Pragmatics Applied to Language Teaching and Learning

Pragmatics Applied to Language Teaching and Learning

Edited by

Reyes Gómez Morón, Manuel Padilla Cruz,
Lucía Fernández Amaya
and María de la O Hernández López

CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS
PUBLISHING

Pragmatics Applied to Language Teaching and Learning,
Edited by Reyes Gómez Morón, Manuel Padilla Cruz, Lucía Fernández Amaya
and María de la O Hernández López

This book first published 2009

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-4438-0972-1, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-0972-6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

INTRODUCTION

INCORPORATING PRAGMATICS TO FOREIGN/SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING[1]

REYES GÓMEZ MORÓN,
MANUEL PADILLA CRUZ,
LUCÍA FERNÁNDEZ AMAYA,
MARÍA DE LA O HERNÁNDEZ LÓPEZ

1. Pragmatics and Foreign/Second Language Teaching

The relationship between Pragmatics and Foreign or Second Language Teaching (F/SLT, henceforth) seems to have been very clear since the origins of both disciplines. One of the major aims of F/SLT undoubtedly is the development of the students' *communicative competence*. Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) initially defined this competence as consisting of four interrelated sub-competencies: *grammatical* competence, or mastery of the linguistic code of the language that is being learnt; *sociolinguistic* competence, or knowing the sociocultural rules of use of the L2; *discourse* competence, or being able to produce unified written or spoken texts, both in terms of coherence and cohesion, and *strategic* competence, or commanding certain verbal and non-verbal devices in order to compensate for possible communication breakdowns, insufficient mastery of the L2 or to enhance communication. Later on, Bachman (1990) proposed that language knowledge comprises two main kinds of knowledge that learners of an L2 must internalise:

a) *Organisational knowledge*, which amounts to knowing how the formal structure of an L2 is controlled so as to produce and/or

[1] The authors would like to express their thanks to Dr María Elena Placencia (Birkbeck College, University of London) for her useful comments and revision of this introductory chapter.

recognise grammatically correct sentences and organise these in texts. It subsumes a *grammatical* and a *textual* knowledge, similar to Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale's (1983) *grammatical* and *discourse* competences, respectively.

b) *Pragmatic knowledge*, which involves knowing how words and utterances can be assigned specific meanings in context and function as the vehicles of their users' intentions. As the previous knowledge, this one is also structured in others: *lexical* knowledge, which amounts to knowing the meaning of lexical items and using them figuratively; *functional* knowledge, or knowing how to relate utterances to their speakers' intentions; and *sociolinguistic* knowledge, similar to Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale's (1983) *sociolinguistic competence*.

Elaborating on these two models, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) suggested a more encompassing model of communicative competence, which they conceive and represent as a sort of pyramid enclosing a circle and surrounded by another circle. Its inner circle is *discourse competence*, the three points of the pyramid are *sociocultural*, *linguistic* and *actional competences*, and the outer circle is *strategic competence*, "[…] an ever-present, potentially usable inventory of skills that allows a strategically competent speaker to negotiate messages and resolve problems or to compensate for deficiencies in any of the other underlying competencies" (Celce-Murcia et al. 1995: 9).

Discourse competence refers to the ability to select and arrange lexical items and syntactic structures in order to achieve well-formed spoken or written texts. For an L2 learner to become competent in terms of discourse, s/he must be able to master such important aspects of language as cohesion (anaphoric/cataphoric reference, ellipsis, conjunction, etc.), deixis (personal, spatial, temporal, etc.), coherence (theme-rheme development, management of old and new information, temporal continuity, etc.), genre structure (the kind of discourse s/he is facing: narrative, interview, report, etc.) and conversational structure (how to take turns, hold/relinquish the floor, interrupt, perform openings, etc.).

Linguistic competence concerns the very foundations of communication, basically the phonological, lexical and morpho-syntactic elements of a language and how they are reflected in writing. For an L2 learner to become linguistically competent, s/he must know the sound inventory of the L2, its spelling rules, the meaning of its lexical items and routines, how to order them so as to form phrases and sentences, the elements that can or cannot collocate with others, etc.

Actional competence, in turn, corresponds to "[…] matching actional intent with linguistic form based on the knowledge of an inventory of verbal schemata that carry illocutionary force (speech acts and speech acts sets)" (Celce-Murcia et al. 1995: 17). Accordingly, a learner must know how to greet other individuals, make introductions, express/acknowledge gratitude, compliment or congratulate, extend/accept/decline invitations, ask/give information, explain/discuss information, agree/disagree with other individuals, express/find out about his feelings or those of other interlocutors, suggest, request, give orders, persuade, encourage/discourage, complain, criticise, or blame among many other language functions but, more importantly, how such functions are performed by means of specific speech acts and the conversational sequences or moves of those speech acts.

Sociocultural competence alludes to the ability to produce utterances that are appropriate to the sociocultural context in which communication takes place, i.e. to the social contextual factors such as participants' age, gender, power or distance; stylistic factors such as politeness conventions and strategies, degrees of formality or field-specific registers; cultural factors such as awareness of dialect or regional differences in the target language, differences and similarities in terms of usage of communicative strategies between the L1 and the L2, social and institutional structure of the target culture, etc.

Finally, *strategic competence* is "[…] knowledge of communication strategies and how to use them" (Celce-Murcia et al. 1995: 26). This overarching competence is formed by *avoidance* or *reduction strategies*, such as topic avoidance and message abandonment; *achievement* or *compensatory strategies*, such as circumlocution, approximation, restructuring of messages or literal translation from L1, among others; *stalling* or *time-gaining strategies*, such as the use of fillers, gambits or hesitation devices; *self-monitoring strategies*, such as self-initiated repair or self-rephrasing, and *interactional strategies*, such as appeals for help when the non-native speaker (NNS, henceforth) does not know a word, meaning negotiation strategies (repetition requests, clarification requests, etc.) or comprehension checks.

As the study of meaning in context, how individuals use language depending on specific psycho-sociological factors (power, distance, imposition, affect, etc.) and how they understand language and come to a particular interpretation out of the (many) competing ones that utterances may have (e.g. Leech 1983; Levinson 1983; Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995; Mey 1993; Thomas 1995), Pragmatics has indeed had, and still has, many implications for the development of learners' communicative

competence. As can be seen from the various components that the three different conceptions of communicative competence include, Pragmatics is indeed central, if not essential, to the development of learners' communicative competence in their L2. In fact, practitioners in the field have repeatedly underlined the need to sensitise L2 learners to specific aspects of particular speech acts in the target language, such as their routinised nature, the semantico-syntactic formulae frequently used to perform them, their integrant conversational moves and sequences, what motivates their performance or avoidance in specific contexts – i.e. when, where, how and with whom they can perform or avoid them, etc. (e.g. Blum-Kulka 1982, 1983; Thomas 1983, 1984; Olshtain and Cohen 1990; Harlow 1990; Jaworski 1994; Citron 1995; García 1996; Riley 2006, among many others). They have also underlined the need to be acquainted with the interactive or sociocultural principles underlying language usage in the target culture. In fact, there is a seminal branch of Pragmatics, known as politeness theory, which has examined the different rules or principles governing linguistic behaviour in diverse cultures (e.g. Lakoff 1973, 1977; Leech 1983; Spencer-Oatey 2000, 2008; Spencer-Oatey and Jiang 2003), how such rules or principles are reflected in the selection of a wide range of linguistic strategies aimed at avoiding interactive conflict between interlocutors (e.g. Brown and Levinson 1978, 1987) and a plethora of politeness phenomena in different languages. Pragmatists working in this area constantly emphasise the need to incorporate the explicit teaching of politeness in course programmes and in the L2 class as a way to contribute to the development of the students' *pragmatic consciousness* or *metapragmatic abilities* (e.g. Sharwood-Smith 1981; Thomas 1983; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Kasper and Blum-Kulka 1993; Kreuz and Roberts 1993; Meier 1995, 1997; Garcés Conejos 2001a, 2001b; Bou Franch and Garcés Conejos 2003). But not only is the development of learners' pragmatic consciousness or metapragmatic abilities an urgent need in F/SLT; teachers must also get a thorough and solid training in and knowledge of pragmatics that enables them to address their learners' needs, lacks, problems and deficiencies when interacting in the L2 (Garcés Conejos 2001b; Bou Franch and Garcés Conejos 2003).

Over the last years, many calls have been made to incorporate pragmatic issues to the teaching and learning of second languages (see Barron 2001; Trosborg 1995; Rose and Kasper 2001; Kasper and Rose 2002; Bardovi-Harlig and Hatford 2005, among many others), as a result of evolving frameworks in cognitive and social pragmatics, on the one hand, and social psychology of language, on the other hand, which reflect the dynamism and complexity of communication *in situ*. Efficient F/SLT

must include all those pragmatic factors that affect interaction in order to obtain satisfactory results not only in the classroom but, more importantly, when learners use their L2 in real and authentic contexts. The growing interest in interdisciplinary studies (pragmatics and language instruction) has been intensified since the appearance of *Pragmatics in Language Teaching* (Rose and Kasper 2001), as it showed that, whatever the linguistic aspect that is at stake, it is clear that there are no concluding results to be applied to the classroom. Likewise, language acquisition studies appeared to be in the middle of nowhere, as far as pragmatic aspects are concerned. What is clear, however, is that cultural and contextual aspects of language cannot be deliberately ignored by the instructor, as defended by Bardovi-Harlig (2001) and Rose (2005): "[…] second language learners who do not receive instruction in pragmatics differ significantly from native speakers (NSs, henceforth) in their pragmatic production and perception in the target language" (Rose 2005: 386).

2. The current volume

This volume stresses the need and importance of incorporating Pragmatics to F/SLT. It gathers twenty chapters resulting from the effort of researchers whose main interests and concerns revolve around areas such as Intercultural Pragmatics, Cognitive Pragmatics, Social Pragmatics, Interlanguage Pragmatics (IP), Languages for Academic or Specific Purposes and F/SLT Teaching. They offer additional evidence of the advantages of dealing with pragmatic issues in the F/SL class or adopting a pragmatic perspective for teaching specific aspects of the F/SL.

The volume is thematically organised in five broad parts, although some of the papers could have perfectly been ascribed to others owing to their multidisciplinary approach. Each of those sections aims at reconciling those aspects that are in the process of being studied and applied to F/SLT, namely, cognitive aspects that may help understand how pragmatics is internalised or influences learners' L2 comprehension and performance; problems and difficulties that arise when performing specific speech acts or linguistic functions in an L2, their implications for F/SLT and how adopting a pragmatic perspective may contribute to solve them; issues to be taken into account when dealing with intercultural communication in F/SLT; teaching an L2 for specific or academic purposes taking into account pragmatic aspects, and other methodological issues such as the use of new technologies to deal with pragmatic aspects. All these issues show the wide range of factors and topics that must be

taken into account when teaching and learning pragmatic aspects of second languages.

Mª Victoria Escandell-Vidal opens the volume with the introductory chapter "Social cognition and second language learning", in which she explains how intercultural pragmatics focuses on the diversity of conversational styles in different cultures and the consequences of such diversity in situations where members of various cultural groups interact. According to the author, the privileged data in this area usually come from the analysis of fragments of actual conversations (business communication, classroom interaction, etc.). The observable communicative behaviour is, however, only the external manifestation of a complex set of internal processes. Her aim is to add a cognitive dimension to the overall picture. The recent development of Social Cognition as a multidisciplinary research field –a field in which Neuroscience, Psychology, Sociology and Linguistics explore the cognitive bases of social interaction– offers a new perspective for a proper understanding of both the unity and the diversity in social behaviour. After presenting some of the major findings of social cognition, Escandell-Vidal examines their implications for intercultural pragmatics, and their contribution to some controversial issues, such as the debate about learnability.

2.1. Part I

After that introductory chapter, the reader will find the first part, entitled "Cognitive Issues on L2 Teaching". It contains three chapters that adopt a cognitive perspective and therefore focus on the need to consider cognitive aspects of communication in F/SLT. The first two chapters are connected because they deal with a topic such as metaphor, which has recently awoken the interest of cognitive linguists.

Chapter two, "Cross-cultural differences in conceptualisation and their application in L2 instruction", by Alberto Hijazo Gazcón, is a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic study of the concept of 'sexual desire' based on Csábi's (1998) analysis of English 'lust'. The cognitive theory of metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Barcelona 2002; Cuenca and Hilferty 1999; Kövecses 2000a, 2000b) considers that metaphors are conceptualising mechanisms that help to understand complex concepts through simple ones, by mapping a source domain into a target domain through different correspondences. Metaphors are not mere ornamental devices, but express key concepts or evaluations, and are a stable part of our category system (Boers and Lindstromberg 2006). In fact, a field such as that of human feelings and emotions is mainly expressed by metaphors

(Kövecses 2000a, 2000b; Soriano 2004; Barcelona 1992). Although some metaphors seem to be universal, culture variation plays an important role in conceptualising abstract concepts and creating extensive meanings. For that reason, the study of metaphors is an important issue to cross-cultural studies, the author claims. Furthermore, *metaphoric intelligence* seems to contribute to the development of communicative strategies such as word coinage and paraphrase, so learners awareness of differences in conceptualization could also imply an improvement in their strategic, and hence, communicative competence (Littlemore 2001, 2004). Since conceptual metaphors often have an important cultural background, if L2 students do not have access to that shared cultural knowledge and expectations, they will probably misinterpret their meaning. In the first part of the paper, the author presents a detailed description of 'sexual desire' in Spanish. Following Csábi's (1998) methodology, he draws the metaphors forming his corpus from Spanish romantic novels. Then, he offers a contrastive comparison between English and Spanish lust metaphors, which highlights the differences in its conceptualization and frequency. In the second part of the paper, Hijazo Gazcón examines how the results of his study can be applied to different fields such as Translation, Second Language Acquisition and teaching/learning pragmatic and sociocultural skills. He shows that the study of metaphors can help to understand extensive meanings in other languages and develop strategic skills in communication.

In the third chapter, "Immigration and conceptual metaphors. A critical approach to ideological representation", María Dolores López Maestre explores some of the conceptual metaphors resorted to by a group of University students in extended essays on the topic of immigration. Following an interdisciplinary approach, the author examines conceptual metaphors from a critical point of view, using analytical procedures from Critical Discourse Analysis, Cognitive Linguistics and Corpus Linguistics. Her aim is to explore not only the conceptualisation of the phenomenon of immigration in the discourse of students, but also to unveil the ideology and socio-cultural values conveyed by their choice of analogical mappings and corresponding metaphorical linguistic expressions. Since the connection between metaphors and ideology is an area particularly fruitful to be explored, López Maestre hopes to show with her paper how studies on intercultural communication and immigration can benefit from a fusion of methods from critical discourse analysis and the so called 'cognitive turn', so prominent in the linguistic panorama recently. She firstly deals with methodological questions related to the sample studied, explains how the material was collected and offers information about the informants

who participated in her project. After examining aspects of the theoretical framework, the author also shows the different stages in the design of her research project and provides a list of the candidate metaphors she considered for investigation. From them, she selects and concentrates on two of the most prominent conceptual metaphors that appear in the discourse of her informants, 'Immigration is war/fight/conflict' and 'Spain is a container', for these two conceptualisations often portray a discriminatory and negative view of immigration. Finally, the author reflects on the ideological power of metaphors to represent experience and the need to develop a critical attitude to the metaphors people use, especially at University. The author argues that, since Language and Literature departments play a crucial role in the development of a linguistic awareness with regard to intercultural issues, teachers should help students become aware of the importance of using a stylistically appropriate language that is respectful to the multicultural experience, and train them to avoid racism, xenophobia and other discriminatory practices.

Finally, the fourth chapter addresses one of the problems when using and understanding an L2: pragmatic failure. Focusing on the hearer and understanding, and assuming that the 'phaticity' of an utterance depends on the communicative circumstances in which it is produced and is therefore negotiated by participants, Manuel Padilla Cruz argues that many utterances intended as phatic can be misunderstood by non-native (NN, henceforth) hearers. This may originate pragmatic failures which can negatively affect communication. "Understanding and overcoming pragmatic failure when interpreting phatic utterances" suggests centring on hearers' interpretive strategies as a preventive way to avoid undesired communicative misunderstandings in intercultural communication between NNSs alone or NNSs and NSs. After briefly reviewing some of the most relevant contributions addressing pragmatic failure, he centres on phatic utterances and summarises some of the extant approaches to this sort of utterances ranging from Malinowski's (1923) work on phatic communion to Žegarac (1998) and Žegarac and Clark's (1999) relevance-theoretic approach to phatic communication. In that revision, the author highlights the importance and risks of phatic utterances for communication. Then, adopting a relevance-theoretic approach to communication (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995), he moves on to explain why and how hearers may recover unintended non-phatic interpretations from utterances whose speakers intended as phatic or, the other way around, why and how they may recover phatic interpretations from utterances whose speakers intended as non-phatic. He argues that what Sperber (1994) calls *naïve* and *optimistic* hearers may recover those wrong

interpretations if, as a result of the expectations of relevance that utterances generate, they believe that their interlocutors are competent and benevolent and stop their processing when obtaining interpretations that appear optimally relevant to them but are not the ones that their interlocutors intended. Next, focusing on communication between NNSs or NNSs and NSs, he proposes that the cognitive strategy that Sperber (1994) labels *cautious optimism* can help them avoid misunderstandings when interpreting phatic and non-phatic utterances. Such strategy consists of a competent attribution of intentions and is called for when speakers are not competent in their L2. It leads hearers to reject the interpretation of an utterance that accidentally achieves an optimal level of relevance and is not the intended one and look for another that is indeed the intended one. The author thus illustrates that cautious optimism can help NN hearers overcome cases of both *accidental relevance* and *accidental irrelevance* when processing specific utterances and suggests to teach learners to become cautious and optimistic hearers.

2.2. Part II

Classroom interaction offers teachers interesting and revealing data to be used as a starting point in order to develop learners' pragmatic competence, teach an L2's pragmatic principles or the way in which specific speech acts are performed in the L2. The second part of the book, "Teaching Languages across Cultures", includes five chapters that tackle learners' performance in specific speech acts or linguistic functions, examining how they acquire pragmatic principles and exploring the factors influencing their performance in different L2s.

The first chapter of this section, "The acquisition of pragmatic competence from a strategic perspective: apology, a case in point", by Abdelhadi Bellachhab, presents a study which draws particularly on two convergent approaches concerned with the development of pragmatic competence from a strategic perspective. The first approach assumes that communication is fundamentally strategic, as manifested through speech act realization and communication in general. The second approach draws inspiration from the evaluation criterion proposed by Galatanu (2007) to determine pragmatic competence. According to that criterion, the evaluation of pragmatic competence can be measured by the fluent (and relevant) production of discursive sequences according not only to the context of communication but also to the argumentative protocol of lexical meanings (Galatanu 2007). Bellachhab's aim is to investigate the links which might exist, on the one hand, between strategic competence –

manifested through communication strategies (Canale and Swain 1980; Bachman 1990) – and the development of pragmatic competence. On the other hand, the author tries to establish a link between the discursive construction at the level of argumentative associations produced by learners of French as a Foreign Language (FFL) and its discursive deployment/actualisation in verbal interactions. In order to explore those links, a cross-sectional research has been made to study the speech act of apology in interactions of advanced Moroccan FFL learners.

In "Learning how to promise: a didactic approach to the teaching of speech acts", Carmen Maíz Arévalo focuses on the analysis of promises both from a linguistic and pragmatic perspective, while also looking at concrete examples from different English textbooks (levels A2 and B1). The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001) pictures learning a foreign language as a combination of linguistic, social and pragmatic competence. Within this framework, communication is regarded as the ability to use the correct linguistic structures but also in the appropriate contexts. Thus, under the heading of 'everyday English' most English textbooks teach learners how to perform different functions such as complaining, apologising, refusing and so on, even from the most elementary levels. Promises, however, have been slightly neglected despite the fact that, in English, they play a significant role in macro-speech acts such as apologies and refusals. Linguistically, this chapter analyses two hundred examples from the *Corpus de Referencia del Español actual* (*CREA*) and the *Bristish National Corpus* (*BNC*) at sentence level in order to contrast the main realisations of this speech act both in English and Spanish and the possible linguistic transfers Spanish students might make. Pragmatically, it analyses the main uses of promises –both as macro and micro speech acts– in both languages to conclude that they perform a very different function in both cultures. Thus, whereas in Spanish promises usually appear as major speech acts, in English they are also prone to form part –as micro speech acts– of acts such as apologies and refusals. In these cases, they function as face repairing devices, since the addressee's face has been threatened and damaged either by the refusal or by the speaker's previous action, hence the need for apologising. On the other hand, it can be observed that in Spanish –on the whole a more positive-politeness culture– apologies and refusals do not necessarily involve promising. These differences in use might make Spanish students appear rude to NSs even though they do not intend to do so, causing a significant pragmatic failure.

The next chapter is "The interlanguage of complaints by Catalan learners of English", by María Sabaté i Dalmau. IP is gaining a position of

its own due to three major factors: growing awareness of multilingual societies, migration movement processes and globalisation processes. Many of the studies on complaints stem from a willingness to demonstrate that linguistic differences between people sharing different politeness systems can lead to intercultural misunderstanding. Complaints require a high level of pragmatic competence in any language, both for NSs and NNSs, because they have to do with sorting out the norms of behaviour that have to be shared daily within society, family, friends, or multilingual workers. Given their importance in everyday communication, it is crucial that L2 speakers master this speech act in order to avoid the types of stereotyping that have been highlighted in many studies on interlanguage (IL) complaints. The author analyses the IL of complaints by Catalan learners of English with two main objectives in mind. On the one hand, she attempts to highlight the importance of understanding the NN production of IL complaints in intercultural communication in depth in order to avoid the kinds of stereotyping outlined above, and, more generally, miscommunication or misunderstanding. On the other hand, she also provides detailed descriptions of the difficult aspects of acquisition, development, and mastering of this specific speech act by three groups of Catalan learners of English, which can be understood as pedagogical tools that can hopefully have some practical applications for the teaching of the English complaint system.

Bryant Smith's chapter, "Learner strategies in L2 pragmatics: the case of Spanish compliment responses" deals with the effect of language transfer that the first language has while learners are attempting to acquire the pragmatic and politeness principles that are central to the target language and culture. One speech act that is particularly of interest to researchers is compliment responses because they require a great deal of pragmatic insight by the speaker and therefore are often rich with data. Smith attempts to bring together the research that has been done on this speech act and clarify it using data from American learners of Spanish in a FL classroom at the university level. Although collecting data from learners is not a new concept, this cross-sectional study of learners at four (beginner, beginner-intermediate, intermediate, advanced) stages of learning will help to fill a void in existing research on the role of language transfer in pragmatic acquisition, as well as the correlation between grammatical competence and pragmatic competence. Results from a compliment response survey administered to American native English-speaking learners of Spanish at LSU from varying levels is analysed and compared to control data from native English and Spanish speakers. This research illustrates that in the second language classroom, pragmatic

accuracy in the L2 often does not simply emerge with grammatical instruction. Instead, Smith's data show that explicit instruction might be a better tool for pragmatic accuracy in compliment responses. His results have pedagogical implications, since pragmatic competence largely remains an overlooked aspect of second language acquisition in the language classroom. This study also attempts to clarify how pragmatic language transfer from the first language affects these speech acts in the L2. Smith's data show that the native language plays a major role in the pragmatic forms used in the second language and that these new forms often incorrectly mimic compliment responses in the native language.

"Modality is more than modal verbs: a pragmatic approach to the teaching of adverbial modality", by Carmen Maíz Arévalo and Jorge Arús Hita closes the second part of this volume. This work argues that modality has been one of the most widely studied issues in English linguistics, as shown by the extensive bibliography devoted to the topic and exemplified by already classical studies such as those published by Coates (1983), Perkins (1983), Palmer (1990), Westney (1995) and Bybee and Fleischman (1995), or more recent ones such as those by Papafragou (2000), Facchinetti et al. (2003), Facchinetti and Palmer (2004) and Marín Arrese (2004), among others. It has long been acknowledged that mastering a foreign language is a combination of competences, as stated by the *Common European Framework of Reference* (2001: 108). For the realisation of communicative intentions, users/learners need a variety of competencies: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. In this chapter, the authors deal with those three competencies assuming that the correct understanding and use of the modal adverb 'certainly' involves mastering the three of them. Finally, Maíz Arévalo and Arús Hita also aim at applying the results of the analysis to two core subjects that integrate the syllabus of English Studies: Translation and Contrastive Linguistics. In both cases, their research might help students observe the differences between the expression of modality in Spanish and English and how these differences can be overcome when, for instance, translating a text from one language into the other.

2.3. Part III

"Intercultural Aspects of Communication" is the title of the third part of this volume. It comprises three chapters that focus on NNSs' use of L2 with other NNSs or NSs, centring on miscommunication. Interactional data obtained when people from different cultures communicate through a *lingua franca* are used to examine how pragmatic principles surface. It is

believed that, since English is considered to be a *lingua franca*, there is no real model to follow in terms of cultural aspects (Alptekin 2002). Nonetheless, classroom studies unveil the existence of an inappropriate pragmatic transfer when learning an L2 (Crandall and Basturkmen 2004). That means that students are not aware of such aspects of communication, unless they are explicitly taught. That is why studies addressing pragmatic issues in language learning and teaching try to cover those weaknesses in teaching, as well as in the creation of new materials. As Crandall and Basturkmen state, "[…] the conventional approach to teaching speech acts in most currently EAP [English for Academic Purposes] speaking textbooks is inadequate. The language input in the textbooks tends to consist of lists of 'useful expressions'. The textbooks seem to wrongly assume that all they need is to be given the phrases to do so" (2004: 44). It is not only lists of useful expressions that must be revised, but also new approaches to teaching that include emergent technologies and devise context-based approaches where cognitive, social, cultural and psychological aspects are integrated, so that the language used when teaching may be closer to reality than it is in traditional teaching.

Beata Karpińska-Musiał opens this part with "Intercultural pragmatics in academic curricula– a hard nut to crack?". The author explains how global reality and globalist discourse affect almost all human spheres of private, social and professional lives nowadays. In its theoretical section, this chapter tries to take a comprehensive look at some ways in which globalization has affected human life, with special focus on educational demands and expectations directed at FL teachers. Language teachers are mediators among numerous cultural realities represented by their students, being essential to become an 'intercultural speaker'. In order to achieve this goal, teachers need to undergo a psychological shift into the direction of an open and flexible observer who is sensitive to intricacies of human interaction, able to decode the pragmatic implications made cross-culturally and ready to modify own attitudes in the process of 'life-long learning'. Building such a profile of a foreign language teacher is a demanding task, requiring multiple competencies. Apart from communicative and linguistic competence, a teacher needs to gain an intercultural pragmatic competence. The second part of the article consists of a description of a research carried out among students and teachers of a Foreign Language Teacher Training Department at the University of Gdansk (Poland). Both target groups were asked to specify their opinions concerning the contents, meaning, position and importance ascribed to training intercultural pragmatic competence at an academic level. The distributed questionnaires tested four variables concerning the definition of

intercultural awareness and competence, self-evaluation as to being inter-culturally sensitive, university as an institutional background for training this ability and evaluation of methodology, i.e. ways of teaching intercultural pragmatic competence. The outcomes of this research brought about a few interesting implications for further pedagogical practice referring to the subject matter. At the same time, they also showed that working on standardized ways to introduce intercultural pragmatic competence into academic curriculum is still quite a 'hard nut to crack'.

In "Stereotypes of communicative styles: Japanese indirectness, ambiguity and vagueness", Barbara Pizziconi approaches a topic of central importance to intercultural communication: stereotypes. She shows that the stereotype of reserved and evasive Japanese people, whose language naturally fosters ambiguity and an intuitive and indirect style, pervades popular as well as pedagogical discourse. Despite evidence that, depending on the situation, Japanese can be fairly direct, this persistent stereotype often acquires normative status in language and culture instruction. While acknowledging research that disproves the stereotype and notes instances of Japanese directness, this chapter maintains that such widespread perception of indirectness must also be recognized and explained. Quantitative research, based on analyses of the presence or absence of specific linguistic markers, may fail to account for the subjective nature of perceptions of indirectness. The fact that linguistic meanings can be scattered throughout the utterance, and emerge from the interaction of utterances with situational and relational variables, entails that what is perceived as an indirect style may go 'under the radar' if examined only at the level of linguistic forms. Moreover, stereotypes typically do not distinguish between descriptive and evaluative facts; statements about the communicative style attributed to the Japanese fail to question the argumentative positioning that evaluative comments invariably entail. The chapter presents various conceptualizations of 'indirectness', which characterize it as a solution to some sort of interactional tension. It then describes an ethnographic interview conducted by the author with two NSs of Japanese and, through an analysis of this conversation, the author tries to provide a reasoned interpretation of the mechanisms responsible for the her own perception of indirectness during the face-to-face encounter, characterized in terms of 'frames' of interpretation, i.e. participants' understanding of and expectations about the nature of the activity under way, including its goals and the allowed contributions. Additionally, the discussion uses Jackendoff's (2007) composite notion of social values to show how an individual's (verbal) behaviour can be taken to signal a number of

different types of the values s/he entertains: affective, normative, utilitarian values etc. This can account for similarities as well as differences to the value systems of other individuals within the same group or culture, and permits to avoid essentializing and stereotyping statements, in and outside the language classroom.

Albin Wagener closes this part with "On intercultural disagreement: interaction and inertia". The author states that intercultural interactions often trigger disagreement, mainly based on misunderstandings regarding the interactants' cultural, social and individual schemes. Every individual involved in interaction implicates her/his own cultural codes, leading to a possible confrontation. However, instead of trying to redefine a new way of interacting, speakers often might repeat their own schemes over and over again, in order to verify their validity and to re-create a well-known environment, while the situation may place them in a position of utter discomfort. According to the author, if we analyze the situation from a systemic perspective, we may find out that this reproduction occurs because individuals (who might be considered as systems of their own) try to maintain their sphere of knowledge and comfort inside the ongoing interaction. This attitude might obey to pragmatic and systemic principles; nevertheless, it prevents the disagreement from being resolved and adds a phenomenon of inertia to the discordant interaction. While speakers try to resolve this situation of discomfort by maintaining their own cultural codes, the possibility of a pragmatic hindsight may seem to appear as an unlikely option for disagreement resolution. In order to verify these theoretical proposals, Wagener introduces a case study reported by Emmanuelle de Pembroke et Montgomery (1996), who spent time analysing the cultural differences and difficulties experienced by American and Japanese immigrants living in Paris. This example features several disagreements reported by a Japanese man dealing with French co-workers. While the Japanese man may find it difficult to stand back from a daily situation of discomfort, his French co-workers are also experiencing the same situation of discomfort, though from a different point of view. However, every communicational sign or act produced in that intercultural interaction may set a global inertia leading to a possible amplification of conflict, due to an ongoing repetition of schemes. According to Wagener, in a situation where every speaker needs to be reassured, that solution (which implies insistent cultural markings) not only amplifies the feeling of discomfort, but may also lead to a situation where conflict might emerge as the only possible resolution, for an interactional system which may be unable to renew itself.

2.4. Part IV

The fourth part of this volume is entitled "Teaching Languages for Academic and Specific Purposes". It gathers five chapters. Languages for Academic/Specific Purposes is an area of study within the larger area of Applied Linguistics research which overlaps with other fields of linguistic analysis. This is the case of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and Pragmatics. From the early 1960's, ESP has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of EFL teaching today (Dudley-Evans 1998). Emerging out of Halliday et al. (1964) work 50 years ago on registers, ESP started life as a branch of English Language Teaching (ELT), promising a stronger descriptive foundation for pedagogic materials. Then Swales (1986, 1988, 1990) and Bathia (1993) called for more attention to the communicative purpose of the communicative event.

Both ESP and EAP examine the way in which members of particular discourse communities use language varieties (genres) to communicate in their pursuit of common professional or work-related goals. Since the late 1980's, ESP has established itself not only as an important and distinctive branch of ELT, but has also incorporated most of the work on discourse and genre analysis, as well as the results of corpus linguistics. As Hyland (2007) notes, ESP has developed rapidly in the past fifty years to become a major force in ELT and research. At the centre of research in ESP are often considerations about pragmatic effects (Tarone 2005). As Widdowson (1998) points out, the study of ESP is inherently a study in pragmatics, since special purpose genres have their origins in pragmatic principles of communication.

In the first chapter of this part, "Pragmatic markers in academic discourse: the cases of *well* and the Spanish counterparts *bien* and *bueno*", Begoña Bellés-Fortuño and Inmaculada Fortanet-Gómez focus on the study of spoken academic discourse (Crawford 2004; Swales 2004) and, more concretely, the genre of lectures. The authors aim at analysing the use of some linguistic features in lectures such as Pragmatic Markers (henceforth PMs). As lecturers of EAP and NSs of Spanish, the authors have identified some NN lecturers' needs when lecturing in English as well as some interference from their L1, in this case, Spanish. What they present here is a contrastive analysis between Spanish and English lectures on the use of 'well' and its counterparts in Spanish 'bueno' and 'bien' functioning as pragmatic markers (Schiffrin 1987; Portolés 1998; González 2004, 2005) or, as they call them here, operators (Bellés-Fortuño, 2007). 'Well', 'bien' and 'bueno' in spoken academic discourse are mostly used as pragmatic markers of the inferential component,

facilitators or pause-fillers within the framing relational function of speaker-hearer and/or speaker/speech. To carry out the study, Bellés-Fortuño and Fortanet-Gómez have gathered a total amount of 24 lectures from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences; 12 of these lectures are English lectures taken from the MICASE (Michigan Corpus of Academic and Spoken English); the Spanish corpus represents the other 12 lectures taken from the MASC (Multimodal Academic and Spoken Corpus) at Universitat Jaume I, Castellón (Spain). Results show that while 'well' is one of the most frequently used pragmatic markers in the English lectures, the Spanish corpus reveals two pragmatic markers according to frequency rate and with the same number of instances: 'bueno', and 'bien'. Some of the arising questions are (i) whether 'bueno' and 'bien' can be used as counterparts for 'well' in Spanish, and (ii) in which context 'well' and 'bueno' or 'bien' express a similar pragmatic meaning. The authors conclude that the results derived from this analysis can give insights to the way spoken academic discourse at a tertiary level is used; and moreover, they can be of help to Spanish lecturers teaching in English or native lecturers of English wanting to lecture in Spanish.

Within ESP, research article introductions have proved fertile ground for researchers. Surprisingly, little attention has been paid to research paper introductions in the Social Sciences. The chapter by Ruth Breeze, "Between the academy and the front page: the double discourses of political communications research", considers the case of political communications research. The study explores the discourses of the hybrid discipline of political communication through analysis of the introductions to 50 research articles from this area. The analysis builds on Swales's (1981) ground-breaking work on the CARS (create a research space) move structure of introductions in empirical disciplines –establishing a territory by claiming centrality or making topic generalizations, establishing a niche by identifying a research gap or raising a question, and occupying the gap or promising to answer the question that has been identified– but develops a deeper understanding of moves 1 and 2 which reveals the existence of rhetorical patterns in which the author may look inward, to the culture of the academic discourse community, or outward, to the real-world issues at stake, or endeavor to keep both within the field of vision. The pattern which emerges indicates that claims to academic importance are obligatory in this discipline, while claims to real-world importance are also highly recommended. Arguably, writers in this area have to negotiate two very different cultures, that of academia and that of media and politics, and the discourses they negotiate reflect their understanding of their role as commentators and their perception of their own position as

interpreters of cultural phenomena for the academy and for wider audiences. Finally, the author offers conclusions referring to the consequences of her findings for the teaching of academic writing. She recommends teachers to conduct genre and discourse analyses of target text types before advising students as to the rhetorical strategies to adopt.

In "Pragmatics and ESP teaching: politeness in English-Spanish business correspondence", Mª Sol Velasco Sacristán investigates the genre of business letters and, more specifically, its pragmatic dimension with regard to the notion of politeness. Certainly, the best known of politeness models is Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987), where politeness is defined as redressive action taken to counterbalance the disruptive effect of 'face-threatening acts' (FTAs). They depict two types of 'politeness strategies' (i.e. 'negative' and 'positive'), which are considered to be universal. Obviously, conventions of politeness vary considerably between language communities, not least in their linguistic form. This can be clearly appreciated in cross-cultural business correspondence. Surprisingly, despite the importance of linguistic politeness in cross-cultural business correspondence, few studies have so far applied politeness theory to its study (Maier 1992; Pilegaard 1989, 1990, 1997; Bargiela-Chiappini 1996; Marcén Bosque 1997, 1999, 2001; Yeung 1997; Hong 1998; Valero Garcés 1999; Saorín Ibarra 2003; Fuertes-Olivera and Nielsen 2008; Velasco Sacristán, 2008). This is by no means a trivial question in terms of pedagogy. In fact, business correspondence handbooks only focus on issues of form ignoring the crucial matter of politeness (Hagge and Kostelnick 1989; Maier 1992; Rodman 2001; Saorín Ibarra 2003; Ancarno 2005). As a result, business letters written by NNSs, even those which are grammatically flawless, may be perceived negatively by their readers because of the inappropriate use of politeness strategies. In view of this situation, and using Marcén Bosque's (1997) study of the manifestations of politeness in English business letters, the author proposes some tasks and activities to help Spanish learners of Business English acquire mastery over the use of polite expressions in business letters written in English.

In the next chapter, "Advances in intercultural communication research and training based on computer simulation of real business settings", Victoria Guillén-Nieto, Pedro Pernías-Peco, Chelo Vargas-Sierra and Judith Williams-Jellyman explain that in the information society at the beginning of the 21st century, as companies grow within the global market, business people are faced with the challenge of exchanging information and establishing international business relations with entrepreneurs who speak other languages and come from other cultures. In international business settings people in general communicate in English, which is

considered to be today's 'lingua franca' of the academic, cultural and professional world. However, intercultural communication means something more than making use of a lingua franca to communicate with other people. A company's export activities and business relations are quite likely to be put at risk by the most subtle aspects, which are sometimes invisible but deeply rooted in the human nature of the participants in discourse: namely, their particular cultural frames, beliefs, values and, more significantly, the way in which such aspects are made visible at the pragmatic level of language use. Findings from European studies such as ELUCIDATE, a Leonardo Da Vinci programme, revealed that the UK and Spain are the two countries in the EU that show the largest percentage of loss in business turnover due to the above mentioned communicative and cultural barriers. That is why cultural sensitization and communicative competence in English and/or Spanish in international business settings are two fundamental social needs that have attracted the interest of researchers in English and Spanish for Specific Purposes in recent times. Pedagogic innovation is needed as regards the teaching-learning methodology with which cultural awareness should be developed in our multilingual and multicultural Europe. Therefore, according to the authors, computer simulation of real business settings may indeed be a suitable learning tool for academic and professional people in general and business people in particular, who need to use English and/or Spanish as the lingua franca in their daily activities, for it promotes communication in a fully contextualized way. The aim of this chapter is to give an overview of the two main areas of the research project COMINTER-SIMULNEG, namely designing a cross-disciplinary model for the analysis of intercultural communication between Spanish and British people, and developing a teaching methodology for cultural awareness based on computer simulation of real business settings.

To conclude this part of the volume, readers will find a chapter that approaches writing in a specific genre such as anecdotes. Laura Hidalgo Downing describes in "The anecdote as humorous narrative: structural and socio-cultural features of anecdotes written by native and NN writers of English" some of the relevant features of humorous anecdotes by examining a sample of 17 anecdotes written by Spanish university learners of English and 10 anecdotes written by American students, plus an anecdote written by a lecturer. With regard to the structure, the analysis of the sample reveals that most of the anecdotes can be said to have a prototypical narrative structure with a punchline typically situated in the resolution. Thus, the previous sections (opening set up, orientation, complication) provide the background and development of a problem