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► **To cite this version:**

Kate Brantley. Pragmatics as a Unifying Element for Foreign Language Instruction in French Higher Education. Recherche et pratiques pédagogiques en langues de spécialité - Cahiers de l'APLIUT, 2019, 38 (1), 10.4000/apliut.6813 . hal-04521276

HAL Id: hal-04521276

<https://hal.science/hal-04521276>

Submitted on 26 Mar 2024

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Recherche et pratiques pédagogiques en langues de spécialité

Cahiers de l'Aplut

Vol. 38 N°1 | 2019

Le secteur Lansad, fédérateur de diversité(s) ?

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Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/apliut/6813>

ISSN: 2119-5242

Publisher

APLIUT

This text was automatically generated on 23 February 2019.

Pragmatics as a Unifying Element for Foreign Language Instruction in French Higher Education

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Introduction

- 1 The sudden massification of foreign language teaching for students not majoring in languages in the French higher education system was the result of the implementation of the European Union's Bologna Process, which sought to increase the quality and compatibility of university degrees across Europe, as well as reforms made by the French government to standardize the organization of university degrees and prioritize foreign languages (Rivens 25-28). Though the French government provided a mandate for the implementation of language classes, it has not provided specific guidelines for their implementation, resulting in a language teaching sector which is characterized by heterogeneity. This issue of *Research and Teaching English for Specific Purposes* invites us to reflect on potential unifying elements within the diverse sector concerned with language teaching for French higher education students not specializing in that language, a sector referred to as "Lansod," an acronym for "languages for specialists of other disciplines"¹.
- 2 Our current research seeks to explore the following question: in the Lansod sector, where the lack of national language policy has resulted in extremely divergent approaches to language teaching, can content specification be approached in a structured and unified way? To answer this question, we suggest that the notion of pragmatics has particular relevance to all foreign language students in higher education, and that emphasizing pragmatics in all Lansod classrooms could provide more unity to the sector. Although the reflections in this article have been inspired by the teaching of English in the French higher education system, they could potentially be relevant for other institutional contexts.

1. Specificity: Re-framing the debate

1.1. The complexity of the Lansod sector

- 3 Much of the difficulty in providing a unified pedagogical response for the Lansod sector is the result of its administrative complexity. For example, the fact that institutions have different ways of organizing foreign language classes, such as delegating the task to the disciplinary departments or to umbrella organizations, means that there is not a unified approach to Lansod course organization. Another complicating factor is the fact that Lansod teachers come from a wide variety of backgrounds, ranging from tenured teaching and research faculty to specialists in linguistics, literature and civilization to native speakers with little or no teaching experience. Student profiles are also extremely divergent; aside from belonging to diverse fields of study, Lansod students possess varied levels of proficiency in the given foreign language. For example, despite the fact that French high school students are supposed to graduate with a B2 level in English, Terrier and Maury's placement test to all arriving first year students at the University of Toulouse 2 revealed that only 12% possessed a B2 level or higher (§21). Finally, the composition of Lansod classes also varies; sometimes students are placed with others from the same disciplinary field, yet other times they are not, a decision which often results from a preference to organize classes by language level. Given these sources of diversity in the Lansod sector and many others not listed here, providing any universal content guidelines has proven to be a complicated issue.

1.2. The specificity debate and the Lansod sector

- 4 As the Lansod sector concerns foreign language teaching in higher education for students enrolled in various disciplinary specialties, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an obvious candidate as a framework for content specification. However, the question of if, and if so how, to relate (ESP) to the Lansod sector has been a source of rigorous debate. This controversy has been complicated by the fact that the French school of ESP, *anglais de spécialité* (henceforth referred to as "French ESP" following Sarré and Whyte §15) is not a precise equivalent of ESP (Van Der Yeught "Développer" §23; Sarré and Whyte §27-28). Although there is a considerable amount of overlap between them, the distinction between the two paradigms is based on the relationship of each paradigm to the concept of the specificity. The specificity of ESP is situated in the learners' purposes for using the language, rather than in disciplinary specificity itself, as illustrated by the fact that disciplinary specificity is considered a "variable characteristic" rather than an "absolute" one (Dudley-Evans and St. John 4-5). French ESP, on the other hand, is defined by its emphasis on "language, discourse and culture of English-language professional communities and specialised social groups, as well as the learning and teaching of this object from a didactic perspective" (Sarré and Whyte §36). The link between "language, discourse and culture" and "professional communities and specialised social groups" (Sarré and Whyte §36) as a defining trait means that specialization is an inherent and not a variable characteristic of French ESP.
- 5 Several calls for unification of course content in the Lansod sector have advocated a framework based on French ESP (Wozniak and Millot §5-6; Van der Yeught "Développer"

§52). While teaching approaches based on French ESP have proven extremely useful in many Lansod classrooms, the notion of specialization has proven difficult to generalize to all contexts for a variety of reasons. For example, lower level students may not yet have a high enough level of English or specialization in the discipline to comprehend specialized discourse, and students of various disciplines may be grouped together in a single language class. Furthermore, many students in higher education may not actually need to use the given foreign language in specialized situations.

- 6 It is for the reasons listed above that we consider the necessity of looking outside the notion of specificity for a concept which can serve as a viable basis for content specification for the entire Lansod sector. While there is no doubt about the utility of training students who will use language in their professions in the particular types of literacy necessary to participate in their careers, both the administrative complexity and the unpredictability of students' needs complicate the implementation of specialized classes. We argue, thus, that any umbrella approach to Lansod content should encompass, but not be defined by, disciplinary specificity. In this article, we assert that the field of pragmatics offers broad perspectives which are relevant to teaching both specialized and non-specialized teaching and thus the entire Lansod sector.

1.3. Pragmatics as a unifying element in the Lansod sector

- 7 In ESP, specificity of course content is often described as falling on a continuum with General English teaching at one end and Specific English teaching on the other (Dudley-Evans and St. John 9). At one end of the spectrum lie wide-angled classes, ones which focus on broad skills which may be generalized to a variety of situations. Further down the spectrum, classes become increasingly narrow-angled, which is to say, related to precise professional activities (9). However, we propose a different way of framing the debate about content specification, one which may highlight needs which are shared by all students. We suggest emphasizing the notions of language and context. This proposition is based on the fact that all Lansod students need to be prepared to use language in context, whether or not those contexts are related to a particular academic or professional community.
- 8 Because the field of pragmatics involves the study of language use in context, we argue that it has the potential to serve as a unifying concept in content specification. In this article, we attempt to illustrate how a re-consideration of the relationship between paradigms related to language and context can contribute to the de-compartmentalization of specialized and non-specialized teaching. Furthermore, we describe evolutions in interlanguage pragmatics which may provide interesting perspectives for the Lansod sector.

1.4. Re-framing the debate: communicative capacity and communicative competence

- 9 The idea that all students need training in pragmatics--both students with specific disciplinary needs and those whose needs are less easily anticipated is not novel; it was introduced by Widdowson in 1983 in the continuum that he proposed for ESP which is depicted below.

Figure 1. Continuum between communicative capacity and communicative competence, based on Widdowson ("Learning" 8-11)



- 10 For those students needing training in specific, identifiable skills, Widdowson suggests developing their communicative competence, which involves developing “not only the speaker’s knowledge of the language system, but his knowledge also of social rules which determine the appropriate use of linguistic forms” (Widdowson “Learning” 7). This end of the spectrum is consistent with a narrow-angled ESP approach in which students are trained to engage in the norms of their respective discourse communities, particularly by learning how to use the particular genres which their respective communities employ to accomplish its particular professional purposes (Swales).
- 11 However, as we discussed above in our description of the Lansod sector, a variety of factors can impede the implementation of a narrow-angled approach such as mixed disciplinary groups or low learner levels of the language. A further reason can be one’s desire to provide students with more flexible skills which can be used in a broader number of contexts. For these situations in which it may be necessary to teach more generalizable skills, Widdowson suggests developing students’ communicative capacity, defined as the “ability to create meanings by exploiting the potential inherent in the language for continual modification in response to change” (“Learning” 8). Communicative capacity differs from “General English” in that rather than being defined by its opposition to specialized language (Millot and Wozniak §4), it is defined by the way that it helps students develop pragmatic knowledge which may help them adapt to unexpected situations. These classes could focus on general pragmatic skills such as developing understanding of the way that speakers fashion utterances according to purpose, illocutionary force, audience and other contextual factors, rather than just “General English.”
- 12 We propose that applying Widdowson’s continuum as a framework for content specificification in the Lansod sector can be useful due to its inclusion of approaches which are appropriate for any degree of content specificity. Contrary to the continuum of general to specific teaching discussed above, Widdowson’s continuum emphasizes a commitment to pragmatics at every degree of teaching, therefore making the commonalities in both general and specific teaching contexts more visible. While the procedure for developing communicative competence corresponds to narrow-angled ESP, communicative capacity development remains un-operationalized. Although a complete operationalization of communicative capacity is outside the scope of this paper, we will attempt to provide some practical suggestions about how it may be implemented by looking towards advances in pragmatics research.

2. What is pragmatics?

2.1. Defining pragmatics

- 13 Bardière has pointed out that pragmatics often represents a “conceptual blur”² for language teachers, which may be due to the fact that the field of pragmatics has undergone multiple evolutions and refinements over the years, eventually serving as an umbrella term for an expansive and varied group of theories and methodologies (Bardière §4). Some of the most influential of these theories include speech act theory, which concerns the performative nature of language use; Grice’s Cooperative Principle, which accounts for the often non-literal nature of utterances by the mutual cooperation of interlocutors; and Sperber and Wilson’s Relevance Theory, which provides a cognitive perspective of utterance interpretation (Cutting 3).
- 14 Despite the diversity within various perspectives in pragmatics, they all share a concern with “the study of communicative action in its sociocultural context” (Kasper and Rose 2). To cite the title of one of the founding works of speech act theory, pragmatics is concerned with *How to Do Things with Words* (Austin); however, it would be a mistake to associate pragmatics solely with speech act theory. Rather, pragmatics involves a variety of theories which take into account ways that language is used to accomplish actions in various situations and for various audiences. Kasper and Rose explain the scope of the notion of “communicative action” in their perspective of pragmatics, saying that it “includes not only using speech acts (such as apologizing, complaining, complimenting, and requesting), but also engaging in different types of discourse and participating in speech events of varying length and complexity” (2).
- 15 Although many definitions of pragmatics have been proposed, in recent literature it is Crystal’s which has become one of the most frequently cited, particularly within the subdomain of interlanguage pragmatics which involves the study of language use by L2 speakers (Ross and Kasper 3). Crystal defines pragmatics as
- the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication. (Crystal 301)
- 16 This definition represents an important shift from other ones which emphasize primarily speaker meaning by highlighting both interaction and perlocution, the effect that language has on other parties in an exchange (Ross and Kasper 2-3). This definition also explicitly adopts the perspective of language users. As we will argue throughout this article, it is this increasingly emic perception of communication which has made contemporary pragmatics research particularly well-adapted to both specialized and non-specialized teaching.
- 17 It has sometimes been asked if pragmatic skills are acquired naturally by using the language, or if they require explicit instruction. It has been shown that students with high levels of grammatical and lexical accuracy sometimes display problems with pragmatic skills, illustrating the importance of explicit instruction (Taguchi 15). Moreover, in Rose’s overview of experiments comparing the effects of instruction to those of exposure, all studies demonstrated that instruction was more effective, although

exposure also had a positive effect (392). Therefore, we consider that teaching students about how to perform linguistic action is a beneficial addition to language instruction.

2.2. Two components of pragmatics: sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics

- 18 Ever since the distinction was originally made in 1983 by Leech, many researchers have continued to consider that pragmatics consists of two components: sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics (Kasper and Rose 2). Sociopragmatics lies at the intersection of pragmatics and sociology and concerns the relative values that social groups attribute to particular communicative actions (Kasper and Rose 2). An example of sociopragmatics is the fact that customers who enter a French shop are expected to greet the shopkeeper. Pragmalinguistics, on the other hand, concerns the relationship between pragmatics and the language system, and thus knowledge of which words and expressions can be used to index intentions or interpersonal relationships (Timpe-Laughlin et al. 6). An example of pragmalinguistics is the fact that the French term “*Bonjour*” is a greeting which is often used for strangers, and therefore could be used to greet the shopkeeper in the above situation. Although these two notions overlap as sociopragmatics are expressed via pragmalinguistics, maintaining this distinction can be useful for language teachers because it may encourage them to find a balance between pragmatic instruction emphasizing the communicative norms of social groups and pragmatic instruction focused on the relationship between linguistic form and function.

2.3. Understanding the scope of pragmatics: The case of pragmatics and discourse analysis

- 19 As we saw in section 2.1, contemporary definitions of pragmatics have taken a broad perspective, including all “communicative action” rather than simply units such as speech acts (Kasper and Rose 2). Under such a broad definition, pragmatics may appear to be co-extensive with both sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. Why, then, emphasize pragmatics rather than discourse analysis or sociolinguistics? It is the emphasis that contemporary pragmatics places on both the user's perspective and on communicative action, as illustrated in Crystal's definition, which have compelled us to emphasize the importance of pragmatics rather than another paradigm. However, due to the fact that they do offer insights on communicative action, both discourse analysis and sociolinguistics have tremendous synergy with pragmatics, and in fact, as we will argue in this section, understanding this synergy can actually help contribute greater coherence to the Lansod sector.
- 20 In this section, we will consider the relationship between pragmatics and discourse analysis. As we will argue, the traditional separation of these two paradigms has served as an impediment to a unified vision of language teaching content due to the association of discourse analysis with specialized language teaching and pragmatics with non-specialized language teaching. Both discourse analysis and pragmatics are concerned with the study of utterances in context, though they are generally considered distinct. The divergences between these two paradigms can be accounted for by their different origins; discourse analysis evolved from the field of linguistics as linguists saw the need to look beyond the sentence and to take into account co-textual and contextual factors in

order to understand language use, whereas pragmatics evolved from the fields of philosophy and logic as rhetoricians saw the need to look beyond the truth-conditions of utterances and to consider the way that language is used in context to accomplish actions (Coste 246). Consequently, each paradigm has developed its own methodologies and traditions.

- 21 Despite these differences, both paradigms have been applied to language teaching for the same reason: because they go beyond grammar and lexicon and provide accounts of communication. The association between pragmatics and general language teaching can be traced to the widespread assimilation of speech act theory into language curricula at the dawn of the Communicative Approach. The association between discourse analysis and specialized language teaching, on the other hand, can be traced to the development of English for Specific Purposes, as pedagogists turned to discourse analyses to characterize the language used within various discourse communities (Dudley-Evans and St. John 19-25).
- 22 As early as 1980, Coste signaled the compartmentalization of discourse analysis and pragmatics in the teaching of French and how this dichotomy may construct a barrier between general and specialized language teaching (245-246). In the following chart, he demonstrates the elements of focus which have typically differentiated these two fields and may have sometimes prevented meaningful discourse between them. Although this chart may oversimplify the scope of each of these paradigms, a fact which Coste readily admits, it does indicate general tendencies in the perspective and methodologies of each one (245).

Table 1. Contrasting elements of focus in pragmatics and discourse analysis

Pragmatics of speech	Discourse analysis
Oral	Written
Expression	Comprehension
Speech event	Text
Onomasiological perspective	Semasiological perspective
Paradigmatic	Syntagmatic
Selection, appropriateness	Cohesion, coherence
Everyday communication	Specialized fields

Source: Coste (245)³

- 23 Despite evolutions in both of these fields since Coste's initial remarks, this dissociation can still be observed as speech acts and speech functions remain important concepts in general language teaching, and discourse analysis remains a pillar of ESP. The polarization between the two concepts may obscure the commitment that teachers, pragmatists and discourse analysts share to understand language use.
- 24 Despite the differences between pragmatics and discourse analysis, the ways that these two perspectives "complement and influence" each other is increasingly being taken into consideration due to their shared concern for the study of language use (Schneider and Barron 3). Emphasizing the similarities between these paradigms can help unify the study

of purposeful language use under one umbrella, regardless of whether it is oral or written or of its degree of specialization, and regardless of the unit of language concerned--speech acts, speech events, conversations, texts, genres or any other unit. Developing the conversation between these paradigms for studying language use has the potential to increase unity language instruction in higher education, a sector in which every student is concerned with language use in context.

3. Re-considering the notion of appropriateness

3.1. Why re-visit pragmatics?

- 25 Asserting the importance of pragmatics in the Lansod sector may initially seem redundant, given that it is the emphasis on pragmatic considerations on top of formal ones, which characterize the Communicative Approach and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Nonetheless, despite the emphasis on pragmatic skills in various models of communicative competence, it has been argued that these descriptions of what it means to use language effectively in context may not be detailed enough to serve as an effective tool for teachers (Sickinger and Schneider 118). For example, after conducting interviews with those responsible for designing the *Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR)* reference level descriptors in English over a period of 3 years, Sickinger and Schneider concluded that a cloud of confusion still surrounds the notions of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence, leading them to assert that these competences remain “critically underspecified” (118). Furthermore, it has been asserted that contemporary teaching approaches have not kept up with advances in the field of pragmatics and often thus are based on outdated views (Ifantidou 22).
- 26 Because a complete analysis of pragmatic competence is out of the scope of this paper, we will focus on only one element, the notion of appropriateness as described in the *CEFR*, contrasting it with applications in contemporary interlanguage pragmatics research. Although the *CEFR* is not a scientific document and has already been critiqued at length, we have chosen to study its description of appropriateness because of its influence on the Lansod sector due to the fact that many teachers use it as a reference and that it serves as the basis for certifications offered to Lansod students, such as the *Certificat de compétences en langues de l’enseignement supérieur (CLES)*.
- 27 The discussion about appropriateness in this section of the paper has two purposes: first of all, it will allow us to assert that applications of pragmatics in language teaching may employ outdated views and thus highlight the importance of updating applications of pragmatics to second language teaching. Secondly, our consideration of appropriateness, a fundamental notion in both pragmatics and ESP, will lead us to suggestions for classroom procedures for both ends of the communicative capacity-communicative competence spectrum.

3.2. Appropriateness in models of communicative competence

- 28 The importance of the notion of appropriateness in language teaching can be traced back to the development of the concept of communicative competence. This notion was elaborated by linguistic anthropologist Hymes who insisted that utterances should not be evaluated strictly in terms of their grammaticality, but also in terms of their feasibility,

appropriateness and actual performance (281). The concept of communicative competence was quickly adopted as a theoretical basis for language teaching by pedagogists who considered that understanding grammar and lexicon was not sufficient for the mastery of a language (Bachman; Bachman and Palmer; Canale; Canale and Swain; Celce-Murcia; Celce-Murcia et al.). Within their models of the skills necessary for communication, Hymes's criteria of feasibility and actual performance were reduced in scope, as appropriateness and grammaticality became the central elements. For example, Canale and Swain's 1980 model of communicative competence includes two major elements of language along with its non-linguistic category of strategic competence: grammatical competence, which includes the mastery of grammar and lexicon, and sociolinguistic competence, which includes "the extent to which certain propositions and communicative functions are appropriate within a given sociocultural context" and "the extent to which appropriate attitude and register or style are conveyed by a particular grammatical form in a given sociocultural context" (30).

- 29 Appropriateness has retained an important role in contemporary language teaching as evidenced by the importance of the concept in the *CEFR*. In fact, in his keyword analysis of the various levels of the *CEFR*, Green noticed that in the descriptors of the B2 level "appropriately" was the third most common keyword, appearing 291 times more frequently than in the reference corpus (95). The framework's theorization of sociolinguistic competence clearly has roots in Canale and Swain's 1980 version, including elements such as "performing language functions in an appropriate way (at lower levels in a neutral register)" and "adopting an appropriate register (from B2)" (Council of Europe 137).
- 30 In recent studies of interlanguage pragmatics, applications of the notion of appropriateness within foreign language teaching such of that of the *CEFR* have been questioned (Dewaele 3-4; Leung 131-132; Van Compernelle 38-40). One criticism of the concept is that it is not clear how to determine which utterances are appropriate and which are not. In fact, following attempts to ensure test item validity by asking native speakers which formulation of a certain illocution was the most appropriate, Macnamara and Roever noted that native speakers rarely agree, leading them to the conclusion that "[j]udgments of what is and what is not appropriate differ widely among NSs [native speakers] and are probably more a function of personality and social background variables than of language knowledge" (Macnamara and Roever 57). Roever points out one source of contradicting views on appropriateness; pragmatic knowledge is acquired through socialization and may be contingent on factors such as age, gender or region (Roever 46).
- 31 The description of appropriateness within the *CEFR*'s construct of sociolinguistic competence, which seems to imply a binary relationship between appropriate and inappropriate utterances, poses a series of problems. First of all, it may belie heterogeneity within different varieties of the language, obscuring variation among as well as within speech and discourse communities (Leung 131). Secondly, this lack of specificity about how to determine appropriateness lends itself to the idealization of "rules" of appropriateness with no empirical basis (Dewaele 250). A final problem is the fact this description of appropriateness may lend itself to injunctions to conform to appropriate behavior, effectively removing students' agency (Leung 132).

3.3. Appropriateness and interlanguage pragmatics

- 32 Appropriateness in interlanguage pragmatics is increasingly being considered relative to both individuals and social factors rather than as a monolithic concept (Timpe-Laughlin 2-3). The increasingly emic perspectives in interlanguage pragmatics of appropriateness are coherent with the increasing orientation towards user perspectives as illustrated by Crystal's definition. In this section of the paper, we will address some of the ways that appropriateness has been addressed in interlanguage pragmatics research. We will relate these concepts to Widdowson's continuum of communicative competence and communicative capacity, which we have suggested as a potentially enlightening framework for Lansod class specification.

3.4. Communicative competence and pragmatics

- 33 On Widdowson's continuum between communicative competence and communicative capacity, communicative competence corresponds to narrow-angled ESP and seeks to train students to conform to pragmatic norms of their respective discourse communities (Widdowson "Learning" 7). Tarone has pointed out that applying ESP to pragmatics actually helps to resolve the issue of the ambiguity of appropriateness because discourse communities are characterized by shared sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic norms (162). Discourse communities have shared values, objectives and conventionalized forms of communication (genres) which can be identified and taught, and therefore the issue of appropriateness in narrow-angled ESP becomes less nebulous (162). Furthermore, the rich body of ESP research that has already been conducted offers insights on pragmatic norms of particular discourse communities. Finally, corpus analyses of pragmatic behavior from particular speech communities may serve as way to benchmark appropriateness in an empirical way (Timpe-Laughlin et al. 21). Consequently, current practice in narrow-angled ESP is already pragmatic in nature and corresponds to research in interlanguage pragmatics which takes a more social perspective, analyzing the way that participation in communities of practice leads to pragmatic development (Timpe-Laughlin 3).

3.5. Communicative capacity and pragmatics

- 34 Helping develop students' communicative capacity, the ability to adapt to unexpected communicative situations, proves more difficult to operationalize than developing communicative competence. This complexity stems from the impossibility of identifying the sociopragmatic norms of the social groups or communicative contexts that the students will participate in. In other words, how can we teach students to act appropriately if appropriateness depends on context, and the contexts in which students will use language are unidentified?
- 35 Various solutions to the ambiguity of sociopragmatic norms for students with less predictable needs have been proposed. Timpe-Laughlin et al. assert that "[g]iven the lack of a clear-cut dichotomy of correct and incorrect pragmatic behavior, teaching may focus on the development of learners' pragmatic awareness" (Timpe-Laughlin et al. 20). Therefore, rather than teaching students pragmatic "rules," many researchers are

focusing on helping students themselves make links themselves between form and function. Authentic input along with activities which bring learners' attention to connections between form and function have been used to develop students' pragmatic knowledge (Timpe-Laughlin et al. 20).

- 36 Johns has proposed using genres along with meta-pragmatic awareness raising activities in classes with a low degree of specialization as a stepping stone to engaging in academic or technical genres (38). She recommends using "homely genres," genres which may be encountered in everyday life such as wedding invitations and obituaries to introduce students to basic notions of genre, such as rhetorical moves and form-function relationships (38). Our own research has focused on meta-pragmatic awareness raising for students in the second year of the course of Culture and Media. We have provided students with a variety of genres both homely and academic and have asked them to make links between linguistic forms and elements such as audience and purpose. Results are forthcoming, though initial analyses indicate that students developed an increasing sensitivity to register.

Conclusion

- 37 As we have argued in this article, despite the extreme diversity within foreign language education in French higher education, a pragmatics-based framework for course content has the potential to provide greater coherence by highlighting the need that all students share to engage in language use. Widdowson's continuum between communicative capacity and communicative competence offers a potentially relevant framework for the Lansod sector because it accommodates varying degrees of disciplinary specificity while emphasizing pragmatic elements at every point of the spectrum, thus offering a common thread.
- 38 In this article, we suggest that emphasizing contemporary views of interlanguage pragmatics offers various advantages to the Lansod sector. First of all, the broad definition proposed by Crystal may highlight the similarities in various paradigms for the study of discourse and may consequently help reduce the separation of non-specialized and specialized teaching due to the association of non-specialized teaching with pragmatics and specialized teaching with discourse analysis. Secondly, the emic perspective in Crystal's definition offers a useful approach to the notion of appropriateness, which, as we argue, has been problematically described in the *CEFR* as a set of abstract sociocultural norms. Finally, we offer suggestions of the types of activities which may be related to various points of Widdowson's continuum of communicative capacity and communicative competence.
- 39 This article offers only a brief reflection on the potential contributions of interlanguage pragmatics research to the Lansod sector. Another fundamental step in creating links between Lansod and pragmatics is establishing a clearer relationship between pragmatics and TBLT. TBLT is a fundamentally pragmatic approach to language teaching in that it requires students to engage in communicative action. However, there exists a dearth of research linking pragmatics and TBLT. In fact, the first major work published to build a bridge between these two paradigms, *Task-Based Approaches to Teaching and Assessing Pragmatics*, was published as recently as August 2018 (Taguchi and Kim), and much work linking these two domains remains to be done. Research in pragmatics therefore has the potential to inform TBLT (and vice versa), particularly given the fact that several studies

have indicated that explicit attention to pragmatics led to better outcomes than only learning by doing (Rose 392).

- 40 In any case, as we hope to have shown in this article, that the field of pragmatics, with its emphasis on linguistic action, offers a particularly promising terrain for explorations of language learning pedagogy for students in higher education. A widespread emphasis on pragmatics could shift conversations among Lamsod teachers from, “Do you teach specialized or general English?” to “How do you prepare your students to engage in linguistic action?”

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NOTES

1. This is our proposed translation for "Lansad - langues pour spécialistes d'autres disciplines".
2. This is our proposed translation for "flou conceptuel" (Bardière §4).
3. This is our suggested translation for the table in Coste 245.

ABSTRACTS

Extreme heterogeneity within foreign language instruction in French higher education has led to calls to find common elements to increase coherence. Whereas debates about course content

have often emphasized the importance of specificity, the presence of mixed disciplinary groups has complicated the widespread adoption of specialized teaching. We suggest that pragmatics has potential to serve as a common element because it encompasses the study of communicative action both within and outside professional communities and can thus be emphasized in any class, regardless of its degree of specificity. While pragmatic elements are fundamental to contemporary teaching approaches, we argue that these manifestations have not kept up with evolutions in interlanguage pragmatics. In order to show this, we problematize the notion of appropriateness as described in the *Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR)*, comparing it with the way that the notion has been treated in contemporary interlanguage pragmatics. Finally, we provide examples of how developments in pragmatics regarding appropriateness have been integrated into both specialized and non-specialized teaching.

L'extrême hétérogénéité de l'enseignement des langues dans l'enseignement supérieur en France a incité à identifier des éléments fédérateurs pour en augmenter la cohérence. Alors que les débats sur le contenu des cours soulignent souvent l'importance de la spécificité, la présence de groupes d'étudiants issus de diverses filières complique la généralisation de l'enseignement spécialisé. Nous suggérons que la pragmatique a le potentiel de servir comme constante puisqu'elle comprend l'étude de l'action communicative à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur des communautés professionnelles et peut donc être mise en avant dans n'importe quel cours, indépendamment de son degré de spécialisation. Alors que la pragmatique occupe un rôle fondamental dans certaines approches d'enseignement contemporaines, nous affirmons que ces manifestations n'ont pas suivi les évolutions dans le domaine de la pragmatique de l'interlangue. Pour illustrer cela, nous problématisons la notion d'adéquation telle qu'elle est décrite dans la *Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues (CECRL)* et la comparons avec la façon dont cette notion a été abordée par la pragmatique de l'interlangue. Enfin, nous donnons des exemples de comment les développements dans la pragmatique concernant l'adéquation ont été intégrés à l'enseignement spécialisé et non-spécialisé.

INDEX

Keywords: appropriateness, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, (CEFR), discourse analysis, higher education, language learning, pragmatics, pragmatic competence

Mots-clés: adéquation, analyse du discours, apprentissage des langues, Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues (CECRL), compétence pragmatique, enseignement supérieur, langues pour spécialistes d'autres disciplines (Lansad), pragmatique

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