

The role of prompts and explicit feedback in raising EFL learners' pragmatic awareness

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on an experimental study on the effectiveness of explicit feedback and prompts in raising English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' pragmatic awareness of the use of appropriate refusals. The study included 39 participants with two experimental groups (i.e., explicit feedback versus prompts) and one control group (i.e., delayed explicit feedback) (N = 13 for each group). The data were derived from the parallel pretest and posttest and interview protocols. After a 10-week treatment, results from a pragmatic awareness multiple-choice test and qualitative data reveal a significant improvement of pragmatic awareness, especially concerning unconventional refusal expressions, of the prompts group over the explicit feedback and the control groups. The key factor leading to the advantages of prompts may result from its demand for learners to generate repairs and its provision of more opportunities for learners' uptake.

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INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing interest in research on the effects of particular types of teacher corrective feedback on second language (L2) development. According to Ayoun (2001), most traditional studies have focused on the explicit correction of learners' mistakes whereas the more recent studies have been investigating the effectiveness of implicit negative feedback, such as *recasts*—teacher provides correction after learner's ill-formed utterance, on learners' linguistic accuracy (e.g., Ayoun, 2001; Fukuya & Zhang, 2002; Spada, 1997). However, some researchers (e.g., Lyster, 1998, 2002; Lyster & Ranta, 1997) recently doubted the effectiveness of recasts on L2 development due to its two important limitations: 1) it may cause ambiguity as learners may not perceive recasts as correction, but an alternative form of utterance, or even the repeat of a correct answer; 2) recasts lack the provision of self-repair, which would accelerate learners' uptake and long term memory. According to Lyster's study (1998, 2002), implicit feedback with the provision of reformulation (focus on form) and self-repair would benefit learners' retrieval and self-monitoring process, thereby helping them develop their second language acquisition. These kinds of interactional moves are known as *prompts*, a group of implicit feedback techniques that guide learners to discover the correct answer from what they have already installed.

While replication studies have been conducted to examine the effects of corrective feedback on L2 grammatical development (e.g., Ammar & Spada, 2006; DeKeyser, 1993; Doughty & Varela, 1998; Ellis, Loewen & Erlam; 2006; Long, Inagaki, & Ortega, 1998; Lyster, 2004; Muranoi, 2000), studies on the role of feedback in teaching L2 pragmatics have been neglected. Several studies on teaching pragmatics investigated the effects of explicit and implicit teaching by including corrective feedback as a part of the instructional methods (e.g., House, 1996; Rose & Ng Kwai-fun, 2001; Takahashi, 2001; Tateyama, 2001). However, few studies have explored learners' acquisition of pragmatic competence in relation to the corrective

feedback alone (as further discussed in the review of the literature section). The present study which is a part of a bigger study on *the effects of implicit and explicit feedback on learners' pragmatic development* aims to explore the role of corrective feedback on learners' refusal production and awareness.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Studies on the role of corrective feedback in pragmatic development

A review of the literature suggests that a few studies have begun to focus on the role of corrective feedback in teaching pragmatics. Martinez-Flor (2004) found that there was a lack of teachers' attention in giving appropriate feedback to facilitate learners' pragmatic development. Washburn (2001) found that explicit feedback on pragmatic language in conversational interaction is usually inexistent or, if given, rarely direct, especially among adults. This finding makes L2 pragmatics learning especially difficult for learners since they are not made aware of their pragmalinguistic or sociopragmatic failures. Alcon and Codina (2002, cited in Martinez-Flor, 2004) also pointed out a lack of appropriate feedback on the part of the teacher and suggested the need in studying the effect of direct and indirect feedback on learners' pragmatic development. Two studies by Fukuya and Zhang (2002) and Koike and Pearson (2005) were relevant to the present study.

Fukuya and Zhang (2002) examined the effects of implicit feedback, i.e., pragmalinguistic recasts, on EFL learners' production and confidence when making English requests. Fourteen role plays were carried out during seven 50-minute sessions on seven consecutive days. Results from the discourse completion post-test showed that the treatment group outperformed the control group in their use of target request forms. However, both groups' responses to the rating scale indicated that recasts did not influence learners' confidence in making requests. Instead, the learners' confidence might have been improved due to the effects of the interactive role

plays they performed. The repetition of role playing helped them build confidence when interacting with teachers and peers. The recasts employed in this study considerably varied in length depending on learners' types of error – *inaccurate* or *inappropriate*. Some recasts regarding learners' inappropriate request forms were the replacement of the whole original utterance.

The effects of recasts in pragmatic development were re-examined by Koike and Pearson (2005). However, the operational definition of recasts in this study was different from that of Fukuya and Zhang. Koike and Pearson (2005) examined the effectiveness of explicit or implicit pre-instruction, and explicit or implicit feedback on teaching Spanish speech acts of suggestions. In this study, explicit feedback was operationalized as “question recasts”, while implicit feedback was simply the statement showing that the teacher did not understand (e.g., what was that?). The study compared the effects of four instructional conditions and one control group. The four instructional conditions were: 1) explicit pre-instruction and explicit feedback; 2) explicit pre-instruction and implicit feedback; 3) implicit pre-instruction and explicit feedback; and 4) implicit pre-instruction and implicit feedback. All four experiment groups saw three sample dialogues and listened to the instructor reading them before completing the tasks. The tests comprised a multiple-choice task and an open-ended dialogue part. Results from the post-test and the delayed-post test indicated that the group of explicit pre-instruction and explicit feedback performed significantly better than other groups in the multiple choice items, while the group with implicit pre-instruction and implicit feedback significantly outperformed the others in the open-ended dialogue tasks. The researchers concluded that the explicit and implicit instruction and feedback might have played differential roles in helping learners develop their pragmatic competence. Especially in the form of question recasts, explicit instruction and feedback effectively helped learners read, interpret, and then understand the use of the target speech act, while implicit instruction and feedback might have helped them produce appropriate pragmatic utterances.

However, as cautioned by Koike and Pearson (2005), the findings should be interpreted together with some design limitations regarding the short period of the treatment (60 minutes), the insufficient practice for the learners and the lack of reliable measurements between the post-test and the pre- and delayed post test which impeded the research results. Furthermore, one may argue against the operationalization of explicit feedback in this study. Explicit feedback was defined as *question recasts*. Teachers provided the correct answer after the learners' non-target utterances, and also commented on why such answers were the most appropriate. This definition of question recasts was likely to be the combination of two feedback techniques, namely recasts and metalinguistic information, and thus cannot represent the precise effects of recasts.

Studies on Pragmatic Awareness

Schauer (2006) points out that a rather limited number of studies have examined the acquisition of pragmatic awareness (as discussed below). Hinkel (1997) investigated Chinese English as a second language (ESL) learners' pragmatic awareness of giving appropriate advice. The learners were required to select the most appropriate advice options (direct, hedged, or indirect) from the multiple-choice questionnaire. The results showed significant differences between the ESL learners' and the native speakers' choice of appropriate advice in that while the native speakers considered indirect advice to be more appropriate, the ESL learners perceived direct and hedged advice to be more appropriate.

Among studies in the relationship between grammatical and pragmatic awareness, Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) investigated the recognition and rating of grammatical and pragmatic infelicities of the ESL and EFL learners. The participants were asked to watch 20 video scenarios comprising various speech acts and either grammatical or pragmatic errors. Then, they were asked to rate the levels of severity of the errors they perceived in the questionnaire. The findings revealed that the ESL learners in the

United States were more aware of pragmatic mistakes than grammatical mistakes. In contrast, the EFL Hungarian learners recognized the grammatical mistakes more than pragmatic errors. Concerning the severity degree, the ESL learners rated the pragmatic errors to be more severe than grammatical errors, while the EFL learners considered grammatical errors to be more important.

Fukuya and Clark (2001) examined the effects of instruction on learners' ability to recognize the appropriate use of mitigators when making requests. Fukuya and Clark (2001) applied input enhancement for an implicit teaching treatment. They found the positive effects of implicit instruction on learners' strategies when making requests. Cook and Liddicoat (2002) studied ESL learners' pragmatic awareness of requests in relation to their level of proficiency. The high- and low-proficiency learners were asked to do the multiple-choice test by reading the request scenario and its corresponding request expression. Each request expression was one of the three request types – direct, conventionally indirect, or unconventionally indirect request. Then, they were required to select the interpretation to each request from the available choices. Findings reported significant differences in the interpretations of direct requests between low proficiency learners and the native speakers. In addition, remarkable disparities in the interpretations of conventional and unconventional requests between both proficiency levels of the ESL learners and the native speakers were also found.

Bardovi-Harlig and Griffin (2005) explored 43 ESL learners' pragmatic awareness in identifying pragmatic infelicities from a video and repairing them. The subjects were asked to work in pairs to identify what is missing from the speech act scenarios and then to perform short role-plays to repair the infelicities they had identified. The subjects' role plays were also video-taped to analyze the types of pragmatic infelicities that are noticed by high intermediate learners and that are most easily remedied by them. The results revealed the learners' recognition of pragmatic infelicities and their ability to supply the missing speech acts. However, the expression and content

repaired by the learners were different from the target-like norms due to their language proficiency and cultural background.

Employing the Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) video-and-questionnaire instrument plus interviews, Schauer (2006) studied the differences of ESL and EFL learners' recognition of pragmatic and grammatical errors. She also investigated the ESL learners' development of their pragmatic awareness during an extended stay in the target environment. Data from the 16 ESL and 17 EFL learners were compared with 20 native speakers of English. The findings from this study are in line with the original work of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) in that the ESL learners were more aware of pragmatic infelicities than the EFL group. It also found that the ESL learners significantly increased their pragmatic and grammatical awareness during their stay in Great Britain. In light of these findings, "it seems that direct requests might be the first Request Strategy that learners become explicitly aware of, as there was no significant difference between the native speakers' and high-proficiency learners' interpretation of these request types" (Schauer, 2006: 278).

Based on the literature discussed above, the majority of interventional studies on teaching pragmatics examined the effects of instruction on various aspects of pragmatic production. Findings on the effects of corrective feedback on pragmatic performance remain inconclusive. However, a meta-analysis of 13 interventional pragmatics studies by Jeon and Kaya (2006) revealed a clear advantage of explicit over implicit instruction.

To date, only a few studies have explored the role of instruction on learners' pragmatic awareness (e.g., Fukuya & Clark, 2001). The existing studies on pragmatic awareness focused on various kinds of speech acts, but not the speech act of refusal. This research gap led us to explore the role of corrective feedback in raising learners' pragmatic awareness of appropriate refusals. For the purpose of this study, Thai learners are the focus of the study as the nature of refusals in Thai differs from that in English culture. The outcome of

this research will benefit the teaching of pragmatics in a Thai context. The research questions are:

1. Are prompts more effective than explicit feedback in promoting learners' pragmatic awareness?
2. In what way may learners receiving prompts versus explicit feedback employ different aspects of pragmatic awareness in solving a communicative task?

METHOD

Context of study

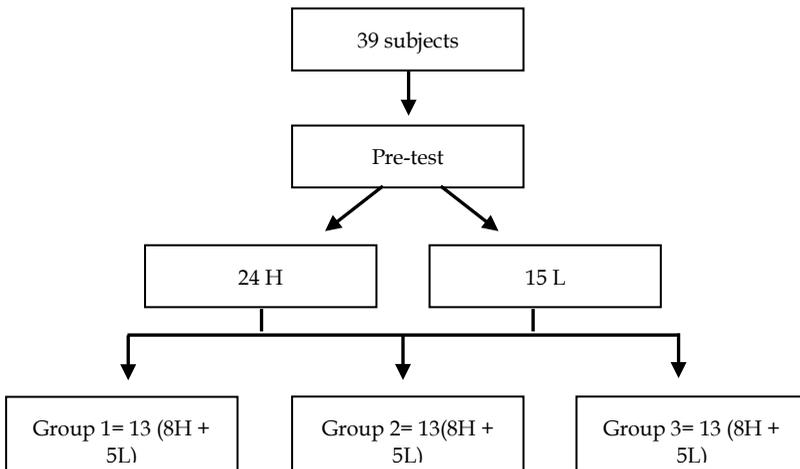
The context of the present study was in an EFL course for undergraduate students in the Faculty of Archaeology at one of the major universities in Bangkok, Thailand. The study was conducted as a complementary part of English Preparation I, the required English grammar course for all first year English majors of the faculty. Students who enrolled in the study were informed about the present research project and signed the consent form to participate in the study. However, at the beginning of the class, they were not informed about the kind of corrective feedback they would receive in the upcoming 10 weeks in order to avoid any prepared mind-set effects. The 90-minute sessions met once a week for 10 weeks, totaling 15 hours.

Participants

The subjects were 39 English-majored freshmen, 6 males and 33 females (aged between 17 and 19 years old) who volunteered to participate in the study. All participants had been studying English as part of their compulsory education for at least ten years. Their English proficiency levels ranged from lower-intermediate to higher-intermediate levels. Most of them had never been to English speaking countries.

This study utilised an experimental research design comprising two experimental groups (explicit feedback versus prompts) and one control group (i.e., delayed explicit feedback). A case study method was also adopted to explore the way in which two experimental groups of learners utilized different kinds of feedback on their refusals (see Duff, 2008). In order to evenly match and assign the subjects into groups, the subjects were firstly pre-tested on their ability in making English refusals in a speaking test. Appendix A presents the target refusal expressions.

FIGURE 1
Steps in assigning subjects into groups



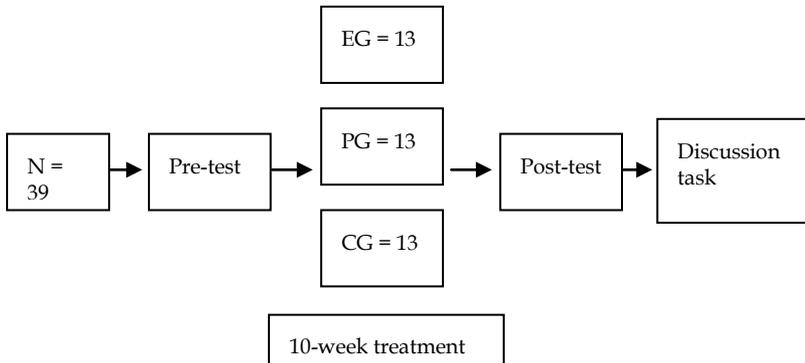
The pretest included 12 items comprising 8 refusal situations with 4 distracters each. The test was conducted in a language laboratory where each subject had their own headphone and microphone. They were asked to respond to the situations given by speaking into the microphone while the device automatically tape-recorded their responses. The scores obtained were used to categorize them into the high- and the low-proficiency level. Therefore, the term *high-*

proficiency (H) and *low-proficiency (L)* employed in this study means the subjects' level of ability in making English refusals, not their general English proficiency. The results yielded altogether 24 H and 15 L. The number of H and L were then matched and assigned into groups. As a result, each group comprised 8 H and 5 L, totaling 13 students (see Figure 1). The mean pretest scores from the pre-test of all three groups were calculated by an analysis of variance (ANOVA). Results revealed considerable uniformity across all three groups [$F(2, 36) = .134; p = .88$]. This indicates that the abilities in making English refusals of the three groups were not significantly different at the beginning of the study.

Research procedure

One week before the instructional intervention was the pre-test. The subjects attended the pragmatic awareness multiple-choice test (MCT; discussed below) in order to measure their pragmatic awareness in making English refusals. During the 10-week course, the three groups were exposed to the same lesson plans and teaching materials, but different types of corrective feedback. The first author was the teacher of all three groups. One week after the course ended, the subjects were required to do the post-test by attending the parallel version of the MCT. From the post-test scores, three subjects of the highest scores and three of the lowest of each group were asked to participate in a discussion task, a group at a time. Appendix B presents the discussion tasks using the think-aloud technique. The discussion task required subjects to express their idea about the best refusal response in each particular situation in order to collect qualitative data about the subjects' pragmatic awareness. The discussions were tape-recorded and transcribed for the content analyses. The results were used to cross-check with the quantitative findings. Figure 2 shows the research design and procedure.

FIGURE 2
Research design and procedure.



EG = Explicit Feedback Group

PG = Prompts Group

CG = Control Group

Instructional intervention

As the study aimed to examine the effects of corrective feedback on learners' pragmatic awareness, it was necessary for the teacher to give feedback to learners' errors regarding both the correctness and the appropriateness of the selected form. Subjects in the first experimental group received explicit feedback when they made oral mistakes regarding the target speech acts. The definition of explicit feedback employed in this study includes explicit correction plus 'metalinguistic' or 'sociopragmatic information'. The two latter terms mean the provision of either grammatical or sociopragmatic metalanguage that refers to the nature of the errors (e.g., You should say 'I had booked it'. It's the past perfect tense.). The other experimental group received prompts—the teacher's immediate response to a learner's error by not providing the right answer, but a cue to help the learner discover the answer by him/herself. Prompts in this study were operationalized as a set of three corrective feedback moves: *elicitation*, *repetition* and *metalinguistic cues*.

Elicitation refers to teachers' direct elicitation of correct forms from students by asking questions such as *"How do we say that in plural?"*. Repetition means teachers' repetition of students' error by adjusting the intonation to highlight the error, e.g., *"I were told?"*. Metalinguistic clues are teachers' provision of comments or questions relating to the learner's mistake, without explicitly providing the correct form, e.g., *"Do we say 'scaring' in English?"*. These techniques can be used either separately or in combination.

The control group in this study was designed to receive delayed explicit feedback, with the instructor collecting the learners' frequent mistakes and providing feedback at the end of each session. The delayed feedback provided to the control group would be the baseline to see the effects of the two immediate feedback types (explicit feedback and prompts). In addition, as the study was conducted in actual classrooms, this design would satisfy ethical requirements in providing corrective feedback to all students.

Although there was a possibility that students from different groups might discuss outside the classroom, this would not essentially affect the research outcomes because the lesson plans were designed to include seven other speech acts apart from refusals and thereby shift their interests from the target speech act. Furthermore, students were told that the class sessions were not included as part of their grades, but merely the additional English speaking hours, thus it might minimise the opportunity for the students to discuss or review the lessons together.

In order to facilitate the teacher monitoring process, and also to minimize the teacher's preference in giving feedback, the feedback rubric was developed based on the framework in giving recast by Fukuya and Zhang (2002). Following this framework, the subjects' oral mistakes were categorized into two types: errors regarding grammatical accuracy and contextual appropriateness. Accordingly, students' utterances can be classified into four types (see Figure 3):

- Type I: appropriate usage/ correct form;
- Type II: appropriate usage/ incorrect form;

- Type III: inappropriate usage/ correct form; and
- Type IV: inappropriate usage/incorrect form

FIGURE 3
Corrective feedback rubrics

Learner's utterance	Appropriate usage	Correct form	Treatments (feedbacks)	
			Explicit correction	Prompts
Type I	+	+	n/a	n/a
Type II	+	-	overtly point out the error and provide the correct form	give one, or a combination of the three prompt techniques to elicit self-repair on forms
Type III	-	+	provide metalinguistic information about the inappropriate expression and give an alternative of the appropriate forms	give one, or a combination of the three prompt techniques to elicit self-repair on appropriate expression
Type IV	-	-		

Note: For the control group, the teacher collects the frequent mistakes made during the class and provides delayed corrective feedback by means of explicit feedback at the end of each class.

The target form in Type I utterance will be excluded from giving corrective feedback. The remaining three types will be treated either by explicit correction or by prompts.

Examples of explicit correction

Error type II: Refusing a colleague's invitation

S1: *I'm having a party at my home on Friday. Do you want to come?*

S2: *Oh..I'm interesting*, but I already have plans with my mother. I'm sorry.*

T: *You should say "I'm interested".*

Error type III: Refusing a boss's request

S1: *I'm looking for someone to arrange the meeting room this evening. Could you do that?*

S2: *I'm sorry. I can't stay late today. I've a dentist's appointment.*

T: *You may make it more polite by saying "I'd love to, but I've a dentist's appointment..."*

Examples of prompts

Error type II: Refusing a colleague's invitation

S1: *I'm having a party at my home on Friday. Do you want to come?*

S2: *Oh.. I'm interesting*, but I already have plans. I'm sorry.*

T: *I'm interesting? I'm interest...?*

(repetition+ elicitation)

Error type III: Refusing a boss's request.

S1: *I'm looking for someone to arrange the meeting room this evening. Could you do that?*

S2: *I'm sorry. I can't help you today. I've a dentist* appointment.*

T: *Can you make "I can't help you today" softer?*

(metalinguistic clues+elicitation)

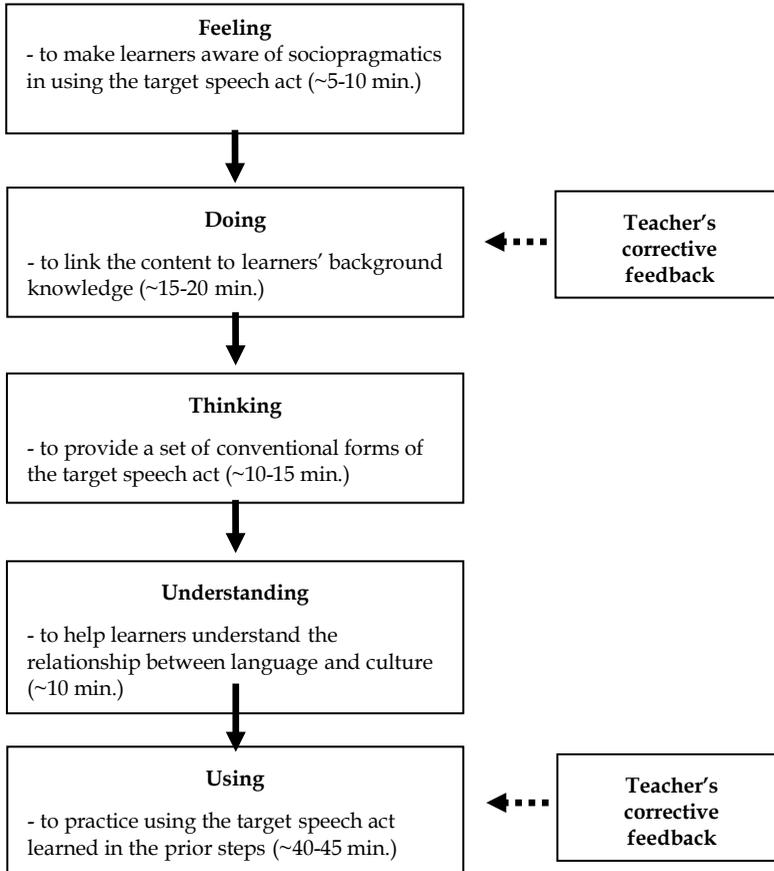
Teaching materials

The teaching materials specially developed for this study consisted of 10 lessons covering 8 speech acts (refusal, invitation, request, offer, suggestion, agreement, complaining and apologizing). The learning activities in each lesson were adapted from the five-step teaching procedures from the book "Heart to Heart: Overcoming barriers in cross-cultural communication" (Yoshida *et al.*, 2000). The five steps were: *feeling, doing, thinking, understanding, and using*. Adapted from Yoshida *et al.* (2000), the first phase, *feeling*, was the introduction to the target speech act which aimed to raise students' awareness towards either the function or the expression of the speech act. The activities employed were, for instance, reading or listening to a dialogue and discussing the quality of the refusal or other speech act expressions. The second step – *doing* – aimed to connect the lesson to students' background knowledge about the target speech act by having them try to solve the communicative tasks with their own language production. The researcher provided corrective feedback

when they made mistakes. At this phase, students may have realized their need to learn more about appropriate speech act expressions. *Thinking* was the third step which introduced the students to a set of conventional expressions used for a particular speech act. At this phase, students were required to think and discuss whether each expression was appropriate in the formal, or informal context, or both. In addition, they were required to use the target expressions in doing the subsequent activities. The fourth step, *understanding*, aimed to open students' minds to other varieties of English in order to enhance students' understanding of the relationship between language and culture. The activities in this step were reading a short passage regarding the use of English by people from different cultures followed by a short discussion. Some of the reading passages were adapted from Yoshida, Kamiya, Kondo and Tokiwa's (2000) book, while some were from the researcher's interview with international students studying in the TESOL program at McGill University. The last step was the *using* phase where the learners were required to use the target expressions learned from the thinking phase to complete the language tasks. The researcher played a facilitative role by providing corrective feedback after non-target utterances. The teaching processes and the estimated time for each step are summarized in Figure 4. Appendix C provides the lesson plans for all 10 weeks.

As can be seen from Figure 4, teacher corrective feedback was mainly provided during phases 2 and 5, which were the phases that consumed the greatest amount of class time. The present study followed the five phases in developing learners' pragmatic competence from the named textbook, but the content and activities in each phase were tailor-made by adapting from the activities provided on various ESL websites, or constructed by the researcher to best suit the learners' context and proficiency level.

FIGURE 4
Instructional Processes



The target speech act

There are numerous refusal strategies in authentic communication. Some expressions are conventionally accepted, some are not. However, which strategy and when to use it depends on the context

of speaking. Refusal strategies are expressed through a particular form of expressions, e.g., *I wish I could, but...* and *I'd love to, but..*. Thus, L2 learners need to learn these forms in order to make appropriate refusal in a conventional way. Therefore, in this study a set of conventional refusal expressions were selected from the pattern of American refusal strategies (Beebe, Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990) and from the textbook for pragmatics teaching "Heart to Heart: Overcoming barriers in cross-cultural communication" (Yoshida *et al.*, 2000).

Instruments and data collection

Pragmatic awareness multiple choice test (MCT)

The data collection instruments comprised two parallel versions of pragmatic awareness multiple choice test (MCT) and a discussion task (the tests and scoring schemes used in this study can be requested by contacting the first author). The design of the multiple choice test (MCT) is generally based on Lyster's (1993) Sociolinguistic Multiple Choice Test. Each version of the tests includes 20 items, comprising 16 refusal items and 4 distracters. The 16-refusal items of each test were designed to measure the subjects' pragmatic awareness in making refusals in four situations—invitation, request, offer and suggestion. The two tests employed the same structure but different situations. The following is an example of this test.

Read the following situations in which you are talking to a person. Decide which response BEST suits each situation. Please note that your relationship to each person is NEITHER too close NOR too distant.

1. You are talking to your new classmate about a book you bought last week and just finished reading. The classmate asked you to lend her the book for a couple of days, but you have to use it in writing a report this weekend. What would you say?

- A. Um...I'm sorry, I can't because I'm writing a report on it. Maybe next time.
- B. I'm afraid I have to use it this week because I'm writing a report on it. I'm sorry.
- C. I'm sorry to say that I can't lend it to you this weekend. I'm writing a report on it. Sorry about that.

To respond to each item the subjects were required to choose the refusal expressions which best suit the given contexts. The MCT were validated by three experts in the areas of EFL teaching and language assessment. Suggestions from the experts led to two main points of revision: 1) the relationship and social distance between the interlocutors of each situation were clarified and emphasized, and 2) some redundancy and unnatural expressions were modified.

After the revision, the tests were administered to the sample of 20 native speakers of English to find the native speakers' norms in selecting the appropriate refusal expressions. As there is no concrete standard for what is considered appropriate language, the most valid and practical way to judge the appropriateness of an utterance in a particular context may rely on the native speakers' norms in language use. By this reason, Lyster's (1993) scoring scheme for sociolinguistic MCT was adopted for use in this study. The test items were scored according to weights or percentage of the native speakers' choices in doing the test. The test scores were then graded according to the following four-point scale.

- 3 points if chosen by 80-100% of the native speakers;
- 2 points if chosen by 50-79% of the native speakers;
- 1 points if chosen by 15-49% of the native speakers;
- 0 points if chosen by less than 15% of the native speakers.

In this study, a repeated-measures *t*-test was employed to compare differences between pretest and posttest performance for each group. A between-group Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine differences in the posttest performances between the three groups.

Discussion protocols

After completing the post-test, six subjects (50%) of each group, three of the highest and three of the lowest scores, were called for a group discussion, a group at a time, to collect the aspects of pragmatic awareness raised by the subjects of each group. The objective of the qualitative part is to further explore the participants' ability to

analyse given language expressions using their pragmatic awareness. To complete the discussion task, the participants received four refusal situations together with two choices of statement of refusal. They were required to discuss them in groups, using think-aloud techniques, to find a consensus on the best refusal for each situation. At this stage, they were prompted what the think-aloud technique was and how to do so by discussing with the researcher in a sample task before performing in the actual tasks. Their responses while discussing each task were tape-recorded and transcribed. The data then were analyzed using a content analysis technique to find general patterns or aspects of pragmatic awareness raised by each group (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). Then, these aspects were recorded together with the number of participants mentioning each aspect. Last, the awareness patterns of the three groups were compared in order to cross-check with the quantitative findings. Results from the qualitative part may reveal whether the group that gains the highest scores on the MCT also reports the most varied aspects of awareness in the discussion.

Results in this part are presented in two sections. The first section reports on the quantitative findings from the MCT pre- and post-test. The second section presents the descriptive data stemmed from the discussions. The three groups were represented by the following abbreviations: EG (Explicit Feedback Group), PG (Prompts Group) and CG (Control Group).

RESULTS

Answers related to RQ1 (Are prompts more effective than explicit feedback in promoting learners' pragmatic awareness?)

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics on the MCT pretest and posttest scores for all the three groups of students. A Kolmorov-Smirnov one-sample test was run to measure the distribution of the pre-test scores. Results showed the difference from normality at .524, which represented the normal distribution of the scores on pre-test (see Table 2). Accordingly, parametric statistics were employed to

analyze the within- and between-group difference. First, scores from the pre- and post-test of each group (see Table 1) were analyzed by a *t*-test to examine whether the improvement of each group was significant. Then, scores from the pre- and post-test of all three groups were analyzed using one way ANOVA with *Post hoc Tukey* statistics to find the differences between groups.

TABLE 1
Scores on the pre- and post-test of all three groups

Group	Pre-test				Post-test			
	X	S.D.	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		X	S.D.	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
EG	19.38	4.31	16.78	21.99	21.00	2.86	19.27	22.73
PG	18.85	2.91	17.09	20.61	24.23	2.20	22.90	25.56
CG	18.92	2.69	17.30	20.55	19.85	2.73	18.19	21.50

Pretest-posttest comparisons

The descriptive statistics from the pre-test show the invariability of scores among the three groups. The EG gained the highest mean score at 19.38, followed by the CG (18.92) and the PG (18.85). Analyses by ANOVA reported that the difference between groups was not significant [$F(2, 36) = .096; p = .908$]. This means that the three groups' level of awareness of appropriate refusal is comparable at the beginning of the study.

TABLE 2
Distribution of scores on the pre-test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Pre-test
N		39
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	19.05
	Std. Deviation	3.300
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.130
	Positive	.130
	Negative	-.084
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.812
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.524

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

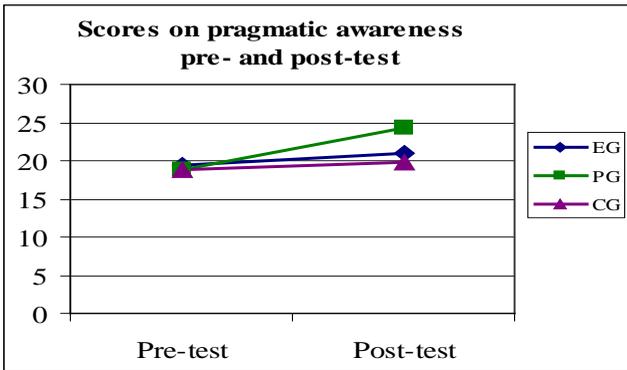
When considering the post-test results, it is obvious that the PG gained the greatest improvement of their pragmatic awareness (24.23), followed by the EG (21.00) and the control group (19.85). A repeated t-test reported a statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores of the PG [$t(12) = 10.759$; $p < 0.05$]. The EG also gained some improvement, but no significant difference was found between their pre- and post-test scores [$t(12) = 1.525$; $p > 0.05$]. The CG recorded the least improvement on pragmatic awareness based on the mean scores on both the pretest and posttest and their scores on both tests were not statistically different [$t(12) = .843$; $p > 0.05$].

Between-group comparisons (posttest)

A between-group ANOVA of the post-test performances between the three groups indicates a statistically significant difference among the three groups [$F(2, 36) = 9.827$; $p = .001$]. A *Post hoc Tukey* showed that the PG considerably outperformed the EG ($p = .009$) and the CG ($p = .001$), which led to a significant difference between the PG and the other two groups. The EG performed better than the CG, but the difference between groups did not reach statistical significance ($p = .505$). The effect size (Eta squared [η^2]) was .353. The calculation of

the effect size to Cohen's d defines large effect size ($d = 1.268$). Figure 5 illustrates the three groups' scores on their pragmatic awareness from the pre- and post-test.

FIGURE 5
Scores on pragmatic awareness pre- and post-test



Answers related to RQ2 (In what way may learners receiving prompts versus explicit feedback employ different aspects of pragmatic awareness in solving a communicative task?)

Analyses of the participants' group discussion using a think-aloud technique aiming to explore what aspects of pragmatic awareness are raised by the participants of each group suggest the following results. It was revealed that a number of pragmatic awareness facets were developed by each group. Quotations from the high- and the low-proficiency subjects are jointly reported with the subject code that identifies the subject's group and proficiency level. Number 1, 2 and 3 in the code represents the high-proficiency subjects while number 4, 5 and 6 labels the low-proficiency ones. For instance, EG1, EG2, EG3 stand for the high-proficiency subjects of the explicit feedback group while EG4, EG5, EG6 represents the low-proficiency of the same group. This system applies to the PG (prompts group) and the CG (control group) as well.

Awareness concerning the context of speaking

All participants (100%) from all three groups are able to evaluate the context of speaking by considering the relationship between the interlocutors. Examples were translated into English and presented with their discussion situation (see Appendix B):

EG1: *"I think choice B is better because the words used is more formal ... because he is the supervisor which is kind of exclusive.. er.. not exclusive, but is in higher status than us." (Situation 2)*

PG4: *"I think the answer should be B because he is talking to the supervisor, so the level of language he used .. uhm .. the words he used ... if he answered like A, it would sound like talking to a friend, not the person from different status like supervisor."(Situation 2)*

CG1: *"...It might be the expressions used... it sounds like we pay respect to the supervisor." (Situation 2)*

CG5: *"I also think B because though the situation says 'classmate', we still don't know how close the classmate is. If he is a close classmate, like friend, choice A is fine. If not, we should say like B." (Situation 4)*

Awareness concerning the concept of 'face' and 'politeness'

This aspect of pragmatic awareness shows the participants' concern for politeness and the concept of 'face' when selecting appropriate refusals. The results revealed that all of the participants (100%) expressed their politeness concerns when analyzing the conversation between the interlocutors, especially when the refusal is addressed to a person of higher status. For example:

EG2: *"B is more appropriate because the supervisor is usually someone who is elder than us. When we want to refuse the supervisor, we then should explain the reason so that...it wouldn't sound too harsh." (Situation 2)*

EG5: "I'll say B because we should care for our friends. And we are not so close. When she suggests an idea, we should say ... yeah, thank you ... it sounds great, but... blah blah blah." (Situation 4)

PG2: "I think A because it's more formal, then show more respect to the hearer than B." (Situation 3)

PG6: "I think A is too straightforward, doesn't try to 'save her (the interlocutor's) face' even though she helped suggest an idea." (Situation 4)

PG5: "I think B has the sentence that explains the reason that he has the dentist's appointment, so it specified the reason, which helps the hearer feel better that .. uhm.. he has an important matter to do, so he cannot help, unlike A."(Situation 2)

CG1: "B is better because it sounds more polite when used with teacher. A sounds too harsh."(Situation 2)

Awareness concerning direct refusals or inappropriate refusal strategies

This kind of awareness represents the participants' ability to identify direct refusals and other expressions that might be inappropriate to the context and may affect the relationship of the interlocutors. 100% of the PG and 83% of the EG addressed this pragmatic awareness aspect, while 67% of the CG mentioned this point. Examples of the statements are:

EG2: " B is better because it sounds more polite when used with teacher. A sounds too harsh."(Situation 2)

EG3: "A sounds really harsh ...like... I don't want to, then I won't go." (Situation 1)

PG6: "I think A is too straightforward, doesn't try to 'save her (the interlocutor's) face' even though she helped suggest an idea." (Situation 4)

PG4: *"I agree with B because ... if we want to avoid, at least we should say something with care. A is too direct and rough ... sorry, I can't. It's like an abrupt refusal."* (Situation 1)

CG1: *"...in choice A 'Oh.. sorry' is a direct refusal, like whatever I won't go."* (Situation 1)

Awareness concerning the cause of unconventional refusal strategies

This awareness aspect was reported by 17% of the EG and 67% of the PG. The participants mentioned that the lack of knowledge or experience in American English and culture essentially resulted in their use of unconventional refusal strategies. None of this sort of awareness was addressed by the CG. The examples are:

EG6: *"B sounds like the native speaker's expression, but I'm not sure because I don't know English very well. Sometimes I myself cannot use it properly."* (Situation 1)

PG3: *"A is a direct refusal. A maybe the answer of someone who are not skillful in using English, and are not skilled in using appropriate language, caring language."* (Situation 1)

PG4: *"Sometimes I didn't use appropriate expressions because I don't know what language level each expression belongs to. And when I talk to this kind of person, what level I should use. It depends on the culture as well, like talking with teachers here needs more polite language than in America I think."* (Situation 3)

PG5: *"I think choice A maybe of the speaker whose English is not advanced. He then says things directly, like .. I'm sorry, I can't make it ... like other Thais who are not good at English, we use it directly, we are not aware of how to make it beautiful because we don't know how ... just get the meaning across, that's it."* (Situation 1)

PG6: *"I myself use 'I think I can't' because it sounds like Thai, but I think American would use 'I don't think I can'. These things we have to learn by experience, if we are not used to their culture, how do we know?"* (Situation 4)

Awareness concerning the effects of non-verbal language on the speech act perception

Another aspect of awareness found from 17% of the EG and 33% of the PG participants is concerning the effects of non-verbal language on refusal perception. In other words, the EG and the PG subjects expressed that they were aware of 'what' and 'how' one says things. For example:

EG1: "If this classmate is not so close to us, we should use B... but it also depends on how we say, like if we say choice A softly...gently, it would be fine." (Situation 4)

PG4: "I think it depends on how we say these expressions as well. Like in choice A, if I say 'Yeah! Munkie is good [in a cheerful way], but ...', it would sound better for the hearer than just 'Yeah... it's good [in a dull way], but... ' because I showed my sincere interest in the way I said, not just saying things in good manner." (Situation 4)

Awareness concerning the unconventional refusal expressions

This facet of pragmatic awareness was mentioned by 50% of the PG, but not from other groups. In addition, the reporters of this kind of awareness were all from the low-proficiency level. Addressing this kind of awareness represented the subjects' ability to identify the unconventional refusal expressions, which signified their focus on language forms. For example:

PG4: "I myself use 'I think I can't' because I translated from Thai, but I think American would use like 'I don't think I can'." (Situation 4)

PG6: "Choice A uses 'I think I can't' but B uses 'I'm afraid I can't'. I think and I'm afraid ... 'I'm afraid' sounds better ... and Americans don't use the expression 'I think I can't', right? " (Situation 4)

Awareness concerning pragmatic transfer

The last facet of pragmatic awareness addressed by 33% of the PG is the awareness concerning pragmatic transfer from their native language (Thai) to American English, which is reflected in the choice of refusal strategies and expressions. The examples are:

PG3: "If I were the speaker, I wouldn't say so because it's too polite. Sometimes we use it in Thai and then we translate to English, but I think it's too much in English context." (Situation 3)

PG4: "I think it's the Thai way to say 'sorry' to an invitation to a concert. I think Americans say 'thank you' instead. And choice A keeps repeating 'oh I'm sorry, sorry again' I think it's too much." (Situation 1)

The aspects of pragmatic awareness shown in the participants' discussion were categorized under the two pragmatic components as defined by Thomas (1983) in that pragmatics comprises two components—pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. *Pragmalinguistics* refers to the grammatical side of pragmatics, which includes a number of resources to achieve particular communicative acts. Such resources include pragmatic strategies, e.g., direct and indirectness, pragmatic routines, and a large range of linguistic forms which can modify, intensify, or soften the communicative acts. *Sociopragmatics* is regarded as the relationship between linguistic action and the social context of its usage. It includes sociocultural factors such as status, social distance and particular cultural context, which can govern what and how those linguistic acts are performed. In other words, sociopragmatics is "the social perceptions underlying participants' interpretation and performance of communicative action" (Rose & Kasper 2001: 2). By considering these definitions, we may categorize the pragmatic awareness shown in the participants' discussion into two categories according to the two pragmatic components: 1) awareness concerning sociopragmatics and 2) awareness concerning pragmalinguistics. Table 3 summarizes the aspects of pragmatic awareness each group reported.

Table 3
Aspects of pragmatic awareness reported from the interview

Aspects of pragmatic awareness	EG	PG	CG
Pragmalinguistics			
1. Awareness concerning direct refusals or inappropriate refusal strategies that may affect the relationship between the interlocutors	83%	100%	67%
2. Awareness concerning the effects of non-verbal language on the speech act perception	17%	33%	-
3. Awareness concerning the unconventional refusal expressions (focus on forms)	-	50%	-
Sociopragmatics			
4. Awareness concerning the concept of 'face' and 'politeness'	100%	100%	100%
5. Awareness concerning the context of speaking	100%	100%	100%
6. Awareness concerning the cause of unconventional refusal strategies (the lack of knowledge or experience in American English and cultures)	17%	67%	-
7. Awareness concerning pragmatic transfer	-	33%	-

DISCUSSION

Data analyses for the MCT aimed to find the answers for the first research question of whether or not prompts are more effective than explicit feedback in promoting learners' pragmatic awareness. The findings from the MCT show the positive effects of prompts on learners' pragmatic awareness over explicit feedback. The explanation of the PG's and the EG's greater degree of pragmatic awareness compared to the control group could be the matter of the time when the corrective feedback was delivered. While prompts and explicit feedback share the characteristic of the instructor

providing corrective feedback immediately after the learner's mistake, the delayed explicit feedback used as the control group treatment involved the instructor compiling a list of frequent mistakes to provide correction explicitly at the end of each class. Unlike prompts and explicit feedback that provide immediate response, the delayed feedback is then comparatively deficient in the linkage between teacher's corrective feedback and learners' recall of their mistakes. Therefore, the PG and the EG have a tendency to be more aware of more pragmatic aspects than the control group as they are able to recall and make comparisons between the target-like form and their own utterance. When comparing the two experimental groups, prompts were found to be the more effective corrective feedback technique in promoting learners' pragmatic awareness in making appropriate refusals compared to explicit feedback. The key factors influencing the effectiveness of prompts are the provision of multiple opportunities for uptake and its demand for learners' generated repair.

As defined by Lyster and Ranta (1997: 49), learner's uptake is "a student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance". A number of studies have investigated the effectiveness of corrective feedback using learners' uptake and repair as measurement (e.g., Ellis, Basturkmen & Loewen, 2001; Loewen, 2004; Lyster, 1998; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Mackey, Oliver & Leeman, 2003; Panova & Lyster, 2002). This is because uptake might be an indication of language acquisition as it indicates learners' noticing of teachers' corrective purpose, while learners' immediate repair demonstrates learning. Although some researchers cautioned that uptake is not necessarily indicative of learning, and learning may take place without uptake (e.g., Mackey & Philp, 1998), others believe in the likelihood that there is a strong relationship between learners' uptake and their awareness (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig, 2006). Further, pragmatic awareness is the key factor leading to improvement in pragmatic production (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig, 1996, 2006; Schauer,

2006; Takahashi, 2005). Thus, it is likely that the type of corrective feedback that leads to greater opportunities for learners' uptake and immediate repair benefits learners' pragmatic competence in terms of their awareness and production. This is because when teacher prompts a cue or a question to push learners to do self-repair, it would activate learners' pragmatic awareness as they have more opportunities to perform mental processes like rethinking, retrieving, and reformulating their utterance (production).

The second factor leading to the effectiveness of prompts is its demand for learners' self-generated repair. According to Schmidt (1993, 2001), language acquisition requires awareness at the level of noticing and what learners notice in the input will become intake for learning. To do self-repair, first, learners need to notice their mistakes (to be aware of what is wrong) from the teacher's input (prompts). In other words, instructors' prompts would activate students' awareness at the level of noticing. Then, the learners will need to refer to their awareness at the level of understanding to retrieve the target form from the language rules, patterns, or socio-cultural concerns stored in their mind. Therefore, learners who are prompted to retrieve more target-like forms are more likely to be aware of pragmatics, thereby improving their pragmatic production in the subsequent situations than learners merely hearing explicit corrections.

Although prompts are relatively more implicit than explicit feedback, findings from the present study cannot fully support Fukuya and Clark's (2001) study finding that implicit instruction is more effective in promoting learners' pragmatic strategies compared to explicit teaching. This is because, according to Lyster (1998, 2004), prompts are a group of corrective feedback moves that combine both implicit and explicit techniques. For example, *repetition* of learner's error with high intonation to highlight the error is considered more implicit compared to *metalinguistic clues* that teacher provides comments or questions relating to the learner's mistake.

Furthermore, the large effect size of the present study ($d = 1.27$) is different from that found in Jeon and Kaya's (2006) study. In their meta-analysis of 13 interventional pragmatics studies, Jeon and Kaya found a larger average effect size of explicit ($d = 1.91$) over implicit instruction ($d = 1.01$). Therefore, it is still inconclusive whether implicit or explicit feedback is more effective in teaching pragmatics.

To answer the second research question, the results from the think-aloud analyses are in line with those of the MCT in that the prompts group has gained the greatest improvement in pragmatic awareness of refusals. According to the qualitative findings, participants from the PG expressed the most various—seven— aspects of pragmatic awareness. The EG addressed five aspects of pragmatic awareness while the CG showed the least amount of awareness as they mentioned merely three aspects of pragmatic awareness in solving the task.

As can be seen in Table 3, the first three awareness aspects were categorized under pragmalinguistics because these kinds of awareness concern the grammatical side of pragmatics (e.g., unconventional forms), and some pragmatic strategies (e.g., direct and indirect strategies, and non-verbal language). The remaining four pragmatic aspects were grouped under sociopragmatic issue as they concern themselves with the relationship between linguistic action and its socio-cultural context (e.g., the concept of face and politeness, and the cultural differences).

According to Table 3, the PG revealed more aspects of both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic awareness than the EG and the CG. Also, among the three pragmatic awareness facets expressed by all three groups, the PG also recorded the greatest number of reporters. Results of the present study support the assumption of Cook and Liddicoat's (2002) and Pearson's (2006) study on learners' awareness of speech act strategies in that direct strategies might be the first request strategies that learners become explicitly aware of. As can be seen in Table 3, *sensitivity to direct expressions in making refusals* (Item 1) seems to be the main aspects of pragmatic awareness

developed by the participants of all three groups. *The levels of politeness* (Item 4) and *the context of speaking* (Item 5) were also markedly of concern for all three groups. The explanation could be the universal concept of politeness in every language of the world where people adjust 'how' (direct or indirect) they say things according to 'whom' and 'when' they are talking (the context). Moreover, an essential factor promoting these kinds of awareness could be due to a hierarchical culture reflected in the Thai language's use of different levels of speech with people of older generations and various social statuses that plays a facilitative role in easing learner's understanding of this concept in their L2. This assumption is in line with Pearson (2006) in that the L1 pragmatic system appears to play a role in interpreting and processing L2 pragmatic production. This is because learners' L1 pragmatic system influences the linking of L1 and L2 forms as learners advanced in their L2 acquisition.

The findings further revealed two aspects of pragmatic awareness expressed by the PG and the EG group, but not by the control group. These facets are the awareness concerning *the effects of non-verbal language* (Item 2) and *the lack of experience in the target language* (Item 6) which results in unconventional refusal strategies. The two facets of pragmatic awareness reported only by the PG were *the awareness of the unconventional refusal expressions* (Item 3) and *the awareness concerning pragmatic transfer* (Item 7). Unlike other aspects discussed above, the ability to identify unconventional refusal requires more analytical skill and more familiarity of the target language and culture in order to differentiate the non-target form or expressions from the target-like ones. The awareness concerning pragmatic transfer from the native language (Thai) is a step further from the one concerning the unconventional expression. These findings support the results from the MCT that the PG significantly improved their pragmatic awareness more than the other two groups. This is because awareness concerning the unconventional refusal expressions essentially benefited the PG in selecting the most appropriate refusal choice according to the native speakers' norms. In addition, the ability to identify conventional and unconventional

expressions could be one of the ultimate pragmatic awareness skills ESL learners can develop. The evidence from Cook and Liddicoat's (2002) study showed that there were significant differences in the interpretation of conventionally indirect and unconventionally indirect requests between the native speakers and the ESL learners of both higher and lower proficiency levels. This is because this kind of pragmatic awareness needs extensive experience in the target language and culture.

Among studies in pragmatic awareness discussed in the literature review, the definitions of pragmatic awareness vary from study to study. For instance, Bardovi-Harlig and Griffin (2005), and Schauer (2006) defined pragmatic awareness as learner's recognition of pragmatic infelicities, while Hinkel (1997) defined it as learner's ability in identifying the most appropriate advice options (direct, hedged, or indirect) from the multiple-choice questionnaire. In Cook and Liddicoat's (2002) study, pragmatic awareness was operationalized as the learner's ability to interpret different request expressions. In these various definitions, we still cannot find the answer *how* or *in what aspects* learners achieved the so-called pragmatic awareness. Findings from the present study shed more light on the aspects of pragmatic awareness L2 learners addressed while completing the task. For example, the PG group that shows the highest level of pragmatic awareness can identify unconventional refusal expressions and the expressions resulting from pragmatic transfer. The control group that represents the least development in pragmatic awareness did not show their concern about the effects of non-verbal language on the speech act perception. Therefore, these findings can provide a guideline regarding aspects of pragmatic awareness that could be taught in the language classroom, also the teaching techniques such as corrective feedback that can facilitate understanding. As only a few studies have been done to explore the role of instruction on learners' pragmatic awareness (e.g., Fukuya & Clark, 2001), findings from this study then can be one of the pioneers in investigating the role of prompts and explicit feedback in promoting learners' pragmatic awareness.

Limitations of the study and future research

There are some limitations of the study that are worth mentioning. First, the findings in this study depend on the sample size, the characteristics of the participants (mostly females), the nature of the instruments used to collect data and the context of the study. It is often the case that experimental research in this area has a small sample size for comparisons, which affects the generalizability of any findings. Second, it should be noted that one of the researchers was the teacher. Although she had the treatment rubric to follow in giving feedback, one may claim that the researcher's agenda on the effectiveness of certain teaching methods as well as her preference in some feedback techniques may affect differences of observed student performances, which would in turn affect the study outcomes. However, since there were two researchers in this project, the effect of possible bias was minimized through the researchers' collaboration and constant monitoring. Third, the findings for research question 1 were limited to statistical analyses using a small sample size, while the qualitative data for research question 2 was only suggestive, rather than definite. Given the limitations of the present study as well as the findings and the research design, future research needs to look deeper into the issues of refusals and the effect of feedback on students' learning in a variety of learning contexts and settings. A conceptual replication (see Mackey & Gass, 2005) of this study is recommended.

CONCLUSION

This study reported the parallel findings from the pragmatic awareness MCT and the think-aloud analyses that the learners who received prompts as corrective feedback significantly improved the degree of their pragmatic awareness more than the learners receiving immediate and delayed explicit feedback. These findings may signify the effectiveness of prompts in promoting pragmatic production as it is likely to be a relationship between pragmatic production and awareness. As the interpretation of the present study

limits the effects of corrective feedback to learners of the same level of language proficiency, future research should explore the extent to which each corrective feedback type helps learners of different language proficiency levels improve their pragmatic awareness.

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APPENDIX A: THE TARGET REFUSAL EXPRESSIONS

Refusal strategies	Target forms
Positive opinion	That sounds wonderful, but... I'd like/love to, but... I wish I could, but...
Thanking	Thank you for the invitation. Thanks, but... Thank you for asking me, though.
Apology/ regret	I'm sorry, but...
Direct refusal	I can't... I'm afraid I can't... I don't think I can...
Reason	I already have other plans. I have to... I'm going to... I can't afford to... I have a lot of homework to do.
Alternative	Maybe some other time. Perhaps next time.

APPENDIX B: DISCUSSION TASK USING THINK-ALOUD TECHNIQUE

What do you think is the best answer for each situation? And for what reasons? Discuss your opinion in group.

- 1. Classmate:** "The university band is playing tonight. The ticket is free. Would you like to come?"

A: "Oh.. I'm sorry. I think I cannot go because I'm having an exam tomorrow. Sorry again."

B: "That sounds great! Thanks for asking me, but I don't think I can make it because I'm having an exam tomorrow."
- 2. Supervisor:** "I'm looking for someone who can arrange the meeting room this evening. It's really urgent. Can you do that, please?"

A: "Oh.. I'm really sorry. I want to help out, but I already have plans this evening. I'm so sorry."

B: "Oh.. It would be my pleasure to help you, but unfortunately, I already have a dentist's appointment this evening. I'm so sorry."
- 3. Supervisor:** "We're looking for a new teacher assistant this semester. I can recommend you to this position because your grade is outstanding. Are you interested?"

A: "I'm deeply honored that you offered me this. Unfortunately, my schedule is so packed this semester, so I don't think I will be able to take this opportunity. I'm really sorry."

B: "Thank you very much. I appreciate your offer. Unfortunately, my schedule is so full this semester, so I'm afraid I can't take it."
- 4. Classmate:** "If you like Chinese food, why don't you have your party at Munkie restaurant? It's one of my favorites."

A: "Yeah.. Munkie is good, but I think I can't afford it. The food is overpriced."

B: "That's a good idea, but I'm afraid I can't afford it. Thank you for your suggestion anyway."

APPENDIX C: LESSON PLANS

Week/Speech act	Steps / Activities	Time/min
1/ Refusal	<p><i>Feeling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read short dialogues and discuss how appropriate they are <p><i>Doing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take turns making refusals to the situations given <p><i>Thinking</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In groups, think of possible expressions used in making refusals - Try to categorize the expressions by strategies - Learn about conventional refusal strategies and forms - Discuss the context of use of each refusal expression <p><i>Understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read a short passage and discuss as a whole class <p><i>Using</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practice making refusals in various emotional states - Complete a story using refusals - Think of situations that are difficult to make refusals; take turns to role play the situations 	<p>10</p> <p>15</p> <p>15</p> <p>10</p> <p>40</p>
2/ Invitation	<p><i>Feeling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completing the callouts in the pictures <p><i>Doing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think of interesting movies to be shown during the university movie week - Take turns inviting other classmates to buy a movie ticket; classmates check with the time schedule provided by teacher and respond to the invitation <p><i>Thinking</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In groups, think of possible expressions used in making invitations - Learn about conventional invitation strategies and forms - Practice some grammatical issues in making invitations <p><i>Understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read a short passage and discuss as a whole class <p><i>Using</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think of a strange party and try to invite classmates; classmates can accept only two invitations and have to refuse the others - Role play the situations given 	<p>10</p> <p>20</p> <p>15</p> <p>10</p> <p>35</p>

Week/Speech act	Steps / Activities	Time/min
3/ Request	<p><i>Feeling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen to a dialogue and discuss the topic of the conversation and the relationship between the interlocutors <p><i>Doing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think of five requests; ask five people in the class to do something for you (be creative) <p><i>Thinking</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In groups, think of the possible expressions used in making requests - Learn about conventional request strategies and forms <p><i>Understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read a short passage and discuss as a whole class <p><i>Using</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In pairs, think of possible requests and refusals according to the picture given; take turns role playing to class - Think of requests to a landlord regarding the apartment rules; the landlord cannot accept your request; role play the situations to the class 	<p>10</p> <p>20</p> <p>10</p> <p>10</p> <p>40</p>
4/ Interaction of week 1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the conventional expressions in making refusals, invitations and requests - Role play 'avoiding Esther': students take turns role playing Esther, a dangerous person, trying to invite or ask other classmates to do something; classmates have to find appropriate refusals to Esther's proposals. - Calling up: each student receives a problematic situation where he/she has to call up someone to request or invite them to do something; the person at the end of the line has to check with his/her situation to decide whether to accept or to refuse their request/ invitation 	<p>20</p> <p>35</p> <p>35</p>

Week/Speech act	Steps / Activities	Time/min
5/ Suggestion	<p>Feeling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen to a dialogue and discuss how appropriate the suggestion used is <p>Doing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think of possible suggestions to each situation and ways to show your agreement/ disagreement with the advice; take turns role playing to the class <p>Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In groups, think of possible expressions used in making suggestions - Learn about conventional suggestion strategies and forms <p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read a short passage and discuss as a whole class <p>Using</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In pairs, think of appropriate suggestion and refusal expressions according to the pictures given; role play the situation for class - Role play 'Dr. Phil's show' by taking turns giving advice to classmates' problems; the classmates have to reject the advice using good reasons 	<p>10</p> <p>15</p> <p>10</p> <p>10</p> <p>45</p>
6/ Offer	<p>Feeling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read different situations where a person is offering something to another; discuss how appropriate the expressions are <p>Doing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simulate a salesperson's job by offering promotions in order to sell the assigned products; the customers select the best promotion and refuse the others <p>Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn about conventional suggestion expressions - Practice matching the expressions to the situations given <p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read a short passage and discuss as a whole class <p>Using</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fulfill the callouts in the pictures with either a request or a suggestion; role play the situations in pairs - In groups, role play a tour agency trying to give traveling advice and offering the promotions; the customers choose the best package and refuse the others 	<p>10</p> <p>20</p> <p>10</p> <p>10</p> <p>45</p>

Week/Speech act	Steps / Activities	Time/min
7/ Interaction of week 5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of conventional suggestions and offering expressions - Sophie: listen to Sophie's story and discuss about each character in the story; take turns giving advice or offering help to Sophie; take turns role playing Sophie and find good reasons to refuse those suggestions or offers - Talking cards: student receives a card telling the situation he/she will have to perform (request, invitation, suggestion or offer); other students receive different cards telling them either to cooperate or to reject their friend's proposal; students role play the situations using the cues from the cards 	<p>10 40</p> <p>40</p>
8/ Agreement/ Disagreement	<p><i>Feeling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen to a discussion; think of who the people are and whether the expressions used affect their relationship <p><i>Doing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss in class about the 'uniform-only' policy of the university <p><i>Thinking</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In groups, think of possible expressions used in expressing ideas - Learn about conventional expressions in expressing agreement/ disagreement - Listen to different conversations; decide whether each disagreement expression is appropriate <p><i>Understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read a short passage and discuss as a whole class <p><i>Using</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Divide the whole class into two teams; conduct a debate on the given topics - Perform a debate about the careers topic 	<p>10</p> <p>20</p> <p>15</p> <p>10</p> <p>40</p>

Week/Speech act	Steps / Activities	Time/min
9/ Complaint/ Apology	<p><i>Feeling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen to two dialogues regarding the same topic; discuss the relationship between the interlocutors and decide which dialogue is more appropriate <p><i>Doing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read the situation given; respond to it by making a complaint, while the other person apologizes <p><i>Thinking</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn about conventional expressions in complaining and apologizing - Discuss possible situations to the complaints provided <p><i>Understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read a short passage and discuss as a whole class <p><i>Using</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talk about the good, the bad, and the ugly people/ situations you experienced; express your complaints/compliments to those people/ situations - Complete the callouts in the pictures given; role play the situations - Think of the possible complaints to a list of companies; role play making complaints to the company, while the company staff apologize 	<p>10</p> <p>10</p> <p>15</p> <p>10</p> <p>40</p>
10/ Interaction of week 1-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the conventional expressions of all speech acts learned in the course - Think of possible topics or speech acts that can be performed according to the pictures given; role playing the situations in pairs; the class decides which one best suits each picture - Socializing with confidence: read the cartoon strips and think of better ways to express in each situation; role play for the class 	<p>30</p> <p>30</p> <p>30</p>