



## **The Effect of Consciousness-raising Method through Video on Iranian EFL Learners' Cultural Awareness: The Case of Complaint and Compliment Speech Acts**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to investigate the effect of consciousness-raising method through video on EFL learners' cultural awareness of speech acts of complaint and compliment. To this end, the data were gathered from 32 Iranian EFL learners. The data were elicited through a personal information form and a DCT through which the participants were asked to answer imaginative situations including complaint- and compliment-required situations through pretest and posttest. The DCT data were examined to see to what extent the formal teaching of the two speech acts affects the socio-pragmatic awareness of Iranian EFL learners. To do this, first the two groups were given an OPT to ensure the homogeneity, then the groups were administered the pretest, after that the participants in experimental group (EG) received the instruction focusing on the two speech acts and the participants in control group (CG) received placebo instruction, and finally all the two groups were given the posttest. Findings showed that Iranian EFL learners in EG performed better after receiving formal instruction through video clips. Findings of this study can be used by language teachers, learners, and curriculum developers.

**Keywords:** cultural awareness, consciousness-raising, speech acts, video

### **INTRODUCTION**

In a rapidly changing world where monolithic cultures are almost becoming a myth, English as an international language has become instrumental as a medium of communication and interaction between various cultural groups across real and virtual borders. Thus, the development of intercultural and intracultural skills using English has become more than desirable. It is, therefore, necessary that ESL teachers, viewed as cultural mediators (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996), pay attention to intercultural and/or

intracultural knowledge and awareness of cultural stereotyping, as they develop in their students unbiased attitudes toward their own culture and the cultures they are learning about. Cultural awareness has become an important focus of modern language learning/teaching, a shift that reflects a greater awareness of the inseparability of language and culture, and the need to prepare students for intercultural communication (Fenner, 2008).

Thus, the need for a strong commitment to the development of cultural understanding within the classroom context is clear in the light of recent development both nationally and internationally. Strasheim (1981) argued that there is no question that the successful integration of culture and language teaching can contribute significantly to general human knowledge, that language ability and cultural sensitivity can play a vital role in the security, defense, and economic well-being of the country, and that global understanding ought to be a mandatory component of basic education (Strasheim, 1981; cited in Hadley, 1993).

The importance of developing intercultural communicative competence alongside linguistic competence has resulted from the learners' needs for acquiring intercultural skills for cross-cultural communication in which they may encounter linguistic and cultural barriers. Teaching from an intercultural perspective involves developing in learners' critical cultural awareness of their own culturally-shaped world view and behaviors as well as the skills and attitudes to understand and successfully interact with people from other cultures, that is, to become interculturally as well as linguistically competent. EFL teachers, therefore, need to shift from a traditional stance to an intercultural one to develop both linguistic and intercultural competences of learners.

As language and culture are deeply intertwined with each other, and language is the vehicle of cultural manifestation, it is natural that the same words represent different notions and cultural values in different languages. Unfortunately, educational programs offered to Iranian EFL learners less often contain real-life and authentic cultural data about English-speaking people. Many instructors in language institutes intend to neglect aspects related to target culture to avoid conflict between the students' native culture and the target culture or to preserve their own so-called valued culture from the probable hazards of the negative aspects of the target culture. This leads, then, to intercultural misunderstanding once coming across odd cultural situations (Yu, 2006). Considering all these shortcomings, as Birjandi and Derakhshan (2014) argued, the video medium as a teaching and learning tool has some distinct advantages over naturalistic observations and textbooks, and regarding the fact that, to the best of our knowledge, few studies have empirically scrutinized the effectiveness of video prompts on the development of speech acts. So, it makes sense to bridge the gap by conducting a study on the effectiveness of consciousness-raising video-driven method on the development of two speech acts of compliment and complaint in a foreign language classroom.

In order to investigate the possible contributions of different kinds of input, video extracts and CR tasks were used in the context of classroom-based instruction to

develop L2 cultural awareness. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of consciousness-raising video-driven extracts on the development of two speech acts of complaint, and compliment by focusing on this specific question:

Does consciousness-raising method through video have any significant effect on EFL learners' cultural awareness of speech acts of complaint and compliment?

In line with the aforementioned research question, the following null hypothesis is formulated.

H<sub>0</sub>: Consciousness-raising video-driven method does not have any significant effect on EFL learners' cultural awareness of speech acts of complaint and compliment.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

To make it easy to understand the bases of this research, it is necessary to define three important terms: (a) cultural awareness, (b) consciousness-raising, and (c) speech acts. Then, some previous research studies will be put forward.

As the first key term, teaching from an intercultural perspective involves developing in learners' critical cultural awareness of their own culturally-shaped world view and behaviors as well as the skills and attitudes to understand and successfully interact with people from other cultures, that is, to become interculturally as well as linguistically competent. Cultural awareness involves:

A gradually developing inner sense of the equality of cultures, an increased understanding of your own and other people's cultures, and a positive interest in how cultures both connect and differ. (Tomlinson, 2001, cited in Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2004, p. 3)

Consequently, an increased cultural awareness helps learners broaden the mind, increase tolerance (Tomlinson, 2001) and achieve cultural empathy and sensitivity (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2004). According to Tomalin and Stempleski (1993), cultural awareness encompasses three qualities: (a) awareness of one's own culturally-induced behavior, (b) awareness of the culturally-induced behavior of others, and (c) ability to explain one's own cultural standpoint.

Ellis (2002) defined consciousness-raising (CR) as an intentional endeavor to draw learners' attention to specific grammatical features of a language which worked as a potential facilitator in improving learners' competence. CR is used as a superordinate term to talk about a variety of instructional techniques differing from each other in terms of degrees of elaboration and explicitness. Giving a rule of thumb or linguistic rule, the use of typographical conventions and increasing the frequency of a feature in discourse are examples of CR.

Pragmatic goals include having a cultural component which helps students to communicate successfully with other speakers of the target culture using the target language; helping to eliminate the notions of negative interference and transfer of

stereotypes about the target culture, helping students socialize with other speakers of the language, both native and non-native; helping arouse students' motivation and interest in the foreign language as they "relate the often abstract sounds and forms of a foreign language to real people and places" (Fenner, 2008, p. 4); and helping prepare learners for the future by reducing the element of culture shock for students who go to study abroad.

While developing cultural awareness in the EFL classroom it should be kept in mind that the native language is learned along with the ways and attitudes of the social group, and these ways and attitudes find expression through the social group. Learning to understand a foreign culture should help students of another language to use words and expressions more skillfully and authentically; to understand levels of language that is situational appropriate; to act naturally with persons of the other culture, while recognizing and accepting their different reactions, and to help speakers of other tongues feel at home in the students' own culture. While most learners indeed find positive benefits in cross-cultural living on learning experiences, nevertheless a number of people experience certain psychological blocks and other inhibiting effects of the second culture.

Teachers can help students to turn such an experience into one of increased cultural and self-awareness. It is possible that learners can feel alienation in the process of learning a foreign language, alienation from people in their home culture, the target culture, and from themselves. In teaching foreign language, we need to be sensitive to the fragility of students by using techniques that promote cultural understanding.

On the other hand, we have the idea of consciousness raising which has always helped language teachers in different aspects of language teaching. Due to the enormity and complexity of language, the provision of a viable and comprehensive description of language as a whole is simply not feasible. Considering the regularities and discernible patterns residing in English, EFL teachers can, nevertheless, provide learners with precise guidelines and, more specifically, with activities which encourage them to reflect on samples of language. These samples should highlight such patterns and regularities so as to help learners reach their own conclusions regarding how language is used (Willis & Willis, 1996). Activities of this type are generally referred to as consciousness-raising (CR) and have been a component of language teaching for quite a long time. Ellis (1997, p. 16) defines a CR task as "a pedagogic activity where the learners are provided with L2 data in some form and required to perform some operation on or with it, the purpose of which is to arrive at an explicit understanding of some linguistic property or properties of the target language".

As a domain within L2 studies, pragmatics is usually referred to as interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), as analogy with IL grammar, IL phonology, and IL lexicon (Kasper & Rose, 2002). ILP is a second-generation hybrid (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). It belongs to two different disciplines, both of which are interdisciplinary. On one hand, as a branch of SLA research, two sections within the wider domain of ILP are distinguished. As the study of L2 use, ILP examines how NNSs comprehend and produce action in the

L2. As the study of L2 learning, ILP investigates how L2 learners develop the ability to understand and perform action in the L2 (Kasper & Rose, 2002). On the other hand, as a subset of pragmatics, ILP is a sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, or simply linguistic enterprise, depending on how one defines the scope of pragmatics (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993). Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993, p. 3) define ILP as “the study of NNSs’ use and acquisition of linguistic action patterns in a second language.” They also offer a broader definition of ILP.

Over the past two decades, a great deal of research (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989; Beebe et al., 1990) has been done in cross-cultural pragmatics (CCP) and ILP. CCP is a well-recognized subfield of pragmatics, which stresses similarity and difference in pragmatic strategies between, at least, two languages and/or cultures. According to Kasper and Schmidt (1996), the CCP approach is comparative, focusing on the cross-cultural similarities and differences in the linguistic realization and the sociopragmatic judgment in contexts (p. 152). Kasper (1998) defined ILP as “acquisitional, having to do with NNSs’ comprehension and production of speech acts, and how their L2-related speech act knowledge is acquired” (p. 216).

Salmani-Nodoushan (2006) carried out a study to see if Persian ostensible and genuine invitations could be distinguished by the same features and properties mentioned by Clark and Isaacs (1990). Forty-five field workers observed and reported 566 ostensible and 607 genuine invitations. In addition, he interviewed 34 undergraduate students and gathered 68 ostensible and 68 genuine invitations. He also interviewed 41 pairs of friends and afforded 41 ostensible invitations. Research findings revealed that Persian ostensible invitations can also be distinguished from Persian genuine invitations by the features and properties identified by Clark and Isaacs.

Afghari (2007) investigated the range of strategies used in performing the speech act of apologizing in Persian. Also explored in his study was the investigation of the effect of the values assigned to the two context-external variables of social distance and social dominance on the frequency of the apology intensifiers. To do so, he used DCT to collect Persian apologetic utterances. The findings of his study showed that Persian apologies are as formulaic in pragmatic structures. Also, the values assigned to the two context-external variables were found to have significant effect on the frequency of the intensifiers in different situations.

Ghobadi and Fahim (2009) studied the effect of explicit teaching of English “thanking formulas” on Persian EFL intermediate level students at English language institutes. They found out that that explicit instruction had an impressively positive effect on raising students’ sociopragmatic awareness as well as their hindrance of L1 pragmalinguistic transfer to L2. They compared the level of English proficiency and age of the learners involved in study to their own study and concluded that younger students possessing lower levels of grammatical and sociolinguistic competence in the second language need explicit instruction both on sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic preferences of the NSs.

Li (2010) contrasted the syntactic forms and pragmatic strategies adopted by Cantonese students in making suggestions in English (their L2) with Australian students. In terms of syntactic forms, the study found that in comparison with Australian students, Cantonese students in their L2 adopt fewer syntactic types in making suggestions. In addition, their suggestions are less likely to be embedded in elliptical or complex sentences but more likely to be preceded by textual themes and interpersonal metaphors. In terms of pragmatic strategies, Cantonese students resembled Australian students in their choices of perspective, directness and politeness in general. However, they showed significant differences in their choices of suggestion strategies.

Shariati and Chamani (2010) investigated the frequency, combination, and sequential position of apology strategies in Persian. They used a corpus of 500 naturally-occurring apology exchanges, collected through an ethnographic method of observation. The results of their study indicated that explicit expression of apology with a request for forgiveness (bebaxs'id) was the most common apology strategy in Persian. The aforementioned strategy together with acknowledgement of responsibility formed the most frequent combination of apology strategies in this language. The same set of apology strategies used in other investigated languages was common in Persian; however, preferences for using these strategies appeared to be culture-specific.

Although the literature on learners' cultural awareness of speech acts is abundant, most of the studies, as mentioned before, have been conducted between English and such languages as Japanese, Chinese, Mexican, and so on. Moreover, Persian researchers have contrasted English and Persian speech acts such as apology (Afghari, 2007; Shariati & Chamani, 2010), thanking (Ghobadi & Fahim, 2009), and invitations (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2006). As far as the present researcher's knowledge is concerned, however, no systematic study has been done to compare the speech act of complaint, and Compliment. Therefore, the researcher intends to fill this gap in the literature. In order to investigate the possible contributions of different kinds of input, video extracts and CR tasks are used in the context of classroom-based instruction to the development of L2 cultural awareness. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of consciousness-raising video-driven extracts on the development of two speech acts of complaint, and compliment.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research design**

The design of the study is quasi-experimental in that it enjoys the main characteristics of experimental studies including being quantitative in nature, using a comparative approach, and undergoing treatment. There were two groups in this study; an experimental group (EG) and a control group (CG). Prior to the treatment, an OPT and a pretest were administered to all Iranian participants in the two groups in order to ensure the homogeneity of the groups in terms of their cultural awareness and general proficiency level. The EG received treatment (i.e., a course on teaching speech acts of

complaint and compliment through video-clips), and the CG had placebo. After the termination of the course for EG, both EG and CG were post-tested.

## Participants

The purposive and convenient sampling was used in this study; purposive in the sense that only upper-intermediate EFL learners were recruited, and convenient in the sense that the participants were two intact classes. The participants in this study were in two groups. It is necessary to mention that the participants voluntarily participated in this study.

The total number of participants was 32. The participants were adult Iranian EFL learners from two genders studying English at an English Language Institute. Two groups of upper-intermediate EFL learners were divided into the EG (n=15) being taught through video extracts as their treatment, and CG (n=17) with no special emphasis on the pragmatic aspects. None of the participants had any living experiences in English-speaking countries.

The first group of participants was 15 EFL learners, voluntarily selected. Their age range was from 20 to 30 and average age of 26.3. After selecting the sample, in order to make certain that language proficiency of the CG is homogenous with the EG, the OPT was administered. They were tested and compared to the EG to see whether or not cultural awareness develops after receiving the treatment by the EG. Additionally, they were compared to the comparison group to see if there was any difference in cultural awareness based on the pretest.

And the second group of the participants who took part in the study was the participants of the CG who were Iranian EFL learners. A total number of 17 learners were voluntarily selected. Their age varied from 20 to 31 and average age of 26.5. After selecting the sample, to ascertain that learners in this group are homogenous, the OPT was administered. They were also given both the pretest and posttest of cultural awareness at the beginning and end of the treatment of EG.

## Instruments

In this study, in addition to the OPT, the pretest and posttest were used to evaluate cultural awareness of Iranian EFL learners. The OPT was administered to measure the level of the participants' general English knowledge and examine the homogeneity between the EG and CG. Additionally, some video clips were applied to teach the intended cultural awareness to the EG. Cultural awareness in this study was investigated using one type of test: comprehension (multiple-choice) (See Appendices B and C, respectively).

### *Oxford Placement Test (OPT)*

The first test was the OPT (devised by Allen, 2004) to assess the learners' degree of homogeneity prior to the study. The OPT has two sections: Section One is on grammar

with 100 multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank questions and Section Two is on testing learners' listening comprehension with 100 questions. For the present study, the learners were only given the first part which is on grammar because this part is a paper-and-pencil test, the same as the pretest and posttest for merely evaluating learners' grammatical knowledge as an index of their linguistic knowledge.

### ***Pretest***

The second test was the researcher-made pretest, contrived especially to evaluate the participants' cultural awareness, in comprehending appropriate language. The Culture-awareness Diagnostic Test (CADT) was designed prior to the treatment to provide insights into the level of culture awareness students have about English-speaking people, also to assess students' foreign culture needs and the main sources of information students use to learn about the English-speaking people's culture. It consists of 50 items in two parts: (a) Part One: In this part, students were required to rate their choices on a true-false response with 30 items. These 30 items incorporated 10 dimensions including introduction and greeting, verbal communication skills, daily lifestyle, social behaviors, personal relationships, family values, history and politics, education, non-verbal communication skills, and finally cultural conflict and adjustment, and (b) Part Two: This is a multiple-choice test composed of 20 hypothetical situations (regarding the two speech acts) to which students are supposed to decide, if they know, how ENSs react to such situations.

This test had one part pertained to the comprehension of culturally appropriate language regarding the two speech acts. The first part required the participants to read some incomplete statements and fill in the blanks and write the answers in the answer sheet, using suitable culturally appropriate language to test their English cultural awareness in production of the two speech acts. This part of the test required the participants to choose some culturally appropriate language sentences from among prepared choices. The number of the items devised from each of the sections of the video clips was almost equal. From almost every unit of video clips, one item was devised and assigned to the pretest so that every unit had at least one item. The total reliability of the pretest was calculated through the use of Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula. The estimated total reliability for the pretest was proved to be 0.75. To prepare a test of sound face and content validity, the researcher tried her best. The time allocated for each multiple-choice item was 90 seconds so that all participants could try all the items, and 60 seconds for each true-false response. The scoring procedure was an objective type, for multiple-choice and true-false response items, that is, the rater's own judgment had no effect on the score, based on the answers given by the native participants.

### ***Posttest***

The third test, the posttest, was an achievement test devised by the researcher, and was administered after instruction to measure the participants' culture awareness competence. At the end of the course for EG, the other Culture-Awareness checklist was



used to determine the students' cultural-awareness and the learning gains after treatment as the posttest. It incorporates the two named speech acts items or situations to be chosen and/or completed by language learners in various forms of multiple-choice tests and Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT) (posttest). Therefore, students participating in this course were given a pre- and post-test composed of a multiple-choice video element. To limit test effect, the DCT was administered first, with the students answering one question per speech act. In addition, a group of American students were used to provide the baseline for the study (validity of the checklists to be proven). Both sections of multiple-choice were designed merely to elicit student meta-awareness of particular speech acts. The DCT, on the other hand is designed to have students use their meta-pragmatic knowledge to produce specific speech acts within various contexts.

The total reliability of the posttest was calculated through the use of Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula. The estimated reliability for the posttest was proved to be 0.73. In order to prepare a test of sound face and content validity, the researcher did her best. The time allocated for each item was the same as that for the pretest items. So that all participants could try all the items. The scoring procedure was objective, that is, rater's own judgment had no effect on the participants' score. It should be remembered that the posttest was a discrete point test type, which examines only one linguistic trait (here, culture awareness competence with a sheer focus on speech acts of complaint and complement).

### **Data collection procedure**

This study was designed through a pre-test/post-test procedure prior to treatment and after treatment phase for its experimental group and the phase for control group, applying cultural-awareness checklists. In the first step, the OPT was given to the 32 participants for the sake of the reliability of the study and to be sure that all are in upper-intermediate level equally. Then, there was the Culture-awareness Diagnostic Test (CADT) which was administered prior to the treatment. After that, the participants in the EG, unlike the control group which received a normal conversational treatment (as we normally do in EFL classrooms, not focusing on the two speech acts under investigation) were exposed to vignettes extracted from different episodes of TV Series or TV Shows. They received 20 video excerpts, 10 compliments and 10 complaints in 45-minute sessions of instruction on the video prompts twice a week during a 10-week period. The major objective of these vignettes was to make students aware of the cultural aspects involved in expressing complaint and/or compliment.

In addition, in each session the objectives of lesson were planned to be taught in a three-step procedure, including preparation, presentation, and production. The participants were exposed to the objectives in preparation step, then some comprehension check question (CCQ) were asked regarding the pragmatic and cultural aspects in order to have some clarifications. The two other following steps included many controlled and free practice for the participants. And the pragmalinguistic and cultural features were

explicitly highlighted through exposing to the video extracts and numerous consciousness raising tasks.

To this end, the researcher pursued the following steps adopted from Birjandi and Derakhshan (2014): (a) Developing learners' understanding of the importance of cultural features in EFL classrooms by presenting the key elements of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, (b) Raising learners' awareness of the appropriate use of L1 compliment and compliant, (c) Providing explicit information on the pragmalinguistic forms of L2 compliment and compliant, and (d) Discussing the appropriate use of L2 compliment and compliant, e.g., issues of social distance, power and imposition, the speaker's intention, etc.

On the other hand, the control group did not receive any explicit instruction on the use of speech acts. The presentation of the video extracts was followed by comprehension questions, repetition, and vocabulary focus. The pragmalinguistic and cultural features were not brought to the fore. The control group's performance was an indicator to see how the experimental group became aware of the cultural and pragmalinguistic features.

Consequently, the Culture-Awareness checklist in various forms of Multiple-choice tests and Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT) (as posttest) were used to determine the students' cultural awareness and the learning gains after treatment. In conclusion, in the present study the linguistic aspects of L2, the cultural aspects of both L1 & L2, and several analytic aspects (ability to analyze and evaluate speech acts) were taken into account.

For ethical perspective, the participants were assured that their personal information would be kept confidential, and only treated data without referring to their names will be published and the data publication will be anonymous. In addition, they were informed of the fact that they were selected to take part in this research, and the obtained data would be used merely for the sake of research and there will be no effect on their personal life or score. Also, it should be mentioned that other ethical issues such as originality of research and morality were observed.

## **Data analysis**

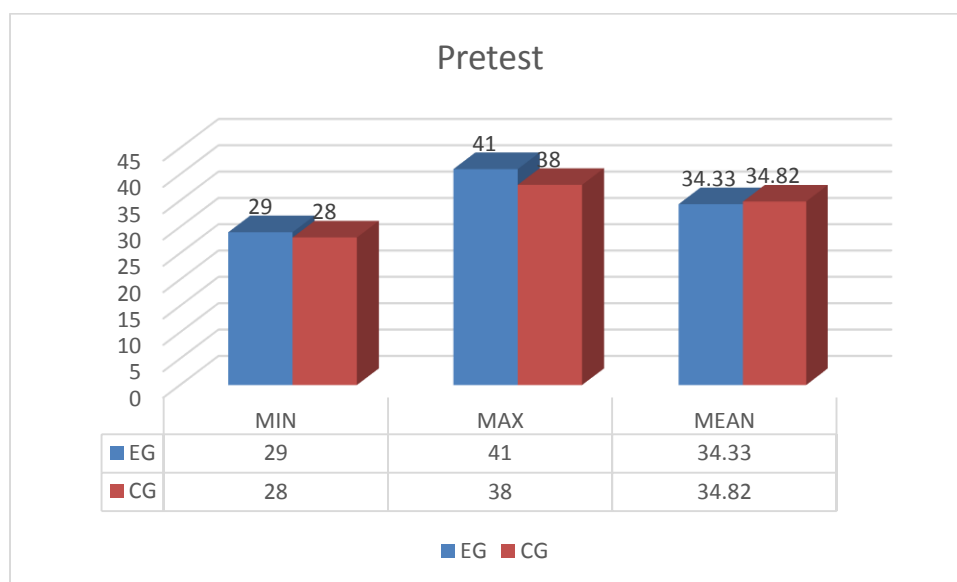
A combination of descriptive and inferential statistics procedures were used to investigate the data collected to answer the research questions. Also, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of these treatments and illustrate any pragmatic development occurred after the treatment, independent and samples t-test was used for repeated measures data. Finally, the data were analyzed using SPSS statistical package, version 20.

## **RESULTS**

To answer the aforementioned question, the data related to the EG and CG were analyzed to find the differences between their pretest and posttest scores.

**Table 1.** Pretest scores for the EG and CG

Group	Number	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Range	Mean	Std. Error	SD*
EG	15	29	41	12	34.33	.838	3.244
CG	17	28	38	10	34.82	.734	3.026
Total	32	28	41	13	34.59	0.546	3.089

**Figure 1.** Pretest results for the EG and CG (separately).

Based on Table 1 and Figure 1, it can be easily understood that the participants in the EG are more heterogeneous than the participants in the CG. Additionally, it can be inferred that the participants in the CG outperformed their counterparts in the EG.

**Table 2.** Independent samples test for the pretest of the EG and CG

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
		Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.006	.937	-.442	30	.662	-.490	1.109	-2.754	1.774
Equal variances not assumed			-.440	28.861	.663	-.490	1.114	-2.768	1.788

As shown in Table 2, since Levene's Test result is significant, that is, we observed  $p < 0.05$ , then we would use the "Equal variances not assumed" output. In t-test for Equality of Means, since  $\alpha = 0.663$  is more than our chosen significance level ( $p = 0.05$ ), we cannot reject the null hypothesis, and therefore, it can be concluded that the mean of pretest scores for the EG and CG are not significantly different from each other. Therefore, keeping in mind the participants' similar mastery level, it is easy to follow up the analysis of data related to the posttest.

**Table 3.** Descriptive statistics of the results of the EG and CG on the pretest and posttest

Test Type	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	SD	Variance
PRETEST CG	17	10.00	28.00	38.00	34.8235	.73382	3.02563	9.154
POSTTEST CG	17	13.75	26.25	40.00	33.6029	.95199	3.92514	15.407
PRETEST EG	15	12.00	29.00	41.00	34.3333	.83761	3.24404	10.524
POSTTEST EG	15	7.50	41.25	48.75	44.3333	.48591	1.88193	3.542
PRETEST CG	17	10.00	28.00	38.00	34.8235	.73382	3.02563	9.154

Based on Table 3, it can be inferred that, although the two groups performed approximately the same in the pretest, they performed much differently in the posttest. To discover whether the difference is statistically significant, paired samples t-test (to prove the intra-group mean difference) and independent t-test (to prove inter-group mean difference) were run.

**Table 4.** Performance of the EG on the pretest and posttest

Test Type	Number	Mean	SD	SEM
Pretest	15	34.3333	3.24404	0.83761
Posttest	15	44.3333	1.88193	0.48591

**Table 5.** Paired samples test of the EG on the pretest and posttest

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	SEM	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pretest & Posttest	-10.000	3.73449	0.96424	-12.06809	-7.93191	-10.371	14	0.00

Tables 4 and 5 showed the result of paired samples for the EG on the pretest and posttest. Considering the results of paired sample t-test (Sig. = 0.00,  $t = 10.371$ ), it can be inferred that there are significant differences between the performance of the EG based on the pretest and posttest (mean was 34.33 and 44.33, respectively). Therefore, the null hypothesis "consciousness-raising method through video does not have any significant effect on EFL learners' cultural awareness of speech acts of complaint and compliment" is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis will be accepted, that is, the lessons that aim to teach the two speech acts of complaint and compliment made positive contributions to the nonnative EFL learners' awareness and success in learning related expressions in the TL. The same statistics were also conducted for the CG.

**Table 6.** Performance of the CG on the Pretest and Posttest

Test Type	Number	Mean	SD	SEM
Pretest	17	34.8235	3.02563	0.73382
Posttest	17	33.6029	3.92514	.95199

**Table 7.** Paired Samples Test of the CG on the Pretest and Posttest

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	SEM	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pretest & Posttest	1.22059	5.61171	1.36104	-1.66469	4.10586	.897	16	0.383

Tables 6 and 7 showed the result of paired samples for the CG on the pretest and posttest. Considering the results of paired sample test (Sig. = 0.383,  $t = 0.897$ ), it can be inferred that there is a not significant difference between the performance of the CG based on the pretest and posttest (before and after the treatment given to the EG).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As the data in this study for the research question showed, the findings obviously confirm this fact that there is a significant difference between the performance of Iranian EFL learners in the experimental group on the pretest and posttest. Considering the results of paired sample t-test (sig. = 0.00,  $t = 10.371$ ), it can be inferred that there are significant differences between the performance of the EG based on the pretest and posttest (before and after the treatment). That is, the lessons that aim to teach the two speech acts of complaint and compliment made positive contributions to the nonnative EFL learners' awareness and success in learning related expressions in the TL. However, considering the results of paired sample t-test (sig. = 0.383,  $t = 0.897$ ), it can be inferred that there is not a significant difference between the performance of the CG based on the pretest and posttest (before and after the treatment given to the EG). Based on the findings for the two groups and comparing them, it can be concluded that the treatment had a significant effect on the performance of the participants in the EG. Although there might be other factors influencing the performance of the two groups, the difference in the performance of the two groups and especially the performance of the EG in the pretest and posttest can mostly be attributed to their receiving treatment in the classroom.

The results of the data analysis and interpretation presented the answers to the questions. This study revealed that Iranian EFL learners in the experimental group outperformed their counterparts after receiving treatment with regard to the two speech acts. This means that, based on the findings, if the learners in ESL and EFL situations are exposed to instruction, their level of mastery will increase whether it be a general issue in language or a specific point like the two speech acts under investigation. Despite the fact that they had already been exposed to formal and informal instruction

of general English (the two speech acts included), Iranian EFL learners' average score on the posttest was higher than their scores on the pretest.

In addition, the results also proved that Iranian EFL learners in the EG outperformed in one speech act than the other, which can be the result of a number of foreseen and unforeseen issues. As the data collected from EG after treatment (based on the posttest scores on the two speech acts) showed, the reason for this is neither Iranian students' incapability in learning the expressions related to one speech act than the other nor their incapability in learning the situations in which either can appropriately be used, but rather it may attributed to other factors such as time limitation, fatigue, the focus on one more than other, prior experience of the teacher or the learners and the like.

The finding in this study can be similar to or dissimilar from the other findings existing in the literature. To make the similarities and differences more clear and understandable, some of other related works will be discussed here. The findings of this study in terms of the first hypothesis is in line with those of Birjandi and Derakhshan (2014) whose results indicated that the routinized nature of speech acts could be utilized in helping learners develop their interlanguage pragmatics. Daikuhara (1986) conducted a study of compliments from a cross-cultural perspective focusing on Japanese vs. American English. The findings proved that while Americans praised their family members in public, the Japanese seldom complimented their spouses, parents, or children as this would be viewed as self-praise. This showed a cross-cultural difference between the two nations.

Terao (1996) in a study concentrated on 901 responses to compliments from TV talks, shows, and authentic conversations, and focused on characteristics of compliment responses in Japanese. Compared to Holmes (1995) (although the taxonomy is slightly different) where acceptance types occurred 60% of the times, acceptance was found less than a third (30%). Rejection was used much more frequently in Japanese (25%) than in English (10%). Nakhle et al., (2014) investigated Complaint Behaviors among Native Speakers of Canadian English, Iranian EFL Learners, and Native Speakers of Persian. The findings revealed that all respondents showed significantly different behaviors to express complaints in the different situations. Moreover, sex and social power were found to cause differential use of complaint utterances.

As language and culture are deeply intertwined with each other, and language is the tool with which cultural issues are manifested, it is natural that some words represent different notions and cultural values in different languages. Unfortunately, programs and curricula offered to instruct Iranian EFL learners less often contain real-life cultural data about English-speaking people. Many English instructors in language institutes and even universities might intentionally or unintentionally ignore cultural aspects of TL to avoid conflict between the students' native culture and the target culture so that this leads to intercultural misunderstanding once coming across odd cultural situations (Yu, 2006).

Considering all these shortcomings, as Birjandi and Derakhshan (2014) argues, the video medium as a teaching and learning tool has some distinct advantages over textbooks, and regarding the fact that, few studies have empirically scrutinized the effectiveness of video prompts on the development of speech acts, it makes sense to bridge the gap by conducting a study on the effectiveness of consciousness-raising video-driven method on the development of two speech acts of compliment and complaint in the English language teaching classrooms.

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