Contemporary Research in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

EDITED BY

Dana Di Pardo Léon-Henri
Bhawana Jain

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—Dana Di Pardo Léon-Henri and Bhawana Jain

INTRODUCTION

DANA DI PARDO LÉON-HENRI[1]
AND BHAWANA JAIN[2]

Worldwide societies have been profoundly changed both on a personal and professional level since the integration and extensive use of new technologies from computers to smartphones and artificial intelligence. The globalization of commerce and an increase in personal mobility have additionally had a vast impact on the evolution of the professional skills required in this 21st-century society. Internationally, these trends have all had widespread influence on our educational systems (Barack et al., 2014). For all of the aforementioned reasons, the requirements and demands of Higher Education (HE) institutions have also been transformed (UNESCO, 2009) and updated right across the globe (Fantini et al., 2001). This has led to a more competitive job market, placing new demands on job seekers at the onset of their professional careers. According to Klaus Schwab (2016), Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, we are on the brink of a technological revolution that has already begun to fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another. As universities struggle to adapt to these swift changes, some have chosen to internationalize their courses as they strive to provide programmes that enhance the skills of their students. The overall objective is to better prepare students for their careers and the arduous demands of the professional world.

It is in this context that many language departments are gaining significant attention within the universities due to their strategic and advantageous positioning between different disciplines. Structurally transdisciplinary, language departments traditionally attract mobile teachers or language instructors of differing and varied educational backgrounds, cultures and languages. Moreover, the contexts (disciplines, levels, specialities, etc.) in which its faculty work are extremely varied,

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creating both new opportunities as well as many new obstacles. As a result of this multiformity and diversification, there is an on-going need for language practitioners to adapt to absolute and variable characteristics whilst redefining course objectives and didactic approaches (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998: 4–5, 13). By exploring modern pedagogical issues and opportunities pertaining to language teaching in the HE context, decision makers and language educators alike stand to gain through the sharing of knowledge, experience and practice in the classroom. This exchange of information and data based on research activities, for instance, will ultimately benefit the students to better equip them for their professional futures.

In terms of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and, more generally, Language for Specific Purposes (LSP), this volume seeks to respond to the need for additional research and the sharing of pedagogical practices in the areas of both ESP and LSP, since many language educators in these contexts are insufficiently prepared for the reality and challenges they may face in the classroom. The idea for this book originated during the one-day symposium held at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne on December 13, 2018, entitled "Teaching / Learning of specialized, professional or general language: What needs, objectives and approaches?" The main objective of this conference was to promote an exchange of rich and constructive teaching experiences among experienced and novice language teachers while engaging in exchanges and reflections based on language pedagogy and didactics. A large majority of the articles in this collection are adapted from the presentations given during that event.

A collaborative endeavour, this edited volume presents a collection of academic papers and discussions on specific issues centred around three broad areas of scholarly interest: the needs and challenges associated with foreign language pedagogy, the acquisition and teaching of language for special, professional or general purposes and the implementation of technology, as well as innovative approaches to language teaching that simultaneously span and integrate several disciplines. It provides an international panorama of the array of vantage points from which language and pedagogy can be studied and perceived. The unifying principle behind the variety of issues and approaches illustrated here is the notion of language acquisition as an object of intellectual inquiry (with a focus on language for specialized, professional or general purposes) acting as a repository of transversal methods that are pertinent in the exploration of other languages. Simply stated, the aim of this edited collection is to advance and further explore ESP and LSP research through the sharing of relevant theoretical foundations, pedagogical practices, teaching methodologies, and classroom experience.

As a comprehensive methodology resource, this collection provides both prospective and experienced foreign language teachers with the theoretical background and practical applications they need to make informed decisions regarding which approaches, materials and resources can or should be considered for implementation in their classrooms. The authors of the scholarship included in this volume are academics and researchers who convened to share their ideas and pave the way for further work in intersecting research areas subsumed under language, plurilingual pedagogies and intercultural studies. While focusing on learner needs, *Contemporary Research in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning* presents innovative methodologies with regard to language and teaching skills, as well as integrated approaches that can benefit and promote teacher reflection and development in terms of language pedagogy.

Classified into four units, the chapters in this volume address relevant issues and challenges that have been observed by active researchers and language practitioners in the extensive field of LSP. Each of the chapters addresses current issues and future implications for additional research into foreign language teaching. The international nature of the scholars and practitioners included in this volume offers a variety of perspectives on foreign language teaching and learning in global contexts. Consisting of a main introduction and introductions for each of the four sections into which the eleven chapters are grouped, as well as short biographies for each of the authors in this collection, this volume provides classroom activities and research methods that can be adapted to and adopted in various contexts and proposes future directions for research into the growing concerns of global scholars. Finally, we hope that this volume makes a modest but valuable contribution to the field of language didactics since it sheds light on the global diversity of innovative learning and teaching practices that combine differing theoretical and empirical approaches whilst analyzing the current needs and challenges associated with contemporary language learning.

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PART I

LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY: LEARNER NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

In an era of rapidly changing and competitive job markets that have been transformed by swift advances in technology, recent graduate students or recruitees are required to possess the latest professional skills whilst keeping pace with evolving job market demands. It is thus essential for HE language instructors to identify these needs in order to develop or enhance these skills, as well as encourage those students who may lack certain competences. Assessing student needs and hence assuming a more personalized approach to language instruction can serve as an essential tool in the teaching and learning of LSP. In this way, curriculum design and pedagogy may be better suited to those professional requirements.

Hutchinson and Waters define the notion of needs in terms of "necessities, lacks and wants" (1987: 55). Brown (1995) states that these needs must be considered when practitioners are considering the goals and objectives of their language courses. The same concept applies when reflecting on developing teaching activities, tasks, projects, tests, evaluations and exams. From differing perspectives, the three chapters in this first section will focus on language pedagogy in terms of learner needs and challenges.

In Chapter One, entitled "Formulating requests in academic emails: Needs and challenges", **Imen Aribi** addresses the significance and importance of "target situation analysis" in order to identify the communicative needs of students in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) context. In her study, she gives her perspectives on students' writing in emails to their teachers. She explains the importance of teaching the various nuances and differences associated with polite and formal email requests that have become an increasingly important and necessary part of students' academic life. The notion of hierarchical relationships and power asymmetry are also addressed in this chapter, which aims to present a study that analyzed a corpus composed of email requests that were made by forty-two postgraduate level Tunisian students of English from different universities in Tunisia. Data collected using a discourse completion test (DCT) suggest that the participants are, to some extent, aware that ranking of imposition and social distance have an impact on communication strategies, yet they fail to consider social status when formulating their requests in the email format. The chapter suggests various pedagogical implications and suggestions for the English as a foreign language (EFL) instructor, such as considering the pragmalinguistic nuances associated with the ways in which email requests are written.

Identifying and acknowledging learners' needs can be beneficial and assist practitioners in improving the overall process associated with course content development, which in turn can also enhance student learning (Cohen and Macaro, 2007; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). In Chapter Two, entitled "Analysis of professional interactions in the context of an artisanal apprenticeship", **Lihua Jin** presents a study that focuses on the learning needs of foreign apprentices in a professional artisanal setting. In this chapter, she proposes a prototype of interactional sequences that could be used as teaching material for the language classroom, both in a professional and traditional context. This prototype is based on a selection of corpora of speaking data between the native master craftsman and the apprentice. This selection of corpora is derived from the professional training interactions encountered during a series of task-based pedagogical methods of instructors and their foreign students for whom French is their second language. In addition, the author suggests some fundamental communicative strategies that are required in this type of workplace environment.

In Chapter Three, entitled "Learning Italian through theatre: Students and migrants on stage", **Antonella Agostino** posits that the production of morphologically correct sentences is not the sole guarantee of language acquisition. In this chapter, she proposes a theatrical project involving innovative didactic techniques in contrast to traditional teaching methods targeting the development of learners' skills, knowledge and confidence. This chapter first imparts the theories that underlie this approach to language teaching, and then the author presents the theatrical project in detail. Finally, she shares the preliminary data results from this study. The results and the feedback obtained, the level of involvement of each learner and the increase in their self-confidence levels appear to confirm the success of this alternative method to foreign language teaching.

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Formulating Requests in Academic Emails: Needs and Challenges

Imen Aribi

Abstract

Writing polite and formal email requests has become a necessary part of academic life for students. However, in hierarchical relationships, where the power asymmetry needs to be maintained or respected (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011: 2), most students are often unfamiliar with the expectations associated with academic email requests. This is particularly the case with student-teacher email interaction in the context of higher education. This chapter aims to analyze a corpus composed of email requests that were made by forty-two postgraduate level Tunisian students of English from different universities in Tunisia. The data were collected using a discourse completion test (DCT), and the results suggest that the participants are, to some extent, aware that ranking of imposition and social distance have an impact on communication strategies, yet they fail to consider social status when formulating their requests in the email format. Finally, this chapter suggests some pedagogical implications and suggestions for the English as a foreign language (EFL) instructor, such as considering the pragmalinguistic nuances associated with the ways in which email requests are written.

Keywords: directness, discourse completion test, email requests, hierarchy, pragmatics, social distance, social power

1. Introduction

Email language is important to study because it is a relatively recent and unique form of communication, which possesses its own proper forms of etiquette. According to Waldvogel (2007: 2), the email has become the most prominent medium for written communication. Emails facilitate interaction between people wherever they may be. This form of communication has been widely adopted for both personal and institutional communication because of its two-way transmission and high speed (Crystal, 2001). It has received much attention from researchers, who have conducted many studies to closely examine it.

The use of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) is the response to the changing needs and objectives of today's university students. Email is often the medium of choice when communicating with lecturers, professors and colleagues. Klassen and Vogel (2003) report that emails are efficient "to some extent" as a means to facilitate and increase the amount of communication between students and their professors. In fact, many researchers (such as Martin et al., 1999; Collins, 1998; Marbach-Ad and Sokolove, 2001; Payne, 1997; Poling, 1994, cited in Chen, 2006) have investigated the communication purposes for which students use emails with their professors. These researchers have found that many of the reasons involve request speech acts. Some of these request speech acts include: building a relationship; getting information or advice about course materials; negotiating the late work policy; challenging grades; showing an interest in and understanding of course material, and "getting on the instructor's good side" (Chen, 2006). However, as email messages lack paralinguistic cues, which are often present in face to face or synchronous communication, an email sender needs to exercise more caution in constructing appropriate messages, especially in situations involving student-faculty communication, which Biesenbach-Lucas (2007) refers to as a status of high power difference.

As part of a study, Bisenbach-Lucas (2007) investigated how native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs) of English formulate e-requests directed at faculty in order to examine the degrees of directness and indirectness. The focus was placed on three types of email requests, such as a request for an appointment, feedback or a deadline extension. For Biesenbach-Lucas (2007), at least half of both NSs' and NNSs' requests were expressed by adding syntactic politeness features. The students tend to rely more heavily on the use of syntactic rather than lexical modifications to soften the force of their e-requests.

Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011) also examined email requests that were sent by Greek Cypriot university students to faculty members over a period of several semesters. The author analyzed the degree of directness, mitigation and forms of address found in the corpus. She reports that students' emails presented a high frequency of direct strategies, an absence of lexical mitigators and inappropriate forms of address. Economidou-Kogetsidis (2011) also observed that openings and closings were missing in the NNSs' emails. She also reported that such emails were perceived as impolite and thus were capable of causing pragmatic failure, which according to Thomas (1983: 93) signifies "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said".

Though email has become a common interpersonal communication medium, it does not mean that this medium is used without difficulty (Aribi, 2018). While there is a growing feeling that many people indeed live in a web world (Haythornthwaite and Hagar, 2005) and are perhaps becoming digital natives, these technological abilities do not seem to translate to academic emails (Prensky, 2001, 2009). Both NSs and NNSs are often faced with uncertainties regarding the style and politeness strategies to use in email interactions (Crystal, 2001; Barron, 2003; Biesenbach Lucas, 2006), especially in the context of hierarchical relationships, where the power asymmetry needs to be maintained. When NNSs make requests in the target culture, despite their grammatical knowledge of that language, they may transfer their native request strategies into the target language and this may result in the production of inappropriate request forms (Koike, 1989).

Several websites like for example https://www. managementstudyguide. com/internet-and-email-etiquettes.htm attempt to provide rules of netiquette (proper internet etiquette) not only for communication strategies, but also for the proper presentation of internet websites or blog posts. With regard to the specific netiquette of emails, the University of South Florida addresses the issue on their website at https://etc.usf.edu/ techease/mac/e-mail/what-is-good-email-netiquette/. Therefore, recommendations on polite online social behaviour do exist. However, Shim (2013) posits that not all email users observe or respect these guidelines. While people can write informal emails to peers or family members in any manner they like, writing emails to figures of authority in academia requires high pragmatic competence and critical language awareness of how discourse can shape and reflect power asymmetry in an institutional context (Chen, 2006). Email writers' ambivalence and uncertainty about how to encode communicative intent in this text-only medium tend to surface especially in hierarchical relationships and in situations involving impositions on the addressee, as Biesenbach-Lucas (2007) points out.

According to Byon (2004), the speech act of requesting is composed of two parts: the request head act and the modifiers. Requests include a main utterance (the request head act), which carries the actual meaning of what is said or written. This request head act is the main utterance that functions as a request and can stand alone without any supportive move to convey the request. In many cases, the request head act is either preceded or followed by peripheral elements (the modifiers), such as hedges, boosters, address forms, downgraders, and upgraders (Byon, 2004: 1675).

According to Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), the variations of three variables in communication refer to social power, social distance and ranking of imposition. Social power is associated with the relative power (P) of the hearer over the speaker. For instance, asking a favour from a friend is generally an easier task compared to asking the same favour of a superior. The social distance (D) between the speaker and the addressee, for example, suggests that it is easier to perform a face-threatening act with an acquaintance than with a stranger. And finally, the ranking or degree of imposition (R) of a specific face-threatening act also has an important impact or role to play. For example, giving someone directions to the hospital is not as demanding or time-consuming as giving someone a lift to the hospital. Each specific culture interprets these variables differently, and thus the language may be shaped differently (Holtgraves and Yang, 1990). These three factors also help to determine the type and level of politeness strategies which need to be used. For Brown and Levinson (1987) and Scollon and Scollon (1995), this may include an assessment of the level of "threat of face", if appropriate. Therefore, as Economidou-Kogetsidis shows (2011), writing status-congruent emails is a skill that requires high pragmatic competence on the part of students.

2. Objectives and method

In this study, a discourse completion test (DCT) was used to elicit data on the use of email request strategies from a group of forty-two postgraduate Tunisian students of English on a Master of Arts (MA) programme, PhD students, or students from differing universities in Tunisia. The participants are proficient in English since they all studied English for at least three years during their Bachelor of Art (BA) programme before enrolling in the postgraduate programme. The study aims to evaluate the participants' requests according to several different sociopragmatic factors. The focus of this study and the subsequent data analysis will be centred on the head acts of requests. The modifiers will not be taken into consideration in this chapter.

The DCT presents eight different situations that the respondents may encounter in terms of email communication. Each situation is based on the variation of three variables (social power, social distance and ranking of imposition) proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) propose a classification for coding the collected email requests, and this method was later modified by Biesenbach-Lucas (2007) and Félix-Brasdefer (2012).

The coding scheme is composed of nine strategy types (based on a scale of directness), which are as follows:

- Mood derivables: utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals illocutionary force (e.g. the imperative);
- Performatives: utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named (e.g. I am asking you to…);
- Want statements: utterances that state the speaker's desire that the hearer carries out the act (e.g. I really want you to…, I'd like to…);
- Need statements: the speaker conveys the illocutionary intent by asserting a particular need (e.g. I need…, I need to know…);
- Direct questions: utterances in which the illocutionary force is expressed through using direct questions;
- Like/appreciate statements: the speaker conveys the illocutionary intent by using like/appreciate statements (e.g. I would appreciate…, I would like…);
- Expectation statements: utterances containing an expectation statement (e.g. I expect…, I hope…);
- Query preparatory: utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions (e.g. ability, willingness) as conventionalized in any specific language (e.g. could you please…, would you…); and
- Hints: utterances whose illocutionary intent is not overtly expressed. Greater inferences are required on the part of the hearer.

3. Data analysis and results

For the purposes of this study, the DCTs are analyzed to evaluate the students' email requests and investigate the impact of social distance, social power and ranking of imposition in their choice of request strategies. All responses are classified into three categories depicting the relative social power between the interlocutors. They are grouped as follows: higher-ranking to lower-ranking, equal to equal ranking, and lower-ranking to higher-ranking request subjects.

3.1. Email request strategies: lower-ranking to higher-ranking subjects

The email request strategies chosen by lower-ranking to higher-ranking subjects can be tested using the data generated by situations one, two, three and four.

3.1.1. Situations one and two

The two following email situations were presented to the students:

Situation One states: *You are in the process of conducting your research and you need to make clear some methodological issues. You write an email to your supervisor in which you request him/her to meet him/her to discuss such points. What would you say in this email?*

Situation Two states: *You have finished writing your PhD thesis and you want your professor to proofread it. You write an email to request your professor to proofread your work. What would you say in this email?*

With regard to the first two situations, the power dimension does not change; the email recipient is in a position of relative authority over the student (the email sender) by virtue of their institutional relationship. The social distance dimension is low, since students and their professors or supervisors typically have frequent and regular interactions in the institutional context. What varies here is the imposition of students' email requests. In situation one, the request is for a face-to-face (FtF) appointment with the supervisor, while in the second situation the request is for the receiver to proofread the sender's dissertation. The request of proofreading is more threatening than the request for an FtF appointment.

3.1.1.1 Situation one

In situation one, the student is asking his or her supervisor for a meeting. The receiver is in a position of social dominance over the requester. This social distance and the ranking of imposition are low. For this particular situation, seventy-six head requests were elicited. The data results are presented in Figure 1-1.

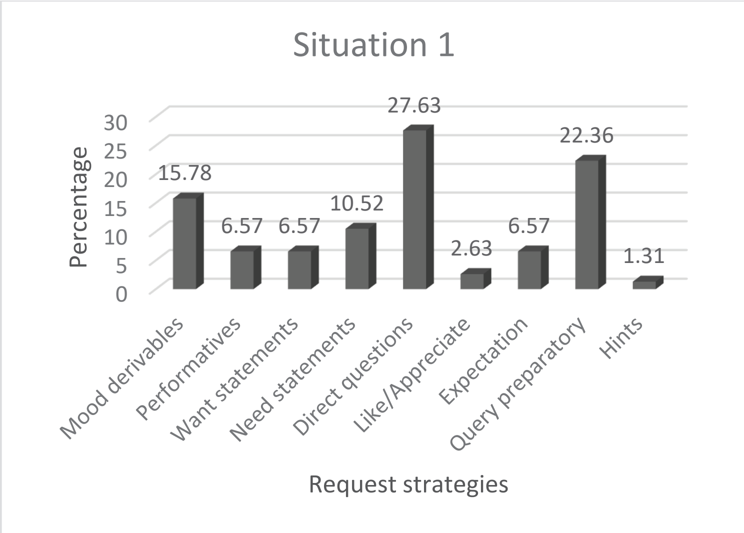

Figure 1-1: Email request strategies used by the participants in situation one

In Figure 1-1, the students in this test group tend to use more direct strategies in addressing their supervisor by means of direct questions (28% or n = 21 requests), mood derivables (16% or n = 12 requests) and need statements (11% or n = 8 requests). Performatives, i.e. want statements and expectation statements, account for 7% (or n = 5 requests) for each direct sub-strategy. The next most frequently chosen strategy is conventionally indirect strategies by means of query preparatory (22% or n = 17 requests). It is worth noting that only one instance of non-conventionally indirect strategies exists (1.31% or n = 1 request) in the form of 'I am in the process of conducting my research and I found some difficulties when dealing with some methodological issues'.

In the context of situation one, the students who make their requests tend to use direct strategy or involvement politeness strategy (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Scollon and Scollon, 1995; Spencer-Oatey, 2000), such as: 'Please sir, let me know when we could discuss some methodological issues concerning my research'. The preference for direct requests in this situation (75% or n = 58 requests) seems to be an instance of solidarity politeness strategy (involvement politeness strategy) and shows that being direct in this situation expresses familiarity, even if the receiver has social power over the sender. Postgraduate students use high levels of directness without the fear of losing 'face', as Brown and Levinson (1987) point out, because the ranking of imposition is low. Furthermore, the speakers consider that there is minimal social distance between them and their interlocutor.

3.1.1.2. Situation two

In situation two, the student is asking the professor to proofread his or her dissertation, and therefore the receiver has a certain degree of social power over the sender. In this situation, the social distance is relatively low; however, the ranking of imposition is high (the act of proofreading a PhD thesis). Figure 1-2 illustrates the results for situation two.

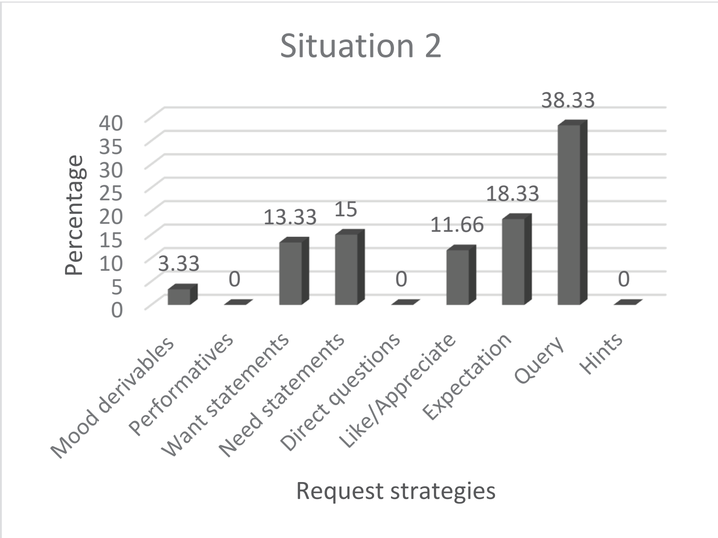

Figure 1-2: Email request strategies used by the participants in situation two

As Figure 1-2 shows, the most frequently used request strategies are direct strategies (62% or n = 37 requests), although the most frequently used sub-strategy is query preparatory (38% or n = 23 requests) in the form of ‘Could you proofread my dissertation, please?’. The most commonly used direct strategies are expectation statements (18% or n = 11 requests), need statements (15% or n = 9 requests) and want statements (13.33% or n = 8 requests), for instance: ‘I wish you proofread my work’. Even if the last statement is grammatically incorrect, the intention is clear.

The use of indirect strategies and direct strategies with softeners in situation two appears to be the marker of respect for the receiver. This is done in order to mitigate and minimize the impact of the face-threatening act of the request that comes in the form of 'I was wondering if you could proofread my PhD thesis'. However, it should be noted that although the recipient has social power over the addresser and the ranking of imposition is higher, direct strategies are used by the students much more often than indirect ones. This may be perceived as rather impolite because the request formulation tends to impede the professor's autonomy and freedom of action, according to Brown and Levinson (1978).

3.1.2. Situations three and four

In the case of the first two situations, the power factor is stable; the receiver is in a higher social position compared to the sender. However, in situations three and four, the social distance is higher, since the email recipient is unknown to the sender. With regard to the ranking of imposition, it is considered that the ranking of imposition of the extension (situation three) is higher than that of the FtF appointment (situation four).

Situation three states: *You heard that Professor 'X', whom you do not know personally, is an expert in the field of your research. You send him an email to request an appointment to speak with him about many important issues concerning your research study. What would you say in this email?*

Situation four states: *You have been accepted to participate in a conference and you were required to send your full paper on a specific date. However, you suddenly became sick and could not follow through with this. You write an email to the organizer of the conference, Professor 'Y', whom you do not know personally, to ask him for a one- or two-day extension. What would you say in this email?*

3.1.2.1. Situation three

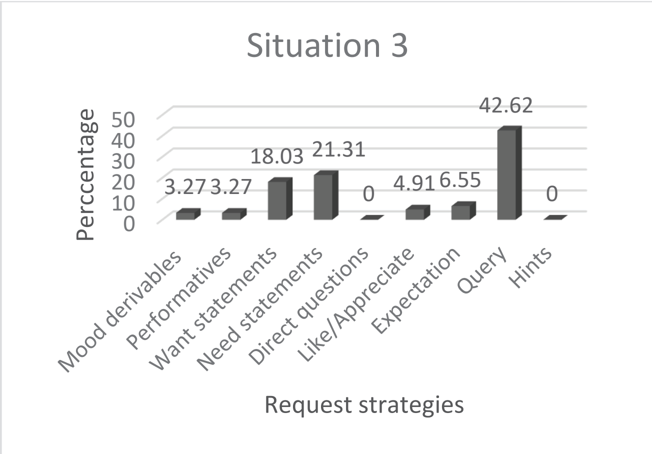

Figure 1-3: Email request strategies used by the participants in situation three

As shown in Figure 1-3, with regard to situation three, the participants tend to prefer conventionally indirect request strategies by means of query preparatory (52% or n = 32 requests). It is also evident that they prefer to use direct request strategies by means of need statements (18% or n = 11 requests) and want statements (11% or n = 7 requests); however, when using conventionally indirect request strategies, for example 'Sorry if I'm bothering you but may I meet you to talk with you about my research study', the email sender appears to attempt to minimize the face-threatening act and the impact of the request. This clearly shows that the email sender consciously acknowledges the fact that the request divulges the existence of social distance. The use of a conventional indirect strategy is the appropriate behaviour in this situation, which may widen the scope of choices for the recipient. Finally, it is important to note here that there is no occurrence of indirect strategies.

3.1.2.2. Situation four

In situation four, the student is asking the organizer of the conference for an extension to the deadline for a paper that is already due. The receiver is once again in a position of social power over the sender. The social distance and the ranking of imposition are higher as compared to situation three. The results for situation four are illustrated in Figure 1-4.

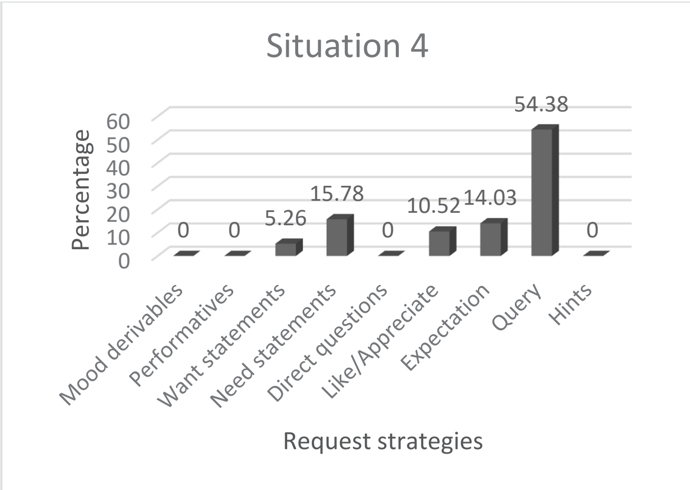

Figure 1-4: Email request strategies used by the participants in situation four

The data for Figure 1-4 reveal that more than half of the participants (54% or n = 42 requests) choose a conventionally indirect strategy by means of query preparatory. However, 46% (or n = 26 requests) of the elicited requests are direct. The most frequently used direct request strategy is need statements, which account for 16% or n = 9 requests, for example 'I need an extension of the deadline for my paper which is already due', followed by expectation statements (14% or n = 8 requests) and like or appreciate statements (11% or n = 6 requests).

In fact, the preference for conventional indirect strategies, for instance 'Could you afford me two days to complete the paper because I was sick?', appears to be the marker of respect for the receiver in order to lessen the threat of the request since the ranking of imposition is higher in this situation. It seems that the participants are aware of the impact of the social factors intervening because all of the factors concerned here are higher.

3.2. Email request strategies: equal to equal-ranking subjects

The equal to equal relation is denoted by situations five and six. In situations five and six, the power status is equivalent or stable, and therefore it does not change. There is a balance in the power status between the interlocutors since they are colleagues. The social distance is lower in comparison to the previous situations, since the students and their colleagues have frequent interactions. What varies in this context is the degree of imposition of the requests. When comparing the two situations here, we believe that the ranking of imposition of the request for a password (situation five) is comparatively lower to that of a statistical analysis (situation six).

Situation five states*: You need the password of a reputed journal to access it and benefit from the online articles. You know that your colleague has the password. You write an email to request that they provide you with the password. What would you say in this email?*

Situation six states: *You are writing your PhD thesis and you know that your colleague is skilful in statistical analysis. You would like to request your colleague's assistance in preparing the statistical part of your thesis. You write an email to request him/her to do so. What would you say in this email?*

3.2.1. Situation five

In situation five, the email writer and the receiver are colleagues. Therefore, there is neither social power nor social distance between them, and the ranking of imposition of the request is relatively low. In Figure 1-5, the data are presented for situation five.

Figure 1-5 reveals that in this situation, the subjects prefer to use direct request strategies (77% or n = 58 requests). The most preferable direct sub-strategy is mood derivables (28% or n = 21 requests), such as in the following form: 'Please, send me the password of the journal', followed by performatives (15% or n = 11 requests), like 'I am asking you to send me the password of the journal', and need statements (13.33% or n = 10 requests), such as 'I need the password of the journal'.

In this situation, the senders use direct strategies or involvement politeness strategies because there is neither social power nor social distance between the interlocutors. In Tunisian cultural codes, a more direct level of interaction between close people such as family members, friends and colleagues is permitted because the speaker assumes only a small social distance between himself or herself and the interlocutor. The preference for direct requests in this situation seems to be an instance of solidarity and shows that being direct with colleagues expresses camaraderie, which is consistent with the cultural norms of Tunisian society.

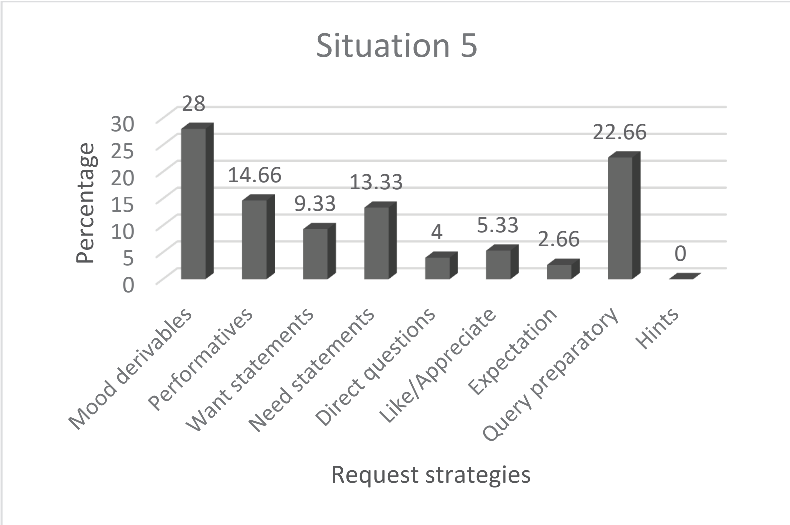

Figure 1-5: Email request strategies used by the participants in situation five

3.2.2 Situation six

In situation six, there is neither social power nor social distance between the interlocutors; however, the ranking of imposition is higher when compared to situation five. In Figure 1-6, the data results for situation six are illustrated.

As shown in Figure 1-6, the students prefer to use direct request strategies (59% or n = 39 requests) and conventionally indirect requests, like ‘Could you please help me in doing the statistical part of my work?’ by means of query preparatory (41% or n = 27 requests). The most frequently used direct strategy is want statements that resemble ‘I want that you help me in doing the statistical part’, which account for 17% or n = 11 requests, need statements (16% or n = 10 requests) and like or appreciate statements (12% or n = 8 requests).

It is interesting to observe that even though the ranking of imposition is higher as compared to situation five, the participants prefer to use direct request strategies. Therefore, it should be noted that the level of the ranking of imposition does not deeply affect the choice of the subjects of the appropriate request strategy. The participants appear to be influenced by Tunisian cultural norms, which denote that being direct or forward with colleagues is part of an expected and accepted cultural code of behaviour.

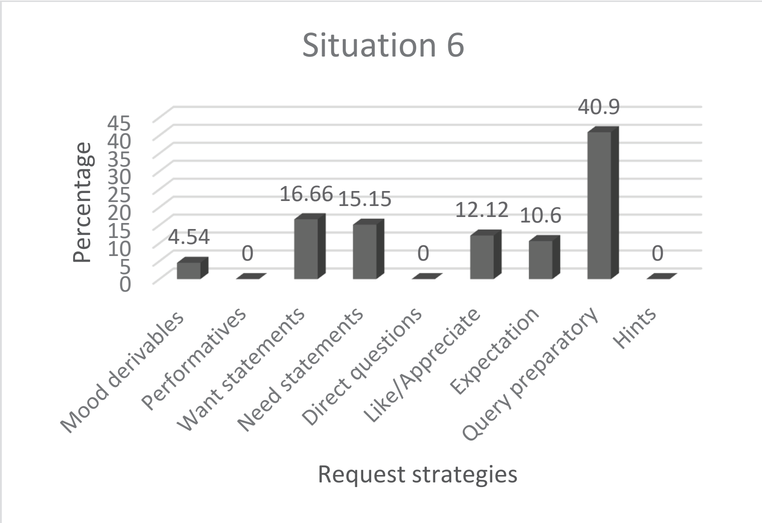

Figure 1-6: Email request strategies used by the participants in situation six

3.3 Email request strategies: higher-ranking to lower-ranking subjects

The higher-ranking to lower-ranking relation is denoted by situations seven and eight. For these situations, the power dimension is stable, since the sender who is the lecturer has relative authority over the student. The social distance dimension is also relatively stable and can be characterized as relatively lower. What varies in this context is the imposition of students' email requests. It is considered that the ranking of imposition of borrowing a book (situation seven) is lower than that of interviewing the student (situation eight). Situations seven and eight are presented below:

Situation seven states: *You need an important pragmatics book and you know that your student has a version of it. You write an email to request him or her to lend you the book. What would you say in this email?*

Situation eight states: *You are in the process of doing your research and need to interview a student of yours. You want to ask her or him to spare* *one or two hours for your interview. You write an email to request this. What would you say in this email?*

3.3.1. Situation seven

The data for situation seven are presented in Figure 1-7.

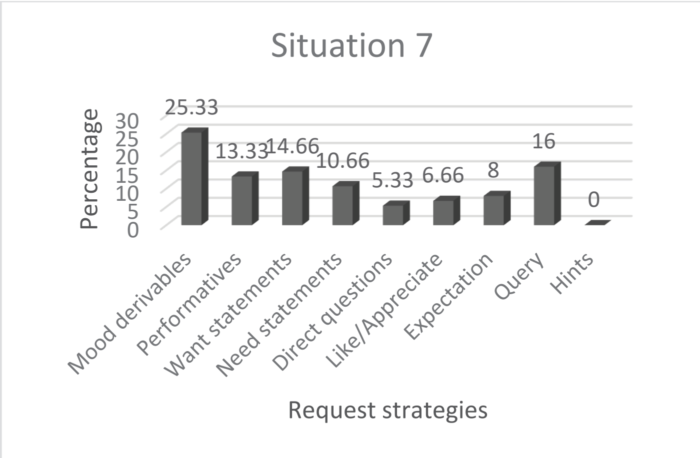

Figure 1-7: Email request strategies used by the participants in situation seven

As clearly indicated in Figure 1-7, the subjects prefer to use more direct strategies by means of mood derivables (25% or n = 19 requests), want statements (15% or n = 11 requests) and performatives (13% or n = 10 requests). The results reveal that query preparatory accounts only for 16% or n = 12 requests.

In this situation, the sender uses a direct strategy or involvement politeness strategy because he or she is in a higher position of authority than the receiver. The participants tend to employ higher levels of directness, for example ‘Please lend me the pragmatics book’, compared to the previous situations without the fear of losing ‘face’, as Brown and Levinson (1987) explain, because it is the expected behaviour in such situations. Another important reason is that the ranking of imposition is lower compared with the previous situations.

3.3.2. Situation eight

The findings for situation eight are represented in Figure 1-8.

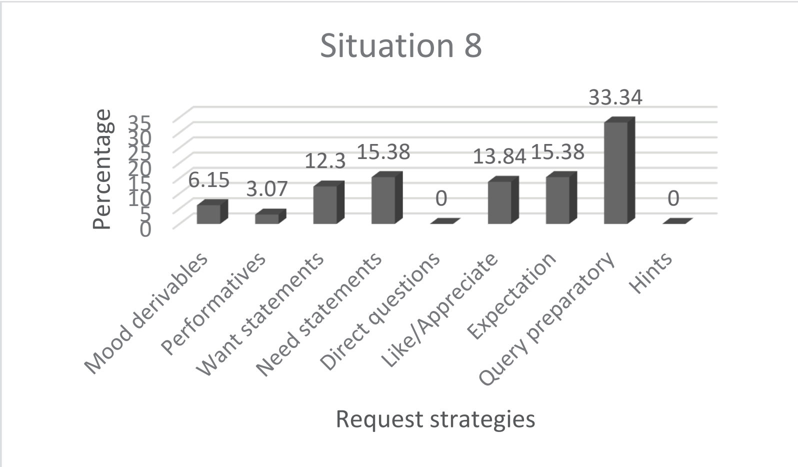

Figure 1-8: Email request strategies used by the participants in situation eight

The data results for situation eight, represented in Figure 1-8, show that the participants prefer to use direct request strategies (67% or n = 43 requests) by means of need statements (15% or n = 10 requests), expectation statements (15% or n = 10 requests), like or appreciate statements (14% or n = 9 requests) and want statements (12% or n = 8 requests) in the form of ‘I really want to interview you in order to facilitate my research work’.

In both situations (seven and eight), there is a tendency to resort to direct request strategies, such as ‘I wish to interview you’ or ‘I am asking you to be interviewed’. However, there is a higher preference for conventionally indirect requests in situation eight because of the high ranking of imposition of the request. This suggests that Tunisian postgraduate students are relatively aware of the influence of the ranking of imposition when initiating low-ranking requests. Thus, the less distant the relationship between the interlocutors, the more power the sender is exerting over the receiver and the more likely it is for the participants to make a direct request.

4. Discussion

A detailed analysis of the request head acts found in the DCT revealed that this group of Tunisian postgraduate students use a varied repertoire of request strategies, but at the same time rely heavily on direct request strategies. The percentage of direct request strategies is consistently higher than that of conventionally indirect requests in six situations. The results of this study reveal that even when addressing their superiors, the participants express their requests directly. In situations one and two, the requester is in a lower position than the requestee, and regardless of whether the rate of imposition is high or low, the participants still preferred to directly formulate a request to their superiors. This finding does not coincide with the findings of Scollon and Scollon (2001) in their politeness framework, which states that in such hierarchical situations, the sender is in a lower professional position and generally avoids using a direct strategy, instead resorting to an independence strategy. Thus, instead of resorting to indirectness, the participants choose to be rather direct, as the data in this study have revealed.

However, in situations three and four, when the receiver is a distant superior, the participants use query preparatory conditionals. It was also noticed that the use of such a strategy is higher when the ranking of imposition is also higher. The findings clearly illustrate that the highest proportion of query preparatory (54%) is found in situation four (asking the professor for an extension). This is because the receiver possesses social power over the addresser. In this context, there is much more social distance between the interlocutors and the ranking of imposition is higher compared to the other situations. Therefore, the higher the social distance between the interlocutors and the rate of imposition, the more likely the senders are to adopt an indirect communication strategy. Therefore, the highest preference for conventionally indirect strategies appears in situations where the relationship between the interlocutors is unequal or distant and often when the rate of imposition is higher.

In situations five and six that denote an equal to equal or a stable relation, the participants prefer to use direct request strategies due to the fact that there is neither a social power nor a social distance barrier between the interlocutors. It should be noted that the level of the ranking of imposition does not deeply affect the choice of the subjects of the appropriate request strategy. The participants appear to be influenced by Tunisian cultural norms that denote that being direct among colleagues is accepted and expected behaviour.

In the Tunisian context, Aribi (2012) found that Tunisian EFL learners resort to their Tunisian cultural norms in formulating their request strategies. Tunisians may deem directness as appropriate when requesting something from a close friend, person or colleague. Therefore, in this cultural context, directness may be assumed to express intimacy and closeness rather than rudeness or impoliteness. This finding supports previous findings in Arab culture that indicate a preference for direct requests in situations where informants were close friends or family members (Abdul-Sattar et al., 2009; Al-Marrani and Sazalie, 2010; Aribi, 2012; Tawalbeh and Al-Oqaily, 2012).

However, according to Han (2013), in British culture, people tend to use conventionally indirect request strategies, even among close friends, in order to be seen as respecting the freedom of action of the receiver by not imposing anything upon him or her. Thus, when comparing British cultural codes and norms to Tunisian ones, there is a clear cultural deviation associated with the politeness norms of the requesting act in English on the part of Tunisian postgraduate students compared to natives. With regard to situations seven and eight, which denote lower-ranking to higher-ranking relations, there is a tendency by social superiors to use a more direct tone when addressing lower-ranking subjects.

When addressing higher-ranking persons, the respondents use a relatively high percentage of mood derivables, as illustrated in situation one. This suggests that the participants of this study are not fully aware of the importance of netiquette and social status when requesting information or services from a social superior, i.e. they are not fully aware of proper politeness conventions and the email netiquette codes that need to be respected and followed. This also implies their poor pragmatic knowledge and a lacuna in the development of their sociolinguistic skills.

Furthermore, the data in this study reveal minimal use of non-conventionally indirect requests in the current DCT (only one occurrence). This reveals that the participants tend to be more direct in their approach to email requests. According to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), native English speakers most often politely adopt conventionally indirect strategies. They use direct strategies less frequently. Bald imperatives will thus be considered as very rude by native English speakers (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). According to Han (2013), in almost all English-speaking countries, individualism is highly valued and cherished, and therefore people in those societies treat others as their equal. As a result, direct strategies or imperatives, which seem more or less like direct orders, will certainly not be appreciated when people make requests.

It could be said that the preference for direct strategies by the participants may be the result of the influence of Tunisian culture. A related point that should be highlighted here is that different cultures view politeness from differing perspectives. Hence, the students tend to express it with differing strategies. As Byon (2004) asserts, making e-requests in a foreign language is face-threatening because it requires considerable cultural and linguistic expertise on the part of the speaker. Thus, inappropriate request strategies can easily cause cultural shock or communication barriers and ultimately breakdowns. Therefore, in order to have successful communication, the email request writers should be aware of the socio-cultural and pragmatic differences between languages and cultures. Thus, Tunisian learners of English should be aware that in certain contexts, indirectness is highly valued in Anglo-Saxon societies, since being direct with a native English speaker may cause misunderstandings (Aribi, 2012).

In order to help learners develop pragmatic knowledge about how to construct email requests appropriately, L2 teachers need to draw attention to cultural and social factors that affect the speech act of requesting through explicit and implicit pragmatic instruction. It is suggested that non-native learners should be offered authentic models of native English email requests in order to conceptualize how native speakers perform requests according to different contexts and social factors. However, the goal of teaching pragmatic practices and offering these authentic email models may not necessarily be to encourage Tunisian learners to achieve native-like speech proficiency. It is also suggested that Tunisian learners should be given input (both native forms as well as those of competent non-native speakers) to help them distinguish appropriate forms from non-appropriate ones. Subsequently, they should be allowed to make their own decisions on how to make requests. In the context of English as a foreign language, a major goal for language instructors should be to teach cultural schemata and to make non-native learners aware of the differences between their own cultural schemata and those of NSs (Najafabadi and Paramasivam, 2012). In teaching sociopragmatics, instructors should remind students that the aim is not to impose values and beliefs on learners, but to inform them about the differences in sociopragmatic norms between cultures and how these norms are reflected in language, as Najafabadi and Paramasivam explain (2012).

5. Conclusion and research implications

In this chapter, the research data and analysis show that the participants overused direct strategies when making email requests, which may enhance a negative effect on their evaluation by the recipient. It is only with distant superiors that they resort to the use of indirectness. Since the direct request strategy and, more specifically, the mood derivable sub-strategy resembles an order, the receiver may be placed in the delicate situation of expressing a written request under instruction or obligation. In this context, if the sender chooses to use imperatives, this may be considered by high-ranking individuals as being too forward, direct or harsh, even if the email includes a dimension of netiquette characterized by the word "please". Thus, in some cases, the use of direct imperatives can be seen as an institutionally inappropriate strategy.

It is worth noting that while the participants are aware to some extent of the effects of social distance and ranking of imposition, they fail to acknowledge the influence of social power when preparing email requests. Even though the participants in this study have an advanced level of English language proficiency, which suggests that they have developed knowledge of lexical and grammatical features of the language, their communication strategies still tend to differ from NSs in their use of email request forms. Indeed, as argued by Lin (2009: 1652), by switching the appropriate perspective, NSs might be more capable of making use of linguistic devices to reduce imposition than L2 learners. Lin (2009) also points out that the pragmatic problems that NNSs may confront could in fact be related to the effects of classroom language instruction. Similarly, the strategies found in the participants' request realizations in the DCT are probably the result of a lack of instruction (grammar and netiquette knowledge).

Accordingly, this study suggests some useful pedagogical implications and provides some suggestions for EFL instructors. English language teachers should pay closer attention to the pragmalinguistic nuances of the ways in which speech acts, such as how requests are realized by their students. However, language instructors find it difficult to understand the importance of the explicit instruction of L2 pragmatics and create the authentic instructional materials needed for these types of activities. For example, in EFL oral English classes, instructors might first assess their students' pragmatic competence by asking them to respond to some simulated authentic professional scenarios. Language instructors could also integrate authentic materials (such as anonymous academic emails) and more classroom awareness-raising activities based on these authentic documents. Finally, EFL teachers and syllabus designers should consider devoting more class time to the development of EFL learners' pragmatic competence by teaching L2 pragmatics.

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ANALYSIS OF PROFESSIONAL INTERACTIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF AN ARTISANAL APPRENTICESHIP

LIHUA JIN

Abstract

The focus of this chapter is to present a study of the professional training interactions encountered during the task-based pedagogical methods of instructors and their foreign students for whom French is their second language. In this professional situation, the foreign students are enrolled in an apprenticeship in which they are fully immersed in an L2 language learning environment. In this setting, the principal means of communication between the native master craftsman and the foreign apprentice is oral communication. Therefore, since the analysis is focused on corpora of speaking data, the methodology related to the use of an interactional database will be applied. Through the analysis of authentic interactional data, the proposition of a prototype of an interactional sequence in professional situations related to the artisanal field (in this case, floral arrangements) is suggested. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a training model based on the student-apprentice's work tasks, as well as to suggest some fundamental communicative strategies that are required in this type of workplace environment.

Keywords: French as a Foreign Language, interactional model in a professional environment, interactions between master craftsman and foreign apprentices, non-verbal interaction, professional interactions, verbal interaction

Introduction

This chapter provides a perspective on how to design task-based language teaching methods in an artisanal field, more specifically that of floral arranging, with an analysis of the professional training conversations and interactions between instructors and their foreign apprentices who are fully immersed in an L2 language learning environment.

However, it should first be noted that, quite often, the words “conversation” and “interaction” are used in a rather confusing or ambiguous way. With regard to conversation, Traverso (2004: 5) suggests that this term refers to informal exchanges between people who know each other well, but it can also refer to any kind of verbal exchange. Yet Traverso (2004: 7) differentiates the two words by expressing that interaction is what happens when a group of people gathered together under certain circumstances engage in a series of exchanges for a specified purpose. An efficient interaction therefore requires that the concerned participants possess the ability to understand and negotiate the meaning of speech. The negotiation of meaning is then the vector force of socialization and the basis for the oral communication framework (Weber, 2013: 262), as shown in Figure 2-1.

As illustrated in Figure 2-1, during interactional situations, the foreign language learners’ communicative needs are directly related to countless speech acts involving a combination of cultural norms and codes, gestures or non-verbal communication, vocabulary or specific jargon. However, it would be impossible to expect the language teacher to provide an exhaustive sampling of communicational contexts to expose learners to natural language patterns in order to prepare them for each interactional situation they may encounter over the course of their lives and career.

Weber (2013: 56) offers an alternative, which is to make the components of the interaction visible. This method includes both the structural and interactional pole. On the one hand, the structural pole includes the functional side of prosodic, rhythmic and articulatory phonetics as well as syntax and lexical skills. On the other hand, the interactional framework comprises social and pragmatic linguistic skills, such as the choice of the type of speech, the degree of politeness, the management of the cultural code of interaction, the gestural behaviours, etc. that are often utilized to different degrees, depending on the type of interaction in which the speakers engage.

In addition, Weber (2013) insists that the identification of clues or indicators that give information about the context of the interaction is highly significant, since this facilitates mutual understanding between the listener and speaker. For example, this includes the setting or environment

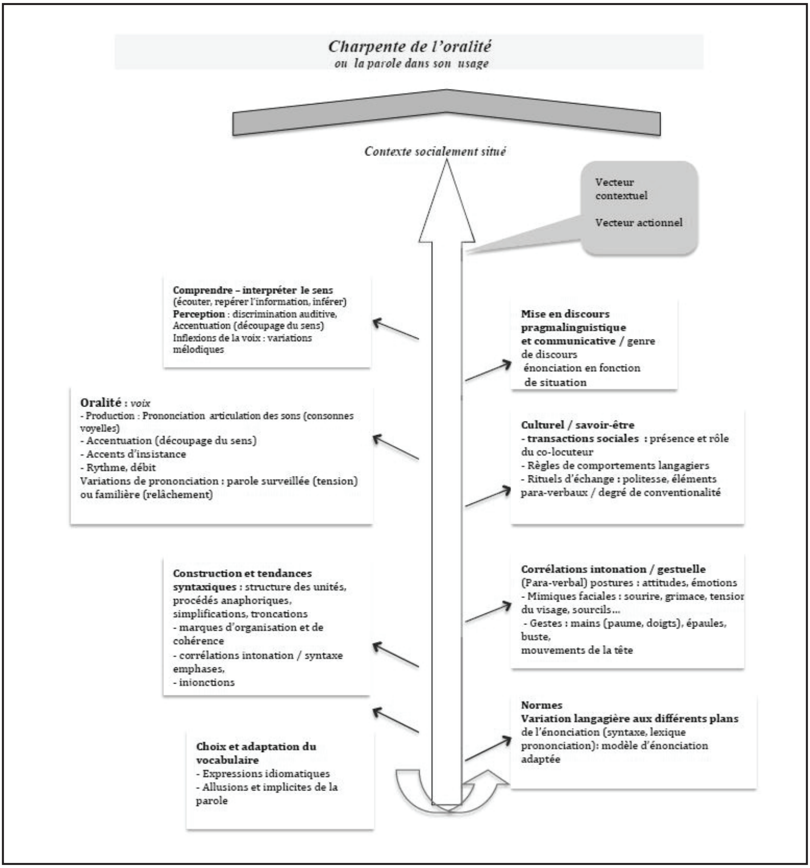

Figure 2-1: The Framework of Oral Communication (Weber, 2013: 262)

where the speech act occurs, the social status of the consenting participants, the presence or interaction of bystanders, and the goal or the objective of the interaction. These aforementioned conditions all have a direct impact on the quality of the interaction. To acquire socialized communicative skills, for instance, speakers must acquire certain specific skills, such as the capacity to adapt one's register to the type of discourse, to produce adequate statements according to the given situation, to respect dialogic communication rituals expected in a given culture, etc. These are considered an integral part of interactional competences and social codes, which need to be taken into account when undertaking a study or observation of the art of social interaction.

According to the framework of oral communication proposed by Weber (2013: 262), the parameters constituting the interactional pole can be examined through corpus analysis. In doing so, it is possible to identify a variety of verbal and non-verbal communication skills and strategies that facilitate communication among learners in various professional situations. It is important to note that in the professional setting, the language teacher must train the learners not only in a specific linguistic field, but also for the use of pragmatic and non-linguistic skills, for instance cultural and gestural paralinguistic skills, to improve and assist in the development of their communication strategies. The analysis of sound recordings would then facilitate the development of a model of interactional sequences. In direct correlation with the hierarchical conversation structure model proposed by Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1990: 193), the sample can be divided into conversational units. This is done to facilitate interaction, since

> (…) in order to deal with one and the same interaction, it is necessary and sufficient that we have a group of participants that is modifiable but not fragmented, [and] that the space-time framework is modifiable but not fragmented, [to] discuss a variable subject without being interrupted. (1990: 216, translation by the author)

Interaction is thus considered as the largest unit in the organization of conversations with its own internal coherence (involving the various participants, spatio-temporal framework or topics of conversation). Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1990: 220) further explains that interactions are also often characterized by an opening and closing sequence. These sequences are strongly ritualized compared to the body of the interaction, which is organized on the basis of interactional themes.

According to the forms and the guidance of the tutor proposed by Kunégel (2011), the opening sequence is often represented by the sequence concerning the “assignment of the task”, and for the closing sequence there is often an “evaluation of the work provided by the apprentice”. Kunégel (2011: 79) explains that the evaluation is a function that takes place during the entire experience since the student is being continually supervised. He regroups evaluation into three main forms: evaluation-measurement, evaluation-judgment, and evaluation-debriefing.

Objectives and methodology

As stated earlier, the underlying objective of this study is to find out how foreign apprentices manage verbal interactions with their native master craftsman in a professional environment. In order to achieve this objective, a sound recording was conducted for approximately twenty hours during one week in the location of the apprenticeship, which was at a floral shop in the Saint Germain des Près quarter of Paris. In March 2015, the same apprentice was observed and recorded for one week right in the middle of her apprenticeship programme. After analysis of this sound recording, a model of interactional sequences based on the various tasks was created. As previously stated, this model was inspired by the various professional exchanges between the native instructor and the apprentice in the workplace and based on a "framework of oral communication" (Weber, 2013: 262). The sound recording was prepared during the days when the apprentice was working at the florist shop. The language used primarily in the interactions is French, since this professional context involves the teaching of French on Specific Objectives (FOS), in this case, floral arrangements within the floral industry. With regard to the transcript and excerpts below, we have provided translations in English when necessary to illustrate and better explain our comments.

The transcripts were made according to the ICOR Convention (CORINTE, 2006) from the University of Lyon 2, which applies to all reference corpus extracts. The ICOR convention can be found on the CORINTE website, created by a research group (*Corpus de Langue Parlée en Interaction* [CLAPI]) at the University of Lyon 2, which is focused on corpus linguistics and, more specifically, language in interaction. CLAPI is a multimedia database of corpora recorded not only in real situations, but also in various contexts. It comprises many types of interaction, such as professional, institutional or private, commercial, didactic or medical. The ICOR Convention, which was created within this framework, directly responds to our requirements, since our objective is to discern the most important elements for the fine analysis of the interactions. This model will facilitate the transcription of the verbal and paraverbal phenomena during the interactions. For the above reasons, the ICOR Convention was selected to transcribe the registered soundtracks.

From the interactional approach (Weber, 2013), the group of participants signifies the speakers who are involved directly or indirectly in an interaction; so, we are referring to those individuals who provided data for the constitution of the corpora in this study. The interactional roles of the participants are presented in Table 2-1.

Participant	**Interactional / interlocutive role**
ASA	Apprentice / speaker, listener
MUR	Master, florist / speaker, listener
JUL	Colleague at the florist, florist / speaker, listener
JEF	Colleague at the florist, florist / speaker, listener
ANA	Apprentice, colleague at the florist / listener
CLI 1, 2, 3…	Client / speaker, listener
CHErcheur/NOUs	Researcher / listener ('eavesdropper')

Table 2-1: The participants and their interactional/interlocutive role

With reference to Goffman (1987: 137–138), Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1998: 82) explains that a participant of an interaction can assume one or several roles at the same time, whether it is linked to social status or an interacting status. In this study, and as the convention requires, all proper names are replaced by pseudonyms. From the apprentice's standpoint (ASA), the master (MUR) is the main and direct interlocutor in the workplace. Thus, the apprentice-master couple ASA-MUR fulfils an institutional status that is assigned specifically to them. They also exchange interactional roles as the transmitters and receivers of messages, which occur in the same space-time framework.

Furthermore, as the researcher, we position ourselves and define our interactional role as that of a simple bystander, according to the opinions of Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1998: 86), because the researcher is present only through recorders and is not physically present or participating in the interaction or workplace. The researcher is therefore not part of the ratified participants of the conversational group from whom a personal commitment or opinion may be expected in the interaction. Despite their physical presence, an interlocutor can be addressed directly or indirectly, according to a specific time and a specific situation. That is to say, the participants can be involved or implicated in an interaction with differing degrees of directness.

Analysis of the transcript excerpts

In general terms and in the professional context of this study, the apprentice attends classes to acquire craftwork or artisanal skills (within the floral industry), and this process occurs by means of social and professional interactions. As an apprentice, the student is not only dealing with the specific role of a student, which coincides with social status, but also interactional roles: those of speaker or interlocutor. Inspired by the tutorial model proposed by Kunégel (2011: 57), this study describes the interactional configuration of a professional task pertaining to an artisanal apprenticeship in the floral industry. All task assignments begin when the order is clearly given by the tutor or master. It is interesting to note that this order most often comes from the master. Meanwhile, the verbal instructions that are given to instruct the apprentice cover a main task to be achieved, but as Kunégel (2011: 61) points out, they also often include several micro-tasks that detail the steps and method required to accomplish the main task. For the interactional roles of each of the participants appearing in this section, please refer to Table 2-1 in the previous section.

1 Assignment of tasks

Task transmission given by the master

The instruction provided for the explanation of a task occurred at the beginning of an interaction sequence. The interaction sequence is brief and lasts only a few seconds. MUR (as the master craftsman) proposes a task to ASA by making a suggestion. With regards to the presentation format, all of the transcripts respect the basic level of the ICOR Convention (the reader is referred to the CORINTE website), which sets the rules for the insertion of the space, the choice of the font, the use of tabs, the codes and the abbreviations, as well as the special punctuation marks used in the transcription. It should be noted that in the transcript, the beginning of the overlap is indicated by the symbol *[*.

Audio excerpt 1: 'After that can you make a bouquet with this?'

('*est c' que après tu peux faire un bouquet avec ça?*')
03:29:30-03:34:56 (March 18th 2015, 15h-21h)

MUR	asax est c' que après tu peux faire un bouquet avec ça/
ASA	oui
MUR	oui/ mais pas trop court
ASA	comme si vraiment petit/
MUR	oui petit mais pas trop serré pas trop petit
ASA	oui\
MUR	d'accord/ du coup j'ai pas mis de feuillage mais tu peux en mettre un peu de feuillage là dedans
ASA	ok

Task: Make a bouquet of flowers

Micro-tasks: How to make a bouquet: grouping floral elements, size and density.

This extract shows a typical interaction sequence in which the master craftsman transmits the task instructions by detailing the actions to be performed. The master begins the interaction by specifying the task to be performed in the form of a request to the apprentice. Once the nature of the task 'Make a bouquet of flowers' is evoked, the master completes her instructions with more precise requests concerning the length ("short", « *court* »), the size ("small", « *petit* »), the width ("tight", « *serré* »), the degree of precision ("not too much, « *pas trop* ») and the element of completion ("add foliage", « *ajouter le feuillage* »).

The following transcript describes a sequence of interaction where there are three interlocutors present: MUR as the direct superior of ASA, and JEF, an employee of the florist shop and a work colleague of ASA. MUR alternates turns of speech between the two interlocutors. The most common form of opening a sequence is shown in this excerpt. As we can see, the task comes from the master: "what can you do?" («*qu'est-ce que tu peux faire?*»). Meanwhile, the statement addressed to JEF by MUR is a type of consultation: "for the orders, what should we order?" («*pour les commandes, on fait quoi comme commande ?*»). Unlike a brief request for an opinion addressed to her colleague with an equal professional status, the statements addressed to ASA by MUR are characterized by a series of gestures to be performed by the apprentice, for example, "put down" (« *faire descendre* »), "fill" (« *remplir* ») and "throw" (« *jeter* »).

***Audio excerpt 2*: ‘What can you do?’**

(‘*qu'est-ce que TU peux faire*’)
04:23:37-04:26:48 (March 18th 2015, 15h-21h)

MUR	qu'est-ce que TU peux faire/ ben là là la mousse on peut la redescendre la ranger ça on va ranger et on va remplir un petit peu il nous faut des bacs ou pas JEFxx
JEF	oui (inaud.)
MUR	oui mais toi pour les commandes on fait quoi comme commande
JEF	(inaud.)
MUR	bon ben on va remplir deux petits là comme ça
ASA	oui=
MUR	=et deux comme ça le mets à moi trois quarts de de un quart d'eau/
ASA	oui eh=
MUR	=deux grandes et petit là sur ça
ASA	(inaud.)on met de l'eau=
MUR	=de l'eau oui
ASA	ça c'est=
MUR	=oui ça on va les jeter (.) est-ce que tes branches de magnolia elles sont dans l'eau ((bruit de l'eau))
ASA	dans l'eau/
MUR	ben c'est pas en bac quoi (inaud.) oui mais ça on sort ah bon qu'est-ce qu'elle dit/

Task: Tidy up	**Micro-tasks**: Micro-actions, for instance, “put down” (« *faire descendre* »), “fill” (« *remplir* »), “put” (« *mettre* »), etc.

Audio excerpt 3 happens near the end of their work day of service. MUR allows ASA an early departure after noticing that there is not much left to do. As this excerpt (below) shows, MUR is somewhat at a loss when she says “I do not know what can you do, you can go… there is not much more to do” (« *j'sais pas qu'est-ce que tu peux faire tu peux y aller y a plus grand chose à faire* »). To sum up, the day of the apprentice is sequenced by the tasks assigned to them by the master and the apprentice relies on these commands most of the time.

Audio excerpt 3: ‘but not white bouquets ... that is beautiful that is yes’

(‘*mais non des bouquets blancs ... LA c'est beau LA oui*’)
4:30:07-4:32:00 (March 18th 2015, 15h-21h)

MUR bon ben j' sais pas qu'est-ce que tu peux faire tu peux y aller hein asax
ASA je peux/
MUR ben oui il est huit heure vas-y bon ben finir puis y a plus grand chose à faire ok/

The above excerpts show that the task assigned to the apprentice by the master does not necessarily take the form of an explicit request. The assignment is indicated by a monologue followed by a proposal from the teacher, such as “what can you do” (« *qu’est-ce que tu peux faire* ») and “we can...” (« *on peut…* »). The master enunciates a series of short actions to be carried out in order to accomplish the task. She issues these orders through the implementation of deixis elements of place, like “there” (« *LA* »), “that” (« *ça* ») and so on.

Initiative on the part of the apprentice with permission and instructions given by the master

A rare occurrence but no less significant, the apprentice sometimes proposes tasks that she wishes to accomplish. In audio excerpt 4, to express her desire, the apprentice uses the most common expression of a wish: “I would like” (« *je voudrais* »). MUR responds with an affirmation: “yes” (« *oui* »). At the same time, MUR does not forget to refer to what was already done by the apprentice the previous week: “Saturday I came and you already had anax or you took out the plants outside” (« *samedi je suis venue et vous aviez déjà anax ou toi a sorti l'extérieur les plantes* »), comparing the work of the previous Saturday to what has been done that day: “in fact you put it all that way... while you see how we do...” (« *en fait vous l'aviez mis tout comme ça... alors que tu vois comme on fait...* »). This comparison leads to micro-tasks to be done to better prepare the work for the next day: “we position the small leaves, we put plants upright, (then) a lower one, there must be beautiful movement like that as a whole, don’t put everything like that” (« *on met de petit livres on mets des plantes en hauteur un plus bas i faut qu'i y ait comme ça du mouvement et des beaux ensembles faut pas mettre tout comme ça* »).

Audio excerpt 4: ‘it's good to want to do it’

(‘*c'est bien de vouloir le faire*’)
01:59:36-02:01:22 (March 20th 2015, 10h-17h)

ASA	c’est possible demain matin=
MUR	=oui/
ASA	je voudrais euh dehors (inaud.)
MUR	non/
ASA	dehors dehors
MUR	tu veux faire dehors/=
ASA	=oui=
MUR	=oui=
ASA	mettre bouquets
MUR	oui
ASA	(inaud.)
MUR	que toi/
ASA	oui
MUR	[d’accord
ASA	[(inaud.) la semaine dernière [(inaud.)non non non deux [semaines moi et anax on a fait on est allées après euh jefxx m’a dit euh c’est [pas
MUR	[oui [oui [c’est pas comme ça
ASA	je vais essayer/=
MUR	=oui c’est bien bon euh regarde là aujourd’hui tu regarderas bien comment c’est fait c'est parce que moi euh samedi je suis venue et vous aviez déjà anax ou toi sorti à l'extérieur les plantes=
ASA	=ah mais demain matin euh [toi et
MUR	[oui c’est moi demain matin [avec toi d’accord/
ASA	[oui oui

ASA proposes setting up the exterior of the flower shop

Validation of the proposal followed by instructions (Task: take the plants outside)

MUR	et en fait vous l'aviez mis tout comme ça
ASA	hm
MUR	alors que tu vois comme on fait on met de petit livres on met des plantes en hauteur un plus bas il faut qu’il y ait comme ça du mouvement et des beaux ensembles faut pas mettre tout comme ça euh tu vois/
ASA	oui=

Reminder from the master

MUR =oui d’accord tu feras demain matin si tu veux (.) c'est bien c’est bien de vouloir le faire

Task: Take the plants outside

Micro-tasks: Micro-actions, for instance, “put it higher” (« *metre en hauteur* »), “put it lower” (« *metre plus bas* »), “create movement” (« *avoir du mouvement* »).

The above excerpts show that the apprentice sometimes boldly demonstrates initiative in making several propositions to the instructor. As excerpt 4 shows, ASA confidently makes proposals for tasks that she feels she can competently fulfil. In this case, the master accords her permission and provides some careful advice. As in excerpt 4, excerpt 5 also begins with the apprentice’s turn of speech. The apprentice breaks the silence in search of a task that she could do. It should be noted here that the following interaction occurred after a long silence. This is probably because the master would have been focused on her own tasks.

Audio excerpt 5: ‘Yes tell me’

(‘*oui dis moi*’)
02:57:00-02:59:50 (March 20th 2015, 10h-17h)

ASA murxx j’ai juste (inaud.)
MUR oui dis moi
ASA tu connais euh un <((en anglais)) crown>
MUR faire une couronne/
ASA c’est pour moi si=
MUR =oui
ASA euh euh je vais acheter=
MUR =non mais c'est bon ça coûte rien asax la eh le mimosa
ASA c’est comme ça euh (inaud.)
MUR =tu veux faire toi même une couronne d'autres choses/
ASA oui d'autres choses=
MUR =oui d'accord
ASA =oui ça va/
MUR oui=
ASA =mais maintenant je vais euh je dois qu’est-ce que je dois (inaud.) non/
MUR euh tu dois euh tu veux faire un bouquet/=

Even if the word is found by the teacher, the initiative is taken by the apprentice

The initiative comes from the apprentice, followed by a proposal from the master

ASA =oui
MUR parce que soit pour la boutique/soit pour demain/
ASA oui
MUR y a euh un <((en anglais)) sweet flow > et (.) et lui c'est que des roses mélangées à cinquante euros ça veut dire qu'i faut que tu prennes (.) en tout tu prends quinze roses [de petites roses mélangées [des roses plus grosses [mais dans ces tons [là un peu
ASA [quinze roses [oui oui [oui [oui d'accord

Micro-tasks: how to make a 'sweet flow' bouquet

Task: Make a 'sweet flow' bouquet

Micro-tasks: How to make a 'sweet flow' bouquet: kinds of flower, price, quantity, form, colour

At first, ASA brings the master onto a subject that interests her: "I just... you know uh a < ((in English)) crown>?" (« *j'ai juste... tu connais euh un <((en anglais)) crown>* »). MUR realized the apprentice's will to want to do something; she suggests to ASA: "you want to make yourself a crown (or) other things?" (« *tu veux faire toi même une couronne (ou) d'autres choses* »). It is only afterwards that ASA directly asks what she can do: "but now I am going to have, what I am…?" (« *je vais euh je dois qu'est-ce que je* ») Then MUR proposes a specific task: "you got to, you want to make a bouquet?" (« *tu dois euh tu veux faire un bouquet* ») and gives details on the price ("fifty Euros", « *cinquante euros* »), on the amount ("fifteen roses", « *quinze roses* »), on the form ("small mixed roses with larger roses", « *des petites roses mélangées [avec des roses plus grosses* ») and on the colour ("in these tones...", « *dans ces tons...* »). The initiative coming from the apprentice is followed by a proposal from the master who provides subsidiary tasks for the apprentice to undertake.

In this professional situation, a typical interaction between the apprentice and the master opens with exchanges aimed at assigning a task and quickly transmitting instructions to the apprentice. These instructions, which arrive prior to the execution of the task, are also referred to as the "pre-guide step" (as translated by the author from the original « *guidage avant* » in Kunégel, 2011: 61). This method prepares the apprentice by extending the instruction by means of a succession of several pieces of advice. At this precise moment, it is crucial for the master to be functioning at a very high level of accuracy and precision, especially when it comes to micro-instructions.

2 Guidance and the apprentice

Kunégel (2011: 61) explains that the instructor's guidance incorporates all of the verbal sequences used to assist the apprentice in their learning. These statements are intended to direct the work and prevent the possibility for error whilst providing useful information for the execution of the task.

Task execution accompanied by detailed micro-instructions

The next transcript, excerpt 6, includes an interaction sequence where the tutor detects a difficulty encountered by the apprentice and intervenes to inquire about what type of difficulty is involved.

Audio excerpt 6: 'Is it difficult? What is it?'

('*c'est difficile/ qu'est ce qu'y a*')

03:29:18-03:30:45 (March 20th 2015, 10h-17h)

MUR c'est difficile/
ASA oui
MUR qu'est ce qu'y a/
ASA parce que (inaud.) je vais essayer euh créer magnolia

Difficulty detected

MUR magnolia/
ASA magnolia=
MUR tu peux
ASA mais euh en plus c'est bizarre ça ça va/
MUR magnolia/
ASA mais euh en plus c'est bizarre ça ça va/
MUR ben tu peux mettre une branche en plus sur le côté mais essaie de faire un bouquet pas trop euh euh ben la branche de magnolia tu la mets qu'à la fin tu vois/ tu essaie de faire un bouquet un peu rond même si y a des hauteurs des piquets et des branches de magnolia tu la mets que sur le bord comme ça tu essaies si ça si tu trouves que c'est pas beau tu l'enlèves [d'accord/
ASA [hm

Useful tips for making a uniform bouquet

MUR et ça c’est très beau=
ASA =oui
MUR une bonne idée mais je pense qu'il faudra que tu les mettes dans les pipettes [pace que c'est trop court
ASA [oui

The apprentice says she is in trouble but she cannot explain what kind of problem she has encountered and only gives her general impression: “but uh also it's weird, is it okay?” («*mais euh en plus c'est bizarre ça ça va* »). It is finally up to MUR to observe and perceive the strangeness to which ASA is referring in order to provide practical advice on how to adjust the different lengths of each stem of magnolia: "you can put another branch on the side but try to make a bouquet not too uh uh... well the branch of magnolia, you put it that at the end you see? You try to make a bouquet a little round, even if there are heights of stakes and branches of magnolia you put it only on the edge like that you try if you think it's not nice you take it off” («*tu peux mettre une branche en plus sur le côté mais essaie de faire un bouquet pas trop euh euh ben la branche de magnolia tu la mets qu'à la fin tu vois/ tu essaie de faire un bouquet un peu rond même si y a des hauteurs des piquets et des branches de magnolia tu la mets que sur le bord comme ça tu essaies si ça si tu trouves que c’est pas beau tu l’enlèves [d'accord/* »). It is interesting to note here that the difficulty, either detected by the tutor or expressed by the apprentice, results in very detailed instructions by the tutor.

Audio excerpt *7*: ‘We have to make bouquets’

(‘*Là il faut qu'on fasse les bouquets*’)
00:39:14-00:41:59 (March 21st 2015, 10h-17h)

MUR maintenant il faut qu'on fasse les bouquets (.) tu sais/ [soit euh soit y en a <((en anglais)) spirit white > comme (inaud.)
((bruit de voiture))
ASA [oui (inaud.)

Task: make a ‘spirit white’ bouquet

MUR oui c'est comme ça donc c'est rose blanche petite les grosses les branchus et du freesia et normalement y a des plassanta mais là on n’en a pas et euh je te donne hortensia d'accord/ je vais t’ dire combien tu peux prendre le rose ah

Instructions detailing micro tasks

attends c'est quatre-vingt eh donc on va dire eh tu vas les compter à tr-
ASA (inaud.)
MUR plus les hortensia on mette euh oui tu peux en mettre un plus freesia [oui de toute façon 15 et <((sonnette de téléphone))après eh tu peux mettre un peu de jasmins parce qu'il y en a un p'ti peu>
ASA [(inaud.) oui
((sonnette de téléphone))
MUR murx bonjour
((00:40:40))
((passage non transcrit))
((00:40:47))
ASA je mets quinze pièces/ [rose/
MUR [quinze tu peux en prendre quinze rose en mélangé eh les p'tites et les grosses

- Doubt raised by the apprentice during the execution of the task
- Doubt solved by the guidance of the master

Despite having received prior instructions – “yes it's like that so it's white, pink, little, big, branchy and freesia and normally there are *plassanta* but there is no *plassanta* right now and uh I give you hydrangea okay / I'll tell you how many of the roses you can take ah wait it’s eighty eh so we'll say eh you'll count them " (« *oui c'est comme ça donc c'est rose blanche petite les grosses les branchus et du freesia et normalement y a des plassanta mais là on n’en a pas et euh je te donne hortensia d'accord/ je vais t’ dire combien tu peux prendre le rose ah attends c'est quatre-vingt eh donc on va dire eh tu vas les compter* ») – the apprentice may still encounter difficulties in the execution of the task.

In excerpt 7 (above), the master guides and assists the apprentice in executing the various micro-task operations in every small clue given by ASA, even if it is inaudible and not explained: {ASA(inaud.)}, {MUR: “put more hydrangeas uh yes you can put one more freesia [yes anyway 15 and <((phone rings)) after eh you can put a little jasmine because there is a little bit left>"} (« *plus les hortensia on mette euh oui tu peux en mettre un plus freesia [oui de toute façon 15 et <((sonnette de téléphone)) après eh tu peux mettre un peu de jasmins parce qu'il y en a un p'ti peu>* »). Difficulties can be raised by the apprentice or detected by the master, as shown in the two above extracts above. According to Kunégel (2011: 66), this type of guidance, called “guidance during the execution operations” (translated by the author from the original « *le guidage des opérations d’exécution* ») is the most common in real practice.

3 Evaluation of Tasks

As mentioned earlier, Kunégel (2011: 79) mentions three forms of evaluation: evaluation-measurement, evaluation-judgment, and evaluation-debriefing. In the context of this study, our analysis has resulted in the discovery of merely the last two kinds of evaluation: *evaluation-judgment* and *evaluation-debriefing*. Overall, the data reveal that evaluation-judgment is the most prevalent form of evaluation. Kunégel (2011: 79) describes evaluation-judgment as “the master expressing, in a reproachful yet supportive form, what he thinks of the performance of the apprentice".

Reproach with a Compliment

Excerpt 8 deals with a sequence of evaluations of ASA’s work by her tutor MUR.

Audio excerpt 8: ‘She has tied it several times’

(‘*elle a attaché plusieurs fois*’)
04:11:48-04:13:39 (March 18th 2015, 15h-21h)

MUR	OH: elle a attaché plusieurs fois OH la [OH la tricheuse là oh:	
JEF	[ça c'est pas bien	Reproach
ASA	[oui: mais j'ai	
JEF	non:=	
MUR	=non c'est pas grave c'est juste qu'on a vu que tu es une tricheuse c'est tout t'es une tricheuse t'es une tricheuse asax qu'est-ce que tu veux que je te dise après c'est pas grave hein après il faut l'assumer hein même (.) et c'est du BEAU boulot	
JEF	après c'est joli quoi	
MUR	ah oui bravo moi j'aime bien hein [tu vas aller dans la boutique/ dans un vase/ déjà vas me- ça là bas ça	Compliment

MUR begins by pointing out a negative aspect of ASA’s work without being ambiguous: “she has tied it several times, oh, cheater there” (« *elle a attaché plusieurs fois OH la [OH la tricheuse là oh:* »). This is because she needs to be as precise as possible in order to transmit the best gestures that need to be reproduced by the apprentice. To soften this rather harsh but essential step, she uses a touch of humour so that the apprentice is not discouraged by the negative comment: “no it’s not serious it’s just that we saw that you’re a cheater that’s all you’re a cheater… what do you want me to tell you after all… you need to accept your actions…” (« *non c'est pas grave c'est juste qu'on a vu que tu es une tricheuse c'est tout t'es une tricheuse t'es une tricheuse asax qu'est-ce que tu veux que je te dise après c'est pas grave hein après il faut l'assumer hein même* »). After observing that the error was corrected, MUR does not forget to express positive reinforcement and support while paying a compliment to ASA: “and it’s a BEAUTIFUL job... ah yes bravo I like it very much...” (« *(.) et c'est du BEAU boulot... ah oui bravo moi j'aime bien hein...* »).

Compliment with tips for improvement

In excerpt 9 below, a form of evaluation consisting of a compliment followed by improvement tips is illustrated:

Audio excerpt 9: ‘A good idea but’

(‘*une bonne idée mais*’)
03:29:18-03:30:45 (March 20th 2015, 10h-17h)

MUR	une bonne idée mais je pense qu'il faudra que tu les mettes dans les pipettes [parce que c'est trop court
ASA	[oui

Compliment

→Tips for improvement

MUR compliments ASA’s creative idea by saying that it is “a good idea” (« *une bonne idée* »), and then she continues her assessment with a point that could make ASA’s idea even better: “but I think you’ll have to put them in the vials [because they’re too short” (« *mais je pense qu'il faudra que tu les mettes dans les pipettes [parce que c'est trop court* »).

Debriefing on what happened with a compliment (about good intentions)

The following data refer to a second form of evaluation, the evaluation-debriefing: the master, following an event (often an error), comments on what happened (Kunégel, 2011: 79).

Audio excerpt 10: 'It's good to want to do it'

('*c'est bien de vouloir le faire*')
01:59:36-02:01:22 20 (March 20th 2015, 10h-17h)

MUR et en fait vous l'aviez mis tout comme ça
ASA hm
MUR alors que tu vois comme on fait on met de petits livres on mets des plantes en hauteur un plus bas i faut qu'i y ait comme ça du mouvement et des beaux ensembles faut pas mettre tout comme ça euh tu vois/
ASA oui=
MUR =oui d'accord tu feras demain matin si tu veux (.) c'est bien c'est bien de vouloir le faire

Reminder of a fact from the past

Compliment on the will

The extract above shows a passage where MUR refers to some previous actions: "and in fact you had put it all like that" (« *et en fait vous l'aviez mis tout comme ça* »). MUR does so in order to recall some earlier work done by ASA in the past that was comparatively less successful. Faced with this failure, MUR not only produces a commentary, but she also takes time to encourage ASA on her good will that she believes merits a compliment in the form of "it's good to want to do it" (« *c'est bien c'est bien de vouloir le faire* »). The above extract shows that the tutor's compliment is not only about the quality of the apprentice's work, but also about her willingness to learn and improve.

To sum up, the verbal evaluation sequences include both reproaches and statements of encouragement from the master. When there is a negative remark about the performance of the apprentice, the master looks for positive points whilst approving of investment and effort in the form of a compliment. This demonstrates the master's approval of the apprentice's professional work attitude and quality of work. However, when there is a compliment, it is often followed by the master's tips for further improvement. Through the transcribed and observed data, we find that the professional interactions of an apprentice in the artisanal field are more or less regulated by recurrent sequences.

In excerpt 11 (below), the interaction reveals a classic example of the opening and closing sequences of a task.

Audio excerpt 11: 'After that can you make a bouquet with this?'

('*est c' que après tu peux faire un bouquet avec ça*')
03:29:30-03:34:56 (March 18th 2015, 15h-21h)

MUR	comment tu t'inquiètes asax est c' que après tu peux faire un bouquet avec ça/
ASA	oui
MUR	oui/ mais pas trop court
ASA	comme si vraiment petit/
MUR	oui petit mais pas trop serré pas trop petit
ASA	oui\
MUR	d'accord/ du coup j'ai pas mis de feuillage mais tu peux en mettre un peu de feuillage là dedans
ASA	ok
	(...)
ASA	oh la la je suis contente
JUL	ben oui elles ont eu succès asax
ASA	ah bon

Opening: instructions to perform the task

Closing: evaluation

Excerpt 11 illustrates a model of interaction based on the task being carried out by the apprentice. The opening is focused on the assignment of a task: "After that can you make a bouquet with this?" (« *est c' que après tu peux faire un bouquet avec ça/* »), and the closing is summed up in the phase of evaluation of the work by the tutor: "well yes they look good asax" (« *ben oui elles ont eu succès asax* »).

In the context of a formal professional interaction, there is usually not much overlap in speech. That is to say, each interlocutor listens to their colleague(s) and, ideally, each speaker politely and attentively awaits their turn or opportunity to speak. In real life, however, overlaps are much more common, as the previous excerpts have revealed. When there is an overlap, we find that at least one person maintains their turn. Apart from the principle "everyone speaks in turn", we also note that the participants of an interaction strive to preserve a balance in terms of the length or duration of their turn within the interaction.

From an overall perspective, one of the most important strategies for foreign language learners to develop at the early stage of their learning process is related to the management and respect of cultural codes. This means they should observe others and learn from them in terms of speaking and turn-taking during verbal interactions. In fact, it is crucial for a non-native apprentice to learn about and manage interactions in problematic situations, such as when instructions issued by the master regarding a task are not understood or misunderstood by the apprentice.

In excerpt 12 (below), the potential for awkwardness during these overlaps is presented:

Audio excerpt 12: ‘What did you do on your holidays?’

(‘*qu'est-ce que t'as fait de tes vacances*’)
00:42:22-00:44:52 (March 18th 2015, 15h-21h)

Part 1

MUR	alors asax qu'est-ce que t'as fait de tes vacances/
ASA	j'ai guidé\
MUR	t'as guidé/
JUL	ben oui elle est le guide [elle a guidé des amis
MUR	[t'as guidé tes amis/guider l'aveugle
ASA	[j'ai guidé
JEF	<((en riant)) guider l'aveugle>
MUR	la langue de signe/
JEF	tu vas dehors en fait c'est pas très correcte guider\
ASA	ah bon/ comment on dit au lieu de (inaud.)
JEF	j'ai fait visiter je fait visiter paris [à mes amis
ASA	[ah d'accord avec/ [avec mes amis/
JEF	[non à mes amis=
MUR	[non à mes amis
ASA	=à mes amis hm hm d'accord

Verbal signals: ask a question

Verbal signals: repetition of teacher's answer as a sign of understanding

The first part of excerpt 12 shows a little linguistic awkwardness, which is corrected by the tutor. The tutor MUR and colleague JUL present in the interaction intervene at the same time to rush to correct the error of the apprentice: JUL: “[she guided friends” (« *[elle a guidé des amis* »); MUR: “[you guided your friends/guided the blind man” (« *[t'as guidé tes amis/guider l'aveugle* »). In response to this interruption, ASA also reacts with overlapped speech: “[I guided” (« *[j'ai guide* »), which has an interrogative value: “*what is wrong with ‘I guided’*?”. The management of the speaking turns proves to be crucial in a situation where the apprentice faces obstacles related to the professional task or the communication. These interactional strategies are significant for foreign apprentices to acquire knowledge of the cultural codes that need to be mastered by them. Some of these can be rather challenging, such as interrupting the speech of someone and getting in on an overlap.

Part 2

JEF du coup vous êtes allé où/[vous êtes allé où/
ASA [(.)ah[ah moi
JEF vous avez visité quoi/
ASA hm hm la tour eiffel
JEF ah tu vas la connaitre par cœur à force/
ASA comment/

Verbal signals: formulation of a question with only one interrogative adverb

Prosodic signal '/': rising intonation

JEF à force d'aller visiter tu vas la connaître par cœur
ASA par cœur//
JEF par cœur\
ASA comme ça/oui
JEF par cœur\ par cœur ça veut dire ben euh par cœur
ASA ah oui euh pouvait aller par cœur aussi/ non/
JEF ah NON:((en riant)) sacré cœur\
ASA ah sacré cœur/
JEF sacré cœur/
ASA non\
JEF NON/ c'est quoi par cœur/

Verbal signals: an expression of the teacher's statement that the apprentice does not understand
Prosodic signals '//', '/': rising intonation

ASA qu'est-ce que tu veux dire par cœur
JEF par cœur c'est=
ASA =c'est comme ça non/=
JEF =ah NON: ça c'est l'arc de triomphe non par cœur ça veut dire c'est comme une alors un petit un petit une chanson d'enfant tu l'as tellement répétée que tu la connais mais en français il y a une expression qui dit qu'on la connaît par cœur
ASA hm

Master's response with explanatory examples

JEF c'est à dire qu'on la connait bien on la connait sur le bout des doigts on dit aussi
ASA hm
JEF quand tu connais par cœur ou connaitre sur le bout des doigts les doigts ça veut dire qu'elle est enregistrée dans ta ton cerveau que [tu l'oublieras jamais par cœur
ASA [par cœur par cœur

Verbal signals: repetition of the expression learned as a sign of understanding

The second part of the excerpt shows the transmission of information through verbal and vocal signals. The repetition of the exact statement produced by the interlocutor is a sign of incomprehension and solicitation of explanations. The apprentice did not understand the meaning of the expression "by heart" (« *par coeur* »), and repeated the same expression with a rising intonation ("by heart //", « *par coeur//* ») to express her hesitation and incomprehension. ASA often uses a rising intonation to check the correctness of her version, as in "ah yes uh could go by heart also/ no/... ah Sacré Coeur/" («*ah oui euh pouvait aller par coeur aussi/ non/...ah sacré coeur/* »). Her colleague JEF provided some contexts for using this expression to facilitate ASA's understanding. Having succeeded in understanding the meaning of the expression, ASA reassures JEF by using a neutral tone to say that she had finally grasped the meaning: "[by heart by heart" (« *[par coeur par coeur* »). The apprentice may hesitate with the master's instructions and whether or not there will be difficulties related to the task. The excerpts above show that the apprentice (ASA) sends out verbal signals that indicate the solicitation of explanations from the master, who proposes a solution to problematic situations.

The various excerpts that we have included in this chapter illustrate that in problematic situations, the apprentice will often resort to verbal signals and phonetic signals such as verbal signs of hesitation, rising intonation, overlapped speech, the repetition of the exact words of the master and long breaks between turns to express doubts and problems.

Conclusion and recommendations for further research

The objective of this study was to investigate, by means of observation and corpus analysis, which types of interaction and communication strategies are implemented by the apprentice to assume and execute the tasks imposed by the native master. Through data analysis, we discovered that there is a certain level of consistency throughout the administration of the tasks and mini-tasks that were entrusted by the master to the apprentice. The study confirmed that the interactions involving the tasks of an artisan apprentice can be broken down into more or less ritualized sequences which coincide each time with a specific task. Every speech act and oral exchange that constitutes these sequences is coherently linked to all the others, as is the case with greeting and taking leave. The interactional structure drawn from this study reveals that a task generally begins with an opening 'transmission of instructions' and finishes with 'the evaluation of the work provided by the apprentice' as a closing.

As this chapter sought to find an interactional model of a task in the context of an artisanal apprenticeship in which the foreign language learner intervenes as an apprentice trainee, we tried to establish an interactional structure based on the typical process of a working task that a foreign apprentice may confront in a professional situation. In addition, the chapter addressed some important non-verbal interaction cues that a foreign apprentice should try to implement when communicating with the native master. We found that a key condition to successful communication resides in good management of turns of speech. In respecting these moments of listening, the apprentice is more likely to either reach a good level of understanding of the master's verbal instructions or realize that there are uncertainties and potential questions to be asked. The management of turns to speak can also contribute to the co-construction of the interaction, since an interaction includes the respect of social codes that include alternate communicative turn-taking.

Though this research, carried out in a professional situation in the field of teaching French on Specific Objectives, focuses on the search for a possible model of interaction between a tutor's and an apprentice's interactive interactions, it could also inspire the teaching of other foreign languages, including ESP (English for Specific Purposes). An interactive model among the participants involved in the training of a foreign language learner could be a teaching method that allows language teachers to abstract the real tasks assigned to the learner. Since the data collected only concern audio data, our analysis on non-verbal communication strategies is related mostly to pauses, intonation, and overlapping statements. In the future, we wish to expand our data collection and research methods to include video samples in order to further investigate non-verbal signals, such as gesture-like signals, postures and facial expressions. This will further complement our research and assist us in examining the stability of an interactional model in professional work environments.

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LEARNING ITALIAN THROUGH THEATRE: STUDENTS AND MIGRANTS ON STAGE

ANTONELLA AGOSTINO

Abstract

Producing morphologically correct sentences is not a guarantee of language acquisition. For this reason, we have experimented with alternative teaching methods, based essentially on the communicative and the humanistic-affective approaches, on two groups of students from the University of Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne. To do this, we implemented innovative didactic techniques and methodologies, such as amusing theatrical activities, in the course of a B2 level course, based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages (Council of Europe, 2019) with students of Italian as a foreign language. This chapter first presents the theories that underlie our approach, then the theatrical project in detail, and finally the preliminary data results that we observed. The goal was to both motivate and actively involve more learners while achieving a significant improvement in their linguistic level. The results and the feedback obtained, the level of involvement of each learner and the increase in their self-confidence levels appear to confirm the success of this method.

Keywords: Communicative approach, foreign language teaching, Gestalt psychology, glottodrama, holistic multisensory approach, humanistic-emotional approach, pragmatic approach, theatre

1. Introduction

For several years now, the focus and main objectives of the foreign language teaching in my class have been based on the formalist approach. This method is mainly grounded in translation, grammar and syntax learning and teaching. In other words, producing morphologically correct sentences remains, for the most part, the only guarantee of acquisition. However, most language teachers observe that producing morphologically correct sentences is not in fact a guarantee of language acquisition and that studying the mechanisms, the structures and the correct syntax of a language does not guarantee the ability to communicate. Indeed, most of the time spent communicating in a foreign language remains limited to the simple practice of “making people talk” or making small talk on a given topic, outside of reality. Communication activities are often limited to listening and understanding through “cloze” exercises, pattern drills or short (artificial) discussions on artificial subjects and contexts.

In the next few sections, we will present several evolutionary milestones in the development of language didactics and in particular the progression and development of various approaches and methodologies to language learning and teaching.

1.1. The communicative approach

The origins of the communicative approach are rooted in linguistic competency, which was first theorized by Chomsky (1965, 1966), who expresses that communication is necessarily linked to performance, which he defines as the “unconscious knowledge of the rules of a language”. From the 1960s, linguists such as Firth (1957, 1957b), Halliday (1967a, 1967b, 1968, 1969, 1973, 1975) and Widdowson (1972, 1978) focused their attention on discourse as an act of communication, while Goffmann (1983) advanced additional theories pertaining to the order and structure of interaction that constitutes what is now referred to as the communicative approach. Hymes, who is famous for his *S.P.E.A.K.I.N.G.* model (1967), developed the term “competence”, referring to not only a question of “mental realities” but also execution in a social context. Hymes (1972) went on to coin the expression “communicative competence” to designate all of the knowledge that every individual must acquire in order to become a member of a speech community. It should be noted here that, according to Hymes (1967), any conversational exchange of elements other than grammatical or lexical knowledge will necessarily influence the meaning of conversational exchanges, such as motivations, attitudes with the other participants, or the sociocultural component concerning roles and statuses, etc.

For Hymes (1967, 1972), the communication act is not just about the message or verbal exchanges, but much more about the social interactions, transactions, or negotiations. Contrary to the views of linguistic competence of Chomsky (1957), the communicative competence of Hymes (1972) involves the mastery of *knowing how to speak* the language, which translates the mental reality into social action. Subsequently, language learners transform their knowledge of language into the capacity to communicate language through interaction or *doing with the language*. Additional theories that also promote this view are found in sociolinguistics (Fishman, 1979: 250) and the notion of interlanguage (Selinker, 1972: 209), as well as the theory of roles (Goffman, 1959) inspired by the psychosocial theories of interaction developed by the Palo Alto school of thought. Gumperz (1989: 185) subsequently argued that any conversational exchange relies on shared expectations of contextualization conventions. Thus, social reality must be considered as a construct that is constantly negotiated or modified in and throughout an interaction.

It is noteworthy to indicate here that Austin (1962: 188) originally developed the theory of speech acts, and Searle (1969) revived, extended and developed the notion into a system that has greatly influenced the ensuing theories of communication, linguistics, the philosophy of language and pragmatics. Both authors state that in a speech act, the speaker constructs a complex relationship between themselves and their interlocutors and the context to which they refer. Thus, "to speak" is "to do", that is to say, to perform an act, so this speech act signifies a social act.

The first Italian essays on this subject date from 1977. Freddi (1990) explains this in an essay on linguistic, sociolinguistic and communicative competence and argues that communicative competence is based on four types of knowledge.

To master a language, the communicator must know:

- the language (linguistic competence), that is, a mental construct that satisfies the rules governing the language;
- the extra-linguistic competence, which concerns non-verbal codes (gestures, mimics, non-spoken language, etc.);
- how to do language and how to realize their linguistic abilities, and
- what to do with language, namely sociopragmatic and intercultural competency development.

According to this approach, language learning follows the inductive type of model. In other words, the teacher adapts to the communicative needs of the students. Language is therefore conceived as an instrument of communication and of social action, as a pragmatic tool. The sociopragmatic, paralinguistic and extra-linguistic aspects are therefore taken into account. The teacher is simultaneously a tutor or a guide who is presenting the language, the culture, the civilization and the social rules. The learner assumes an active and central role. The main goal of learning is the acquisition of communicative competence. Among the most used methods and techniques, we can mention the development of linguistic competences, the use of dramatization of glottodidactic technologies and, above all, the use of video and new interactive technologies (smart phones or Skype, for instance).

Balboni (2008, 2015: 170) develops his representation of communicative competence from the perspective of mental competencies (linguistic, extra-linguistic and sociopragmatic) and real-world interactions. The various skills permit us to acknowledge the language in differing ways. In this manner, language learners develop the necessary skills to act or interact socially with the language and therefore they are able "to do or work with language".

A communicative competence schema inspired by Balboni (2015: 170) is illustrated in Figure 3-1.

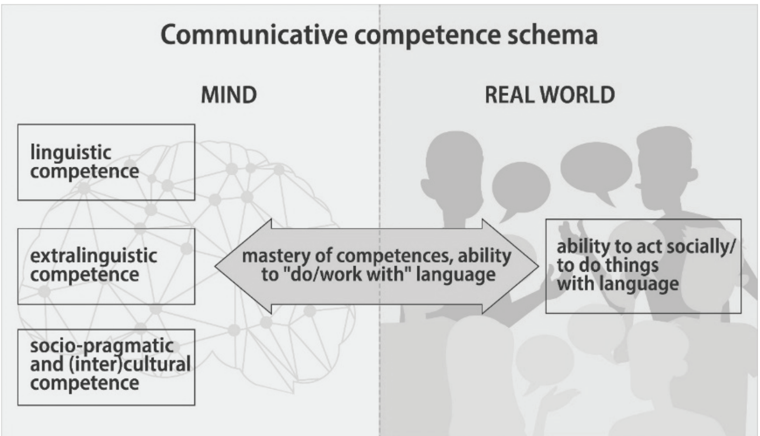

Figure 3-1: Communicative competence schema (Balboni, 2015)

As shown in Figure 3-1, communicative competence is the result of real-world interactions, as well as communication based on active thinking and personal reflections on linguistic, extra-linguistic and sociopragmatic or intercultural competence. Communication is thus based on real-world use, active reflection and interaction, rather than vocabulary learning and grammar practice. However, Richards and Rodgers (2001: 7) explain that the traditional "Grammar-Translation Method" is still widely practised today as are, to a lesser extent, several structuralist approaches (for further explanation, see Bloomfield, 1942; Lado, 1964: 239; Skinner, 1957: 478). More modern teaching pedagogies should involve a variety of innovative and motivating techniques. In this way, students may be encouraged to further invest in their learning with more amusing activities, through the implementation of new technologies (Internet, multimedia, computer-based techniques), to promote the development of their communicative competences, allowing them to "do or work with language" while they employ their linguistic, extra-linguistic, sociopragmatic and (inter)cultural competences in the real world.

1.2. The humanistic-affective approach

The humanistic-affective approach was developed in the 1970s in Europe and the United States. Theories of reference include the humanistic psychology of Maslow (1943: 370–396, 1968: 240) and Rogers (1946: 451–422, 1959: 184–256) and the natural approach of Krashen (2003). With regard to the natural approach, Krashen (2003: 112) postulates that the acquisition of a foreign language is only possible if the learners are exposed to understandable and accessible input. This signifies that the language level must indeed be slightly higher than the language level that has already been acquired by the learner. In this case, the affective filters (anxiety, self-esteem and motivation) are relatively lower to allow the input to be in the correct order on the natural axis of acquisition (precise order of acquisition of inputs). Krashen (2003: 112) distinguishes the role of the affective filter, the monitor and the role of the learner's internal system, which may vary according to age, cognitive style, motivation in L2, as well as the natural order of acquisition (unconsciously assimilated grammar rules, for instance), the difference between the learning, rational and voluntary conscious and the brief duration process, and acquiring the stable and deep unconscious process that generates understanding and automatic production.

Several additional theories correspond to this same approach. For instance, the same underlying approach can be linked to the Total Physical Response (Ascher, 1966: 79–84, 1969: 3–17), the Silent Way (Gattegno, 1972: 144, 1976) and the use of Music Therapy or Suggestopedia (Lozanov, 1978). According to these approaches, language acquisition follows an inductive type of model; that is, according to the learner's level of affectivity and relational capacity, the characteristics of the learner's personality, or the capacity to suppress anxiety and competitiveness. Apart from the needs analysis stage, it is fundamental that in adopting each of the aforementioned pedagogical theories or approaches, the language teacher must additionally consider methods and activities which will encourage the stimulation of student investment and motivation levels.

Above all, language is a pragmatic instrument of communication. The teacher assumes the role of guide, director or consultant who is ready to adapt various postures in order to provide support and guidance to the students. This attitude creates and allows for a relaxed and serene learning environment. The error factor, which can be embarrassing, negative and anxiety-provoking for many students, must be dealt with accordingly and above all with tact, since it can serve as the starting point of a language activity or lesson. The learner is both the protagonist and the actor of their learning: they can be stimulated and motivated to follow a path independently. However, group work should also be promoted to encourage group dynamics and create synergy within the classroom.

1.3. Process drama and the glottodrama method

Originating in England in the 1970s and inspired by the pedagogy of Freire (1970), process drama can be defined as a dramatic form used for educational purposes. It recognizes and builds on the individuality of each learner and the humanistic-affective current. The fundamental underlying principles of this theory are derived from Slade (1955) and Way (1967), and together they form an inspiring school of thought that has developed into process drama. Glottodrama is thus a proposal to translate the theoretical assumptions of the so-called communicative approach with a humanistic-affective orientation into a practical teaching solution.

What is of interest in process drama and glottodrama is the fact that the ultimate objective is to engage the learner and stimulate foreign language learning. In adopting this theory, there are in fact different types of involvement to consider. These include linguistic, communicative, intercultural, affective, dramatic and sensorial types of involvement on behalf of the learner. For van Lier (1996), linguistic involvement is the degree of receptivity of the learner, to be understood as the permanent or temporary mental state of openness to the experience of expressing oneself in a foreign language. Svalberg (2009: 242–258) further defines the concept of linguistic involvement using the three following parameters; the cognitive, affective and social dimensions encountered during the foreign language learning process.

Similarly, task engagement (Platt & Brooks, 2002: 365–400) is significant to active learning and personal investment in the foreign language learning process. For example, in the context of group work, a drama or improvisational workshop generally involves problem solving and may require many steps of assimilation on behalf of the participants, as well as much engagement before the final product or assignment is ready for presentation. This type of active involvement illustrates that foreign language learning is a sociocultural process. There are hints of this type of involvement in the strategies language learners use to become aware of and improve verbal (greater fluency, use of the target language) and paraverbal (accentuated body language, stronger vocal quality, upright posture) communication. This can sometimes lead students to improved language acquisition through the association of a concrete memory during a precise moment or emotion within a specific context. Through reflection and observation, students can connect the lived communicative process experience to what they have learned throughout the learning process.

It should be noted that this dramatic method does not necessarily follow a script, nor does it aim at the realization of a theatrical performance. It arises from the collaboration of the teacher and the participants, who alternate and improvise the role of authors, directors and actors. This type of collaboration, a fundamental characteristic of process drama, eliminates the traditional teacher-learner hierarchy while establishing a creative synergy which varies and is very useful to the language acquisition process. Having chosen the pre-text, the teacher co-creates and proposes the various roles while guiding students through a narrative path, directly in collaboration with the learners. The theatrical path created by the group does not foresee the presence of an external public, and this frees the participants from the emotional filter weight or the stress associated with having to "expose" themselves to an outside audience. In this manner, the fear of being judged is minimized, since the pressure and frustration associated with the error factor are diminished. On the contrary, the participants often find themselves interpreting a "collective role", where the group expresses itself simultaneously, and this in turn reinforces the cohesion of the class as a group.

2. A dual project approach to language teaching

Since the beginning of the 1960s, the trends in language pedagogy have clearly evolved. As mentioned earlier, the formalist "Grammar-Translation Method" approach and the Structuralist approach of

Bloomfield (1942) have been updated to include the new glottodidactic approaches, such as the communicative approaches of Austin (1962) and Hymes (1967a, 1967b, 1972) and the humanistic-affective approaches of Maslow (1943, 1968). Rogers (1946, 1959) upholds that teaching a language does not consist solely of proposing simple linguistic descriptions. In fact, grammar, translation and lexico-syntactic memorization are often no longer systematically placed at the centre of the foreign language teaching process. In light of this, the basis for our initial questioning revolves around the aforementioned theories. Since producing morphologically correct sentences is not a guarantee of language acquisition, can we then use these alternative methodologies and approaches to improve foreign language teaching and learning? If this is possible, how do we go about this?

The following study was developed with these questions in mind, but also based on my more than fifteen years of teaching experience in France in the context of young, adult and elderly learners of various sociocultural origins. In this section, we will introduce the study and some advantages that are associated with the innovative didactic techniques and methodologies based on the integration of amusing and theatrical activities in foreign language teaching. Then we will illustrate the methodology used to conduct a study based on two groups of B2 level students, which was based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages (Council of Europe, 2019) in a foreign language 1 (LV1) and a foreign language 2 (LV2) learning programme at the University of Paris 1.

In fact, this research study involves two different but related projects. The first, which is the focus of this chapter and the next section, was conducted in collaboration with the Parisian immigrant association or the *Centre d'action social de la Ville de Paris* (CASVP). The other project, which is not fully explained in this chapter, was based on the use of the written press and the creation of a newspaper, involving a press officer from the Directorate-General for Communication of the European Parliament. The next section will focus on the CASVP project, which is an experiment that was conducted in parallel in the context of two classes, one of which functioned as a control group. The comparison of the two groups allowed for the evaluation and analysis of the data, particularly with regard to how much linguistic, extra-linguistic, sociopragmatic and intercultural competences had improved.

2.1. Objectives of the CASVP project

This study was inspired by the previously mentioned theories and methods pertaining to process drama and glottodrama, which we believe are more pragmatic and in tune with the needs and objectives of the learners. Since language for special purposes (LSP) education is an interdisciplinary science, we are interested in the interactionist approach (Blumer, 1969: 208; Goffman, 1973: 251) to language science through its methodological and didactic reflections, as well as its (inter)disciplinary convergences. The pragmatic paradigm (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969, 1972: 261) postulates that language includes a code of human relationships and is not limited to being a mere instrument for communicating information. We therefore begin with the epistemological hypothesis that the sociopragmatic approach (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969, 1972) revolutionized theories of communication and influenced traditional linguistics by breaking with internal structural linguistics and influencing the telegraphic model of communication. Language and its uses are studied according to real and authentic interaction acts between interlocutors in a particular context.

Next, we focused on the notion of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) and reflected on the question: *what does "being able to communicate in a foreign language" signify?* To do so, we tested these new approaches and, more particularly, the communicational and humanistic-affective approaches with the support of the SUN (*Service des usages numériques*) lab of the University of Paris 1 on two groups of LV1 and LV2 students enrolled at the University of Paris 1 on an Italian language course (at the B2 level). Both groups were closely observed and compared to two other "control" groups.

2.2. Linguistic and intercultural objectives

Within the scope of this study, our linguistic and intercultural objectives aim to:

- make the input comprehensible and simplified by group mediation;
- facilitate the process of learning, which involves capturing the general and global meaning;
- assist students in producing written material and text (script created by the group);
- provide a forum for oral presentations;

- encourage students to practice various oral skills, including phonological and intonation aspects;
- function on different language levels (neo-standard, standard, regional, etc.);
- encourage language use and to "do" (applied to pragmatic actions, to create authentic situations);
- develop social involvement and cooperative work (interaction with others, involvement and consolidation of the class as a group);
- create a serene and pleasant learning environment through the application of a playful didactics; and
- check and evaluate the learning process and end results.

2.3. The extra-linguistic and cognitive objectives

In terms of the extra-linguistic objectives, this study aims to:

- involve motor skills (to "do" language: language is used to give instructions and carry out actions); and
- include a semiotic dimension, including the use of signs, gestures, sounds, and gestural and body movements to communicate.

Finally, the cognitive objectives in this study are designed to:

- stimulate cerebral bimodality while using all sensory faculties;
- stimulate enthusiasm and arouse interest;
- motivate while increasing risk-taking and improving self-esteem;
- activate natural learning;
- involve emotion and break down emotional filters; and
- reduce stress levels while encouraging negotiation.

2.4. The three phases of language acquisition

As previously mentioned, this study is based on a combination of pedagogical methods and theories, such as the communicative and humanistic-affective approaches. The methods and underlying theories we have chosen to integrate in this study favour collaboration, interculturality, creativity and spontaneity.

The reference acquisition mode is drawn from the Gestalt theory (Wertheimer, 1925: 39–60). Balboni's definition of the Gestalt model is an "acquisition unit" (Balboni, 2010: 53) and can be explained as follows:

"acquisition occurs through a global perception at first, followed by a phase of analysis, and it ends with a synthesis, where the mind fixes what it has observed and analysed", as illustrated in Figure 3-2.

Figure 3-2: Three phases of language acquisition (Balboni, 2010: 53)

Within this study, a new work model is thus proposed involving the teaching of techniques in language teaching, as well the theatre techniques found in process drama and glottodrama. However, our study differs somewhat from traditional theatrical methods in terms of setting and methodology, which are both presented in the next section.

3. Methodology

3.1. The implementation of Freytag's Pyramid

For this study on alternative teaching methods, two different activities were proposed: one involved the production of a newspaper and the other was the creation, production and interpretation of a staged production. The latter activity, which will be the focus of this section, was partly carried out with the collaboration of the SUN Lab of the University of Paris 1. The finalized theatrical performance was staged in April 2019. This performance was also an adaptation of the dramatization technique, since the students were invited to create their own characters, identities, and a scenario that unfolded in constant adaptation to the others. While the goal of this activity was to allow all of the characters to be represented, the students had to conceive the scenario, the dialogues and the actions. The creation of the script, the characters, the dialogues, etc. adhered to the process reflected in Freytag (1863) and his pyramid technique, illustrated in Figure 3-3.

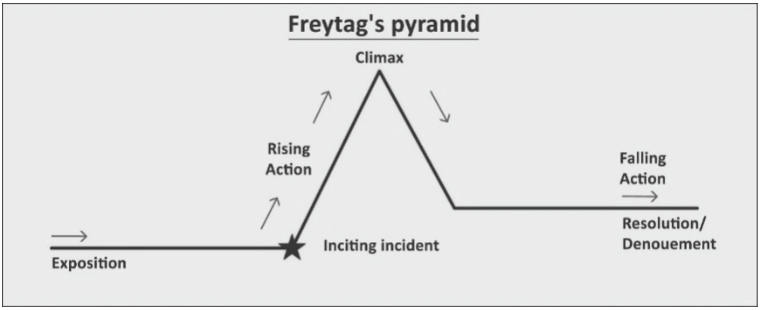

Figure 3-3: Freytag's pyramid theory and system for dramatic structure

The punctual video recordings serve as feedback for representation and linguistic corrections. The culmination of the students' work was the staging and interpretation of the play on a theme related to contemporary social and political reality, where everyone had to have a role to play. The theme chosen by the group was “immigration”.

Italian-speaking political refugees who recently came to France via Italy were contacted at the CASVP in Paris to participate in the project. The inclusion of ‘outsiders’ would provide the students with the opportunity to negotiate new relationships, whilst confronting real life or authentic discourse. In addition to the development of communicative competence, this also allowed them to create fragments of reality that involve and motivate them directly. From the author's perspective, this innovative approach renews the traditional pedagogical technique of dramatization.

3.2. A whole-person approach to language acquisition

A playful yet meaningful approach to foreign language teaching employs theatrical means of expression to access the world of foreign languages. Almond (2004) defines this as a “whole-person approach” in the sense that it involves not only the spoken language, but also the more general aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication. This technique bridges the gap between the classroom and the real world. Drama provides learners with a realistic need to communicate. Language is no longer carefully controlled or artificial. On the contrary, the approach allows for a more comprehensive use of language and encourages the development of oral communication, but also includes the kinaesthetic characteristics that promote extra-verbal codes (gestures, facial expressions, mimics and body movements). Furthermore, it allows for the focus on holistic multisensory approach, stimulating the long-term memory. Students are focused on their ability to effectively communicate their ideas, to create a relaxed environment and to collaborate or work in groups (negotiation). Simulation, role-playing and improvisation, which are part of the drama experience, activate the students' motivation on many levels. Thus, they naturally "do with the language" and develop their communicative competences thanks to this sociopragmatic approach.

4. Overall progress of the project

In this section, we will present only a brief description of the CASVP project's results since the data evaluation process is still underway. We wish to emphasize that the work carried out in this study was inspired by the techniques of process drama and glottodrama, but we did not literally follow the proposed models per se. For example, we did not submit pre-texts to students, but rather opted for the full use of their personal contributions (90 minutes per week for 13 consecutive weeks).

With regard to the theatrical project, the work is divided into three major phases (repeated in each lesson), with close attention given to the synergy between words, gestures and movements. The teaching objective is to stimulate oral and written production to implement a B2 level linguistic programme in Italian. Approximately twenty-four LV1 and LV2 students with ages ranging between 20 and 25 years participated in the study. Every fixed module was established and prepared by the teacher, even if, during parallel sessions, supplementary activities were sometimes included as an adaptation to the pace of development and learning levels of the various groups.

The students initially pass an "access test" (before the experimentation) and an "exit test" (after the finalization of the play), as well as fill in an overall evaluation questionnaire. In the next section, the methodology will be more clearly defined and some initial remarks, based on observation, feedback and both oral and written productions, will be shared.

4.1. Doing and learning: the importance of movement and gestures

During the first warm-up stage phase, the students are provided with activities related to theatrical techniques (relaxation exercises, movement and physical work), with the aim of rendering the students familiar with the surrounding space and their own body while interacting with the others and with the class as a mobile group. Speech and breathing exercises were put in place to make the students learn to control their stress, emotions, moods, insecurities and shyness, as well as to reinforce self-confidence and their ability to speak in public. Other methods included relaxing music, meditation and relaxation exercises for a few minutes. Students were asked to close their eyes and to breathe deeply while keeping pace with the music.

We observed that due to the nature and novelty of this course, the students were quite surprised. After being confronted with the first reactions of hilarity, mistrust, rejection, etc., which were very perceivable during the first session, we tried to involve them in mentally detaching themselves from their daily life in order to better concentrate on what they were doing in the classroom. Gradually, increasingly complex exercises were introduced. The students generally took the initiative to engage and then additionally freely propose activities. At the beginning, we proposed phonetics exercises, performed in a playful way, while working together in a circle and, for example, reciting nursery rhymes and tongue twisters, repeating them in turn (Mollica, 2010: 424). This game was repeated with movements and words, first in a group, then in pairs, and finally alone. Each student took a turn in the middle of the class space.

In the second phase, we worked to discover, use and correct morphosyntactic sentences (Dubois *et al.*, 2002), that is, the correct form of words (gender, number and conjugation) and the correct grammatical arrangement of the words in phrases and propositions used to create mini-dialogues, stories, etc. Two or three students were asked to give their input to make the other students act by using the imperative form for reinforcement. We observed one male student who suggested the following scenario: "You are stuck in a bus in Syria and there are soldiers who shoot at the bus". Then he gave commands for movements and facial expressions, such as *abbassatevi* (lower yourself), *proteggetevi sotto i sedili!* (protect yourself under the seats!), *alzate le mani!* (raise your hands!), *non aver paura!* (do not be afraid!), *urlate! avete tanta paura!* (shout! You are so afraid!), etc. The teacher, who participated in this activity, demonstrated what to do and also interpreted the scene, while putting themselves in the characters' shoes and acting out the gestures. This full adherence to the group on the part of the language teacher helps to break the ice and encourage all of the students to assume their roles without being afraid of appearing ridiculous. The exercise is carried out with improvised scenario proposals for about ten more minutes. It was observed that this relaxed, playful and dynamic atmosphere to language teaching makes the learners more available and open to carry out the subsequent phase of the work.

Next, in the third phase, the rules of glottodrama are adopted as the class divides into small groups and works in the “grammar corner”. This activity is focused on reviewing the grammatical rules that have been used, and it is repeated several times by the teacher. Once the teacher has observed and validated, for example, that the rules of the pronominal imperative and the imperative have been learned and assimilated, the class can then proceed with the next step of the project.

In the fourth stage, photocopies of the vocabulary related to moods, feelings and emotions are distributed. While working in pairs, the students must define which type of profile best suits them. The students listen to various dialogues between characters and they show their different reactions to certain situations. This allows the teacher to review the vocabulary, as well as the imperative forms. The scripts of the dialogues are distributed to the students, and they must complete them with the missing words or sentences they hear. They correct their answers in small groups and then proceed with the correction phase.

Afterwards, two people per group are chosen to interpret and stage the dialogue, while paying particular attention to the intonations. They are recorded and the video is shown for feedback. The whole class participates and collaborates to identify the linguistic problems, evaluate the performances and vote for the best one(s). After each course, the recording that receives the most votes is uploaded and posted online in an interactive shared space, reserved for our activities and accessible only to the whole class.

The students and teacher work together on the different scripts (one per group). The scripts are gradually assembled and adapted to create a final script. The final play integrates all of the different group contributions. The punctual recordings continue to serve as feedback for representation and linguistic and grammatical corrections.

The external interventions of the CASVP manager and the migrants that the students encountered in the offices of the Parisian Mayor’s office allowed for much interaction. We observed that the students were very curious and actively asked many questions about the activities carried out by the CASVP. They also asked the young migrants about their journey, their experience of life in Italy, how they overcame their hardships, etc. In fact, two migrants willingly accepted to take part in some of the scenes. The different groups of students welcomed them with strong enthusiasm, and they created and wrote two monologues specifically for their roles. The recording and viewing of the meetings and theatrical repetitions and performances contributed to consolidate, motivate and engage the whole class. The final recording was completed and included the students' choices with regard to the scenery and music.

5. Conclusion

This study was created to answer the initial questions: can we use alternative methodological approaches to improve foreign language teaching and learning, and if so, how can we go about doing this? By means of the methodological and didactic choices we adopted, namely the communicative and humanistic-affective approach as well as the process drama" and glottodrama methods, we were able to ponder on and evaluate the impact of implementing theatrical techniques in foreign language teaching. We were also able to consider how foreign language teachers could use the various aesthetics of process drama to foster intercultural awareness. In using process drama and glottodrama, we observed that these approaches can assist in engaging the learner and stimulating foreign language learning. These methods can easily be adapted to any level of foreign language learning and any type of learner, at any age, as long as the methods are adapted. These innovative and often amusing approaches to language teaching transform the role of the language teacher and increase the involvement and investment of the students, who adopt a very active role, both as actors and as directors, with the full involvement of emotional, cognitive, situational and intercultural factors.

Throughout this study, we discovered that even when students are faced with linguistic difficulties, if they are adequately accompanied by the teacher, they are perfectly capable of expressing themselves and actively participating in the finalized academic activities. These skills are developed both spontaneously and subconsciously through privileged channels of learning, such as motivation, pleasure and collaboration. The final test results, the positive informal feedback from the learners (which were collected through a questionnaire), their active participation and the evident improvement of their linguistic level was very encouraging and confirmed the success of the proposed activities, as well as that of the theoretical reflections on which they are based. Overall, the linguistic and communicative competencies were improved in many of the exit tests, since the students achieved very satisfactory results. In addition, and from a humanistic point of view, their involvement proved to be very moving.

This innovative approach to foreign language teaching considers language as a complete communication package involving both verbal and non-verbal communication in terms of expression. When it comes to language learning, intercultural communication is also very important, above all if we consider the Italian language and its culture. Compared to other languages, the Italian language is widely known to be rich and replete with distinctive recourse to extra-linguistic codes such as mimetic gestuality, proxemics, etc. Today it is impossible to conceive the teaching of a foreign language without considering the context in which it is practised and the intercultural dimension. As children, we learn from an early age through experience, imitation and experimentation, but also through errors, successes, emotions and feelings. Language learning and teaching at the higher education level provide the perfect context for this to continue and flourish.

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PART II

ACTION-ORIENTED APPROACH AND MOTIVATION

As DuFour and Eaker (1998: 25) suggest, the action-oriented approach to language teaching is "the engine of improvement", since it aims to develop and improve locally determined teaching and learning objectives. Furthermore, Cordingley (2000: 1) suggests how action research "…enabled them (as teachers) to do their tasks more effectively and/or more efficiently". In fact, the action-oriented approach to language teaching views communication as an active, explicit and deliberate social activity. In the language learning environment, courses should be designed to accomplish specific language tasks that integrate a communicative approach to learning. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, 2011: 10) advocates going beyond the communicative approach to emphasize active language use that develops the five language skills – spoken production, spoken interaction, listening, reading, and writing, which includes the skills required for writing to interact. It recognizes students as being fully immersed and active participants in the learning process.

The next three chapters in this section exemplify the positive effects of implementing an action-oriented approach in ESP classrooms. These chapters illustrate how this approach can be utilized in three different ESP contexts, whilst showing how it encourages greater involvement, investment and participation on behalf of the learners, as well as how it can enhance their metacognitive skills and motivation levels.

In Chapter Four, entitled "Teaching communication skills through Literature: Encouraging Master's level ESP students to speak up and move", **Dana Di Pardo Léon-Henri** presents a task-based approach which endeavours to go beyond teaching verbal and non-verbal communication skills to non-specialist English language students of Literature at the Master's level. The theoretical framework that forms the foundation and basis for this English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teaching methodology is presented first. The underlying objective of this didactic approach and action-oriented research is to engage students, while enhancing their motivation and personal investment, to assist them in conquering their fear of public speaking in order to improve their overall communication skills. This approach will additionally reinforce their self-confidence and encourage them in developing the professional skills that 21st-century professionals revere. The enhancement of these skills has shown that this approach not only serves general and discipline-specific pedagogical functions, but it also provides the opportunity for students to develop their metacognitive skills, which are lifelong transversal skills they will employ throughout their personal lives and professional careers.

In Chapter Five, entitled "Rehearsal versus spontaneity: ESP learner preferences for intercultural awareness role-plays", **Philip Hindley** and **Bhawana Jain** analyze how to best promote Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in Business English (BE) classrooms using two types of role-plays: spontaneous and rehearsed. Through the implementation of these two professional peer collaborative role-play tasks for university students studying business management in France, the chapter compares and contrasts results in terms of their efficiency in promoting cultural awareness and improving negotiation skills. The chapter also explains how quantitative and qualitative summative assessment techniques can be used to measure the efficiency of the role-plays in achieving learning goals. According to the learners, rehearsed role-plays were more efficient at promoting their awareness of interculturality and spontaneous role-plays significantly improved their negotiation skills. Although both role-plays were considered motivating, the rehearsed role-play was preferred over the spontaneous one.

In Chapter Six, entitled "Teaching English for Specific Academic Purposes: Insights into students' perceptions", **Elis Kakoulli Constantinou** reports on the findings of a research study at the Cyprus University of Technology Language Centre in the spring of 2019. The purpose of her study was to investigate how students perceived the delivery of two English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) courses: ESAP for students of Commerce, Finance and Shipping (CFS) and ESAP for students of Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology and Food Science (ASBFS). The underlying reason for this study was to gain valuable insights into the evaluation and eventual improvement of future courses. Based on social constructivist theories of learning, the courses were delivered via innovative technologies. Apart from the acquisition of language skills, they aimed at developing students' academic skills, as well as enhancing their transferable 21st-century skills. Data was collected through students' reflective journals, their comments and feedback on the Google Classroom platform and an electronic questionnaire that was administered to the students at the end of the course. The results indicated that students had positive perceptions of the two courses and they also generated important observations for the improvement of future courses.

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TEACHING COMMUNICATION SKILLS THROUGH LITERATURE: ENCOURAGING MASTER'S LEVEL ESP STUDENTS TO SPEAK UP AND MOVE

DANA DI PARDO LÉON-HENRI

Abstract

This aim of this chapter is to present a task-based approach which endeavours to go beyond teaching verbal and non-verbal communication skills to non-specialist English language students of Literature at the Master's level. The theoretical framework that forms the foundation and basis for this English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teaching methodology will first be presented. The underlying objective of this didactic approach and action-oriented research is to engage students, while enhancing their motivation and personal investment, to assist them in conquering their fear of public speaking in order to improve their overall communication skills. This approach will additionally reinforce their self-confidence and encourage them in developing the professional skills that 21st-century professionals revere. The enhancement of these skills has shown that this approach not only serves general and discipline-specific pedagogical functions, but it also provides the opportunity for students to develop their metacognitive skills, which are lifelong transversal skills they will employ throughout their personal lives and professional careers.

Keywords: Literature for non-specialists, interactive communication, inverted classroom, metacognition, self-regulated learning, task-based instruction, verbal and non-verbal skills development

1. Introduction

Society has radically changed since the development, integration and adoption of new technologies. In our highly mobile and rapidly evolving society, the most widely used form of technology, the smartphone, has irreversibly changed the way we live, work and communicate. Often used as a sanctuary, the smartphone has become an object of dependency for people of all ages at different stages of their lives. Consequently, it has also become the object of much research. Large scale studies, such as the annual Deloitte Global Mobile Consumer Survey (which spanned six continents, 35 countries and 54,150 respondents aged from 18 to 70 in 2018), have recently shown that people of all ages become addicted to this omnipresent object, which has been given omnipotent control over many of our daily activities from communication and photography or film to shopping, banking and beyond with its infinite array of applications designed to *assist* us in life.

The increase in overall use and dependency is directly linked to the increasingly widespread use of the smartphone, as Rideout et al. (2010) show in their three-phase study based on respondents aged from 8 to 18 years old. It is noteworthy to state here that very young children are also affected by this increasing societal problem, and Mai-Han et al. (2020) present the media habits for New York State children from as young as 12 to 36 months in their study dating from 2008 to 2010. Today, children are offered these multifaceted and versatile objects as a distraction or, even worse, as a temporary babysitter to amuse and appease them.

One of the main reasons for the increased use of screens and smartphones is that the smartphone itself has replaced quite a number of physical objects in our everyday lives, as Mims (2012) points out. Drago (2015) illustrates that this form of technology has become an integral part of the way that people communicate with one another and has increasingly taken the place of face-to-face communication. The incessant use of this type of technology can have a direct impact on the oral communication skills (and also written skills) of individuals who tend to shy away and withdraw from opportunities to openly exchange and socialize in public. As this pattern of behaviour progressively infiltrates everyday life in societies (we observe it on public transport, on the streets, and in social places, such as meetings, restaurants or at the dinner table, for example), it can also find its way into our classrooms. Even if some higher education (HE) students are not actively using their smartphone during class time, the object in question is often placed on their work table in plain sight, acting as a timepiece in place of the traditional wristwatch, for instance. However, one may wonder if this type of behaviour can perhaps mask the real issue at play; that is, the psychological need to be reassured that their preferred communication tool and social lifeline is very close by.

More than ever before, it is crucial to acknowledge that one of the fundamental objectives of education is to teach lifelong learning skills that will help students to communicate and better navigate through their careers and future relationships towards both personal and professional fulfilment. As educators in HE, we provide instruction fundamentally through a process of social interaction and academic discourse. We not only educate students in the core subjects, but we also support students in the development of their soft skills, which they will require in their future lives and careers. A significant component of these skills is a solid combination of social skills made up of effective verbal and non-verbal communicative competences. Transversal in nature, these people skills (characterized by proficiencies such as social skills, teamwork and negotiation skills, to name a few) can be implemented in various personal or professional contexts to facilitate and ameliorate communication and problem solving.

In order to teach these communication skills, it is important for language teachers to first deconstruct the components of an interaction, activity or task. Following this step, they should then develop a didactic approach to language teaching that can be implemented to encourage a variety of learners to manage diverse content under differing time constraints (often related to initial language competency) while assisting the learner in developing metacognitive skills, such as self-reflection and critical thinking. To be effective, this procedure must take place in a secure and innovative learning environment that is based on motivating, creative and inspiring teaching strategies. In this way, the students will wilfully and sincerely invest their efforts to improve their overall communication proficiency while acquiring and ameliorating their transversal professional skills.

2. Literature review

Before exploring how to encourage non-specialist Master's level ESP students of Literature to communicate in a more open, analytical and inquisitive manner, it is essential to understand the underlying theoretical foundations that support this approach and the notion that language acquisition can be considered as an object of intellectual inquiry. For instance, the analysis of a specific genre of literature can serve as a point of departure and the basis for differing discussions involving themes such as intercultural experiences or multiculturalism in society. At the same time, however, in this non-specialist context, a concentrated effort should be made to avoid creating an isolated and exceedingly specialized focus exclusively on literature (Walker, 1968). If this literary investigation is carried out by students within the framework of experiential learning or 'learning by doing', which Kolb and Fry (1975) explain involves the integration of the cognitive and socio-emotional perspectives of the learning process, it is then possible to attain a holistic approach to the learning process that recognizes both the emotional and intellectual components of the learning act. This type of classroom environment which engages students and encourages creative autonomy could persuade students to speak up and move (or be moved) in a both formal (oral presentations) and non-formal (interactive discussions) settings. These settings favour the integration and use of notions such as comparison, analysis, reflection, cooperative action, and perhaps even the sharing of personal observations or experience(s) if the appropriate teaching and learning methods are supported by the instructor.

One of the challenges within the context of this particular Literature course is the fact the students can originate from very diverse disciplines within the Humanities, for instance: Philosophy, Psychology, Language Sciences, Didactics, Machine Learning, Classic or Children's Literature and foreign languages (such as Spanish, German, Italian, Greek or Latin). However, as we will see in the analysis section of this chapter, this challenge is actually an underlying force of this course, since each student brings their cultural heritage, knowledge and unique academic perspective to the foreground for discussion and debate. Consequently, when language teaching for non-specialists is based on Literature studies, the language itself is utilized as the object of intellectual inquiry.

2.1. From speaking and listening to speaking up and being moved

According to Ur (1996), if we were to choose the most important skill out of all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking would intuitively be the most essential, since we refer to people who know a language as 'speakers' of that language. In this way, Ur posits that the act of speaking embraces the notion of mastering all the other kinds of language skills. Consider, for instance, the case of a tourist who is travelling alone through a foreign country. While it is true that a tourist who is lost in a foreign country will search for assistance and is most likely to ask *"do you speak English (or French, etc…)?"* and is not very likely to ask *"do you read Italian (or write Chinese, etc…)?",* the reality in the classroom is somewhat different. In the classroom setting, Ur states that a successful speaking activity is characterized by language learners who are actively participating in the act of speaking. She explains that this participation should be constant and consistent throughout the classroom, where, in a successful setting, there is a high level of investment and motivation. Finally, the language being used in the classroom should be of an acceptable level. This classroom talk is indeed very crucial to learning. Smith (2005: 86) states that even at the primary level, it can naturally lead to puzzling questions, thoughtful arguments and discussions, which make way for negotiated meaning and the understanding of new skills and different concepts on a subconscious level.

However, in a transversal setting where students are non-specialist language learners, language levels are often heterogeneous. As a result, the more timid students often shy away from those who actively and openly engage in discussions. Therefore, while speaking is a very important language skill, the act of listening should follow closely behind. Jones (2007) posits that the planning and assessment of learning should include the development of the following aspects of speaking and listening: social (develop relationships), communicative (transfer meanings), cultural (share differing meanings or views) and cognitive (use discourse as a means to learning). In the context of literary analysis, an additional aspect could be added to this list: the socio-emotional one (through critical analysis). It is through the act of listening to an oral presentation, for instance, that new knowledge can be acquired or a different perspective can be gained for contemplation and consideration. This new knowledge can pique curiosity and stimulate interactive dialogue. Furthermore, this process can lead to the (re)formulation of questions which could then engage the different interlocutors of diverse language proficiencies in very interesting conversations. It is within this context that students can overlook their inhibitions and be absorbed in the act of speaking and understanding to share their opinions, ideas and perspectives. In the process, new ways of thinking and understanding may be constructed in a collective and reassuring environment. Knowledge and language can thus be shared in a constructive and supportive manner.

2.2. Metacognition and self-regulated learning

As indicated by Flavell (1978, 1979), learner metacognition is defined and investigated through three perspectives: the examination of knowledge, task-based knowledge development and strategy knowledge. In general terms, learners subconsciously examine both what is known (acquired knowledge) and what is learned (new knowledge) to process and understand a given situation. If there is a discrepancy between the two forms of knowledge, the learner should naturally implement a strategy to formulate questions or statements for clarification. However, in order for metacognition to occur, Kolb (1984) posits that the learner must be open and ready to actively participate and reflect on the experience (judgment and critical thinking), use analytical skills to conceptualize the task (cognitive flexibility), make decisions and solve problems they may encounter (coordinating with others), and recycle innovative ideas (creativity) while retaining, developing and improving (new) skills acquired during the task or experience. Schraw (1998) further defines metacognition as the knowledge about and the regulation of cognition. The regulation of cognition differs significantly when comparing a child to an adult; however, there are some similarities when considering the self-regulation of cognitive learning.

Evans and Jones (2007) explain that effective learning in the context of early child development and care is more likely to take place when the planning focuses on exploratory talk, a term which was coined by Douglas Barnes (1975) in his influential work *From Communication to Curriculum*. Barnes defined a particular type of talk observed between peers in classrooms that he argued was essentially different from the type of language used in interactions with the teacher. He called this ‘presentational talk’, which accords a social dimension to learning and communicating. The same reasoning applies in higher education. From the Vygotskian perspective and a sociocultural approach to cognitive development (Wertsch, 1985), this learning occurs when learners of unequal ability interact since language is described as a ‘social mode of thinking’. Yet Evans and Jones (2007) insist that while this model of ‘scaffolded’ learning is constructive, it fails to account for the learning that can also occur among peers of equal ability. The exchange of information between groups of both equal and unequal abilities can in fact be fruitful for all members involved in the communicative act.

It is through interactive talk, in particular, that information and ideas can be communicated and reformulated or points of view can be readily investigated and rationalizations presented. New perspectives or different ways of thinking may represent minor contributions, but they are noteworthy in cognitive development and the ongoing construction of knowledge. In this context, not only does the language instructor impact on students’ language acquisition, but students in turn also impact on the language instructors’ understandings. In this manner, the language classroom environment becomes an open and versatile forum of language and knowledge exchange. Furthermore, in the context of a learner-centred approach, where students are encouraged to instruct and guide their classmates, the impact is reciprocal between students, since the language instructor merely fades into the background to observe the interaction and mediate only if necessary. More generally, the negotiation of understanding contributes to the ongoing development of social and cultural appreciation and the various ways of thinking about the rapidly changing world around us. In this context, we can argue that teaching and learning are thus part of a shared give and take process, the process whereby knowledge is created through the grasping, contribution and transformation of experience.

2.3 Engaging students in an inverted learner-centred classroom

When adopting a learner-centred approach to teaching, the teacher's role generally shifts from the traditional classroom leader to the observer and mediator. Larsson (2001) argues that a language course based on assignments or tasks that require students to act, interact and communicate will successfully encourage social interaction and language learning through observation and the exchange of methods or information. This observation can also lead to the development of mimic strategies where learners can creatively create tangible linguistic products (in the case of this study, effective slide presentations and posters) while reviewing their classmates' work and offering constructive feedback to gain a deeper sense of learning (vocabulary development in a real-world situation). In addition, the activities, tasks and social interaction in this classroom environment considerably assist learners in the development of metacognitive and interactive communication skills.

An interactive setting is by far the most enriching forum for learning for the students and teacher alike. A creative and forward-thinking teacher is fully aware of the importance of classroom group dynamics. According to Dörnyei and Murphy (2003), the success of classroom learning is very much dependent on the classroom environment and not only how the students relate to, cooperate and communicate with each other, but also how they relate to, cooperate and communicate with their teacher. Furthermore, they put forward that the roles the learners assume are also very significant. Subsequently, the role the teacher plays also has a major impact on classroom dynamics. By placing the students in the teaching position, there is a clear shift in authority which ultimately engages and empowers the students. As part of a task-based approach (Ellis, 2003), their research material and linguistic products are placed at centre stage and they become part of the syllabus and focus of social interaction and debate. It is in this context of communicative language teaching that there is a focus on opinion sharing based on the content since the activities engage the students to speak on a subject which interests and motivates them (Richards, 2006). In small groups, they are persuaded to debate their opinions on the topic (negotiation and exchange of knowledge) and include or encourage the more introverted students to open up and share their opinions (critical thinking). If a student has a strong opinion on a certain topic, they will likely speak up and share it. However, the instructor must insist on some fundamental rules such as respect for others in the case of a difference of opinion (teacher as a moderator).

Therefore, language teachers should be flexible and assume many different roles in the course of teaching since this may in fact facilitate learning for their students. For Brown (2007), their ability to carry out these roles effectively will depend to a large extent on the rapport they establish with their students and, logically, on their own level of knowledge in terms of the foreign language and also pedagogic skills. Harmer (2007) stipulates that the term 'facilitator' is used by many authors to describe a particular kind of teacher, one who is democratic (where the teacher shares some of the leadership with the students) rather than autocratic (where the teacher is in control of everything that goes on in the classroom) and who fosters learner autonomy (where students not only learn on their own but also take responsibility for that learning). Through the use of group work, the teacher deliberately transfers control (and power) of the classroom to the students who are acting as unified groups or teams. The teacher then adopts a secondary role and operates as more of a resource than a transmitter of knowledge. In this way, both the teacher and students learn to negotiate their new roles and achieve more in an inverted setting.

The literature review above clearly shows that students at the HE level could stand to benefit significantly from the integration of a learner-centred task-based approach which encourages metacognition and self-regulated learning in the context of communicative language learning. Based on this literature review, the following research questions were asked in preparation for this study:

RQ1. To what extent can technology be used as a tool to encourage students to openly engage in face-to-face interaction?

RQ2. Is it possible to rekindle a renewed interest and appreciation for the diary, which has been referred to as a “neglected literary genre”?

RQ3. Could an inverted classroom empower students to speak up and move (in both the literal and figurative senses) their classmates?

3. Method

3.1 The pedagogical intervention

The method which is presented here was developed and implemented during the first academic semester (September to December) every year for over the last five years. It was designed and first put into practice for non-specialist English students of Literature at the Master’s level in September 2015, and it has been improved as each year has gone by. This chapter focuses for the most part on observations from September to December in 2017 and 2018.

The course is based on an 18-hour hybrid class (2 hours per week for 9 weeks) wherein the full group of students (on average 22 per group) is divided in half for a 1-hour workshop and, on alternating weeks, the full group is in the language centre for 2 hours. The course begins in the workshop. In actual fact, the Master’s students benefit from only 13 hours of class time (8 hours in the language centre and 5 hours in the workshop). In the language centre, the students work alone or in small groups on the syllabus and course materials, which are available on the Moodle platform. They often work in small discussion groups for debates to improve their oral communication skills. The resources on Moodle include the course brochure and the required reading, as well as other resources (links, videos and additional documents). The focus is placed on both verbal and non-verbal communication (from voice projection to kinesics and body movement), but also presentation techniques (from signposting to slide preparations), the ‘SIFT’ method of literary analysis (c.f. Annex A), and a review of figures of speech and expressions for discussion and debate.

In the language centre, they also partake in small group debates and conversations to discuss and review the course material and any questions that may arise in terms of communication. It is during their time in the language centre that the students begin their oral presentations as early as the second week of class. The orals take place in the library, which is a separate room and fully equipped for slide presentations. The students are encouraged to speak up and move, literally, but also in the figurative sense by taking a stand, defending it and, whenever possible, using their communication skills to emotionally move their audience. An illustration of this is, for instance, their use of vocal intonations and stress to insist on salient areas and communicate emphatic emotions when reading the chosen texts to the class.

The various tasks (oral presentation and poster pitch) require many steps and stages, so they are clearly explained on the first day of class in the workshop. This also provides the students with the maximum amount of time, in terms of weeks, so that they can plan their work schedule and carefully prepare for the weeks to come, not only for this course but also in consideration of their workload in terms of their other courses in their discipline. For the oral presentation, the students must first choose and research a topic, then present a diarist (by choosing from the list, see Annex B). They must provide a literary analysis using the SIFT method (Annex A) during a 10-minute slide presentation (using PowerPoint, Prezi or Emaze) with an interactive classmate discussion of at least five additional minutes (ideally while the next student sets up their slide presentation).

Each student is encouraged to choose a different diarist so that all of the presentations are unique. They are instructed to briefly provide their personal history, as well as the historical, political and social context. The literary analysis is based on two different short journal entries that they must compare and contrast using the diarists' choice of words, writing methods, mood, tone and themes. To guide the students in their critical analysis, which the author characterizes as a form of forensic interpretation, they must use the SIFT method (c.f. Annex A). At the end of their presentation, they must also explain and justify their choice of diarist. The slide presentation must be sent (in .pdf format) to the teacher after the oral takes place since it is part of the overall evaluation. Based on their oral presentation, the students prepare a reduced, A3-size scientific-inspired literary poster. This poster is the visual representation of their oral presentation in printed form. During the last language centre course, the students present their poster and one-minute pitch to inspire and motivate the other students to perhaps one day pursue further reading on their diarist.

Since the students in this class come from many different fields of study (Information and Communication Studies, French as a Foreign Language, Sociology, Spanish, German, Philosophy, Performing Arts, Youth Literature, Science of Antiquity, etc.), the students have very different interests and personal or professional experiences (through internships). A real potential for rich intellectual exchange exists in this unique context. However, since their communicative qualities differ greatly, it is very important to provide a level playing field in terms of evaluation. Therefore, for each stage of the various activities, from planning and organizing to slide preparation and verbal and non-verbal communication, the students will find resources, vocabulary, examples and suggestions on Moodle. In the preparation stages, the students are also asked to observe their classmates' performances and reevaluate or readapt their presentation, as well as practice and repeat their presentation at least three times before the date of their oral.

During the first workshop, the language instructor presents the course syllabus and objectives, as well as a model (based on the Russian - Ukrainian diarist, painter, and sculptor Marie Bashkirtseff) of what is expected for the oral presentation. Later, in the second workshop, the poster pitch assignment is clearly presented with samples of what is expected of them.

3.2 Data collection

The author conducted classroom observations and entry and exit surveys to measure the level of engagement that students have in face-to-face communication. The overall quality of the social interactions that ensued during the oral presentations and poster pitch session were also observed. Finally, during the last class, the students were interviewed in small groups for their overall feedback on the use of the diary in its various forms as an object of study in a class based on Literature for non-specialists of English. Their opinions were noted and documented.

A link to the Google Drive survey was administered during the first two weeks (entry) and during the last week (exit) of the class on Moodle. Students were administered surveys composed of approximately 12 statements (with a 5-point Likert scale for each) regarding their perceptions in relation to the oral presentation experience, as well as their habits and use of the diary or journal (literary or virtual). They also provided their informal overall feedback with regard to the inverted classroom as the basis for face-to-face and interactive communication. The questions in the two surveys would assist in responding to the three research questions previously noted above.

For the year 2017, responses were obtained for 23 out of 26 surveys, and in 2018, responses were gained for 25 out of 28 surveys. In both cases, this represents a response rate of approximately 90%. The classroom observations were conducted during the oral presentations and poster pitch session and immediately afterwards, when students would engage in spontaneous interactive communication. A variety of interactions between the students were recorded, in particular those interacting with the presenter, those interacting with the other students and those referring to the overall experience of the slide or poster presentations.

4. Findings

The findings presented here are based on the entry and exit surveys, as well as informal feedback, classroom comments and observations.

4.1 Entry survey

The vast majority (80% or 39 out of the 48 students) indicated that they strongly agreed when asked if they felt apprehensive about an oral presentation. 65% (31 of the 48 students) strongly agreed that this was due to the fact that they would be speaking alone in front of the class. (They were encouraged to use their slide presentation as a guide and allowed only a small post-it note with keywords.) A small minority (30% or 15 of the 48 students) strongly agreed that they feared the questions that would be asked during the interactive classmate discussion session immediately following their oral presentation. When asked about the experience of giving an oral presentation in a foreign language in front of the class, a small group of students (18% or 9 of the 48 respondents) indicated that they had never previously had the opportunity.

A large majority (60% or 29 of the 48 students) indicated that they once kept a diary (travel, daily or emotions journal). Of those 29 students, the vast majority (90% or 26 of the 29 students) were female. A large majority (87% or 42 of the 48 students) strongly agreed that they had never read a diary before. The vast majority (75% or 36 out of 48 students) indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the following statement: "*the diary is a social outcast, of no fixed theoretical address…*" (Lejeune, 1975). 70% (34 out of the 48 students) strongly disagreed with the statement "*I am aware of my metacognitive skills' development*".

4.2 Exit survey

All 48 of the students strongly agreed that both the oral presentation and poster pitch session were both practical and motivating activities. The response was unanimous when asked if the students enjoyed improving their language skills in the inverted classroom setting. All 48 strongly agreed that the oral presentations were diversified and enriching. 95% (or 46 of the 48 students) strongly agreed that they forgot their inhibitions about speaking in English and actively participated or asked questions during the interactive sessions. 65% (or 31 of the 48 students) expressed that they strongly agreed with the statement that they were emotionally surprised or moved by their classmates' oral presentations on the lives and words of the various diarists.

The vast majority (74% or 36 of the 48 students) strongly agreed that the journal or diary is a fascinating and therapeutic tool and 95% (46 of the 48 students) strongly agreed that they might use this form of expression in the future to record their daily thoughts or perhaps record their memories during a travel journey, for example. They all strongly supported the statement that during the course, they acquired a newfound respect and understanding for the diary and its many forms and uses.

When asked if they agreed with the statement "*the diary is a social outcast, of no fixed theoretical address…*" (Lejeune, 1975), the vast majority (80% or 39 of the 48 students) indicated that they did not agree. Approximately 95% (46 of the 48 students) strongly agreed that this course encourages analytical reflection and critical thinking skills. With regard to the poster pitch session, 85% (41 of the 48 students) strongly agreed that it was a challenging and entertaining approach that permitted them to exchange information and knowledge in a creative manner.

4.3 Classroom observations and discussion

Over the nine weeks of this course, the author found it essential to discreetly observe students' communicative behaviour and informal feedback not only during but also in between oral presentations. A checklist was developed over the course of the first two years to simplify pertinent notations. The findings refer to the most recent group of students who attended this class from September to December 2018, unless otherwise stated.

For the most part, students with stronger language skills and thus a higher level of self-assurance generally tended to choose the early dates for their presentations. Conversely, those who lack self-assurance were inclined to ask for later dates so that they could observe the others and modify their presentations or adopt different strategies in terms of communication. This statement holds true for all five years that this course has been taught.

Over the course of this five-year study, it was observed that the students of African origin (Campus France) who arrive at the Master's level generally do not have any experience with oral presentations, debates or conversations, since their foreign language courses at home focused wholly on written comprehension and expression. The 2018 group counted six students from the following countries: Senegal, Mali, Ghana, Benin, Nigeria and Cameroon. For these students, the apprehension level was quite high at the entry level, and the oral presentation was thus initially deemed very difficult, challenging and for some next to impossible. However, with the correct preparation and support from the teacher, as well as the observation of and encouragement from their classmates, they were able to overcome their communication barriers and achieve success, just like their classmates. For those six students, this personal success was a source of implicit and explicit motivation that appeared to boost their personal confidence level when communicating in the foreign language.

While there appeared to be some appreciation (and some apprehension) with regard to the diary at the onset of the course, the level of interest and overall appreciation for the genre increased greatly with every oral presentation and as each week passed. The students seemed genuinely surprised and intrigued by the wide variety of topics (travel, social status, historical settings, survival, emotional distress, psychological disorders, etc.) and quality of writing, as well as the numerous forms of the diary, which has greatly evolved over the decades. As part of the syllabus, the views of established researchers, such as the noteworthy Philippe Lejeune (1975), a renowned French professor and essayist on the diary, were discussed and debated as well as other famous artists, painters and authors. The students were clearly motivated to listen to their classmates and enthusiastically engaged in conversations during the workshops and sessions in the language centre. Some students opted to complete the language centre work on Moodle at a distance so that they could actively partake in each of the oral presentations that were held in the library.

While there were some grammatical mistakes during the social exchanges, the focus was on interactive communication. When reformulation was necessary, it was done by means of a teamwork approach, where the students supported and assisted each other in the clarification of expressions or vocabulary. The language was therefore of an acceptable level since they were able to successfully communicate with minimal mediation on the part of the teacher. These observations support the opinion of Ur (1996), who outlines the characteristics of a successful speaking activity. The students naturally applied cooperative and collaborative learning strategies while participating in very rich, in-depth discussions on many different levels (intercultural awareness, historical events, the evolution of society, etc.).

The majority of the students chose diarists who wrote in a traditional diary format (notes in notebooks and written by hand). However, a few students asked for permission to present some rather unique diary forms. For example, in 2019, a student requested my permission to present a diary format from an interactive computer game called *Sea of Solitude* from Jo-Mei Games. As players assume their roles, he explained, they change the fate and the diary of their character. He also talked about another interactive computer game called *Depression Quest*, which asks players to step into the shoes of a character living with depression. This new trend in computer gaming is a way to bring addiction and thus mental health issues to light for debate and discussion. Topics such as addiction, self-identity, anger issues and post-traumatic stress disorder are addressed in the various games. This was the exact result in the language classroom, since the students candidly shared their thoughts and feelings while asking many different questions about this new technology-driven trend. The aforementioned games are two such examples, however, many additional games of this type already exist for differing age groups (as young as pre-adolescence).

Each year, the author noted a correlation between the different fields of study and the students' choice of diarist. Many of their choices are directly related to either their field of study (Literature, Philosophy, History, etc.) or major themes (famous people, celebrities, or views on life and culture). Table 4-1 presents the top twenty diarist choices from 2015 to 2019.

Rank	Author	Rank	Author
1	Virginia Woolf	11	Sophia Tolstoy
2	Anne Frank	12	Andy Warhol
3	Anne Lister	13	Kurt Cobain
4	George Sand	14	Marjorie Fleming
5	Robert Louis Stevenson	15	Mary Chesnut
6	Hélène Berr	16	Etty Hillesum
7	Sylvia Plath	17	Lewis Carroll
8	Franz Kafka	18	George Washington
9	Anne Morrow Lindbergh	19	Samuel Pepys
10	Queen Victoria	20	Malala Yousafzai

Table 4-1: Ranking of the top twenty diarist choices from 2015 to 2019

As clearly indicated in Table 4-1, the diarists that are most frequently chosen are famous authors (of literature but also films and TV series), celebrities and historical figures. The most popular choice was Virginia Woolf, with Anne Frank right behind in second place. The choices are most often based on the nature of the student's discipline, their personal interests or their academic specializations. However, this is not always the rule of thumb. Nevertheless, in providing a list of diarists from all walks of life and allowing the students to freely choose a name from the list or not, the teacher integrates a dimension of creativity, innovation and intellectual freedom into the course. The students are given the opportunity to discover or rediscover an author from a more personal perspective while compiling a small corpus of documents for analysis. They are also permitted to bring an unknown, misunderstood diarist or unique diary format to the forefront for consideration, discussion and debate.

The feedback, observations and results validate this approach to language teaching, since the course is designed to encourage students to speak up or give their opinions, as well as figuratively and literally move their classmates both emotionally and intellectually. For a brief time during the presentations and literary analysis, the students appeared to be easily and willingly transported to different spatiotemporal environments to contemplate the meaning of life through the words of a diarist while leaving the present behind. Finally, while conducting various classroom observations, the author noted that when the students were in the library listening to the oral presentations, there were no mobile phones in sight. The object was left behind while the students opted to attentively listen to and hold exchanges with their classmates. It was more often in the workshop (a traditional classroom setting) that a few students would place their phones on their work tables immediately after entering the classroom with their phone in hand. However, it would appear that the students clearly enjoyed and benefitted from the integration of critical thinking and literary analysis in this course that is fundamentally based on encouraging the development of their metacognitive and communicative skills.

5. Concluding remarks and limitations

Classroom observations and an analysis of the entry and exit surveys provided evidence that technology in the form of slide presentations can be used as a tool to encourage students to engage in face-to-face interactions. Students are willing to openly speak up and partake in interactive communication when they are intrigued or uninhibited by language insecurity. Within this framework, they are using higher order metacognitive thinking skills to analyze their acquired and new knowledge while using various learning strategies to communicate. This development of effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills is very significant for 21st-century careers.

The results of both the surveys as well as the classroom observations reveal that the use of the diary as a genre for literary analysis for non-specialist language students at the Master's level can lead to renewed interest and appreciation, since it has evolved with the development of technology over recent decades. New forms and forums for online diaries exist, as well as interactive games that are based on the journal writing experience. When given the chance to choose their diarist, the students often proposed their own choice based on their personal interests. In this way, the list of diarists is constantly growing over time.

With regard to the inverted classroom, the students clearly expressed that they enjoyed the freedom of bringing new knowledge or their favourite diarists to the classroom. In addition, they felt empowered to integrate elements from their domains of study such as philosophy, geography and classical studies. Many of the students both formally (in the questionnaires) and informally (verbal feedback) expressed a renewed interest in the diary as a literary genre. Some stated a desire to begin or continue a diary in one form or other (personal, travel, reflective). This was the case with students from areas such as children's literature, sociology, journalism, philosophy, theatre arts, etc. Many of the presentations were very emotionally moving and at times very revealing in terms of personal beliefs, traditions or customs. Not only were the students moved by the diarists, but they also engaged their classmates in being moved by the words or artistry (in the case of Kurt Cobain) of the diarist. Some students even developed an appreciation for diarists of the past. They also discovered some famous contemporary diarists, such as an exchange student from Ghana who chose and discovered the amazing story of Malala Yousafzai, who in October 2012, along with two other young girls, was shot in the head at 12 years of age by a Taliban gunman. She miraculously recovered and later, in 2014, Malala became the youngest Nobel Peace laureate. For the Ghanaian student who discovered Malala, this extraordinary young woman represents courage, hope and determination.

Each year, the list of diarists grows, since the students are encouraged to research and find their own diarists. This provides them with the opportunity to take the initiative and personally invest in their topic, from researching to reading a small corpus or collection of journals. To valorize their efforts and investment, a vote is organized for the best overall slide presentation as well as for the best poster pitch and presentation. The slide presentation that won the vote in 2018 can be found in Annex C. In fact, although the focus of this chapter has mainly been on the oral presentations, the poster pitches also proved to be very successful. While the vast majority of the students (80% based on the results of the last five years) prepare their posters with different software and then print them, every year a few gifted artists will choose to make a hand-drawn poster. In 2018, one of the students was profoundly inspired by the course material based on diaries written in the form of a calligram, which is a text arranged in such a way that it forms a thematically related image (the text can be a poem, a phrase, etc.). She opted to create her poster by hand (see Annex D) when her computer unexpectedly rendered its soul. Her unique and very poetic poster was the winner in 2018. The winner for the best printed poster of 2018 is also presented in Annex D.

Over the last five years, this approach to teaching Literature to non-specialists has consistently revealed that not only are the students engaged in what they are doing, but they also share much knowledge as well as a high level of personal pride and investment in their contributions. A large majority of the students often reveal some of their personal or cultural traits either during their oral presentation or poster pitch or in the interactive communication sessions. In addition, they expressed a renewed interest and appreciation for the use and impact of non-verbal communication, since they realized that, in the professional world and compared to verbal communication, non-verbal communication can often have more of an influence on the subconscious level of their peers and colleagues. Job candidates are judged on how they portray themselves (from dress codes to behaviour codes, etc.). This also holds true in one's personal life and therefore applies to friends and family.

Some students sent their slide presentations by email accompanied by very touching personal messages of support and gratitude while expressing their appreciation for this course. The entry and exit surveys show that there has been a net progression in the awareness of metacognitive skills development. It ought to be said that there was a difference in the nature of the formulations of this particular question: in the entry survey, the statement was much more implicit in nature (metacognitive skills development) as opposed to the exit survey, which was more explicitly formulated (analytical reflection and critical thinking skills).

Finally, it is important to consider the limitations of this study. The number of students enrolled in this course each year gradually increased in the following manner: 14 (2015), 18 (2016), 26 (2017), 28 (2018) and 42 (2019). While these numbers show an encouraging and constant increase, the sampling remains feeble. For this reason, this chapter is based on a five-year study with a focus on the combined survey results from the last two years. While the main objective of this course is to encourage interactive communication and the improvement of verbal and non-verbal communication skills to respond to modern professional needs, the results are limited to in-class face-to-face classroom communication.

Ironically, as the students leave the classroom (both in the case of the workshop and the language centre), the first object they generally reach for is their smartphone. As the adage goes, old habits die hard. However, while this pedagogical approach serves general and discipline-specific pedagogical functions, it also provides them with the opportunity to enhance their metacognitive and communicative competencies, which are lifelong transversal skills they will naturally utilize (we sincerely hope) throughout their personal lives and professional careers.

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Annex A

Using the SIFT Method of Literary Analysis

When exploring how a writer uses literary elements and stylistic techniques to convey meaning or theme, you may want to consider the SIFT method to practice literary analysis. This method allows you to "sift" through the parts in order to comprehend the whole.

> **S**ymbol: examine the title and the text for symbolism
> **I**mages: identify images and sensory details
> **F**igures of speech: analyze figurative language and other devices
> **T**one and **T**heme: discuss how all devices reveal tone and theme

SYMBOL Since the title of a story or novel often contains symbols that hint at the theme, you should first be encouraged to reexamine the title. Is part of the title a central symbol in the story? Are there other significant symbols in the story? What are the characteristics of the symbol(s)? Speculate about its significance. Has the symbol been used in literature before to represent the same themes in this story? Does the meaning of the symbol change throughout the story, and does the change reveal insights about the author's use of symbolism and its contribution to the theme?

IMAGERY Writers use language to create sensory impressions and to evoke specific responses to characters, objects, events, or situations in their works. The writer "shows" rather than "tells", thus allowing the reader to participate in the experience more fully. Therefore, imagery helps to produce mood and tone. When reading a piece of literature containing imagery, consider two questions:

1. What do I see, hear, taste, smell, or feel?
2. What EFFECT is the author trying to convey with these images?

Does the story open or close with significant or intense images? Why might the author begin or end with those images? What kind of information or message do they provide?

LITERARY DEVICES (FIGURES OF SPEECH or FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE)

Writers form images by using figures of speech such as similes, metaphors, and personification. Find examples in the story and discuss how these figures of speech help to convey effect and meaning.

Consider the following questions:

1. What is the significance of comparisons in the story (metaphors, similes, etc.)?
2. How do figures of speech enhance meaning?

Consider other devices used in the story such as irony and allusion. Irony is often found in the contradictions of expectations and reality, or appearance and reality. How do allusions enhance the meaning or effect of the novel? Does the author retain the original symbolic meaning of an allusion, or does he/she alter it?

TONE A close examination of word choice, imagery, and detail reveals a narrator's attitude or tone and contributes to the reader's understanding. Find details that reveal the author's tone toward the subjects of the story.

THEME To determine the theme, you might:

1. Summarize the passage or story.
2. List the subjects or motifs that emerge from the summary, such as evil, injustice, inhumanity, social protest, corruption, poverty, tradition, individuality, survival, etc.
3. Write a sentence about each subject or motif based on insights gained from analyzing symbolism, imagery, figurative language, and other devices. Because all literary devices lead to tone and theme, this process will help you to perceive what insights about life the author is revealing about each subject and to refine the process of determining meaning in a text.

Ask yourself what life-lessons the main characters have learned or what lessons they themselves have learned as a result of reading. Look for statements in the story by the characters or the narrator that comment on life, the world, or human nature, thereby implying theme. Discuss each thematic possibility and decide which is the most probable based upon the evidence from the text and from this "SIFTing" process, keeping in mind the fact that many stories have more than one theme and there is seldom just one "right" answer.

Adapted from the following source:
https://www.wsfcs.k12.nc.us/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=83818&dataid=97543&FileName=sift_analysis.pdf

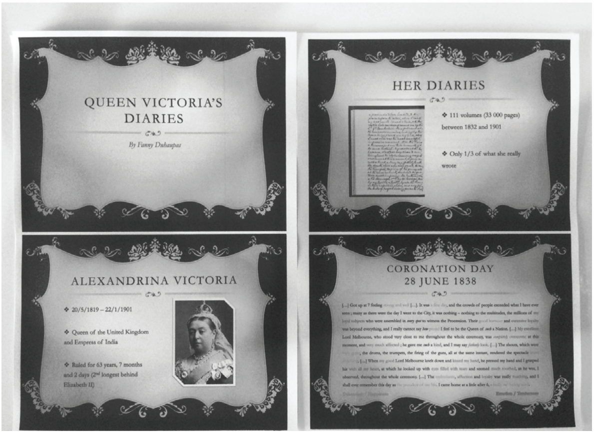
Annex B
List of Diarists

John Quincy Adams
Louisa May Alcott
Lady Cynthia Asquith
Charles Baudelaire
Hélène Berr
Frieidel Bohny-Reiter
William Byrd
Jim Carroll
Lewis Carroll
Violet Carter
Mary Chesnut
Agatha Christie
Kurt Cobain
Clarence Darrow
Kirk Douglas
Frances Hewitt Fearn
Marjorie Fleming
Anne Frank
Gwendolyn Wilson Fowler
Etty Hillesum
Elizabeth Gilbert
Charlotte Forten Grimke
Hervé Guibert
Sir Alec Guiness
Lady Margaret Hoby
Mineko Iwasaki
Thomas Jefferson
Alice Gortner Johnson
Franz Kafka
Faustina Kowalska
Anne Lister
Anne Morrow Lindbergh
Primo Levy
Pierre Louÿs
Mary MacLane
Katherine Mansfield
Agnes Barland McDaniel
Toni Morrison
Helena Morley
Florence Nightingale
Jessye Norman
Vaslav Nijinsky
Anaïs Nin
Sylvia Plath
Samuel Pepys
Mihajlo Pupin
Raymond Queneau
Emily Quiner
Joan Rivers
Gaetano Salvemini
George Sand
May Sarton
Elizabeth Simcoe
Robert Louis Stevenson
Nikola Tesla
Sophia Tolstoy
Harry S. Truman
Queen Victoria
Charlotte Williams-Wynn
Andy Warhol
George Washington
Virginia Woolf
Dorothy Wordsworth
Ruth van Horn Zuckerman

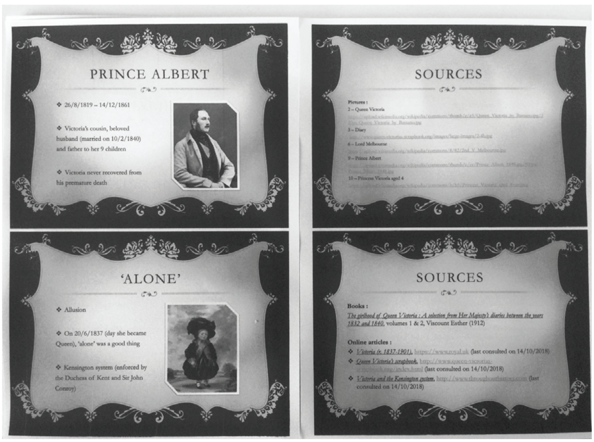
Annex C

Winner 2018 Slide Presentation,

Queen Victoria*



Queen Victoria, Slides 1–4 (above) and Slides 9–12 (below)

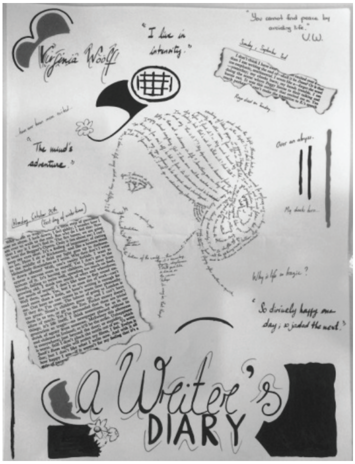


* With permission from Fanny Duhaupas, student on Master's course 1 (2018). While there are a total of 12 slides in the presentation, only the first and last four slides are presented here.

Annex D

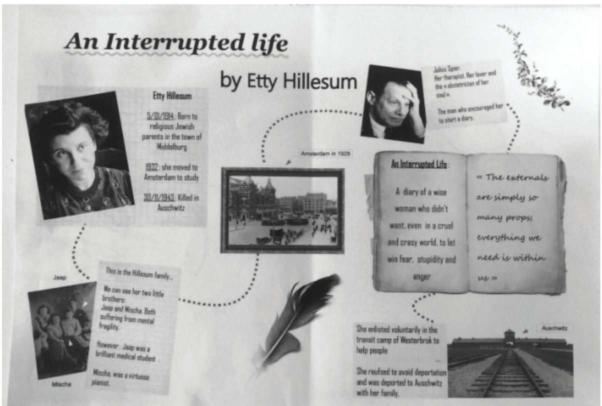
Poster 1:

Winner 2018 Handmade Poster, Virginia Woolf**



Poster 2:

Winner 2018 Printed Poster, Etty Hillesum**



** With permission from the authors on Master's course 1 (2018), who chose to remain anonymous.

Rehearsal versus Spontaneity: ESP Learner Preferences for Intercultural Awareness Role-Plays

Philip Hindley and Bhawana Jain

Abstract

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) is becoming increasingly important in the world of business with the opening of trade barriers and a move towards globalization. This action research examines how best to promote intercultural awareness in Business English (BE) classes using role-plays. Two professional peer collaborative role-play tasks were presented to university students studying business management in France and compared in terms of their efficiency in promoting cultural awareness and improving negotiation skills. Both role-plays were centred on interculturality and business negotiations; however, one role-play was scripted and rehearsed, whereas the second was unscripted and spontaneous. The intercultural barriers contained in the role-plays were, therefore, either known or extemporaneous for the learners. A quantitative and qualitative summative assessment technique was used to measure the efficiency of the role-plays in achieving learning goals. According to the learners, rehearsed role-plays were more efficient at promoting their awareness of interculturality and spontaneous role-plays significantly improved their negotiation skills. Although both role-plays were considered motivating, the rehearsed role-play was preferred over the spontaneous one.

Keywords: Business English (BE), intercultural awareness, Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), negotiation skills, role-plays

1. Introduction

Liberalism is affecting the business world in the form of improved international collaborations, joint ventures and employee relocations. However, this does not signify the presence of a common business culture throughout the world. Business professionals across the globe may share common negotiation and business skills, but their culture, customs and etiquette differ from one country to another, which also impact their work environment. The effects of these differences should not be underestimated in the context of international business negotiations and meetings, where the use of different strategies for communicating with people from other cultures and for effectively dealing with misunderstandings and conflicts are particularly important. Therefore, the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (henceforth ICC) is becoming all the more important in the training of future business professionals. Moreover, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) proposes to integrate an intercultural awareness strand in course design and lesson planning in higher education. In a chapter on "Language use and the language user/learner", the potential for intercultural learning is described as follows:

> The learner does not simply acquire two distinct, unrelated ways of acting and communicating. The language learner becomes *plurilingual* and develops *interculturality*. The linguistic and cultural competences in respect of each language are modified by knowledge of the other and contribute to intercultural awareness, skills and know-how. (Council of Europe, 2001: 43)

This relation between language and culture is further reinforced by the research work of Kaplan (1966), Byram (1997), Kramsch (1993) and Liddicoat (2002), among others. According to Tseng (2002: 13), "success in language learning is conditional upon the acquisition of cultural knowledge: language learners acquire cultural background knowledge in order to communicate, and to increase their comprehension in the target language." He asserts that cultural awareness not only contributes to language learning but also improves communication skills.

Therefore, learners should be encouraged to become conversant with the various socio-cultural aspects of intercultural communication in professional settings as well as to acquire practical expressions relating to cultural mores. It is, therefore, important for language teachers to integrate an ICC strand into their lesson plans on business negotiations so as to provide learners with knowledge pertaining to globalized professional settings and, in particular, on how multi-national business negotiations are conducted.

Role-play could be one of the oral activities that enable learners to explore realistic situations in a safe environment. It is a useful pedagogical tool for developing ICC in the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classroom, particularly when it is adapted according to the learners' preconceptions linked to their specific socio-cultural backgrounds. Moreover, a well-designed role-play that acknowledges the learner's prior knowledge concerning intercultural differences may enable learners to enhance both their professional intercultural communication and negotiation skills as they analyze, adapt, negotiate and co-operate during the enactment of the role-play.

2. Role-play: importance and types

Role-play pedagogy involves the practice of making learners take on the part of another person and act out a specific task for the purpose of learning language and understanding "complex or ambiguous concepts" (Sogunro, 2004: 367). Armstrong (2003: 13) and Ruhanen (2005: 33) demonstrate that role-playing can develop learners' oral business communication and interpersonal skills, which can be useful in their future employment. Rao and Stupans (2012: 431) also argue that role-playing mirrors complex situations of future professional life. Additionally, according to McCarthy and Anderson (2000: 290), the practice of creative and entertaining activities such as role-playing offers a more effective learning method than more traditional classroom situations; it provides a welcome break away from the latter for learners, as well as teachers.

Role-plays also fit well into a learner-centred approach where the teacher is a facilitator and provides learners with the necessary tools, tasks, autonomy and liberty to innovate, create and produce in the classroom. This also encourages active participation in self-learning (Howell, 1991: 69). According to Westrup and Planander (2013: 207), the immersion of learners in such an active learning situation is not only rewarding and interesting, but it also increases their engagement and knowledge retention. Furthermore, role-playing also involves masking or assuming a professional role and responsibility, which could help students to overcome their personal inhibitions while simultaneously improving their communication, confidence and perceptions (Dohaney and Brogt, 2017: 1). Rao and Stupans (2012: 428) also assert that role-play stimulates learners' further interest in the topic being taught in the classroom. This increased motivation plays an important role in accomplishing task goals.

According to Bonwell and Eison (1991: 47), role-play exercises can take the form of "short, spontaneous presentations", but they can also be rehearsed research assignments that are more planned and structured. A rehearsed role-play focuses on developing learners' practical skills by simulating a scenario within which newly developed skills and knowledge may be practised. Di Pardo Léon-Henri and Jain (2017) illustrate that rehearsed role-play activity as a peer-collaborative task could be an effective way for students to improve their specialized workplace vocabulary and skills associated with intercultural communication. These rehearsed or controlled role-plays offer the learners a platform to innovate from different perspectives while actively brainstorming, problem solving and decision-making (Pavey and Donoghue 2003:7) as a functioning group (Wohlking and Weiner, 1971: 9). However, these role-plays may sometimes prove to be a rather time-consuming process given the limited amount of available classroom time and the research and knowledge required on behalf of the students in gathering and preparing the content for the role-play (Di Pardo Léon-Henri and Jain, 2017).

On the other hand, spontaneous role-playing takes up less time and could be seen to resemble real-world settings because it often requires swift adaptability, resilience and balance on the part of the role-play participants to manage an unpredictable situation. This type of role-play allows the students to apply their acquired skills in a realistic yet safe and non-threatening setting. The uncertainty, freedom and novelty linked with such an activity (Hewes 2014: 286) is seen as conducive to affective, cognitive, and behavioural development (Maier 2002; Rao and Stupans 2012: 428), making it easier for learners to learn and apply their learning (McEwen, Stokes, Crowley and Roberts 2014: 280).

Although a number of studies have examined the use of either spontaneous or rehearsed role-plays in Business English (henceforth BE) classrooms, to the best of these authors' knowledge, little identified research has been conducted to compare the effectiveness of spontaneous and rehearsed role-plays. This action research aims to demonstrate which type of peer collaborative role-play task, spontaneous or rehearsed, is more effective in terms of stimulating intercultural awareness and improving negotiation techniques. Additional objectives are to determine the key factors that improve ICC and negotiation skills in a BE classroom and assess learner preferences in terms of motivation.

3. Methods

The research project involved 92 students who were majoring in diverse disciplines at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. Data were obtained from their BE classes during a two-hour lesson aimed at teaching intercultural awareness and business negotiations. The student classes and details concerning their courses are listed in Table 5-1. Two teachers participated in the trials: A and B.

Class	Teacher	Degree	Year	Subject	Number of Students
1	A	Master's	2	Entrepreneurship	11
2	A	Bachelor	3	Accounting	20
3	B	Master's	1	Management	11
4	B	Master's	1	Management	15
5	A	Master's	1	I.T. & management	25
6	A	Master's	2	Negotiation strategies	10
				Total	92

Table 5-1: Student participants

Most of the students were French, but some classes included students of other nationalities such as Algerian, Moroccan and Chinese. Their levels of English within the classes were heterogeneous, ranging from A2 to C1 (based on the CERFL), with the majority at the B level. All of the students were following a compulsory BE course in their programme focussed on communication skills. The course objective was to help students acquire the oral and written skills required to function in a professional environment. Students were taught, for example, how to give oral presentations, as well as organize and manage meetings and negotiations. The students were instrumentally motivated learners. That is to say, they were studying English for pragmatic professional reasons.

The learners were presented with two role-plays involving the negotiation of a merger between two foreign companies with different work cultures. One role-play involved spontaneous communication, whereas the second was scripted and rehearsed by the learners. The order of performance of the role-plays was alternated so that when the data were pooled the number of participants who had performed the spontaneous role-play first (n=46) equalled the number of participants who had performed the rehearsed role-play first (n=46). This was to nullify any extraneous effects on the data collection; for example, learners might have graded role-plays performed towards the end of a lesson more negatively than those performed at the beginning simply due to fatigue.

Before presenting the role-plays, the teacher gave a short introductory talk concerning the significance of interculturality in today's business environment. The teacher then highlighted different factors that impede intercultural communication such as cultural differences, stereotyping and linguistic barriers. Some examples were also given of how the literal translation of certain French expressions into English might unintentionally cause offence among native-speaker interlocutors. Furthermore, the inappropriate use of stress often gives the impression of disdain on behalf of the speaker. It is important that learners become aware of these kinds of pitfalls, since such misunderstandings could eventually lead to tension and confusion during business meetings in professional settings.

Following this presentation, the teacher divided the class randomly into groups of four or, on occasion, three students in order to perform the two role-plays consecutively. The groups were informed that the objective of the lesson was to make them more aware of intercultural differences during business negotiations and to learn and practise a series of functions to improve their ICC. The teacher then presented the guidelines and details of the role-plays to the learners.

3.1. Instructions for the spontaneous role-play

The participants were provided with instructions for the role-play, which involved negotiating a merger between two energy companies from two different imaginary countries named Malakan and Talakan (see Appendix 1 for more details). They were also presented with the expressions frequently used by the extremely polite Malakan society (see Table 5-2).

Before the role-play commenced, the negotiators from the two companies were separated and given 'secret' instructions for the role-play. Unbeknown to the Malakan, the Talakan negotiators were informed that in Talakan culture, people rarely touch each other; they simply bow their heads. Unbeknown to the Talakan, the Malakan negotiators were told that in Malakan culture, people were very tactile and could only confirm business deals by standing up and shaking hands. The aim of these instructions was to create an artificial cultural barrier between the two imaginary countries.

(1) *I'm afraid I can't agree with you on that.*
(2) *I'm sorry, but...*
(3) *Would you mind if I* + simple past
(4) *Might I come in at this point?*
(5) *May I give my opinion?*

Table 5-2: Functions used for polite negotiations

3.2. Instructions for the rehearsed role-play

Learners were provided with expressions connected to cultural barriers (see Table 5-3). Each group was then requested to write a short sketch that involved a negotiation over lunch between two businesses from two imaginary countries, this time named Malakan (social culture) and Walakan (fact culture). During the role-play, they were told to demonstrate intercultural barriers between these countries.

(1) *There is a misunderstanding about….*
(2) *I find it strange to….*
(3) *I'm shocked by…*
(4) *This behaviour is offensive because…*
(5) *I find it amusing to…*

Table 5-3: Functions used for dealing with intercultural barriers

They were further instructed to greet one another, introduce themselves, start a negotiation, show the intercultural barriers, and demonstrate reactions and solutions to these barriers. The learners were provided with a worksheet (refer to Appendix 2) that included more details about Malakan and Walakan cultures. They then proceeded with the role-play.

4. Quantitative and qualitative summative evaluation

After the completion of both of the role-plays, the learners were asked to fill in an evaluation form anonymously concerning their opinions with regard to the efficiency of the role-plays in arousing cultural awareness and improving negotiating skills as well as the extent to which they enjoyed performing the role-plays (refer to Appendix 3). A numerical rating scale (NRS) was used to render a quantitative measure of these aspects of the role-plays. The ordered set was from 0 to 10 coupled with anchors zero *not at all* and ten *a great deal* to guide the participants' evaluations. The compiled data provided indices (expressed as means) for these aspects for both types of role-play. The data were subsequently statistically analyzed to determine if there were significant differences between the two role-plays.

Qualitative data were also collected using an assessment technique termed the "minute paper" (Ramsden 2003: 143). Rapid feedback was obtained from the students at the end of the two activities by means of open-ended questions (refer to Appendix 4) on what they believe might have been achieved by the role-plays. This technique focused on the learners' personal and spontaneous thoughts and did not incorporate any deeper reflections or explanations. The results based on the responses to the open-ended questions were then collated (see Table 5-5) and interpreted. The focus was to understand the learning outcomes of both role-play activities so as to ultimately improve teaching pedagogy.

5. Results

5.1. Quantitative summative evaluation

A non-parametric test (Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test) was used to determine if there were significant differences between the role-plays. The collated data are shown in Table 5-4.

Aspect	Spontaneous	Rehearsed	Values		
	Indices (means)		Z	P	N
Cultural awareness	6.1	7.9	-5.88	0	75
Negotiating skills	6.0	5.3	-2.64	0.0083	65
Motivation	7.2	7.9	-2.66	0.0078	64

Table 5-4: Collated data for the spontaneous and rehearsed role-plays

The results are significant at $p \leq 0.05$.

The above indices (means) were calculated from the learners' own appreciation of their performance and therefore rely on the learners' awareness of the cognitive procedures stimulated by the tasks and the degree of enjoyment engendered by the tasks. The results (significant at $p \leq 0.05$) indicated that rehearsed role-plays improved intercultural awareness significantly more than spontaneous role-plays, whereas spontaneous role-plays were more effective at improving negotiating skills. The learners found the rehearsed role-plays to be more motivating than the spontaneous ones.

5.2. Qualitative summative evaluation

The open-ended questions listed in Appendix 4 were used to gather supplementary information concerning the role-plays. The learners' comments were then analyzed and classified according to the underlying aspects that were most frequently mentioned by the participants. These are listed in Table 5-5 in the order of their importance to the learners as indicated by the number of times each aspect was commented upon in the questionnaires. All these comments were considered to be positive, with the exception of those categorized under *time constraints*. These referred to the lack of preparation time for the role-play and were considered as negative.

Aspect	Spontaneous	Rehearsed
Ludic aspect	04	29
Interculturality	01	20
Time constraints	01	08
Improvisation	08	0
Learning efficiency	05	01
Practice negotiation skills	04	02
Dynamic	01	04

Table 5-5: Number of times each aspect of a role-play was commented upon

The points brought up by the participants are considered in the discussion section coupled with the observations made by the teachers during the enactment of the role-plays.

6. Discussion

6.1. Intercultural awareness

The student-centred and active learning pedagogy of both role-plays enabled learners to influence and appropriate the content and material around the topic of interculturality. In both cases, they were challenged by a conflicting intercultural situation and they tried to use this as an opportunity to develop their ICC. This also allowed the learners to get a glimpse of how intercultural awareness can affect professional life. Moreover, in both cases, the teachers scaffolded the students to reflect creatively and critically on the various ways to resolve the intercultural issues at stake. However, learners felt that the rehearsed role-plays were significantly more effective at promoting intercultural awareness than the spontaneous ones. While drafting the rehearsed role-plays, they employed techniques such as brainstorming, problem-solving and innovative skills to work collectively on the creation of the intercultural barriers they had been asked to demonstrate. More time was thus required to complete this type of role-play and more thought went into the consideration of socio-cultural differences during its preparation. According to the results, this self-paced and cooperative (group-based) learning proved to be more beneficial for all the learners and especially for intermediate level learners who were able to prepare themselves for the enactment of the role-play by writing notes as a support.

6.2. Negotiation skills

The learners indicated that their negotiation skills improved more with the spontaneous role-plays than the rehearsed ones. This is supported by the open-ended questions (refer to Table 5-5). During the spontaneous role-play, they had to respond to the positions taken by their fellow negotiators by articulating their ideas swiftly in order to reach an agreement not only on the issues surrounding the negotiation points, but also on how to overcome the barriers arising from the cultural differences set up by the teachers. This obligation to improvise, mentioned on several occasions in the questionnaires (see Table 5-5), demanded a significant cognitive investment to find solutions to problems and to mobilize the necessary linguistic skills to communicate these solutions to interlocutors. At times, this presented an insurmountable linguistic challenge, especially for intermediate level learners. This learning-by-doing spontaneous approach helped to improve negotiation skills, but was less effective at promoting intercultural awareness. This indicates that careful consideration should be made concerning the point at which these kinds of tasks are introduced into the learning programme.

Rehearsed role-plays may provide an ideal starting point from which to introduce the concept of interculturality, but as the course progresses, learners need to be immersed in increasingly extemporaneous learning environments. These will enable them to become more adept at dealing with the dynamics of realistic professional settings, which are more accurately reflected in spontaneous role-playing.

6.3. Creativity, the ludic aspect and motivation

The motivation indices for both role-plays were high (spontaneous: 7.2 and rehearsed: 7.9), but the learners deemed the rehearsed role-plays to be more motivating than the spontaneous ones. In the rehearsed role-plays, each group was given the freedom to create their own scenario. This stimulated their creativity to produce a wide variety of sketches connected with intercultural problems. They also included the prescribed expressions in varied and creative ways to demonstrate solutions to these problems. Some learners even used the ‘offensive’ expressions presented in the introductory part of the lesson in order to deliberately ‘irritate’ their interlocutors. Matched with this creativity was the use of humour to set up entertaining scenarios. This ludic aspect was often mentioned by the learners for the rehearsed role-plays (Table 5-5); however, as witnessed by the teachers, the learners also enjoyed and were deeply engaged in the spontaneous role-plays.

It is important to develop motivating language-learning tasks for ESP students who may be unenthusiastic about studying English since it is a compulsory course requirement rather than a subject of choice. It was therefore gratifying to discover that the ludic nature of these role-plays was appreciated. The rehearsed role-play contained the creative and humoristic elements of writing and acting out a scenario. The spontaneous role-play contained a fun/exciting element due to the unpredictable situations arising from the cultural barriers.

The authors initially believed that spontaneous role-plays would be highly motivating for learners, whereas pre-scripted sketches were artificial and would be reluctantly and mechanically acted out in front of the class. The results of this study indicate the contrary, thus demonstrating that even experienced practitioners can entertain preconceptions concerning classroom practices. This underlines the role of action research in continually experimenting with, testing and challenging classroom activities in order to develop more effective language learning tasks.

6.4. Learner participation

In some cases, the intercultural barriers initially created confusion and conflict when cultural differences impeded negotiation. However, learners used appropriate communication forms and expressions (refer to Tables 5-2 and 5-3) to resolve the problems while working out different solutions. Most of the negotiations ended with the sealing of a deal. Both the role-plays provided an opportunity to increase learners' involvement and participation as opposed to more teacher-centred classroom activities. The spontaneous role-plays especially pushed learners to give clarifications and explanations during the negotiations in order to reach joint conclusions. This rendered them more active in their own learning process as well as promoting peer learning.

On occasion, learners provided mutual support during their interactions. Utterances were often jointly constructed, with learners providing vocabulary for their peers when there were gaps in the discourse. Some learners actively encouraged other more recalcitrant colleagues to speak; for example, a learner playing the role of a CEO deliberately asked her 'secretary' to provide more information on a specific issue to encourage her fellow student to contribute to the negotiations.

6.5. Practical considerations

Learners maintained their roles throughout the interaction phase, which was completed entirely in English. In contrast, the preparation phase was often conducted in both L1 (French) and L2 (English). The preparation time was much longer for the rehearsed role-plays than the spontaneous ones and several learners mentioned that they had not been allocated enough time to complete the rehearsed role-plays (see Table 5-5). Role-plays can be time-consuming activities and the constraints under which many ESP courses operate may restrict their use in programmes. Nevertheless, this study does provide pointers as to how different types of role-plays can be used at different stages in an ESP programme. Rehearsed role-plays are more suited to controlled language practice where learners have time to think about language and draft dialogues, whereas spontaneous role-plays allow learners to produce language more freely and promote improvisation.

Several of the learners in this study felt that spontaneous role-plays were more effective for language learning than rehearsed ones (refer to Table 5-5). However, these results only reflect learners' impressions concerning their own learning processes and may not convince some teachers who still question the use of role-plays compared to more traditional approaches. Less subjective methods of assessing language acquisition through role-playing and what kinds of role-plays perform this function more effectively need to be developed in order to demonstrate their value as pedagogical tools.

Role-plays are not necessarily the ideal teaching and learning method suited to every student's learning needs and preferences. Care should be taken to ensure that they are contextualized according to the learners' knowledge and understanding, otherwise they can become counterproductive.

7. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that role-plays, either rehearsed or spontaneous, are highly motivating activities that are appreciated by learners. They are flexible tools that that can be adapted to a variety of different international professional settings; for example, meetings, conferences, telephone calls or visits to a foreign company. They can be employed not only for language learning and practice, but also for acquiring language-based skills such as negotiating and learning how to deal with cultural differences. Following this research, the authors recommend that more time be devoted to cultural awareness activities in the BE language classroom. As one student pointed out, interculturality is a complex issue that should be taught in an extended course and not limited to only a two-hour lesson.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix 1

Unscripted Spontaneous Role-Play

Instructions

Two major energy producers are interested in a merger. During the role-play you should greet one another, introduce yourselves and start the negotiations. The negotiations take place on neutral territory in the USS. Negotiate the following aspects of the merger.

(1) Where will the new headquarters be located?
(2) Will the new CEO be chosen from the existing companies or will a new CEO be appointed?
(3) What will be the new name of the company?
(4) What will be the new management culture?

Malakan Petroleum is a recently created company. It is run by a young, dynamic CEO with innovative engineers based in Tirsit, Malakan. It has recently gained a huge presence in the USS in the field of sustainable energy (biogas from bananas). It has quickly become successful because it takes risks and employs an enthusiastic staff. It is a decentralised *flat* organisation and therefore less hierarchical. Decision-making is rapid as employees at lower levels are also allowed to reach decisions. It is interested in merging with Talakangas.

Talakangas is one of the oldest energy producers in the field based in Talakan. It is run by an experienced traditional CEO with employees who have been with the company for many years. It is a well-known company worldwide with a very good reputation for supplying natural gas. However, it has recently had some problems with increased competition in the USS because the company is traditional and doesn't like change. It is a *tall* organisation. Decision-making in the company is hierarchical and therefore time-consuming. It is interested in merging with Malakan Petroleum.

Expressions for the role-play

I'm afraid I can't agree with you on that.
I'm sorry, but...
Would you mind if I + simple past
Might I come in at this point?
May I give my opinion?

Appendix 2

Scripted/Rehearsed Role-Play

Instructions

Each group will write a short sketch which involves intercultural communication during a merger negotiation between two businesses from Malakan and Walakan. The negotiations take place on neutral territory. During the role-play you must demonstrate intercultural barrier(s) between Malakan (social culture) and Walakan (fact culture). You should greet one another, introduce yourselves, start a negotiation, show the intercultural barrier(s) and demonstrate reactions and solutions.

Malakan

They are casual and being late for a meeting by 10-20 minutes is normal. They like to socialise and build relationships before talking about business. They use first names to address other people. Everyone is equal irrespective of the post held. They may talk about family, children, etc. during meetings.

Walakan

They are formal and strictly respect appointment time. They talk about business immediately after a brief introduction as they consider both socialising and relationship-building to be time-consuming. The CEO is referred to as Mr. X or Ms. X. They have a strict hierarchy. They keep private and professional lives separate.

Expressions for the role-play

There is a misunderstanding about…
I find it strange to…
I'm shocked by…
This behaviour is offensive because…
I find it amusing to…

Appendix 3:

Student Evaluation for the Two Role-Plays

Answer the question by putting a circle around the appropriate response from 0 to 10:

(0 = *not at all* and 10 = *a great deal)*.

(1) How much were you made aware of intercultural differences?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

(2) How much did you improve your negotiating skills in an international context?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

(3) How much did you enjoy the role-play?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Appendix 4

Open-Ended Questions

1) *Que pensez-vous du premier jeu de rôle ?*

What do you think of the first role-play?

(2) *Que pensez-vous du deuxième jeu de rôle ?*

What do you think of the second role-play?

(3) *Autres commentaries:*

Miscellaneous comments:

TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC ACADEMIC PURPOSES: INSIGHTS INTO STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

ELIS KAKOULLI CONSTANTINOU

Abstract

This chapter reports on the findings of a research study at the Cyprus University of Technology Language Centre in the spring of 2019, the purpose of which was to investigate how students perceived the delivery of two English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) courses: ESAP for students of Commerce, Finance and Shipping (CFS) and ESAP for students of Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology and Food Science (ASBFS). The reason behind the study was to gain valuable insight into the evaluation and eventual improvement of the courses in the future. The courses were based on social constructivist theories of learning and were delivered using new technologies. Apart from the acquisition of language skills, they aimed at developing students' academic skills as well as enhancing their transferable 21st-century skills. Data was collected through students' reflective journals, their comments on the Google Classroom platform and an electronic questionnaire that was administered to the students at the end of the course. The results indicated that students had positive perceptions of the two courses and generated important observations for the improvement of the courses in the future.

Keywords: ESAP, students' perceptions, course evaluation, social constructivism, blended learning, G Suite for Education

1. Introduction

In today's constantly and rapidly developing world, technology and globalisation have influenced all aspects of life. The socio-economic, political and technological changes have also affected Higher Education (HE) institutions, which now focus their attention on how to equip their students with the appropriate skills to become accomplished global citizens and enhance their employability potentials (Álvarez-Mayo, Gallagher-Brett, and Michel, 2017). Language education in the HE context is yet another field that has been influenced by these developments. Amongst the main objectives of language education today is the acquisition not only of language skills, but also of additional skills, which Álvarez-Mayo, Gallagher-Brett, and Michel (2017) refer to as employability skills; in other words, the skills required for a successful career, e.g. communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, technology literacy, social and cross-cultural skills, etc. All of these are the result of the digitisation and automation of work, which has been referred to as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (FIR), which will eventually lead to the disappearance of certain professions and to the emergence of others (Hirschi, 2018).

In this climate of constant change, research in the field of foreign language education revolves around issues related to technology-enhanced learning and teaching, since the value of the integration of new technologies in the education process has been repeatedly expressed in the literature (Donaldson and Haggstorm, 2006; Blake, 2013). Another continuing issue is teacher empowerment, which refers to the autonomy that teachers develop to take decisions and "exercise their professional judgement about how and what to teach" (Bolin, 1989: 82). Additionally, research in the field also deals with the development of students' engagement and the building of soft skills required for their future careers through practices which expose them to real life, such as work placements (Organ, 2017).

Following the latest developments in foreign language education, the present chapter describes a study conducted at the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) in the spring of 2019, which aimed at investigating how students perceived the delivery of two English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) courses: ESAP for students of Commerce, Finance and Shipping (CFS) and ESAP for students of Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology and Food Science (ASBFS). Students' perceptions are considered a vital component for the evaluation and improvement of any educational programme, since they offer valuable feedback on the learners' needs and help the evaluator, in this case the ESP practitioner, to gain insight into effective decision making (Üstünel and Kaplan, 2015) and syllabus design.

2. Innovations in teaching English for Specific Purposes

Various advances in the field of foreign language education in HE have also fuelled developments in the area of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) with all of its branches and subdivisions (Sarré and Whyte, 2017). The focus has often been put on the language and materials used, placing the emphasis more on issues of discourse analysis. Today, ESP is defined as "the branch of English language studies which concerns the language, discourse, and culture of English-language professional communities and specialised groups, as well as the learning and teaching of this object from a didactic perspective" (Sarré and Whyte, 2017: 150). This definition reflects the multiple perspectives of ESP – linguistic, cultural, discourse and didactic – which denote its multifaceted nature.

In general terms, the students' engagement in the learning process and their acquisition of various skills that will enable them to become active citizens of the 21st century constitute a concern of HE, in particular in the context of ESP. Many innovative projects have been reported in the literature that illustrate this, such as the integration of literature in ESP (Almeida and Puig, 2017), telecollaboration projects (Guadamillas-Gómez, 2017), projects related to the use of virtual reality (VR) (Steuer, 1992), and the integration of serious gaming in ESP (Papa and Papadima-Sophocleous, 2019).

Another development in the field of ESP is research related to Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which is characterised by an immersion environment wherein the learners are exposed to both the teaching of the subject and the foreign language (Woźniak and Acebes de la Arada, 2018). Amongst the recent innovative teaching and learning practices in ESP that have emerged within the last decade is the use of social media (Rosell-Aguilar, 2018; Plutino, 2017) and cloud computing (Kakoulli Constantinou, 2018, 2019) in the language classroom. Language practitioners have also become more sensitive towards issues that concern opportunities for students and their work placements abroad (Organ, 2017).

In this context of rapid development and constant innovation, the efforts of the Cyprus University of Technology Language Centre (CUT LC) focus on keeping up with the latest developments in the field of language teaching and learning in HE. This chapter focuses on the case of two ESAP courses offered by the CUT LC, as well as the students' perceptions of these courses.

3. Teaching English for Specific Academic Purposes at the Cyprus University of Technology

Since the Cyprus University of Technology began operating in September 2007, all first-year students from all the departments of the university are required to pass two English courses in their first year of studies in order to be eligible for graduation at the Bachelor level. The first course, English for Academic Purposes (EAP), is offered in the autumn semester, whereas the second course, ESAP, is offered in the spring semester. The ESAP course is specifically designed to cater to the needs of the students of each department.

As previously mentioned, this chapter reports on a study into the investigation of students' perceptions of the two ESAP spring courses for two groups of students, namely Group 1 (CFS) and Group 2 (ASBFS). The general objective of both courses was to assist students in improving their overall communicative competence and achieve the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL; Council of Europe, 2019) on academic issues, as well as on issues related to their future professional careers. Such issues could be the following: development, marketing, outsourcing, markets, communication, etc. for the CFS students, and sustainability and agriculture, beef industry, swine industry, poultry industry, dairy industry, animal health, plant diseases, etc. for the ASBFS students. Drawing from the latest developments in language teaching pedagogy and the latest advancements in the use of technologies for the teaching of languages, the courses were based on theories such as social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) and on student-centred teaching methods involving technology. The courses aimed at developing both language as well as transferable 21st-century skills (Trilling and Fadel, 2009) such as communication, the use of new information and communication technologies (ICT), collaboration, creativity, innovation, critical thinking, intercultural awareness, autonomy and lifelong learning.

Both courses were blended; in other words, they involved both face-to-face and online instruction (Gleason, 2013). Cloud technologies, and more specifically the G Suite for Education (Google, 2019), were integrated in the courses. Google Classroom was used as the teaching and learning platform for all classroom management practices, from posting announcements, material and tasks, the submission and marking of assignments to general record keeping of all classroom activities. Google Drive was used for storing all the resource material and assignments for the course and for the creation of all documents, slides, spreadsheets and forms. The use of Google Drive allowed for the synchronous and asynchronous collaboration of students. A closed Facebook group was also established for each of the two courses for posting materials and announcements related to the course. These groups were initially created in January 2016. Since then, over 100 student members have joined. Participation in these groups was not compulsory.

In this context, language learning activities were based on communicative situations deriving from authentic-like communication acts[3] that students may experience in their lives during their studies and professional careers, e.g. the delivery of oral presentations with the use of technology (e.g. Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Slides), visits to different companies related to the students' field of studies, or educational visits by professionals during classes. Language competence was acquired through the use of text types, scenarios, and roles which promoted the production and understanding of spoken and written language related to the topics covered. Furthermore, the instructor assumed the role of the facilitator in the learning process while maintaining a positive and pleasant atmosphere in the classroom, since according to Noels, Clément and Pelletier (1999) this enhances students' intrinsic motivation.

4. Method

4.1. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research study was to investigate students' perceptions of two spring courses offered by the CUT LC for first-year students: ESAP for Group 1 and ESAP for Group 2. Both courses, offered during the spring of 2019, were built on the same learning theories and principles (social constructivism and student-centred teaching methods).

The study was founded on several research questions:

1. What are the students' perceptions of the ESAP courses that they attended?
2. What knowledge did they gain?

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[3] According to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), the term 'authenticity' is used not to refer to genuineness of material alone, but also to the way in which learners interact with a particular text and the meaning and knowledge that the text provides to the learners.

3. What elements did they like?
4. What are the students' suggestions for the improvement of the courses?

4.2. Participants

A total of 79 students participated in the study (Group 1: n=39 and Group 2: n=40). The participants were mostly of the same linguistic background, since only four students were of nationalities other than Cypriot and Greek. All were between the ages of 18–22 years. Table 6-1 (below) summarises the information regarding the participants:

	ESAP for Commerce, Finance and Shipping (CFS) (*n*=39, 49.4%)	ESAP for Agricultural Sciences, Biotechnology and Food Science (ASBFS) (*n*=40, 50.6%)
Sex		
Male	12	12
Female	27	18
Nationality		
Cypriot	36	34
Greek	3	2
Kenyan	-	3
Hungarian	-	1

Table 6-1: The participants in the study

4.3. Data collection and analysis

The data collection was a tri-fold process involving:

a) a reflective journal that each student kept when they had to complete certain tasks, e.g. the practice and delivery of oral presentations concerning companies related to their field of studies, and educational visits that they made to these companies in the context of these projects. The students were invited to provide their reflections on these experiences freely without the instructor posing any questions,

b) comments on Google Classroom after talks (based on the course content) delivered by the invited professionals, and
c) an evaluation questionnaire that was administered to the students after the completion of the course via Google Forms.

The questionnaire consisted of four general open-ended questions:

1. What have you gained from this course?
2. What were the things that you liked?
3. Is there anything that could have been done differently? Please explain what and how.
4. Are there any new things that you would wish to see in this course in the future? What are these?

The data acquired was analysed thematically using NVivo 12 software (NVivo) for the qualitative data analysis.

5. Results and discussion

The thematic analysis of the data obtained from all three research tools (reflective journals, comments on Google Classroom and the online questionnaire) revealed five thematic categories in relation to how the students perceived the two courses in general, as well as certain tasks that were assigned to them. The analysis and discussion of results that are presented in this section are based on the data obtained from all three tools. The five thematic categories which resulted from the analysis of the data are as follows:

a) processes followed for the completion of tasks;
b) knowledge gained;
c) elements they liked and facts characterised as interesting;
d) challenges faced; and
e) things that could have been done differently and suggestions for improvements.

The analysis of the data yielded significant results regarding the students' views on the two ESAP courses. The following subsections provide a discussion based on the thematic categories that were formed. This analysis provides the instructor with valuable insights concerning the evaluation of the courses and their future implementation.

5.1. Processes followed for the completion of tasks

Firstly, the results from the data analysis shed light on the processes that students followed to prepare for the tasks that were assigned to them during the semester. The students' reflections in their reflective journals illustrated that many of them followed the instructions and worked both cooperatively and collaboratively for the completion of the tasks, more specifically, in the preparation stage of their presentations. This was implied in the responses of 16 students from Group 1 (40%) and 22 students from Group 2 (56.4%). These numbers indicate the students who talked about collaboration or cooperation in their reflections. The rest of the students may have worked together on the completion of tasks but did not mention this point in their reflections.

For the students from Group 1, the task involved the preparation of an oral presentation on a specific company of their choice. They were instructed by the course facilitator to choose a company and visit it to enrich their research. The criteria for selection were information that was available on the Internet and connections that they might have within the specific company. With the help of the instructor, they contacted the companies (the instructor checked the students' emails and provided them with feedback beforehand) and arranged for visits. According to 40% of the students (n=16), all these processes were the result of teamwork.

For the students from Group 2, the task involved the preparation of an oral presentation on a specific process related to their field of study, e.g. the production of wine, honey or cheese, planting a vineyard, etc. The students were urged to visit production units in Cyprus, talk to professionals and enrich their presentations with authentic information on their topic. In most cases (n=22, 56.4%), students in Group 2 worked together on all aspects of their oral presentation projects, especially on the day of the visit to the company or production unit.

The following responses are characteristic of the process students of both groups followed:

> *Concerning the project, our team sent an email to the MSC offices in order to be able to interview one worker there. They were willing to accept our request and asked if it were possible to send them the questions to choose the right person to talk to us. Our questions were on the operations of the*

company in general, as well as for other subjects. Because of the company's policy, we were not allowed to video record the person talking. However it was fine to voice record the conservation. As we went there, we spoke to a woman, who is the Head of Group learning and organisational development, sustainability and support services. She gave us her professional card and the conversation was friendly and warm. She was willing to give to us as much information as we needed. (Student from Group 1)

By this point we had already started the presentation with general information about our product, yoghurt. Also we visited the most popular milk production plant in Cyprus and we collected a lot of information. We shared the structure of the presentation with each other and now we are trying to fix our presentation. (Student from Group 2)

Apart from their visit to the different companies and production units, the students also worked together on the preparation of the oral presentation, using Microsoft PowerPoint and in some cases Google Slides (4 out of 11 presentations for Group 1 and 2 out of 12 presentations for Group 2), because it allowed them to share slides and contribute on the same file synchronously and asynchronously. Two students from Group 2 also mentioned that after they had prepared everything, they practised their presentations together.

5.2. Knowledge gained

Regarding the knowledge that students gained from the course in general, the following responses were collected from all three sources of data. Students believed that they:

- improved their knowledge on issues related to their field of studies (Group 1 n=10 and Group 2 n=7; total 21.5%);
- developed their vocabulary in English and enriched it with terminology (Group 1 n=5 and Group 2 n=7; total 15.2%);
- improved in all four language skills (Group 1 n=6 and Group 2 n=5; total 13.9%); and
- learned how to collaborate with their classmates (Group 1 n=4 and Group 2 n=2; total 7.6%).

Concerning knowledge on issues related to their field of studies, students stated that they had learned how to prepare and deliver presentations (Group 1 n=2 and Group 2 n=1), reports (Group 1 n=2) and descriptions of graphs (Group 1 n=4), and how to approach companies and conduct interviews (Group 1 n=1). A student also cited leadership and communication skills among the skills that they felt they had improved.

> *I have gained leadership skills, communication skills, vocabulary and grammar needed generally and for my studies.* (Student from Group 1)

> *I learned many useful things, first of all I improved my English mostly speaking in a nice classroom environment by having discussions on subjects related to my field of studies. Among many things, I also learned how to make short reports and evaluate decisions, describe graphs and also how to work more effectively in groups.* (Student from Group 1)

With regard to specific tasks, students' comments on Google Classroom revealed that they had enjoyed the Junior Achievement talk at the university (for more information, see https://jacyprus.org/el/), and they wished to have more activities like this in the future (Group 1 n=10, 25.6%). Moreover, some students said that the event was an opportunity to learn about the processes students followed in order to create and promote a product in the market, how to organise a small business and how to innovate (Group 1 n=8, 20.5%). They also added that they learned about this organisation, its programmes and its goals to promote student entrepreneurship (Group 1 n=2, 5.1%).

Concerning oral presentations, in their reflective journals, students stated that the presentations helped them in acquiring knowledge related to their field of studies (Group 1 n=13, 33.3% and Group 2 n=14, 35%) including knowledge with respect to the companies and the products they presented. Additionally, a total of 15 students (19%) claimed that they had learned how to collaborate and work within a team (Group 1 n=9 and Group 2 n=6), while 10 students (12.6%) mentioned that they had learned how to deliver oral presentations (Group 1 n=6 and Group 2 n=4). Furthermore, eight students from both groups (10%) felt that oral presentations helped them face their fear of speaking in public, especially in English, which is not their mother language. Three students (3.8%) also mentioned that they had developed their research skills. Finally, students' reflective journals revealed that there were students who learned how to be more creative (Group 2 n=1), manage their time (Group 2 n=1), keep a reflective journal (Group 2 n=1), and use Google Slides (Group 2 n=1). The project was also a chance to learn more about other cultures (Group 2 n=1), feel like adults taking initiatives (Group 2 n=1), and develop their self-esteem (Group 1 n=1). One student also commented that it was an opportunity to practise their English (Group 1). The following responses illustrate some of the benefits that students gained from this project:

So, assigning us such projects is really helpful, we learn new skills and we even go out of our comfort zone so it helps us build up our self-esteem. (Student from Group 1)

I had the opportunity to visit one of the biggest businesses in Cyprus, learned to communicate with specialists, arrange appointments, managed to get over my shyness and ask questions, got sociable, learned how to work with others and also learned to talk about disagreements I had with the members of my group and tried to find a solution. I also learned to use Google Slides, treat professionals politely and to act like a professional, and I learned more about milk, yoghurt, halloumi, dairy products and more generally Food Science that is the path that I follow. (Student from Group 2)

Jendrych (2013: 12) stresses the significance of students' acquiring the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence needed for their field of studies. She asserts that "[p]rofessionals usually need good interpersonal skills, business and managerial skills, analytical skills, persuasion skills as well as specific micro-skills" in order to reach the required professional performance. The students' responses in all three tools of data collection proved that they had been offered opportunities for acquiring such skills.

5.3. Course elements that the students liked and facts characterised as interesting

Concerning aspects of the courses that students enjoyed, the questionnaire responses showed that they liked the assessed tasks (Group 1 n=8 and Group 2 n=5; total 16%). Moreover, they considered these tasks as interesting; some of them mentioned oral presentations and the visit by Junior Achievement Cyprus (Group 1 n=1 and Group 2 n=5; total 7.6%).

It was really fun to do something different on Tuesday. It was interesting to see how the young entrepreneurs formed their business and how they worked together as a team. Also it was useful for us because we got the chance to speak English in front of people that we don't know. I would really like to have more events like this in the future because they improve our English and we learn other skills as well. (Student from Group 1).

Students also liked the teaching methodology (Group 1 n=5 and Group 2 n=7; total 15.2%) and the technologies used in the courses (Group 1 n=4 and Group 2 n=2; total 7.6%). They also enjoyed collaborating with their teammates (Group 1 n=4 and Group 2 n=2; total 7.6%) and the relationship that they developed with the instructor, whom they characterised as helpful and willing to assist them in any difficulties they faced, not only within the context of the course, but also within their studies in general (Group 1 n=3 and Group 2 n=2; total 6.3%). Furthermore, two students (Group 1) mentioned that they liked the coursebook used for the course and the discussions the class had on different topics from the book. One student mentioned that they liked the atmosphere that prevailed in the class every time the class met. Following is a student's response to the evaluation questionnaire.

> *I liked the structure of the lesson, that is using Google Classroom which is a very useful program and very organised, and also the environment in the class that made me feel open to participating in class dialogues about a subject.* (Student from Group 1)

All these positive aspects of the course recorded by the students in their reflective journals, in their comments about Google Classroom and in the questionnaire may be regarded as parameters that strengthened their motivation and interest and should be maintained in the future.

5.4. Challenges faced by the students during the two courses

Among the challenges recorded by the students was the fact that seven of them from Group 1 (18%) were not able to attend the talk delivered by Junior Achievement Cyprus because of other obligations, even though they understood the significance of the event, which was to practise using language meaningfully. To minimise this challenge in the future, the instructor could assign assessed tasks to the students that can only be completed if students attend the event.

Other challenges mentioned by the students related to the students' collaboration and interpersonal relations. At certain times the students faced difficulties in making decisions related to group tasks and building relationships of trust with other members of the group. This might imply that, as Katsara (2008) proposes, the instructors should take into account the benefits of effective group work and be as encouraging as possible in order to instruct the students on the value of resolving conflicts and building relationships of mutual understanding within the group.

Furthermore, regarding oral presentations, the students mentioned their fear of presenting in public (n=6, 15.4%), while no students from Group 2: ASBFS referred to this challenge. A student from Group 1: CFS wrote the following in their reflective journal:

However, I am not happy about the presentation. I've always had trouble speaking in front of an audience, I get anxiety every time I have to get on stage and talk. I don't know how it'll go. I guess we'll have to wait and see…

The students also talked about difficulties in the following areas: decision making and the inability to reach a consensus among the team members (Group 1 n=1 and Group 2 n=3), cooperating with different companies (Group 1 n=2 and Group 2 n=1), creating videos for their presentations (Group 1 n=3), finding time for meetings (Group 1 n=3), and coping with the project because of other academic commitments (Group 1 n=3). A student also reported a lack of free time because of the workload (Group 1). Finally, a student mentioned the fact that on the day of the presentations, some students had left the room before the last few groups delivered their presentations because the session had exceeded the time limit (Group 2). This created feelings of disappointment and injustice among certain students.

The challenges reported by the students could prove very useful in informing the instructor regarding the various measures that have to be taken when the course is offered in the future. To face these challenges, the instructor could:

- keep a list of the companies that had accepted students from one year to the next;
- suggest different video editing software to students they could use;
- dedicate more classroom time to the completion of assessed tasks; and perhaps
- manage the time of the presentations more effectively so that all students are given the opportunity to present without others leaving the room.

Nevertheless, all of the above challenges faced by the students could be regarded as "blessings in disguise", since the processes and mechanisms students employ in order to overcome these challenges help them develop a series of problem-solving skills useful in their future academic life and professional careers (Jendrych, 2013).

5.5. Things that could have been done differently and suggestions for future improvement

Concerning things that could have been done differently, almost half the students responded that they were satisfied with the course as it was (Group 1 n=20 and Group 2 n=19; total 49.4%). Nevertheless, the students from Group 1 made the following suggestions:

- one student suggested more speaking in the class;
- another believed that they should have chosen a different company to present;
- another mentioned that the instructor could have arranged an educational visit to a specific company;
- one student said that they would prefer not to have a coursebook, even though she understood the value of it; and
- another expressed a preference for individual instead of collaborative work.

The above comments and feedback are valuable sources to deduce areas for course improvement in the future.

In the same manner, the students from Group 2 proposed a list of areas for improvement. They are as follows:

- one student said that the instructor should have found another way to handle "weak" students, meaning that she should make things simpler for them;
- another one said that an educational visit to a company should be arranged by the instructor;
- one student mentioned that the instructor should have intervened when members of a group could not work together due to disagreement; and
- one student said that the workload should have been less.

As mentioned above, the suggestions expressed by the students should be taken into serious account when renewing the syllabus of the two courses in the future. As Üstünel and Kaplan (2015: 34) express, "learners should have [a] voice in the decisions that might affect them" in the context of a humanistic approach to language teaching and learning. This is particularly appropriate in the case of ESP, where the analysis of the learners' needs is the driving force of curriculum development (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998).

In this case study, the students appear to have appreciated the instructor's effort to expose them to authentic language situations and contexts. However, the instructor should encourage them more to express their own opinions on areas that need to be changed in the course. By means of this approach, more students would likely contribute with suggestions for course improvement. When asking for the integration of more tasks that involved educational visits, the students expressed a need for more exposure to authentic and real-life material, with a reduction in the use of the coursebook. Paying closer attention to students with lower performance is another parameter that should be taken into consideration, and finally, closer and more regular monitoring of students' group tasks to avoid any problems and conflicts created within the groups is a significant area to observe in terms of amelioration. Even though granting autonomy to students could prove extremely useful and valuable, since it refers to a "self-regulated, self-designed, or self-organized learning process" (Geng, 2010: 944), more guidance on the part of the instructor should be given to students who need it, especially in their first year of HE studies.

6. Conclusion

In the context of modern on-going developments and changes, where the goals of HE have been directed towards a more comprehensive conceptualisation of the competences that today's graduates should acquire at the tertiary level, ESP is a field of many innovations. Having the learners and their needs at the nucleus of the curriculum and the teaching process, ESP practitioners continually strive to adapt to the latest developments and to update their teaching methodologies in accordance with current institutional demands.

Curriculum evaluation is an integral part of the educational process (Richards, 2001) and students' perceptions of the teaching and learning processes are valuable for the future improvement of any educational programme or syllabus. This chapter aimed at presenting the perceptions of first-year students at the CUT on the ESAP courses that they attended in spring 2019. Taking into consideration the aims set at the beginning of the courses and analysing the students' perceptions, the overall results demonstrate that the two courses could be regarded as successful and positively perceived by the students. The present study did not attempt to evaluate whether students' language performance had improved after the completion of the courses; it only examined their perceptions. This is something that merits investigation in future studies. Nevertheless, the students appeared to have enjoyed many aspects of the courses and the teaching methodologies that were used. The challenges and practical difficulties faced by the students and their suggestions for improvements are valuable sources of information for future modifications of these courses and any other similar courses offered in similar contexts. Therefore, this study and the pedagogical approach that it presents may provide useful insights not only to ESP language educators, but also to curriculum developers, ESP (and foreign language) practitioners, teacher educators and anyone wishing to stay abreast of the latest developments in the field of foreign language education and acquisition.

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PART III

NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Over the last few decades, technological advances have inevitably had a significant impact on language teaching and learning. However, within the last decade, we have been witnessing an increasing number of new methods and trends involving the integration of a variety of online resources that have been recently developed. The integration of corpora is one illustration of this emerging trend. Garrett (2009: 719) insists on “the full integration of technology into language learning”. Warschauer and Kern (2000) argue that the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a vital tool to accomplish certain tasks or to communicate in language classrooms. Furthermore, Arnó-Macía (2012) asserts that language professionals now use ICT and various other tools designed to create specialized materials for LSP classrooms.

Yet, for differing reasons, a number of language practitioners are uncertain and uncomfortable about implementing ICTs in their language classrooms. While the use of ICTs can serve as a stimulus and encourage the impetus of language acquisition, some language practitioners have noted a saturation and thus reticence for ICT use amongst language learners, who, already proficient in ICT use, are showing signs of weariness and a renewed desire for more traditional methods in the language classroom context. Their need for more direct teacher-student interaction and a penchant for human interaction thus indicate that there is an increasing variety in the number of obstacles associated with language teaching and the integration of ICT. Throughout the next three chapters, the authors address the aforementioned issues, as well as the obstacles and advantages associated with the integration of ICT into language teaching pedagogy.

In Chapter Seven, entitled “Integrating new technologies in language teaching: Obstacles and challenges”, **Mahdi Amazouz** and **Franck Zumstein** establish a typology of obstacles to the integration of ICT in French elementary and secondary schools. The authors account for the reasons preventing teachers from using ICT tools in the classroom, which contribute to three different types of attitudes: immobilization, reluctance and caution. They then present the results of their survey on the use of new technologies by teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in French universities in order to assess whether such obstacles also hamper (or not) ICT integration in their pedagogical environments. In the final discussion of their results, they show that a lack of teacher training is the main obstacle as a 'first-order' barrier. The authors posit that this barrier most probably stems from a fear of unreachable levels of technicality, and therefore some university teachers of English reluctantly invest time and effort in their use of ICT tools. It is their contention that once all obstacles are lifted, the availability and use of authentic linguistic data in English classrooms to 'feed' digital pedagogical applications constitute a further stumbling block. They then suggest two solutions: the first one in the form of large-scale existing speech corpora of the main standard varieties of English and a second one that consists of language teachers building their own corpus.

In Chapter Eight, entitled "Enhancing ESP vocabulary practice with online corpus analysis tools", **Dragana Vukovic Vojnovic** shares how the implementation of corpus analysis tools provides an enhanced practical approach to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) methodology, in particular when the specific research objective is to identify key vocabulary and terminology. This chapter provides an overview of corpus analysis tools that are pertinent to the teaching of ESP in the context of vocabulary analysis and jargon used in the tourism industry. In the context of the study, data was collected from two English language tourism websites: one website promotes Paris, and the other promotes New York. The results were presented to a group of students in an ESP tourism course for discussion and debate. The students were asked to further document the ways in which specialist vocabulary in promotional texts can influence potential tourists who visit these websites. Finally, the chapter explains how corpus tools can assist foreign language teachers in the development of active learning and learner autonomy, as well as expand specialist vocabulary knowledge through the use of corpus analysis.

In Chapter Nine, entitled "Saturation with technology in the ESP setting" **Nadezda Stojkovic, Ana Balula** and **Sandra Vasconcelos** describe an academic setting where adept students who have already been exposed to intensive training in technology argue in favour of a return to more traditional classroom settings and direct teacher-student interaction and exchanges during their courses of ESP. The authors explain and maintain that human-to-human interaction in language instruction is more holistic and inherent to the nature of language teaching and learning in terms of social exchange and human experience.

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INTEGRATING NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING: OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES

MAHDI NACIM AMAZOUZ
AND FRANCK ZUMSTEIN

Abstract

In this chapter, we first focus on two attempts to establish a typology of obstacles to the integration of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in French elementary and secondary schools. Teyssedre (2012) puts forward "first-order barriers" and "second-order barriers" and Campillo-Paquet (2015) mentions teachers' "personal imaginary" and "collective imaginary" with regard to new technologies and that both can be negative or positive. We account for the reasons that prevent teachers from using ICT tools in the classroom, which contribute to three types of attitudes identified by Guichon (2012): immobilization, reluctance and caution.

We then present the results of a survey on the use of new technologies by teachers of English as a foreign language in French universities in order to assess whether such obstacles also hamper (or not) ICT integration in their pedagogical environments. In the final discussion of the results of our survey, we show that a lack of teacher training is the main obstacle as a "first-order" barrier. This barrier most probably stems from a fear of unreachable levels of technicality, so some university teachers of English reluctantly invest time and effort in their use of ICT tools. It is our contention that once all obstacles are lifted, the availability and use of authentic linguistic data in English classrooms to 'feed' digital pedagogical applications constitute a further stumbling block. We finally suggest a first solution in the form of large-scale existing speech corpora of the main standard varieties of English and a second one which consists of building one's own corpus.

Keywords: Information Communication Technology (ICT), language learning, pedagogy, obstacles

1. Introduction

This study is dedicated to the challenges associated with the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in French universities among teachers of English in Literature, Linguistics, and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). As an innovative medium for teaching languages, ICT use has become more and more common worldwide. According to Valentin et al. (2013: 52–58), the increased accessibility of learning technologies has created new learning environments in which learners' interests are stimulated. Autonomous learners can independently access knowledge, collect and evaluate information on their own. ICT provides teachers and learners with access to a wide range of information and authentic materials within and outside the classroom. Nevertheless, the role of the teacher is essential in getting students acquainted with the technology in use, since they should not only guide and monitor learners, but also monitor the learning process. Both students and teachers must continually develop new strategies and skills to use these tools so that the teaching and learning process can take place most effectively. Kasper (2000: 16) writes "in our digital age of information, students must become electronically literate".

Obstacles to the integration of new technologies in primary and secondary schools in France have caught the attention of researchers such as Teyssedre (2012), who suggests a typology for the various groups of obstacles. He classifies some as "first-order barriers" and others as "second-order barriers". These barriers are also studied by Campillot-Paquet (2015) in terms of the teachers' "imaginaries", which can be "personal" or "collective". Each one of these may be considered as "positive" or "negative". Both researchers provide the reasons that are behind such obstacles which hinder progress and thus contribute to some teachers' rather ambiguous attitudes towards new technologies. Guichon (2012) qualifies and categorizes those different attitudes in the following terms: "immobilization", "reluctance" and "caution".

In our study, we strive to assess whether the same types of hindrance play a role in the use of ICT in English classrooms at French universities through the use of data collection from an online survey conducted in 2018. This chapter first presents the details of the survey and its results, and then an analysis and discussion based on the respondents' answers to the different questions. Our survey tends to show that "first-order barriers" and a "negative collective imaginary" play dominant roles when it comes to integrating ICT tools in teaching practices. The use of new technologies then remains primarily of a transmissive type in most cases, since the main problem raised by our test group of university teachers is the lack of proper training. We finally contend that beyond ICT-related barriers, teachers are confronted with another obstacle. This obstacle comprises the problems associated with the availability of and rapid access to authentic linguistic examples to 'feed' ICT tools in order to produce language resources. We suggest a first solution via a project that consists of building speech corpora that include the main standard varieties of English. We also recommend that teachers learn how to build their own corpus to integrate authentic examples in their teaching practice.

2. The integration of ICT in schools: a typology of obstacles

2.1. First- and second-order barriers

For many elementary and secondary school teachers in France, a full integration of ICT tools in teaching practices remains an insurmountable obstacle. In order to find the reasons behind such attitudes and apprehension, Teyssedre (2012: 119) builds upon the research of Ertmer (1999) and proposes a typology of obstacles. Among those obstacles, there are a few "first-order barriers" which are beyond teachers' control since they relate to:

- hardware and software insufficiencies: too few machines, minimal installed applications, limited access to the Internet, etc.;
- technical problems: failing or unreliable machines and technical support, inadequately installed pieces of software, etc.; and
- lack of time: too few periods fully dedicated to training sessions.

Additional obstacles are classified as "second-order barriers" and are closely linked to the teachers' professional identity, that is to say, their attachment to traditional modes and models of teaching and their own representations of the teacher's role in the classroom. These "second-order barriers" include the teacher's:

- conception and models of teaching;
- views and opinions about ICT tools for teaching;
- teaching habits; and
- reluctance to adopt new models or methods of teaching.

Obstacles of the first type are clearly anchored in reality and can be considered as pragmatic, whereas "second-order barriers" relate to the teacher as an individual who is in full control of their choices, method and pedagogy. Ertmer (2005: 36) uses the expression "final frontier" to refer to "second-order barriers" that she equates to "teachers' pedagogical beliefs" when referring to low levels of teachers' use of ICT tools in their classrooms across the USA, as explained in her conclusion:

> While the foundations for successful technology integration finally appear to be in place (U.S. DOE [US Department of Education], 2003; MDR [Market Data Retrieval], 2002), high-level technology use is still surprisingly low (Barron et al., 2003; Newman, 2002; Zhao et al., 2002), suggesting that additional barriers, specifically related to teachers' pedagogical beliefs, may be at work.

Such personal beliefs most certainly contribute to what Campillo-Paquet (2015) labels the teachers' "negative collective imaginary" since teachers form a community and certain attitudes or behaviour may have an impact on their colleagues.

2.2. Teachers' imaginaries

In her research, Campillo-Paquet (2015) attempts to find the origins of or the reasons behind the "pedagogical beliefs" of teachers at some French universities that prevent them from leaving their comfort zone. Campillo-Paquet (2015: 294) introduces the notion of the "teachers' imaginary" that she divides into two classifications: a personal imaginary and a collective imaginary. Each of these is fed by teachers' perceptions of and opinions on ICT tools. Both of these classifications can be either positive or negative. In the teachers' positive imaginary, Campillo-Paquet (2015: 295) mentions that the teacher feels that technology is a clear asset and its added value in teaching is undeniable, since it improves the learning process and can be a source of motivation for the learners.

Teachers also mention that it is easier to share knowledge and to cooperate with learners with the help of adequate technological tools, such as learning management systems (LMSs). Some other tools, such as online applications that allow learners to create talking avatars (*Voki*, https://www.voki.com/) or their own resources (*LearningApps*, https://learningapps.org/), can also enhance the learner's creativity whilst making it easier for the teacher to suggest additional pedagogical resources beyond the classroom. In this way, constraints, both in terms of space and time, tend to vanish in the teaching and learning process. One negative aspect associated with the teacher's imaginary is that it can attract and accumulate a variety of fears. Among them, Campillo-Paquet (2015: 295) mentions the following types:

- students choose to stop attending classes, since the courses are available at a distance online;
- pedagogical creations may be pillaged despite intellectual property laws;
- the amount and level of technological knowledge is too high and intense;
- the teacher's role is irremediably changed after having adopted technology in class; and
- such transformations may amount to almost nothing, that is to say, there may be a considerable amount of investment and a minimal impact on the student success rates.

The research of Campillo-Paquet (2015: 295) points to the following paradox: most teachers admit that the use of ICT tools in pedagogical practices is an asset and plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, since it allows more students to participate in collaborative work. However, some students isolate themselves and opt to work alone or independently at a distance. More teachers would be willing to integrate new technologies in their classes, yet their collective negative imaginary ultimately prevents them from doing so. According to Teyssedre (2012: 119), the pedagogical beliefs represent obstacles that are the most severe limits to push or surmount.

2.3. A typology of teachers' negative attitudes towards change and innovation

In researching this paradox, Guichon (2012: 46–47) identifies three types of negative attitudes that are usually adopted by teachers when it comes to using new technologies, namely:

- **immobilization:** this describes a feeling of "powerlessness" (technology is perceived as an intrusion into the learning and pedagogical process, an event that creates an imbalance that is difficult to normalize);
- **reluctance:** the integration of new technologies requires investment and a certain repositioning of teachers' role within the classroom (knowing what it is reasonable to concede professionally); and

- **caution**: some teachers rightly emphasize the importance of the pedagogical content over the use of ICT. However, some of them also admit to a form of "pedagogical regression".

Such attitudes are often symptomatic of what we call the teacher's uneasiness towards the pedagogical use of ICT, so their use of new technology is reduced to merely transmitting content. Yet, according to Bédard et al. (2009), the field of Educational Sciences attributes a "pedagogical" dimension to the term "innovation" since there is an ongoing search for "substantial" improvement in the learning of students in situations of interaction and interactivity. However, we only perceive and focus on technical innovations. In this pedagogical setting, ICT use is thus technology-driven and not pedagogy-driven. Regarding secondary schools, Guichon (2012) concludes that although teachers perceive the potential of ICT use for language teaching, their uses remain relatively narrow and basic. A lack of ICT training can result in critical difficulties associated with the integration of new technologies into the teaching and learning process.

3. A survey of ICT integration in ESP classrooms at French universities

3.1. Method

The data in this study were collected from 18 French universities using quantitative and qualitative techniques [Paris Diderot (n=10); Poitiers (n=5); Sorbonne, Nanterre (n=2); AMU, Lyon 2, Pau et Pays de l'Adour, Toulouse 3, UT1, Bordeaux-Montaigne, Clermont Auvergne, Jean Monnet, Antilles (n=1); unspecified (n=6)]. A questionnaire was administered to 33 university teachers between 33 and 65 years of age. The teachers are specialized in different fields of study in English, such as Linguistics (n=5), (n=Literature (n=4) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (n=5), for which there were a total of 23 respondents, as well as Phonetics and Phonology (n=10).

Although somewhat limited in terms of the number of respondents (n=33), this survey will provide an overview of ICT use in the Higher Education (HE) context, the difficulties encountered during the process, and the pedagogical principles that inform decision-making during the teaching process. To offer a correlation between tertiary and secondary education teaching practices and the competences associated with the use of ICT, we have assessed our respondents' skills according to Guichon's (2012) terminology of "minimal" and "in-depth" skills in the use of ICT.

3.2. Results

The analysis of the data shows that although teachers perceive the potential of ICT for language learning, their uses remain limited. 86.67% (n=26) of the surveyed teachers believe that the usefulness of ICT for teaching is proven; they admit that their ICT use is primarily transmissive. This is noteworthy given that 82.76% (n=24) of teachers perceived the added value of digital devices in their teaching in terms of learners' motivation and interest, knowledge retention and sharing, interaction and autonomy.

Regarding the acquired skills for ICT use, they are rather minimal. These skills are mainly of a 'research' nature, such as the ability to find raw (non-teaching) resources on the Internet for pedagogical use. 'Evaluation skills' (evaluate media-based learning resources) are reported on behalf of 80.65% (n=25) of teachers, and 'dissemination skills' (the ability to channel knowledge through media-based learning resources) are found in the responses of 83.87% (n=26) of teachers.

Regarding in-depth skills in terms of ICT use, the data yielded the following results: 'design skills' are revealed in the answers of 32.26% (n=10) of teachers; 'publishing and manufacturing of micro-tasks skills' are found in 45.16% (n=14) of the responses; 'integration skills' in 41.94% (n=13); 'pedagogical and support skills' in 48.39% (n=15); and 'mediation skills' in 41.94% (n=13). When we look more closely at the results of our survey, teachers mainly use common presentation and transmission platforms, such as the *espace numérique de travail* or *ENT* (Virtual Work Environment), MS PowerPoint, YouTube, etc.

To provide part of the answer about the gap between technological change and the development of ICT integration skills among university teachers, we addressed the question of their own ICT training. Only 54.55% (n=18) of all respondents have participated in an ICT-related training programme. 64.52% (n=20) of the respondents claim that opportunities for ICT training are limited in their institution, and oftentimes they do not necessarily correspond to their schedules. The lack of training is particularly problematic as 64.52% (n=20) of all surveyed teachers expressed a persistent need for the assistance of an expert when using these tools.

3.3. Obstacles in the English language teaching classroom

The study results are in line with Guichon's (2012: 46–47) typology of negative attitudes and his concluding remarks about a minimalist approach in using new technologies. Indeed, the situation in terms of ICT integration in pedagogical practices in some French universities is the same as it is in secondary schools. The typology of obstacles put forward by Teyssedre (2012) can also be more or less applied to some French universities' pedagogical environments. The results also confirm the findings of Campillot-Paquet (2015) that university teachers have developed a "negative collective imaginary". Just like their counterparts in secondary schools, many teachers in universities are paradoxically well aware of the benefits of ICT integration in their classrooms.

Furthermore, the results also show that the main stumbling block for many language instructors is the lack of training in universities. In this context, it would be opportune to consider aligning technical ambitions with pedagogical ambitions and make use of the potential benefits ICT use can offer. This training must include pedagogical practices and support for teachers and students, as well as the design of mechanisms for the acquisition of knowledge, project coordination and the evaluation and constant evolution of educational practices. In this respect, initial and continued teacher training has an important role to play. There is a significant modelling effect to the extent that future teachers tend to reproduce the practices to which they are exposed during their training for the teaching process (Bétrancourt, 2007). Guichon (2012) cautions that the integration of ICT into the learning process requires "in-depth" skills. The risks associated with neophytes are addressed by Bétrancourt (2007: 2), who claims:

> […] not only do newly trained teachers not use ICT more than their elders (Karsenti, 2007; Larose, Grenon, Lenoir, et al., 2007), but there is also no correlation between a teacher's technological skills and their pedagogical use of ICT (Gonzalez, 2004). It is training focused on the educational uses of ICT that can facilitate use in the classroom (Karsenti, 2004; Yldirim, 2000).

Consequently, a young teacher may be very skilled at using social media and a smartphone, for example; however, the same young teacher may be at a loss over the pedagogic use and integration of ICT in their teaching syllabus. The transition from the field of pedagogy to the use of digital technology requires a plethora of training opportunities to support ongoing advancements in technology while optimizing the quality of the learning and teaching process.

In France, several academic institutions offer ICT-related training courses, including pedagogy support and ICT orientation services. For example, this is the case at the University of Rennes 1 in the *Service universitaire de pédagogie et des TICE de l'université de Rennes 1* (SUPTICE-Rennes 1, 2019). The programme aims to train teachers and researchers in ICT knowledge and pedagogic use. Nevertheless, unfortunately this training programme does not extend to the national level. Furthermore, training missions for students are rare or non-existent for some undergraduate level degrees, as well as at the graduate or doctoral level. As part of the teacher training programme or *Master des Métiers de l'Enseignement, de l'Éducation et de la Formation* (MEEF), the curriculum imposes training sessions in new technologies and programmes for future secondary school teachers. Yet, strangely enough, this training offer does not extend to HE professionals.

As we have seen throughout this chapter, the obstacles to using ICT in HE can be numerous and rather layered or complex. It is our contention that once each of the aforementioned obstacles is lifted, teachers are still confronted with yet another one: the use of authentic oral language examples to nourish pedagogical computer applications aimed at preparing and producing didactic resources. When looking for such examples, teachers have to consider the following question: where can a teacher find authentic oral specimens in vast quantities to select an appropriate and sufficient number of samplings for pedagogic use? In the next section, we will propose a viable solution to this question.

3.4. A further obstacle: the availability of authentic oral examples

Many obstacles may indeed conceal additional ones. Our data results show that some HE English teachers perceive the added value of the integration of ICT tools in their teaching. However, we suggest that once all other barriers are lifted, a new obstacle may also prove to be insurmountable and lead teachers to abandon any attempt to fully integrate technology into their teaching practices. Indeed, when a technological tool is adopted by a teacher, he or she soon realizes that there is a wide range of possible pedagogical applications, particularly in the context of tools that enable the integration of multimedia contents. The teacher thus becomes aware of the potential extent of the infinite opportunities. The downside of this is that such tools are merely what we label ‘empty jars’ that need to be filled with linguistic data if the teacher aims to produce different practical resources. The use of authentic samples has long been discussed in the literature and adopted in language curricula at university level (Yu, 2006: 23–31; Parmawati and Yugafiati, 2017: 1–8).

With regard to the definition of an authentic example and while citing the previous findings of several researchers, Gilmore (2007: 98) makes the following observations:

> […] authenticity relates to the language produced by native speakers for native speakers in a particular language community (Porter & Roberts 1981; Little et al. 1989), and authenticity relates to the language produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience, conveying a real message (Morrow 1977; Porter & Roberts 1981; Swaffar 1985; Nunan 1988/9; Benson & Voller 1997).

Since the use of technology allows the teacher to suggest new authentic resources beyond the limits of the classroom as Campillo-Paquet (2015) highlights, there is thus a tangible need for extensive amounts of authentic data samples.

During the selection process of these authentic samples, Bento (2017: 45–46) identifies several factors that contribute to the eventual choice and lists three types of factors: human, contextual and pedagogical or didactic factors. Yet she does not address an important question that is to be asked before any act of selection: where and how can teachers find appropriate authentic examples in large numbers? We must keep in mind here that quantity is important, since the objective is to include authentic data in activities, exercises or tests that may also include the use of question banks, that is to say, databases including vast amounts of questions made available for exercises and tests. When looking for authentic data, many teachers search the Internet; however, this method usually proves disappointing and leads to discouragement or distractions. Furthermore, this method can be rather time-consuming, generally yielding very few results. If looking for audio extracts, for example, teachers often listen to complete audio files before finding the authentic examples that best suit their needs.

4. Overcoming this final obstacle

4.1. The speech corpora project

In order to solve the problem of the accessibility of authentic oral language samples, we feel that teachers should have access to a corpus of authentic material before creating new resources with ICT tools. Boulton (2010: 101–103) discusses and exemplifies the use of corpora and specifically mentions that such use should be adapted to what he calls "specific learning styles". The notion of the corpus is important here, since it refers to a collection of authentic written data that are at least carefully indexed or, at most, enriched with metadata such as XML-TEI tags (TEI 2019), part-of-speech tags (TreeTagger), or prosodic tags (Hasegawa-Johnson et al., 2005). In fact, speech corpora include two major components: audio files and their written scripts. When searching for audio samples, the user should first search for specific items within the written component. In most cases, speech corpora are aligned so that whole audio and written contents are broken into pieces or chunks at word level, phrase level, sentence level or according to prosodic cues. Audio and written data alignment means that each audio piece corresponds to its corresponding written piece and an indexation or linking device assists the user in finding the audio chunks after having retrieved results from the written part of the corpus.

Unless ready-made corpora are made available to teachers, this problem of access represents an additional obstacle to many colleagues. If corpora including written data are relatively easy to find, speech corpora are, in comparison, quite scarce. Our research project may thus fill this void. The original idea was to make use of speech corpora to evaluate ongoing variations and changes in the pronunciation of three standard varieties of English: British English, American English and Australian English. We have compiled audio files and their written scripts from programmes delivered by online media outlets such as *BBC Learning English* (BBC, Great Britain), *National Public Radio* (NPR, USA) and the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation* (ABC, Australia). The audio and scripts of these programmes are freely available, and a link to each of them is provided in the corpus. Yet within the framework of this project, we intend to officially ask permission to re-use such content for pedagogical and research purposes. In this respect, our work with the NPR content is in adequation with the legal concept of 'Fair Use' in the United States of America (U.S. Copyright Office, n.d.). We also may suggest business deals with media outlets so that the corpus can be made available via financial subscriptions.

Audio files and their corresponding scripts are thus aligned at the sentence level. The scripts come as simple text files that can be researched with the help of concordancer software (see https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/concordancers-elt for a quick definition and see http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/ for a free standard concordancer called *AntConc*).

A sample of the search results for all words ending with '-ate' are presented in Figure 7-1.

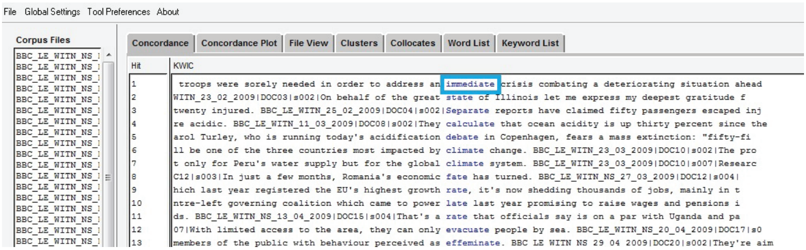

Figure 7-1: Results of a concordancer search based on all words ending in '-ate'

In Figure 7-1, the loaded corpus text files are listed on the far left. In the text files, each sentence is enclosed in a paragraph so that there are as many paragraphs as there are sentences. All search-specific words appear in blue with some context on the left and some on the right. It is possible to click on the blue search words and to open the files in which those words appear. For example, after having clicked on the word *immediate* at the top of the list, a new window opens and shows the full context in which the word appears, as shown in Figure 7-2.

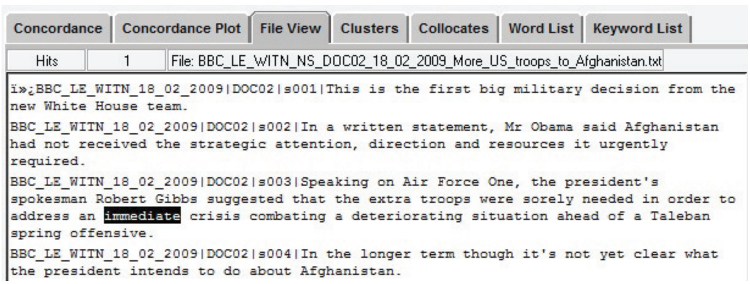

Figure 7-2: The word *immediate* as it appears in document 02 of the corpus

In Figure 7-2 and at the beginning of the sentence in which the word *immediate* appears, the indexation system BBC_LE_WITN_18_02_2209|DOC02|s003 signifies the following:

- "BBC - *British Broadcasting Corporation*",
- "LE - *Learning English* component",
- " WITN - *Words In The News* programme", date of publication of the programme (18_02_2009);
- rank of the document in the corpus (DOC02); and
- sentence number 3 in the text file (s003).

With the help of these references, it is possible to listen to and/or download the matching audio file via our web interface, as shown in Figure 7-3.

Figure 7-3: The corresponding web interface

The use of concordance tools should not be an obstacle to HE language teachers, since it has become common practice in research for many different fields of study. The real obstacle is the scarce availability of speech corpora when looking for authentic audio data. Our corpus is currently in the making, and it will eventually include a very extensive amount of authentic written and audio material. The data collection includes archives of media outlets that date back to the year 2005. Teachers with access to this corpus will subsequently know where and how to extract as many audio examples as they want to produce their own language resources.

4.2. Pushing the limits of corpora use

The use of corpora in language teaching has long been a field of study. As indicated by Roemer (2008: 112), there is an increasing need for corpora among the teaching community.

> Over the past two decades, corpora (i.e. large systematic collections of written and/or spoken language stored on a computer and used in linguistic analysis) and corpus evidence have not only been used in linguistic research but also in the teaching and learning of languages – probably a use that "the compilers [of corpora] may not have foreseen" (Johansson 2007) […] and a number of dedicated researchers and teachers have made concrete suggestions on how concordances and corpus-derived exercises could be used in the language teaching classroom, thus significantly "[e]nriching the learning environment" (Aston 1997, 51).

An increasing number of teachers are thus becoming corpora users, but the existing corpora do not necessarily meet their needs. It is thus an opportune time for them to become their own best resource. In this way, they will find an alternative solution to the obstacle. They can compile their own speech corpora and simply become corpus compilers. Indeed, many HE language teachers hold dual posts that involve both teaching and researching. Most of them already use ICT tools within the framework of their research projects. It may then just be a question of showing them how to utilize such corpus compilation tools so that they can in turn contribute to the field of corpus linguistics and the preservation of authentic language materials.

Additionally, the limits of corpora use may also be redefined and pushed forward. Gilmore (2007) indicates that corpora may have dual roles when used by teachers: an indirect role and a direct role. The former is the most frequent and the most documented in terms of research. The latter is less known and was in fact pioneered in the early 1990s by Tim Johns (1991), who presented his results in a seminal article. Today, it is widely known as Data-Driven Learning (DDL), and Johns (1991: 2) justifies his approach as follows:

> What is novel about the work reported in this paper is the perception that "research is too serious to be left to the researchers": that the language-learner is also, essentially, a research worker whose learning needs to be driven by access to linguistic data – hence the term "data-driven learning" (DDL) to describe the approach.

At the HE level, the advantages of using the DDL in terms of language teaching are twofold. First, it provides the students with hands-on and authentic data, which they are asked to analyze in order to infer language rules that are applied by native speakers. However, it also allows them to point to exceptions and variations in the language. Secondly, it shows them of what corpora are composed and which additional purposes they may serve. DDL could be construed as part of a didactic approach for the introduction to the world of corpus linguistics and its methodologies that imply the use of ICT tools. It is thus a way of lifting all possible obstacles to impeding the use of ICT, since new generations of teachers and researchers will no longer be challenged by second-order barriers. Furthermore, they will know how to explore corpora and even venture into building new ones to enhance the integration and use of ICT tools within their teaching practices.

5. Conclusion

The results of our survey based on the use of ICT and new technologies by English language teachers in French universities show a lack of competency in the integration of ICT. With respect to this, the shortfall in ICT training constitutes the main obstacle to the adequate integration of digital tools in language classrooms. In order to harness digital media and technology for language learning, it is necessary to channel progress through digital media literacy and training, thereby generating added value for the learning process. Furthermore, the availability of authentic linguistic data to nourish digital pedagogical application needs could be the cornerstone of ICT integration in the learning process. Accordingly, we recommend, with a great penchant for digital methodology, that teachers learn to build their own corpora to integrate authentic language samples into their teaching pedagogy.

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ENHANCING ESP VOCABULARY PRACTICE WITH ONLINE CORPUS ANALYSIS TOOLS

DRAGANA VUKOVIC VOJNOVIC

Abstract

The implementation of corpus analysis tools provides an enhanced practical approach to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) methodology, in particular when the specific research objective is to identify key vocabulary and terminology. This chapter provides an overview of corpus analysis tools that are pertinent to the teaching of ESP in the context of vocabulary analysis and jargon used in the tourism industry. The first objective of the chapter is to present a study which identifies recurring vocabulary structures specifically in the form of *adjective* + *noun* or *noun* + *noun* collocations that could be identified as field-specific for tourism texts. Next, the data are then further analysed to investigate if the jargon has culture-specific nuances. In the context of our study, this has been done by compiling data collected from two English language tourism websites: one website promotes Paris, and the other promotes New York. The results were presented to a group of students in an ESP tourism course for discussion and debate. The students were also asked to further document the ways in which specialist vocabulary in promotional texts can influence potential tourists who visit these websites. Finally, the chapter explains how corpus tools can assist foreign language teachers in the development of active learning and learner autonomy, as well as expand specialist vocabulary knowledge through the use of corpus analysis.

Keywords: collocations, corpus analysis, ESP, tourism vocabulary

1. Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the use of corpus analysis tools in the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses for tertiary students preparing for their careers in the tourism industry in the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Novi Sad, Serbia. During this study, two different corpora of texts were compiled from two official tourism promotional websites for the world-renowned cities of New York and Paris. Subsequently, two corpus analysis tools were applied to further analyse the data: the first in the preliminary stage of the study and the second in the culture-specific research stage. The primary objective of this study was to identify key vocabulary and terminology in the field of tourism, which can also potentially reveal cultural nuances or links. Through the use of corpus analysis, students of tourism can become more aware of the special features of field-specific jargon and, at the same time, they can also develop methodology related to the research and extraction of this specific jargon for the tourism industry. Finally, the data results can serve as a basis for discussion and debate on not only tourism terminology, but also the American and French cultural values promoted through the differing websites.

1.1. The professional needs of ESP students

As technology has developed over the last few decades, the influence it exerts on foreign language teaching and pedagogical research has also evolved and become increasingly commonplace. Innovative pragmatics-based approaches to language learning have emerged. This has also resulted in task-based and learner-centred activities that focus on the communicative purpose of language. In the context of ESP, language teaching methodology has progressed over the last few decades, and the spotlight has now shifted to a more goal-oriented approach that integrates the future professional needs of learners. This means that tasks and activities have been updated in order to mirror real-life situations that the language learners will eventually perform in a foreign language. This professional approach to foreign language teaching is not new. Crystal (1997: ix) explains that as the global language of communication in many spheres of life, English, is taught worldwide, language teachers must keep up with the new contexts and methods of language learning. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998: 145) explain the criteria that can help ESP teachers to pedagogically engineer their courses with a specific purpose in mind in order to achieve predefined practical outcomes. In order to meet these criteria, teachers should decide on the immediate and delayed needs of their students, while considering the broad and narrow focus of the course. They should also determine if the group will be homogenous or heterogeneous, if the course content will be negotiated with the learners, and if the learners are professionals or pre-service students.

Today the ESP language instructor plays an important role in adopting a learner-centred methodology which considers learner needs before the selection of specific content and teaching methods, since new language learners know why they want to learn a new language (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987: 6). The ESP methodology thus carries a strong connotation of practical applications and must possess a sense of purpose and vocation (Harding, 2007: 6–9). However, this methodology needs to be combined with innovative approaches, which have recently emerged with the development of technology. In order to enrich the traditional coursebook and written exercise work, it is important to enhance language learning activities with authentic materials and 'real' language (Ur, 2001). For this reason, when Internet resources that offer authentic texts in English, along with language analysis tools, which are readily available online, are integrated into language teaching methods, the results can be very motivating for both the language learners and instructor.

1.2. ESP and the language of tourism

Having considered the specialist language associated with the tourism industry and in particular the language of promotional advertising and marketing for travel destinations, we may surmise that this type of promotional communication can sometimes be characterised by descriptive passages. Not only do these passages provide useful information, but they also promote an embellished image to attract prospective visitors and tourists to a precise destination. In ESP classes for tourism, language instructors must naturally focus on the specific vocabulary; however, in addition, they should also encourage students to analyse the lexical characteristics of the genre. Students will benefit from developing their awareness of the cultural impact that can be conveyed through the use of particular language devices. For example, in the corpus of tourism texts compiled by Lam (2007: 77), the most frequent form of *adjectives + noun* collocations, with the noun *city* as the node word, were those where the adjectives had the semantic prosody of importance (e.g. *capital city, main city, historic city*), followed by the collocations with the semantic prosody of *age* (e.g. *old city, modern city, medieval city*). Therefore, it is useful to observe and analyse these types of linguistic trends while taking into consideration the cultural dimension, if any.

Research has also shown that today, tourists are increasingly on the lookout for authentic, unique experiences even though their desires are often satisfied by mere markers of authenticity or by clichés (Boorstin, 1967; Culler, 1990; Dann, 1996); this is an issue to be explored further, but goes beyond the reach of this article. The language of tourism is using the language of power and it is transforming the physical space of a destination into a landscape which becomes a visual desire for the prospective tourist or visitor (Urry, 1995; Dann, 1996; Jaworski and Pritchard, 2005). A specialised discourse also belongs to the general discourse, but with some additional criteria that are applied, such as the context of a specific professional community and the group of specialists who are using it in this specific context (Gotti, 2008: 22–24). It can be argued that tourism discourse is also very close to general discourse, especially because it is relatively straightforward and simplified (when compared to legal or medical jargon, for example) and is easily understood by the non-professional community. In the core of tourism communication, there is an ongoing interaction between the professional community (i.e. tourism employees) and the non-professional community (i.e. tourists, visitors). These insights into the nature of communication for tourism can inspire ESP teachers who teach English for Tourism to create activities and materials that could help their students, future tourism professionals, to become more aware of these language features and to acquire them and incorporate them into real-life professional situations.

1.3. ESP vocabulary and the use of corpus analysis

Since the study of lexis (Sinclair, 1966), the focus of language research interest has shifted towards the nature of vocabulary and the idiomatic principles of how words are combined together to provide a message. As the founder of corpus studies in applied linguistics, Sinclair (1966: 411) emphasises the influence of the situational context on word combinations or collocations, and later, Sinclair (1991: 170) defined collocations as "co-occurrences of two or more words which appear in the text not far from each other with an increased frequency".

When preparing a syllabus to teach vocabulary to ESP or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students, it is important that the language instructor considers the following question: *which vocabulary should be distinguished as the most relevant to the students in their domain?* This query was recognised in the early 1990s (McEnery and Xiao, 2010: 364) when researchers began to analyse large language corpora with the aim of developing representative word lists that would help language learners to focus on the core vocabulary. The extraction of the core vocabulary and terminology assists teachers in choosing the target vocabulary when they want to apply direct instruction. The most often cited examples of corpora and the most frequently used word lists are the General Service List (West, 1953), the University Word List (Xue and Nation, 1984), and the more recent Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000), which includes 570 word families of predominantly academic words extracted from a large electronic corpus.

One of the major contributions corpus analysis has made to the general understanding of lexical features is that the specially compiled corpora can give a useful insight into the nature of language because they are empirical, more objective and provide real-life examples of language use (McEnery and Xiao, 2010: 367). This is very common in terms of research pertaining to particular word combinations and collocations (Schmitt, 2008; Geeraerts, 2010). Corpus analysis and the use of electronic corpora can be useful in teaching and learning languages for specific purposes, as McEnery and Xiao (2010: 371) explain in relation to:

- teaching writing or specialist vocabulary and the importance of concordance;
- comparing different language features (e.g. metadiscourse) across genres and disciplines; and
- studying the relationship of culture and professional communication.

Since vast electronic corpora are based on frequency and authenticity, such tools provide the vocabulary with the appropriate context for those specific words or groups of words that are being sought.

One of the biggest static online corpora for English is the *Brigham Young University Corpus* integrated with the *British National Corpus* (*BNC*) (https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc), which is composed of 100 million words. The *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (*COCA*) is based on 560 million words and is being continuously expanded (https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/). For researchers who want to explore more specific types of language features, particularly terminology, and still use a vast database, the *BooTCat* tool provides the fastest way to explore the endless source of texts on the web (https://bootcat.dipintra.it/), but it is important to choose the right choice of keywords for search purposes in order to compile a desired and specific corpora. Corpus analysis, in addition to informing researchers about statistical data such as the frequency of words, can be used for qualitative analysis as well, according to McCarten (2007), since it:

- illustrates the contexts in which the words are used;
- provides collocational information; and
- exemplifies special features of speaking and writing about a specific topic.

In this way, language learners and instructors draw conclusions on how people talk or write about specific topics through the use of authentic speech data. Furthermore, when researchers compile a corpus of texts specially chosen for their research purposes, or purpose-built corpora, they can use several corpus analysis tools available online. Some of these instruments include the *Oxford Word Smith Tools* (https://www.lexically.net/wordsmith/) and *GraphColl* (http://www.extremetomato.com/projects/graphcoll/), which is used for building collocational networks. A newer version is called *LancsBox* (http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/lancsbox/).

Liu and Han (2015) provide a representative example of corpus analysis in ESP and EAP teaching. In addition to giving a detailed overview of research into field-specific academic word lists, the main objective of their study was to create a corpus-based environmental academic word list that would become a reference point and representative of the environmental science corpus. Liu and Han (2015: 3) used computer software called *Range* (https://www.range-software.com/) for lexical analysis purposes to investigate the coverage of items from the General Word List (GWL) and the Academic Word List (AWL) in specialist texts.

2. Research methodology

2.1. The objectives of this study

The objectives of this study are threefold. Firstly, the aim was to find specific *adjective + noun* or *noun + noun* collocations in the specially compiled corpora that could be identified as field-specific for tourism texts. Secondly, we attempt to show that the obtained collocations can be interpreted as culture-specific. The corpus analysis was done by the author of this chapter outside of the classroom. The third objective was to present the study results to a group of about 30 third-year tourism students as part of their English for Tourism B2 level according to the Common European

Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF or CEFR) course. The students must successfully complete this one-semester course with three hours of classes once per week for a duration of fifteen weeks. This approach was used to make use of the results as a starting point for the discussion on the features of tourism vocabulary in English, as well as the cultural values promoted by the use of such specific language. Furthermore, it assists the language instructor in streamlining the new terminology and focusing only on vocabulary that the students will actually use in their future professional tasks.

Given that the main study presented in this chapter was done with a pedagogical purpose in mind, in this case to enhance ESP teaching, the presentation of the corpus analysis results to the students was preceded by two sets of class activities. A short summary of these preliminary activities is given in the following subsection. This stage enabled the students to become more familiar with specific vocabulary and collocations related to destination descriptions and tourism in general. Conversely, the language instructor was able to assess the students' language skills, prior knowledge and range in terms of collocations in the field of tourism. Since the students are not philology specialists, the instructions were given with a focus on the functional and practical purpose as opposed to a theoretical purpose.

2.2. Corpus analysis tools used in this study

As previously stated, two corpus analysis tools were used in this study. Firstly, *AntConc* (Anthony, 2017) is a frequently used tool that can be downloaded for free from https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software. A software program that can be used with any language, it is equipped with an easy to use interface, as seen in Figure 8-1, which presents a partial list of the collocate search results for the adjective *free*.

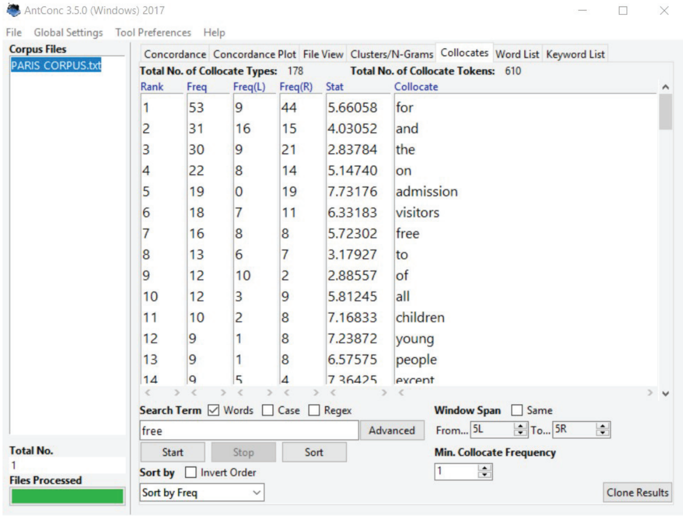

Figure 8-1: Collocates for *free* – partial view (*AntConc*, Anthony, 2017)

As shown in Figure 8-1 (above), the interface and data presentation is very clear and simple to understand. In order to utilise this software successfully, users need to follow certain steps so that they will be sure to get the best results. Firstly, the corpus of compiled texts that will be analysed should be prepared in .txt format and encoded in UniCode (UTF-8), otherwise the file will not be properly opened by the program. Next, the option *Wordlist* should be chosen, which indicates all words in the target corpus, according to their frequency. Finally, in progressing through this word list, you may choose the *Concordance* option for the word you wish to analyse. This option is formatted according to Key Word in Context (KWIC), which is the most common format used in concordance software. You may check the collocations for a particular word. In order to do this, you should choose the number of words to the left and to the right from the target word. The program then lists all of the combinations according to frequency.

However, it should be noted here that it is important for researchers to apply their own judgement at this stage. When the main underlying principle for distinguishing collocations in a corpus is frequency, some combinations that are listed are not in fact real collocations. An example of this is *the,* a very frequent word used in combinations to be recognised by concordance software as significant. As presented in Figure 8-1 (above), the most frequent collocate recognised by *AntConc* for the adjective *free* is the preposition *for*, but if we look at the concordance list in Figure 8-2, the search results provide some interesting and revealing results.

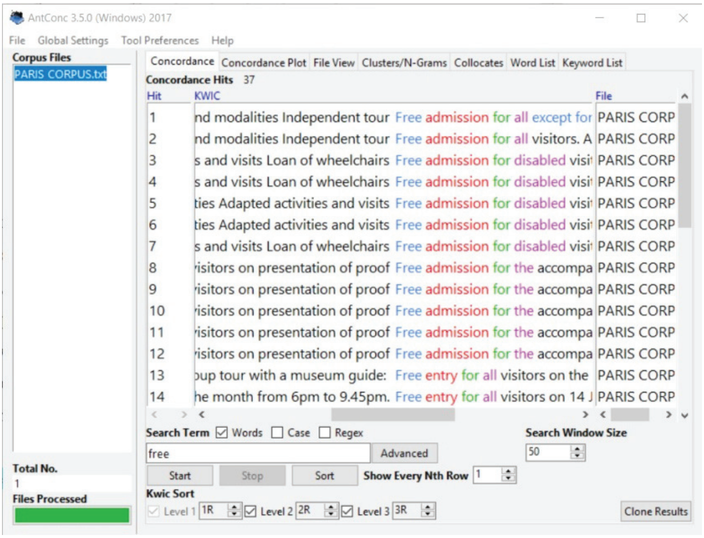

Figure 8-2: Concordance list for adjective *free* + preposition *for* – partial view (*AntConc*, Anthony, 2017)

As shown above in Figure 8-2, for the adjective *free*, it is clear that the preposition *for* is actually bound to the noun *admission* in the first twelve examples, which clearly shows that, in this context, *for* is part of the collocation *free admission for*. For this reason, researchers should carefully sift through the results and apply their own judgement and knowledge on collocations. One of the more recent investigations that used *AntConc* concordance software was done by Hyland and Jiang (2017). They investigated the degree of informality in academic writing. They analysed an extensive corpus of more than 2.2 million words from 360 papers in four different scientific disciplines – linguistics, sociology, electrical engineering and biology – across three periods – 1965, 1985 and 2015 (Hyland and Jiang, 2017: 43–44). *AntConc* concordance software was applied to show how informal academic writing had become throughout the decades. The authors also independently checked the data and then reached an agreement before publishing their final results.

In line with this perspective, a second online corpus analysis tool that was integrated into our study is *Sketch Engine* (https://www.sketchengine.eu/). An online tool (one-month free trial version) for data mining and text analysis, this software calculates word frequencies in the designated corpus, which is executed through incorporated tools in its Application Programming Interface (API). When the texts are uploaded for analysis, they are fully and automatically processed into a corpus, including part-of-speech tagging and lemmatisation, which is a process that groups together all inflectional forms of a word in order to be analysed as a single item (Sinclair, 1991: 173–174). The data results can be saved in .xls format, so they can easily be accessed and analysed at a later date. *Sketch Engine* can also be used for the analysis of parallel or comparable corpora and for comparing the uploaded specialist corpora with the vast online resources. It should be noted here that parallel corpora refer to an original corpus in language A and its translation into language B, whereas comparable corpora are two or more monolingual corpora in different languages but of similar design (O'Keefe et al., 2007: 19). *Sketch Engine* also possesses a *BooTCat* option (that has been mentioned earlier in this chapter) if a researcher wants to use a corpus of texts compiled from the Internet.

Finally, the most effective way for ESP teachers to use this type of software is for the specially compiled or purpose-built corpora that will meet their students' needs, as well as their teaching goals. Although the purpose-built corpora are usually not meant to be representative of the overall frequency of the words, this is crucial for ESP vocabulary practice, and it enables the teachers to focus on the specific vocabulary or structural features that they would like to teach (Cobb and Boulton, 2015).

2.3. Preliminary classroom activities

In the introductory lesson on collocations and corpus analysis, students were given a short presentation by the teacher on the basic notions of collocations. They were then instructed to look for examples of *adjective + noun* and *noun + noun* collocations in a reading assignment chosen from their textbook *English for Specific Purposes: Tourism and Hospitality* (Vukovic Vojnovic, 2010: 62–65). This was followed by a discussion based on the examples they found and their translation into the students' native language (in this case, Serbian), firstly to see if the same combinations could be found there or not, and secondly to find the best possible translation correspondents.

At this stage, the language instructor expressed that the choice of the right collocation in a foreign language can contribute to more native-like (natural and, thus, authentic) communication. This introductory lesson was concluded with a final gap-fill activity. Students were given a short text that described a luxury resort with the adjectives removed from the text so that they could try to complete the passage with the adjectives of their own choice. In some cases, a few students came up with adjectives that would not be considered appropriate in terms of promotional language. This is clearly illustrated with the combination *expensive hotel*, which is not appropriate in this context due to its negative connotation for the tourist. This type of error was then discussed and debated by the students in a group activity. Subsequently, this combination was replaced with *luxurious hotel*. Finally, we compared their ideas to the original text (which can be found at the following link: https://www.cntraveller.com/article/insiders-tips-christopher-chongs-oman).

Two weeks later, the second activity was proposed. The students were given a set of different pictures showing typical scenes or settings in famous cities. In the case of this study, these were the following situations or settings:

- a street scene in New York City;
- a rural landscape in England;
- a postcard of Paris; and
- a Mediterranean beach.

They were asked to describe the pictures by using *adjective* + *noun* combinations. Firstly, for the street scene in New York, the students came up with collocations such as *busy street* and *crowded street,* which are both true representations of what was seen in the picture; however, after a class discussion and debate, the students realised that this terminology would not be best suited to the language of tourism promotion, since the main objective of this type of advertising is to create a positive, attractive image of a destination. Once again, the words *busy* and *crowded* carry negative connotations. The next activity consisted of describing the pictures in order to create a positive image for the prospective tourists. One of the nouns that was most often used in relation to the picture of New York was *city* (25 times), described by the students with the following adjectives, given in descending order from most to least common: *big* (7 times), *famous* (4), *busy* (3), *modern* (3), *urban* (2), *beautiful* (1), *live* (1), *nice* (1), etc. Then, the students were introduced to the use of corpus analysis software in the form of *AntConc* (Anthony,

2017) to compare their collocations with those found on the New York City official tourism website (https://www.nycgo.com/). During this stage, the teacher simply projected the website in front of the class so that every student could follow the procedure. The adjectives collocating with the noun *city* found on the New York City official website were the following: *famous, ever-expanding, (the most densely populated) major, quintessential, the world's greatest,* and *diverse culinary*. A similar procedure was followed for the nouns *landmark, attraction, people* and *street*, and the findings were discussed in terms of what image and cultural concepts of New York City were presented to tourists visiting that website.

2.4. Data samples and the research methodology for the study

As stated earlier, two different corpora in English were compiled from the official tourism websites of New York City and Paris. The chosen texts refer to more general, introductory descriptions of the cities, and the names of the texts' authors are not specified on the websites. Table 8-1 presents the corpus details for each of the two tourist destinations.

	WEBSITE	CORPUS SOURCE	CORPUS SIZE (calculated by *Sketch Engine*)
New York City	https://www.nycgo.com/	*General and introductory texts about the city*	tokens: 11,469 words: 9,918 sentences: 418
Paris	https://en.parisinfo.com/	*General and introductory texts about the city*	tokens: 14,006 words: 11,678 sentences: 515

Table 8-1: Data relating to the New York City and Paris websites

As we can see from Table 8-1, the two corpora are relatively small, when compared to the sizes of the other available corpora mentioned earlier. These two corpora are somewhat similar, yet are not precisely the same size in terms of token, word and sentence data results. For the purposes of this study, it was not crucial that the websites yield exactly the same results. As expressed earlier, the main focus of this study is on the content, context and specific topics of this specialised text. An overall comparison of the findings is provided in the next section of this study. It should also be noted here that the word *tokens* refers to the total number of words regardless of how often they appear in the text, and the number of words in this case is the number of word types.

The corpora were saved as plain text files and uploaded separately to the *Sketch Engine* tool. It should be emphasised that this software automatically extracts core vocabulary and multi-word terms that reflect the nature of the terminology in the analysed corpus by applying the so-called simple math method, which determines the keyness score of each word. More details are available on the *Sketch Engine* website (https://www.sketchengine.eu/). The results appear in a list which includes the words and multi-word terms that are considered to be keywords and terms, i.e. they are more specifically related to the analysed corpus as compared to the general reference corpus. The lists for both corpora were then saved separately as .xls files for further analysis. However, as mentioned earlier, the lists had to be thoroughly checked for the removal of any inappropriate word combinations in order to achieve more precise and representative insights into the corpora. This was followed by identifying the top 25 multi-word terms (for instance: *free admission, independent tour, fine cuisine*, etc.) in the two corpora. Only multi-word terms from the lists that appeared three or more times were counted in order to identify the core terminology of the two texts. This core terminology can then be considered as representative of the overall content. This method also provides insight into culture-specific topics that are promoted in the texts. The multi-word terms were grouped together, according to the topic to which they pertain, and normalised frequencies per 1,000 words were then calculated for each topic. The normalised word frequency per 1,000 is calculated when the raw word frequency is divided by the total number of words in the corpus and multiplied by 1,000.

3. Research results and discussion

3.1. Data based on *Sketch Engine* results

The overview of the obtained results in the *Sketch Engine* tool shows that the two corpora are rather different in their use of collocations and in the content they present to the prospective tourists. Firstly, the Paris corpus has a raw total of 774 multi-word terms identified by the *Sketch Engine* tool, but this should not be considered as a final number because there are some combinations that need to be removed from the list, since not all of the combinations are collocations. For example, the tool recognised the combination *musée d'* as a significant multi-word term which appeared 10 times in the analysed corpus, and even 38 times in the general reference corpus. However, these French words are actually a part of the name of the museum (*Musée d'Orsay*) and cannot be considered as a valid English collocation or a specific term. The most frequent collocation in the Paris corpus is *free admission* (16 times), which is illustrative of the nature of the entire corpus. This point will be elaborated later in this section. Table 8-2 (below) presents a summary of the data results for the Paris corpus.

Paris Corpus		
Practical information related to museum visits	**Museum-visit types**	**Describing cultural attractions**
free admission (16) exceptional opening (9) accompanying person (8) foreign language (8) accessibility information (6) free entry (6)	independent tour (10) group tour (6)	contemporary art (9) architectural style (8) panoramic view (5)

Table 8-2: The most frequent multi-word terms in the Paris corpus

As illustrated in Table 8-2, based on the top 25 most frequent collocations found by *Sketch Engine*, the texts of the Paris corpus promote the highly artistic and cultural aspects of Paris, i.e. museum visits. Tourists and visitors can easily find all they need to plan their group or independent visits to museums on this website. What is not clearly illustrated in Table 8-2, but is rather pertinent to this study, is a group of the next 20 words in the corpus, which mostly included longer expressions comprising the collocations from the table (*accompanying person priority admission* (2 times), *independent tour free admission* (2 times), etc.). In addition, further on in the list of multi-word terms from the Paris corpus, more practical aspects for tourists and visitors were presented, such as more details about museum visits (e.g. *last entry* (3 times), *grab rail* (3), *late opening* (3), *free access* (3), etc.) or how to get to and from certain attractions (e.g. *metro line* (3), *short walk* (3), etc.). Therefore, to promote the city of Paris, it is important that the website expresses convenience and easy access to the city.

In the case of the New York City corpus, a raw total of 603 multi-word terms were found, but the frequency count of individual collocations is much lower than in the Paris corpus. The New York City corpus, as analysed by *Sketch Engine*, does not include multi-word terms that appeared more than three times in the given corpus. There are only a few multi-word terms that appeared three times, whereas most of the multi-word terms appeared one or two times in the corpus. They were also part of the top 25 collocations found by *Sketch Engine*. This observation suggests that the topics covered by the New York City website are of a wider variety, whereas the content of the Paris corpus is more consistent and focussed on more extraordinary topics. The results for the New York City corpus are given in Table 8-3.

New York City Corpus			
Food and Beverage	**Art and Entertainment**	**Practical Tourist Information**	**Describing Attractions**
supper club (3) watering hole (3) backstage lounge (2) eclectic American menu (2) dinner bar (2) cocktail service (2) fine cuisine (2)	moving image (3) contemporary art (3) Tibetan art (2) downtown performance venue (2)	subway station (3) mezzanine level (2) important phone (2)	art deco (3) landmark edifice (2) original use (2)

Table 8-3: The most frequent multi-word terms in the New York City corpus

As indicated in Table 8-3, based on the top 25 multi-word terms or collocations found by *Sketch Engine*, collocations in the New York City corpus can be grouped into several topics: various types of eateries and cafes, night entertainment, views of famous New York buildings, and some practical instructions for access to the different destinations. The collocations are not always typical, but are more creative and more culturally marked; that is to say, they tend to point to a unique customer experience while inviting tourists to enjoy a wide variety of food, beverages and entertainment in the vibrant and animated New York City.

After investigating the top 25 collocations for each corpus, it became evident that certain topics and specific values were more dominant. In order to determine this with more precision and to further compare the two corpora, normalised frequencies of collocations per 1,000 words and per topic were calculated, as illustrated in Table 8-4. The numbers in brackets represent the normalised frequencies of all the collocations under the given topic per 1,000 words. This shows the overall nature and the theme of the corpus, e.g. if it is more informative or descriptive, if it offers practical information on cultural attractions to tourists or if it emphasises more places to eat or of entertainment, etc.

Paris Corpus	**New York City Corpus**
Practical information related to museum visits (4.5) Describing cultural attractions (1.88) Museum-visit types (1.37)	Food and Beverage (1.6) Art and Entertainment (1) Practical Tourist Information (0.7) Describing Attractions (0.7)

Table 8-4: Normalised frequencies per 1,000 words per topic

As shown in Table 8-4, the Paris corpus offers, for the most part, practical information about museum visits in the city, and therefore the focus of the promotional texts is on the artistic, cultural and historical values of this city. This is further corroborated with the descriptions of the various cultural attractions. Tourists can readily experience this side of Paris once they arrive because they can easily plan their visit in advance, since the essential information is readily available on the website. Conversely, the New York City corpus offers information about eating out and entertainment. The practical information (for example, access or advance tickets) is not as readily available as in the Paris corpus. Based on the normalised frequencies, we can conclude that in terms of content, the New York City corpus is not as homogenous as the Paris corpus; however, the various topics for New York City are comparatively much more diversified. Finally, these results were presented to the students in order to be further analysed, explored and assimilated. This fostered a debate and discussion in English on the language of tourism and destination promotion, as well as the impact it could have on prospective tourists. Accordingly, the students increased their awareness of how specific jargon could create a significant impact in the tourism industry.

3.2. Further developments for this study

From the teacher's perspective, the use of corpora can be very practical in teaching recurring vocabulary in ESP for tourism. As a follow-up activity, students can be given an additional assignment to do in class or for homework in order to help them find collocations in context while taking note of specific sentences with illustrations and examples to revise them later. They can also check their own written expression samples by comparing them to the general reference corpus or a specially designed corpus by the language instructor. In the future, in order to understand the real effects of these types of activities, it would be useful to conduct a survey among students after the activities and accompany it with interviews for a more grounded qualitative and quantitative research study.

4. Conclusion and future implications

To conclude, this study has shown that corpus analysis tools can indeed assist both language learners and instructors to analyse authentic texts in English. Today, these authentic texts are readily available online in the form of corpora, which are compiled specifically to represent a certain specialist field. With the rapid evolution of big data, new forms of corpora are being created every day. By applying various software tools, teachers can identify keywords and expressions more efficiently, reliably and easily than ever before. Additionally, ESP students can be instructed to use these tools independently if they want or need to check on how a particular word, expression or structure is used in real-life authentic language. The *AntConc* and *Sketch Engine* tools have proven to be very practical for ESP teachers, because they are easily available online and are extremely user-friendly.

However, one tangible obstacle remains: some ESP teachers deal with a number of students who are not trained in language analysis. The study programmes of these students are usually far from the domain of philology and thus using these software tools to a larger extent in ESP classes could prove challenging and time-consuming. Nevertheless, if this is the case, some representative examples can be prepared and extracted by the teacher early on for direct teaching purposes in order to demonstrate the corpus examples of specific lexical or structural features of the specialist language.

With regard to the language of tourism, further applications or studies can lead to discussions and debates about the nature and impact of tourism discourse, as well as the conscious and unconscious effects it can have on prospective tourists. In this manner, students may discover new ways to enhance professional communication in the field of tourism. Nevertheless, ESP students can be trained to use such software tools as additional assignments or for homework. Finally, it is important to carry out surveys and interviews to assess the students' feedback while observing if this approach to language teaching does indeed foster more sophisticated and native-like language production in the field of ESP for the tourism industry.

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Saturation with Technology in the ESP Setting

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Abstract

Technology in the educational setting is nowadays widespread for the numerous benefits it offers both to students and to lecturers. Some of the most notable advantages it holds for the success of the learning process are heightened learners' motivation, the wide availability of teaching material and its practice models, and its almost unlimited presence. It is widely exploited in (foreign) language learning courses, and the methodology of its use and application is now firmly established and developing further. However, we hereby describe an academic setting where all these premises are negated due to the intensive training in technology students are exposed to. For this primary reason, in courses of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), they appear disinterested in technology-assisted language learning but argue in favour of teacher and student interaction. This peculiarity, as we argue here, needs to be taken into account when (rightfully) advocating technology-enhanced language learning. It also points to another highly relevant yet understated issue in researching ESP, the 'restrictive' nature of language taught, seen precisely in the presented case of students' need for human to human interaction in language instruction that is thus more holistic and more according to the inherent nature of language as an ontology of human experience.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes, technology, saturation, interaction, ontology

Introduction: the educational setting

Technology-assisted language learning is one of the mainstream methodological approaches in language teaching, and is much acclaimed and recommended for its benefits referring to the availability of a wide variety of uploaded content, its interactive features, its responsiveness to different devices, creativity for both teachers and students, and its user-friendliness. As the age we live in is characterized by the omnipresence of technology, its application in the language learning environment becomes only natural and expected, especially for young students born in the age of IT, thus enhancing their motivation for learning. However, this chapter presents a case of IT students in the Faculty of Electronic Engineering at the University of Niš, Serbia, who experience saturation with technology use in language classes due to the fact that they already possess a thorough insight into the software types underlying language learning applications that hinders their further involvement in technology-supported language tasks. Instead, they ask for 'old fashioned' teacher↔student as well as student↔student interactions. Yet, in instances where technology is used in a way that fosters their creative capabilities of self-expression, where technology is merely a tool beyond any focus on it per se, are they willing to enthusiastically engage in such language learning practices?

At the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the University of Niš, students are thoroughly immersed in the latest technology both in the faculty and during their extracurricular activities. In line with the requirements of present-day education, the offered study modules are fully dedicated to preparing students to be competitive engineers in the world market economy. This is indeed proven by a significant number of graduate engineers who easily obtain prestigious jobs and positions in world-renowned companies. A relevant characteristic of almost all classes and laboratory practices provided by the faculty is that they are performed in classrooms and laboratories fully equipped with the necessary and latest technological devices. Already during their studies, students work on projects in the form of developing software applications that are immediately put to use, making them highly cognitively engaged in studying the content directly relevant for engineering.

During this kind of intensive and dedicated instruction, students are rarely provided with an opportunity to express anything else of their personality apart from their knowledge of their major. Probably a unique feature of studying at this faculty is that students almost never speak, neither in class nor in exams. In the classes, which are lecture- or laboratory-based, they are asked to perform a process and achieve the required result. During their oral exams, which follow the written part, they do not present their knowledge verbally, but again in written form, which is then examined by professors and teaching assistants. This type of teaching and learning is defended by course lecturers as a better opportunity for students to ponder over their answers so as to be more precise and include all relevant pieces of information that provide a complete, correct answer to the question posed. In this way, the studies lead to a complete exclusion of any oral expression on the side of the students. The curriculum, hence, is focused on developing hard skills in the form of receptive and productive skills that relate solely to technology. All interaction is therefore almost exclusively functional, yet without paying much attention to the correctness or stylistics of the language used, and certainly without practising language skills, even in the students' mother tongue.

In such an academic context, foreign (English) language teaching is conducted in the form of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a communicational tool for successful performance and advancement in technology-related research and/or job posts. The syllabus of the obligatory 'English language 1' and 'English language 2' courses at this faculty targets technological discourse in most of its major distinctive features, namely vocabulary, rhetoric, characteristic syntactic style, appropriate register and style, as well as practising various speaking and writing formats. The ESP syllabus is situationally functional, conceived as a direct linguistically instrumental contribution to the overall efficiency of the profession. The methodology of teaching insists upon enhancing students' profession-related functional interactions and implies the use of technology in the form of various software and mobile applications in order to maximize students' participation and engagement in language learning.

The syllabi of the English language courses primarily target technological discourse. As such, the language taught complies with what Mackay and Mountford (1978: 485) termed "restricted language". Cultural issues are present only to the extent necessary for the professional setting, basically simulating situations in which professional engagement requires expressing respect and knowledge of various cultural norms. This was set as a standard even by Dudley-Evans and St. John, referential authorities, who stated that ESP needs to deal with "what language is culturally appropriate in different situations" (1998: p.232), where "different situations" inherently imply those that are business-related. Stronach and MacLure (1997) also argue more specifically that performativity (Lyotard, 1994) is changing the nature of educational research. There is no pre-determined space within the syllabus of linguistic situations in which students are encouraged or given the opportunity to express themselves. This issue is ignored in ESP since it is admittedly outside the scope of professional discourse required. ESP therefore does not deal much with pedagogical issues, as Dudley-Evans (2001) noticed regarding the research in this field. In this way, ESP taught at this faculty is in line with the overall profile of the institution and with the overall trend of contemporary education whose imperative is to be “performative” (Lyotard, 1984: xxiv).

Technology used in the ESP courses and the students' reactions

Technology-enhanced language learning, constantly and rapidly evolving, is one of the mainstream forms of language teaching today. It is research founded and driven, grounded in novel theoretical approaches and case studies dealing with linguistics, the methodology of learning, psychology, and pedagogy. Its major advantages and reasons for being recommended for use in (language) classes are its widespread presence and its immense, ever-growing potential for user-friendly modes of learning, applications that can target each and every aspect of a language syllabus. Therefore, regarding technology, the syllabi of the ‘English language 1’ and ‘English language 2’ courses at the Faculty of Electronic Engineering, University of Niš, Serbia, is based on course management systems, corpora, Web 2.0 tools, and asynchronous communications (Dahtestani & Stojković, 2015), all presupposing students’ unquenchable interest in it.

The Moodle course system or Learning Management System (LMS) in the ‘English language 1’ and ‘English language 2’ courses was first integrated in 2010, with the primary goal being to harvest its interactive feature, which provides easy and accessible uploading of teaching/learning content, and its collaborative features. It was hoped that this much-acclaimed collaborative teaching platform would induce additional motivation in students to practice the language through the unhindered communicative channels it offers. Prior to its use, closed Facebook (FB) groups would be created for each generation of students to post teaching material, students’ assignments for peer review and comments, and all kinds of administrative and technical communication regarding class schedules, office hours, and suchlike. At first, the introduction of Moodle as management support for English courses was welcomed by the students, primarily as this platform had already been in use on their major courses. The decision for its implementation was also based on current and acknowledged research proving it increases students' motivation (see e.g. Al-Mazeedi, 2011; Mamakou & Grigoriadou, 2008; Maulan & Ibrahim, 2012) and autonomy in learning (Mamakou & Grigoriadou, 2008).

However, even in the first term, it was already very often necessary to remind students to switch from using FB for posting assignments and questions to Moodle. This continued, so in the second term it was necessary to have an open discussion on the previous consensus for all to adhere to the agreed and decided upon use of Moodle. This particular conversation, however, led to the abandonment of Moodle and a return to FB. (Yet, the students' refusal to use Moodle was appropriately used for an elaborate speaking practice in building a case, argumentation and counter argumentation, and defence of their stance, which is a recurrent topic in the syllabus, notably belonging to English for Academic Specific Purposes, and this time practised as a real case, not a simulation.)

The students' stance was that Moodle and other similar teaching/learning management system platforms are only later 'variations' of the very same functionalities that FB was the first to offer. Although, for example, Moodle allows for the upload of significantly larger files than this social network platform, that functionality did not matter much for English courses as shared files are usually small. When asked why they use Moodle in other subjects yet show utter unwillingness to do so in English classes, their simple answer was that they had not been using FB in those courses and so it was not an option. Then, they explained they are used to FB now, mostly as a place for the exchange of information of all kinds. It was the most widespread platform, and each generation of students make their own closed group where they post all kinds of relevant updates, advice, and learning materials, but also, of course, exchange important pieces of information regarding professors' way of working, character, temperament, and suchlike. Interestingly enough, the very same situation – IT students rejecting the use Content Management Systems (CMSs) on English courses in favour of 'just' FB – was reported in an informal collegial exchange of experiences with Prof. Antonio Moreira of the University of Aveiro, Portugal.

In summary, the following arguments were formulated: first and foremost, it was their professional opinion that CMSs are, for the most part, extended variants of the communication interface that a social network provides. They could pinpoint each feature of a CMS and 'disassemble' it in terms of software support used, programming language, its advantages and disadvantages, and could add an idea about how the latter could be improved. Their expert knowledge of the inner structure of such technology made them disinterested and unmotivated to use it in language courses. This situation was and still is the complete opposite of what e-learning is considered to be: the delivery of personalized, dynamic learning material in real-time (Drucker, 2000), namely a technology-enabled approach. With students of IT on English courses, it is technology itself that demotivates them due to them knowing it inside out and being exposed to it, or demanded to use it, on all their other courses, due to them being “saturated” with it, as they put it.

Despite this, there is certainly a constant awareness of the potential for using technology in language learning (Butler-Pascoe, 2009), and hence attempts have been made to include it as a methodological approach in teaching. What students agree to is the use of mobile phone applications for short practice, one such being the Socrates application, introduced by Dr. Ana Balula of the University of Aveiro during her invited lecture at the Faculty of Electronic Engineering at the University of Niš.

International research: international students’ online video conferencing and students’ video assignments for enhancing technical vocabulary

In the students’ reactions and feedback to the technology used, it was noticeable that one of the reasons they were reluctant to use it in language courses is their apparent, though most probably unconscious, perception that those classes are solely for (oral) communication, the expression of their opinions, and exchanges of ideas without relating to their major (which they do when asked to use technology). Very likely this is the notion they have from their previous stage in education, high school English classes, where although technology is present, it is so to a lesser extent. Witnessing this, it was necessary to employ methodological approaches that would have technology ‘in the background’ and professional communication, self-expression, and (inter)cultural issues at the forefront. It was necessary to resort to technological support for teaching in a way where technology would not be so obvious for them, but the aim and the content would preclude their awareness and thinking of it.

The most feasible approach in that sense turned out to be participation in international research. Here are two representative examples. The first example was the Serbia-Slovakia Students Online Conferencing project[4], where the aim was to have students prepare and deliver online conferences via Skype while speaking on domain-relevant topics, practising professional and scientific vocabulary, phrases, and sentence structures, and using scientific conference discourse. The other is the V-interESP project, an on-going international research venture involving students from Serbia, Portugal, and Lithuania, where students are asked to make short video presentations on how they would improve some existing device, software or application so as to use relevant technical vocabulary and appropriate rhetorical structures.

Both of these projects are focused on students' personal expression, related to their professional domain, while they are encouraged to express their own views on technology, be creative without having set boundaries, and discuss the impact of technology on society and personal life quality. Equally motivating for them is the setting – to be in direct contact with other foreign students, to learn about their cultures and to share thoughts on their own. Exchanging opinions and debating with foreign students can prove to be highly motivating. During such work, and in the follow-up feedback, it is obvious they are enjoying it thoroughly, and the results are certainly excellent, even exceeding the expected level.

This proved to be the right measure for IT students to access learning the English language, which is specifically needed for their profession in a technology-assisted environment. What technology provided them with in these cases was a medium for reaching out towards self-expression and expanding personal cultural vistas. This was going beyond technology; it was invisible and not focal in nature. In both cases, students enthusiastically invested a lot of effort and time in designing their roles and participation in the projects, comparably more than in otherwise 'usual class practices'.

[4] Student Online Conferences of STU MTF (Slovakia) and the Faculty of Electronic Engineering, University of Niš (Serbia), for the Purposes of Specific English Language and other Skills Development. Slovak Principal Investigator: Mgr. Gabriela Chmelíková, PhD, Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava; Serbian Principal Investigator: Dr. Nadežda Stojković, Faculty of Electronic Engineering, University of Niš; SK project number SK-SRB-2013-0034, SRB project number 451-03-545/2015-09/11.

The ontological nature of language learning

This saturation with technology, evident with IT students at this particular university, proves that language learning is ontological in its nature and that a performativity-prescribed ESP syllabus needs to be modified to include (back) settings and topics outside their speciality, or rather to expand their domain's syllabi to include practice that allows for their personality's expression related to their motivation for work and personal gains rather than solely profession-related knowledge.

It is highly relevant that this saturation is expressed in language classes. It becomes obvious that there is a dichotomy between merely performative education and the inherent, natural revolt against the stifling conditions of such a setting, and the ontological nature of language education. By suggesting and actually refusing to use technology, students express a conscious intellectual and emotional disengagement from what is offered to them through the ESP syllabus, which closely follows the syllabi of major subjects. They experience a lack of stimulation (Moneta & Csikszentmihalyi, 1996) to which they respond with the adoption of a coping strategy or a behavioural approach strategy, which implies changing the very situation – their refusal and request for a different methodology. In this way, they resolve their situational, academic boredom elicited by situational attributes (Kanevsky & Keighley, 2003) by coming up with a creative attitude (Svendsen, 2003). We commend and recommend this approach and stress it is possible when students experience constant support in developing and expressing their autonomy in the learning process. This allowed them to openly present their enthusiasm and motivation in responding to the experience of boredom and saturation. Their saturation-related coping strategy facilitated self-regulated learning regarding the English language, which most significantly added to maintaining and optimizing the learning process and facilitating academic motivation and achievement.

In the presented higher educational environment, in English language instruction there is evidence of students' saturation with technologies, which in our opinion relates to the overall demands of performative education. While such student reactions as are described here are possible due to the teacher-student relationship established on trust, respect and openness, our claim is that the ultimate reason is the nature of language itself. Classroom dynamics only give way to a spontaneous outburst of saturation with technology, but also, on a broader scale, with strictly performative education. The students' cognitive approach to it and their conscious recognition that technology-related issues are not sufficiently adapted to all of their educational and formative needs, denotes perhaps some deficiencies associated with this approach to language pedagogy. Students openly argue in favour of instruction that engages with their whole personalities. It is highly relevant and encouraging that this is evident with young people, that their psychological need for fullness of being is opposed to the educational systems imposing the development of only functional, hard skills.

The need for students to speak on all topics they are interested in, in contrast to only technology-related ones, strongly delineates the distinction between language that has an identity-constitutive and liberating aspect and the 'reduced language' of professional training. With their open demands to speak freely in unhindered and direct human to human communication, students are demonstrating their inherent and unsubdued need to freely express and enrich their personalities. George Steiner explained that language is both an instrument and a driving force of human individuation, that it enshrines "privacy and territoriality vital to our identity. To a greater or lesser degree, every language offers its own reading of life… it is a bewildering bias of the human spirit towards freedom" (1998: 19). Speaking always involves personal traits, both in verbal and non-verbal communication; they are inherent components of it, which (un)consciously allow for the feelings of presenting and stimulating, strengthening one's opinion, personality and individuality. As speaking is always accompanied by spontaneous body movements, posture, and facial expressions (though modelled to or reduced for the requirements of a formal situation), they do not hinder students' self-expression, but provide for its free manifestation and enhancement of students' self-assurance.

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Online Applications

Socrates: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.andromo.dev281819.app381325&hl=en.

PART IV

DISSOLVING THE BARRIERS BETWEEN DISCIPLINES IN LANGUAGE CLASSES

As previously mentioned in this volume, the need for LSP has become a requirement for professional development nowadays and, consequently, language practitioners have had to adapt their pedagogy to adopt methods which are more transversal and interdisciplinary in nature. Dogan and Pahre (1990: 63–76) refer to the concept of interdisciplinarity by using the term “hybridization”, and they contend that it is only through this intersection, between disciplines, that innovation and in turn specialization can be achieved. Applying scientific or humanities-related domains to foreign language teaching not only has the potential to enhance our inventory of ideas, but it also presents a variety of innovative methods and approaches which offer new perspectives on language pedagogy.

Over the last two decades, there has been a real shift to interdisciplinary teamwork. As Stapleton (2014: 432) contends, “research into how languages are best taught requires a more interdisciplinary approach that includes methods and instruments from the […] sciences”. Interdisciplinary research is a trend that promises new insights and innovations rooted in cross-disciplinary collaborations (Menken and Keestra, 2016). However, as Klaassen (2018: 842) cautions in the context of interdisciplinary research and teaching, “the choice of problem, the level of interaction between different disciplines and constructive alignment are variables to consider” when designing a syllabus. LSP professionals must therefore take into account the core subjects of their students when designing interdisciplinary course objectives and contents. This approach is not only an integral part of the course requirements in most of the European universities today, but it also allows students specialising in disciplines (non-specialists of English, for instance) to remain motivated and engaged in classroom activities and language acquisition. However, LSP teachers are often faced with the challenge of adopting an interdisciplinary teaching approach, which may prove to be a significant hurdle for them in many different ways. The two chapters included in this last section focus on how language practitioners may strive to dissolve barriers between the disciplines in two very different LSP settings.

In Chapter Ten, entitled “Enhancing content-based specialist knowledge with ESP for Economics and Management”, **Nadeera Rajapakse** argues how content-based and goal-oriented tasks can be used in English for Economics and Management (EEM) classes to encourage communication and discourse. In this chapter, she focuses on the relation between language learning and knowledge acquisition, based on specialized content. In addition, she presents insights into her study based on a language teaching process that aims at evaluating students on oral production in terms of language skills and content knowledge. The data collected in her study reveals that interactive tasks based on real-world examples do indeed improve students’ overall understanding and retention of core content. Furthermore, encouraging critical thinking and promoting debate and discussion contribute greatly towards the acquisition of transferable skills, such as analytical thinking and effective communication.

In Chapter Eleven, entitled “Hermeneutics and pedagogy through the lens of translation: Reflections on the pedagogical value of the pragmatic aspects in translation”, **Raffaella Diacono Febe** presents the notion of translation, which remains a topic of much debate and discussion that still divides philosophers and translators today. The focus of this chapter is to consider all aspects that make it possible to question and critically analyze the different paths of education and self-education as a continuum of experience and interpretation throughout the span of one’s life. The author posits that as translation is to literary work, interpretation is to the product of our own interior modelling. The underlying issue that is considered in this chapter is the interpretation of personal experience and the new space that is created, whilst finding new meaning in or of language in relation to the phenomena of existence. Next, the hermeneutical circle is presented as a representation of a model of the combination of both textual (or contextual) comprehension and existence in history. Finally, the act of translation is then illustrated as a prolific philosophical and pragmatical endeavour that sheds light on the process of language acquisition and interpretation.

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ENHANCING CONTENT-BASED SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE WITH ESP FOR ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

NADEERA RAJAPAKSE

Abstract

Successful and effective English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes can be in part attributed to their pedagogical methods and characteristics. These types of classes are often interactive, content-based, and goal-oriented while being focused on oral and written production. Such classes motivate students in an implicit and explicit manner and inspire confidence by creating an environment that encourages communication. The focus of this chapter is on another dimension of ESP classes: the correlation between the language learning process and knowledge acquisition, based on specialised content.

With reference to the outcomes of a pedagogical study undertaken at the University of Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne, this chapter presents the positive impact of how specialist knowledge can be highlighted in an ESP context. The research presented herein offers several insights into an ESP language teaching process that aims at evaluating students on oral production in terms of language skills and content knowledge. Choosing content that is subject-specific resonates with students' knowledge in their core disciplines while also making the learning process more meaningful and concrete. This study shows that interactive tasks based on real-world examples do indeed improve students' overall understanding and retention of core content, in this case Economic and Management concepts. Furthermore, encouraging critical thinking and promoting debate and discussion contribute greatly towards the acquisition of transferable skills, such as analytical thinking and effective communication.

Keywords: Content-based instruction (CBI), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), specialist knowledge, subject-specificity

Introduction

In recent decades, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has progressed and developed into a major research area of English language teaching. ESP continues to develop and includes an increasingly wide range of fields (English for Psychology, English for Language Sciences, English for Medicine, English for Economics and Management, etc.). Successful language practitioners strive to combine different techniques and innovative methods while considering fundamental theoretical underpinnings. Although it has been taught in many different ways for many different domains, there is one common denominator that can be found in all ESP classrooms: the ESP syllabus and course objectives must respond to the needs and demands of students. Today's global economy calls for students who are equipped with fluent reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively in an international working environment. ESP has been described as an effective means to encourage the development of these skills.

1.1. The potential and efficiency of ESP

According to Basturkmen (2010), many theoretical arguments can be made as to why ESP courses are more effective than general English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. Firstly, it is because ESP courses cater to students' interests and needs and they are more likely to engender high levels of motivation. Generally speaking, we can assume that the higher the motivation, the better the learning will be. Secondly, ESP courses are more efficient because they are generally more limited in terms of aims and objectives when compared with general ESL courses. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) place the emphasis more on language learning than on language use. Identifying students' needs and delivering relevant courses is thus an essential part of the ESP teaching process (Dudley-Evans & John, 1991). The process of needs analysis allows practitioners to better define objectives for the ESP course, while keeping in mind that the evaluation process must measure the overall success or effectiveness of the course. Limited and highly specified aims are more likely to be achievable (Basturkmen, 2010: 11), making both practitioners and learners perceive ESP learning outcomes more efficiently and favourably.

The effectiveness of ESP courses is also linked to another of its key aspects: subject-specificity. In fact, the effectiveness of ESP from the subject-specific perspective has been much debated throughout the different phases of ESP development. Subject-specificity, in the form of product-oriented learning, characterised the initial phase of growth of ESP and was originally promoted by Swales (1985) and then somewhat disputed by Hutchinson and Walters (1987). Supported by the use and progression of discourse analysis, ESP research continued to develop in terms of subject-specificity while broadening out to the wider context of specialist discourse. In addition to the opposition between Swales (1985) and Hutchinson (1987), the debate grew to include Dudley-Evans (1998) and Hyland (2002), who argue in its favour. More recently, as Basturkmen (2010: 55) explains, the subject-specificity of a course can be measured on a continuum ranging from wide to narrow. Wide-angled in this context refers to the most general ESP courses that work towards a generic set of skills, whereas narrow-angled ESP caters to specific needs and to language skills required for a particular area of work or study (Anthony, 2011). Today, rapid technological progress has allowed for ESP studies to integrate corpus studies, leading to a penchant for a discipline-specific ESP approach (Anthony, 2011).

1.2. English for Economics and Management

Within this context of subject-specific ESP, the focus is on the connection between language learning and specialised knowledge. As we have previously mentioned, the advantages of subject-specificity – in terms of needs and course content – have largely been discussed as an effective approach to language learning and teaching. However, this has mostly been limited to a one-directional emphasis, focusing on how content-based teaching leads to language acquisition. In this chapter, we will discuss the impact that ESP learning processes can have on specialist knowledge, namely, in the case of this study, English for Economics and Management (EEM) on the knowledge of Economics and Management. In order to discuss the correlation between the linguistic skills targeted in the language learning process and the specialised knowledge that defines the domain of Economics, we will present a pedagogical study undertaken at the University of Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne. This research is based on the teaching of EEM to undergraduate students.

The principal research question which lies at the foundation of this research study is the extent to which an EEM course can enhance students' knowledge of their specialist domain. In other words, to what extent are the students able to grasp Economics-related concepts and mechanisms in the ESP setting? In addition, the study addresses the issue of how, despite the course falling into the narrow-angled ESP category, it could avoid the associated disadvantages by adopting interactive pedagogical tasks. Anthony

(2011) provides a series of arguments in favour of wide-angled ESP classes by listing the disadvantages of narrow-angled ESP, some of which are related to the impracticality of ESP practitioners mastering the specialised knowledge, or the difficulty of finding material on specialised knowledge for the classroom, or also perhaps the risk of highly-specialised knowledge becoming outdated or obsolete. It is, in particular, this last risk that has caught our attention and, for that reason, it is specifically addressed in our research here.

The outcomes and results of this research can be interpreted as an appeal for improved collaboration between the language teacher and the content teachers in the specialist domains. In ESP classes in French universities, this implies confronting the sentiment of foreign language teaching in French universities as being somewhat undervalued and given lower priority compared to core content. Taillefer has expressed some of these concerns with regard to the status of language teaching and "the 'delicate' question of defending la *francophonie* in the face of the hegemonic English as *a lingua franca*. A further logical extension of this theoretical orientation is the less than 'noble' status of language teaching and research in the Language for Specific Purposes (*Langues pour spécialistes d'autres disciplines, LANSAD*) context compared to that of more traditional disciplines, making collaboration on an equal footing potentially challenging between discipline and language specialists" (2013: 16). Many language teachers and researchers spend a lot of time and energy aiming to change that view, both inside and outside the classroom.

2. Content-based instruction and the teaching of English for Economics and Management

In order to discuss the effectiveness of ESP teaching, the main characteristics identified by researchers with regard to ESP first need to be analysed. In the context of EEM, the most suitable approach is the use of Content-Based Instruction (CBI), where language is utilised as the medium for teaching subject content (Mohan, 1986). At the heart of CBI is the notion that language instruction cannot be devoid of the context in which it is presented. Content rather than language structures should be the driving force in curriculum development (Erickson & Schulz, 1981). As Basturkmen (2010) posits, CBI is perceived as having a positive impact on students' academic progress and success. Students naturally focus on gathering information from the content-based materials, which often present complex notions as well as jargon, communicated through the second language. In other words, students acquire information through sophisticated linguistic input, and this helps them move to more advanced levels of language processing and acquisition.

2.1 A combination of input and output-based instruction with internal and external aims

Next, the combination of input-based and output-based instruction is relevant to ESP language teaching and learning. Following Basturkmen's definition (2006), structured-input instruction guides learners to pay attention to the form of the target structure and to process input for meaning through tasks – such as reading texts from the core discipline – that do not require them to produce the target structure. Learners study key grammatical items and lexical structures by focusing on input-based activities. On the contrary, output-based instructions include activities that incite learners to actively produce language structures and, as Swain (1995, 2005) insists, one of its functions is to assist learners in recognising or critically analysing the gaps which exist between their current linguistic knowledge and the target language system. It should be noted here that a task is understood to be "an activity that involves the use of language but in which the focus is on the outcome of the activity rather than on the language used to achieve that outcome" (Willis, 1990: 127). In keeping with Basturkmen (2006: 124) and the notion that "production is the trigger that forces learners to pay attention to the means of expression", the tasks are designed in order to promote the maximum amount of speaking by the learners.

The third key feature of the ESP syllabus is a combination of internal and external objectives (Cook, 2002). Internal goals relate to the educational aims of the classroom. In ESP, the learner is seen as engaged either in academic, professional or occupational pursuits and as using English as a means to carry out those pursuits. External goals suggest an instrumental and more general view of language learning, that is to say, language being learnt for non-linguistic goals. These external goals include the use of language outside the classroom. The majority of ESP classes propose a combination of both internal and external aims or linguistic objectives that combine 'real world' objectives. With regard to this, Basturkmen (2006) states the following:

> The ESP teacher/course developer needs to find out what the language-based objectives of the students are in the target occupation or academic

discipline and ensure that the content of the ESP course works towards them. (2010: 8)

As stated above, the importance and focus are placed on the student's needs analysis in the preparation of ESP courses.

The classes this study is concerned with are designed with the CBI approach in mind and they are geared towards giving students the tools to *do* Economics in English. The general objectives encompass the core competencies in language learning, the four main categories of which are reading, writing, listening and speaking, including both internal and external language use. Hutchinson and Waters (1985) argue that ESP should aim to develop students' knowledge of disciplinary concepts in addition to language skills, and they employ the term 'underlying competencies in ESP' to refer to disciplinary concepts from the students' field of study.

With regard to content and subject-specificity, the debate as to whether ESP has a distinctive methodology is ongoing. Robinson (1991) argues that methodology in general language training and ESP differ little, while identifying two characteristic features of ESP methodology: namely that ESP is based on activities that respect students' specialist disciplines and that ESP activities can possess an authentic purpose derived from students' target needs. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) maintain that ESP methodology is also characterised by the use of tasks and activities which reflect the students' specialist areas. In the following section, the methodology of this research will be detailed to provide an application of the aforementioned approaches. In addition, we will also discuss how linguistic aims can increase learners' understanding of the underlying concepts of their field of study. The methodology adopted for the study is therefore task-based and output-oriented with a focus on spoken production and interaction.

3. Methods

3.1. Purpose of the study

As indicated earlier, this research is focused on task design for Economics students who are learning ESP. By incorporating specific content and pedagogical tasks in the classroom, we aim to observe the impact of our pedagogical methods on oral production skills and knowledge skills in terms of English for Economics and Management learning. Our aims are illustrated in Figure 10-1:

A – Oral production skills through 4 key objectives:
• Clarity of speech • Fluency (ability to speak spontaneously and easily) • Asking questions • Technical and general vocabulary
B – Knowledge in Economics and Management:
• Comprehension of concepts • Applying the concepts to examples

Figure 10-1: Two-fold objectives for EEM

The students are expected to fulfil the assigned tasks in order to reach these two sets of objectives illustrated in Figure 10-1. The first pertains to general language skills focusing on oral production. The students are encouraged to strive to speak fluently and clearly and lead a discussion by asking and answering questions. Focusing on the goal of improving speaking skills is relevant for many reasons: the tasks allow more room for interactive real-life settings and professional contexts than writing skills, for example. In addition, it requires a high degree of spontaneity, which is a difficult yet stimulating challenge for language students. The discussions and interactions with others are also useful for building greater confidence. The combination of these two sets of objectives provides students with the opportunity to put theory into practice, as the concepts and ideas of their core discipline are reutilised during these active and engaging tasks.

3.2. Participants

This study was carried out during the academic year 2018–2019 at the Sorbonne School of Management (*École de Management de la Sorbonne*) at the University of Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne with four groups of classes (tutorial format) in English for Economics and Management. The participants were first-year undergraduates, who had classes every week (12 weeks in each semester) for one and a half hours per week. There were about 28 students in each tutorial class, making up a total of 112 students for this cohort. The tasks, which are described below, were completed during class time and took approximately 30 minutes each time over a period of four weeks.

3.3. Classroom tasks and activities

The classroom activity in this study consisted of interactive role-plays based on real-world scenarios and content from student hand-outs or student-led class discussions.

The tasks and roles are illustrated and explained in Figure 10-2.

Role-plays (Groups of 4 students): **1) A - Crowdfunding activity and the funding meeting** Product or idea pitch: Two start-up founders talking about their product or idea: Present the product to the class, making sure you mention the funding needed. Do a SWOT analysis and speak about the marketing mix relating to your product or idea. To obtain the funding, convince the audience of the feasibility and potential success of your idea. One potential enthusiastic customer: You have been selected as a potential customer You have been asked to attend the meeting to share your thoughts. You are enthusiastic about the product. You will explain how it can benefit you. You also have questions about how the product or idea will evolve. One potential sceptical customer: You have been selected as a potential customer. You have been asked to attend the meeting to share your thoughts. You have doubts about the idea/product and have a series of questions to ask the founders.
B – Banking products and services (Groups of 2 students): Conversation between a bank employee and a customer: Use the cue cards and follow the information indicated on them. The client needs to obtain the products and services mentioned on his or her card. The bank employee must provide all the information about his or her products and services.
2) Presenting and commenting on articles on Economics (from the student hand-out)
Text 1 – "Global winners and Losers", from Friedman, T.L. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, HarperCollins Pub. (2000), 308–310. Text 2 – "Russia's failed transition", from Stiglitz, J. *Globalization and Its Discontents*, W.W. Norton & Co. (2003), 153–155. Text 3 – "The political economy of gender inequality", from Iversen, T., and Frances Rosenbluth, *Women, Work, & Politics, The Political Economy of Gender Inequality*, New Haven: Yale University Press (2010), vii–viii, 5–7. Text 4 – "Women are the engines of the Indian economy but their contribution is ignored", from Ghosh, J., *The Guardian*, Saturday 16 July 2016. The students were: - divided into small groups (3 or 4 persons), given texts to read and asked to summarise the texts; - then asked to present them to the class, provide additional examples and give their opinions. The audience asked questions or commented.

Figure 10-2: Interactive tasks involving role-plays

As explained in Figure 10-2, the role-plays were designed to make the students use their theoretical knowledge in practical, real-world settings. They were given time to prepare and practice beforehand, although they were not allowed to read notes during the exercise. While the tasks included a certain amount of rehearsed speech, improvisation and spontaneity were encouraged, especially during the question-and-answer sessions.

The second task involved reading, summarising and commenting on articles that were taken from the student booklet of the first semester, *English for Economics and Management Semester: Booklet 1* (Selzner, 2018), which was edited by the coordinator of the first-year English for Economics and Management programme and was distributed to all students. As illustrated in Figure 10-2, this second task was divided into three parts: summarising and presenting the articles, analysing and commenting on them, and discussing them with the audience through questions and answers.

3.4. Assessment and evaluation methods

An evaluation grid was prepared and the students were graded out of 20 points for each of the skills, as indicated in Figure 10-3 (below), which also presents the overall average grade achieved for each skill (average grade based on the four groups).

Oral production skills through 4 key objectives (Average grades out of 20)	
Technical and general vocabulary	13.5
Fluency	15
Clarity of Speech	14.5
Asking questions	13
Knowledge in English for Economics and Management (Average grades out of 20)	
Comprehension of concepts	14
Applying the concepts to examples	14

Figure 10-3: Evaluation grid and average grades

Through informal and formal observation methods, it was evident that the students participated in an enthusiastic and motivated manner. The results indicated in Figure 10-3 show that their overall average grades with regard to oral skills were much higher than their written expression grades. The students are much more competent in terms of their speaking skills, compared to their written skills. As Figure 10-3 illustrates, the students succeed in effectively communicating in EEM while speaking clearly and demonstrating a good understanding of the Economics terms and concepts.

4. Discussion of outcomes

This study has shown that subject-specific content can play a significant and positive role during the teaching and learning process. Task-based activities and interactions through role-plays can ensure that the students engage in meaningful exchanges while avoiding the pitfalls of narrow-angled ESP methods.

4.1. Subject-specific content and tasks

The outcomes of the activities can be discussed from two angles: in terms of content and with regard to tasks. This section will explain how the content or domain-specific material used has been instrumental in assisting students to understand Economics concepts and jargon.

In the case of role-plays, the scenario is defined along the lines of examples that complement the theoretical discussions students were exposed to in their ESP classes, as well as in their core discipline classes. The process of starting a company, raising funds, defining and negotiating strategies and elaborating business plans are significant aspects in Economics and Management, as well as in the business world in general terms. The role-play on crowdfunding combines a significant number of these aspects, while the second role-play on banking products and services is also derived from chapter two, “Money Matters”, on money and banking in their course booklet (Selzner, 2018: 22–34).

In terms of the content used for the second activity (presenting texts), the material is taken from their student booklets for their English for Economics and Management classes (Selzner, 2018: 57–66). The student booklet for the first semester is structured in two parts: Basic Economics and Trade. Each chapter includes a list of keywords that students are expected to learn, use and master in the correct context. They also contain domain-specific reading material for comprehension and discussion. There is also a section in each chapter on grammar revision and, finally, discussion topics for debate.

One of the main priorities of this study is to render the lesson more meaningful for the students. This entails designing content with examples that will resonate with their professional lives, refer to current events or encourage them to formulate their own ideas and examples to discuss the various topics and issues. Students are assisted in breaking down abstract definitions into concrete ideas. In addition, they are able to put the concepts they learn into practice by discussing case studies, real business issues and actual events. In this manner, not only do the definitions make more sense to them, but the learners also become comfortable using the words and concepts.

A key area of success in this exercise is when students relate the concepts to their own lives and apply the theoretical knowledge to their personal experiences. For example, in the banking products role-play, students often shared their own personal anecdotes, talked about money and their financial situations, what loans they have taken out, how much debt they have, how much they owe, what interest rates they have paid, what problems they have had with repayments, etc. Working with examples in the ESP classroom also involves reflection and thinking of counterexamples, with the underlying linguistic objectives of implementing link words, finding opposites, using comparatives or superlatives, etc. Consequently, along with these linguistic objectives, students are exposed to a variety of language formulations and thoughts. Not only do they discuss the main theoretical ideas, but they also reflect on counter theories while engaging in meaningful discussions and debates.

4.2. Interactive tasks and activities

In this study, the student activities are task-based and therefore the production is the trigger that forces learners to pay attention to the way they express themselves and communicate. The tasks are designed to promote the maximum amount of speaking by the learners. While working in small groups, they are required to interact and exchange or communicate in the target language. Dovey (2006) describes the skill of communication as one of the most important skills that is transferable from education in a context where the new knowledge economy requires learners to be able to understand new processes and grasp new knowledge in the workplace. Teamwork and communication are therefore essential for this purpose, and these two skills are successfully promoted by the tasks in this study.

The second task, presenting texts, aims at making the learner take an active part in the classroom. It requires students to lead class discussions, stimulate group interest and conduct a question-and-answer session. The audience is expected to participate by asking questions and commenting. The learners are evaluated on their ability to express their ideas in an articulated fashion, as well as share their knowledge of the content. This task of presenting a subject-specific text, for instance, an extract on inequality by Thomas L. Friedman entitled "Global winners and losers" (2000: 308–310), requires background research and preparation to explain or clarify information and also incite a debate. Not only does the activity improve students' communicative skills, but it also deepens their knowledge on the topic and domain. Moreover, it enhances their critical and analytical skills. The audience must engage in asking questions, while the speakers are expected to stimulate enquiry. Both types of activities also enable students to make the link between their studies and the real world by connecting their academic knowledge and skills to the expectations and challenges of the workplace.

This study illustrates that the pedagogical methods which make the class interactive and participatory create an effective and safe learning environment. Learners cannot be passive in the ESP classes described herein, since their participation is rewarded regardless of their linguistic level. This is, therefore, a strong incentive for all students to be active in class and to interact continuously. In return, this engaged activity and investment generate positive effects on improving their specialised knowledge skills. Unlike their core discipline classes, students are not dissuaded by factual errors. It is not whether the answer is right or wrong that counts in ESP classes. Instead, it is asking the questions, providing answers, expressing and justifying one's opinion, and, in general terms, simple active and engaged communication that is encouraged. Confidence-building goes hand-in-hand with such an approach, and this can indeed yield very positive results.

4.3. Subject-specific ESP and transferable skills

Using subject-specific content in a context that promotes debate and critical inquiry provides a buffer against the risk of the ESP classroom becoming an environment that accepts and conserves the norms of communication within it. Accused of being a force for accommodation and conservatism (Basturkmen, 2006: 141), ESP classes must strive to provide a forum in order to prepare non-native speaker students for target discourse communities. Basturkmen (2006: 141) further explains that ESP may have inadvertently endorsed practices and norms of target environments.

With regard to Economics, the boundaries are porous and blurred, since the discipline is continuously evolving and interacting with other disciplines. A telling sign of this blurred heterogeneity is the new sub-divisions that have been incorporated into the domain. Behavioural economics, neuro-economics and environmental economics or feminist economics are a few sub-categories that are providing evidence of the transdisciplinary nature of Economics. Thus, drawing the attention of learners towards the heterogeneity of thought in the discipline, as is the case in the EEM classes described here, raises students' overall critical awareness. They are encouraged to discuss how norms and communicative practices in the target environments become established. For example, students may consider the analysis of different uses of the word 'market' in order to identify and differentiate the various schools of thought in economic theory.

Furthermore, pedagogical strategies and techniques that encompass transferable skills ensure that students do not simply acquire knowledge, but become more aware of how that knowledge has evolved and how it can be used. In terms of transferable skills, this creates safeguards against the limits of knowledge becoming obsolete. Students are exposed to the process of learning – observation, recording, and analysing texts – that will result in a set of skills that are more regular and stable than the product-oriented knowledge skills of a narrowly defined, highly specialised discipline. ESP can, therefore, be subject-specific and, in addition, widely applicable or transferable.

Finally, ESP classrooms enable a two-way, implicitly motivating learning process because when learners are familiar with the content, it is much more motivating for them. The domain-specific material makes more sense to them and they can use it to compensate for lacunae in their linguistic skills. We have shown that there is also a beneficial transfer in the other direction. ESP content and pedagogy can also help them to better understand and assimilate their core discipline. This aspect can be further improved by coordinated efforts between language teachers and core discipline teachers in designing curricula, sharing pedagogical methods, and setting syllabus objectives.

Concluding remarks

When the material designed for the ESP classroom complements the input students derive from their core discipline, it is not uncommon to observe that language learners affirm that the ESP classes actually help them to improve their understanding of certain core notions. Increased student motivation, cited as one of the advantages of interactive ESP classes with subject-specific content, can in the context of critical enquiry and analysis deepen learners' knowledge of their subject. This is an added benefit to the acquisition of linguistic skills. In addition, because the approach presented in this study involves paying attention to the specialist discourse, highlighting its limits as well as its heterogeneity, learners become more aware of how the discipline works and evolves. This echoes the words of Dudley-Evans (2014: 3), who states that ESP practitioners need "to try to find out how the discipline works, what sort of questions they are seeking answers to rather than necessarily know or understand all the answers." It is therefore important to know about more about the '*savoir-faire*' of the discipline than the actual '*savoir*' (Dudley-Evans, 2014).

There is still room for much improvement and research in the area of ESP and in particular a need for language practitioners to work closely with core discipline specialist teachers in French universities. The effectiveness of ESP pedagogy needs to be publicised and shared more widely. This task can begin in the classroom, since, as we have shown in this research, the students are readily in favour of corroborating the fact that ESP is an important and practical subject in itself. This study has clearly illustrated that the ESP learning process has the added benefit of enhancing their specialist knowledge.

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Hermeneutics and Pedagogy through the Lens of Translation: Reflections on the Pedagogical Value of the Pragmatic Aspects in Translation

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Abstract

Today, the possibility or impossibility of translation is a matter that still divides philosophers and translators, while triggering much debate and discussion. There are many controversial theories for some aspects of translation pointing to the field of cognitive processes on the one hand and to the field of hermeneutics on the other. Is it therefore possible (or not) to accord accurate interpretations to texts? The focus of this chapter is to consider all aspects that make it possible to question and critically analyze the different paths of education and self-education as a continuum of experience and interpretation during one's whole life. As translation is to literary work, interpretation is the product of our own interior modelling. The main issues considered here in this chapter are the interpretation of our own personal experience and the new space that is created, whilst finding new meaning to the phenomena of existence. Next, the hermeneutical circle is presented as a representation of a model of the combined text comprehension and existence in history. Finally, translation is then illustrated as a prolific philosophical and pragmatical activity that can shed light on the process of interpretation.

Keywords: *Bildung*, hermeneutics, interpretation, pedagogy, translation

1. Introduction

This chapter aims to present an historical and philosophical comparative approach to the concepts that underlie the relationship between pedagogy and hermeneutics. Starting with the historical analysis of the notion of hermeneutics, we move on to observe translation as part of the cognitive process of individual subjectivity. The study covers phenomenological and existentialist pedagogies and the philosophy of language according to Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004a: 441) and Antoine Berman (1984: 72), who consider the *Bildung* ideal in German romanticism from the point of view of human education and the creation of a work of art. Similar to the translation process, pedagogy is an academic discipline which examines how knowledge and skills are exchanged during the educational process, but not only; since learning is a lifelong process, this definition can be extended to include the vast horizon of one's entire life. As Sola (2012:19) eloquently asks, "how do we become what we are?"

1.1. The complexity of translation

Translation is defined as an activity that is both theoretical and pragmatical, but there are, of course, vast differences between these two concepts. For Benjamin (2002: 258), one must consider the concept of the translator's task. Nida (1982: 13) considers translation as a search, in the target language, for a balance between meaning and effect. He defines his way of translating as a way "to reproduce in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent" (Nida, 1982: 12). This would appear to be the best course in translating biblical messages in as many foreign languages as possible; however, this remains a rather pedagogical approach to translation. On the contrary, Benjamin (2002: 253) expresses that translation is never to be intended as something that is done for the reader who does not know the original language. This statement could certainly be debated, but it represents perhaps the approach which most respects the spirit of the hermeneutical translation approach, since this method considers the original text as a form or work of art that must keep its unique and original form.

In his essay, Ladmiral (2015: 120) states that translation is not only a transposition of meaning from one language to another, but it is much more in view of the fact that translation possesses an essential philosophical issue because of the core of its essence. Antoine Berman (1999: 15) posits that translation is characterized by two inseparable dimensions called reflection and experience. He grants preference to these words in opposition to theory and practice, as they can apply both to translation as well as education:

> *Je dirais maintenant quelques mots concernant l'horizon du "discours" que j'entends tenir sur la traduction, qu'il s'agisse de critique des théories traditionnelles ou d'analyse de certaines traductions concrètes. Il ne peut être question ici de théorie, d'aucune sorte. Mais plutôt de réflexion, dans un sens que je préciserai bientôt. Je veux me situer entièrement hors du cadre conceptuel fourni par le couple théorie/pratique, et remplacer ce couple par celui d'expérience et de réflexion. Le rapport de l'expérience et de la réflexion n'est pas celui de la pratique et de la théorie. La traduction est une expérience qui peut s'ouvrir et se (re)saisir dans la réflexion. Plus précisément : elle est originellement (et en tant qu'expérience) réflexion.* (Berman, 1999: 15)

In his study on the meaning of translation and traductology, Albir (2014: 40) analyzes translation activity from different points of view: as a communication act, a textual operation and a cognitive activity. This illustrates that pedagogy and translation now both share common ground in terms of theoretical and pragmatic aspects. To better understand the correlation between translation and pedagogy, we could consider them from the point of view of our own self-education process, in order to seek meaning in our lifelong personal and professional life experience.

During a summer school colloquium on Hölderlin's Hymn at Freiburg University in 1941 (see Galasso, 1998), Martin Heidegger expressed the following: "Tell me what you think about translating and I shall tell you who you are." This quotation reveals that there is something emblematic and revealing embedded in our opinions and notions of translation, both in terms of practice and theory. The approach we adopt and the accuracy we have in translating a text, by respecting the source text and trying to communicate it in another language, are the fundamental subject matter stemming from everything we have encountered in our personal intellectual life. Our responsibility as teacher and translator is to correctly report or share what we know, and this inevitably passes through our own personal way of understanding, interpreting and translating.

1.2. Translation and the cultural dimension

We cannot fully understand a culture if we do not consider its unique codes and way of thinking or communicating. This is particularly true when considering the historical and cultural evolutions of a society. When we study a culture, we are reading and analyzing language and literary work from different periods and various authors with differing perspectives on how history unfolded. The literary productions of a culture are often the result of translations, and this should not remain hidden but must be revealed to the reader's conscience and thus taken into consideration.

For translated texts this means highlighting the importance of the translation process itself. In his first essay *Sourciers et ciblistes*, Ladmiral (1986) defines a dual approach to translation: one that is closer to the source code (*sourcier*) and another that is closer to the final reader (*cibliste*). This is also the distinction at the basis of Schleiermacher's work (1985) and his reflection on the different methods of translating; one that leads the reader of the final text to the writer, which remains closer to its own language (*sourcier*), and one that leads the writer to the reader, in which the writer adapts his or her language to the target (*cibliste*). Schleiermacher's reflection is presented below:

> *A mio avviso, di tali vie ce ne sono soltanto due. O il traduttore lascia il più possibile in pace lo scrittore e gli muove incontro il lettore, o lascia il più possibile in pace il lettore e gli muove incontro lo scrittore. Le due vie sono talmente diverse che, imboccandone una, si deve percorrerla fino in fondo con il maggior rigore possibile; dal tentativo di percorrerle entrambe contemporaneamente non ci si possono attendere che risultati estremamente incerti, con il rischio di smarrire sia lo scrittore sia il lettore.* (Schleiermacher, 1985: 95)

It is possible to consider these two approaches in terms of different perspectives on transmitting knowledge. This is particularly true in contexts with cultural and religious differences. For example, when considering the transmission of knowledge, the implication of the teacher is very important in assisting students to discover this. The teacher should simply guide the students through these differences without influencing their comprehension of them. In fact, learners of all ages could benefit from this pedagogy. Consider, for instance, a population that has not yet developed the critical skills associated with the appreciation of a foreign culture or language, such as a group of children or young people being encouraged to formulate analytical and critical thoughts. In shifting from one language to another, children can be taught to consider these different cultural nuances. Translation without the necessary attention to cultural aspects leads to results that are opposed to what we consider as in-depth comprehension. This opposition creates distance between the learner and the translated word or text, leading to a form of alienation of the contents, which remain enveloped and thus sealed inside the original significance and meaning. In these circumstances, there is no room for critical analysis or interpretation and the process of self-education is abruptly curtailed.

The study and awareness of the philosophical underpinnings of translation is a relatively recent discovery, dating back only a mere few decades. According to Cicero (1973: 33–35), the ancient Romans used the method of translating the works of the most famous Greek writers for the literary and oratory education of their new speakers. Ladmiral (2015: 4) suggests that it was not customary for them to ponder particular concepts that modernity brought to light in the translation field. Today, these concepts still represent the basis for confrontations of and debates on differing philosophical approaches to translation theories, such as fidelity, manipulation, necessity, freedom, and equivalence.

1.3. From translation to classical hermeneutics

Classical hermeneutics addresses the field of textual studies in which the intent is first to comprehend the writings of a culture and subsequently render the writing comprehensible (Schleiermacher, 2015: 87). During the last century, hermeneutics has taken on new meanings, from Nietzsche's nihilism and Heidegger's existential turn to Gadamer's historical and linguistic approach. Over the decades, it has developed to encompass the thresholds of the interpretation of reality while aiming to understand and explain the events of history, as well as existence itself, through both philosophy and the philosophy of history (see Grondin, 2012: 145–151).

2. Theoretical reflections on translation, interpretation and hermeneutics

2.1. Interpretation as a science

As Grondin (2012: 8) affirms, theoretical reflection on translation has commonly been the prerogative of theologians, philosophers and intellectuals, who have often based their formulations on their own personal education and historical background. Therefore, translation is often characterized by subjectivity, since it is an acknowledged process that is often approached in a very individualistic manner (Albir, 2014: 311). For this reason, it is extremely difficult and challenging to ascertain the boundaries of personal knowledge influence or subjectivity in the various disciplines of translation theory. The interpretative science field is, generally, susceptible to such undefined limits. In fact, two areas of study (the history and geography of interpretation) have flourished over time, and the roots of both areas are deeply anchored in the fertile soil of hermeneutics and semiotics, as Gennari (1992: 173) points out below:

> *La storia e la geografia dell'interpretazione – così come, del resto, quella del concetto di segno – partono da lontano, per attraversare poi, sia i campi della semiotica, sia i territori assai fertili dell'ermeneutica. Invadenze e sconfinamenti reciproci sono la testimonianza di come si riveli arduo delimitare in comparti disciplinari categorie dalla debordante effervescenza euristica.*

Only in recent decades has translation developed into its own field of research. In France, for instance, this field is referred to as *Traductologie* and it is approached by means of a philosophical perspective. In English, we refer to it as Translation Studies, but also as Traductology and Translatology. *Traductologie* is the transposition to verbal speech of the steps and stages (we experience) during the translation activity, according to Berman (1999: 16), who explains this as follows:

> *J'appelle l'articulation consciente de l'expérience de la traduction, distincte de tout savoir objectivant et extérieur à celle-ci (tel qu'en élaborent la linguistique, la littérature comparée, la poétique) la traductologie. [...] La traductologie : la réflexion de la traduction sur elle-même à partir de sa nature d'expérience.*

Today, translation studies are essential to the preservation of the multiple points of view. This field of research is useful to consider how language is not only an instrument for communication but is also a standalone subject for critical analysis itself. Clearly, language allows us to interact with a very mobile and globalized society, and we can reach out to cultures and languages that were once considered too far from our own. We should thus be careful to avoid refuting these differences in order to better understand and respect different cultures.

As previously mentioned, each and every translation act is, in fact, an interpretative act. Translation is both a theoretical and pragmatical activity, which leads us through a new reflection on the ways a person can build his or her own existence. For example, we could consider that translation is part of an ongoing life process, based on our need for comprehension, interpretation and confrontation of life, our existence and the facts or roots of our reality (Madrussan, 2011: 99). When we need to find an interpretation of the phenomena in our lives, we address our own prejudices, limits and capacity to give a personal and subjective interpretation (Calvetto, 2011: 71). Moreover, as Lévinas (1986: 218) explains in the

Jewish exegetical tradition, this is common practice as one must strive to find interconnections between human life and the life of words, texts and language.

Much the same way, the Italian theologian and hermeneut Paolo De Benedetti (2006: 20) notes that when we are considering the different meanings (of texts or otherwise) within and outside the communities in which we live, the seventy-first sense is the meaning each one of us is called to find. He explains this in the following passage:

> *Il settantunesimo senso è una parte rispetto al tutto, al tutto dei sensi, ma deve esserne consapevole, avere la consapevolezza di essere solo parte. E solo parte vuol dire: consapevolezza che c'è il tutto. […] Per me, che non devo mai dimenticare di essere ricercatore di una parte del tutto, e che il tutto è dato dalla comunità nella storia, per me aprire un senso appartiene alla mia vocazione esistenziale? Per il fatto che io sia nato in un contesto socioculturale dove la Scrittura esiste, fa parte della mia vocazione il trovare un senso? Posso pensare che Dio mi ha fatto nascere, come dice Lévinas, perché nella Scrittura c'era un senso per me, perché Dio voleva partorire un senso?*

In the above passage, De Benedetti evokes the fact that we ought to consider the reason for which we were born and thus brought here to this world. However, depending on our social and religious beliefs, this perspective may be interpreted very differently. Is it then possible to consider translation as a form of interpretation?

Perhaps this question encourages us to reflect on one of man's greatest non-original works of art that continues with his existence through history and space (physical and cultural), for this is the only way to account for the meaning or senselessness of our own existence. What are the greatest philosophers' works of art but the translation of one another, with extended, modified, re-written and sometimes censured objects of cancellation and manipulation that are not always justifiable? And what of history itself? With its unique and yet repetitive cycles of human errors, including its oppositions and contradictory forms, is the history of literature and the creation of a new work of art ever considered to be a new and unique creation, or rather something that resembles something that was previously made or created? Is it then possible to find meaning in our lives or does everything simply continue revolving on an absurd staging, such as the theatrical setting of Beckett (2006)? Camus (1954: 4) considered that "the absurd is an experience that must be lived through, a point of departure, the equivalent, in existence, of Descartes's methodical doubt." Indeed, the point of departure for our quest is the search for meaning.

2.2. The limits and essence of translation, interpretation and pedagogy

From the perspective of pedagogy, the question above remains vast and quite challenging to define. Is it possible therefore to wonder if there are boundaries or limits to translation and pedagogy? At what point does pedagogy betray its own task? Is it even possible to completely distort the sense and meaning of education? At the foundation of education is an ethical basis founded on a culture. Ethics are the very foundation on which the understandings of the reality of the world are based. As Dottori (2008: 10) suggests, our actions are based upon the freedom of our personal choices, which can sometimes collide with these ethical codes of behaviour.

Inevitably, the interpretation of a text or passage first begins with the comprehension stage of that text moving from one language to another. In the context of this translation, there are undoubtedly a number of different structural and grammatical forms to consider since, depending on the languages, there may be significant variations in form or length between the original and the translated text. Madrussan (2011: 118) addresses this space within the text and explains that it can shift or move when trying to respect the original form. It is therefore necessary to critically work towards a formative task, as well as against direct translation, because of the pre-existing prejudices and presuppositions acquired through education. Moreover, in the interpretation of existence, our critical approach should never fail (Gadamer, 2004b: 314) and, as researchers in translation, we should strive to recognize the misunderstandings or shortcomings of this field and its various methods.

In fact, if connected with the practice of translation, the prospects related to humans seeking meaning is comparable to what the translator does while working on the text that is being translated. The translator derives a specific sense or meaning that emerges from the original, but first passes through personal, cultural and educational filters. The translation is finally transformed in a new light, as opposed to what already existed in the original form, and this is the essence of translation. With regard to the task of the translator, Benjamin (2002: 258) explains that in translating poetry, you must create and make poetry. He also states that "translation is a form of its own, so … the task of the translator [is to] be regarded as distinct and clearly differentiated from the task of the poet"

(Benjamin, 2002: 258). Consequently, we are not creating our life, because it is still being created, but we are transforming it by means of our personal and cultural instruments. In philosophical terms, Schlegel (1991: 55) defends that even poetry is not a creation out of history, but rather an expression of our spirit through language and sensation.

In addition, Berman (1999: 41) proposes a third approach to translation, thus transcending the dichotomy of the *sourcier* and *cibliste*. In translating, he seeks a way to translate as closely as possible to the original in respecting the truth and essence of the original text, and by rejecting as much as possible the multiple compromises that translation can sometimes demand. He explains his perspective and approach as follows (Berman, 1999: 41):

> *Bien sûr : il y a, dans cette expérience, une souffrance. Non seulement celle du traducteur. Celle, aussi, du texte traduit. Celle du sens privé de sa lettre. […] Mais ce qui est nié – le corps – se venge. La traduction découvre à ses dépens que lettre et sens sont à la fois dissociables et indissociables. […] Si la lettre et sens sont liés, la traduction est une trahison et une impossibilité.*

In this manner, Berman (1999: 49) approaches translation through the implementation of critical analysis. This is done by means of careful analysis to identify the potential distortions of meaning or sense that often infiltrate and influence the translation in its finished form. In this way, those discrepancies are highlighted and ultimately avoided. For Berman (1999: 49), the letter is the very body of meaning, a unitary element that cannot be arbitrarily separated or decimated. The consciousness of a word, in fact, can be assimilated to the awareness that one has of its history, of the evolution of its concept and of its own form. Having historical awareness also means having an awareness of a bodily unit, but this is often the main obstacle to the possibility of translation, because letter and spirit are so deeply meshed together that their separation is quite impossible. However, one may wonder if it is impossible to proceed with translation without deconstruction. If the destruction of the letter must take place, it must be handled with the prospect of its reconstruction, as Berman (1999: 68) illustrates below:

> *Lorsque nous « critiquons » le système des tendances déformantes, nous le faisons au nom d'une autre essence du traduire. Car si, sous certains rapports, la lettre doit être détruite, sous d'autres – plus essentiels – elle doit être sauvée et maintenue.*

This emphasis on the letter being a sacred word can be traced back to the German Romantic period. The consideration and "preservation of the letter" is traceable in one of Hölderlin's hymns, entitled *Patmos* (as cited in Fasani, 1949: 191). Berman (1999: 49) integrates technical aspects of deconstructive translation analysis with the tendency to enrich and ennoble the text while steering clear of disrespecting lexical fields and the network of tenses. In the next section, we would like to further develop this reflection to also include a dimension of philosophy in education, while considering personal experience and reflection as fundamental factors of both translation activity and self-education.

2.3. The influence of experience and reflection

During our lifetimes, we are all faced with many events and phenomena that need interpretation and explanation. This constitutes what we define as "experience". Our experiences are constantly based on some form of subjective activity, since they are conditioned by our education and culture. The interpretation of our experiences depends wholly on the tools or skills we possess to handle and understand them. Concurrently, when trying to understand and interpret, for example, we could easily make the mistake of separating the historical contingency of a text from their subjective and intentional aspects and, in doing so, miss a significant moment of understanding (Gadamer, 2004a: 314). In seeking the interpretation and meaning of life, we risk making the same type of mistake. Our illustration remains somewhat oversimplified. Gadamer (2004a: 314) addresses this issue when elucidating the significance of presuppositions in the context of translation. He suggests that they are part of the pre-comprehension phase, which influences the way we interpret phenomena of existence, well before the interpretation of a text. With respect to the pedagogical studies of Gadamer (2014: 11), his thoughts on self-education are the basis for a new glimpse into the concepts of humanistic education (Sola, 2012: 19), which also mirror the philosophical hermeneutics line of thought from varying perspectives.

In the following passage, Italian pedagogue and Professor Mario Gennari (1992: 180) reflects on the correlation between subjectivity and history in the hermeneutical circle with inspiration from the work of Gadamer (2004b, 2004c):

> *La circolarità dell'impianto ermeneutico non scarta né il soggetto, né i suoi limiti storici. Giudizio e pregiudizio, dirà Gadamer, sono entrambi costitutivi della realtà storica dell'individuo. L'interpretazione del testo*

non si appiattisce, così, sulle sue parole. La spirale ermeneutica procede nel rispetto della tradizione e nel riguardo verso la natura storiografica della ricerca. Passato e presente sintetizzano la comprensione. La teoria non è soltanto un procedimento soggettivo che deve essere svolto secondo modalità particolari. Tale lettura è del tutto insufficiente. Il significato ermeneutico di un testo riposa, infatti, nella distanza temporale che separa fra loro l'autore e il suo interprete. [...] Per il maggior rappresentante dell'ermeneutica filosofica, infatti, "l'arte dell'interpretazione" viene costituendosi come paradigma fondativo del tragitto globale della conoscenza.

In the above quotation, Gennari explains the hermeneutic spiral (around the subject and the [his]story) and that both judgement and prejudice are an integral part of the translation process. The hermeneutic meaning of a text exists in the temporal distance that separates the author and the interpreter. He insists that philosophical hermeneutics or "the art of interpretation" (Schleiermacher, 2015: 89) is constituted as a founding paradigm of the global journey of knowledge, and he reiterates Gadamer's opinion that comprehension lies in the temporal distance between past and present (Gadamer, 2004a: 340).

3. Gadamer's hermeneutical experience: *Erlebnis* in translation and education

3.1. The influence of the *Weltanschauung*

Before adopting or applying translation techniques, particular attention should be attributed to the various language elements within a text, since they possess the capacity to convey specific contexts and directions or lines of significance, which are necessary to reveal or hide cultural aspects and meanings. It is imperative to avoid the activation of the manipulation mechanism, even unwittingly. For Gadamer (2004a: 506), such concepts mask the true significance of the linguistic character associated with the hermeneutical experience. In his analysis of the phenomenological movement he criticizes and profoundly examines the concept of *Weltanschauung* or world view, which is the fundamental cognitive orientation of an individual or society encompassing the entirety of the individual or society's knowledge and point of view, including natural philosophy; fundamental, existential, and normative postulates; and themes, values, emotions, and ethics (Gadamer, 2008: 17). This phenomenological philosophy originated with Edmund Husserl, a German philosopher, who developed "the science of consciousness and knowledge phenomena" (as cited in Herrmann, 1997: 8). Husserl believed in the necessity of experiencing the limitedness and historicity of our personal lives.

In the same manner, instructors can, through their pedagogical approach, inadvertently risk transmitting their own preconceptions by conveying messages that can develop into obstacles to the students' personal education, rather than foster intellectual growth, development and critical awareness skills. In translation science and in pedagogical research, it is thus fundamental to maintain the balance between the construction of a meaning and its criticism. This is done using language; however, over time and with education, knowledge and experience, our language expands and evolves. This is the hermeneutical experience theorized by Gadamer (2004b: 312) and the reason for which language is our precondition in the world experience, even if we are uniquely preconditioned through the influence of our own native cultures and languages (Gadamer, 2004b: 441). The hermeneutical philosophy of Gadamer (2004c: 225) is an essential part of hermeneutic research to understand world phenomena and human existence throughout all of history, art and language.

Similar to the hermeneutical experience, the procedure which is involved in the translation process is a cognitive operation that is cradled in the translator's mind. At the same time, there is an inter-semiotic translation, if we consider the intangible dimension of thought, which varies greatly from our individual linguistic coding. In the same way, when Ferdinand De Saussure (2005: 97) theorized the difference between *langue* and *parole*, he did not mean that two material entities existed in the same reality, but rather that their existences depended on differing subjectivities. This does not mean that reality itself is modified; however, the final perception of the subject could be, and because of this duality, we may be led towards or away from what is expressed by language. In fact, all human language is composed of verbal and non-verbal expressions, such as emotions, symbols and paralinguistic features, that contribute to providing an interpretation of what we hear, what we feel and what we say.

During the formation process, we also encounter experiences that contribute to the transformation of our reality, of what we are and how we reflect on life experience. However, a varied range of intermediate realities coexist, depending on our subjective and objective interpretations. As the German philosopher and seminal thinker Martin Heidegger (1982) expresses in the following passage, this experience may profoundly touch and affect us:

> To undergo an experience with something – be it a thing, a person, or a god – means that this something befalls us, strikes us, comes over us, overwhelms and transforms us. When we talk of "undergoing" an experience, we mean specifically that the experience is not of our own making; to "undergo" here means that we endure it, suffer it, receive it as it strikes us and submit to it. […] If it is true that man finds the proper abode of his existence in language – whether he is aware of it or not – then an experience we undergo with language will touch the innermost nexus of our existence. (Heidegger, 1982: 57)

This is obviously true for the sum of our life experience, although we sometimes encounter instances in life when it is not so obvious or simple to go or get beyond an experience. Some individuals may be perturbed or blocked by a traumatic life experience. By giving personal and intentional significance to the facts of the experience, we contribute to creating our self-education, as Madrussan (2011: 98) explains below:

> *È l'al di là del fatto, quindi, a dare senso al fatto stesso, dove l'accadere del gesto intenzionale non è altro che il compimento nel mondo dell'intenzionalità di senso soggettiva. Ed è ancora questo stesso superamento – al di là del mero fatto a costituire lo spazio originario dell'educazione.*

In the above passage, he insists that education is never a neutral activity, for the reason that it is always preconditioned by tradition and by the cultural environment in which the teaching and learning take place. In addition, phenomenological philosophy, based on the concept of *Erlebnis* ("to live an experience" in German), is the approach we adopt for life, and its phenomena, from the experience to consciousness, will be presented in the next section.

3.2. The significance and impact of *Erlebnis* on translation

In *Truth and Method,* Gadamer (2004a: 57) considers the German concept of *Erlebnis*. It signifies something you experience and how we analyze what we experience or really know. Gadamer (2004a) considers how experience can be a very subjective experience while making the following observations:

> Thus, both in Dilthey and in Husserl, both in life philosophy and in phenomenology, the concept of *Erlebnis* is primarily purely epistemological.

> […] If something is called or considered an *Erlebnis*, that means it is rounded into the unity of a significant whole. An experience is as much distinguished from other experiences – in which other things are experienced – as it is from the rest of life in which "nothing" is experienced. An experience is no longer just something that flows past quickly in the stream of conscious life; it is meant as a unity and thus attains a new mode of being one. Thus, it is quite understandable that the word emerges in biographical literature and ultimately stems from its use in autobiography. What can be called an experience constitutes itself in memory.

For the above-cited reasons, Gadamer (2004a) insists that experience is not an object we can take as a paradigm, but rather that it is a way of being of the subject. Furthermore, he rationalizes that the notion of experience also includes a contrastive and temporal feature, as stated in the following passage (Gadamer, 2004a: 58):

> On the other hand, however, the notion of experience also implies a contrast between life and mere concept. Experience has a definite immediacy which eludes every opinion about its meaning. Everything that is experienced is experienced by oneself, and part of its meaning is that it belongs to the unity of this self and thus contains an unmistakable and irreplaceable relation to the whole of this one life. Thus, essential to an experience is that it cannot be exhausted in what can be said of it or grasped as its meaning. As determined through autobiographical or biographical reflection, its meaning remains fused with the whole movement of life and constantly accompanies it. The mode of being of experience is precisely to be so determinative that one is never finished with it.

The education process, which Gadamer (2014: 12) refers to as self-education, often passes through language, because it is our first form of education at birth. For many reasons, it is very close to the translation activity, if we consider the process of translation as an experience with a foreign language. During this experience, the intromission of subjectivity is inevitable for both the author and the translator. As Schleiermacher (2015: 79) states: "You already need to know a man to understand his words, but it is only from his words that you can get to know a man". For this reason both types of "experience", that is, (self-)education and translation, are part of a critical and anti-dogmatic analysis, two essential elements that are required to achieve the proper form of our task, with the awareness of their limits in the form of imperfections or impossibilities. The conflict or discrepancy often lays somewhere between the new and the old, what we know and what is not known, the letter and its interpretation, the prescription and the vitality of the language (Luther, 2006: 55).

As Berman (1984: 78) describes below, all of human life is merely a game of communication, whereby we are perpetually alternating between the coming out of ourselves only to return to our inner selves, all the while facing "the Other" becoming the "other" to us:

> *Le jeu de la communication et du rapprochement est l'occupation et la force de la vie. L'essence de l'Esprit est de se déterminer lui-même et, dans une perpétuelle alternance, de sortir de soi et de rentrer en soi-même. Le vrai milieu est seulement celui auquel on revient toujours depuis les voies excentriques de l'enthousiasme et de l'énergie, non pas celui que l'on ne quitte jamais.*

In the philosophy of Berman (1984: 279), translation is finally considered as an independent discipline that he approaches through Romantic studies about literary criticism and the *Bildung* concept. Like hermeneutics, translation studies span the decades as a cultural topic in different forms, but it is continually associated with the fields of literature and philosophy. Translation can be considered as part of a knowledge paradigm for culture because of its role in the formation process of a literary system, and even for our own existence. This concept is the founding principle for his study on *Bildung* as a mediation element in building a culture, a man, or a work of art. The base concept for this line of thought is the foreign element as the touchstone to reach our own form in all fields, as Berman (1984: 79) argues: "since the Other has a mediating function, translation may become one of the agents of *Bildung*".

3.3. Pedagogic implications and applications

In Romantic thought, the intromission of a foreign element in a culture is the first step for the constitution of a proper shape (Berman, 1984: 79). With regard to this, Berman wrote about the importance of translation in the process of constituting a culture, and this is the basis for considering the "Other" as the fundamental *Bildung* element in translation (1984: 174). Receiving or accepting the "Other" includes an understanding process in order to adopt the most authentic passageway to "comprehension", and this is only possible through interpretation (Gadamer, 2004a: 447). Therefore, if we were to consider translation as a knowledge process by means of the hermeneutic approach, it is in seeking the vestiges and evolution of words and texts throughout history, as Berman and Gadamer have done in the whole of their own research, that allows us to understand, through language, the core of a culture, of a society or of (a) man.

This is extremely useful and practical for a pedagogic approach to translation activity in teaching foreign languages, since languages are the medium of transmission of this foreign element. To ensure a more prolific knowledge of translation from this perspective, it is necessary to give a consistent panoramic vision of translation philosophy, and not only in terms of modern translation studies. It may be pragmatic to provide the same text translated into several different languages with the objective of deriving confrontational or diversified points between them for debate and discussion. The students could initially try to translate alone or in small groups and then share their findings with other students or the teacher to receive critical feedback. Berman (1999: 79) applies this method along with several other researchers and translators (e.g. Eco, 2007; Cavagnoli, 2012) who use translated materials as part of their research studies.

The added value here is the fact that the students move from a critical reflection on texts to the comprehension of their own personal methods of interpretation as a window that is opened onto their whole existence. As mentioned earlier, the act of translation is, in itself, an experience that has the potential to teach us something profound about our lives and about the fertile ground of interpretation. The most significant point is that this act involves reflecting on our personal way of reasoning and interpreting in a very critical and analytical way. Finally, translation gives us the opportunity to recognize the multiple layers of subjectivity whilst preserving the freedom of personal thought and expression. The most pragmatic objective of a translation activity is to produce a work that is the expression of both a subject's individuality and the cultural *Geist* of a period. Studying the field of translation allows us to keep an open mind to confrontation, critical analysis and the possibility of reaching new horizons through language. This is due to the form of translation itself, with a dual-faced form and a dual ending that is either possible or impossible. Essentially, we have shown here that the translator's task is, to a certain extent, a philosophical one.

4. Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview based on the interpretative dimension of translation sciences approached from the perspective of hermeneutical history and translation studies. The pedagogical opening is based on the prolific studies of a few Italian pedagogues from two academic institutions: the University of Genoa (Mario Gennari, Giancarla Sola) and the University of Turin (Elena Madrussan, Silvano Calvetto). From Gadamer's writings to the Jewish exegetical tradition on the interpretation of sacred texts, hermeneutic philosophy has been shown to be a rich, thought-embracing composite based on ancient Greek philosophy, biblical interpretation history, Husserlian phenomenology and Heideggerian existentialism. In this chapter, the author has merely scratched the surface of this subject; however, it certainly merits further investigation in order to highlight and discover many other potential links with translation and education philosophy that pass through interpretation. Berman closely analyzes the German *Bildung* concept, which is the ideal of education and the way we become what we are at the same time, whereas for Gadamer, the *Bildung* ideal still represents the basis of his own education, because he was born in Germany at the beginning of the twentieth century and grew up in the period of transition from the great German philosophical ideal to the destruction of them. These and other topics are the fundamental foundations of this research, but also represent future issues and new directions for further studies in the vast field of interpretative and translation sciences.

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