore the teaching of pragmatics altogether or reduce it to a few bits of simplistic, often stereotypical, cultural and linguistic information" (González-Lloret, 2019, p.338). This could be due to the lack of information some teachers have on the benefits of proper L2 pragmatics instruction. However, the explanation cannot only come from teachers' responsibility, but from the pedagogical materials available: pragmatic features are usually ignored by L2 textbook writers. As Tateyama (2019, p. 404) explained, books tend to be "inadequate in terms of scope and quality of target pragmatic features". This can be attributed to the fact that "textbook writers tend to rely on their own intuitions rather than empirical data" (Tateyama, 2019, p.405). Consequently, if teachers have access to L2 pragmatics features through textbooks, these are usually unnatural (Cohen & Ishihara 2013; Ishihara & Cohen 2010; Gilmore 2007). Hence, L2 learners are not provided with enough realistic input to become "pragmatically appropriate" (González-Lloret, 2019, p.340). Having all this in mind, to respond to this need of bringing authentic interactional contexts to classroom settings and to stress the positive effects of L2 pragmatics instruction, this section will focus on two approaches that have been claimed successful to teach L2 pragmatics: TBLT and TSLT.

8.1. Task-based language teaching (TBLT)

L2 pragmatics teaching through TBLT aims “to equip students with knowledge and linguistic tools so they can interact appropriately in a specific speech community” (González-Lloret, 2019, p.339). To do so, it is key to bear in mind learners’ needs. As González-Lloret explains, a needs analysis “to understand how, when, and with whom learners may use the L2, as well as their perceptions and views on the sociopragmatic norms of the target language” must be carried out before planning a task-based syllabus. For instance, young learners will not have the same communicative needs as teenagers. For learners to find tasks meaningful, it is important to adapt them to their requirements. In that sense, as González-Lloret (2019, p.339) points out, for pedagogic tasks to be meaningful and effective, they must mirror real-world activities. This way they will lead learners to be pragmatically competent in authentic tasks, that is, real world tasks in L2 settings. Therefore, from the task-type “purchasing goods in a store”, target pedagogical tasks such as “purchasing a phone” and “purchasing clothes” can be developed. Although these tasks share elements and probably similar speech acts would come up in their performance, different outcomes may be prompted depending on the nature of the task in terms of modality, design and complexity.

8.1.1. The most productive frameworks within TBLT

Researchers have focused their studies on the effects that manipulation of task modality, design and complexity have on learners’ outcome in terms of complexity, accuracy and fluency (CAF). Although the development of pragmatic competence has not been explored in depth yet, there are few recent studies focusing on its achievement through TBLT. Regarding task modality, Fukuya and Martínez-Flor (2008) examined the production of head acts and hedges in the speech act of suggestion in L2 English. Their aim was to compare the oral (phone message) and written (email) modality and the effectiveness of explicit instruction. The results obtained indicated the effectivity of pre-teaching pragmalinguistic features on oral production, something which did not translate into written outcome. As González-Lloret (2019) states, further research is needed in this area to determine the impact of changes in modality on outcome.

Task design has been targeted as the feature that best promotes L2 pragmatics learning. As argued before, depending on the design of the task, there will be more or less interaction and therefore more or less instances of focus on form. In that sense, Taguchi and Kim (2016) explored the differences between collaborative and individual tasks. To do so, EFL learners were asked to complete a drama script set in a specific context which involved the speech act of request-making. Collaborative groups had more opportunities to engage in pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic discussions about the targeted speech act. Unfortunately, the gains achieved in production were not perceived in the delayed post-test. Again, as different results were obtained in other studies with similar interactive tasks, further research is needed to prove the effectivity of collaborative condition.

Finally, task complexity research seems to be the most productive in TBLT. According to Robinson's cognition hypothesis (2005, 2011):

> "increasing the cognitive complexity of a task will lead to more accurate and complex (although less fluent) L2 production, more interaction, more noticing of forms and uptake of corrective feedback, and deeper processing and longer retention of learned forms" (González-Lloret, 2019, p.343)

Hence, tasks can be made more complex by manipulating resource-directing variables and resource-dispersing variables. The former one refers to increasing or decreasing the number of elements in a task. This will enhance the cognitive demand of the task entailing more spatial, causal and intentional reasoning from learners. The second one refers to having planning time, being a single or multi-step task or having been pre-taught. The presence or lack of these variables will affect task performance promoting automatization. Following Robinson's studies, Kim and Taguchi (2015) increased or decreased reasoning in a task to see its effects on learners' outcomes. To do so, participants were asked to create a drama script. The difference laid in the amount of contextual information that the group performing the complex task was not given. Hence, they had to figure out the context and then decide the most appropriate requests. The rise in complexity was translated into major gains in the delayed post-test. Nonetheless, when analysing learners' discussions, researchers realized that learners engaged more in sociopragmatic discussions rather than pragmalinguistic ones. As González- Lloret (2019, p.343) puts it, the task prompted that learners "needed to negotiate […] contextual factors but not the requests forms taught in the pre-task lesson". As González-Lloret (2019, p.343) concludes, these findings suggest "the difficulty of applying existing task complexity frameworks to the study of L2 pragmatic production and development".

8.1.2. Sociopragmatic interactional variables

González-Lloret and Ortega (2018) proposed an expansion of Robinson's (2005, 2011) task complexity variables. Their 'sociopragmatic-interactional variables' are key to the purpose of this paper since they are claimed to actively promote L2 pragmatics learning.

1. Interactional variables. These are "number of participants, flow of interaction and amount of contribution and negotiation" (González-Lloret, 2019, p.344). These factors might affect the organization of the interaction, that is, the turns in which the participants speak, the direction of the dialogue, changes in the topic, etc.
2. Participant variables. These are variables related to the context of the speakers: gender, familiarity, shared content and cultural knowledge, status and role, and proficiency. Although González-Lloret includes "gender" variable, this one should not affect performance in an inclusive world.
3. Mediating artifacts. This variable refers to any kind of physical object which may complicate interaction. For instance, as González-Lloret (2019, p.345) exemplifies, "the exchange of a business card has an impact on how greeting is performed with normative elements that do not exist if the business card is not exchanged".

As table[1] by González-Lloret (2019, p.346) shows, these variables could be implemented in traditional tasks' frameworks to add L2 pragmatics. All these variables are true to real life interaction: when people interact in their L1, they take into account many of these factors for a successful communicative exchange. As L2 learners will also find such situations in an L2 communicative context, sociopragmatic-interactional variables are crucial; they should be taken into consideration when creating tasks that will deal with L2 pragmatics. The addition of such variables to traditional tasks will contribute to a better understanding of pragmalinguistic features and a better production in terms of pragmatic appropriateness.

Finally, considering assessment of L2 pragmatic pedagogical tasks, they must not be assessed only in terms of fluency, accuracy and complexity. As González-Lloret (2019, p.347) argues, it is essential to assess pragmatic appropriateness. In that sense, "learners are considered to have performed the task appropriately if "the language used was interpretable by the interlocutor(s) or audience according to the discourse situation" and

[1] Appendices section

"if the language used was effective 'in reflecting and (re)shaping activity types, social relationships and/or social identities'" (van Compernolle, 2014, p.41 in González-Lloret, 2019).

8.2 Task-supported language teaching (TSLT)

As the last part of this paper will be a task proposal including explicit teaching, it is of utmost importance to briefly define TSLT. When TBLT is combined with explicit teaching of the features which are considered necessary for the development of the task, it is no longer referred to as TBLT but TSLT. This can be linked to the debate surrounding the effectiveness of explicit instruction in L2 pragmatics teaching. In that sense, a very recent study carried out by Barón, Celaya and Levkina (2020) suggested that "providing learners with pragmatic expressions and metapragmatic explanations helps students become more aware of the L2 pragmatics" (2020, pp.19-20). To do so, they compared the production in terms of pragmatic appropriateness of three groups at a B2 proficiency level. Learners were classified between two experimental groups (one following TSLT and the other a more traditional approach) and a control group. Both G1 and G2 received pragmatic instruction in the first phase for the learners to become familiar with the target pragmalinguistic features. The difference between these two groups was in terms of learners' production: while G1 used tasks and had time to plan their outcome (e.g. their opinion about a topic to discuss in a debate), G2 "had to carry out a series of activities (individually or in groups) in order to use and practice the pragmatic moves" which they were taught in the previous phase (Barón, Celaya & Levkina, 2020, p.7). Interestingly, following a pragmatic perspective, this study took into account "different social distances and both face and non-face threatening situations in order to provide students with a wide variety of pragmatic contexts" (Barón, Celaya & Levkina, 2020, p.7). Although these factors are related to the sociopragmatic-interactional variables González-Lloret (2019) proposed for the teaching of pragmatics through TBLT, the authors claim that "task sequencing manipulation was not part of the design" (Barón, Celaya & Levkina, 2020, p.7). Nonetheless, their study and other studies have contributed to validate the benefits of TSLT: "task-supported approach helps learners develop their interactional skills, as in Li et al. (2016), Long (1985), and Nunan (2004)" (Barón, Celaya & Levkina, 2020, p.20). As regards to the results obtained, they acknowledged that effects would have been greater had the period of instruction been longer with more opportunities to practice. To close this section, as Barón, Celaya and Levkina (2020, p. 21) conclude, "it is the responsibility of both teachers and language material designers to take into account the pragmatic needs of learners […] and thus design tasks that portray situations and interactions in as realistic way as possible."

9. L2 PEDAGOGIC PRAGMATIC TASK PROPOSAL

Taking into account Long's, Robinson's, González-Lloret's and Barón, Celaya and Levkina's contributions to the teaching of L2 pragmatics through tasks, this section will offer a proposal gathering key information that have been discussed throughout the paper. Usually tasks which implement L2 pragmatics are aimed at teenagers or adult learners. Hence, following González-Lloret's (2019, p.345-348) example of the addition of L2 pragmatic features to a traditional task, this section will propose a pedagogic pragmatic task for young learners at pre-intermediate and low-intermediate levels.

First, a needs analysis will be conducted having in mind learners' ages. Usually during the period of prepubescence and at the beginning of the puberty ages, learners meet with their friends outside, have sleepovers or invite friends to stay the weekend. At these ages they are likely to have experienced such events and they are enough cognitively mature to know that they should change the register depending on whom they speak to. Hence, a task around the need of having parents' permission will be realistic at the same time that it will entail useful speech acts such as request-making, refusing and expressing gratitude among others. In addition, and considering González-Lloret's contributions, small talk could also be implemented in the development of this task, since it plays a fundamental role in face to face interactional pragmatics.

As this task is aimed at young learners, they will be given clear goals that they have to achieve in the task-cycle stage. In that sense, considering their cognitive maturity, the proposal stems from the hypothesis that young learners will benefit from explicit and contextualized pragmalinguistic instruction together with previous exposure to the target pragmalinguistic features. As for the type of task, it will be a role play in which learners will have to act according to the profile they have been assigned. Consequently, they will have to adapt the speech acts differently depending on the card they are given. The profiles that will be given to each pair of learners will include the parent's profile and the requester profile, which could be the son or daughter or the friend who wants to stay. The fact that they will have to put themselves in adults' shoes may lead them to think about similar experiences they may have lived, which will increase the complexity of the task – since they will have to consider other points of view. Furthermore, to promote focus on

L2 sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics features, learners will also be provided with a particular context involving elements which will also increase cognitive complexity. In that sense, they will be provided with more formal or informal contexts, and their characters will be described with adjectives of personality (which they will have previously been taught as well) that will prompt different speech act realizations. In addition, the pairs of profiles will contain information about the relationship between the characters. Consequently, different degrees of politeness will be triggered in the development of this task.

As for the scenarios they will be given, there will be three possible scenarios (which could be expanded):

- A son/daughter asking the mom if the best friend (whom the mother has never met) can stay the night to play videogames. In that context, the mother is angry because her son/daughter has not tidied the bedroom and has forgotten to wash the dishes.
- A very shy friend who has recently met the friends' parents wants to ask them whether their son/daughter could spend the weekend with him/her and his/her family at their holiday accommodation. In that context, the setting is the invited friend's house and the requester friend is with his/her friend's parents alone in the kitchen (their son/daughter has gone to the bathroom).
- A son/daughter asking for permission to go to his/her best friend's birthday party in the bowling alley. In that context, the son/daughter will also have to make a great effort to convince the dad because s/he will have to skip piano classes the day of the party. Moreover, the father is very busy with housekeeping chores the moment s/he wants to make the request (since they are going to have guests for dinner).

As it can be seen, depending on the scenario, more or less formal pragmalinguistic forms will be prompted. Nonetheless, there is no closed goal for this task. Giving learners a high amount of information on the profiles of their characters allows them to have freedom to determine the final decision: whether parents give them permission or not. Although the target pragmalinguistic elements are request-making expressions, each scenario brings in the opportunity to have a small talk to break the ice, followed by request-making from daughter/son's part and other possible interactional sequences such as questions-and-answers or thanking. From the parents' role, students could also come up with refusals.

As for how learners will receive the input, this task could be preceded by several pre-task focus on form activities. In that sense, learners could be provided first with realistic audio-visual input to watch people in similar situations. Afterwards, to ensure focus on target pragmalinguistic features, they will watch the video again while they have the transcript with the target features highlighted (input-enhancement). Then, students will be asked to rank the expressions from formal to informal. Finally, students will receive feedback and will be explicitly taught the use of the pragmalinguistic forms. As discussed in previous sections, this will accelerate the process of accessing this new input in their working memory while they develop the task. Furthermore, since small talk can take place in some situations where the speakers barely know each other, it can also be pre-taught and shown in videos.

The task cycle will take several stages. First, students will be given the cards individually and asked to present their characters to the rest of the class. Then, they will be assigned a pair to build a dialogue collaboratively taking into account the contextual constraints of their respective scenarios. While they discuss how to build the scenario, focus on form can take place through LREs and PREs or corrective feedback from the teacher – who would be monitoring them – or from the other learner (peer-feedback). Finally, they will act out the dialogues they have built in front of the class.

As a post-task, students would have to rate whether the performances have been pragmatically accurate or not according to the knowledge they have acquired. To enhance listening comprehension and therefore a reflection on the pragmatic appropriateness of the performance, learners can prepare true-false statements about their story. Finally, all the class can evaluate the appropriateness of the language and the pragmalinguistic features used in the performance. To prove the effectivity of such task, it could be repeated in the future changing the characters and the scenarios and implementing other socio-pragmatic interactional variables to get students produce different outcomes and to learn other interactional sequences. If the tasks were to be assessed, it is important to bear in mind González-Lloret’s (2019) claim about not just assessing fluency, accuracy and complexity, but also appropriateness from L2 pragmatics point of view.

10. CONCLUSION

So far, this essay has answered Kasper’s (1997) question: ‘Can Pragmatic Competence Be Taught?’. Most of the research studies cited point out that “we can arrange learning opportunities in such a way that they benefit the development of pragmatic competence in L2" (Kasper, 1997). Following this idea, as the issue of pragmatics is a newcomer in SLA research, this essay's goals have been to highlight the importance of L2 pragmatics in SLA and to prove the effectivity of tasks and FonF approaches on L2 pragmatics learning. As González-Lloret (2019, p.338) argued, "pragmatics is essential to establish and maintain communication and rapport, as well as to avoid negative judgement and even stereotypical opinions about a community of speakers". In that sense, it is important to consider cross-cultural and inter-cultural pragmatics' contributions to L2 pragmatics. L2 learners should be aware of the socio-cultural norms of the target language and also be able to negotiate meaning in communicative situations to be pragmatically competent in the L2. As Taguchi (2019) stated, to achieve L2 pragmatic competence learners need to be provided with enough linguistic resources (pragmalinguistics) and contextual information about the cultural norms and conventions of the target language community (sociopragmatics). These two kinds of knowledge are intertwined because the culture of a community of speakers often determines the way they speak. In that sense, two of the most productive areas in L2 pragmatics have been speech acts and politeness since they are language and context specific. Hence, the choice of given structures may vary depending on the sociopragmatic interactional variables (González-Lloret, 2019) that L2 learners may encounter.

All the points hitherto exposed indicate that L2 pragmatics should have been given more attention in teaching since communication is key in SLA. Nonetheless, from what this essay has explored, teaching L2 pragmatics is not an easy task because it involves the mastery of many factors such as "the ability to manage a complex interplay of language, language users, and context of interaction" (Taguchi, 2011, p.291). Even though these factors complicate L2 pragmatics' learning and acquisition, FonF approaches such as TBLT and TSLT have been claimed to successfully promote its learning. The fact that FonF considers the internal processes in the learners' brain when they are presented with new input provides TBLT and TSLT with key information to develop strategies to direct learners' attention to form. Hence, as this paper has emphasized, L2 pragmatic instruction must contemplate cognitive and socially oriented SLA theories on pragmatic competence such as cognitive hypotheses, skill acquisition theories and collaborative dialogue. These theories together with the findings of the internal processes of the brain – the functioning of short and long-term memory – should be considered by teachers and textbook writers to create teaching materials. In that sense, as studies have revealed, several kinds of focus on form activities can be implemented in different stages of task performance to promote noticing of L2 pragmalinguistic features. Nonetheless, there is still much to do in L2 pragmatics instruction studies: although research has proved the effectivity of TBLT and TSLT on L2 pragmatics acquisition, there are many areas that deserve further exploration. Whether focus on form effectivity increases or decreases depending on how (the type of focus on form) and when (the moment) it takes place or whether learners benefit from explicit metapragmatic instruction of L2 pragmalinguistic features are still questions that should be explored in longitudinal type of research studies. This can be linked to Anderson's (1993) claim about the three consecutive stages for skill acquisition. The shift from declarative to procedural knowledge is not simple: learners need a high amount of practice to end up proceduralizing and integrating new form-function-context mappings in their long-term memory. Even so, this does not mean that attempts at teaching L2 pragmatics are futile and that learners cannot learn L2 pragmatics in instructional settings. Although further research is needed to prove the benefits of FonF approaches (TBLT and TSLT) on L2 pragmatics learning and acquisition, all the studies presented point to the fact that instruction is better than non-instruction.

All in all, life is about communicating with people and conveying meaningful messages. Hence, since languages are not only a tool for communication but also essential attributes of cultural identity, L2 pragmatics teaching is a vast area of study which deserves further investigation and should be given more importance in SLT. In order to do so, teachers should be trained to employ innovative teaching methods such as TBLT and TSLT which promote interaction. Moreover, staying and studying abroad programs could be implemented in the syllabus and linked with the contents to ensure meaningful and contextualized L2 learning experiences. This way there would be more competent, motivated and pragmatically appropriate L2 learners.

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APPENDICES

Table[1] by González-Lloret (2019):

Table 22.1 Addition of L2 pragmatic elements to a TBLT framework

TBLT framework proposed by Long (2015) and Norris (2009)	*Additions of pragmatics elements*
Step 1: Identification of task and task features (needs analysis) • Identification of target language (topics, structures, lexis) • Identification of technology if task is technology-mediated* Step 2: Selection of relevant tasks from those identified	• More encompassing definition of 'task' • Learners' views of their roles in the L2 community • Identification of pragmalinguistic features (e.g., speech act strategies, formulas) • Identification of macro and micro (interactional) features involved in task (e.g., settings, interlocutors' relationships, shared background knowledge and history, age, gender, turn-taking conventions, non-verbal norms)
Step 3: Development of materials and instruction • Pedagogic language tasks • Pedagogic technology tasks*	• Pedagogic pragmatic tasks (e.g., awareness raising, Focus-on-Form on pragmalinguistics, comprehension, guided production, and free production of pragmatic functions)
Step 4: Sequencing of materials • Consider language complexity • Consider task complexity • Consider complexity of technology*	• Consider pragmatic complexity coming from sociopragmatic-interactional variables (e.g., turn-taking system) as part of task sequencing (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2018; see the previous section)
Step 5: Student assessment Performance-based assessment considering: • Task completion • Language use (fluency, accuracy, complexity) • Technology use*	• Appropriateness of language use according to cultural, social, contextual, and interactional norms
Step 6: Program/ unit evaluation	

Note: * Added by González-Lloret and Ortega (2014).