

The background of the slide is a complex, abstract pattern of white and light blue lines and shapes on a dark blue background. The lines are thin and crisscrossing, creating a dense, web-like structure. There are also some faint, illegible text fragments scattered throughout the background, which appear to be related to the title's subject matter.

**The Effect of  
Consciousness-Raising  
Instruction on the  
Pragmatic Development of  
Agreeing and Disagreeing  
of Iranian EFL Upper  
Intermediate Learners in  
Speaking Performance**



**THE EFFECT OF CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING INSTRUCTION ON THE PRAGMATIC DEVELOPMENT OF AGREEING AND DISAGREEING OF IRANIAN EFL UPPER INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS IN SPEAKING PERFORMANCE**

**EL EFECTO DE LA INSTRUCCIÓN DE CONCIENCIACIÓN SOBRE EL DESARROLLO PRAGMÁTICO DE ESTAR DE ACUERDO O EN DESACUERDO EN LOS ESTUDIANTES DE NIVEL INTERMEDIO-SUPERIOR DE EFL IRANÍES EN EL RENDIMIENTO DE SU CONVERSACIÓN**

**Masoumeh Pourcheragh**, *Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran*

**Gholamhassan Famil Khalili**, *Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran*

E-mail: [esfehni.mohamad3@gmail.com](mailto:esfehni.mohamad3@gmail.com)

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### **Abstract**

Pragmatics, as a subfield of linguistics, plays a major role in learning a foreign language (Crystal, 1997) and to make someone aware of something. Consciousness-raising tasks are designed. Accordingly, this study was done to investigate the effect of consciousness-raising instruction on the pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing of Iranian EFL upper intermediate learners in speaking performance. To fulfill the purpose of this study, on the basis of the result of English Unlimited Placement Test, 60 male and female upper intermediate EFL learners, aged 17 to 23, were selected out of 70. The participants were divided in two experimental and control groups. The experimental group was divided into three sub- groups including a role play group, a discussion group, and an interactive translation group. Each experimental group received different treatment on speaking performance. The way they were treated in these three experimental groups varied. This research was conducted at two English institutes located in Karaj, namely, Negarin and Zaban Tarjoman Language Centers. The study lasted for one term (i.e., 16 sessions). The quantitative data obtained were analyzed through SPSS to scrutinize the effect of the treatment. The results of a repeated-measures two-way ANOVA showed that there was a significant improvement in Iranian EFL learners' application of agreement and disagreement structures while speaking. Meanwhile, in the control group the improvement was not statistically significant. Conclusions and Pedagogical implications are further discussed.

**Keywords:** Consciousness-Raising (CR); Pragmatic; Discourse Analysis; Speech Act; Communicative Competence.

### **Resumen**

La pragmática, como subcampo de la lingüística, desempeña un papel importante en el aprendizaje de un idioma extranjero (Crystal, 1997) y en hacer que alguien se dé cuenta de algo. Se diseñan tareas de concienciación. En consecuencia, este estudio se realizó para investigar el efecto de la instrucción de concienciación sobre el desarrollo pragmático de



estar de acuerdo y en desacuerdo entre los estudiantes de nivel intermedio alto EFL iraní en el desempeño de la conversación. Para cumplir con el propósito de este estudio, sobre la base del resultado de la Prueba de Colocación Ilimitada en Inglés, 60 estudiantes masculinos y femeninos de EFL de nivel intermedio superior, de entre 17 y 23 años, fueron seleccionados entre 70. Los participantes se dividieron en dos grupos experimentales y de control. El grupo experimental se dividió en tres subgrupos, incluido un grupo de juego de roles, un grupo de discusión y un grupo de traducción interactiva. Cada grupo experimental recibió un tratamiento diferente en el rendimiento del habla. La forma en que fueron tratados en estos tres grupos experimentales varió. Esta investigación se realizó en dos institutos de inglés ubicados en Karaj, a saber, Negarin y Zaban Tarjoman Language Centers. El estudio duró un término (es decir, 16 sesiones). Los datos cuantitativos obtenidos se analizaron a través de SPSS para analizar el efecto del tratamiento. Los resultados de un ANOVA bidireccional de medidas repetidas mostraron que hubo una mejora significativa en la aplicación de estructuras de acuerdo y desacuerdo por parte de los estudiantes de EFL iraníes mientras hablaban. Mientras tanto, en el grupo de control la mejora no fue estadísticamente significativa. Las conclusiones y las implicaciones pedagógicas se discuten más a fondo.

**Palabras clave:** Concienciación (CR); Pragmático; Análisis del discurso; Acto de habla; Competencia comunicativa

## Introduction

The current study falls within the realm of pragmatics. Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics, dealing with the study of language. Pragmatics concentrates on conversational contexts. It is a process in which a speaker implies and listeners infer. Pragmatics studies language that is not directly spoken. Instead, a speaker hints at or suggests a meaning, and listeners assume the correct intention. Pragmatics, as a subfield of linguistics, is important because it plays a major role in learning foreign languages (Svalberg, 2012). As Crystal (1997) stated, pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics that has been characterized as the investigation of dialect from the perspective of users, particularly of the decisions they make, the limitations they experience in utilizing interaction social connection and the impacts their utilization of dialect has on different members in the demonstration of correspondence. Kasper and Dahl (1991) characterize teach of Inter language pragmatics as the investigation of non-native speaker's acquisition, cognizance and production of pragmatics. Pragmatic capacities are multifaceted aptitude. It is contended that utilizing and translating language in correspondence is a requesting undertaking that requires language capacities and depends on various types of knowledge. Very often, in regular utilization of language, the pragmatic significance of an utterance isn't what is truly said. Thus, interpreting an utterance requires going past what is said keeping in mind the end goal to recognize the speaker informative intentions. This sort of interpretation requires an inferential procedure in light of contextual knowledge or a shared conviction that interlocutors are supposed to share. As Sharwood-Smith (1981) stated, Consciousness Raising (CR) is a way to deal with language educating. Educators may utilize CR errands as their primary approach or just infrequently. To raise something to consciousness intends to make somebody mindful of something. CR errands are in this way intended to raise the



student language awareness. Pragmatic development is important for the lives of students and it is important at all levels of education.

There are several problems that students encounter in their English lessons particularly among non-native learners including Iranian EFL learners. Most second language learners find it embarrassing to understand pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in speaking performance. It is acknowledged that guideline assumes a pivotal part in the acquisition of pragmatics (Taguchi, 2005, 2007; Kondo, 2008), the foreign language classroom may open understudies to a limited situation in which to create pragmatics learning. There is accord among pragmatics professionals and theoreticians that the open doors for human interaction are fairly confined (Lyster, 1994; Kasper and Rose, 1999; Kasper, 2001), and the materials to which the understudies are uncovered are decontextualized (Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan, and Reynolds, 1991), and they may not create the sociolinguistic information that is basic with the end goal for figuring out how to happen.

This study examines the role of pragmatics instruction in English as a foreign language and the imperative need for teaching pragmatic aspects. It attempts to investigate the effect of consciousness-raising instruction on the pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing of Iranian EFL upper intermediate learners in speaking performance.

This study was designed to answer the following questions:

Q<sub>1</sub>. Does consciousness-raising instruction have any effect on pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners' speaking performance?

Q<sub>2</sub>. Is there any difference between the effect of consciousness-raising instruction through discussion, role play, or interactive translation on pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners' speaking performance?

Regarding the questions of the study mentioned above, two null hypotheses were proposed by the researcher:

**H<sub>01</sub>**. Consciousness-raising instruction does not have any effect on pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners' speaking performance.

**H<sub>02</sub>**. There is no difference between the effect of consciousness-raising instruction through discussion, role play, or interactive translation on pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners' speaking performance.

## Literature Review

### Defining Discourse Studies and Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis refers to the actual analysis, while discourse studies refer to the field or discipline. Discourse studies, as a discipline, are most closely associated with linguistics, but are employed in such diverse fields as anthropology, business studies, communication studies, cultural studies, educational studies, environmental studies, law, literary studies, media studies, philosophy, politics, psychology, sociology, and many others, in addition to linguistics. In the 1964a, Dell Hymes provided a sociological point of



view with the investigation of discourse in its social setting. The linguistic logicians, for example, Austin, (1962 ), Searle, (1969 ) and Grice, (1975) were likewise powerful in the investigation of language as social segment, reflected in speech act theory and the definition of conversational sayings, close by the development of pragmatics, which is the investigation of importance in context (Levinson 1983; Leech 1983).

### **Discourse Structures and Speech Acts**

Form and function must be isolated to comprehend what is occurring in discourse. Applied linguists and language instructors have been acquainted with the term work throughout recent years. A specific piece of discourse or writing is a demand or a guideline or an exemplification we are focusing on what that bit of language is doing, or how the audience and reader gathered respond therefore, such elements are regularly additionally called speech acts Austin, (1962) and Searle,( 1969) every one of the stretches of language that are conveying the power of requesting for, instructing, etc. is viewed as playing out a specific act. The way to deal with communicative language teaching that underlines the function or speech acts that bits of language perform covers in a vital sense with the distractions of discourse analysts. Materials are worried about speech acts, with what is done with words, not simply the linguistic and lexical types of what is said. When we talk or write, we don't simply express a string of linguistic structures, without starting, center or end, and any way, we have officially shown the trouble of assigning a function to a specific type of language structure and vocabulary. Without a doubt a significant speculation to make for a student and numerous notional functional language course books do only that, offering short expressions or clauses which distinctively satisfy functions, for example, apologizing or making a polite demand. The discourse analyst is substantially more interested by the procedure by which, for instance, an inverted verb and subject come to be heard as an informing speech act, and to get at this, and we should have our speech act completely contextualized both regarding the surrounding text and of the key highlights of the circumstances.

### **Communicative Competence**

The focus on importance and reason through the student presentation to legitimate language was first presented in the late 1970s affected by the sociolinguistic theory of communicative competence by Hymes. In a battle to interrelate what he kept up to be basic to genuine communicative learning, Hymes, (1972) authored the term communicative competence. Through this term, Hymes could underline the essentialness of a language users not exclusively having the capacity to apply and utilize grammatical rules yet additionally to frame adjust utterances and know how to utilize them properly. The acknowledgment of setting as a critical component of the communicative aspect would then require an all the more comprehensive meaning of communicative competence while numerous meanings of communicative competence keep on evolving Hymes beginning acknowledgement of the part of setting in communication serves as a frame of reference in present-day communicative teaching, Savignon, (1997). As indicated by Hymes, (1974), Chomsky accentuation on grammatical competence was not to be ignored but rather joined by the affirmation of significance in communication dictated by special speech community and the content network and the substance of the collaboration. Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence by categorizing its components in to three main aspects of competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. This



category was later revised to include a fourth element, this is, discourse competence (Canale1983).

### **Pragmatic Competence**

In the present study, pragmatic competence is defined as the power to take the context and setting into verification when selecting language to express a meaning. In addition, it is about comprehending how and when it is suitable to interact in a conversation. It is about perceiving discourse roles, and meeting expectations present in a conversation. In addition, it is about being able to formulate and organize discourse in a meaningful manner to be understood. pragmatic competences “Are associated with the functional use of linguistic resources (production of language functions, speech acts), drawing on scenarios or scripts of interactional exchanges. It also associates the mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence, the identification of text types and forms, irony and parody. For this element even more than the linguistic component, it is hardly necessary to remark the basic impact of interactions and cultural environments in which such abilities are constructed.(Council of Europe, 2001, p.13).” According to Bialystok (as cited in Rueda, 2006), pragmatic competences are comprised mainly of speakers’ ability to use language for various intentions and to comprehend the rules and functions of language to interpret what is communicated. In other words, it is about being able to look beyond the grammatical structures of the linguistic utterance and catch the meaning of what is said. The Council of Europe (2001) remarks that pragmatic competences are associated with the user/learner’s knowledge of principles based on which messages are:

- a) “organized, structured and arranged (‘discourse competence’);
- b) used to perform communicative functions (functional competence’);
- c) sequenced on the base of interactional and transactional schemata (‘design competence’)” (p. 123).

### **Facilitation of L2 Pragmatics**

Findings illustrate positive effects of pedagogical intervention in expanding pragmatic competences in education. Underlining the probability of pragmatic competences being stimulated and developed in the classroom, Rueda (2006) discusses that students will benefit from taking part in carefully planned activities involving them in positions and challenges they might come across when using their L2 outside the classroom. This point was also stated in the introductory chapter with Kasper’s (1997) claim that pragmatic competences cannot simply be taught. Instead students must involve in the processes to obtain the competences. The same point is remarked by Richards (2006) in the way that “language learning is facilitated both by activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language use and organization, as well as by those engaging language analysis and reflection (p.22).

Rose (2001) decide for creating activities to develop students’ awareness and “persuade them to use their universal or transferrable L1 pragmatic knowledge in L2 contexts” (p. 7). Such awareness developing activities are also recommended in the CEFR (2001, see section 2.3). The intention of such activities is to enable learners to recognize how things might work correspondingly in L1 and L2. A probable way to achieve such awareness is through meta-talk. In the present study, meta-talk will be interpreted as an activity where students are required to consider the reasoning behind their actions and



choices as regards communication. By asking students to consider why language is used in a certain manner. In this way they become aware of their personal reasoning behind actions and the perceived effect certain choices have. To define metacognition, Haukås (2014) states the first definition of the term "one's knowledge relating one's own cognitive processes and products or anything related to them" (p. 2). By expanding students' metacognition, they could become aware of their pragmatic knowledge and handle to transfer knowledge from the L1. They might also become aware of negative transfers. Such tact can develop autonomous learners as they become aware of their language usage. Regarding transferable pragmatics, consciousness-raising activities can be useful in the way that students become more aware when making pragmatic selections. Such insight can therefore help students avoid unproductive language. When a pragmatic characteristic is illustrated or discussed, one would say that it is a subject of explicit information being managed. Such instruction, compared to implicit instruction, has been a subject of discussion within the field of language teaching for a long time. Kasper (1997) refers to findings demonstrating that skills are expanded no matter which methods are chosen, but students who are given explicit instruction do better in terms of pragmatics. Meta pragmatic instruction entails the presentation of meta pragmatic information, which is defined as "when, where, and to whom it is propitious to perform a special speech act and what expression would or would not be suitable in a particular context of culture and context of situation" (Nguyen, 2011, p. 22). The importance of such instruction is developed by Kasper (2001) as she points to abundant studies comparing meta pragmatic instruction (input on pragmatic features) versus "practice-only" conditions (p. 53). Findings demonstrate that explicit concentration on pragmatic characteristics, getting them explained and having them discussed, can be useful for language learners.

### **Classroom Activities Promoting Pragmatic Competence**

In his book *Communicative Language Teaching Today*, Richards (2006) refers to the value of effective classroom-learning tasks giving students chances to "negotiate meaning, develop their language resources, notice how language is used, and participate in meaningful interpersonal exchange" (p. 22). The importance of student talk is also underlined by Szecsy (2008), who claims that: "the primitive function of language is to let interaction and communication" (p. 3). In order to enable students to perceive how works discourse, they should be prepared with illustrative models of language in use, and take part in interaction (Cunnings Worth, 1987). Newell et al. (2011) also refers to revises which are often based on "attempts to engage students in debates that echo the controversies and discussions in their daily lives, popular culture, the workplace, professions, and academic disciplines" (273). Active student participation in the classroom is therefore central in language teaching. However, allowing students take part in discourse has not always been a priority in language teaching.

Cunnings worth (1987) refers to periods of grammar translations and audio lingual methods where conversational tact to fit the process of naturally happening conversations was neglected as a part of foreign language teaching Pragmatic competences deal with an individual's ability to manage manifold communicative situations, and realize certain patterns of repetition in social interaction situations. For this reason, students should be provided with chances for interaction in purposeful communication situations. This way, students get to experience how language works and how interlocutors react to their



utterances. Such experiences persuade learners to put language knowledge into use and might therefore facilitate the process of expanding pragmatic competences.

The same point is remarked in a study conducted by Jadallah and colleagues (as quoted in Newell et al., 2011):

“as to how collaborative reasoning evolves to provide a social context in which children are able to repeatedly and spontaneously of [sic] use tools for thinking and suitable new tools from one another and from their teachers. As children advance in argumentation, they reach a level of independence and consciousness in using these tools. (p. 28).”

How to go about such activities in the English language learning classroom is a challenging issue. In a critical-pragmatic classroom, learners are expected to present a full range of communicative forms, however, not all at the same time (Young, 1997). They should be directed through scaffolding and with opportunities for the manifold forms to be expanded and practiced. Concerning activities, Littlewood (1981) regards both pre-communicative and communicative language activities as important parts of expanding individuals' communicative ability. He explains that in order to become communicatively competent, one has to commence concentrating on the smaller parts (the connection between language forms and meaning) to expand a learner's repertoire and independence. Pre communicative tasks “intend to equip the learner with some of the skills required for communication” (Littlewood, 1981, p. 8). This way, the learning is better provided for real situations to communicate meanings. By linking forms to meanings, students are able to bridge the gap between linguistic and communicative competence. At last, students could therefore be introduced to more complex situations and be expected to handle them.

The same point is remarked by Young (1997) who stressed that language functions should initially be practiced within confined spheres, before eventually developing by the amount of competences being dealt with in a communication situation. Another important aspect is presented by Cunnings Worth (1987) who argues that grammatical awareness of language is not enough for students to successfully participate in conversations.

Small group talk one way of engaging students in discourse is through small group talk. Such talk allows for insight in the organization and management of conversation, and contextualizes social interaction situations. With reference to the cooperative principle group talk creates opportunities for experiencing the collaborative art of a conversation. This point is also stressed by Cunnings worth (1987) who says: “a conversation is interactional and the participants work together in its development, mutually defining and evaluating each contribution; it is essentially a collaborative process and must be seen as such for teaching purposes. Such talk allows for the use of several functional competences in addition to aspects of discourse competence. The importance of engaging students in such activities is also raised in LK06 (2013), which states how learners should understand and be able to use the English language by “listening, speaking and conversing.

## **Methodology**

### **Participants**

Sixty Persian learners of English (i.e., 30 male and 30 female students) ranging in age from 17 to 23 were selected from 70 English language learners based on the Topnotch Series and English Unlimited Placement test. According to the English Unlimited



Placement test, all of the participants were upper-intermediate EFL learners of English at Negarin and Zaban Tarjoman English Language Institutes in Karaj. Sixty percent of them had studied English for two and three years, and the rest had studied English for three and four years at English language institutes plus the number of years they had studied English at school.

They all had learned English in foreign language classrooms with no experience of visiting an English speaking country. They were then divided in to two groups including the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group was then divided in to three subcategories called the discussion group, the role play group, and the interactive translation group. Each group consisted of 10 female students. The control group consisted of 30 male students.

### **Instruments**

The main purpose of the study was to find out the effect of consciousness-raising instruction on the pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing of Iranian EFL upper intermediate learners in speaking performance. Hence two instruments were used:

#### **English Unlimited Placement Test**

In order to homogenize the groups of the study, the English Unlimited Placement Test was administered. The test consists of 120 Grammar and Vocabulary questions. The test obliged the participants to select the best response for each item. Stop when the items turn out to be excessively troublesome. Spend close to 40 minutes on the test.

#### **Speaking Performance Test (Pretest and Posttest)**

To measure the participants' speaking performance ability for the pretest and the post test, the researcher used IELTS Speaking Sample Test consisting of 10 speaking items. Five items were related to general questions and others were related to how individuals remark their agreement and disagreement. The chosen speaking items were taken from genuine sites such as those belonging to Oxford and Cambridge so that the validity of the items could be ensured.

### **Procedure**

This study was conducted at Negarin and Zaban Tarjoman English Language Institutes in Karaj in spring 2018. There were two groups in this study (i.e., the experimental group and the control group). In Zaban Tarjoman English Language Institute, the male English language learners were considered as the control group and in Negarin, the female English language learners were considered as the experimental group.

Three intact English classes from Negarin Language Institute, which was taught by the researcher, were combined with each other due to the facility of teaching. The researcher conducted the study in 16 sessions (three times a week, each session 90 minutes of instruction). The experimental group was then divided in to three groups including the discussion group, the role play group, and the interactive translation group which were exposed to 18 video vignettes (9 agreements and 9 disagreements). The vignettes were extracted from different episodes of the Divorce TV series and worked on the identification and analysis of agreement and disagreement.



The Divorce TV series was selected because it could provide the students with the analysis of language forms and strategies of agreement and disagreement as well as good discussions of the appropriateness of forms in relation to the contexts. Another consciousness-raising instruction on the pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing which was used in this study pertained to agreement and disagreement video conversations. In the frame of conversation, students learned how to remark their agreement or disagreement in different situations. Another consciousness-raising strategy on the pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing was related to 10 topics to have discussion within a group and express agreement and disagreement.

It should be noted that six sessions were allocated to watching and working on different episodes of Divorce TV series, 4 four sessions were allocated to watching video conversations related to agreement and disagreement, 4 and four sessions were associated to 10 topics for debates. Moreover, two sessions were dedicated to the administration of the pretest and posttest. The treatment that each group received is described separately as follow discussion group, the role play group, and interactive translation group.

In the present study the researcher used the pretest/posttest quasi-experimental design and also non-random sampling model for selecting the participants of the study (Hatch & Faraday, 1982). The study included a control group and an experimental group. The experimental group was divided in to three, subcategories called the discussion group, the role play group and, the interactive translation group. Each group received treatment differently and each group consisted of ten female participants. The control group did not receive any treatment and it consisted of thirty male participants.

The researcher investigated the effect of consciousness-raising instruction on the pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing of Iranian EFL upper intermediate learners in speaking performance. A two-factor mixed design ANOVA was run.

### **Data Analysis and Results**

The present study is designed and conducted in order to examine the possible effect that consciousness raising instruction might have on development of agreement and disagreement in Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners' speaking performance. Besides this main objective, the researcher aims at comparing the effects of the three techniques employed for manipulation of the independent variable, namely, discussion, role play and interactive translation. Thus, in line with the aims and objectives of the study, two research questions and hypotheses have been formulated.

Table 1 reports descriptive statistics of the pretest, midterm and posttest scores of the experimental group. The increase in the mean scores ( $\bar{X}_{\text{Pretest}}= 16.27$ ;  $\bar{X}_{\text{Midterm}}= 16.72$ ;  $\bar{X}_{\text{Posttest}}= 17.33$ ) reflect a gradual improvement in the scores and the decrease in the standard deviations of the scores ( $S_{\text{Pretest}} = 1.50$ ;  $S_{\text{Midterm}} = 1.41$ ;  $S_{\text{Posttest}} = 1.39$ ) points at an increase in homogeneity of the sample as a result of the treatment to which the members of the experimental group have been exposed. Statistical significance of the observed improvements is evaluated in the repeated measures ANOVA reported below.



Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Experimental Group

		Pretest of speaking of the experimental group	Midterm of speaking of the experimental group	Posttest of speaking of the experimental group
N	Valid	30	30	30
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		16.2708	16.7250	17.3333
Median		16.3125	16.8750	17.3750
Std. Deviation		1.50755	1.41665	1.39323
Range		6.50	6.00	5.50
Minimum		12.50	13.25	14.50
Maximum		19.00	19.25	20.00

Table 2. Test of Sphericity of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Experimental Group

Measure: MEASURE\_1

Within Subjects Effect	Mauchly's W	Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.	Epsilon <sup>b</sup>		
					Greenhouse-Geisser	Huynh-Feldt	Lower-bound
Time	.572	15.631	2	.000	.700	.725	.500

Tests the null hypothesis that the error covariance matrix of the orthonormalized transformed dependent variables is proportional to an identity matrix.<sup>a</sup>

a. Design: Intercept

Within Subjects Design: Time

b. May be used to adjust the degrees of freedom for the averaged tests of significance. Corrected tests are displayed in the Tests of Within-Subjects Effects table.

Besides normality of the scores, application of repeated measures ANOVAs assume sphericity of the analyzed scores. Table 2 is dedicated to reporting results of the test of sphericity of the pretest, midterm and posttest scores obtained from the experimental group. As displayed in the table, the level of significance of Mauchly's W is less than the critical significance level ( $W = .572$ ;  $p = .000$ ;  $\alpha = .05$ ;  $p < \alpha$ ). Thus, it is concluded that the sets of scores do not meet the assumption of sphericity and in the test of the within-subjects effects (Table 3), the row with Greenhouse-Geisser correction is used as the reference.



Table 3. Test of within Subject Effects of Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Experimental Group

Measure: MEASURE\_1

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Time	Sphericity Assumed	17.052	2	8.526	64.858	.000	.691
	Greenhouse-Geisser	17.052	1.401	12.174	64.858	.000	.691
	Huynh-Feldt	17.052	1.450	11.759	64.858	.000	.691
	Lower-bound	17.052	1.000	17.052	64.858	.000	.691
Error (Time)	Sphericity Assumed	7.625	58	.131			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	7.625	40.622	.188			
	Huynh-Feldt	7.625	42.054	.181			
	Lower-bound	7.625	29.000	.263			

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Control Group

		Pretest of speaking of the control group	Midterm of speaking of the control group	Posttest of speaking of the control group
N	Valid	30	30	30
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		16.8917	17.1000	17.2667
Median		16.5000	17.2500	17.3750
Std. Deviation		1.46096	1.17783	1.41982
Range		5.00	4.25	6.75
Minimum		14.25	15.00	13.25
Maximum		19.25	19.25	20.00

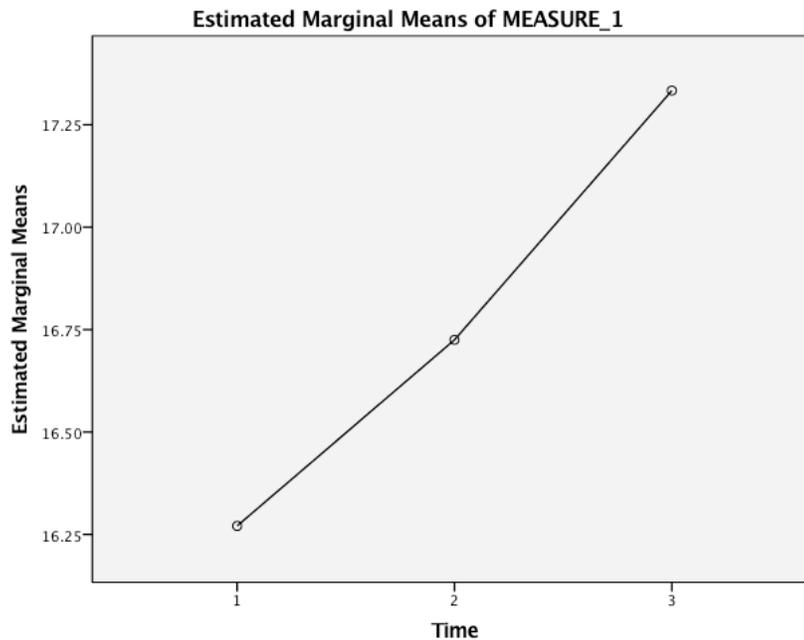


Figure 1. Improvement of the Experimental Group Members' Speaking Scores

This is statistically reflected in Table 3 by the fact that the  $F$  which is corrected with Greenhouse-Geisser technique ( $F_{(1.401,40.622)} = 64.858$ ) is large enough to enjoy a level of significance smaller than the standard .05 level ( $p = .000$ ;  $\alpha = .05$ ;  $p < \alpha$ ). Moreover, the measure of effect size ( $\eta_p^2 = .691$ ) points at a relatively high effect of the independent variable. Figure 1 depicts the improvement observed in the experimental group.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Control Group

		Pretest of speaking of the control group	Midterm of speaking of the control group	Posttest of speaking of the control group
N	Valid	30	30	30
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		16.8917	17.1000	17.2667
Median		16.5000	17.2500	17.3750
Std. Deviation		1.46096	1.17783	1.41982
Range		5.00	4.25	6.75
Minimum		14.25	15.00	13.25
Maximum		19.25	19.25	20.00

The same analyses are repeated with the pretest, midterm and posttest scores of the members of the control group. Table 4 shows a similar pattern of improvement in the mean scores ( $\bar{X}_{\text{Pretest}} = 16.89$ ;  $\bar{X}_{\text{Midterm}} = 17.10$ ;  $\bar{X}_{\text{Posttest}} = 17.26$ ); however, the magnitude of the improvement of the mean scores of the control group is less than the one observed in the



experimental group. Meanwhile, the change that happened in the standard deviations does not follow a meaningful pattern ( $S_{Pretest} = 1.46$ ;  $S_{Midterm} = 1.17$ ;  $S_{Posttest} = 1.41$ ).

Table 5 proves that the analyzed scores meet the assumption of sphericity. The calculated level of significance of Mauchly's W is larger than the .05 standard ( $W = .969$ ;  $p = .641$ ;  $\alpha = .05$ ;  $p > \alpha$ ). Thus, it is concluded that no correction is required in the table of the within-subjects effects (Table 6).

Table 5. Test of Sphericity of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Control Group

Measure: MEASURE\_1

Within Subjects Effect	W	Mauchly's Chi-Square	Approx. f	Sig.	Epsilon <sup>b</sup>		
					Greenhouse-Geisser	Huynh-Feldt	Lower-bound
Time	.969	.888		.64	.970	1.000	.500

Tests the null hypothesis that the error covariance matrix of the orthonormalized transformed dependent variables is proportional to an identity matrix.<sup>a</sup>

a. Design: Intercept

Within Subjects Design: Time

b. May be used to adjust the degrees of freedom for the averaged tests of significance. Corrected tests are displayed in the Tests of Within-Subjects Effects table.

Table 6. Test of within Subject Effects of Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Control Group

Measure: MEASURE\_1

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	
Time	Sphericity Assumed	2.118	2	1.059	1.792	.176	.058
	Greenhouse-Geisser	2.118	1.939	1.092	1.792	.177	.058
	Huynh-Feldt	2.118	2.000	1.059	1.792	.176	.058
	Lower-bound	2.118	1.000	2.118	1.792	.191	.058
Error (Time)	Sphericity Assumed	34.267	58	.591			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	34.267	56.243	.609			
	Huynh-Feldt	34.267	58.000	.591			
	Lower-bound	34.267	29.000	1.182			

The *F* representing statistical value of the difference observed between the analyzed scores is not significant at two and fifty-eight degrees of freedom because the level of significance of the *F* is beyond the standard ( $F_{(2,58)} = 1.792$ ;  $p = .176$ ;  $\alpha = .05$ ;  $p > \alpha$ ). Moreover, the relatively meager effect size suggested by the partial eta squared reflecting the effect of the placebo provided in the control group ( $\eta_p^2 = .058$ ) proves that the improvement observed in the control group members' performance in the pretest, midterm



and posttest is not statistically considerable. Figure 2 portrays the statistically insignificant improvement observed in the control group.

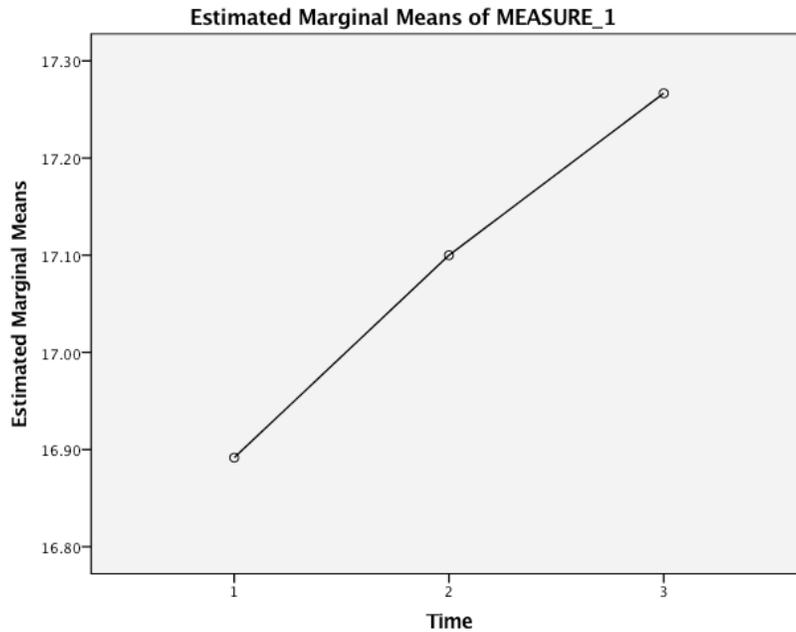


Figure 2. Improvement of the Control Group Members' Speaking Scores

In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of what has happened in the course of the study, the researcher compares performance of the members of the two groups in the three tests through independent samples *t* tests and presents the results in Tables 7 and 8 below.

Table 7 displays the descriptive statistics of the pretest, midterm and posttest scores in the two groups. A close look at the table makes it evident that there is a difference between the mean scores of the two groups in all of the tests ( $\bar{X}_{Pre.Exp} = 16.27$ ;  $\bar{X}_{Pre.Ctrl} = 16.89$ ;  $\bar{X}_{Mid.Exp} = 16.72$ ;  $\bar{X}_{Mid.Ctrl} = 17.10$ ;  $\bar{X}_{Post.Exp} = 17.33$ ;  $\bar{X}_{Post.Ctrl} = 17.26$ ). The members of the experimental group start the research with a mean score less than that of the control group in the pretest; however, as the research goes on, they reduce their distance with the control group members and in the posttest, they outperform the control group members. This is clearly observable in Figure 3.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Two Groups

	Group membership	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest of speaking	Experimental group	30	16.2708	1.50755	.27524
	Control group	30	16.8917	1.46096	.26673
Midterm of speaking	Experimental group	30	16.7250	1.41665	.25864
	Control group	30	17.1000	1.17783	.21504
Posttest of speaking	Experimental group	30	17.3333	1.39323	.25437
	Control group	30	17.2667	1.41982	.25922

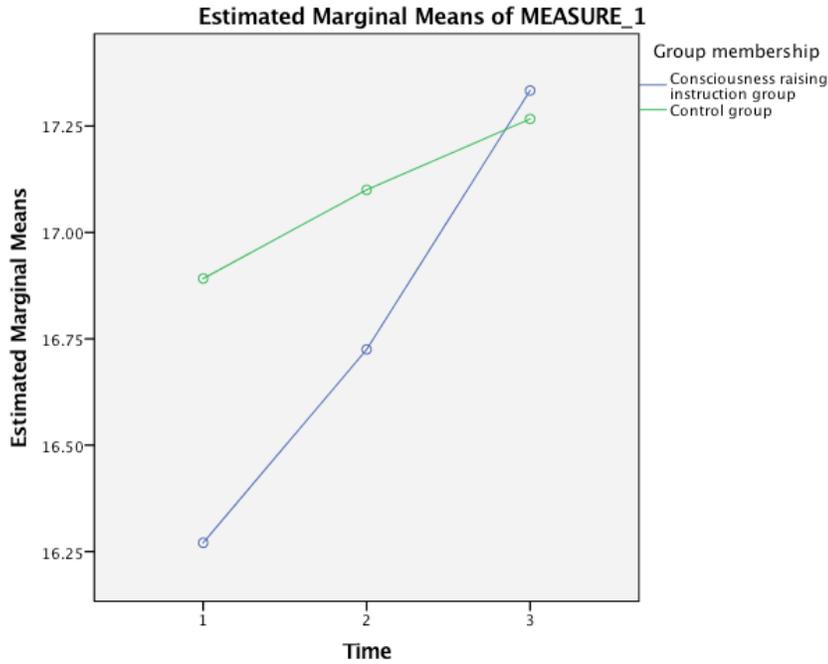


Figure 3. Improvement of the Experimental and Control Group Members’ Speaking Scores

Table 8 summarizes results of the independent samples *t* test of the pretest, midterm and posttest scores in the two groups. None of the three independent samples measures representing statistical value of the differences between the scores obtained in the three groups ( $t_{pretest} = -1.620$ ;  $t_{midterm} = -1.115$ ;  $t_{posttest} = .184$ ) is significant. In fact, in none of the cases, the *t* is large enough to enjoy a level of significance smaller than the standard level of significance at fifty-eight degrees of freedom ( $\alpha = .05$ ;  $p > \alpha$ ). It is to be underscored that in the three tests the analyzed scores meet the assumption of homogeneity of variances and the rows which assume equal variances are used as the reference ( $F_{pretest} = .066$ ;  $F_{midterm} = 1.215$ ;  $F_{posttest} = .094$ ;  $\alpha = .05$ ;  $p > \alpha$ ).

The second null hypothesis she proposed focuses on the possible difference between the effects of these techniques. In order to verify the hypothesis a two-factor mixed design ANOVA is employed and the scores obtained by the members of the three experimental sub-groups in the pretest, midterm and posttest of speaking are compared. Tables 9 through 12 and Figure 4 report outcomes of this test.

Table 8.Independent-Samples T Test of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Two Groups

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	(2-Mean Difference)	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.066	-.798	58	.111	-.62083	.38328	-1.3880	.1463



Equal variances not assumed			-1.620	57.943	.111	-.62083	.38328	-1.3880	.1464
Equal variances assumed	1.215	.275	-1.115	58	.270	-.37500	.33636	-1.0483	.2983
Equal variances not assumed			-1.115	56.129	.270	-.37500	.33636	-1.0487	.2987
Equal variances assumed	.094	.760	.184	58	.855	.06667	.36318	-.6603	.7936
Equal variances not assumed			.184	57.979	.855	.06667	.36318	-.6603	.7936

According to the results provided in tables 1 through 3 and figure 1, consciousness raising instruction causes a statically considerable improvement in Iranian EFL learners application of agreement and disagreement structures while speaking. Meanwhile, Tables 4,5 and 6 and figure2 suggest that the placebo provided in the control group causes an improvement in the scores but the improvement is not statistically meaningful. Tables 7 and 8 and Figure 3, on the other hand, prove insignificants of the difference between the experimental and control groups. As a result the first null hypothesis of the present study which is “consciousness raising instruction does not have any effect on pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners’ speaking performance” is rejected.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Three Experimental Sub-Groups

	Group membership	Std.		N
		Mean	Deviation	
Pretest of speaking	Discussion group	16.8250	1.25167	10
	Role play group	15.4750	1.93542	10
	Interactive translation group	16.5125	.94914	10
	Total	16.2708	1.50755	30
Midterm of speaking	Discussion group	17.1375	1.14633	10
	Role play group	16.3500	1.94079	10
	Interactive translation group	16.6875	1.01934	10
	Total	16.7250	1.41665	30
Posttest of speaking	Discussion group	17.5250	1.16190	10
	Role play group	17.3750	1.93021	10
	Interactive translation group	17.1000	1.03716	10
	Total	17.3333	1.39323	30

Table 9 presents descriptive statistics of the nine sets of scores representing performance of the members of the three experimental sub-groups in the pretest, midterm and posttest. The table reflects the differences between the mean scores within the tests



(between groups) and between the tests (within groups). The most noteworthy information conveyed by the table is the diversity observed in the mean scores in the pretest and the similarity between the mean scores in the posttest. This reflects an improvement in homogeneity of the experimental sub-groups which is also observable in Figure 4 below.

Table 10. *Test of Sphericity of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Three Experimental Sub-Groups*

Measure: MEASURE\_1

Within Subjects Effect	Mauchly's W	Approx. Square	Chi-df	Sig.	Epsilon <sup>b</sup>		
					Greenhouse-Geisser	Huynh-Feldt	Lower-bound
Time	.839	4.577	2	.101	.861	.982	.500

Tests the null hypothesis that the error covariance matrix of the orthonormalized transformed dependent variables is proportional to an identity matrix.<sup>a</sup>

a. Design: Intercept + Group

Within Subjects Design: Time

b. May be used to adjust the degrees of freedom for the averaged tests of significance. Corrected tests are displayed in the Tests of Within-Subjects Effects table.

Table 10 proves that the analyzed sets of scores meet the assumption of sphericity. The calculated Mauchly's W is not significant because its respective level of significance is larger than the critical significance level ( $W = .839; p = .101; \alpha = .05; p > \alpha$ ). Accordingly, in Table 11, that is, the table of the within-subjects effects, the rows which assume sphericity and are thus left intact are used as the reference.

According to Table 11, the treatments provided in the three sub-groups have caused significant improvements in the subjects' performance in the tests. The *F* which represents the magnitude of the development that has happened over time, regardless of the sub-group to which the subjects belong, is large enough to be statistically considerable ( $F_{(2,54)} = 199.278$ ). The suggested level of significance of the *F* is thus smaller than the critical .05 level ( $p = .000; \alpha = .05; p < \alpha$ ). Moreover, the partial eta squared which is exploited as a measure of the effect size of the treatments is substantially high ( $\eta_p^2 = .881$ ).

Table 11. *Tests of Within-Subjects Effects of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Three Experimental Sub-Groups*

Measure: MEASURE\_1

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	
Time	Sphericity Assumed	17.052	2	8.526	199.278	.000	.881
	Greenhouse-Geisser	17.052	1.722	9.902	199.278	.000	.881
	Huynh-Feldt	17.052	1.965	8.680	199.278	.000	.881
	Lower-bound	17.052	1.000	17.052	199.278	.000	.881
Time *	Sphericity Assumed	5.314	4	1.329	31.052	.000	.697



Group	Greenhouse-Geisser	5.314	3.444	1.543	31.052	.000	.697
	Huynh-Feldt	5.314	3.929	1.352	31.052	.000	.697
	Lower-bound	5.314	2.000	2.657	31.052	.000	.697
Error (Time)	Sphericity Assumed	2.310	54	.043			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	2.310	46.495	.050			
	Huynh-Feldt	2.310	53.045	.044			
	Lower-bound	2.310	27.000	.086			

Table 12. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects of the Pretest, Midterm and Posttest of the Three Experimental Sub-Groups

Measure: MEASURE\_1

Transformed Variable: Average

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	25330.250	1	25330.250	4168.940	.000	.994
Group	8.725	2	4.363	.718	.497	.051
Error	164.051	27	6.076			

The table of the between-subjects effects (Table 12), on the other hand, proves that the difference observed in the patterns of improvement of the members of the experimental sub-groups (Table 9) are not statistically meaningful. In other words, there is no considerable difference between the treatment techniques exploited in the treatment sessions. No matter what the treatment technique was, the subjects have managed to significantly improve their agreement and disagreement structures while speaking. The F reflecting the difference between the sub-groups has a level of significance much bigger than the .05 standard level ( $F(2,27) = .718$ ;  $p = .497$ ;  $\alpha = .05$ ;  $p > \alpha$ ). Moreover, the measure of effect size of the difference between the groups is very weak ( $\eta^2 = .051$ ).

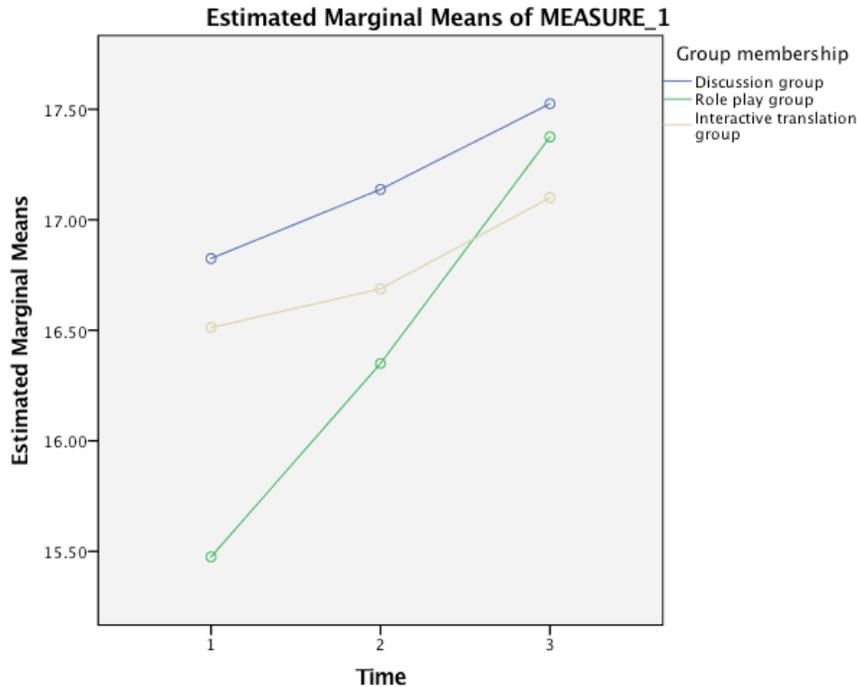


Figure 4. Improvement of the Experimental Sub-Groups Members' Speaking Scores

Figure 4 visually depicts the difference between the effects of the treatment techniques. The applied consciousness raising techniques (i.e. discussion, role play or interactive translation) are all positively effective; however, the members of the role play sub-group seem to have enjoyed more improvement. This difference is not proven statistically significant, though.

Tables 9 through 12 and Figure 4 prove that the three techniques employed in the treatment sessions are positively effective and there is no significant difference between their effects. As a result, the second null hypothesis proposed by the researcher which reads “there is no difference between the effect of consciousness raising instruction through discussion, role play or interactive translation on pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners’ speaking performance” is not rejected.

## Conclusions

This study set out the quasi experimental research applying pretest posttest design in order to investigate the effect of consciousness raising instruction on the pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing of Iranian EFL Upper intermediate learners in speaking performance.

According to the first null hypothesis is verified through comparison of the test scores within and between the groups (Tables 1 through 8 and Figures 1, 2 and 3). Finally the effect of the three treatment techniques are compared with each other and the second hypothesis is verified (Tables 9 to 12 and Figure 4).

According to the results provided in Table 1 through 16 and Figure 1, consciousness raising instruction causes a statistically considerable improvement in Iranian EFL learners’ application of agreement and disagreement structures while speaking. Meanwhile, Tables



4 and 5, 6 and Figure 2 suggest that the placebo provided in the control group causes an improvement in the scores but the improvement is not statistically meaningful. Tables 20 and 21 and Figure 3, on the other hand, prove insignificance of the difference between the experimental and control groups. As a result, the first null hypothesis of the present study which is consciousness raising instruction does not have any effect on pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in Iranian Upper intermediate EFL learners in speaking performance is rejected.

Tables 10 through 12 and Figure 4 prove that the three techniques employed in the treatment sessions are positively effective and there is no significance difference between their effects. As a result, the second null hypothesis proposed by the researcher which reads there is no difference between the effect of consciousness raising instruction through discussion, role play, or interactive translation on pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in Iranian Upper intermediate EFL learners in speaking performance is not rejected.

In doing any research, there exist a growing number of restrictions or deficiencies which can be overcome in subsequent studies. Further research would show if the effect of consciousness raising instruction on the pragmatic development of agreeing and disagreeing in speaking performance remains the same in other context or levels. Some of the suggestions for further research include:

1) There is a need for further studies not only in the area of speaking performance, but also in all other language skills and sub -skills. Since this study was limited to speaking performance, further studies on the effect of consciousness raising instruction on the other language skills and components are needed.

2) Another study can be conducted with learners of different proficiency levels to better define the significance of consciousness raising instruction in the process of learning.

3) Similar studies can be done to compare the effect of consciousness raising instruction among learners of different age groups.

4) Another study can be conducted with the effect of consciousness raising instruction on the other different dependent variables.

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