



Reflecting on Pragmatics in ESP Contexts

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Abstract

The inadequacy of research studies in evaluating English for Special Purposes (ESP) textbooks in terms of pragmatic awareness should not be disregarded. The current study is an attempt to extend politeness and speech act theory to the analysis of ESP in hope of bridging the gap between the form of language and its function. Traditionally, studies on ESP focused basically on the syntactic and the lexical choices made by the learners in order to cope with specialized content and vocabulary. This paper aims to show how pragmatics is inherently incorporated in ESP contexts. The claim draws on an ESP textbook, English for Personal Assistants, to show how pragmatics is an integral constituent of this approach to EFL/ESL learning. The study attempts to promote theory-informed pragmatic awareness for ESP learners and teachers alike. To this end, the paper presents the theoretical framework upon which the argument is based. Then, an investigation is carried out with respect to how speech act theory and politeness theory can be drawn upon in order to establish a correlation between pragmatics and ESP.

Key words: ESP; Pragmatics; Politeness; Speech act theory

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INTRODUCTION

Language for special purposes (LSP) describes the linguistic variants used in a professional context.

According to Fioroto (2005), several factors might constitute a language for special purposes community. A distinct community of users who use a sub-language for a limited purpose and orientation, and who share specialized knowledge of a particular professional or academic domain. In fact, while it is true that language for special purpose has become a trend in most languages, it has particularly been associated with English as a universal language of business, High-tech, as well as other domains. This has been a contributing factor for the growing use of English for special purposes worldwide.

Due to the widespread use of English as a lingua-franca, English for Specific Purposes had to adapt itself to new international markets, industries as well as other ESP related contexts. As a goal-oriented type of English, ESP aims to organize the relationship between the customers, the superior and the subordinate in hope of making communication between different stakeholders more smoothly regardless of any differences that might arise from culture, geography or gender. To this end, this liaison between language structure and social function lies at the heart Pragmatics. Pragmatics and ESP, Triki suggests, both share a common interest in contextual appropriateness related to politeness and meaning negotiation. ESP settings are a fertile ground for meaning negotiation, and the interlocutor's endeavor for mutual understanding is usually at stake. The relationship between locutionary act (literal meaning) and illocutionary acts (intended meaning), and the perlocutionary act (or the actual meaning as received by the addressee, or the effect) is a tricky one as it is highly governed by norms and context, and to overlook this intertwined feature is to miss the very essence of ESP.

Mounir (2005) affirms that today studies on ESP have shifted from studies on the syntactic and lexical choices made by the learners to an emphasis on contextual and formulaic requirement. He adds that ESP is a goal-oriented type of English specially designed to professional

specifications. It aims to organize the relationship between the customers, the superior and the subordinate. He also asserts that this liaison between language structure and social function lies at the heart Pragmatics. Therefore, pragmatics seems to be of vital use to the students of ESP. Cross-cultural misunderstanding is likely to arise in business contexts. With the growing rise of globalization, developing pragmatic awareness has become part and parcel of business transactions. It is also important to develop this competence as a prerequisite for the learners' future professional career as a part of the corporate culture. The latter is characterized by a well-structured hierarchy that entails a certain degree of pragmatic awareness of the context, and how relationships are regulated among the employers and employees. The social variables of relative power, social distance, and ranking of imposition should be paid due attention in this regard.

Here comes the role of pragmatics. It gives guidance on language usage for better understanding in production and reception. Some of the questions that fall within the interest of pragmatics include knowing which norms of communication to use, how speakers can use a language to express their intentions, and when to use certain forms and with whom. As stated in the words of Mey (2001, p.12): "pragmatics is needed if we want a fuller, deeper and generally more reasonable account of human language behaviour . . . outside of pragmatics, no understanding".

PREVIOUS STUDIES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ESP AND PRAGMATICS

In the literature, the correlation between pragmatics and ESP has been dealt with in many ways. Mounir (2002) asserts that there is an inherent relationship between pragmatics and ESP. The former investigates language structure and social function, and the latter as a goal-oriented type of English tailored to specific professional setting. (2002). Equally important, Kaulen (1985), stresses the importance of making the link between Pragmatics and ESP a theory-informed one. This correlations between the two scopes is likely to facilitate the process of learning English. Usó-Juan & Martinez-Flor (2006) also deposit that ESP learners need to be exposed to appropriate input in the classroom. The latter doesn't offer a suitable context because learners' chances to be in contact with the target language outside the classroom context are scarce or inexistent.

Ildiko (2008) explores how some Business English books approach pragmatic competence with an emphasis on conversation openings and closings. He found out that pragmatic awareness is not paid enough attention in those books especially when it comes to providing the suitable

set of formulae for opening and closing interactions. He states that more emphasis should be put of language communication and fluency. Likewise, Martinez Martinez-Flor and Alcón Soler (2004) conduct an investigation with the aim of exploring pragmatic awareness and production across some ESP disciplines such as Law, Business English, and computer science. They conclude that there is a need to integrate pragmatic aspects in the teaching of English in the above mentioned disciplines.

Another interesting study was carried out by Martinez Martinez-Flor and Alcón Soler (2004) with the aim of investigating pragmatic awareness and production across six ESP disciplines, namely, English Philology, Law studies, Business and Management , Computer Science and Agricultural Engineering. They suggest that there is a need to integrate pragmatic aspects in the teaching of English in the disciplines examined. Likewise, Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2006) highlighted the liaison between pragmatics and ESP by investigating the speech act of request across two ESP disciplines (English Philology and Computer Science Engineering). They also present some pedagogical implications which could be adopted for different ESP courses, and affirm that "pragmatics should be integrated in different foreign language learning syllabi attending to learners' needs in a given discipline" (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor (2006, p.39).

In the light of these studies, it can be noted there is an emphasis on integrating pragmatic competence in ESP contexts. While some studies might hint for the implicit presence of pragmatics in ESP textbooks, there is a general agreement that this liaison between ESP and pragmatics has to be theory-informed.

SPEECH ACTS FOR ESP

Speech Act theory is based on the premise that words or utterances do function as actions.

They create a new reality be it social, judicial, financial etc In ESP contexts, speech acts, especially in oral business communication, are a very common practice. ESP textbooks include some single or limited utterances of speech acts namely, apology, complaint, offer, request etc. They are designed in a way that suits the professional settings since the latter requires a careful attention to how language functions.

Speech acts in ESP contexts can also be in the form of communication genres as stated by Lorenzo Fiorito (2005). Interestingly, a great deal of ESP documents are a written extension of speech acts. Documents commonly used in ESP settings (e.g., complaint letters, apologies, refusals, etc.) can also be considered as speech acts of a larger size. For example, "letters of offer are commissives; certificates and diplomas are declarations; informational brochures are representatives; order forms are directives; and so forth". (2005, p.106). Therefore, the learners ability to

distinguish locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts might be of great help in ESP contexts since it boost their awareness of the power of words. It might also help decipher the appropriateness and degree of formality of structures with regard to the contexts to perform certain speech acts that are frequently utilized in business and professional settings.

ESP textbooks provide a vast sphere where different types of speech acts are commonly employed in business oral and written communication:

Speech act	Description	Sentence type	Examples
Commissives	Commit the speaker to a particular course of action	Praise Refunds Offers	I agree to your conditions
		Order for goods/ services acceptances	Y o u r complaints is accepted
Representatives	Describe some state of affairs	I n f o r m a t i v e statements Leaflets Brochures	The doctor is in Your refund is enclosed
		Sales letter	
Directives	Attempts to get the hearer to do something	Job application letter R e q u e s t f o r information Request for action	Send us your check today
		A f f e c t s the legal status of a discourse participants	I nominate John to the budget committee

In the current study, an investigation of an ESP textbook called English for Personal Assistants is carried out with regard to the presence of pragmatic competence as an integral part of English for business communication. Pragmatic theories of speech act, politeness and facework would be used as the theoretical framework in hope of establishing any potential liaison between the two language disciplines.

In this textbook, the learners are given an exercise through which they learn to identify the most appropriate formulae that can be used in a business context. The learners are given a chance to practice and to identify the most appropriate formulae that can be used in business and job-related settings.

The choice of the appropriate form of downgraders is highlighted and stressed (past tense modal verb forms (e.g. Could /Would” and politeness marker “please”. In addition, the textbook under investigation offers some explicit tips on the importance of modifying speech acts. These instruction are belong to a section subtitled “Complaint”. Let’s consider the following example:

Use would, could or might to make what you say more tentative:
That is too long a delay – That would be too long a delay
That does not meet our specifications – That might not meet our specifications
You must visit our London office – You could visit our London office (2007, p.155)

As can be noted, the following tips stress the importance of considering a high degree of formality when it comes to formal business communication. The use of model verb forms serves this purpose in a way that takes into account face wants or desires of both interlocutors. Interestingly, learners are directed also to pay close attention to the strategies outside complaint Head Act. Let consider the following instructions:

- Use qualifying words to soften what you say:
a slight misunderstanding / a bit of a problem / some reservations / a short delay
- Soften your message by using a comparative form:
Would Tuesday be a better day to meet? Would the afternoon be more convenient? (ibid, p. 157)

The use of downgrades is emphasized in this section which deals with handling complaints in business settings. The point being made here is that ESP and pragmatics correlate in their focus on appropriateness and formality.

The language of apologies

Apologies					
May I/we I/We would like to I/We	apologise				for ...
May I/we I/We would like to I/We	offer extend	my our	sincere profound	apologies	for
	Please accept	my our	sincere profound	apologies	for
Accepting blame					
I/We	accept			responsibility	for
I/We	accept acknowledge grant			(the fact)	that
This problem	was caused	as a result of	our	system error	
Assurances					
	Please accept	my our	(personal)	assurance guarantee undertaking	that
Let	me us I/We can	(person- ally)	assure guarantee promise reassure	you	that

Note. Reprinted from English for Personal Assistants, by Anna Broadhead and Ginni Light (2007).

Oftentimes, EFL textbook would basically attribute more attention to speech acts at the level of head acts than at the level of external and internal modifications. The focus in professional settings is not on performing speech acts per se but rather about how they are realized taking politeness, formality and appropriateness into account. The following example extracted from the same ESP textbook, English for Personal Assistant, deals with apologies semantic formulae and how they can be employed effectively in a professional context. Here again, the Head Act or Illocutionary Force Indicating

Devices (IFIDs) constitutes only a part of semantic formulae. Furthermore, common forms such as “Sorry” or “I apologize” seem to not work here with regard to the specificities of ESP setting.

This distinction helps understand the correlation between ESP and speech act theory. Words also perform actions. The language used in ESP is a sensitive tool that should be used wisely. Therefore, ESP students are made aware of the fact that what is intended is methodologically distinct from what is actually understood, or how it is interpreted; that inconsistencies should be anticipated between locutionary act (literal meaning) and illocutionary act (intended meaning) on the one hand and between these two and perlocutionary act (actual meaning as received by the addressee) on the other; that the connections between these utterance acts are norm-and context-bound. Let’s consider the following exercise:

Complaints and apologies:

Where or when would you hear these complaints and apologies?
Match each complaint with one of the places in the box below.

At a hotel at a school at a restaurant at a nightclub
At work at a garage at an airport after match

Excuse me, this is too strong. Can I have some water?
Excuse me, my room is really too small
I love it but it’s too expensive. Have you got an older model?
I’m sorry, but if you’re only sixteen you are too young
I’m sorry, but the flight is delayed. It is too foggy to land in Paris

(Ibid, p.30)

One important thing that this exercise aims at with regard to pragmatic knowledge is how to teach the learners to use the forms “Excuse me” and “I’m sorry” correctly. Many students mistakenly use the forms interchangeably to express apology and complaints. Here, it is implicitly taught that the former should be used as an attention getter for complaints, while the latter is used to express apology. Furthermore, as in number 4, it is shown that traditional speech acts formulae are called upon in more formal context, while in other context, the speakers can opt for a different strategy (disarmers: I love it but it is too expensive). So, the study of meaning in use provides tools to help the learner understand the meaning in a given professional context, including the effect that language has on those involved in the speech situation. This lies at the heart of pragmatics and what it tries to decipher.

GRICEAN MAXIMS

The concept of the cooperative principle was introduced by philosopher H. Paul Grice in his article “Logic and Conversation” (*Syntax and Semantics*, 1975). He classifies the conversational maxims into four categories. This latter account for the conversational rules people obey or should obey in order to communicate effectively:

The maxim of quantity

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

The maxim of quality.

Try to make your contribution one that is true.

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

The maxim of relation.

Be relevant.

The maxim of Manner

Be perspicuous.

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid prolixity).
4. Be orderly. (Grice, 1975)

Grice’s cooperative principle tries to account for the discrepancies between the surface meaning of an utterance and its implied meaning (pragmatic force). To achieve successful communication, users (speaking and writing) have to obey these principles by taking into account a number of maxims in an attempt to measure the said meaning and the social context. The Gricean Maxims offer standardized rules of appropriateness relevant to ESP contexts. These rules function as model standards for any deviations in business or ESP related norms. Equally important, by involving these pragmatic considerations in ESP learning contexts, ESP learners will be trained to consciously be in control of these maxims in order to produce intended implicatures, and correctly interpret underlying forms. Being aware of the conflicting nature of these norms, ESP students will be able to prioritize one maxim at the expense of another based on contextual constraints.

CORRELATION BETWEEN GRICEAN MAXIMS AND ESP

The Maxim of Quantity

For ESP, the maxim of quality could be drawn upon to justify the inclusion of some items (such as, type of document, date, topic, filing information etc.) in the documents and the exclusion of some items (such as not using the common form of “we look forward to...” in some types of letters and a great deal of verbatim in cables and faxes). The maxims could be flouted to a larger extent as in legal documents where there is a marked need for precision or by default as in certain types of contracts and advertisements for mystification purposes (Triki and Taman, 1994).

Triki (2002) states that the presence of the maxim of quantity in ESP textbooks can be illustrated in business emails by the inclusion of “type of document, date, topic, filing information etc.) in the documents and the exclusion

of some form such as (we look forward to... in some types of letters or emails” (2002, p.15). The maxims could be violated either in excess as in legal documents where there is a huge need for precision or by default as in certain types of contracts and advertisements for mystification purposes (Triki and Taman, 1994). In Business letters the maxim of quantity varies depending on the type of documents and the degree of formality.

To clarify this aforementioned points, let’s consider the following tips borrowed from **English For Personal Assistants** (2007, p.45)

Tips on how to handle quantity in sales letters:

1. Don’t overload the initial sales letter with too much information
2. Keep your information simple and straightforward; the prospect may know little about your product or service so include key details.

In a first instance, the ESP learner is advised to adhere to the maxim of quantity by not including too many details in an initial sales letter. In business traditions of this type letters, it is highly recommended that the writer use short emails to initiate the deal and make good business relationships by making use of short emails as a first step. On the other hand, English for Special Assistants recommends the use of a clear language and the inclusion key details, hence, adhering to the maxim of manner.

The second example include two tips on how to handle complaints in Business from *The Essential Handbook for Business Writing* (2007, p.91)

Refer to the problem or issue including specifics such as time, date, reference numbers, and other important details.

Don’t make any references to legal liability.

From the perspective of cooperative principle, the learner is asked to obey the maxims of quantity. The latter varies depending on the type of information that building business relationships need.. In fact, when dealing with complaints letters as it is the case of the two tips, the addresser is asked to include certain details while asked to overlook any mention for legal liabilities. Complaints in business are perceived as opportunities rather than a burden. In ESP business contexts, assistants are called upon to build relationships with the customers by avoiding raising issues of legal procedures unless necessary.

The Maxim of Quality

For the sake of effective communication, this maxim is based on the premise that the speaker should/do not say what they believe to be false or that for which they lack adequate evidence. As such, it is particularly relevant for ESP where precision and accuracy are an exigency. According to the Maxim of Manner, cooperation can only be felt if the speaker is perspicuous, avoids obscurity

of expression, ambiguity and unnecessary prolixity and presents information in an orderly fashion. All ESP manuals drill students on how to structure information orally or in writing as well as how to perceive and interpret well-structured documents.

This maxim instructs learners to avoid what they believe to be false or that for which they have no adequate information or evidence. Following this, ESP contexts entail a high degree of precision and accuracy. For instance in reports writing, the book instructs learners to “Check that the report is accurate – both in facts and language, and is objective” page.

Within the same token, English for Personal Assistants stresses accuracy when writing a business email. Consider the following tips on report writing. English for Personal Assistants.

Pay attention to your spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Writing an email full of mistakes reduces your credibility with your reader. (2007, p. 64)

The authors emphasize the fact that overlooking accuracy might influence cooperation and credibility between the different interlocutors. Here, it can be noted that the maxim of quality take precedence over that of quantity to serve politeness purposes. This can also be revealed in the following example which shows some tips on responding to complaints in a business letter:

If the client is correct in the complaint, acknowledge this; if you believe the client to be in error, do not state this outright.
If the client is incorrect in the claim, explain why; reassure the client that issuing a complaint was the right thing to do to rectify the problem. (p. 109)

As can be observed in this example, the authors demonstrate that the cooperative maxim of quantity can be flouted in an attempt to preserve the face of the addressee, the client. Indicating that the customer’s claims are erroneous does not serve the interests of the enterprise. This very crucial point lies at the heart of business settings and customer services. Such careful use of language is not employed in other contexts.

The Maxim of Manner

By adhering to this maxim, the speaker or the writer tries to be clear, brief, orderly in what is said or written. There is also an exigency to avoid obscurity and ambiguity. In page 11, the book under study instructs the personal assistant to take the maxim of manner into account:

It is vital when communicating, whether speaking or writing, that the message is clear and unambiguous and that your audience easily understands what you want to say.
General lack of clarity. Make sure that your reader knows what you expect them to do in response to your email. Convey your message clearly and concisely. (2007, p.11)

The learners are instructed to observe the maxim of manner by being brief, avoiding obscure language, being

orderly or avoiding ambiguity. This creates an implicature which makes the participants look for an additional set of meanings (Thomas, 1995, p.71). In a section subtitled Communicating with clarity, Annie Broadhead and Ginni Light (2007), explicitly instruct ESP learners to write business documents in a logical way. They affirm that the structure of writing should be “chronological, from general to specific, and from the most important to the less important” (p.14).

The Maxim of Relation

ESP textbooks instructs the learners to obey a certain kind of regularity in conversational behavior with regard to the relevance of information given at each part of an interaction. English for Personal Assistants shows many instances on how the maxim of relation is emphasized in ESP context. In a section subtitled Proposals and Reports, the learners are given some guidelines on how to adhere to the maxim of relation when writing business proposals and reports. One of the key elements that is stressed in this regard is the fact that the sum of information dispatched in such documents should be concise and to the point (2007, p.66). The cooperative maxim of relation is also referred to in the textbook by asking learners to avoid controversial topic or topics that might threaten the sensitive nature business relationships, “you should avoid personal and hot topics such as sex, politics, religion, and money. These topics, as in any other cultures, you reserve for close friends” (2007, p.33).

FACEWORK IN ESP SETTINGS

According to Grice (2004), cooperative maxims might be flouted by a speaker in their attempt to mislead” their interlocutors in conversation (p.49). Likewise, Goffman (2008, p.17) notes that the speaker do not obey Grice’s maxims in order to save face and avoid face threatening acts. This is very common in business ESP books where there is a high demand for face considerations. Khosarvizadeh and Sadehvandi (2011) affirm that the speakers violate Grice’s cooperative maxims to cause misunderstandings on their participants’ part to achieve some other purposes’ (pp.122-123). In this section, the textbook under scrutiny is explored more with a focus on how Face theory is emphasized in an ESP context. English for Personal Assistants gives an example of how pragmatics and English for special purposes correlate in terms of addressing issues related to politeness theory. In this regard, the concept of Face has been at the heart of pragmaticists’ concerns over language in use (Goffman, 1955; Brown & Levinson, 1978; Domenici & Littlejohn, 2006; Beebe & Redmond, 2014).

The Concept of Face is very important in ESP contexts. The interlocutor’s self-image should be saved as a politeness strategy to protect business relationships.

The example given by Hollinger (2005, p.21 cited in Triki, 2002) highlights this point:

- A. We are sorry you misinterpreted our instructions.
- B. We are sorry the instructions in our catalogue were not entirely clear.

As can be perceived, in example A has directly pointed out that the addressee has had difficulty getting the intended message. This might be a face threatening act that underestimate the abilities of the addressee. Conversely, the suggested form B shows a tendency toward observing tact maxim which calls for “Minimizing **cost to others**, maximizing the benefit to **others**.” Leech (1983)¹

In the face-saving view of politeness, the greatest emphasis is on the wants of the participants involved in a given interaction rather than on the interaction per se or the social norms. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), Face is “something that is emotionally invested, and can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction” (p.66). The textbook under study has proved a clear liaison between pragmatics and the professional environment where different stakeholders interact through various arrays of conventional roles and where the power of words is hugely manifested in appropriateness relating to face wants and politeness needs. The lessons and exercises used in the textbook focus on pragmatic awareness as a focal point in establishing business written and spoken rapports, especially with respect to Facework. Let’s consider the following example extracted from a section under the headline Dealing With Difficult People:

Remember that assertive behaviour is primarily practised in Anglo-Saxon/North European cultures. In Far Eastern cultures, ‘saving face’ can be more important than achieving personal satisfaction. However, in Latin cultures, self-expression may go far beyond what we find acceptable to the point of ‘machismo’ especially when applied to men. Thus, how we use assertiveness may be perceived by other cultures as too aggressive or, on the other hand, as not assertive enough. (2007, p.154)

The authors attempt to raise the learners’ cross-cultural pragmatic awareness by raising issues related to how different cultures might perceive politeness, and how important is facework to some cultures. Being aware of these differences, the learner are likely to use this pragmatic knowledge to sort out any potential misunderstandings related to their careers since ‘In other cultures, effective communication is more about servicing relationships and communicating things indirectly,

¹ Leech (1983: 132) proposes six maxims of politeness principles including tact maxim. He asserts that, in conversation, politeness does not only concern with the relationship between two interlocutors, self and other, turn-taking but it also might also involve the presence of a third party.

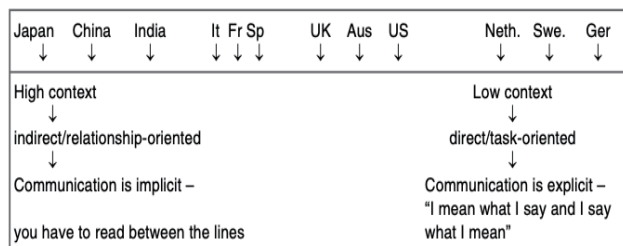
particularly when someone’s ‘face’ is at stake”. (ibid, p.125)

Consider the following instruction from English for Personal Assistants. The section is entitled Raising Awareness of Different Communication Styles:

You have a lot of work and could really do without any more to do. However, you are willing to lend her a hand. She is about to give you a ring – remember that the Chinese are very relationship-oriented, so be prepared to engage in small talk before getting to the point of the call and don’t let her lose face. (2007, p.29)

In this gap filling exercise and prior to the instruction, the learners are given hints on how to handle facework in cross-cultural business encounters when dealing with someone who belongs to a “relationship oriented” culture with a focus on taking into account Facework.

In ESP contexts, there is a high demand for face-saving techniques more than any other context. “In some cultures it’s hard for people to back down; they lose face, so you have to offer an acceptable way out” (ibid, p.52). This part of the textbook provides theoretically-informed guidelines with respect to the different communication styles adopted by in different parts of the world. A case in the point is Edouard Hall’s dichotomy of High context vs low context cultures. .



Adapted from Edward Hall

Note. Reprinted from English for Personal Assistants, by Anna Broadhead and Ginni Light (2007).

By adopting such a cross-cultural approach to language learning, the authors help the learners boost their communication skills along with enriching their linguistic repertoire. Such knowledge will be of great benefit and a key to a successful business career. Language is used as a means to do business and establish close relationship with other stakeholders, thus, any violation of this norm may be costly:

‘Be aware of the culture of the person you are talking to. In some cultures it’s hard for people to back down; they lose face, so you have to offer an acceptable way out’.
(Ibid, 2007, p.35)

Throughout the textbook under scrutiny, there are explicit and theory-informed instructions on how to effectively carry out effective written and spoken communication in a professional context. The notion of politeness theory and facework are omnipresent in the textbook either through practice and exercises or through

direct instructions. Pragmatics as a theory that advocates a close attention to language in use and the context seems to be of de facto correlation with ESP. Therefore, it is believed that establishing this liaison should be taken into consideration in order to develop the most appropriate tools to establish a theory-informed learning approach to this discipline.

CONCLUSION

It has been shown that ESP context is highly conventionalized, thus, entails a great degree of effective communication skills and meaning negotiation. Following this, it has been shown that pragmatics constitutes a part and parcel of English for Special Purposes. A theory-informed approach to enhancing pragmatic competence among learners and teachers will definitely be of an added value to the learning and teaching operation. It is therefore recommended that the materials and the syllabus and materials design take into account pragmatic competence as an integral part of ESP. It is also believed that teachers are to be trained on how to bring these cross-cultural variables into their classrooms. More importantly, it is recommended that Pragmatics be attributed greater academic interest with respect to its correlation with ESP disciplines.

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