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**CHALLENGES ON INTEGRATING PRAGMATICS IN ESL AND EFL  
GRAMMAR CLASSROOMS: A CONTENT ANALYSIS**

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**ABSTRACT**

Teaching grammar is beyond teaching students how to use linguistic forms correctly, meaningfully, and properly; its purpose must be the combination of teaching grammar and pragmatics (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). The study focused on the challenges encountered by ESL and EFL teachers in grammar teaching through content analysis. This study aimed to identify and analyze the challenges of integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL grammar classrooms. The researcher made use of a qualitative research design that deals with the content analysis of data. Since this study is mainly qualitative in nature, it used an in-depth analysis to fully gain a clear understanding of the challenges on the integration of pragmatics in grammar teaching. In the content analysis, 15 studies about the challenges encountered by ESL and EFL teachers in incorporating pragmatics in their grammar classrooms were analyzed. The findings revealed that the challenges on the integration fell in both teachers' Pragmatics and learners' Pragmatics. In terms of teachers' pragmatics challenges were present in all its components in terms of knowledge, belief, and practice. All the components that teachers must acquire to teach Pragmatics effectively are missing under teachers' Pragmatics. In terms of learners' pragmatics, the challenges fell under pragmatic ability and learner's choice. In light of the findings, this paper would like to recommend that the curriculum developers, policymakers, and instructional materials writers try into looking at ways on lending an avenue on how teachers would be

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capacitated in both subject-content and pedagogical-content of Grammar and Pragmatics. This is so it will have a ripple effect on other components especially on learners' pragmatics.

**Keywords:** *Pragmatics, Grammar, ESL and EFL teachers*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics has now been considered as mainstream in the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning given the wide attention it has received for decades now (Ishihara & Cohen, 2014). The premise of pragmatics is the context-based shared meaning of language from the sender and the receiver. It means that it is not solely focusing on the interpretation of the receiver of the message but also the intention of the sender.

For the past years, huge attention has been received by second language pragmatics (L2 Pragmatics) or interlanguage pragmatics as a subfield under pragmatics as it centers on the learning and teaching of second language (Schauer, 2019). In fact, a huge plethora of studies has been conducted in this area (e.g., Li, 2022; Yakut, 2022; Derakhshan et al., 2021, etc.).

González-Lloret (2020) views L2 Pragmatic development or interlanguage pragmatics as the changes that occurs in the learner's pragmatic systems that includes their capability to comprehend and deliver context-based communicative actions. Further, it also includes exploring how changes occurred and how instruction and interaction with others from inside and outside the classroom is influenced by the pragmatic process. Interlanguage pragmatics has known to be hovering the second language acquisition research.

It has been emphasized by Kasper and Rose (2002) that the scholars on pragmatic development observed and commented the impact of constraints in grammars of learners to their L2 pragmatic comprehension and production. However, though they explicitly showed in their findings this fact, they did not explore the relationship between the development of grammar and pragmatics which is seen as fundamental component in learning grammar.

Teaching grammar is traditionally regarded as teaching the linguistic forms along with the rules. In fact, Mojica-Díaz and Sánchez-López (2010) assert that there were numerous studies

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revealing grammar teaching as a language learning conventional approach that emphasizes form over meaning, output over input processing, and a didactic over a discovery-based approach.

However, Larsen-Freeman (2001) contends that teaching grammar is beyond teaching students how to use linguistic forms correctly, meaningfully, and properly; that its purpose must be the combination of teaching grammar and communication. Thus, grammar should not be viewed as discrete set of meaning-less, decontextualized, static structures or solely as prescriptive rules on linguistic form; more so, they should also be considered as an instrument to express meaning in context-appropriate use (pragmatics).

In the L2 pragmatics literature, it has been shown that without instruction on pragmatics, learners do not make associations between target forms and how they can be used to execute specific "speech acts" in the target culture (Félix-Brasdefer, 2008; Fernández-Guerra and Martínez-Flor, 2006). Thus, there is a necessity to include this in the grammar instruction.

As there are increasing number of scholars who chose to learn languages not solely for the sake of knowing them, but more so for the purpose of using them (i.e., Celce-Murcia, 1980; Larsen-Freeman, 2001; Nassaji & Fotos, 2010) people began to interrogate the structure-based approaches in language instruction. Hence, several calls for the alteration of the present state of affairs in teaching the language teaching of moving away from a "focus on language-as-object," into a "focus on language for communication," gives much attention to teaching grammar through Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

Littlewood (1981) as cited in Yu (2013) defined CLT as a teaching method that delve into meaningful communication in language teaching "in real situations and real time." Accordingly, the main tenet of the CLT approach is its aim of focusing not only on the grammatical competence but also on soliciting encouragement from the learners in the discourse and pragmatics language use for communicative and meaningful purposes.

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Undeniably, Pragmatics being considered as one of the elements of communicative competence received so much attention due to its distinct feature. Unlike the other components, pragmatics is seen as an important component when teaching grammar. As a matter of fact, Ariel (2008) reiterates that Grammar and Pragmatics always go together, where one cannot be taught in isolation if the purpose is to attain effective communication. Thus, these two must be taught in tandem.

Pragmatic competence pertains to the ability to practice language correctly in various contexts. In second language (L2), it is considered as a crucial skill in communication. Thus, Hilliard (2017) reiterated that in teaching effective communication, teachers must integrate a focus on improving the students' pragmatic competence.

Pragmatic competence has long been recognized as a fundamental component of communicative competence (e.g., Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980). With this, there has been increasing attention to address the second (L2) or foreign language (FL) curriculum in pragmatics as exposed in the published pedagogical-oriented articles (e.g., Ishihara, 2007; LoCastro, 2001; Rose, 2005; Yates, 2010) and functional teachers' resources (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003; Bardovi-Harlig, 2012; Kasper & Roever, 2005; Tatsuki, 2005; Taguchi, 2012; Tang, 2019). Ishihara (2019) mentions that since the 1990s, scholars have exerted vigorous efforts to improve the learners' pragmatic competence when teaching grammar (e.g., Hudson et al., 1995; Röver, 2005; Liu, 2007).

While some scholars attempt to study the effectiveness and impact of using Pragmatics in Grammar classrooms (e.g., Tang, 2016), there has been several underlying challenges that scholars identified which resulted to a failure of integration of these two areas in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms. In particular, Sharif et al. (2017) stated that though these two areas were recognized and secured a position in various models of Communicative Competence, pragmatic

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competence has been notably absent from ELT curricula which resulted to the he barriers to teaching and learning pragmatics in ESL/EFL classrooms. Additionally, Rose (2005) points out that pragmatics is neglected in the second language acquisition.

As observed, although there are several studies pointed out to the integration of Pragmatics in grammar instructions, there has been notably numerous studies as well which look into the challenges in integration of these two areas. In terms of comparison and content analysis, it appears that there has been limited studies leading into that direction. Recognizing the importance of awareness and consciousness on the problems and issues on pedagogical approaches in teaching these two areas in tandem, this paper aims to fill that gap by investigating the challenges that ESL and EFL teachers were experiencing in integrating Pragmatics in their Grammar classrooms. Also, recognizing that there were several studies already (Alcón-Soler, 2015; Barekat & Mehri, 2013; Dastjerdi & Rezvani, 2011; Roever et al., 2014) that investigated the challenges and effects of Pragmatics on learner's performance, this study took a different direction as this investigated the challenges experienced on the integration of Pragmatics on the Grammar classrooms through the eyes of the ESL and EFL teachers.

## 1.1. Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to identify and analyze the challenges for integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL grammar classrooms.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the challenges experienced by teachers in the ESL and EFL classrooms on incorporating Pragmatics in their grammar lessons in terms of:

1.1. Teacher's Pragmatics;

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1.1.1. Knowledge;

1.1.2. Beliefs; and

1.1.3. Practices?

1.2. Learners' Pragmatics;

1.2.1. Pragmatic Ability; and

1.2.2. Learner's Choice?

2. What is the implication of the study in second and foreign language grammar teaching and learning?

## 1.2. Theoretical Framework

Larsen-Freeman (2001) views teaching grammar as a way of enabling learning in using the linguistic forms in an accurate, meaningful, and appropriate manner. It has been emphasized by Larsen-Freeman (2001) that in order to deal with the grammar complexity, there are three dimensions that must concern us: "structure or form, semantics or meaning, and the pragmatic conditions governing use" (p.252).

The theory of the study is anchored on the theory of Larsen-Freeman's (2001) three-dimensional framework of grammar teaching. The three-dimensional framework centers on the combination of three essential components of language namely (1) form, (2) meaning, and (3) use in teaching grammar (see figure 1). Form deals with structure, meaning deals with semantics, and use deals with pragmatics.

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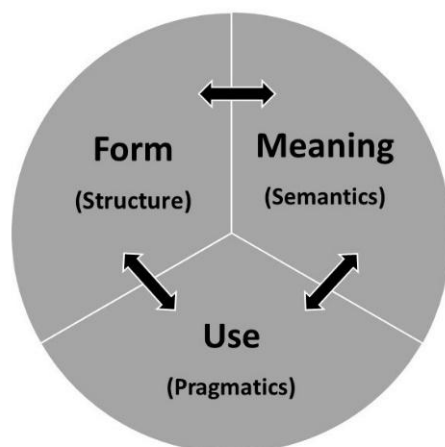
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Figure 1

*The Three-Dimensional Grammar Framework of Larsen-Freeman (2001)*



The three-dimensional grammar framework of Larsen-Freeman (2001) informs us that teaching grammar require the integration of three language components (e.g., structure, semantics, and pragmatics). More importantly, having these three dimensions tells us that teaching grammar is challenging given the complexity that entails teaching grammar alongside pragmatics. On the other hand, Larsen-Freeman (2001) emphasized the important position that pragmatics play in teaching grammar when she stressed the importance of context. This was also recognized by Nunan (1998) as cited in Devi (2017) that there would be difficulties for learners to acquire communicative competence if they would not be given opportunities of exploration of grammar in context. Thus, an emphasis to look at "form in/with context" contrary to the traditional way of focusing at "form without context."

Understanding the components and their distinction to each other would be influential for grammar teachers to effectively integrate pragmatics in their ESL and EFL classrooms. This theory

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informs us that in teaching grammar, pragmatics must be incorporated. This theory, according to (Larsen-Freeman, 2001), proves that by focusing the attention of the learners on the linguistic forms in the context-based interactions in communication, there would be a positive impact to them.

It would be a gateway in achieving pragmatic competence which is important aspect of communicative competence. In fact, Ifantidou (2014) emphasizes the significance of incorporating this in teaching pragmatics as it involves pragmatic norms such as "speech act routines, cultural and ethnic stereotypes, or social values" which are essential in learning pragmatics. He added that this is widely and commonly taught and evaluated in the contexts of L2.

### 1.3. Conceptual Framework

Teaching Grammar is now seen as teaching beyond linguistic form and rules, as it integrates another fundamental area which is Pragmatics with the goal of attaining effective communication. Undeniably, Pragmatics plays a crucial role in communication as communicators needs a thorough and in-depth understanding of this area to make the communication effective. Failure to do so will lead to a communication breakdown.

In the context of teaching grammar, though there are three dimensions to consider as revealed in the three-dimensional framework of Larsen-Freeman (2001), it is fundamental to put the spotlight in understanding pragmatics and the challenges that comes with it. In teaching and learning Pragmatics, it is essential that both the teachers and learners understand their own Pragmatics. This is because they serve as the main players in the process of communication inside the classroom. Hence, it is important that these two aspects: (1) teacher's Pragmatics and (2) learner's Pragmatics are intact and in accordance to how Pragmatics must be taught and learned inside the classroom.

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With the difficulties surrounding its instruction in the classroom, Ivanova (2018) viewed the problems to achieve effective teaching and learning experience without a competent teacher who takes active intervention along the process. As Erton (2017) points out the significant role played by the teachers in the development of the pragmatic awareness of the students as they served as their sole role model in that stage of development. With that being said, it is fundamental to assess first the teacher's Pragmatics as to how they view Pragmatics in terms of knowledge, beliefs, and practice to ensure that teachers can play the role of facilitator in the context of Pragmatics.

The study adopted the frameworks of Ishihara (2014) on teacher's Pragmatics and Ishihara and Cohen (2014) on Learner's Pragmatics that teaching and learning Pragmatics starts with having awareness on these two aspects.

In teacher's Pragmatics, Ishihara (2014) identified three outcomes of how teachers teach Pragmatics in ESL and EFL classrooms. These are (1) knowledge, (2) beliefs, and (3) practice.

Teacher's knowledge has been contended by Ishihara (2014) that include the following: "(1) subject-matter knowledge (e.g., how English grammar works); (2) pedagogical knowledge (e.g., how to teach and assess); (3) pedagogical-content knowledge (e.g., how to teach writing); (4) knowledge of learners and their characteristics (e.g., how they tend to respond to group and individual tasks); (5) knowledge of educational contexts (e.g., whether the L2 is a second or foreign language at the elementary, secondary, or post-secondary level); and (6) knowledge of the curriculum and educational ends (e.g., whether/how the content is integrated into language learning)." Ishihara (2014) notes that essence of identifying the teachers' pragmatics in order to assist the learners on their needs and understand their communicative goals and intentions in the provided sociocultural settings.

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The teacher beliefs are hugely influenced by the experiences of the teachers of their growth in terms of either academic or professional aspects. The influence of beliefs can be manifested on their perceptions, thinking processes, and decision-making inside the classroom. Ishihara (2014) states that teachers' beliefs can include the inherent theories of : "(1) learning in general; (2) the subject matter (e.g., the nature and characteristics of the target language; and the nature of pragmatics in our case); (3) the nature of knowledge (e.g., how knowledge is generated or acquired); (4) (language) learning; (5) (language) teaching; (6) learners and their characteristics; (7) learning to teach; (8) self (e.g., self-identity and self-esteem); (9) teacher efficacy (e.g., teachers' perception of their own influence on student learning); (10) the teacher's role; (11) the curriculum; and (12) teaching contexts." On an important note, the beliefs of the teacher are the reflection of their values either personal, educational, cultural, or even political which has impacts on the myriad of experiences not inside but also outside the classroom.

The last and third component of teacher's pragmatics is the teaching practices which are usually affected by the two prior components known as teachers' knowledge and beliefs in an obscure way. Ishihara (2014) highlights that the classroom practices and knowledge of the teachers are often highly influenced by the instructional context like the availability of time, the environment, and the students' number.

It is essential to note the connection between these three components under the teacher's pragmatics. The teacher's knowledge is intertwined with beliefs, and practice is interconnected.

On the other hand, Ishihara and Cohen (2016) identified two potential causes of learner's Pragmatics which include (1) pragmatic ability and (2) learner's choice.

Pragmatic ability is revealed as one of the most complex and challenging aspects under communicative competence due to several factors that need to be addressed. In addition, Ishihara and Cohen (2014) highly emphasize that for the teachers to provide effective instruction,

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it is fundamental to conduct investigation on the pragmatic use of language in "natural or elicited discourse" They further state that the lack of pragmatic ability results in the pragmatic divergence. The causes of this divergence on pragmatic ability are enumerated as the following: "(1) negative transfer of pragmatic norms; (2) limited grammatical ability in the L2; (3) overgeneralization of perceived L2 pragmatic norms; (4) effect of instruction or instructional materials" (p.77).

On the other hand, the learners' choice is also pinpointed by Ishihara and Cohen (2014) as a component which may cause pragmatic divergence. Learner's choice refers to the choice made by the learners in either accepting or rejecting the pragmatic knowledge shared by their teachers. Ishihara and Cohen (2014) further emphasize that included to the challenge under the learner's choice is the learner's intentional resistance on the communicated ideas.

Figure 2

*The Conceptual Framework of the Study*

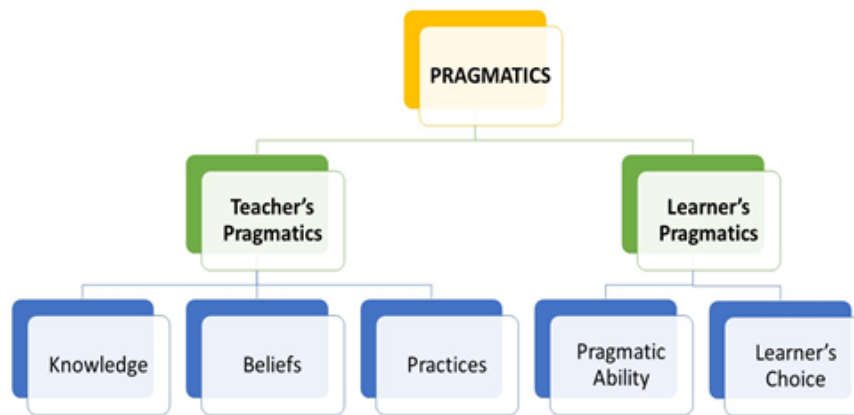


Figure 2 reveals the conceptual framework of this study which is based on the frameworks of Ishihara (2014) on teacher's Pragmatics and Ishihara and Cohen (2014) on Learner's Pragmatics. These concepts will be used in identifying and grouping the challenges experienced in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms.

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## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Research Design

This study made use of a qualitative research design that deals with the content analysis of the data. Since this study is mainly qualitative in nature, it will use an in-depth content analysis to fully gain a clear understanding of the challenges on integrating the Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms as reflected in 15 studies about it.

### 2.2. Corpus

There were 15 studies focusing on the challenges of integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms, which will be subjected to analysis. From those studies, only the findings and discussions sections will be analyzed using the framework of Ishihara and Cohen (2016) to examine the challenges present. These studies are: (1) *"Challenges in Teaching Interlanguage Pragmatics at Private EFL Institutes in Iran"* by Tan and Farashaiyan (2016), (2) *"Developing Pragmatic Competence in the EFL Context: Opportunities and Challenges"* by Segueni Lamri (2014), (3) *"Teaching Pragmatics in the EFL Classroom: Challenges, Lacunas, and Suggestions"* by Sharif et al. (2017), (4) *"Challenges for Implementing Pragmatics Instruction in Second Foreign Grammar Classrooms"* by Kathleen Bardovi-Harlig (2020), (5) *"Pragmatic Failures and Language Ideologies: Challenges in the Japanese EFL Context"* by Bouchard (2011), (6) *"Integrating Pragmatics into the MA-TESL Program: Perspectives from Former Students"* by Camilla Vásquez and Amy Fioramonte (2011), (7) *"Issues in Teaching Pragmatics, Prosody, and Non-Verbal Communication"* by Daniel Sean Hurley (2020), (8) *"Teaching Pragmatics: Nonnative-speaker Teachers' Knowledge, Beliefs and Reported Practices"* by Christine Savvidou and Maria Economidou-Kogetsidis (2019), (9) *"Teachers' Practices on Raising Students' Pragmatic Awareness: Challenges and Reflections for EFL Teachers"* by Getari Adyagarini, Lies Amin Lestari and Ahmad Munir (2019), (10) *"Teaching pragmatics in English as a Foreign Language at a*

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*Vietnamese University: Teachers' Perceptions, Curricular Content, and Classroom Practices*" by Ngoc Minh Vu (2017), (11) *"The Role of Pragmatics in English Teaching: A Study of Pragmatic Competence of Students from Spanish Institutions"* by Andrea Martínez Celis, (12) *"Teachers' Practices on Raising Students' Pragmatic Awareness: Challenges and Reflections for EFL Teachers"* by Getari Adyagarini, Lies Amin Lestari and Ahmad Munir (2019), (13) *"Intonation as a Pragmatic Resource in ELF Interaction"* by Lucy Pickering (2009), (14) *"Discourse and Pragmatics in English Grammar Teaching"* by Tang TANG, and (15) *"Teaching Pragmatics in the Foreign Language Classroom: Grammar as a Communicative Resource"* by J. César Félix-Brasdefer and Andrew D. Cohen."

### 2.3. Data Gathering Procedures

This study conducted a content analysis following the thematic analysis approach of Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis Approach (2006). This was carried out by looking into the Findings or Results and Discussions section of the corpus of the study. These sections were read and re-read several times to identify the needed data.

The next phase comprised of identifying the data by putting them into meaningful groups of codes. It was followed by analyzing and combining the formed categories. Similarly, in the discussion part of this paper, the researcher used codes for easy tracking of which particular study the excerpts came from. The code includes letter S combined with the study number (i.e., S10 pertains that the excerpt was lifted from Study number 10). The order of the study can be seen in the corpus section.

The next phase was for the review and refinement of the identified categories. After this, the themes emerged were subjected to analysis using the frameworks of Ishihara (2014) on Teacher's Pragmatics and Ishihara and Cohen (2014) on Learner's Pragmatics. In the content analysis, the researcher identified the challenges experienced by ESL and EFL teachers in

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integrating pragmatics into their grammar lessons in terms of teacher's Pragmatics and learner's Pragmatics.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This presents the challenges on integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms after the content analysis was made. The presentation of the findings is divided into two major parts in order to answer the research questions of the study. These parts are: (1) challenges on integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms; and (2) implication of the study in second language grammar teaching and learning.

#### 3.1. Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms

This section discusses the challenges experienced by ESL and EFL teachers in grammar classrooms vis-à-vis teacher's pragmatics and learner's pragmatics. The discussions for the challenges experienced under teacher's pragmatics will be discussed individually which are divided into two subsections, following the frameworks of Ishihara (2014) on teacher's Pragmatics and Ishihara and Cohen (2014) on Learner's Pragmatics, namely: (1) knowledge; (2) beliefs; (3) practice. On the other hand, learner's pragmatics will be divided into two: 1) pragmatic ability and (2) learner's choice.

##### 3.1.1. Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms in Terms of Teacher's Pragmatics

This part presents the challenges on integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms after the content analysis of the findings, results, and discussions segments of the corpus were analyzed in terms of teacher's Pragmatics. Validating the claims of Ishihara (2014) on teacher's Pragmatics, this study identified the challenges that were occurring and recurring in terms of three components, such as, knowledge, belief, and practice (see table 1).

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Table 1

## Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms in terms of Teacher's Pragmatics

Knowledge	Belief	Practice
Lack of pedagogical-content knowledge	Resistance on incorporating Pragmatics in Grammar	Lack of Adequate and authentic Instructional Materials in Pragmatics
Lack of subject-matter knowledge	Teachers' Self-efficacy in teaching Pragmatics	Lack of good language environments
Lack of Experience of the teacher in teaching Pragmatics	Teachers' culture and identity	Input unfavorable for the learners
	Pressures on standardized testing	Limited theoretical support for curricular development
		Lack of teacher's trainings
		Inconsistencies between teacher's knowledge and practice

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Table 1 presents the summary of the challenges experienced by ESL and EFL on integrating Pragmatics in their Grammar classrooms in terms of teacher's pragmatics. It shows that the challenges fall into all the three components of teacher's Pragmatics of Ishihara (2014). In terms of knowledge, the challenges are pedagogical-content knowledge, lack of subject-matter knowledge, and lack of experience of the teacher in teaching Pragmatics. On the other hand, in terms of belief, the identified challenges are resistance on incorporating Pragmatics in Grammar, teachers' self-efficacy in teaching Pragmatics, teachers' culture and identity, and pressures on standardized testing. Lastly, the challenges on practice are lack of adequate and authentic instructional materials in Pragmatics, lack of good language environments, input unfavorable for the learners, limited theoretical support for curricular development, lack of teacher's trainings, and inconsistencies between teacher's knowledge and practice.

The result of this study confirmed and validated the claims of Ishihara (2014) that the classroom practice, teachers' knowledge, and beliefs are often highly influenced by the instructional context like the availability of time, the environment, and the number of students. Hence, the overlapping ideas can be observed in the results. It was validated by this study that there was only a very fine line that distinguished and bridged the challenges on knowledge, beliefs, and practice.

### ***3.1.1.1. Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms in terms of Teacher's Pragmatics on Knowledge***

The results of the study revealed that the numerous challenges on integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms in terms of teacher's Pragmatics were under knowledge. Studies revealed how teacher's knowledge play an essential role in students' learning. Hence, teacher's insufficient knowledge of pragmatics would result in an ineffective transfer of

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knowledge. As a result, challenges exist in the classroom which hinder the learning of the students.

Under knowledge, the challenges revealed by this study were pedagogical-content knowledge, lack of subject-matter knowledge, and lack of experience of the teacher in teaching Pragmatics.

**3.1.1.1.1. Lack of Pedagogical-Content Knowledge.** Lack of pedagogical-content knowledge is one of the challenges faced by ESL and EFL teachers in integrating pragmatics in their grammar lessons.

Under the lack of pedagogical-content knowledge, they viewed the accessibility on research trends, teacher's avoidance of assessing the pragmatic knowledge of the students, lack of engagement of the teachers on planning the lessons, teacher's avoidance of assessing the pragmatic knowledge of the students, and lack of engagement of the teachers on planning the lessons as the challenges that they confronted that led to their failure to execute their pedagogical-content knowledge.

**3.1.1.1.2. Unawareness on how to Discuss Pragmatics.** Challenge experienced of the ESL and EFL teachers on how to discuss pragmatics was unveiled. The exemplar 9 from the corpus tells:

*"With respect to pragmatics, instructor knowledge involves knowing about pragmatics and knowing how to teach pragmatics. At the level of pragmatic knowledge, teachers may be familiar with the components of common speech acts as well as their functions, a range of conventional expressions, and regional pragmatic variation. But they may also be unaware of them or not have the means to discuss them explicitly. Knowledge of teaching of pragmatics entails knowledge of pragmatics, but knowledge of pragmatics*

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*does not guarantee knowledge of how to teach it, as demonstrated by the fact that pragmatics pedagogy is still developing” (S5).*

From exemplar 1, it shows how although the teachers have familiarity on some of the components of the lessons in pragmatics, unawareness on how to discuss these explicitly is a problem.

**3.1.1.1.3. Accessibility on Research Trends.** The corpus revealed that teachers were having issues on their accessibility on research trends. In fact, exemplar 1 shows this reality:

*“EFL teachers seldom have access to pragmatics research findings. Besides, there seems to be a gap in what research has found and how pragmatics is taught. Hence, teachers have to rely on their intuition in teaching pragmatics” (S3).*

As observed, exemplar 2 reveals that with their infrequent access to research related to pragmatics, teachers were not informed on how they can improve their classroom instructions. Hence, they ended up relying on their intuition when teaching pragmatics. This showcased a huge problem because research leads the teachers into improving their pedagogical approaches. Thus, if there were issues on the access, teachers will heavily rely on themselves in teaching grammar and pragmatics, which was also emphasized as the initial response of the respondents. Also, given the ambiguity of pragmatics, this needs assistance coming from the experts which were communicated through research findings. Those findings can serve as a springboard of decision-making for the practices that they could integrate in their grammar classrooms. This supports the importance of research as highlighted by Heggen et al. (2010) that research-based teaching in improving the education quality and teachers’ practice. Given this fact, it is not surprising that ESL and EFL teachers were having difficulties with the integration of pragmatics in their grammar lessons.

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**3.1.1.1.4. Teacher's Avoidance of Assessing the Pragmatic Knowledge of the Students.** Another challenge that appeared was the teacher's avoidance of assessing the pragmatic knowledge of the students.

*"Teachers generally avoid classroom assessment of pragmatic knowledge. Therefore, the tests of pragmatic knowledge have not been part of classroom assessment" (S3).*

S3 showed how teachers intentionally detach themselves from assessing the pragmatic knowledge of the students. This is crucial as without assessment of the students' pragmatic knowledge, the teachers would not be able to identify the specific competencies that need further interventions in terms of pragmatic knowledge. Additionally, it will just worsen the problem because there is no action taken.

Tosuncuoglu (2018) reiterated the essence of classroom assessments because it tells instructional decisions on a part of the teachers as it helps them in diagnosing the strengths and weaknesses of the students, and it gives learning feedback to the students. Similarly, teachers were given feedback as to how they could form their teaching practices while addressing their students learning styles and interests.

On the flip side of the situation, this avoidance, could be a by-product of their insufficient knowledge of pragmatics in terms of both content knowledge and pedagogy.

**3.1.1.1.5. Lack of Engagement of the Teachers on Planning the Lessons.** One of the challenges revealed was that teachers do not engage into planning the entire lessons around Pragmatics. Kim et al. (2018) stressed that pedagogical content knowledge can be seen and gauge on teachers' lesson plan writing and how they translate it in their classrooms. Hence, the problem in not planning the entire lesson as manifested in their lesson plans, might affect the delivery of the lesson. S6 states this reality.

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*"Our findings suggest that the majority of participants usually do not plan entire lessons around pragmatics. Instead, they tend to incorporate pragmatics into existing materials or whenever a classroom situation presents itself" (S6).*

Further, s6 unveiled the tendency of the teachers to just incorporate pragmatics into the existing materials or when the situations caught them. This response is understandable given the fact that they do not plan the integration of pragmatics in their grammar lessons. Additionally, not planning the entirety of the lesson opens room for mistakes. This is crucial if the teacher is not considered expert in the field of pragmatics because there might be an instance that he/she will be caught in the middle of the situation where his/her unpreparedness would cause danger.

Another response of the teachers as reflected in S7 shows the reality that they do not plan the integration of pragmatics and it is just part of incidental lesson.

*"I teach pragmatics any time I can! Mostly, I don't incorporate pragmatics into my lessons as much as I address it when it comes up. For example, if a student says, 'What?' in class to ask for clarification, we talk about proper ways to ask 'Excuse me, could you repeat that, may I ask a question?' I talk about how to use contextually appropriate language as it comes up" (S7).*

This challenge is very problematic in teaching primarily because teaching always needs planning. Thus, if the teachers failed to do so, there would not have a successful transfer of learning. In fact, Taguchi (2011) stressed the importance of an overt instruction when teaching and learning pragmatics.

**3.1.1.1.6. Lack of Teachers' Pedagogical Trainings about Pragmatics.** One of the identified challenges by the teachers as revealed by exemplar 6 was the absence of pedagogical trainings for teachers focusing on pragmatics. Adding to this fact is the reality that it is not part

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of the curriculum as reflected in the language teacher education programs. Further, it validated how teachers struggled in incorporating pragmatics in their lesson as they do not have a concrete guide on how they can integrate it in their lessons.

*"Language teacher education programmes across the world tend not to focus on the pragmatic aspects of language, or neglect having a pedagogical component on training teachers on how to actually teach the pragmatics of the target language" (S9).*

However, if analyzed intently, it is evident that in the K-12 curriculum, it was already embedded in the grammar lessons. Chances are that teachers are not aware of the integration in the grammar lessons. Hence, they do not know how to attack the lessons.

**3.1.1.2. Lack of Subject-Matter Knowledge.** Aside from the challenge on the pedagogical content knowledge, results revealed the problems on subject-matter knowledge as well.

This is definitely a very challenging issue on teaching pragmatics, as obviously, no one can teach the subject-matter that needs to be taught without knowledge on it. In fact, Ishihara and Cohen (2014) emphasizes that it is a necessity to know the subject-matter if teachers aim to teach pragmatics in grammar. Additionally, Eslami-Rasekh (2011) also supports this idea by declaring that the fundamental indicator which contributes to the pragmatics development is the instruction of the teachers.

Under subject-matter knowledge, the challenges experienced by the ESL and EFL teachers are lack of pragmatic knowledge, different L1 of ESL and EFL teachers, unawareness on how to discuss pragmatics, and lack of pragmatic competence and practical methods.

**3.1.1.2.1. Lack of Pragmatic Knowledge.** One of the challenges unveiled by the ESL and EFL teachers involve their lack pragmatic knowledge. In exemplar 7, it states how teachers are aware of their lack of expertise in teaching pragmatics due to their lack of pragmatic

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knowledge as well. This conform the claim of Siegel (2016) that while teachers are conscious of the significance of pragmatics that ignite their desire on integrating it in their lessons, they are uncertain of ways to choose and integrate activities in EFL pragmatic classes.

*"In fact, we as language instructors, do not have enough pragmatic knowledge or maybe what we know is a whole picture of it for two reasons: first, there is no information or emphasis regarding the pragmatics issues in the teachers' manuals as the basis of the teaching and secondly, instructors are not trained in teacher's training courses to pay attention to this aspect and explicitly teach learners the pragmatics features" (S1).*

Aside from the reality exposed in S1 regarding the issue on the pragmatic knowledge, it can also be manifested that teachers' insufficient knowledge on pragmatics was due to the lack of information on issues about pragmatics and the lack of trainings on how to explicitly teach pragmatics in the classrooms.

**3.1.1.2.2. Different L1 of ESL and EFL Teachers.** Another challenge that contributed to the lack of insufficient knowledge of the teachers involved their different first language to their students. Exemplar 8 indicates:

*"Most of the time teachers who are considered to models for their learners are non-native speakers of English and do not really master all the aspects of the pragmatic competence of the TL" (S2).*

From exemplar 8, it could be retracted that the reason for the lack of mastery of the teachers in teaching pragmatics is due to the fact that they are non-native speakers of English. With teachers who are non-native speakers of English, they would not have the mastery of all the components that made up the pragmatic competence of the target language.

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**3.1.1.2.3. Lack of Teachers' Knowledge on Assessing the Pragmatic Performance of the Students.** Another challenge on the subject matter knowledge points toward the issue on the assessment of the performance of the students, specifically in pragmatics. S3 asserts that:

*"We do not know yet how to assess the performance of speech acts in language classrooms despite the large body of work on speech acts" (S3).*

S3 shows that the challenge on the difficulty on the integration of pragmatics is because they do not have knowledge on how to assess a certain pragmatic competency. What is surprising is that this is despite the fact that there are large body of work on speech acts. This mirrors the reality on other lessons and competencies that involved the assessment of pragmatics.

Additionally, this issue on the lack of knowledge on pragmatic assessment is parallel to the problem identified under pedagogical knowledge on teacher's avoidance on assessing the pragmatic knowledge of the students. From here, it can be concluded that perhaps, the avoidance of the teachers on pragmatic assessment was due to their lack of knowledge or mastery on assessing pragmatics.

**3.1.1.2.4. Lack of Pragmatic Competence and Practical Methods.** The challenge is encountered by teachers on integrating the pragmatic loads in the grammar lessons is because of their lack of pragmatic competence and practical methods. It states that:

*"Teachers encountered difficulties in inserting pragmatic loads into the lesson due to their lack of pragmatic competence and practical methods" (S10).*

EFL and ESL teachers singled out that they are adding pragmatics in their lesson because they do not have the competence in pragmatics and practical methods. Again, this practice was showcased by these teachers because they lack knowledge and skills on pragmatics.

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**3.1.1.3. Lack of Experience of the teacher in teaching Pragmatics.** The teachers' experience on teaching pragmatics is also included as the challenge for them in teaching their students. The s6 expounds:

*"Several participants who had a considerable amount of prior language teaching experience noted that a major obstacle to teaching pragmatics is that it is not adequately covered in language textbooks. This may also be an issue for novice teachers who have not yet developed an extensive repertoire of teaching ideas and resources, and who may rely on a textbook to a greater extent than perhaps their more experienced counterparts" (S6).*

S6 reveals that those who have less teaching experience, or the neophyte teachers will be confronted with difficulties since their tendency is to rely to the textbooks available. The problem there though, is that Pragmatics are not included in these language or grammar textbooks. Thus, if they will rely on the books, chances are, they would not be able to integrate pragmatics in teaching grammar.

### **3.1.2. Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms in terms of Teacher's Pragmatics on Beliefs**

Another identified challenges of the teachers on the integration of pragmatics in their grammar classrooms fell into beliefs. Under beliefs the challenges identified are resistance on incorporating pragmatics in Grammar, teachers' self-efficacy in teaching pragmatics, teachers' culture and identity, and pressures on standardized testing.

**3.1.2.1. Resistance on Incorporating Pragmatics in Grammar.** One of the challenges is the resistance on incorporating pragmatics in grammar. It reveals how teachers held back when they need to integrate Pragmatics in Grammar. Their resistance is due to various reasons. This result is consistent with numerous studies (i.e., Fontich & García-Folgado, 2018;

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Kabel, 2020) claiming that there was widely resistance to shift from conventional grammar teaching to communicative grammar teaching.

Surprising result was revealed in exemplar 12 when it reveals how a teacher admitted that she was equipped with pragmatic knowledge but felt overwhelmed to incorporate Pragmatics into her class. It states:

*"A very experienced teacher of English indicates that although the course equipped her with a greater awareness of interlanguage pragmatics (which enabled her to subsequently deal with individual students in specific situations), she nevertheless felt daunted by incorporating pragmatics into the class in a broader way" (S6).*

Similarly, another teacher claimed how he has an awareness of the loopholes of his students in terms of pragmatic aspects, but he failed to take steps on how to correct them. It states:

*"I am now much more aware of pragmatic lapses in my students, and can analyze what is wrong and why, but I have not taken any systematic steps to help them beyond ad hoc correction and explanation. Part of this stems from the kinds of classes I have taught since doing the class but also from the fact that it is such a huge issue, I don't know where to begin. Some of the emails the students send me are very, very pragmatically flawed, but I haven't yet taken the time and energy to design materials and activities to address this. Next semester I am teaching Grammar at level 5 [...]. Maybe I can incorporate some specifically pragmatics-orientated activities in that course. I know that I really should" (S7).*

The s6 and s7 show how the teachers showcase the abilities and knowledge on pragmatics but they resist on incorporating it in their grammar lessons.

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Lastly, S9 states how some teachers feel uncomfortable of teaching pragmatics and incorporating it in their grammar classrooms because they are nonnative teachers.

*"Some language teachers feel uncomfortable about being a source of knowledge for L2 pragmatics or explaining pragmatics issues to their students. Nonnative teachers NNSTs felt less knowledgeable and less comfortable about the teaching of TL pragmatics and about serving as a resource for information about the specifics of pragmatics in the target language. Commenting on those moments when they did not feel like an authority with respect to pragmatics, most NNTs explained that they would check with NSs, with the Internet, and with other sources" (S9).*

**3.1.2.2. Teachers' Self-efficacy in Teaching Pragmatics.** Teachers' self-efficacy in teaching pragmatics is another challenge in terms of belief. S9 reveals:

*"Effie, for instance, believed that the age of learner was an important consideration: Young learners cannot grasp the sense as such because they are still exploring this second language in terms of the system. So they are still struggling with the meaning, the subject, the verbs... the tenses. But older learners like 14 year-olds, 14 years-old and older they could be taught this, while for Alexia, lack of time and access to materials presented a challenge: Firstly we have to find materials or videos or articles that may expose children to the pragmatic aspect of the language. It is not easy because we don't have the time" (S9).*

It can be understood from S9 that the teacher has his own perspective and consideration on when is the right age to teach pragmatics, that the exposure to the second language starts at a certain age. This is a problem because students' age is not the sole determiner of their readiness in learning. With this overgeneralization, teachers might ignore the needs of the students.

Another challenge under self-efficacy is reflected in S10 which states:

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*"Both of the teachers' way in raising student pragmatic awareness relied on her sole explanation and lecturing style as target language input in the classroom especially with regard to pragmatics" (S10).*

As seen in exemplar 16, the problem is because the teachers relied on his own knowledge and teaching style. This is crucial because teaching pragmatics is cannot just be done by intuition. Given the ambiguity attached to how pragmatics shall be taught, teachers must equip themselves of the advances on the pragmatics as an area in order to achieve successful teaching-learning process.

**3.1.2.3. Teachers' Culture and Identity.** The teachers' culture and identity posed another challenge in terms of teaching pragmatics in a grammar classroom. S3 explains:

*"Teachers may serve as a major source of input for L2 learners. However, they have their own identities, and their teaching activities or the input they provide to L2 learners may not be impartial" (S3).*

From S3, it shows how the identities of teachers swayed them in teaching pragmatics in a way that they gave students impartial knowledge.

This is in support with the ideas of Eslami-Rasekh (2008) and Simin et al. (2014) that EFL instructors are confronted with a very demanding and challenging task due to the differences of pragmatic behaviors and norms across various social and cultural contexts. The problem is the difference on their beliefs or even cultures that held them back in providing students with extensive inputs that will cater the pragmatic needs of the learners. Ishihara and Cohen (2014) support this when they claimed that research suggests that the sense of identity is interconnected with how one uses the language. Thus, the way teachers deliver the lesson reflects their identity which unfortunately not congruent to the learners own identity.

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**3.1.2.4. Pressures on Standardized Testing.** Another challenge in teaching pragmatics is the belief of the teachers that pragmatics is not needed in the standardized testing. In fact, S6 reveals:

*"In yet another context, two of the teachers who worked in K-12 settings indicated that they did not have a chance to incorporate pragmatics at all into their teaching. One of these teachers explained that: The first year I taught middle school ESL language arts/reading, [I] did not incorporate pragmatics. Thinking back, the reason for this may have been the pressure of other things that I needed to teach them that year... possibly some backwash effect of standardized testing as well" (Study 6).*

From S6, it can be derived that teachers believe that if pragmatics will be incorporated in the lesson, it will have an adverse effect in the standardized testing.

### **3.1.3. Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms in terms of Teacher's Pragmatics on Practice**

Another challenge faced by ESL and EFL teachers in incorporating pragmatics in their grammar classrooms evolved on their practice. The challenges revealed in the corpus are lack of adequate and authentic instructional materials in pragmatics, lack of good language environments, input unfavorable for the learners, teacher-centered classroom environments, limited theoretical support for curricular development, lack of teachers' trainings, and inconsistencies between teacher's knowledge and practice.

#### **3.1.3.1. Lack of Adequate and authentic Instructional Materials in Pragmatics.**

One of the controversial issues on pragmatics is the recognition that it should be integrated in teaching grammar for the students to attain communicate competence, yet there is massive

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problem on the accessible materials which are not only adequate but also authentic. In fact, S1 gives audacity to this problem when it states:

*"Out of the 20 instructors who were interviewed, four stated that they did not have access to enough materials or input to teach interlanguage pragmatics. This shortage could be attributed to the textbooks, which are the major and the only source of input in foreign language contexts" (S1).*

The problem on the adequate and authentic instructional materials in pragmatics affect the teachers' practice inside the classroom.

Similarly, S3 taken from the corpus reveals the same sentiments when it reveals:

*"The textbooks substantially lack authenticity as corpus studies have shown inconsistencies between the English found in textbooks and the English which appears in spoken/written corpora. Therefore, textbooks cannot prepare EFL learners for unrehearsed real-life performance" (S3).*

The issue on the textbook was similar to the claims of Sørensen (2008) on how grammar was ignored in Denmark as from 1970–1980, he revealed that grammar instruction already vanished from Danish L1 textbooks.

True enough, bounded with limitations as to what to use in the classroom due to the lack of resources, the teacher resulted into focusing on the topics which are widely explored such as the topic requests. S5 uncovers:

*"Over the years, I have observed that graduate students are drawn to study requests as a topic for both research and pedagogical projects because there are more reports on the acquisition and use of requests by L2 speakers and learners than on any other*

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*speech act. This dominance is echoed in instructional effect studies, and requests are also the most likely speech act to be included in textbooks (often called polite requests). Years of observation suggest that the existence of resources encourages teaching in pragmatics; the lack of resources discourages it" (S5).*

In line to this, is the study of Eslami-Rasekh (2005) where he emphasizes that the teachers are experiencing problems due to the lack of sufficient materials.

**3.1.3.2. Lack of Good Language Environments.** Aside from the challenges on the instructional materials, another huge challenge which put teachers into a difficult situation is the lack of good language environments. The S1 states:

*"Lack of facilities such as films is a factor that contributes to the lack of pragmatics teaching. It is better to accompany each taught lesson, especially cultural points, by showing films besides what learners read in the book. I think films can transfer the materials much better and the feedback could be really much better" (S1).*

As revealed by the exemplar 23, it explicates how the lack of facilities such as films add up to the problem experience by the teachers.

*"Lack of time was also noted by five of the instructors as having an impact on the non-inclusion of pragmatics instruction in the language classroom. They expressed that since the contents of the textbook, which include mostly grammatical items, were too wide and demanding to be covered by them in a mere semester, they tended to leave out pragmatics and not consider teaching the nuances of it" (S1).*

Another issue on providing good language environment to the learners is because the textbooks fail to provide information that reflect the pragmatic usage of the experts. The authenticity on the conversations is absent from textbooks. S5 asserts:

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*"Textbooks for both English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) present author-created conversations that do not reflect pragmatic usage by expert speakers (be they native or nonnative members of a speech community); the point here is that authentic conversations are absent from textbooks" (S5).*

Supported to this claim are the emphasis given by many researchers (e.g., Chastain, 1988; McGrath, 2002) who highlighted the importance of incorporating the teaching of culture of the second language or foreign language being taught. The study of Akbari (2015) in his study on the current challenges in teaching/learning English for EFL learners in Iran that their English textbooks have no integration of culture of the English-speaking countries. As a result, the students from Iran are having difficulties in differentiating the native culture from the target culture.

Likewise, aside from the failure of the materials to provide authentic experience to the teachers and learners, there is also a problem on providing these learners an opportunity for them to be exposed on the use of the language. This reality is reflected in S10 as it reveals:

*"In spite of teachers' massive role, the language environment in the classroom such as the textbooks and the interlocutors to practice TL pragmatics were not providing them huge opportunities of language exposure" (S10).*

Like this finding, Ifantidou (2014) claims that the exposure to the L2 brings in growth in terms of pragmatics, linguistics, or grammar aspects. He added that there is a need to understand that the issue here is not on the effects of exposure to growth but whether the exposure's length can be gauged in different situation.

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**3.1.3.3. Input Unfavorable for the Learners.** Providing students inputs which hindered students in the acquisition of communicative competence is a big challenge for both the teachers and students. In S2 taken from the corpus, it states that:

*"The input provided by teachers is hardly favourable for acquiring communicative competence in the classroom" (S2).*

This is problematic because, the inputs given to the students will shape their competence. Thus, if this practice will be continuously exercise by the teacher, students will have difficulty to decipher the lesson.

**3.1.3.4. Teacher-Centered Classroom Environments.** The direction of the learning process now is on providing them a classroom environment which are centered to them. The problem though with the teaching of Pragmatics is that it limits the teachers on providing students such environment. S3 states:

*"The classroom environments in grammar classrooms world-wide are commonly teacher-centred, structured to complete the syllabus with little time during lessons to facilitate practice of language where learners are involved in comprehension and production of pragmatic meaning. [And] the opportunities to use the target language in situations that approach real world conversation are limited" (S3).*

The identified problem as revealed in S3 is the limitations on providing learners a real-world conversation that is beneficial to the learners in understanding pragmatics.

**3.1.3.5. Limited Theoretical Support for Curricular Development.** The practice of the teachers is highly influenced by the theoretical support provided for them for curricular development. As expose in S5:

*"there is still no complete pragmatics curriculum. However, neither the specification of the target, nor the development of language teaching pedagogy (for morphosyntax, for*

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*example) is sufficient to fully specify a pedagogy of pragmatics, and, as observed that it is not always obvious how principles proposed for instruction in grammar might translate to pragmatics" (S5).*

Ishihara and Cohen (2014) cited that in the recent survey nationwide revealed that the development courses for teachers in the US centers are more on theoretical models than practical applications. They added that assumption can be made that if there would be appropriate theoretical framework, the language and grammar educators will be able to devise their own strategies for instruction.

**3.1.3.6. Lack of Teacher's Trainings.** With the challenges in understanding and learning pragmatics, teachers badly need trainings that would capacitate them on what and how to teach pragmatics in grammar classroom. However, this is not the case as the S9 reveals:

*"Language teacher education programmes across the world tend not to focus on the pragmatic aspects of language, or neglect having a pedagogical component on training teachers on how to actually teach the pragmatics of the target language" (S9).*

**3.1.3.7. Inconsistencies Between Teacher's Knowledge and Practice.** What is challenging on teaching pragmatics is how teachers are equipped on what to teach as far as Pragmatics is concerned. S10 reveals:

*"The teachers claimed that they employed different strategies in raising students' pragmatic awareness. However, the observation shows that both of the teachers overweighed emphasis on linguistic forms and lexical cues. However, it is proved in a number of studies that form-focused explanation does not necessarily increase students' pragmatic awareness, unless it is done accompanied with the rich detailed analysis on the context it is used" (S10).*

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S10 shows how the teachers claimed and thought that they were able to perform strategies for student’s pragmatic awareness yet during observation these were not vividly seen. As a matter of fact, the lesson heavily focuses on the linguistic forms and lexical cues which is not align with the claims of the teachers. This is problematic because if the teachers can no longer see the distinction of the strategies that they are employing, definitely, there won’t be an effective teaching of Pragmatics.

### 3.1. 2. Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms in Terms of Learners’ Pragmatics

This part presents the challenges on integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms after the content analysis of the findings, analysis and discussions segments of the corpus analyzed in terms of learners’ Pragmatics.

Table 5

Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms in terms of Learners’ Pragmatics

Pragmatic Ability	Learner’s Choice
Rare corrective feedback given	Resistance of students
Misinterpretation of pragmatic accent	Lack of interaction with the TL community
misinterpretation of the illocutionary force of the student’s request	
Lack of engagement	
Lack of understanding of sociocultural norms	

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Problems on turn-taking and general conversation management strategies when using the target language

Students' Inadequate Vocabulary Mastery

Student's incompetence on pragmatics

Students' inability to determine linguistic choices in different context

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Table 5 portrays the challenges on integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar classrooms in terms of learners' pragmatics. It reveals that the challenges fall into all the two components under learners' Pragmatics, namely, the pragmatic ability and learner's choice.

Under pragmatic ability the challenges identified are rare corrective feedback given, misinterpretation of pragmatic accent, misinterpretation of the illocutionary force of the student's request, lack of engagement, lack of understanding of sociocultural norms, problems on turn-taking and general conversation management strategies when using the target language, students' inadequate vocabulary mastery, student's incompetence on pragmatics, and students' inability to determine linguistic choices in different context.

On the other hand, the challenges which fall under learner's choice are resistance of students and lack of interaction with the TL community.

### ***3.2.1. Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms in terms of Learners' Pragmatics on Pragmatic Ability***

**3.2.1.1. Rare Corrective Feedback Given.** In the teaching-learning process, corrective feedback is an important aspect. This is because the learners will be informed of what they are

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lacking. However, one of the challenges is the limited corrective feedback given by the teachers as reflected in S10. It states that:

*"Limited corrective feedback by the teachers especially T1 on infelicitous pragmatic choices and pragmatic mistakes made by students" (S10).*

As observed, S10 revealed the limited corrective feedback given by teachers to their students. This practice of teachers is crucial as Shirkhani and Tajeddin (2017) stated, corrective feedback is seen as a way to effectively develop the pragmatic awareness and pragmatic competence of the learners. Hence, to help students in gaining competence not only in grammar but also in pragmatics, it is important that corrective feedback is maximized in the teaching and learning process.

**3.2.1.2. Misinterpretation of Pragmatic Accent.** The challenge exposed in S6 is also another challenge to take into account. It reveals that:

*"Problem with interpreting pragmatic accent (assumption about what is communicated without being said), which originates in a problematic linguistic interpretation of speech event (how does one make a request for further information)" (S6).*

From s6, it shows that there is a problem on interpreting the pragmatic accent of the students. Hence, they are having difficulties in understanding the grammar lessons of the teachers. In pragmatic sense, accent is crucial as it gives different meaning to a particular word when uttered. Thus, it is vital that the teacher gives attention on the word being uttered in terms of accent so it would not be misinterpreted.

**3.2.1.3. Misinterpretation of the Illocutionary Force of the Students' Request.** Another issue which is problematic is how the teacher misinterpret the student's utterance. The results of the study revealed this reality as manifested in S6 reveals:

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*"There is a misinterpretation of the illocutionary force of the student's request inside the classroom" (S6).*

If the teachers are having trouble on understanding the illocutionary force of the students, they will in return act not based on the expectation of the student who perform the request. Thus, it might affect the students.

**3.2.1.4. Lack of Engagement.** The learners lack of engagement on the lesson is a big challenge as well to the teachers. The lack of pragmatic ability to understand the task or activity to be accomplished will defeat the purpose of the teacher's activity. S6 indicates:

*"Even though questions from the interviewer were meant to elicit a self-narrative, the student often perceived them as checks. This pressure had a significant impact on how the interview unfolded. In short, because she could not always move beyond language ideology, the JHS never fully engaged in self-narrative" (S6).*

As observed in S6, the challenge is on the divergence on what the students understood on what is being presented to them. Thus, an effect is shown at the lack of engagement on the tasks.

**3.2.1.5. Lack of Understanding of Sociocultural Norms.** Another problematic aspect of teaching pragmatics is the incapacity of the learners to understand the sociocultural norms that are fundamental in pragmatics. Exemplar 35 uncovers:

*"The pragmatic failure occurs after the response 'When I was go to Odori or playing with my friends I asked my parents to give some money.' At that point, JHS 1 fails to maintain the flow of communication. Moreover, she switches code. The extended 'So...' is a Japanese back-channel. As such, it shows a lack of understanding of sociocultural norms (culturally appropriate turn-taking strategies and use of silence)" (S6).*

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Similar to this, is the result of study of Tan and Farashaiyan (2016) which reveals that the most dominating factor for the learner's insufficient knowledge of the cultural background of the learners.

**3.2.1.6. Problems on Turn-Taking and General Conversation Management Strategies when Using the Target Language.** The problems of the learners on turn-taking and strategies on conversation management when using the target language is also evident. S6 unveils:

*"They seem to have trouble with turn-taking and general conversation management strategies when using the target language" (S6).*

**3.2.1.7. Students' Inadequate Vocabulary Mastery.** To fully acquire mastery in language, it fundamental to have rich vocabulary. Nevertheless, the reality is that learners do have problem on this. As a matter of fact, S10 reveals that:

*"Limited vocabulary possessed by students becomes the utmost complicated issue for pragmatic awareness-raising. That is shown from the teachers' responses as well as classroom observation. All of the teachers confessed that not all of the students show significant enthusiasm towards English subject in general which in turn affect their drive to acquire new words or to discover new words in English by their own wills" (S10).*

As revealed in the excerpt from S10, the limited vocabulary by the students is a complicated issue in acquiring pragmatic awareness.

**3.2.1.8. Student's Incompetence on Pragmatics.** The students' lack of skills on pragmatics is also a problem encountered by the teachers in teaching pragmatics. This resulted to the failure to understand the thoughts being communicated. Ishihara and Cohen (2014) defend this by saying that there were times that learners basically do not understand what was being

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communicated to them in certain situation, which resulted to a language forms divergence. This is shown in S10 when it states:

*"The students hardly catch the meaning of the English words especially if it is isolated or detached from the context" (S10).*

Added to the students' difficulty in understanding the concept of the lesson or the English words is that some words are used in isolation or not contextualized. This is problematic as Farahian (2012) claims, the barrier into intercultural understanding is the failure of pragmatics in utilizing the proper speech.

**3.2.1.9. Students' Inability to Determine Linguistic Choices in Different Context.** The inability of the students to distinguish the linguistic choices is also identified as a challenge. S10 reveals:

*"Students' inability to determine linguistic choices is inferring the ways students' ability to use appropriate linguistic forms and rhetorical strategies in expressing an intention towards the interlocutors in the act of communication. That matter becomes one of the obstacles for the teachers in raising students' pragmatic awareness. From the observation 4 on the teacher 1 and observation 2 for the teacher 2, it was subtle that students needed explicit instruction to acknowledge linguistic forms and their function pragmatically. Given an example, the students were not aware of the modal verbs usage in asking permission, to request, or to interrupt someone" (S10).*

S10 clearly shows the challenge on students' ability to identify the linguistic forms and rhetorical strategies. What can be taken from excerpt is the need for the students to be provided with explicit instruction in order for them to notice the linguistic forms and their pragmatic functions. Aufa (2011) confirms the importance of explicit instruction in teaching pragmatics to

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students. He stated that in developing pragmatic competence, students would learn it more if it would be taught in explicit manner.

### **3.2.2. Challenges on Integrating Pragmatics in ESL and EFL Grammar Classrooms in terms of Learners' Pragmatics on Learner's Choice**

**3.2.2.1. Resistance of Students.** The resistance of the students on learning pragmatics along with grammar is a very difficult challenge, as teachers cannot do something about it. S7 uncovers:

*"One of the EAP teachers mentioned an interesting episode of resistance from one of her students. The teacher summarized her experience in the following excerpt: Although some classes have been very receptive to the notion of pragmatics, others have not. For example, one student once commented after a discussion of pragmatics in making requests that teachers should not assume that students are impolite, and that politeness is the type of information they can discover on their own. Of course, to be fair, this probably has much to do with the fact that I am still learning how to approach the integration of pragmatics into skill and content-based English classes, as it does with students' notions of what language learning does and does not encompass. Regardless, it was infinitely helpful and eye-opening for me to think about language learning on this level, as it has been for many of my students and I remain quite invested in the idea of teaching pragmatics at every level" (S7).*

As shown in S7, it manifests how there are learners' who are very open on understanding pragmatics while some are not. Bearing this on mind, teacher's must be able to give extra attention on how to craft lessons that will compel students who are resistant to learn pragmatics without compromising those who are willing to learn.

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**3.2.2.2. Lack of interaction with the TL community.** Exposure to the language is very essential to anyone who would like to learn it. Understanding Pragmatics is not enough to understand the language, it is essential to understand that it embeds the culture and tradition in the target language community. However, the teachers seen this as a problem as manifested in S10:

*"...the fact that the students have very limited or not at all a chance to interact with TL community makes them insensitive to TL sociocultural values" (S10).*

From S10, it was revealed that students have very limited interaction with the target language that made them insensitive to the sociocultural values. Similarly, Akbari (2015) states that the main barrier for the ESL and EFL students is the lack of environment which can help them be familiar with the language. That is, there is nothing where they could communicate English with outside the classroom. As a result of this, they are having difficulties integrating their lessons in Pragmatics on what is being given to them.

Another challenge identified is the lack of opportunity to have authentic communication. S10 states:

*"Lack of chances for authentic communication in the target language in turn creates difficulties for learners to acquire knowledge of appropriate language use in different context" (S10).*

### **3.3. Implication of the Study in Second and Foreign Language Grammar Teaching and Learning**

This study unveils a few implications not just for future research but more importantly in the second and foreign language grammar teaching and learning. The purpose of this study is not to highlight the problem that surrounds the integration of pragmatics in grammar classrooms

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but to understand the problems or challenges on this aspect so that specific solutions and directions would be unveiled.

In the recent years, Department of Education has started to take actions by adopting the theory of integrating pragmatics in grammar teaching. In fact, it was embedded already in the K-12 curriculum that teaching grammar must be taught communicatively, that grammar must not be taught in isolation. Apart from this, in 2021, the Department of Education concluded the six-week virtual webinar training series organized by the United States Embassy in the Philippines Regional English Language Office in partnership with the Department of Education through the National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP). The webinar series titled "Teaching Grammar Communicatively in the Philippines" accentuates the recognition of the department of teaching grammar for communication purposes. This undertaking also emphasizes the efforts of the department to capacitate administrators and teachers in teaching grammar with the incorporation of pragmatics. Hence, this initiative taken by DepEd only reflected how vital the integration of pragmatics whenever grammar is taught in classrooms. It also shows the acknowledgment of the department of the importance of pragmatics to be integrated in the grammar lessons.

With the results exposed by this study, it cannot be denied that teaching grammar with the integration of pragmatics is a huge challenge to hurdle by both ESL and EFL teachers. Through this study, ESL and EFL teachers will be geared towards the elimination of these problems. A recommendation from the study of Kabel et al. (2022) that it is fundamental consider giving space for functional grammar and contextualized grammar teaching in order to shift the focus on grammatical choices in various communicative contexts.

This study revealed pressing problem on how pragmatics was treated in grammar classrooms. Regardless of a huge plethora of studies and theories pointing towards the academic

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benefits of the integration of pragmatics in grammar, this study uncovered the detachment of practice from theories. No matter how numerous studies were positive on how integrating pragmatics to grammar helps in learning grammar more effectively, this aspect has been often neglected in ESL and EFL grammar classrooms.

With the results of this study, this can be a baseline data on how to intensify and heighten the integration of pragmatics in ESL and EFL grammar classrooms. Given that this study enumerated and specified the challenges in all areas, this gives a more vivid picture on what aspect to focus on. Indeed, it is note-worthy to take the challenges revealed by this study on what specific areas to give attention to. This is fundamental as no matter how education sector acknowledge the struggles of the students in acquiring the competencies in Pragmatics and Grammar or in English at large as revealed by some international standardized assessment results (e.g., PISA), solutions offered by the department would never be enough if they would not address the root cause of the problem. Hence, the essence of this study. That said, it gives a clear direction on what future steps can be taken by policymakers or even the teachers themselves who are teaching grammar.

#### 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Teaching grammar and teaching pragmatics in isolation are both challenging already. Thus, it is not surprising how challenges occur when these two areas are integrated. It appears ideal that these two areas such as grammar and pragmatics are both integrated when teaching grammar. Though there is a huge plethora of studies and frameworks suggesting the academic benefits it would bring to the table, in terms of both teachers' and learners' pragmatics, there appears to be a huge problem in practice.

In analyzing the data generated by this study, the researcher discovered what appears to be the disturbing challenges that might be happening as well in the Philippine Grammar

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classrooms. Though this study only investigated the challenges limited to the foreign studies due to the dearth of studies in the Philippine settings, it was able to display the shared pressing problems and issues encountered in the classrooms that need attention and immediate action. That is, if the Philippine education sector is true to its call of teaching Grammar communicatively to the students.

The shared sentiments revealed by various studies uncovered by this study on the challenges of integrating Pragmatics as experienced by the ESL and EFL teachers manifest why teachers tend to heavily focus on teaching Grammar alone. Thus, the teachers should not be the only ones to be blamed here, as the presence of the challenges on the teacher's pragmatics and learner's pragmatics are all attributed to several factors related to the implementation of the curriculum itself. This study intends to open academic discussions on how the problems on the implementation can have a domino effect, resulting in ineffective teaching of the teachers and unsuccessful learning of the learners. It is more bothering to note that this contributed to the failure of the integration between grammar and pragmatics.

As observed in the results of this study, the challenges on the integration fell in both teachers' Pragmatics and learners' Pragmatics. It is more bothering to note that all the components that teachers must acquire to teach Pragmatics effectively are missing under teachers' Pragmatics. By knowing this alone, the success of the integration will be a huge question mark already. Teachers, after all, play a fundamental role in shaping the students' overall learning. Thus, this should be the first and foremost focus of the government, specifically the curriculum developers, policy makers, and instructional materials writers, on how they could capacitate the teachers in both subject-content and pedagogical-content of Grammar and Pragmatics. This is for them to be able to transfer their knowledge to the students effectively. In terms of beliefs, teachers should be guided and trained on how to reserve their culture and beliefs while transferring knowledge to the students. They should ensure that knowledge would not be

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compromised while tightly holding to their beliefs. It is fundamental to note that changing the teachers' beliefs won't be a good option because it may cause them even more resistance since they might come from a different environment with different upbringings, especially if they are nonnative speakers. This is a compelling issue that needs careful planning by the educational sector. On the flip of the situation, this study recommends hiring teachers who share the same first language/vernacular as the students. This is to ensure that there won't be resistance when it comes to teaching Pragmatics because they share the same cultures with the students so that it will be easy for them to connect and relate to the students.

In terms of practices, as observed, the challenges cannot be solely blamed to the teachers as their failed practices were due to the unavailability of instructional materials, disintegrated curriculum, and lack of related pedagogical and subject matter training and seminars. It still boils down to curriculum planning and instruction, which teachers do not have control of. Here, the power of top management is essential; hence, with the findings revealed by this study, they can try to revisit the grammar curriculum and perhaps do some refinement.

The setbacks and challenges revealed by this study need collective efforts and participation from all the players beginning from the top to the down. The programs and policies would not be achieved if the teachers or the learners won't give their cooperation in the process of teaching and learning. On the other hand, if the educational sectors won't act up to address the recurring issues and problems on this, the teachers won't be effective in delivering knowledge to the students.

Recognizing the issues and difficulties in terms of integration between pragmatics and grammar, the researcher arrived at the assumption that perhaps these areas should not be combined or integrated. Better outcomes might be more achieved if these two are taught in isolation instead of sacrificing both competencies due to several factors. Better yet, teachers can

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be trained first on both linguistic areas before training them the integration of these two. Additionally, it is never enough to capacitate teachers but more importantly, these teachers must be guided on how they would teach this in their ESL or EFL classrooms. Hence, it is noteworthy to consider this for inclusion in the curriculum to lead teachers into the aspired integration.

On an important note, this study is not to question the effectiveness of the integration of pragmatics and grammar but to offer significant points on the weight of the challenges present on the integration of pragmatics in ESL and EFL grammar classrooms. After all, the promising goal of successfully integrating these two areas in language teaching is unquestionable. Thus, it is either the challenges be addressed or ignored. However, either of the two would largely impact the learners in two different levels.

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