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Developing ESP Learners' Pragmatic Competence

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to

My dear parents for their great support and encouragements

To my brothers and sisters

To all my nearest and dearest

To the sweet "team work"

Acknowledgements

ABSTRACT

In the present study an attempt is made to investigate the possible way of developing ESP learners' pragmatic competence. Being aware of the importance of pragmatic competence in ESP contexts and the seriousness of a pragmatic failure, our aim is to heighten ESP learners' sensitivity to pragmatic features by adopting Judd's model (1999) of teaching speech acts and some tasks that are used to promote pragmatic competence. To achieve this model, questionnaires were administrated to the sample of the study. The questionnaires were used to both determine ESP learners' needs, to test their current pragmatic level, and to measure what they have been learnt from the training phase. Findings of the study showed that ESP learners' lack pragmatic competence and that their competence can be developed *via* an explicit teaching of speech acts and awareness raising activities which draw the learners' attention to what they possess as a free pragmatic knowledge. Additionally, the present study emphasized the importance of building learners' metapragmatic capacity which aids them in analysing the discourse community pragmatic norms. As to assessing pragmatic competence, the current enquiry is based on the basic assumption that the clearer is the purpose of assessment the more this will help in selecting adequate tools for assessing learners' pragmatic abilities. Drawing on these findings, a sample of course in speech acts is designed.

List of Abbreviations

CF: Corrective Feedback.

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching.

CP: Cooperative Principle.

DCT: Discourse Completion Task.

DRPT: Discourse Role-Play Task.

DSAT: Discourse Self-Assessment Task.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

ESP: English for Specific Purposes.

FL: Foreign Language.

L1/ MT: First Language/ Mother Tongue.

MDCT: Multiple-choice Discourse Completion Task.

NA: Needs Analysis.

ODCT: Oral Discourse Completion Task.

RPSA: Role-Play Self Assessment task.

SAs: Speech Act(s).

SL: Second Language.

TL: Target Language.

TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language.

TS: Target Situation.

WDCT: Written Discourse Completion Task.

List of Tables

List of Figures

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Research Background

Chapter Two : Pragmatics for ESP purposes

Chapter One: Research Background

Introduction

1.1 Background

1.2 Statement of purpose

1.3 Rationale

1.4 Statement of the problem

1.5 Methodology

1.6 Limitations of the study

1.7 Structure of the study

1.8 Key concepts

Chapter one: Research Background

Introduction

Developing communicative abilities is the ultimate goal of EFL learners and language teaching in general (Clenell, 1999). That is, language teaching aims mainly to promote learners' ability to communicate appropriately in a given target situation (ibid.). This implies that language teachers need to construct not merely their learners' linguistic knowledge but also their pragmatic competence (Kasper, 1997). This is more noticeable in the case of ESP where learners, particularly foreign learners, are associated with a certain occupational setting and obliged to match those setting norms with an appropriate use of language (McKay, 2002). In fact, the ESP learners' need for the pragmatic competence highly motivated us, as FL learners, to investigate the possible ways that enable them to build their pragmatic competence and to set it as a major concern of this study. The present study adopts the communicative language teaching approach (CLT) as a theoretical framework. In other words, this study considers language as communication and, thus, language learning as the learning of how to communicate appropriately (Littlewood, 1981).

1.1 Background

The launching of the term "communicative competence" by Hymes marked a turning point in the field of language teaching (Brumfit, 1984). Based on his definition, many studies have been carried out to set the communicative competence components (Rose & Kasper, 2001). The widely known division was given by Canale and Swain in 1980 (revised by Canale in 1983) (ibid.). They split communicative competence into four components: Grammatical, Sociolinguistic, Discourse, and Strategic competence (ibid.). Later on, other scholars propose different divisions (Bachman (1990)). In fact, the most debatable component in all these divisions is the pragmatic competence (El-Okda, 2011). Hymes (1971), Canale and Swain (1980) consider pragmatic competence as a part of sociolinguistic competence, whereas Bachman (1990) figures pragmatic competence as a component of communicative competence (ibid.).

Pragmatic competence refers to the learners' ability to employ different linguistic forms appropriately in a given social and cultural context (Usó-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2006b). Thus, pragmatics is the field that studies language by considering the context and the

speaker's intention (Yule, 1996a). There are many themes that are dealt with under pragmatics such as *deixis, reference, politeness* and *speech acts* and the like (ibid.). Indeed, all these themes are needed for building the learners' pragmatic awareness and the success of communication (ibid.). *Speech Act theory*, for instance, investigates ways of performing particular communicative acts appropriately in some social contexts and how to understand what is being communicated between the lines (illocutionary intent) (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). In this regard, Kasper (1997) sees that: *"In order to communicate successfully in a target language, pragmatic competence in L2 must be reasonably well developed."(2)*

Pragmatic competence seems, then, to be necessary for SL and FL learners, particularly for ESP learners who must acquire appropriate social and cultural knowledge of the discourse community to which they belong (Basturkmen, 2006). That is, ESP learners have to be aware of how different communicative acts are performed in a target situation (occupational setting) (ibid.). This fact was proved by many studies conducted in different ESP contexts such as medicine, business, and academic settings (ibid.). For instance, Dudely-Evans and St. John (1998) attempt to show the need of business learners to build their awareness of the different cultural views in performing the pragmatic aspects such as *politeness*. They note that:

> A sensitivity to differences between cultures is necessary
> for successful business communications in matters such as
> the purpose of meetings, the use of direct or indirect
> negotiation tactics, the structuring of information or the
> use of politeness strategies in letters or meetings. (69).

Further, Rudnai and Ferenczy (1992) argue that medical students need to learn rhetorical strategies, that is, the strategies of how to use language effectively in communication such as the *Cooperative Principle* (Leech, 1983), the way they are used by the medical discourse community (Rudnai and Ferenczy cited in Triki, 2002). Hence, they will be able to apply these strategies in a target social occasion (ibid.). They state that *"Teaching ESP to Medical school students involves matching rhetorical strategies to social occasion".* (Rudnai & Ferenczy cited in Triki, 2002:2).

The task of how to develop the pragmatic competence has exercised the mind of language teachers for a long time (Clenell, 1999). In formal terms, such a type of failure

(pragmatic failure) has urged researchers to look for the main reasons that lie behind this lack and to develop an adequate method for teaching the pragmatic aspects (El- Okda, 2011). Hence, even curricula and teaching materials adopt the aim of promoting the learners' pragmatic competence (Rose & Kasper, 2001). Rose and Kasper (2001) express this idea by saying that:

> In many second and foreign language teaching contexts, curricula and materials developed in recent year include strong pragmatic components or even adopt a pragmatic approach as their organizing principles (3).

1.2 Statement of purpose

It is widely agreed that the realization of an effective Needs Analysis and a good understanding of a target situation in the area of ESP entails the consideration of both the target linguistic needs and the professional discourse community norms, that is, the required pragmatic knowledge (Basturkmen, 2006). Hence, the present study aims to search for the reasons of the ESP learners' lack of pragmatic competence and in particular that pertaining to the realization of speech acts and the tasks that can promote this competence. Further, the study investigates how to assess the pragmatic competence of the ESP learners. It is important to note that there are many issues that are dealt with under pragmatics, mainly: *deixis, reference, presupposition, Cooperative Principle, implicature, politeness, cross-cultural pragmatics, interlanguage pragmatics, and speech acts, etc.* (Yule, 1996a).

The present study will have the last theme, *viz.* speech acts as its main focus. More precisely, it attempts to adapt the tasks that are used in teaching/leaning pragmatics within an ESP context. First, it aims to benefit ESP teachers in exploiting these findings and introduce pragmatics in ESP courses. Also, the present study aims to provide ESP learners with tasks which enable them to develop their pragmatic competence in the classroom and through self study and to cope with the discourse community they belong to. Further, it offers a methodology for developing pragmatic competence within the context of ESP instruction.

1.3 Rationale

Studies in language teaching reveal that linguistic competence is not enough for developing the communicative competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003). They show that most breakdowns in communication are due to a lack of pragmatic awareness (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991), notably in ESP where learners should adhere to a set of norms (Clenell, 1991). So, it is clear that pragmatic competence plays an important role in making a learner a good communicator (ibid.). For instance, a FL learner who is able to distinguish between direct and indirect speech act and knows when to use either, can produce and interpret the utterances appropriately and can manage communication easily (Rose, 1999), and so is the case with ESP (Basturkmen, 2006) where learners should acquire the pragmatic abilities to perform well in the target situation (ibid.).

The crucial role that pragmatic competence plays in helping ESP learners to join the discourse community which they belong to (McKay, 2002) and the serious communication problems that ESP learners face lead us to investigate possible ways to develop their pragmatic competence mainly in the case of speech acts.

1.4 Statement of the problem

How to build pragmatic competence must be the main question that should be asked in the ESP learners' minds as pragmatic competence is crucial in building good communicative abilities (Clenell, 1999). Thus, as a problematic, this study sets forward the following questions:

- ➢ Is pragmatics relevant to ESP?
- ➢ What are the main causes of ESP learners' lack of pragmatic competence mainly that related to speech act (SA) items?
- ➢ To what extent can ESP learners' pragmatic competence and speech act, in particular, be developed?
- ➢ How can ESP learners develop their pragmatic competence? What are the tasks that are to be devised to achieve this purpose?
- ➢ How can pragmatic competence be assessed?

1.5 Methodology

To find an adequate answer to the above questions, the study adopts a questionnaire as a technique of collecting data. This technique will be used to collect data from 12 undergraduate learners studying agriculture at the University of Ouargla.

Concerning the methodology, the issue of teaching pragmatics to ESP learners involves mainly three major procedures (following Judd, 1999). The first one refers to the analysis of the ESP learners' pragmatic needs (mainly speech acts needs). The second procedure is concerned with the supplying of the linguistic forms which are required for the performance of the selected speech acts. The final procedure is about the presentation of the sociolinguistic factors that determine the choice of linguistic form. Finally, the assessment of the ESP learners' pragmatic competence will be mainly based on the two last procedures (following Cohen, 1996).

1.6 Limitations of the study

In conducting the study, we faced some problems. The main difficulty is in keeping the number of the selected sample constant during the study. Another problem that faced the work is the administrative constraints such as getting permission for accomplishing the experiment. In addition, the time allotted to the achievement of the work is limited.

1.7 Structure of the study

The present inquiry is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, Research background, we define the framework of the present work, that is, its purpose, rationale, methodology, etc. The second chapter is devoted to the definition of pragmatics in general and pragmatic competence. Further, it identifies some of the themes that fall under the field of pragmatics *viz.* Speech Act theory which is the concern of the current work. The chapter also accounts for the relevance of pragmatics in the teaching of ESP.

The third chapter accounts for the lack of pragmatic competence, mainly pragmatic failure and its main cause. Additionally, it discusses the issue of teaching pragmatics through reviewing some tasks that are likely to promote pragmatic competence. Further, the chapter sheds light on how to assess pragmatic competence in an ESP context. The final chapter reviews the steps of conducting the experiment as well as its results and the interpretation of these results.

1.8 Key concepts

Communicative acts: are actions people perform through language (speech acts) (Kasper, 1997). Kasper (1997) argues that the term 'communicative act' is more general than 'speech act'. Communicative act is neutral, that is, between spoken and written mode and it may include even a non-verbal action (ibid.).

Communicative competence: is the knowledge of language rules, and how these rules are used to understand and produce appropriate language in a variety of sociocultural settings. (Hedge, 2000)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): is an approach that aims to promote the learners' communicative competence (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). That is, it looks for building the learners' ability to communicate appropriately and effectively through encouraging them to communicate (ibid.). CLT teaches linguistic knowledge from difficulties in communication (ibid.). Thus, it considers errors as a sign of learning (Littlewood, 1981).

Direct speech act: is the act of expressing the illocutionary intent such as 'apologizing' in an utterance explicitly (Searle, 1975). That is, the illocutionary intent is the literal meaning of the utterance (ibid.). E.g. "I'm sorry", "Excuse me" (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991: 156).

Discourse community: refers to "a particular group of people who are brought together for specific purposes" (McKay, 2002: 99).

Discourse competence: refers to the ability to understand and produce contextualized stretches of language in spoken or written texts. (Hedge, 2000)

Grammatical competence: knowledge of language itself, its form and meaning (Hedge, 2000). It is called also 'linguistic competence' (ibid.).

Illocutionary intent /force: is the intended meaning of an utterance (Cohen, 1996). An utterance can have different illocutionary intents (ibid.). For instance, the utterance *"what time is it?"* (McKay, 2002: 132) may be a sign of 'opening conversation' or a 'request of leaving' or 'asking for information' (ibid.).

Indirect speech act: refers to the case where illocutionary intent is performed implicitly (Searle, 1975). E.g. the question "can you speak a little louder" (Brown & Yule, 1983:232) can be used to perform a 'request'.

Pragmatic awareness: is to be knowledgeable about the way language is used in relation to its siocultural context (Hedge, 2000)

Pragmatic failure: it is the misunderstanding of the speaker's intention by focusing on the literal meaning of an utterance (Thomas (1983) cited in Rose, 1999). Also, it refers to the inappropriate use of language (ibid.).

Pragmatic fluency: it is the extent to which the speaker contributes effectively, politely, etc. in communication (Kasper, 1997)

Sociolinguistic competence: the ability to use language in ways appropriate to the contexts of use, role relationship, and communicative purposes (Hedge, 2000)

Strategic competence: refers to "how to cope in an authentic communicative situation and how to keep communicative channel open" (Canale and Swain (1980) cited in Hedge, 2000).

Target situation: it is the occupational context where learner is supposed to use language appropriately to join the discourse community (McKay, 2002).

Universal pragmatics: it is the pragmatic knowledge which is known by all communities (Kasper, 1997). For instance all people know that there are turns in conversation. (ibid.).

Chapter Two : Pragmatics for ESP purposes

Introduction

2.1 Definition of Pragmatics

2.2 Pragmatic competence

2.3 Aspects of Pragmatic competence

2.4 Speech Act theory

    2.4.1 Classification of speech acts

    2.4.2 Direct and indirect speech acts

    2.4.3 Speech act set and speech event

    2.4.4 Felicity conditions

2.5 Pragmatics and ESP

    2.5.1 Definition of ESP

    2.5.2 Pragmatics in ESP

    2.5.3 Speech acts and ESP

Conclusion

Chapter two: Pragmatics for ESP purposes.

Introduction

A successful interaction involves more than mastering the linguistic forms, that is, language usage, but also their appropriate use in different social contexts (language use) (Hinkel, 1999). The claim of considering the social aspects of language appeared mainly with the work of Dell Hymes and John Gumperz in the 1960s and 1970s (ethnography of speaking), and the work of philosophers John Austin and Searle in the 1950s and 1960s (ibid.). With the rise of studying language in its social context, pragmatics has emerged by the late 1970s as a subfield of linguistics which accounts for how speakers use language in communication (Liu, S., 2010). Simultaneously, ESP as a recent field was concerned with the investigation of how a given discourse community performs communicative acts in different social contexts (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

This present chapter provides information about pragmatics in general, its definition and the definition of the concept of "pragmatic competence". Also, it accounts for the themes that fall under the field of pragmatics. Since the present study is concerned mainly with *speech act*, we will explain its theory, classifications, and the main concepts that are dealt with in this area of study on one hand. On the other hand, we will account for the term of "ESP" and its relation with pragmatics and speech acts.

2.1 Definition of pragmatics

Pragmatics has been the subject of many definitions (El-Okda, 2011). The commonly oldest one is that by Charles Morris (1938) who defines pragmatics as *"the relation of signs to their users."*(Charles Morris cited in Akmajian *et al*., 2001:361). That is, pragmatics is an area of knowledge that deals with the systematic relations that exist between linguistic forms and the language users' intention and social setting (Brown & Levinson (1987) cited in Yule (1996a), Yule, 1996a). On this point, Leech (1983) claims that pragmatics is defined from a philosophical perspective yet it needs to be viewed from a linguistic one.

Pragmatics knew other definitions that match this goal (Leech, 1983). For Leech (1983), pragmatics is the study of meaning in speech situation. In other words, pragmatics accounts for the meaning of communicative actions in a certain situation (ibid.). So, as Leech

(1983) puts it: *"I shall redefine pragmatics for the purposes of linguistics, as the study of meaning in relation to speech situations"* (6). Moreover, pragmatics is concerned with the study of how people produce and comprehend a certain linguistic action in a particular context (Kasper, 1993 cited in Echeverria Castillo, 2009). For instance, it is pragmatics which explains why people 'apologize' using "Excuse me" in a certain context and not using "sorry" (Cohen, 1996). So, as McCarthy (2001) notes, pragmatics studies how communicative actions acquire meaning in a particular context.

It is worth noting that context is an important element in the definition of pragmatics (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; El-Okda, 2011). Context is so vast that it comprises the linguistic context such as the choice of words, as well as the sociocultural context such as the relationship between participants (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). In this regard, Crystal (1997) identifies context in the definition of pragmatics as all that concern the users' performance, that is, users' context (Crystal cited in Rose & Kasper, 2001). He defines pragmatics as the discipline that studies language from the part of its users (ibid.). In other words, it focuses on the users' choice of words in communicating a particular act, on the barriers that the users face, and on the acts' effect on the listeners (ibid.). In Crystal's words (1997), pragmatics is

> The study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication. (Crystal (1997) qtd. in Rose & Kasper, 2001:2)

We adopt Crystal's definition in the present study as it reflects the focus of the present work which is the searching for the limitations that face ESP learners as users of language and for the possible ways that can help developing their pragmatic competence. Thus, the current study refers to pragmatics as an area of study that studies language as utilized and understood by its users in different contexts of communication (Yule, 1996a; Rose & Kasper, 2001; Crystal cited in Rose & Kasper, 2001; Liu, S., 2010).
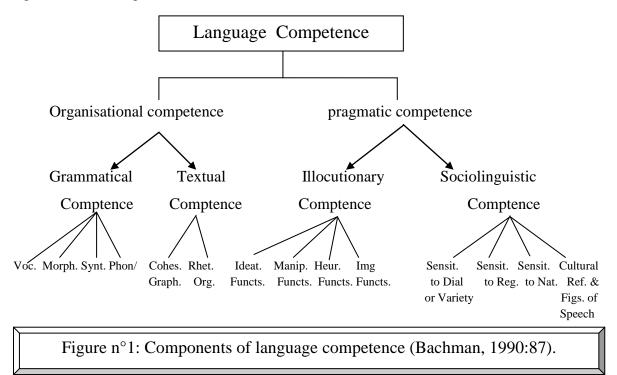
2.2 Pragmatic competence

After providing some definitions of pragmatics, it is high time to highlight what is meant by pragmatic competence. It is widely agreed that the pragmatic competence is a component of communicative competence (Rose & Kasper, 2001). The latter was suggested by Hymes (1971) as a representative of *"rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless"* (Hymes cited in Brumfit, 1984:25). That is, it is a set of rules that should be added to grammar rules to build an effective utterance. Aiming to enlarge the scope of communicative competence, many models were constructed (Rose & Kasper, 2001). Though pragmatic competence did not figure as a component of communicative competence, it was always considered as a major element in the framework of communicative competence (El-Okda, 2011). Among these models was the one by Canale and Swain (1980) which divided communicative competence into three sub- competencies: "linguistic competence" or the mastery of language levels (syntax, phonology, and lexical) (Hoa Hip, 2005), "sociolinguistic competence", that is, the ability of using grammatical utterance appropriately (ibid.), and "strategic competence" or the ability to compensate for limitation in L2 linguistic background or communicative strategies (Saville-Troike, 2006). Later, Canale (1983) adjusted the framework of communicative competence to include "discourse competence" (ibid.) as the ability to construct and comprehend stretches of language in a context (Hedge, 2000). It can be noticed that in this division pragmatic competence is considered as a component of the sociolinguistic competence under the name of "rules of use" (Rose & Kasper, 2001).

Later on, Bachman (1990) added another component to Canale and Swain's account (Rose & Kasper, 2001). Her model figures pragmatic competence as a component of communicative competence (language competence) (ibid.). Moreover, she split communicative competence into two sub-competencies: organizational and pragmatic competence (Bachman, 1990). The former comprises the knowledge of linguistic competence and the areas that are needed for constructing sentences, that is, vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology/graphology (ibid.). Also, the organizational competence includes the textual competence as the knowledge of how to organize a text and which contains cohesion and rhetorical organization (Bachman, 1990). The latter, pragmatic competence, includes illocutionary competence as the knowledge of how to carry out communicative acts or functions such as the ideational, manipulative, heuristic, and the imaginative functions (ibid.). Further, the sociolinguistic competence is a part of the pragmatic competence (Bachman,

1990). It implies the knowledge of how to perform the communicative acts appropriately in a context, that is, to be able not only to use in each context the appropriate dialects, variety, or registers but also to generate natural utterance and to grasp cultural references and speech figures. (ibid.). (Figure n: 1 below).

Figure n°1: Components of language competence (Bachman, 1990:87).

It seems from Bachman's tree diagram that to use language appropriately and communicatively, one needs formal knowledge (organizational competence) and pragmatic knowledge (Bachman, 1990).

So, for Bachman (1990), to be pragmatically competent means to know that utterances convey a certain meaning (illocutionary competence) which is appropriate to the context in which communication occurs (sociolinguistic competence) (El-Okda, 2011). More precisely, Bachman defines pragmatic competence as *"the knowledge of the components that enable us to relate words and utterances to their meanings, the intentions of language users and relevant characteristics of the language use contexts."*(Bachman cited in El-Okda, 2011:170). Not far from Bachman's view of pragmatic competence, Taylor (1988) identifies it as the ability to communicate appropriately and efficiently the communicative acts (Taylor cited in Ellis, 1997:100). Further, Thomas (1995) claims that pragmatic competence refers also to the ability to understand the illocutionary force of an utterance (Thomas cited in McKay, 2002:7). That is, it is the ability to grasp the speakers' intention or communicative act which is embedded in the utterance (what the speaker wants to perform *via* a given utterance) (ibid.).

It is obvious, from these definitions, that there is a close relation between pragmatic competence and the construction and comprehension of communicative acts (the illocutionary force of an utterance) (Taylor cited in Ellis, 1997; Thomas cited in McKay, 2002). On these premises, Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) point out that pragmatic competence should consider two elements: pragmalinguistics which refers to the resources of linguistic forms needed to convey communicative acts (Leech, 1983; Kasper, 1997; Rose, 1999) and sociopragmatics which signifies *"the social interface of pragmatics"* (Leech, 1983: 10-11). That is, it is the social perception of speakers that determines their performance (Kasper, 1997; Rose, 1999). Sociopragmatics is concerned with appropriate behaviours (ibid.). That is to say, once speakers aim to perform, say, "a request", they choose from the resources a linguistic form that goes with their social perception (Rose & Kasper, 2001). That is, they opt for either a question or an imperative form depending on social power, age, social distance, etc. in performing a request. Hence, the ability to match these two elements together accurately and appropriately in performing and comprehending a communicative act is at the core of pragmatic competence raising (Kasper, 1997).

2.3 Aspects of pragmatic competence

Many aspects are involved into the forming of pragmatic competence and the field of pragmatics (Liu, S., 2010). On this view, a logical place to start in investigating the aspects of pragmatics is to recognize the origin of this field (Yule, 1996a). Moreover, it is known that the studies of language emphasized the formal analysis of its system, that is, the analysis of the relation between the elements of the sentence (ibid.). Linguists tend to remove all the elements that cannot be accounted for by a formal analysis and put them on "pragmatic Wastebasket" (Yule, 1996a). So, pragmatics appeared as a branch that adopted these elements or categories (ibid.). Indeed, unlike the formal analysis, pragmatics analyses these categories by referring to the context and language users (Yule, 1996a). We will report briefly the contents of this wastebasket (pragmatics) which form its aspects. It is worth noting that there is no fixed list of the aspects that are dealt with under pragmatics (ibid.). So, we list them nearly as they are set by Yule (1996a):

2.3.1 Deixis: it refers to the pointing at things through language (Yule, 1996a; Liu, S., 2010). That is, a speaker uses expressions to point at what s/he intends to mean and to draw a clear framework to the communication (ibid.). There are 3 types of deictic expressions:

a) Person deixis: used to point to the speaker (I) or listener (you) (Yule, 1996a). Also, it shows the degree of familiarity between participants (ibid.)

b) Spatial deixis: points to the distance of events from speaker or listener such as "here", "there", or verbs as "go", and "come". (ibid.)

c) Temporal deixis: points to the distance from the current time or from the current reality (Yule, 1996a). For example: "now", "then". (ibid.)

The performance or the interpretation of deictic expressions as a communicative act depends on the context and the speakers' intentions (Yule, 1996a). It means that one should refer to the context to understand what a speaker means by, say, 'there' in an utterance. Let us consider the following example which illustrates the 3 types of deixis:

e.g.: I have called you many times but I think you weren't there. So, I left then.

2.3.2 Reference: Yule (1996b) defines it as the act of using linguistic forms which enable the interpreters to understand something. In other words, the speaker utilizes forms to refer to a certain point which aids the listener to grasp the intended meaning. Referring expressions can have an attributive use (indefinite physical referent, that is, whatever or whoever fits the description of an utterance) or referential use (refers to definite noun phrase) (Yule, 1996a). To understand the two types, notice the following utterance:

> e.g.: *The proteolytic activities of GECs and commercial enzymes were measured in both camel and bovine milk whereas all data were significantly different (P≤0.05). The proteolytic activity of **each of the GECs** was higher than **those** of commercial enzymes in both milks.*(Boudjenah-Haroun,*et al*., 2011: 305)(Emphasis added).

In the above utterance, the phrase '*each of the GECs*' refers to 'the proteolytic activity' of whatever GECs enzyme of camel or bovine, that is, it is GECs enzyme whether it is extracted from aged or younger camel or from a bovine (attributive use)(ibid.). Also, the utterance contains a referential use illustrated by the pronoun "**those**" which refers to 'the proteolytic activity' (ibid.).

For an appropriate inference of referring expressions meaning, the speaker needs to consider the shared knowledge in communicating referring expressions (Yule, 1996a). Also, the listener has to grasp the speaker's intended meaning from the context (ibid.).

2.3.3 Presupposition: implies that the speaker constructs a message based on what s/he assumes that the listener shares or knows (Yule, 1996b). That is, when speaker uses, say, a reference s/he presupposes that listener knows the intended referent (ibid.). There are many types of presupposition (Yule, 1996a). Some of these types are: "existential presupposition" which refers to the guess that something exists such as: your book implies that you have a book (ibid.). "Factive presupposition" suggests that there is a fact (ibid.). For instance, if we say: the teacher does not realize that there is something wrong in the exercise. This implies the fact that a wrong thing exists in the exercise (ibid.). "Lexical presupposition" is another type of presupposition (Yule, 1996a). It represents the use of some words such as: stop, again, etc. which hold a supposition that the action happen before the moment of speaking (ibid.). For example, the following sentence: "the camel is ill again" holds a lexical presupposition that the camel was ill before. So, the inference of presuppositions as well as their use relies on the speaker's assumption (Yule, 1996b).

2.3.4 Cooperative principle (CP): it is a set of criteria set out by Grice (1975) for aiding communicators in co-operating so as to have a successful communication (Yule, 1996a; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). These principles consist of four maxims (called maxims of cooperation) (ibid.):

a) Quantity: be informative but not more than is required (Yule, 1996a).
b) Quality: say what you think is true (ibid.).
c) Relation: be relevant (ibid.).
d) Manner: avoid ambiguity (ibid.).

Complying or violating CP has an obvious effect on the speaker's success in communicating his/her intent (Yule, 1996a; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000).

2.3.5 Implicature: it is the additional conveyed meaning (Yule, 1996a) or the implicit meaning in an utterance (Liu, S., 2010). So, the speaker intends to communicate more than what their utterance conveys (Yule, 1996a). There are two types of implicture (ibid.):

a) Conversational implicature: it refers to the speaker's intention to communicate more than what they utter in a conversation (Yule, 1996a). It is related to maxims (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). That is, the speaker flouts a certain maxim to convey an additional meaning in conversation (ibid.). It consists of three types (Yule, 1996a):

1/generalized conversational implicature: refers to the case where no special knowledge of context is required to infer the additional meaning (ibid.). To exemplify this point, Yule (1996a) provides this utterance:

e.g.: *"I was sitting in a garden one day, a child looked over the fence"* (Yule, 1996a:41)

You as a listener can deduce that "garden" and "child" are not the speaker's without knowing about context (setting, time, speaker, etc.) (ibid.). So, the knowledge of context is useless (ibid.).

2/ Scalar implicature: it implies the use of one item from scale of values which cancels the higher values from the inference process (Yule, 1996a). An example of this could be:

e.g.: the farmer uses some of the crops.

So, the example holds an implicit meaning, that is, the farmer utilizes "some" and not "all or most" of the crops (Yule, 1996a).

3/ Particularized conversational implicature: unlike the previous types of implicature, particularized implicature needs a special knowledge of context (ibid.). That is, the comprehension of an utterance hinges on the consideration of context (ibid.). Let us imagine that you invite your friend to travel together and he replies by saying: "we are in September". So, to understand this reply, you need to know that he is, say, a farmer and that September is the harvest time (Yule, 1996a), that is, he is so busy and cannot travel.

b) Conventional implicature: as opposed to conversational implicature, conventional implicature is neither related to maxims, nor does it occur in conversation, nor does it rely on a special knowledge to be interpreted (Yule, 1996a). More clearly, it is an additional meaning that is embedded in words like "even", "but", and "yet" (ibid.). Taking "but" as an illustration, we notice that the utterance contains a constant meaning, i.e., *the second meaning is in contrast to the first one* (ibid.).

e.g.: *This is in line with the data, reported by Ramet (1985, 1993), that the optimum temperature of most clotting enzymes were around 40-50°C,* **but** *beyond these values there was a progressive denaturation of the enzyme and at 65°C there was no activity.*(Boudjenah-Haroun, *et al.*, 2011: 307) (Emphasis added) (Sic.).

2.3.6 Politeness: it is another aspect of pragmatics (Yule, 1996a). Yule (1996a) defines politeness as "the means employed to show awareness of another person's face" (60). That is, speaker makes use of certain structures or means to keep the other person's face wants (to respect their limits) (ibid.). So, like CP, politeness is a set of rules that aim to enhance communication (Yule, 1996a; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). It is important to point to the influential work on politeness by Brown and Levinson (1987) which offers details about politeness (ibid.).

2.3.7 Cross-Cultural pragmatics: there is a growing interest in this subject as it scrutinizes how people from different cultures or communities use pragmatic principles (Liu, S., 2010). That is, it studies the similarities and differences between cultures in performing communicative acts (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Clearly, a particular speech community utilizes, say, some implicatures which cannot be understood by other communities such as the utterance: "Do chicken have lips" (Yule, 1996a: 44). So is the case with politeness, what is polite in English may be impolite in Arabic and *vice versa* (El-Okda, 2011). Thus, Cross-cultural pragmatics is a vast area of research especially in business matters (McKay, 2002). It includes: pragmatic failure, cultural breakdowns, contrastive pragmatics, etc. (Liu, S., 2010).

2.3.8 Interlanguage pragmatics: it is concerned with how nonnative speakers (NNSs) produce speech acts in second language (L2 or SL) (Mey, 2009). Generally speaking, NNSs learning L2 generate a certain type of language which is between their mother tongue (MT) and target language (TL), that is, between languages (ibid.). So is the case with pragmatic abilities such as speech acts (ibid.). In other words, interlanguage pragmatics is the aspect that is concerned with the foreign language (FL) and SL learners' acquisition of L2 pragmatic abilities (Rose & Kasper, 2001).

2.3.9 Speech act: it is one of the major themes studies under pragmatics (Gutting, 2002)**.** It is based on the assumption that language is not only saying but also doing (Tan, 1994). That is, by the use of an utterance, we are performing some communicative act such

as: apologizing, requesting, etc. (Austin, 1962). It is worth noting that the Speech Act theory was pioneered by the philosopher Austin (1962) and developed by Searle (1969) (Sbisà, 1995). It is based on the fact that speakers do things with words (Austin's concept, 1962) (ibid.).Speech Acts will be dealt with next.

2.4 Speech act theory

Speech Act theory emerged as a trend within the two areas of philosophy of language and pragmatics (Sbisà, 1995). In the late 1950s the field of philosophy of language was concerned with categorizing utterances based on their truth value (to judge the truth of literal meaning of utterance) (ibid.). In an attempt to analyze the truth value of utterances, Austin (1962) noticed that there are some utterances which cannot be scrutinized using this feature (ibid.). That is, one cannot judge the extent these utterances are true (ibid.). He realized that the speaker makes use of such utterances to perform a certain action (Austin, 1962). Austin (ibid.) labeled them "performative utterances" (Sbisà, 1995). Based on this observation, Austin (1962) set the theory of speech acts which asserts that through uttering words, the speaker is performing actions and that a speech act (SA) is a functional unit (Cohen, 1996). For him, these functional utterances such as naming, promising, etc. are more than simple ones as they have three meanings (or levels): locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutinary (Sbisà, 1995).

a) Locutionary meaning (propositional): refers to the literal meaning of an utterance (Cohen, 1996). For example, the utterance *"I am hungry"* (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000:20) explains the situation of the speaker.

b) Illocutionary meaning (illocutionary act or force): implies the function of the utterance, that is, what a speaker intends to say by a certain utterance (Cohen, 1996). In the previous example, the utterance can function as a request for food (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). More clearly, the speaker intends to say: "could you give me some food, please."

c) Perlocutionary meaning: means the effect of the utterance on the listener (Cohen, 1996) such as 'providing food for the above mentioned utterance'.

Studies on SA continued to identify the concepts which make the framework of the theory (ibid.). These concepts are mentioned below:

2.4.1 Classification of speech acts:

In 1969, Searle adjusted Austin's work and presented an influential version of Speech Acts theory (Hatch, 1992). He classified SA into five categories (ibid.):

1/ Declaratives: are SAs which change the current state of a listener if it is performed (Hatch, 1992). To illustrate the point, here is an example. If a jury announces: "We find the defendant not guilty!" (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000:25), the utterance changes the state of an accused person from being guilty to being innocent (ibid.). In fact, the performance of the declarative utterances involves some conditions (Gutting, 2002) which will be explained later.

2/Representatives: in uttering representatives, the speakers state their beliefs, thoughts, assertions, illustrations, and so on (Gutting, 2002). For instance, a speaker hypothesizes his/her beliefs in an agriculture setting may say: "Today, tomatoes can be grown in the desert." (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000:25).

3/Expressives: are SAs that express the speaker's feelings such as apologizing, complaining, complimenting, etc. (Hatch, 1992).

e.g.: "All praises be to Allah".

4/Directives: are expressions that enable the speaker to require from the listener to do something (Gutting, 2002). An example of directives can be requesting, ordering, inviting, etc. (ibid.)

e.g.: "*would you like to join us for a coffee*" (Blundell *et al*., 1982:179).

5/Commissives: in commissives, the speaker commits to perform a certain action on the future such as promising, refusing, and threatening (Gutting, 2002), for instance, "*if you don't settle your account within ten days I shall be forced to put the matter in the hands of our solicitors*" (Blundell *et al*., 1982:150).

There are, indeed, other classifications of SAs but they are mainly based on Austin and Searle's works (Hatch, 1992). The Council of Europe (1976), for example, sets new categories of functions to serve language teaching goals (ibid.). This new list consists of six major functions and each of them contains sub-functions (Hatch, 1992). An illustration from

this classification is presented by Hatch (1992) in the following: *"Imparting/seeking FACTUAL information: indentify, ask, report, say, think X."*(131). In addition, Searle (1975) distinguishes between two types of SAs which will be the concern of the next section.

2.4.2 Direct and indirect speech acts:

Austin (1962) believed that all utterances possess a performative verb which holds explicitly their illocutionary force (Sbisà, 1995) such as "I promise you that I will be back tomorrow" (Gutting, 2002:19). Later on, he realized that not all utterances have an explicit performative verb (Sbisà, 1995). Searle (1976) supported this view and argued that there are some utterances which have an implicit illocutionary force (ibid.). Moreover, Searle (1976) distinguished between direct and indirect SAs (ibid.). The former indicates a representation of the literal meaning whereas the latter refers to the speaker's intention or what they want to communicate *via* an utterance and which is not clear in the literal meaning (Searle, 1975). Searle (1975) defines the direct and indirect SAs as:

> The simplest cases of meaning are those in which the speaker utters a sentence and means exactly and literally what he says … But notoriously, not all cases of meaning are this simple…One important class of such cases is that in which the speaker utters a sentence, means what he says, but also means something more.(59).

It is important to note that it is hard to differentiate between the direct and the indirect SAs (Gutting, 2002). In formal terms, one utterance can be classified as a direct SA in one category of function such as directive and as an indirect one in another category (ibid.). The utterance *"Thank you for not smoking"* (Gutting, 2002:20) can be classified as a direct SA in the expressive category and as an indirect one in the directives (requiring or prohibiting smoking) (ibid.). So, a SA such as an apology can be a direct or an indirect SA (Cohen, 1996). Also, it has a *speech act set* and a special use in certain *speech events* (ibid.).

2.4.3 Speech act set and speech event:

Further influential concepts in speech act theory are the speech act sets and the speech events (Hatch, 1992; Cohen, 1996). Speech act set was firstly introduced by Olshtain and Cohen (1983) to refer to a set of linguistic and pragmatic strategies that are used by native speakers (NSs) in performing a particular SA (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991). Cohen (1996) indentifies the speech act set as:

> The set of realization patterns typically used by native speakers of the target language, any of which would be recognized as the speech act in question, when uttered in the appropriate context.(385)

Additionally, the speech act set consists of the semantic criteria (that is, patterns used to make SA more realizable such as providing justification with apology) which reflects the speaker's aim as well as the illocutionary intent (Cohen, 1996). The speaker can call for one strategy from these semantic formulas hinging on the pragmatic and situational factors (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991). To give an example, if the situation of being late is a serious problem in a given culture (pragmatic factor), it requires a special pattern of apology such as 'apologizing and giving an explanation' (ibid.). Also, the speaker has to consider the situational factors, that is, the listener's age, social status, and the relationship between the speaker and the listener by choosing an appropriate modification to the pattern such as "really" and not "very" in order to show the seriousness of apology (the illocutionary intent) (ibid.).This area of the Speech Act theory receives less attention than the others despite its great benefits to language teaching and material designing (ibid.).

Another concept of the Speech Act theory is 'speech events' (Hatch, 1992). Hatch (1992) defines speech events as the occasions where a large discourse structure of SAs is required. For example, the speech event of "asking about time" contains at least four SAs (asking, giving time, thanking, replying to thanks) (Banjar, 2008). So, the speech event analysis scrutinizes how different SAs structure or order in a given speech event and how SAs can be realized in a discourse (Hatch, 1992). The speech event analysis can help researchers in adjusting felicity conditions which are required for a particular speech act (ibid.).

2.4.4 Felicity conditions:

Another basic term in the area of Speech Act theory is 'felicity condition' (Gutting, 2002). These are the rules which must be met for the SA to be performed appropriately (ibid.). Austin (1962) suggested some general conditions that are necessary for all the SAs, while Searle (1969) distinguished between general and special ones which are needed only with declaratives and directives acts (ibid.). To identify some of these general and specific felicity conditions, let us consider the example below:

e.g.: S: "*can you reach the salt?*" (Searle, 1975:60)

L: sure, take it.

It is clear that the speaker intends his/her utterance to be 'a request' (ibid.). But in order for his/her utterance to be understood as a request, it is to meet some conditions (Gutting, 2002). Starting from the general conditions, the context where the act performed must be appropriate and known to the participants (ibid.). That is, the participants are familiar with the context of say, lunch which is appropriate to the asking about the salt (ibid.). Also, the speaker has to be serious and not pretending that s/he cannot reach the salt, otherwise his/her utterance will be understood as a simple question about listener's ability or something else (Searle, 1975). Let us change the utterance to a declarative such as "betting" in order to account for Searle's special conditions (Gutting, 2002). For instance, the speaker declares "I bet that you cannot reach the salt". As a first condition the speaker should believe that s/he can and has the right to carry out the act of betting (ibid.). Further, both the speaker and listener must be agreed on wanting to perform the act (ibid.)

2.5 Pragmatics and ESP

It should not be surprising to talk about ESP alongside with pragmatics, as there is a close relation between the two (Widdowson (1998) cited in Gómez Morón *et al*., 2009). Widdowson (1998) expresses such a relation by saying that:

>…the study of ESP is inherently a study in pragmatics, since special purpose genres have their origins in pragmatic principles of communication (Widdowson cited in Gómez Morón *et al*.2009: xxvii).

For a better understanding of Widdowson's claim, one has to know first the definition of ESP so as to be able to relate it to pragmatics and SA.

2.5.1 Definition of ESP

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has been the subject of many definitions (Dudley-Evan & St. John, 1998). Each of which contributes in the building of its framework (ibid.). First, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) consider *"ESP as an approach rather than product"* (16). In other words, they argued that ESP is an approach to language teaching that focuses on learners' needs and not a product of language (that is *stable*) which has a specific methodology and teaching materials (Hutchinson & Water, 1987). Strevens (1988) provides another definition of ESP in the form of absolute and variable characteristics (Dudley-Evan & St. John, 1998). For him, ESP has the following characteristics (Strevens cited in Dudely-Evans & St. John, 1998: 3):

- Absolute characteristics: ESP is

-*designed to meet specified needs of the learner.* (it is based on the learners' needs.)(Strevens cited in Dudely-Evans & St. John, 1998).

-*related in content (that is in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations, and activities".* (its content is designed to a certain speciality or discipline (ibid.)).

-*centered on language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics and so on, and analysis of the discourse.*(it focuses on language in use used in specific area of interest (ibid.))

- *in contrast with General English.*

- Variable characteristics: these characteristics are not necessary (Gatehouse, n.d.). So ESP:

-*may be restricted as to the learning skills to be learned (for example reading only).* (it may address only the needed skill) (Strevens cited in Dudely-Evans & St. John, 1998).

-*may not be taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.* (it is not necessary to adopt pre-established methodology (ibid.))

Additionally, Robinson (1991) indentifies two key criteria and two features which define ESP (Dudely-Evans & St. John, 1998). Concerning the two key criteria, Robinson (1991) argues that ESP is *"normally goal directed"* (Robinson cited in Dudely-Evans & St. John, 1998: 3) and it designs its course from the analysis of the learners' needs (ibid.). In other words, ESP is directed towards identifiable goals which set through analysing the needs of learners (ibid.). Further, Robinson (1991) states that ESP has two features which can be summed up as follows. ESP courses are limited in time and taught to adult learners in homogeneous groups (ibid.). In their turn, Dudley-Evan and St. John (1998) modified Strevens' (1988) definition of ESP by widening the variable characteristics and omitting one of the absolute characteristics (Gatehouse, n.d.). Thus, from these definitions, we can deduce that ESP course hinges mainly on the analysis of the learners' needs who should be adults in terms of the language background (Dudely-Evans & St. John, 1998). Also, ESP aims to promote the learners' skills in their area of interest (ibid.).

2.5.2 Pragmatics in ESP:

Having some background knowledge on both areas: pragmatics and ESP, we can now highlight the relation between them. From an ESP perspective, pragmatics is an essential component in ESP (Widdowson (1998) cited in Gómez Morón *et al*., 2009). To clarify the role of pragmatics in ESP, we will discuss four points.

2.5.2.1 Pragmatics in the term of "English for Specific Purposes":

In the term English for Specific Purposes, the preposition "for" holds the meaning of language use rather than linguistic competence (Triki, 2002). Moreover, it refers to how English used for achieving specific communicative purposes of a discourse community (the members who represent the community of a certain field of interest or occupations) (McKay, 2002) and not to how to be linguistically competent to serve specific purposes (that is, grammatically competent) (Triki, 2002). So, it is pragmatics that deals with the language use (in addition to discourse analysis) and also it is pragmatics that leads to such interpretation by considering the speaker's intention (ibid.). Further, the use of zero article alongside with plural in "purposes" create an idea of indefiniteness which refers to ESP context (ibid.). That is, it implicates that ESP is concerned with a variety of contexts (ibid.). Triki (2002) summarizes this relation by saying that: *"context-sensitivity and intentionality, which are fundamental to pragmatics, are constitutive of the very term ESP"* (2).

2.5.2.2 Pragmatics in the developments of ESP:

Developments in the field of ESP started from a focus on register analysis (Hutchinson & Water, 1987). That is, language used in professions was analysed in terms of its linguistic features (*i.e.* the terms used in a particular profession) (ibid.). But not long, scholars namely Allen and Widdowson (1974) noticed that this is not what learners need to learn English for. They argued that:

> … their needs cannot be met by a course which simply provides further practice in the composition of sentences, but only by one which develops *a knowledge of how sentences are used in the performance of different communicative acts.* (Allen & Widdowson cited in Hutchinson & Water, 1987: 10-11). (emphasis added)

Thus, attention moved towards focusing on the textual features and text in a particular context (discourse and genre analysis) (Basturkmen, 2006). More clearly, in teaching ESP, the teachers began to teach ESP learners not only the textual features of a particular genre (related to their occupation) but also the cultural and contextual features as they are used in the discourse community to which they belong (Triki, 2002). In fact, these elements make the core of pragmatics (Crystal (1997) qtd. in Rose & Kasper, 2001).

2.5.2.3 Pragmatics and Needs Analysis:

It is obvious that Needs Analysis is a key term in ESP (Hutchinson & Water, 1987). That is, ESP course is constructed from learners' needs (what learners need English for (ibid.)). So, ESP has to create a connection between how the discourse community does things (in the target situation) and what should be taught to ESP learners (Basturkmen, 2006). In doing so, pragmatics is called into play as it explains how utterances that are taught can acquire a certain meaning in a particular context (McCarthy's definition, 2001). As evidence, Triki (2002) sees that:

> The matching between language structure and social function is exactly the domain of Pragmatics. In other words, Pragmatics will be called upon to mediate between the customers needs identified

through Needs Analysis and the linguistic structures
taught in ESP (2) (sic).

2.5.2.4 Pragmatics and ESP aim:

The ultimate goal of ESP is to promote learners' communicative competence and different skills (Triki, 2002; Basturmen, 2006). In fact, the communicative competence aids in developing skills and *vice versa* (Uso´-Juan & Martı´nez-Flor, 2006a). So, one can deduce that the pragmatic competence as a component of the communicative competence promotes ESP learners' skills (ibid.). That is, the pragmatic competence enhances ESP learners', say, reading skill (Triki, 2002). For instance, if an ESP learner is pragmatically competent, it implies that s/he recognizes that an utterance has an illocutionary meaning and that s/he can grasp this meaning by considering the appropriate context (Bachman (1990) cited in El-Okda, 2011). Thus, the ESP learner succeed in getting writer' intention and being an active reader (Uso´-Juan & Martı´nez-Flor, 2006a). Hence, pragmatic competence is required to accomplish ESP ultimate aim (Triki, 2002).

So, through this explanation, one can understand Widdowson's claim (1998) which insists on the fact that studying ESP is, indeed, studying pragmatics with its aspects as it forms a basic component in acquiring the skills used in a particular occupations (Widdowson (1998) cited in Gómez Morón *et al*., 2009).

2.5.3 Speech acts and ESP:

SA and its relevance to ESP is the central concern of the present study. It is clear that among the main themes studied within Speech Act theory, we find the three levels of utterance, felicity conditions, and direct and indirect SAs (Gutting, 2002). All the concepts, indeed, occupy a crucial place in ESP (Triki, 2002). First, ESP learners should be aware of the three levels of utterance: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary and of the fact that the connection between them is *"context and norm governed"* (Triki, 2002: 7). In other words, it is the norms of a particular discourse community that determine the appropriate locutionary act which is needed for the performance of a given illocutionary intent so as to have the intended perlocutionary effect on the listener in, say, a business context (ibid.). For example, the norm of a business community entails from the speaker who intends to order the listener to pay his/her invoice by means of a cheque (illocutionary intent), to soften his/her expression in the form of a wish (locutionary act) (Triki, 2002) by saying: *"[we] would be grateful if you*

could let us have a check for this amount."(Triki, 2002:8). Such a form of the utterance may help to avoid any communication breakdown (perlocutionary effect) (ibid.). These norms alongside with felicity conditions allow ESP learners to produce appropriate communicative acts in the target situation and thus to communicate safely (ibid.).

Further, the inappropriate choice of direct or indirect SAs may cause a serious problem in communication (Triki, 2002). Let us imagine that in the previous example the speaker orders the company by saying: "I order you to pay the invoice in cheque as soon as possible". It is sure that communication between the participants will breakdown (ibid.). Thus, each discourse community has a particular use of language that should be mastered by ESP learners (ibid.). Triki (2002) describes this special use of language as a weapon by arguing that:

> This means that the language used in ESP is a loaded weapon giving speakers power to effect changes in their immediate environment but, at the same time, this weapon can backfire if mishandled (7)

So, ESP learners have to acquire this knowledge of pragmatics so as to master the use of this weapon in their occupations (ibid.)

Conclusion

For an effective and appropriate interaction in the target situation, ESP learners have to be pragmatically competent (Triki, 2002). That is, they possess the linguistic forms that are needed for the performance of different communicative acts (Kasper, 1997). Also, they can successfully choose the appropriate form based on the sociolinguistic features which represent the context (ibid.). Thus, since the pragmatic knowledge and mainly SA play an influential role in the effectiveness of the ESP communication, one can infer that with matching pragmatics to ESP, great success will be brought to different professions (Triki, 2002).

Chapter Three: Developing ESP learners' pragmatic competence.

Introduction

3.1 Pragmatic failure

      3.1.1 Pragmaliguistic failure

      3.1.2 Sociopragmatic failure

3.2 Causes of ESP learners' pragmatic failure

3.3 Teaching pragmatics

      3.3.1 Tasks to promote ESP learners' Pragmatic Competence

3.4 Assessing ESP learners' pragmatic competence

 Conclusion

Chapter three: Developing ESP learners' pragmatic competence.

Introduction

The emphasis in the preceding chapter was on what may constitute pragmatic competence and its relevance to ESP. It seems clear that pragmatic knowledge is a crucial component in a SL and FL communication (Judd, 1999) and in the discourse community communication too (McKay, 2002). Hence, ESP learners have to acquire pragmatic competence in order to be able to use language appropriately in different occupational settings (Triki, 2002). In fact, failure to do so may lead to a serious problem in communication (Judd, 1999). Thanks to the realization of the seriousness of such failure, i.e., pragmatic failure pragmatics began to receive more attention in language teaching after a long period of neglect (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003; Jung, 2001(cited in Dash, 2004)). That is to say, teachers and material designers have moved towards focusing on the way to develop learners' pragmatic competence so as to avoid any pragmatic failure and to communicate appropriately (Kasper, 1997; Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor 2003).

Based on the assumption that one can better understand a subject by examining cases of its malfunction (Celce-Murcia, 1995), the current chapter starts by discussing the ESP learners' pragmatic failure and the main causes that stand behind this lack so as to account for the teaching of pragmatics in general and speech act in particular. Also, we attempt to review some tasks which are likely to aid ESP learners in promoting their competence in understanding and expressing speech acts. Finally, we present the way pragmatic competence can be assessed in ESP context.

3.1 Pragmatic failure

Most studies carried out in different areas of pragmatics reveal that FL learners are pragmatically incompetent (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991; Bardovi-Harlig *et al*., 1991 (cited in Hedge, 2000); Cohen, 1996; Kasper, 1997; and others). That is, they cannot perform communicative acts appropriately (ibid.). In the area of speech act, Thomas (1983) and Bardovi-Harlig (1990) point out that learners usually act out speech acts in an inappropriate way which lead to communication impediment (Thomas, 1983 & Bardovi-Harlig 1990 cited in Basturkmen, 2006).They state that:

Research has shown that despite high level of grammatical competence, non-native speakers may still have difficulties in communicating because of a lack of ability to express speech acts appropriately. (Thomas (1983) & Bardovi-Harlig (1990) cited in Basturkmen, 2006: 51)

This means that learners succeed in constructing and treating utterances literally and grammatically but they cannot make sense of their illocutionary intent (Kasper, 1997). In trying to explain this lack, Kasper (1997) argues that *"L2 recipients often tend towards literal interpretation, taking utterances at face value rather than inferring what is meant from what is said and underusing context information"* (03). The same observation has been recorded by most studies in the context of ESP (Clenell, 1999; Basturkmen, 2006). That is, researchers notice that ESP learners are unable to produce utterances appropriate to the norms of their discourse community (ibid.).

This lack is called pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983). Miller (1974) argues that this failure springs from a misunderstanding of the speakers' intention (Miller cited in Thomas, 1983). In other words, the learners' unsuccessful way of interpreting what a speaker tends to mean by a certain utterance or in expressing their intention appropriately is the main source of difficulties in communication (ibid.). Thomas (1983) defines pragmatic failure as the *"...inability to understand what is meant by what is said"* (Thomas qtd. in Li, 2011: 771). In formal terms, it is the consideration of a mere literal meaning of the speakers' utterance rather than the illocutionary meaning (ibid.). Additionally, the learners' unsuccessful attempt to accomplish the intended prelocutionary effect on the listener is also a pragmatic failure (ibid.). In the same vein, Thomas (1983) says that pragmatic failure is also the *"failure to achieve the desired communicative effect in communication."* (Thomas qtd. in Li, 2011: 771). Therefore, the pragmatic failure can exist when understanding as well as when producing utterances (Fernández Amaya, 2008).

Further, Thomas (1983) identifies two types of pragmatic failure which are as follows:

3.1.1 Pragmalinguistic failure

It occurs when there is a difference between the illocutionary force of certain utterance in MT and TL (Thomas, 1983). That is, when the function of an utterance in MT differs from its function in TL, a pragmalinguistic failure may take place (ibid.). In formal

terms, the pragmalinguistic failure stems from the transfer of utterances from MT to TL such as the transfer of a linguistic structure that is used to realize a certain speech act to the TL (Judd, 1999). For Thomas (ibid.), this type of failure is easy to repair as it involves only an understanding of the conventional way of using language in TL. The following dialogue provides a clear example of pragmalinguistic failure (it is taken from Reynolds qtd. in Fernàndez Amaya, 2008). In this situation, A is an English speaker and B a Polish one. They are traveling in the train. As an attempt to soften communication, A says:

"A: I wonder how many trees are in Poland.

B: I cannot imagine who would want to know that."

(Reynolds qtd. in Fernàndez Amaya, 2008: 18)

In this example, A transfers the way of 'opening' communication from his MT to the TL and B interprets it literally as a 'wondering' and thus a pragmalinguistic failure happens (ibid.)

3.1.2 Sociopragmatic failure

It takes place when there is a difference between the sociolinguistic perception of MT and TL (Huamin, 2006; Fernández Amaya, 2008). In other words, the difference in the appropriate behaviour between MT and TL may lead to sociopragmatic failure (ibid.). It is a result of the learners' use of MT perception of sociolinguistic factors (such as the social value and social status, etc.) in TL (ibid.). Further, Thomas (ibid.) clarifies that the requirement of an understanding of the target culture makes the sociopragmatic failure a difficult area of repair. To better understand this type, let us consider the following example where Li Ming, a Chinese woman, is talking to her NS colleague:

"Li Ming: you are putting on weight recently, aren't you?

Miss Green: it's none of your business."   (Xiaohong, 1994: 31)

In fact, the topics which are considered as private matters differ in the Chinese and English cultures (ibid.). That is, Li Ming performs the act from a Chinese cultural background where asking about weight is not a private topic, while it is in the English culture (ibid.).

Accordingly, ESP learners have to build sensitivity to this type of differences, i.e. the illocutionary intent and sociopragmatic perception between MT and TL in order to avoid pragmatic failure (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). Also, ESP teachers need to help their learners through looking for the sources where this lack may spring from (El-Okda, 2011). The main causes of the pragmatic lack are the focus of the next section.

3.2 Causes of ESP learners' pragmatic failure

The learners' unsuccessful attempts to perform different communicative acts may be due to different causes. Some of them are set below:

- Teaching curricula ignore pragmatic aspects in their design (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003). That is to say, the curricula do not include lessons in, say, speech acts (ibid.). As an evidence, Bardovi- Harlig & Mahan-Taylor (2003) reports that *"these areas of language and language use have not traditionally been addressed in language teaching curricula."* (37).
- Textbooks lack input that is needed in the teaching of pragmatics (Bardovi-Harlig *et al.* (1991) cited in Hedge, 2000; Blez (2007) cited in El-Okda, 2011). In other words, there is a need for materials that treat pragmatic aspects (ibid.). Not far from EFL textbooks, Alemi & Razzaghi (2012) clarify that even ESP textbooks disregard this area, by saying that:

> The lack of this pragmatic input especially in ESP textbooks in which the learners are to master the English in order to be able to communicate in an international business context can lead to inappropriate development of communicative competence…(109).

- The existing materials comprise inaccurate and decontextualized examples (Judd, 1999). That is, the available examples are far from language real world use and obscure in building the learners' sensitivity to sociolinguistic distinction in TL (Cohen, 1996). Judd (1999) noticed that:

> … many texts do not include examples of speech
> acts that are representative of naturally occurring
> discourse or the examples are often inaccurate or
> limited in regard to sociolinguistic variables. (157).

- Some teaching materials tend to focus on the way to construct the learners' linguistic background of how to realize different speech acts at the expense of the sociopragmatic competence, i.e. how to perform speech acts appropriately (Basturkmen, 2006). In fact, this emphasis generates learners who treat utterances literally and neglect their illocutionary intent (Kasper, 1997). Crandell (1999) reports that :

> It has been noted that some speech-act-based
> courses and materials target pragmalinguistics with
> the aim of equipping learners with the linguistic
> sources to make a number of speech acts and to do
> so more or less politely and directly, but neglect
> sociopragmatic aspects. (Crandell qtd. in
> Basturkmen, 2006: 51).

- As to the teachers, pre-service as well as in-service programs provide little pragmatic information for teachers (El-Okda, 2011). It means that educational programs do not prepare teachers to teach pragmatics (ibid.). For this, teachers find difficulties in instructing pragmatics (Fernàndez Amaya, 2008). In an attempt to rate the degree to which educational programs train teachers for teaching pragmatic knowledge, Cohen (2008) notes that *"most programs investigated rarely provide information about pragmatics or pragmatic knowledge instruction and assessment."* (Cohen cited in El-Okda, 2011:179).

- When learners produce inappropriate utterances, they receive no corrective feedback (CF) from their teachers so as to alter their pragmatic knowledge (Chavez de Castro, 2005). As a support, Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford (1996) claim that:

> Thus, if no CF is provided to learners as to how
> inappropriate their utterances have been and how to
> make them more appropriate, it is likely they will
> not realize the need to modify their production.
> (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford qtd. in Chavez de
> Castro, 2005:282)

- The learners tend to transfer the pragmatic knowledge such as speech act strategies from their MT to the TL (Basturkmen, 2006). That is, they negatively transfer their native pragmatic norms to the TL (ibid.). On these premises, Olshtain and Cohen (1991) conduct a study and report that *"the results revealed situations in which the EFL deviations from cultural patterns appeared to be a result of negative transfer from the first language"* (162-163).

- Usually learners do not exploit or transfer their free pragmatic knowledge that they already have to the TL (Rose & Kasper, 2001). More clearly, Kasper (1997) points out that learners possess a considerable amount of free pragmatic knowledge (i.e. universal pragmatic knowledge) such as the three types of request (direct, indirect, and hints). But they do not use it when communicating in TL (ibid.). Rose and Kasper (2001) maintain that:

> Unfortunately, learners do not always capitalize on the knowledge they already have. It is well known from educational psychology that students do not always transfer available knowledge and strategies to new tasks. This is also true for some aspects of learners' universal or L1-based pragmatic knowledge. (6).

- Both teachers and learners do not take the pragmatic mistakes seriously (Kasper, 1997). Moreover, Bardovi-Harlig and DÖrnyei (1998) see that teachers and learners give much importance to grammatical errors than they do for the pragmatic mistakes (Bardovi-Harlig & DÖrnyei cited in Edwards, 2003). They declare that *"...EFL learners and their teachers tend to undervalue the seriousness of pragmatic mistakes and consistently ranked grammatical errors as more serious than pragmatic errors…"* (Bardovi-Harlig & DÖrnyei cited in Edwards, 2003: 41).

3.3 Teaching pragmatics

In order for pragmatic failure to be avoided, ESP learners have to develop their pragmatic competence, that is, their pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence of TL (Pohl, 2004). In fact, ESP learners' appropriate use of language can be effectively promoted *via* formal instruction in pragmatics (Cohen, 1996). That is to say, the effective classroom

teaching of speech acts can raise the learners' ability of expressing and understanding appropriate utterances. In formal terms, teaching learners the different linguistic forms of realizing a particular speech act and the sociolinguistic factors that determine the appropriate choice of forms reveal that it is a successful way of developing learners' pragmatic competence (ibid.). Kasper and Rose (2002) support this view by saying that: *"without exception learners receiving instruction in pragmatics outperformed those who did not"* (Kasper & Rose qtd. in Marra, 2013: 181). That is to say, instruction shows changes in the learners' level of pragmatic performance (ibid.)

The process of instructing pragmatics entails a particular role for teachers and learners. First, it is important to note that learners' background contains a free pragmatic knowledge (Kasper, 1997). A case in point is that the routinized nature of speech act which is a crucial part in the learners' free pragmatic knowledge (Cohen, 1996). In other words, NS regularly makes use of some utterances to perform a particular act such as the regular use of adjectives 'nice or good' in making compliments, which is widely known (ibid.).Drawing on these insights, Kasper (1997) declares that the role of teacher is to draw the learners' attention on what they possess as the available pragmatic knowledge. That is, they should teach their learners how to employ this background knowledge in their performance in the target situation (ibid.). She claims that:

> There is thus a clear role for pedagogic intervention here, not with the purpose of providing learners with new information but to make them aware of what they know already and encourage them to use their universals or transferable L1pragmatic knowledge in L2 contexts. (Kasper, 1997: 3)

Learners, on their part, are required to facilitate their learning of pragmatics through holding a comparison between their native way of performing, say, different speech acts and the target ones (ibid.). Cohen (1996) elucidates the learners' role when learning pragmatics by clarifying that *"the role of the learners is to notice similarities and differences between the way that native speakers perform such speech acts and the way that they do…"*(Cohen 1996:412). As a matter of fact, this assigned roles to teachers and learners and the fact that pragmatic aspects can be taught remains true regardless of the adopted approaches to teaching (Kasper, 1997). It means that different approaches to teaching pragmatics agree on the role of

teachers and learners and the assumption that instruction can raise learners' pragmatic awareness (ibid.).

Concerning the teaching approach, the present study adopts Judd's model (1999) of teaching pragmatics especially speech acts. His approach consists of four stages:

1/Teacher analysis of speech act

First, teacher needs to determine the speech act to be taught based on his/her learners' needs (in the discourse community) (Judd, 1999). Equally important, teacher has to relate the research findings about the needed speech act to the learning environments (ibid.). That is, the teacher role is to match the target situation features (i.e. when, where and with whom the learners have to perform the speech act) with the required speech act findings (ibid.).

2/Cognitive awareness skills

The next stage after choosing the speech act to be taught aims to enrich the learners' cognitive awareness of the realization of these speech acts i.e. learners' linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge about the way the chosen speech act can be realized (Judd, 1999). Teacher starts by providing the learners with linguistic forms that are required for the performance of an appropriate speech act (ibid.). Simultaneously, s/he shows learners the different sociolinguistic factors that affect the choice of forms such as the social distance between the participants (ibid.). It does not matter which approach to use whether deductive or inductive (ibid.). The essence is to supply natural occurring examples (Judd, 1999). As an outcome, the ESP learners recognize the linguistic forms of a certain speech act and the effect of sociolinguistic factors on their choice.

3/ Receptive/ integrative skills

This stage offers the learners opportunity to identify the speech act under study when it occurs in the natural discourse (Judd, 1999). That is, it improves and tests the learners' ability to recognize the sociolinguistic factors from the contextualized linguistic forms in the discourse (ibid.). Thus, the ESP learners' receptive ability i.e. *the ability to understand the speech act when they encounter it in a discourse of target situation will be increased.*

4/Controlled productive skills

The fourth stage supplies the learners with activities where they are asked to call for their cognitive awareness (2nd stage) and their comprehension of sociolinguistic factors and speech act (3rd stage) to produce an appropriate form of speech act (Judd, 1999). In formal terms, learners need to make use of what they learn about the linguistic forms of a particular speech act and the sociolinguistic features in order to understand the speakers' intention and thus to be able to act out an appropriate speech act in their discourse community(ibid.).

5/ Free, integrated practice

Judd (1999) maintains that many textbooks neglect this stage which aims to integrate the speech act to be studied with the other activities of language use. In other words, learners who learnt how to *give an example* will be called upon in this stage to act out this speech act alongside with the other ones such as *agreeing, disagreeing*, etc. in one situation (Judd, 1999). The teacher, at this stage, has to provide no guidance to learners so as to test the degree to which his/her learners have learnt. To sum up the central point of this stage, Judd (1999) says: *"The key point at this stage is to have students engage in meaningful activities so that occasions for pragmatic performance will naturally arise" (166).*

All in all, following these stages of teaching, ESP learners' pragmatic competence can be developed but not to the extent of the NS competence (Judd, 1999). In addition to enriching the learners' pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence, the teachers need to raise their learners' metapragmatic capacity (Thomas, 1983), that is, their *"capacity to analyze language in a conscious way"* (Fernández Amaya, 2008:13). Constructing the learners' metapragmatic capacity enables them to analyze different situations and to choose when to follow the target pragmatic norms in terms of sociolinguistic perception and when to keep their own (ibid.). FL learners are not required to acquire a total native like competence (ibid.). To achieve these goals, the teacher can devise tasks that aid in developing the learners' pragmatic competence. The coming item will focus on some of these tasks.

3.3.1 Tasks to promote ESP learners' pragmatic competence

It is widely agreed among most researchers that the useful way of pragmatic development is through explicit instruction which comprises awareness raising activities (Kasper, 1997; Li, 2011; El-Okda, 2011). That is, the teachers who present to their learners pragmatic aspects,

for example, speech act in a clear and direct way and assign them some tasks that are intended to raise their production and comprehension of speech act are likely to have positive results (ibid.). Here, we will suggest some of these tasks. They are classified into two categories: tasks aid in developing learners' production and tasks that develop comprehension.

3.3.1.1 Tasks to promote learners' pragmatic production

Among the tasks that are brought into play to develop ESP learners' pragmatic competence, we can set the following:

1/ Role-play activities: in the role-play activity, learners are given opportunities to use the speech act under study (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991). First, the teacher supplies the learners with information about the situation and their roles (ibid.). Then, learners have to perform the roles after discussing the appropriate speech act (ibid.). Acting out different roles in various situations makes learners more familiar with the natural use of speech act (Judd, 1999).

2/ Contrastive role-play activity: is a type of role-play where learners are required to play a set of roles with different sociolinguistic factors, each time (Judd, 1999). This activity draws learners' attention to the effect of sociolinguistic elements such as status, social distance on their production of linguistic forms (ibid).

3/ What are they saying? Is an activity that has been introduced by Edwards and Csizér (2004). It aims to raise the learners' consideration of the sociolinguistic features in their construction of speech act (Edwards & Csizér 2004). This task begins by providing learners with a situation and distributing randomly the roles (ibid.). That is, the teacher attaches for every participant in the play a paper in his/her back which contains his/ her role (ibid.). Then, the learner has to guess his/her role from the way other participants talking to him/her (ibid.). Based on his/ her inference s/he can act out appropriately the speech act in the play (Edwards & Csizér 2004).

4/ Feedback and discussion: is the space where learners are given opportunity to talk about their beliefs on the similarities and differences between their MT pragmatic norms and the TL ones (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991). Providing feedback and discussing with other learners the pragmatic aspects enriches the learners' sociopragmatic competence (the TL appropriate use) and draw their attention to the possible areas of the negative transfer or misunderstanding (Li, 2001).

5/ Discourse completion task (DCT): it is one of the most used tools in pragmatic research (Baleghizadeh, 2007). The learners are asked to complete a discourse of a given situation with the suitable form of speech act taking into account the available sociolinguistic features (ibid.). This task challenges the learners' ability to deduce and generate the appropriate form of a speech act (Cohen, 1996). It is worth noting that this task can also be used to enhance the learners' comprehension of the role of context in using the appropriate form (ibid.)

3.3.1.2 Tasks to promote the ESP learners' pragmatic comprehension

The following tasks can be used to develop the ESP learners' comprehension of the pragmatic norms of their discourse community:

1/Model dialogue: with this activity, the learners can notice speech acts in use (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991). That is, the focus is on how speech acts are used in discourse (ibid.). The teacher presents a dialogue to the learners which should be *"short and natural"* (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991:161) and then asks them to deduce the speech act performed and the different sociolinguistic factors involved, drawing upon their understanding of the dialogue (ibid.). In a similar task, the teacher can require learners to guess or choose the possible situation where the given dialogue may happen (Blundell *et al.*, 1982). Another form of this activity is to question the learners' understanding by giving them a reordered dialogue that contains speech acts to be studied together with their responses and demand that learners order it (Edwards & Csizér, 2004).

2/The evaluation of a situation[1]: It is a helpful task in raising the learners' perception of speech acts (Cohen, 1996). Learners are given a situation and are asked to judge whether the form used is appropriate or not. Relying on the considerations of the sociolinguistic factors of the given situation, learners can infer whether the form used matches these factors or not (ibid.). In formal terms, the learners need to make use of their pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence to provide the right answer (ibid.).

3/Comparing two situations: In this task, two different situations are given together with a dialogue for each, and then the learners are requested to explain why the speakers utilize different forms to act out the same speech act (Judd, 1999). It is clear that to detect the

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[1] It can be used in promoting pragmatic production by asking the learners to suggest the alternative form to the given situation (Blundell *et al.*, 1982).

difference between the two situations, learners have to employ what they know about factors such as setting, status, etc. (ibid.).

4/Discourse rating task: it is also called 'acceptability rating' (Cohen, 1996). It refers to the task where learners are ordered to give rates to the given forms (e.g. from the most appropriate to the possible form) (ibid.). This improves the learners' comprehension by teaching them the way to relate forms to their appropriate sociolinguistic features (Baleghizadeh, 2007). In fact, this task is used also to assess learners' pragmatic competence, notably in the diagnostic assessment phase where teachers use this task to evaluate their learners' level in order to set their teaching goals (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991).

3.4 Assessing ESP learners' pragmatic competence

One of the main constraints that encounter the teaching of pragmatics is the lack of assessment methods (Roever, 2009). Put another way, there are no highly followed methods that are employed in assessing pragmatics similar to those employed in language proficiency tests such as TOFEL (ibid.). The problem in the area of assessing pragmatics lies, indeed, in the unclear answer to what and how pragmatic competence is assessed (ibid.). On these premises, Cohen (2004) notes that the first step to start with in pragmatic knowledge assessment is to identify the purpose of assessment. In a sense, the teacher has to set clearly why s/he intends to assess the learners' pragmatic competence (Cohen, 2004). Cohen (2004) says that *"we could start by asking, what is our purpose for assessing speech acts?"* (Cohen, 2004:4)

In answering this basic question, the teacher can decide on focusing assessment on the pragmalinguistic or sociopragmatic abilities (Cohen, 2004). In other words, the decision of testing either the learners' recognition of different linguistic forms of certain speech acts or their ability to use these forms appropriately rely heavily on the goal behind the assessment process (ibid.). For example, if the aim of assessment is to raise the learners' awareness about the difference between the forms that are used to achieve a speech act in TL and MT, this goal indicates that the main element in the test or its focus must be on the learners' pragmalinguistic abilities (Cohen, 2004). Yet, it is clear that the pragmatic assessment should evaluate the learners' pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic abilities (ibid.).

The answer to the second question, how to measure pragmatic competence, hinges too on the purpose of assessment (Hudson, 2001). To better grasp this idea, it is worth noting that there are six tools for assessing the pragmatic competence.

1/ A written discourse completion task (WDCT):

It is a written test which gives the learners description about a situation followed by an incomplete dialogue where they are asked to write the appropriate form of the tested speech act (Brown, 2001). WDCT has two forms. It either requires the learners to provide a 'rejoinder' (reply) appropriate to the given utterance in a situation or it may require only a 'specification of a situation' (Li, 2006). That is, in the first case, the learners ought to consider the situation and the available utterance or role in inferring the appropriate form (such as providing a 'refusal' based on a given 'request'), while in the second, they need to refer only to the situation to provide the appropriate answer (ibid.).

2/ A multiple-choice discourse completion task (MDCT):

It is an assignment where there is a written description of a situation together with several responses (Brown, 2001). The learner is required to select the appropriate form from the given choices (ibid.).

3/ Oral discourse completion task (ODCT):

In the ODCT, the learner listens to a situation and is ordered to supply the appropriate answer orally (Brown, 2001).

4/ A discourse role-play task (DRPT):

It is a test that presents a situation and the learner has to act out the given roles (ibid.).

5/ A discourse self-assessment task (DSAT):

It refers to the assignment where a written situation with several forms are offered and the learners are requested to rate their intended answer (e.g. from 1 to 5) (Brown, 2001).

6/ A role-play self assessment task (RPSA):

It is a combination of the DRPT and the DSAT. RPSA is a test which asks the learners to rate their performance of a role in a given situation (Brown, 2001).

So, to choose an adequate tool or way for assessing learners, teachers should specify their purpose (Hudson, 2001). In other words, based on the goal of assessment, a certain tool should be opted for as an adequate one (ibid.). For instance, a teacher who aims to evaluate his/her learners' ability to use correct forms of a speech act (pragmalinguistic competence) can employ DCT as the adequate tool (DCT focuses more on pragmalinguistic aspect) (Hudson, 2001). As a matter of fact, researchers, namely Brown (2001); Hudson (2001); and Cohen (2004) highlight that the useful way to test the learners' pragmatic competence is to make use of more than one tool of assessment as each tool measures a particular ability of the learners. A test which contains a WDCT and DRPT can supply more valid data about the learners' ability because the WDCT assesses learners' pragmalinguistic competence (ability to utilize different correct forms of speech acts). The DRPT, in its turn, judges the learners' ability to use these forms appropriately based on the sociolinguistic factors, i.e. the sociopragmatic competence (Hudson, 2001). As an evidence, Cohen (2004) maintains that *"for greater validity, it is probably best to use multiple measures in order to approximate the respondents' genuine abilities…" (4).*

Conclusion

To overcome the different causes that may lead to learners' pragmatic failure, teachers have to teach pragmatics explicitly and support the teaching with awareness raising activities (Kasper, 1997). Put another way, ESP learners' pragmatic competence can be developed by a means of direct formal teaching of pragmatic aspects and a focus on awareness raising activities. Thus, ESP learners can enrich their pragmatic knowledge to the extent that they can easily be made sensitive to pragmatic features of the discourse community (Rose (1994) cited in Liu, J., 2006). Further, these pragmatic abilities can be graded by using different tools which should be exploited depending on the purpose of assessment. In sum, through explicit teaching and awareness raising activities, ESP learners no longer run into a serious pragmatic failure.

Chapter Four: Application

Introduction

4.1 Participants and instruments

4.2 Procedures of the study

    4.2.1 Needs Analysis questionnaire

    4.2.2 Pre-test questionnaire

    4.2.3 The teaching phase

    4.2.4 Post-test questionnaire

4.3 Results of the study

4.4 Discussion

Conclusion

Chapter four: Applications.

Introduction

Throughout the preceding chapters, a basic theoretical background has been constructed about pragmatics and ESP. The essential assumption is that pragmatic competence is a crucial item in ESP learners' competence which can be developed through explicit teaching and some awareness raising activities.

In this chapter we would like to apply Judd's model and different tasks in an attempt to develop ESP learners' pragmatic competence using the above assumption. Moreover, the chapter shows the procedures that are followed in the study with the aim of promoting mainly learners' ability to realize a set of speech acts. Also, the chapter contains the results gained from the study and discusses these results in relation with the research findings.

4.1 Participants and instruments

The participants in this study are 12 third-year saharien agriculture intermediate learners at the University of Ouargla.

As to the instruments, the study employed questionnaires. They are mainly designed according to the type of tasks previously mentioned. Concerning the content, it evolves around how to realize four speech acts: 'giving an example, giving reasons, comparing, and warning' in two situations: the formal and informal. In fact, the focus of content results from the analysis of an agriculture corpus which consists of 22 texts. First, the corpus analysis shows the seven most frequent functions in the selected agriculture texts (Table1). The seven functions were used in the needs analysis questionnaire out of which four functions were selected by the participants.

Functions	Fequency of occurence
Giving an example	14
Giving reasons	11
Comparing	10
Warning	9
Telling how to do something	9
Talking about what may happen	4
Advising someone to do something	3

Table 1: The seven most frequent functions in 22 agriculture texts.

4.2 Procedures of the study

The study has gone through four stages: needs analysis questionnaires, pre-test, teaching phase, and post-test. In addition, the observation phase helped us to determine the learners' pragmatic level, the way they were taught and the subjects that they prefer. Also, during this phase the subject of the study has been made clear to them. The study has been conducted as follows:

4.2.1 Needs Analysis questionnaire (NA)

In order to determine the learners' needs, a needs analysis questionnaire has been distributed. It consists of five questions. There are two main questions, the third and the fourth one which are about the content of the course. The third question asks the learners to choose four functions which they are seen as necessary to their formation, while the fourth question is about the situation where learners need to use these functions. The remaining questions are about their assumption regarding their current English course and the coming one. This questionnaire is compatible with Judd's stage 'teacher analysis of the speech act'.

4.2.2 Pre-test questionnaire

In response to the NA questionnaire result (i.e. the learners' choice of functions and situations), a pre-test was designed to determine the gaps in the learners' pragmatic competence. The pre-test consists of four exercises (MDCT tasks). Each exercise is devoted to one function. The first and the fourth exercises are in the form of a situation followed by

responses (see Appendix 2). Learners were asked to choose a form according to the given situation with the consideration of the sociolinguistic factors. These two exercises aim to test learners' production of the appropriate speech act. The second and third exercises are used to test the learners' understanding of speech acts by offering them a form of speech act with three possible interpretations. Learners have to select the appropriate interpretation based on their perception of the form and the sociolinguistic features. As to scoring, each correct answer in the exercise was assigned five points. In fact, all answers were possible in the first, second, and fourth exercises but only one was appropriate from a sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic point of view.

4.2.3 The teaching phase

In the teaching session learners received an explicit explanation of the way the four speech acts are realized. We started by exposing learners to different linguistic forms that are called for to act out these speech acts. Then, we gradually made them aware about the sociolinguistic factors which determine their choice of forms, that is, bottom-up process. It is worth noting that the study focused on three sociolinguistic factors based on Hudson (2001) and Brown's (2001) works which ensure the importance of the three factors: *power, social distance, and imposition.* In this regard, Hudson (2001) argues that:

> These variables were selected because, within the research on pragmatics, they are identified as the three independent and culturally sensitive variables that subsume all other variables and play a principled role in speech act behavior. (284)

Trying to relate the definitions of the three factors to the four speech acts, we find that the definition of the third factor 'imposition' does not match with the features of these speech acts. Moreover, according to Hudson (2001) and Brown (2001) this factor is a variable that affects speech acts which are face threatening, that is, their performance may threat the listeners such as 'refusals'. Since the four functions are not face threatening, the 'imposition' factor cannot influence them. As an alternative, we select 'setting' as we notice from the analysis of agriculture texts that it affects the way of realizing the four functions. So, the factors are defined as follows:

- *Power:* it refers to the degree to which the speaker has the right to order or impose the listener to do something due to the speaker's rank or professional status (Hudson, 2001). Here power is used as *'status'*.
- *Social distance:* it means the degree of familiarity between the speaker and the listener (ibid.)
- *Setting:* it refers to the place and occasion of the act (Blundell *et al.*,1982)

Further, at the end of each course, learners are assigned a task that treats one function and has various types of activities. In Judd's model (1999), this teaching phase presents three stages: 'cognitive awareness skills' (the teaching of speech acts); 'receptive/integrative skills' and 'controlled productive skills' (applied in the tasks). Additionally, the focus of the course i.e. the subject of tasks was extracted from three topics in agriculture which have been chosen from the learners' speciality course. They are as follows: irrigation system, camel milk, and making vinegar.

4.2.4 Post-test questionnaire

At the end of the course, learners were given another questionnaire fairly similar to that given at the beginning and to tasks presented in the teaching phase. It aimed to post-test learners in order to deduce what was learnt. The post-test is made up of five exercises which measure the learners' production and comprehension of the speech acts. Also, tasks are varied so as to test different abilities of learners.

The first exercise contains two types of tasks: *evaluation of situation and MDCT*. The second exercise is a *comparison between two situations*. The third one is a form of a *model dialogue task* while the fourth exercise is *DCT*. Finally, the fifth activity takes the form of DCT where the four speech acts integrate with other functions such as 'defining, saying something in another way, etc.'. This last activity presents Judd's fifth stage i.e. 'free, integrated practice'. Concerning the scoring, in each exercise the grade was distributed between correct form (pragmalinguistic ability) and the consideration of sociolinguistic factors (sociopragmatic ability).

4.3 Results of the study

Before dealing with pre-test and post-test questionnaires, it is essential to analyse the NA questionnaire as its results are tied to the content and analysis of the two tests (using a quantitative method).

In the NA questionnaire, the first question aims to know the learners' view about the focus of their English course. Table 2 shows the results of learners' responses:

The course reflection of needs	Number	%
Yes	1	8.33
No	11	91,66

Table 2: Learners' responses about the current English course.

It is clear from the analysis of Table 2 above that most learners (11 out of 12) think that the current English course does not focus on what they really need English for. This means that the learners are aware about what they need and that the current course does not really reflect their needs.

Question two aims to investigate what learners need exactly. Table 3 below shows results of learners' responses:

Learners' needs	Number	%
a	0	0
b	6	50
both	6	50

Table 3 : Learners' needs

The results from Table 3 above shows that half of the participants see that they need to learn English for communicative purposes, whereas the second half think that they need it to have both linguistic knowledge and communicative skills. This result implies that learners agree that they need to develop their communicative skills.

In question three, learners are asked to choose four functions which are necessary in their field of interest. Table 4 below illustrates learners' choice of functions:

Function	Number	%
Giving reasons	11	22,91
Giving an example	10	20.83
Comparing	7	14,58
Warning	6	12.5
Telling how to do something	5	10.41
Advising someone to do something	5	10.41
Talking about what may happen	4	8.33

Table 4: The chosen functions by learners.

Reading Table 4, we can realize that the four chosen functions are: giving an example, giving reasons, comparing, and warning. This result seems to be similar to the result of analysis of agriculture texts (Table 1 above). In a sense, learners are in need to know how to realize these four functions in order to appropriately perform them within the discourse community.

The fourth question is addressed to learners in order to know the setting where they may act out these functions. Table 5 below indicates that most learners perform these functions with their teachers as well as with their classmates. This denotes that both situations, formal and informal, should be involved in the teaching of the speech acts under study.

Answer	Number	%
A	1	8.33
B	1	8.33
both	10	83.33

Table 5: The setting of speech acts realization

Finally, the fifth and sixth questions have been devised to obtain the learners' view on the purpose of the study and their motivation. From the results on Table 6 below, we can notice that the participants show that they are motivated to know more about functions. In fact, their motivation helped us to present the course in its due time.

Question	Yes		No	
Q5	Number	%	Number	%
	12	100	0	0
Q6	12	100	0	0

Table 6: Learners' motivation and attitudes about functions.

Drawing on the NA questionnaire results, the pre-test was designed to test the learners' level of realizing the speech acts under study in both situations. The pre-test results on Table 7 suggest that learners lack pragmatic competence especially in understanding and producing speech acts. These results support Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor's findings (2003) (see Chapter three). To illustrate the point, in exercise three, the majority of learners interpreted the utterance *"there is no comparison between making vinegar from dry dates and semi-dry ones"* literally by opting for the answer: *"the two types are good"* in making vinegar (see Appendix 2). This misunderstanding can be seen as an evidence of the view that learners do not call for their free pragmatic knowledge and opt for the literal interpretation of utterances (Kasper, 1997). In other words, even in their L1 this utterance *"there is no comparison between"* is used to mean that one item is superior to the other. Thus, learners lack pragmalinguistic competence (comprehension of forms correctly).

Not far from the results of understanding speech act, the learners' production outcomes reveal that their sociopragmatic competence requires enrichment. In exercise one, learners failed to select the appropriate form for a given situation because of their lack of the way to consider the given sociolinguistic factors in inferring the appropriate form such as the classroom setting.[2] It is important to highlight some exceptional results, namely L1, L9, and L11 whose right answers may be interpreted in accordance with their use of their background knowledge. For instance, all the participants studied before that the dry date is the best type in making vinegar.

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[2] The two exercises, two and four, revealed the same results.

Learners	Mark
L1	11
L2	7,5
L3	9,5
L4	7,5
L5	7,25
L6	7,25
L7	7,25
L8	10,5
L9	13,25
L10	6,25
L11	10
L12	8,5

Table 7: The pre-test results.

Like the pre-test, the post-test measured the learners' comprehension and production of speech acts. Its results show that the learners' level in realizing speech acts under study has been developed. As an evidence, most learners can make use of the three sociolinguistic factors (status, social distance, and setting) in determining the appropriate form or situation like in exercises one and three (see Appendix 3) and in explaining the reasons of using different forms for acting out a certain speech act (exercise two). Further, the majority of learners succeeded in completing and performing the appropriate speech act when it is used with other functions such as in exercise five. The unexpected result was in exercise four where nearly all learners failed to relate the needed linguistic form to the given rejoinder. As an example, a learner tried to connect the form of warning *"be aware"* to the rejoinder *"protect your plants"* by producing *"be aware, protect your plants".* This misuse may be due to the form of rejoinder which may have caused misunderstanding. The post-test results are presented on Table 8 below:

Learners	Mark
L1	15,5
L2	15,75
L3	16
L4	16,75
L5	15
L6	13
L7	10
L8	17,75
L9	19
L10	14,75
L11	18,75
L12	10,5

Table 8: The post-test results.

Analyses of the two tests results (Table 9) below show that the pre-test yielded lower mean than the post-test. Thus, we can deduce that learners have make progress compared with their state of knowledge before the implementation of the suggested model. That is, they have learnt something about the way to appropriately realize speech acts. Table 9 below shows the pre-test and post-test means:

	Score	Mean
Pretest	105,75	8,81
Post-test	182,75	15,22

Table 9: The pre-test and post-test

4.4 Discussion

The study findings may be accounted for in relation with two reasons. The first reason is the lack of pragmatic input in the learners' current English course. This reason has been

deduced from our observation of their English course that brought to light the course strong focus on grammatical knowledge such as 'active' and 'passive voice' and its impoverished input in pragmatics. In formal terms, this theme of realizing speech acts seems to reflect the learners' needs as they reported in the NA questionnaire. Also, it is considered as a new teaching to learners as they have not been taught speech act explicitly and in relation to their field of interest before. These facts help in raising learners' motivation to the study and, thus, increase the test results.

The second and main reason is related to the adopted methodology of teaching. Methodology implies a way of teaching, material, and assessment. Following Kasper (1997) and Judd's (1999) view, explicit way of teaching pragmatics was an effective method for enriching the learners' pragmatic background and drawing their attention on what they have as a free pragmatic knowledge such as the use of imperative form in performing 'warning'. Further, supporting explicit teaching with teaching materials, mainly awareness raising activities such as DCT, facilitate the process of stacking the information on the learners' mind and making learners aware of the pragmalinguistic knowledge (linguistic forms) and sociopragmatic knowledge (socilinguistic factors) and mainly of the effect of the sociolinguistic factors on the choice of forms. Concerning assessment, we think that the face and content validity of the tests lend hand in achieving the obtained results. That is, if the test serves the study objectives and reflects the entire content of the course (Bachman, 1990) in addition to varying the type of tasks employed (Hudson, 2001; Cohen, 2004), it can be said to be valid. And thus, it can enhance learners' achievement. Hence, the collaboration of these factors leads to the development of the agriculture learners' pragmatic competence.

Conclusion

Though the sample cannot be said to represent all ESP learners, the study findings can offer some inspirations for further research. The study results back up the research findings about the effectiveness of explicit teaching and awareness raising activities in developing ESP learners' pragmatic awareness. The essential step that the study can be said to have accomplished is raising agriculture learners' pragmatic awareness. That is, agriculture learners are able to notice pragmatic features easily and to provide the appropriate form of the speech act under study.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General conclusion

The present inquiry investigates the way to develop ESP learners' pragmatic competence as a crucial element in the discourse community. Put another way, communicating effectively in the target situations (TS) hinges fairly on ESP learners' pragmatic competence, that is, their ability to interpret and generate utterances appropriately. Failure to do so may lead to serious problems in communication. Thus, the importance of pragmatic competence in understanding discourse community norms and the seriousness of pragmatic failure that ESP learners face, make pragmatic competence a basic element that should be promoted together with other components of communicative competence.

Studies in this area reveal that ESP teachers have to look for the main causes that lie behind their learners' pragmatic failure. On these premises, the present study attended to some of these causes and argued that they are mainly due to a lack of pragmatic teaching and input. Drawing on these results, many researchers maintain that explicit teaching of pragmatics contribute considerably in developing ESP learners' ability to act out, say, different speech acts appropriately. In other words, ESP learners' pragmatic competence can be promoted through direct instruction of pragmatic aspects which draw ESP learners' attention to their free pragmatic knowledge.

It may be fairly easy for ESP teachers to teach speech acts explicitly but it is a rather difficult task to make their learners exploit what they have learnt in the target situation. Awareness raising activities help teachers in achieving this goal by involving learners in situations akin to the ones they encounter within their discourse community. The current work suggests some of these tasks for the same purpose.

Putting into practice this model of teaching proved that ESP learners' pragmatic competence can be developed to the point that they are made sensitive to pragmatic features. Additionally, learners can build a metapragmatic capacity which enables them to analyse different target situations and to avoid pragmatic failure by realizing similarities and differences between MT and TL.

These pragmatic abilities can be best assessed by using a set of assessment tools as an efficient way that provide valid judgment of ESP learners' pragmatic ability. Some of these tools are explained in the present work. Literature on assessing pragmatic competence reveals

that the essence is to set clearly the purpose of assessment which determines the adequate assessment tool for a given situation.

Finally, in ESP context, pragmatic competence tree can be grown with two vital conditions: *explicit teaching* and *awareness raising activities*. Further, its blossom can be measured by making use of various tools of assessment.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Needs analysis sheet

Would you please answer the following questions by putting a cross in the suitable box?

Sex: Male ☐   Female ☐

Age: …

1/- Do you feel that what you study in English reflects

your needs ?   Yes   ☐   No ☐

2/- What do you need English for?

        a- To write correct sentences   ☐

        b- To learn how to communicate   ☐

3/- Which of the following functions do you think is necessary in the interaction in your speciality (Agriculture)? (Choose 4functions)

Giving reasons	☐	Warning ☐ Comparing	☐
Giving an example	☐	Telling how to do sth	☐
Talking about what may happen	☐	Advising someone to do sth	☐

4/- With whom do you need to use these functions?

  a- Head of department ☐ b- Classmates ☐ Both ☐

5/- Do you think that the knowledge of these functions can benefit you?

Yes ☐   No ☐

6/- Do you like to know more about function?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Pre-test Sheet

Exercise 1:

Choose the right (appropriate) answer for the following situation:

Situation: your teacher is talking about a family of tree called *Phoenix* and s/he begins to give its characteristics. You want to give an example about this family of tree. So, which form will you use?

    a) Can I illustrate the point, it is a date palm tree.   ☐

    b) For example, a date palm tree.   ☐

Exercise 2:

When would you say this?

"The simple reason why camel milk differs from the milk of other animals (species) is that it contains a powerful protector system"[3]

    a) You answer a question that is given by your teacher of Alimentary Technology.   ☐

    b) You are discussing with your classmates.   ☐

    c) You are summarizing what you have understood from presentation given by the head of department in a conference.   ☐

Exercise 3:

What does the following sentence mean?

"There is no comparison between making vinegar from dry dates and from semi- dry ones."[4]

    a) Making vinegar from dry dates is inferior to that made by semi-dry ones   ☐

    b) The two types are good.   ☐

    c) Making vinegar from dry dates is superior to that made by semi-dry ones   ☐

Exercise 4:

Situation: in the exploitation of ITAS, you are pruning the leaves of a long date palm tree and throw it down. Suddenly, you see a worker walking under the date tree. What would you say?

    a) Mind out!   ☐

    b) Move!   ☐

    c) Be aware! I will throw it.   ☐

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[3] (Sibouker& Sibouker,2013: 1).

[4] Lectures in making vinger, 2013.

Appendix 3

Sample of Course

Function :Giving an example
Aim:[5] to raise Agriculture learners' awareness of how to give an example appropriately in both situations, formal and informal, and how to recognize the examples when given to them.
Objectives: learners will be able to: a)Know linguistic forms used in when giving examples. b)Distinguish between formal linguistic forms and informal ones. c)Be aware of the factors that determine which form to use. d)Produce and understand examples appropriately. e)Imagine the situation of a given form and detect the problems that exist in a certain situation.
Time needed: ….
Approach: explicit. (A direct way of presenting elements of the lesson.) Method:[6]   *1/Cognitive Awareness Skills: (a,b)* Linguistic forms
Informal situation   **Task:** You are chatting with a friend *via* the net and s/he asks you about the kind of dates in Algeria.

There are many types of dates in Algeria
 	
    ➢ **For example, For instance** (Iteema, Deglet Noor)
 	
    ➢ **Such as…**
 	
    ➢ **Take…**
 	
    ➢ **Like…**

Formal situation **Task:** You meet an expert who s/he begins asking you about the position of Algeria among date-producing countries.

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[5] Lesson plan retrieved from Frendo (2005).

[6] Steps of teaching from Judd's model (1999).

Algeria is one of the top twenty producers of dates:

> **To illustrate this point[7]** (Algeria was classified the 6th producer in 2009 with 600.70 tonnes.)
> **To give you an example…**
> **To exemplify what I mean…**
> **Let me take, give an example…**

2/ Receptive/ Integrative Skills(c,d)(two or more skills together)

Sociolinguistic factors

- Status and occupation: examples given to someone lower in status should be more simplified and can be in an informal form.
- Setting: an example that the speaker provides in pedagogical setting is not the same as the one given in non pedagogical one.
- Social distance: relying on the level of familiarity among participants, one chooses how to supply examples (in formal or informal way).

3/Controlled productive skills: (d,e)(speaking /writing)

Task

You are an Engineer in agriculture. You meet an old farmer who begins talking about the type of palm trees in this area. You interrupt him by saying: "take a *Phoenix dactylifera*".

1/ Play the role

2/ What is the error in this situation?

3/ Which of the following factors do you think is involved in the above situation: status; setting; social distance.

4/ Give an appropriate form.

Answer

2/ The Engineer has to use a formal form and not to use scientific terms.

3/Factors that involve the use of formal form are:

-Status: lower with more experience (which means the use of formal form)

-Setting: non pedagogical (it is not the case in this situation).

-Social distance: not close distance.

4/ Appropriate form: *Let me take an example.*

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[7] Forms extracted from Blundell *et al*. (1982)

Appendix 4

Post-test sheet

Exercise1:

Situation: you are a member in an online scientific forum where you begin discussing with your friends about the studies on the production of foods. One of your friends provides the following participation:

"*For thousands of years mankind has used moulds and bacteria to make food products.* Let me take an example bread, vinegar, yoghurt, and cheese." [8]

1/ Is the form used in giving an example appropriate?   yes ☐   No ☐

2/If no, what do you think are the reasons concerning the following two factors?

1) Situation: formal ☐   informal ☐

2) Social setting: close ☐   not close ☐

3/Choose the most appropriate form.   1) For example ☐   2) Take ☐

Exercise 2:

Situation 1: you read in <u>Emirates Journal of Food</u> an article which talks about a study of making cheese from camel's milk that *"the main reason why most attempts to make cheese from camel milk fail is that it is difficult to get camel milk coagulate."* (2011: 302)

Situation 2: you send an email to your colleague wondering why most research are now focusing on the coagulation properties of the camel milk. You receive the following answer:

"It is like this, you see *the technical difficulties of camel's milk coagulation lead all these researchers to search for a way to coagulate camel milk"*(Boudjenah-Haroun,*etal*.,2011:305).

1/compare between the two forms of giving reason in terms of situation and factors.

Situation 1: ……….. / Situation 2……….

Factors: 1) status: S1……… S2………

2) Social distance: S1……….. S2………..

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[8] Lecture in 'Microorganisms in food product', 2013.

3) Setting: S1……… S2………

Exercise 3: Consider the following dialogue:

A: what have you deduce from reading the text about types of irrigation system?

B: I deduce that drip irrigation system consumes less water than the flood system.[9]

1/what is the performed function in the dialogue? The function is ……

2/what can you infer from this dialogue about the following factors:

Social distance……….., status…………, and situation………..

3/ cross the situation where this dialogue can be applicable.

Situation: 1/dialogue between teacher and students ☐

2/dialogue between two friends. ☐

Exercise 4: look at the picture[10] and answer

Ali is a farmer. He is observing the weather with his wife Amina. So, what does Amina say? (Warning him to protect his plant).

Exercise 5:

Read the following text[11] and complete by the appropriate form from the suggested forms. (Do not forget to determine whether situation is formal or informal)

Irrigation is the artificial supply of water to land, to maintain or increase yields of food crops. There are many types of irrigation systems 1……………. drip irrigation system and flood irrigation system. In fact, the irrigation method used is determined by the type of soil. 2………………………… between flood system and drip system, the flood irrigation system is more used with clay soil than drip one3…………………clay soil has a low

[9] (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2007.)

[10] (Blundell et al., 1982: 24).

[11] (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2007.)

infiltration rate and thus it requires a large amount of water. But 4……………..flood irrigation system is used only with plants that need a lot of water such as rice.

1/ for example/ such as

2/ if you compare/ there's no way

3/ if I could explain/ because

4/ be aware/ watch out

ملخص الدراسة

حاولنا من خلال هذه الدراسة إيجاد طريقة ناجعة تمكن من تطوير الكفاءة السياقية للطلبة الذين يدرسون الإنجليزية كلغة اختصاص(ESP learners) وذلك عن طريق رفع وعيهم بالميزات السياقية في استعمال اللغة من خلال تطبيق نموذج "جود1999"(Judd, 1999) لتدريس عملية التحدث وتطبيق بعض التمارين التي تساعد على ترقية هذه الكفاءة.

لتطبيق هذا النموذج, تم توزيع استبيانات تهدف إلى تحديد حاجيات الطلبة وتقييم مهاراتهم وكذا قياس ما تم اكتسابه خلال فترة التدريس.

بينت النتائج أن هذه الفئة من الطلبة تفتقد للكفاءة السياقية في استعمال اللغة. كما أثبتت هذه النتائج إن طريقة التدريس المقترحة لعملية التحدث و رفع الوعي ساعدت في تحسيس طلبة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اختصاص بما يملكون من معرفة سياقية في استعمال اللغة وفي بناء قدراتهم في هذا السياق وفي تحليل قواعد البعد السياقي في تعلم اللغة.

وفيما يخص تقييم الكفاءة السياقية, ركزت الدراسة على الاتجاه الذي يرى أن وضوح هدف التقييم يساعد في اختيار الأداة المناسبة وعلى أساس هذه النتائج تم تصميم نموذج لتدريس عملية التحدث.