

The Effect of Metapragmatic Awareness, Interactive Translation, and Discussion through Video-Enhanced Input on EFL Learners' Comprehension of Implicature

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Abstract: It is substantiated that particular features of pragmatics are teachable, and instruction is both necessary and effective. Determining what kind of intervention is most effectual for facilitating learners' pragmatic development has been a central issue for researchers. To respond to the inconclusive findings in intervention studies and to extend the instructional studies in L2 pragmatics to less studied and more complex teaching targets, such as implicatures, the current study inquired into the effects of metapragmatic awareness, interactive translation, and discussion through video vignettes on the comprehension of implicatures of 51 (15 male and 36 female) Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners, who were selected based on Oxford Quick Placement Test (2004) from students majoring English Literature and TEFL at Golestan University, Gorgan, Iran. Fifty-six video prompts containing implicatures from *Friends* sitcom series and *Desperate Housewives* TV series were taught to the participants who were randomly assigned to four groups (metapragmatic awareness, interactive translation, discussion, and control). The participants attended the classes twice a week for eight sessions. Results of multiple-choice implicature listening test revealed that all three intervention groups outperformed the control group. Results of Tukey's Honest Significant Difference (HSD) test illustrated that the metapragmatic awareness group outperformed the interactive translation and discussion groups. No meaningful difference was found between the interactive translation group and the discussion group. The paper concludes that providing learners with contextually appropriate input through video using methods of pragmatic instruction (metapragmatic consciousness-raising, translation, and discussion) is effective to promote their ability to comprehend implicatures and signposts some avenues for future research.

Keywords: Consciousness-raising, Discussion, Implicatures, Interactive Translation, Metapragmatic.

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Introduction

Pragmatic competence, defined as “the study of speaker and hearer meaning created in their joint actions that include both linguistic and nonlinguistic signals in the context of socioculturally organized activities” (LoCastro, 2003, p. 15), was brought into the limelight following the postulations of communicative competence (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, & Thurrell, 1995; Uso´-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2007), but explicitly premiered in Bachman’s (1990) model of communicative competence, underscoring the significance of the relationship between “language users and the context of communication” (p. 89). LoCastro’s definition of pragmatic competence puts a premium upon speaker-hearer interactions in socioculturally organized activities, reminding us of the fact that pragmatic competence entails two intersecting domains referred to as sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic competence (Leech, 1983). The former includes knowledge of the relationships between social distance, communicative action and power, as well as the amount of severity involved in the performance of the speech acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987), or the social conditions and consequences of what you do, when, and to whom (Fraser, Rintell, & Walters, 1981). The latter, nonetheless, encompasses the knowledge and ability to use conventions of means and conventions of form (Thomas, 1983). It is, thereby, perceived that learners ought to be cognizant of the peculiarities of linguistic and nonlinguistic signals, conventions, functions, and sociocultural contexts which may vary cross-culturally, suggesting that they need to master new sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge to be pragmatically competent in any given context.

Instructional pragmatics has received a momentum since the emergence of pragmatics in the communicative competence models (Culpeper, Mackey, & Taguchi, 2018; Taguchi, 2011, 2015, 2019; Taguchi & Roever, 2017). Given the intricate interconnectedness of form-function context of sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge, in the early 1990s, the prime concerns of pragmatics theoreticians and practitioners were to find out whether pragmatics is amenable to intervention, whether intervention is more effective than no intervention, and whether different teaching approaches yield different results (Kasper & Roever, 2005). With respect to the first and second concerns, it has been confirmed that many features of pragmatics are teachable, suggesting that instruction is effective in promoting pragmatic development (Kondo, 2008; Plonsky & Zhuang, 2019; Rose, 2005). Regarding the third concern, most researchers have examined dichotomous teaching approaches, namely explicit vs. implicit (Alcón-Soler, 2007; Tateyama, 2001) or inductive vs. deductive (Kubota,

1995; Martínez-Flor, 2008; Rose & Ng, 2001) with a few studies focusing on other teaching approaches such as form-search and form-comparison (Takahashi, 2001), interactive translation (Derakhshan & Eslami, 2015; House, 2008) and discussion (Derakhshan & Eslami, 2015; Takimoto, 2012). Due to the inconclusive findings of these teaching approaches and the paucity of research on other aspects of pragmatics, such as implicatures, it stands to reason to focus on the comprehension of implicatures through other interventional approaches such as metapragmatic, interactive translation, and discussion.

One of the pivotal aspects of pragmatics which has been a nascent area of inquiry in instructional pragmatics is implicatures. Abundant research in L2 pragmatics has scrutinized pragmatic production of speech acts (Alcón-Soler, 2007; Bardovi-Harlig, 2013; Kasper & Rose, 2002), whereas there seems to be a dearth of research in comprehension of implicatures (Köylü, 2018; Taguchi & Yamaguchi, 2019). Grice (1975) coined the term *conversational implicature* which purports to account for nonliteral/implied meanings that individuals infer based on the assumptions of relevance and contextual clues. In everyday conversation, however, the maxims (quality, quantity, manner, and relation) of the cooperative principle (CP) are often violated, which is where Grice's concept of conversational implicature plays its significant role. It is postulated that when the maxims of the CP are flouted, the recipient needs to infer implicature. Grice (1975) argues that the interlocutors expect the utterances to be clear, informative, true, and relevant, but occasionally the speakers/writers violate these principles and convey meaning implicitly. Besides, Grice demarcates conventional implicatures from conversational implicatures. Whereas the former pertains to the inferences individuals draw with no reference to the context, and their interpretations are contingent upon the conventional meanings that are instantiated as lexical items, the latter is concerned with the inferential message which is primarily context-sensitive. Bouton (1994a) highlights that context plays an indispensable role to derive meaning. Further, Bouton (1999) also distinguishes formulaic implicatures from idiosyncratic implicatures. On the one hand, formulaic implicatures have typical structural or semantic features, such as POPE Q (Is Pope Catholic?); on the other hand, idiosyncratic implicatures are those based on violations of Grice's relevance maxim.

Advanced as a reaction to Grice's (1975) maxims, Sperber and Wilson (1995) place the concept of implicature on a more explicitly cognitive underpinning. They condensed all the four maxims of CP into an overarching framework called Relevance Theory (RT). RT assumes that cognitive inferential processes play a fundamental role to recognize the

interlocutors' intentions. RT puts an emphasis on interpreting contextual cues and using them to arrive at the speaker's intentions (Taguchi, 2002), rather than mere focus on decoding linguistic features. When the interlocutor produces an utterance, the recipient presupposes that the message is germane to the discourse context, and therefore strives for the most pertinent and accessible interpretation of the implied meaning. Sperber and Wilson (1995) contend that context plays a key role to arrive at the intended meaning, while the linguistic features of an utterance bear merely a portion of what is intended. External factors such as physical environment or the immediate discourse do not necessarily characterize context. A combination of all the presuppositions that the hearer has about the world, including cultural knowledge, topic familiarity, previous experience, people's knowledge of discourse, and expectations about future, play equal roles to determine the meaning interpretation. Moreover, RT puts emphasis on the relation between contextual factors and processing effort.

Köylü (2018) argues that a conversational implicature comes into play because of various reasons, depending on the theories opted. With respect to Grice's (1975) theory, a conversational implicature plays a paramount role when maxims are violated. On the contrary, Sperber and Wilson (1995) note that a conversational implicature comes into use when interlocutors make an attempt to gain the highest cognitive effect in return for the lowest processing endeavor by saying an utterance that is not necessarily explicit, yet still quite germane. Although RT has the potential to demonstrate L2 comprehension of nonliteral meaning, relative paucity of studies in the learners' pragmatic *comprehension* of speech acts in general (Birjandi & Derakhshan, 2014; Taguchi, 2008b; Takahashi, 2005) and implicatures in particular, (Bouton, 1988, 1994a, 1994b, 1999; Garcia, 2004; Köylü, 2018; Mirzaei, Hashemian, & Khoramshekouh, 2016; Taguchi, 2011, 2013; Taguchi, Li, & Liu, 2013; Taguchi & Yamaguchi, 2019) has been acknowledged since most previous studies have focused on the production of speech acts (Alcón-Soler, 2013; Bardovi-Harlig, 2013; Eslami-Rasekh & Eslami-Rasekh, 2008; Kasper & Roever, 2005; Martínez-Flor, 2016; Rose, 2005; Taguchi, 2008a; Tajeddin, Keshavarz, & Zand-Moghadam, 2012). Research findings corroborate that the comprehension and production of some formulaic aspects of pragmatics are more amenable to instruction than those of idiosyncratic expressions (Bouton, 1999; Taguchi, 2005, 2011). The general consensus indicates that foreign language learners perform better with explicit metapragmatic instruction (e.g., Alcón-Soler, 2005; Derakhshan & Arabmofrad, 2018; Kondo, 2008; Martínez-Flor, 2008; Tateyama, 2001) than with implicit

teaching methods. Moreover, previous studies found that learners' comprehension of implicature is mediated by a range of factors such as learners' cultural backgrounds (Bouton, 1988; Roever, Wang, & Brophy, 2014; Taguchi, 2011), type of implicature (Taguchi, 2005, 2011), conventionality and degree of formulae in implicatures (Bouton, 1999; Taguchi, 2007), individual differences (Roever, 2005; Taguchi, 2008a), and with proficiency levels (Cook & Liddicoat, 2002; Garcia, 2004; Taguchi, 2005; 2011; Taguchi et al., 2013; Yamanaka, 2003)

Although foreign language learners have limited access to natural language input through authentic interactions, they can, nonetheless, have exposure to them through other means, one of which lies in the use of video-driven prompts (Alcón-Soler, 2005; Crandall & Basturkmen, 2004; Rose, 1994). Furthermore, as suggested by different researchers (Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan, & Reynolds, 1991; Derakhshan & Arabmofrad, 2018; Derakhshan & Eslami, 2015; Eslami-Rasekh, 2005; Rose, 1994; Taguchi, 2015), learners are mainly exposed to unnatural, decontextualized, and impoverished language in textbook conversations, have limited interaction opportunities in large classes, as well as little opportunity to maximize and develop intercultural competence. Due to the paucity of research on the possible effects of different types of interventions on L2 learners' comprehension of implicatures and the abovementioned concerns, and given that previous studies utilized a small number of items, more research awaits to inquire into different instructional approaches, different modes of teaching using multimodal techniques (e.g., audio-visual), and different assessment tests, including listening implicature test with more item pools. Therefore, the present study, drawing on video-driven prompts, aimed to find out whether metapragmatic, interactive translation, and discussion teaching approaches are effective in developing Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners' comprehension of implicatures, and to unearth which teaching approach yields more results across the groups.

1. Do interactive translation approach, metapragmatic awareness-raising approach, and discussion approach improve Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners' comprehension of implicatures?
2. Is there any statistically significant difference in Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners' comprehension of implicatures across the three kinds of treatments, including interactive translation, metapragmatic, and discussion instructional methods?

Literature Review

Investigations of conversational implicatures commenced with pioneering work of Bouton (1988) and his subsequent works. Bouton (1988) sought to explore the effects of learners' cultural background on their ability to comprehend conversational implicatures in L2 English. Participants included 28 native speakers (NSs) of English and 436 nonnative speakers (NNSs), coming from seven different language backgrounds. The instrument consisted of 33 multiple-choice items. The results revealed that even proficient NNSs of English interpreted implicatures differently compared to NSs.

Moreover, Bouton (1992, 1994a, 1999) compared L2 English learners' comprehension of relevance implicature, sequence implicature, irony, Pope questions (e.g., Is the Pope catholic? to mean that something is obvious), and indirect criticisms. The results indicated that the relevance implicatures were relatively easy for learners, but Pope questions, irony, indirect criticism, and sequence implicature remained difficult even after spending 17 months in the U.S.A, highlighting that cross-cultural and social differences could affect the interpretation of implicatures, depending on the language background and nationality of the participants. Taguchi (2002) incorporated RT to second language research by evaluating L2 learners' comprehension of conversational implicatures. Accordingly, a listening test consisting of 24 dialogs spoken by native speakers was administered to eight Japanese learners of English in two proficiency levels. In the experimental dialogs, the speaker's reply violated Grice's (1975) relevance maxim and did not provide a direct response to the question. Findings revealed that low proficient learners had equal access to inferential processes which help them trace relevance of the speaker's intended message based on the context. Taguchi reports that less proficient learners depended more on the background knowledge while more proficient learners were able to frequently identify the speaker's implicature.

Lee (2002) also investigated whether implicature comprehension and strategies of native speakers of English and Korean nonnative speakers of English differ. To this end, 15 monolingual native speakers of English, and 15 Korean nonnative speakers of English participated in the study. The participants were given about 30 minutes to complete the 14-item multiple-choice questions selected from Bouton's (1988, 1994a) test. They were asked to think aloud and describe their reasoning behind the interpretation of the implicatures as they were taking the test. Findings showed the two groups differ to construe particularized conversational implicatures, but they had no difference to derive meaning in generalized

implicatures. The results of the verbal protocol also demonstrated that the two groups used different strategies to derive meaning for the comprehension of implicatures.

Pragmatic comprehension of low and high proficient L2 English speakers was compared by Garcia (2004). Garcia, focusing on specific and general implicatures, conducted his study on 16 advanced and 19 beginning English language learners. The test takers listened to fairly long dialogs of around 30 turns. Multiple-choice questions were given to measure comprehension of implicatures, offers, suggestions indirect requests, and corrections. He found that the high proficient learners remarkably outperformed the low proficient ones with respect to their comprehension of conversational implicatures, comprehension of speech acts, pragmatic comprehension as well as linguistic comprehension.

Similarly, Taguchi (2005) investigated how L2 students' proficiency levels and their abilities to perceive intended meaning in spoken dialogs are related to accuracy and the speed of implicature comprehension on 160 Japanese students of English and 46 native English speakers. The test included a 38-item computerized listening task assessing their comprehension of conversational implicatures. The results demonstrated that L2 students' proficiency had a significant role in accuracy but not in comprehension speed. By the same token, Taguchi (2009) conducted a study to explore the effects of three levels of proficiency on the comprehension of 84 college students' and 30 native Japanese speakers' implicatures. In order to measure their comprehension ability of conventional indirect opinions, indirect refusals, and nonconventional indirect opinions a listening test was administered. Taguchi concluded that nonconventional indirect opinions were by far the most difficult to comprehend, followed by conventional, and refusals. Regarding the proficiency levels, although no difference was found in the comprehension of nonconventional, conventional indirect opinions, and refusals, all nonnative Japanese speakers comprehended refusals the best followed by conventional and nonconventional indirect opinions.

Derakhshan (2014) investigated the effects of video vignettes on the comprehension of implicatures on 78 Persian learners of English who were divided into role-play, form-search, metapragmatic, and control groups. Twenty-eight video prompts containing implicatures were taught to them for six sessions. Results of implicature listening test revealed that comprehension of idiosyncratic and formulaic implicatures across the three teaching approaches improved after the intervention, and they all outperformed the control group. Results also illustrated that metapragmatic consciousness-raising group outperformed form-search and role-play groups. It was also found that there was no meaningful difference

between form-search group and role-play group and that form-search group did not outperform role-play group. Derakhshan concluded that videos could provide contextually rich input to boost learners' implicature comprehension.

More recently, Mirzaei et al. (2016) investigated the effects of synchronous and asynchronous computer-mediated communication on the development of 90 Iranian EFL undergraduates' comprehension of implicatures. Their results illustrated that both synchronous and asynchronous computer-mediated communication enhanced students' implicature knowledge after the instruction, yet the asynchronous computer-mediated communication group improved more significantly. They argued that comprehending L2 implicatures is amenable to computer-mediated instruction, and different computer-mediated modes of presentation may contribute to differential implicature developmental effects. In another study, Köylü (2018) conducted a study to investigate the ability of 54 learners at three proficiency levels and five native speakers of English to infer conversational implicatures in English. Watching the 20 scenes from *Friends*, the participants orally reported their comprehension of conversational implicatures. The results revealed that the comprehension of conversational implicatures positively correlated with L2 proficiency.

As presented above, most studies reported in the literature focused on the relevance of language proficiency and implicature comprehension and production. However, few studies have sought to explore the effects of different instructional methods on learning implicatures. Given the fact that, of the studies cited in the literature, very few studies have utilized video-driven prompts to teach implicatures, and regarding the fact that a small number of items was used in most of the previous studies, more research needs to be undertaken to examine the effects of different instructional approaches using different modes of teaching (e.g., audio-visual). Therefore, the present study, utilizing video-driven vignettes, aimed to explore whether metapragmatic, interactive translation, and discussion teaching approaches are effective in developing Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners' implicature comprehension, and to examine which teaching approach is more effective in developing the learners' comprehension of implicatures.

Method

Participants

To recruit the participants, a request for participation in an English conversation class was sent to the students studying English Literature and Teaching English as a Foreign Language

(TEFL) at Golestan University. Oxford Quick Placement Test (2004) was administered to the enrolled participants to measure their language proficiency level. Based on the test results, 51 students with approximately the same level of language proficiency ($M= 42.6$ $SD=.09$) were considered as the sample of the study, and the rest were assigned to normal conversation class. The 51 participants in the experimental groups were randomly assigned to four subgroups of interactive translation, metapragmatic, discussion, and control. None of the participants had any living experiences in English speaking countries. The detailed description of the participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Participants' Description*

Group	Number	Number of Female Students	Number of Male Students	Age Range
Interactive translation	13	10	3	18-22
Metapragmatic	12	9	3	18-25
Discussion	13	8	5	18-21
Control	13	9	4	18-21
Total	51	36	15	

Materials and Instruments

Oxford Quick Placement Test

In order to determine the English language proficiency of the participants and select homogeneous participants, OQPT (2004) which is a reliable English language proficiency test was administered. The students whose scores ranged from 41 to 47 were considered upper-intermediate, as shown in Table 2, so they were included in the study.

Table 2. *OQPT Scoring Rubric*

Scoring	Proficiency Level
0-15	Beginner
16-23	Elementary
24-30	Lower Intermediate
31-40	Intermediate
41-47	Upper Intermediate
48-54	Advanced
55-60	Very Advanced

The Implicature Listening Test

The implicature test was adapted from Bouton (1988, 1992), culturally validated by Derakhshan (2014), and finally tailored into a 26-multiple-choice listening implicature test, including 11 formulaic-based items being subsumed under three categories, namely Pope Q, irony, and indirect criticism, and 15 idiosyncratic or relevance-based items, including relevance-general, relevance-evaluation, relevance-change, and relevance-disclosure which were then designed into a listening task. The test took about one hour to be completed. The internal consistency indices of the pretest and the posttest as measured by Cronbach's alpha were .82 and .86, respectively. The number of questions for each category is shown in Table 3. To have a better understanding of these categories, a brief description is provided here. Because of length constraints, only the first three questions of the test are listed in Appendix A.

Classifications of Formulaic Implicatures

Formulaic implicatures, including POPE question, irony, and indirect criticism, have typical structural or semantic features, which are as follows:

- *Irony*: Bouton (1988) notes that "Irony is a violation of quality maxim" (p. 191).

A: *I need some cash.*

B: *Your credit card also works on this machine.*

- *Indirect Criticism*:

A: *The food looks good. Do you like it?*

B: *Well, it's colorful, isn't it?*

- *The POPE Q Implicature*: Relevance maxim is flouted when Pope Q is formulated. It is based on the prototype dialog in which the apparently irrelevant question, "Is the Pope Catholic?" is given a response to another question to which the answer seems obvious" (Bouton, 1988, p. 191)

A: *Are you sure you can take care of yourself this weekend?*

B: *Can a duck swim, Mother?*

Classification of Idiosyncratic Implicatures

Bouton (1988) categorizes the idiosyncratic implicatures into four subtypes of implicature, including relevance-general, relevance-evaluation, relevance-disclosure, and relevance-change. Each type of implicature is defined as follows:

- *Relevance-general*: It is concerned with responses that flout the relation maxim.

A: *What time is it, Helen?*

B: The postman has been here.

- *Relevance-evaluation*: It refers to the responses which are given to evaluation.

A: What did you think of my paper?

B: That was a very difficult assignment.

- *Relevance-disclosure*: This category pertains to the responses to disclose oneself.

A: Did you just get divorced?

B: I think we married too young.

- *Relevance-change*: This kind of implicature deals with the responses that completely change the topic.

A: Can you give me a ride home, Nick?

B: Boy! The boss looked sick today.

Table 3. *Number of Questions for Idiosyncratic and Formulaic Implicatures*

Implicature Type	Number of Test Items
1. Formulaic Implicature	
a. Pope Q	4
b. Indirect Criticism	4
c. Irony	3
Subtotal	11
2. Idiosyncratic or Relevance Implicature	
a. Relevance-general	5
b. Relevance-disclosure	3
c. Relevance-change	4
d. Relevance-evaluation	3
Subtotal	15
Total	26

Instructional Materials: Implicature Vignettes

Fifty-six video vignettes featuring different kinds of implicatures were extracted from *Friends*, due to the resemblance of the linguistic and extralinguistic features in *Friends* to those of natural conversations, and *Desperate Housewives* (TV series) following Armstrong (2007). Quaglio (2009) notes that *Friends* shares some key characteristics which embody various registers in natural conversations. The validity of the selection of these vignettes implicatures was cross-checked by the researchers and two PhD holders in TEFL.

Procedure

The present study has a quasi-experimental design where the groups were exposed to vignettes extracted from different episodes of *Friends* sitcom and *Desperate Housewives*. These vignettes aimed to make the learners conscious of the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic features involved in making implicatures. The instruction lasted for eight sessions twice a week, each of which lasted for 60 minutes. At the outset of the session, the participants were given a general plot of *Friends* and *Desperate Housewives*. All three treatment groups were provided with a written background for each video prompt. Following Taguchi et al. (2013), some important measures need to be taken into account to let learners comprehend a conversational implicature such as “decoding linguistic and contextual cues and using them to make inferences of speakers’ implied intentions behind the cues” (p. 139). Moreover, individuals need to understand the literal meaning and identify the gap between the intended meaning and the literal. So, the groups worked on recognizing the literal and implied meaning, albeit differently which is explicated separately as follows:

Metapragmatic Awareness Raising Group (MPG)

The participants in this group were three males and nine females; their ages ranged from 18 to 25 with an average of 19.1 ($SD=0.9$). The pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic features of formulaic and idiosyncratic features were explicitly highlighted. The students watched the scene without the subtitle, tried to guess what each speaker meant, and finally tried to grasp the implied meaning.

The following tasks were followed:

1. The teacher explained the difference between the intended and literal meaning.
2. The teacher provided explicit metapragmatic information about the sociolinguistic rules of the target language or culture.
3. The teacher made students aware of subtle features of speech, such as stress and intonation, which assist interlocutors to infer contextually adequate meanings in conversation.
4. The teacher identified the use of relevant grammatical structures, explained them to the class, and students practiced the use of the structures.
5. The students practiced the use of strategies for implicatures.
6. The students worked on language and context to identify the goal and intention of the speaker.
7. The students tried to identify and use a range of cultural norms in the L2 culture.

Interactive Translation Group (ITG)

This group consisted of 13 participants (10 females and 3 males) whose ages ranged from 18 to 22 ($M=18.5$, $SD=0.8$) with an average of 19.3. Interactive translation deals with an interactive thinking aloud. House (2008) argues that in this kind of teaching approach, learners need to translate texts cooperatively and verbalize their thoughts on their decision and solution processes during the translation. The scripts were given to the learners, and so they interactively translated the implicatures to facilitate their engagement. House cogently mentions that such joint and interactive translation endeavor is more inspiring than mere thinking aloud in isolation while translating. The learners, watching 56 video excerpts, practiced different patterns and ways of translating idiosyncratic and formulaic implicatures verbally.

Discussion Group (DG)

The discussion group included five males and eight females whose age ranged from 18 to 21 ($M=18.2$, $SD=0.6$) watched the video prompts and discussed the similarities and differences in Persian and English implicatures. Similar to interactive translation group, this group was provided with scripts as well to discuss different patterns and ways of making formulaic and idiosyncratic implicatures in different situations. They also discussed the role relationships between the interlocutors, the distance between them, and the degree of severity. Different strategies for formulaic and idiosyncratic features were discussed. The students were engaged in the collaborative (rather than individual) dialog about pragmalinguistic features, sociopragmatic factors, and the connection between them, and gradually develop a joint understanding of the principles underlying the connection.

Control Group (CG)

Four males and nine females with the age range from 18 to 21 ($M=18.2$, $SD=0.9$) consisted the control group. The control group received the traditional instruction in a conversation class, and they did not work on the use of implicatures. These students worked on listening and speaking skills or their conversational skills by watching the same videos as well as the course book, but the implicatures were not taught to them. They focused on the words and grammatical structures in the videos.

Data Analysis

After making sure that the data were normally distributed as proven by Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for normality, paired sample t-test, one-way ANOVA, and Tukey's Honest Significant Difference (HSD) test were conducted for data analyses.

Results and Discussion

Results

Research Question One

A paired sample t-test was utilized so as to find out whether interactive translation approach, metapragmatic consciousness-raising approach, and discussion approach enhance the comprehension of implicatures compared to the control group. As indicated in Table 4, the difference in learners' comprehension of the implicatures across the four groups before and after the treatment is illustrated. Descriptive statistics reveal that the four groups were homogenous in terms of their implicature knowledge in preintervention stage. Besides, Table 4 illustrates that the total mean (13.77) of the four groups in the posttest was higher than that of the four groups in the pretest (10.36), suggesting that the intervention impacted learners' comprehension of implicature.

Table 4. Summary of Descriptive Statistics of Implicature Knowledge for All Groups Before and After the Treatment

Group	Test	N	M	SD
MPG	Pretest	12	10.26	2.12
	Posttest		18.32	2.31
ITG	Pretest	13	10.73	2.8
	Posttest		13.39	4.32
DG	Pretest	13	10.31	3.42
	Posttest		12.5	2.26
CG	Pretest	13	10.14	2.3
	Posttest		10.9	2.41
Total	Pretest	51	10.36	2.69
	Posttest		13.77	4.3

Table 5 shows the results of paired sample t-test as follows: The results did not show any statistical difference in the control group before and after the interventional period ($t = -2.63$, $df = 12$, $\alpha = 0.05$, $p = .17$). Nevertheless, there were differences in the pre and

posttest performance of the treatment groups. Based on the results, we can conclude that learners' comprehension of idiosyncratic and formulaic implicatures across the three instructional methods, including metapragmatic, interactive translation, and discussion, significantly enhanced after the intervention.

Table 5. Summary of Paired Sample T- test of All Groups Before and After the Instructional Period

Group	Test	<i>t</i>	df	Sig.
MPG	Pretest	-29.37	11	.000
	Posttest			
ITG	Pretest	-4.67	12	.000
	Posttest			
DG	Pretest	-15.35	12	.001
	Posttest			
CG	Pretest	-2.63	12	.172
	Posttest			
Total	Pretest	-9.52	47	.000
	Posttest			

Research Question Two

The second research question addressed the effects of three teaching approaches, namely interactive translation, metapragmatic consciousness-raising, and discussion on the comprehension of implicatures. Regarding the learners' performance on the posttest and answering the second research question, the performances of the groups were compared to see if there would be any meaningful differences among them. Hence, a one-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted, as displayed in Table 6, and showed significant differences among the four groups on the posttest [$F(3,50) = 21.35$, $p < 0.05$, $\alpha = 0.05$). The post-hoc Tukey (HSD) test was conducted to report where the differences among the four groups lie.

Table 6. One-way ANOVA for Learners' Implicature Knowledge in the Posttest

	SS	df	MS	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Between Groups	635.25	3	214.69	21.35	0.000
Within Groups	713.41	47	9.67		
Total	1348.65	50			

Table 6 presents the results of the post-hoc Tukey (HSD) test, suggesting that the metapragmatic, interactive group, and discussion groups significantly outperformed the control group. It also indicates that there is a meaningful difference between metapragmatic group, interactive translation group ($p < 0.05$), discussion group ($p < 0.05$) and control group ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, the mean differences between metapragmatic group, and interactive translation group, and discussion group are 4.93, and 5.82, respectively indicating that metapragmatic group outperformed the other groups. Alternatively, Table 6 also illustrates that no meaningful difference is found between interactive translation and discussion group ($p > 0.05$), and interactive translation did not outperform discussion group as revealed in the mean difference between the two groups (.89). Moreover, a meaningful difference was found between discussion group and control group ($p < 0.05$).

Table 6. Multiple Comparisons Through Post-hoc Test of Tukey (HSD)

(I) Intervention	(J) Intervention	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
CG	ITG	-2.49*	.96	.000
	MPG	-7.42*	.95	.000
	DG	-1.6*	1.	.007
ITG	CG	2.49*	.96	.000
	MPG	-4.93*	.90	.001
	DG	.89	.95	.620
MPG	CG	7.42*	.95	.000
	ITG	4.93*	.90	.001
	DG	5.82*	.94	.000
DG	CG	1.6*	1.	.007
	ITG	-.89	.95	.620
	MPG	-5.82*	.94	.000

Note: ITN: Interactive Group; MPG: Metapragmatic Group; DG: Discussion Group; CG: Control Group

* $p < 0.05$.

Discussion

Based on the learners' implicature knowledge, the data support Schmidt's (1993, 2001) noticing hypothesis and Sharwood Smith's (1981, 1993) consciousness-raising inasmuch as intervention has had an essential role in enhancing learners' comprehension of idiosyncratic and formulaic implicatures. Bouton (1994b) argues that the opportunities in ESL/EFL

classrooms to make learners conscious of implicatures as a communicative tool are rare, and these classes do not give learners sufficient practice to utilize implicatures in English. The findings illustrated that the metapragmatic awareness approach had the best performance compared to the interactive translation, the discussion, and the control groups. It was also found that there was no meaningful difference between interactive translation group and discussion group and that interactive translation group did not outperform discussion group. The findings of this study corroborate those of previously conducted research on the positive effects of instruction on implicatures (Bouton, 1994b; Derakhshan, 2014; Garcia, 2004; Kubota, 1995; Lee, 2002; Mirzaei et al., 2016; Taguchi, 2002, 2009, 2011).

The recommendations of Bouton's (1994b) study were taken up leading to conducting the present study. Unlike Bouton's study which was a longitudinal study, based only on exposure with no intervention, the present study used intervention to enhance learners' comprehension of implicatures. Based on our findings, we suggest that implicatures be taught to learners to facilitate their pragmatic development. As Bouton (1994b) stated, the explicit teaching of implicature was not only desirable but essential. Being inspired by this postulation, it was found that when conversational implicatures are not deliberately taught in a second or foreign language, they are learned slowly.

Despite its ubiquity in daily life (Armstrong, 2007), the teaching of conversational implicature has received scant attention in ESL/EFL settings. Studies of ESL learners' awareness and production of implicatures conducted by Bouton (1988, 1994b) produced evidence for the need of focused attention and instruction of implicatures. Despite the general trend highlighted in support of explicit instruction, not all studies support that provision of metapragmatic information produces better results (Rose, 2005). Although the pendulum of explicit and implicit dichotomy swings more towards explicit instruction, Kubota's (1995) replication of Bouton's (1994b) study on implicature comprehension reported the supremacy of implicit instruction. Unlike Kubota's (1995) study, the results of Bouton's (1994b) study and the present study are more consistent with each other corroborating that conversational implicatures are amenable to instruction in an explicit way. Moreover, both Kubota (1995) and Bouton (1994b) concur that explicit instruction leads to more implicature gain which in turn confirms the findings of the present study with regard to the fact that metapragmatic group gained more implicature knowledge. The findings might be attributed to the fact that examples of formulaic and idiosyncratic implicatures were taught explicitly to the metapragmatic group. The findings support that

explicit instruction of the comprehension and production of speaker implied meaning to L2 learners seems warranted (Armstrong, 2007).

The results of the present study are well supported by Derakhshan's (2014) study pertaining to the fact that implicature is amenable to instruction and the more pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic features of implicature are highlighted, the more conscious learners become which per se leads to more learning. On par with Taguchi's (2005) study, which considers that "explicit instruction of pragmatic skills" (p. 558) should be conducted in L2 classrooms, the findings of the present study are in favor of metapragmatic consciousness-raising activities to make learners more aware of different kinds of implicatures across different contexts. Although both interactive translation group and discussion group outperformed control group, there was no significant difference between the two. This might be attributed to the similar level of involvement and awareness-raising in both treatment groups. The results of the present study conform to those of Mirzaei et al. (2016) in that both studies substantiate that implicatures lend themselves well to instruction. Mirzaei et al. (2016) conclude "that L2 implicatures can explicitly be taught with relative success, but the rate of development highly depends on the pedagogical procedures and instructional designs" (p. 166).

A comprehensive review of literature represents that most of the studies undertaken on implicatures were primarily related to the relationship between different proficiency levels and implicature knowledge (Cook & Liddicoat, 2002; Garcia, 2004; Köylü, 2018; Taguchi, 2002, 2005, 2009; 2011; Roever et al., 2014; Taguchi et al., 2013; Yamanaka, 2003), the relationship between length of residence and implicature knowledge (Roever et al., 2014), and the relationship between native and nonnative speakers' implicature knowledge (Lee, 2002; Taguchi, 2011). The aforementioned studies did not employ video-prompts as an instructional medium, even though it has been used in other studies for pragmatic development of learners (Alcón-Solar, 2005; Derakhshan, 2014; Martínez-Flor, 2007; Rose, 1994, 2001). The implicature instruction is a relatively overlooked and underexplored area of ESL/EFL teaching to compare and contrast their findings with the present study. Therefore, more research needs to be done to find out the effects of different teaching approaches on the comprehension and production of implicatures.

Conclusion and Implications

The effects of metapragmatic awareness approach, interactive translation approach, and discussion approach through video-driven vignettes on the comprehension of idiosyncratic and formulaic implicatures was the major concern of the first research question. Our findings indicated that the learners' comprehension of idiosyncratic and formulaic implicatures across the three teaching approaches developed after the intervention, and they all outperformed the control group. The second research question scrutinized whether there was any difference in learners' comprehension of idiosyncratic and formulaic implicatures across these three teaching approaches. The results illustrated that the participants of metapragmatic, interactive translation and discussion groups significantly outperformed the control group. The findings demonstrated that metapragmatic consciousness-raising approach had the best performance compared to interactive translation, discussion, and control groups. It was also found that there was no meaningful difference between interactive translation group and discussion group and that interactive translation group did not outperform discussion group.

Our findings substantiate Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis and Sharwood Smith's (1981, 1993) consciousness-raising hypothesis which have served as a major theoretical framework for interlanguage pragmatic (ILP) development. Although some scholars (Derakhshan, 2014, Derakhshan, Mohsenzadeh, & Mohammadzadeh, 2014; Martínez-Flor, 2007; Rose, 1994) have supported the effectiveness of video-driven prompts as an influential and contextualized input, very few (Alcón-Solar, 2005; Rose, 1994) have empirically investigated its role in EFL/ESL settings. The present study provides support for Bouton's (1994a, 1998) and Lee's (2002) findings that implicature is amenable to instruction. The results indicated that metapragmatic or explicit instruction was more effective than interactive translation and discussion approaches. In a nutshell, even in the absence of explicit instruction as was witnessed in the interactive translation approach, which was enhanced through video-vignettes, the findings offer comparable benefits for implicature comprehension. This makes it logical to postulate that input enhancement (Sharwood Smith, 1981, 1993) and noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990, 1993) can be regarded as a theoretical underpinning for ILP development.

The contribution of the present study is that it used audio-listening comprehension test to find out the effectiveness of the three underrepresented interventional approaches. The results of the present study can offer some implications for teachers, materials developers, and learners. With the dramatic increase of globalization and intercultural

(mis)communication, the roles of pragmatics competence and implicatures become significantly crucial since successful communication depends on the shared pragmatic rules and sociocultural conventions; consequently, language learners must learn not only the rules of syntax and semantics, but also they need to learn how language is pragmatically used (Taguchi, 2015). Therefore, textbook developers need to include cultural-specific instances of both formulaic and idiosyncratic implicatures to enhance the learners' comprehension. In other words, in order for an appropriate interpretation of an implicature to successfully take place, learners need to be equipped with the skills to identify linguistic and contextual cues. So, the pedagogical implication is that including and developing contextual information, cultural background in educational courses instead of mere concentration on linguistic features in the process of teaching and learning can be helpful with successful pragmatic comprehension.

Armstrong (2007) suggests that the instruction of conversational implicatures be included in EFL classrooms because implicatures are a pervasive aspect of every day interactions of native speakers. With respect to the instructional sequence of implicatures, since idiosyncratic implicatures are easier to comprehend, it is recommended that they be introduced sooner. As an additional activity, a cross-linguistic comparison of conventional expressions can help learners gain in-depth understanding, as well. Derakhshan (2014) believes that teachers can take advantage of authentic audio-visual materials, since they expose learners to relatively natural and context specific language to be used for the development of their pragmatic competence. Besides, when teachers plan to teach less conventional implicatures, they can elaborate on the effective roles of contextual information, suprasegmental elements and paralinguistic factors to infer meaning more appropriately and figure out speakers' hidden intentions.

Kasper and Roever (2005) cogently argue that in ESL contexts learners have more opportunities to develop their implicature knowledge, so exposure to it can improve their idiosyncratic and formulaic implicature. On the contrary, in the EFL contexts learners are in an impoverished context because they rely only on the input that is enhanced and provided in the classroom. Rose (1999) emphasizes that some characteristics of EFL contexts that hinder pragmatic learning include limited contact hours with the target language, large classes, and little opportunity for cross-cultural communication. Although the present study contributes to the literature on the effects of intervention, it has some limitations and thus some ideas for future research are suggested. The relationship between subcategories of formulaic-based

implicature and idiosyncratic implicature is still inconclusive, so more studies need to be conducted to bridge this lacuna. Future research could use different assessment measures to investigate learners' development in L2 implicature comprehension. Previous studies primarily focused on a highly controlled, decontextualized listening or reading test with researcher-made dialogs, restricting the extrapolation of the findings to real-life situations. The implicature listening test was used in the present study, so other researchers are suggested to use different measurement instruments. Particularly beneficial in this line of research is the use of multimodal input integrating visual, auditory, and textual information. As Sperber and Wilson (1995) brilliantly postulate, comprehension is not only confined to decoding linguistic input; it is a global process in which both linguistic and nonlinguistic cues are concomitantly used to deduce meaning. The final suggestion for future research is to use robust corpora of naturally occurring conversations to investigate the comprehension of conversational implicatures in L2 learning.

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Appendix A: The Implicature Listening Test

Ethnographic and Language Proficiency Data

Name: Age:

Years of learning English at the institute:

Any experience living abroad:

Directions:

In this section of the test, you will hear short conversations and one question about them. For each conversation, first read the situation and the question. Then listen to the conversation and answer the question after you hear the conversation. Respond to the questions by marking the correct answer (a, b, c, or d) on your answer sheet.

Read the example situation and question.

Practice Question

0. Lilly, Tom, and Tad are friends. One day, Lilly and Tom are talking about Tad.

What is the point of Tom's question?

- (a) He just noticed that Jenny has bought a new red sports car.
- (b) He has no idea about where Tad is.
- (c) He thinks Tad may be at Jenny's house.
- (d) He likes red sports car and wants Lilly to see one.

Now listen to the example conversation. The answer for the example conversation is c.

Note: At the end of the test, you'll be given 5 minutes to transfer your answers to an answer sheet.

1. Linda and Mike usually play golf on Saturdays. This Saturday, however, Mike went alone. When he returns, Linda wants to find out how well he did.

What does Mike mean?

- (a) He didn't play golf well today.
- (b) He didn't go out to play golf, either.
- (c) He felt bored because Linda didn't play with him.
- (d) He was just complaining about the bad weather.

2. Recently, Maria got her hair cut and styled. She wants to find out what Frank (Maria's husband) thinks of it and so she asks him.

What does Frank mean?

- (a) Frank thinks that Maria's hair style is terrible.
- (b) Maria's hair doesn't match the color of their apartment.
- (c) Frank thinks Maria's hair style is good.
- (d) Frank wants Maria to paint the apartment with him.

3. Max and Julie are neighbors. They are now jogging in the park. Their conversation goes as follows:

What does Julie mean?

- (a) She never smokes and she is glad that she doesn't.
- (b) She is saying the reason why Max is out of breath.
- (c) She doesn't like the way Max's breath smells.
- (d) She doesn't want to slow down.