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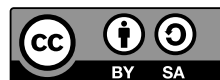
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FROM GRAMMATICAL TO PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE: TENSE AND ASPECT AS POLITENESS DEVICES IN ENGLISH FOR TOURISM PURPOSES

1 INTRODUCTION

Tense and aspect are intuitively associated with grammatical competence. Since the 1970s when the communicative approach took hold in English as a Foreign/Second Language (EFL/ESL) teaching pedagogy, the grammatical competence has been put aside and the emphasis shifted to communicative competence. Roughly coinciding with the surge of interest in pragmatics, the changed orientation in the EFL paradigm has been equally promoting pragmatic competence. In Canale's (1983) framework, communicative competence includes four areas of knowledge and skill: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. As such, pragmatic competence is identified as sociolinguistic competence that "addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts" (Canale 1983: 7). For EFL teachers, pragmatic competence is one of the cornerstones of the overall communicative competence that refers to understanding and producing language appropriate for the context. This view, which is adopted in this study, implies that pragmatic competence entails other sub-competences, including interactional competence. Theorists view pragmatic competence as "the ability to communicate your intended message with all its nuances in any socio-cultural context and to interpret the message of your interlocutor as it was intended" (Fraser 2010: 15). Either way, linguistic politeness competence is its significant part.

The English language has indisputably acquired the role of *lingua franca* in academic and professional contexts (Crystal 2003). Given its unique status as the international language of travel that no other language can rival, a very good command of English is a basic prerequisite in the tourism industry. A growing body of literature thus emphasizes English

language proficiency as one of the main prerequisites for work in this context (see Sirikhan/ Prapphal 2011). English for Tourism Purposes (ETP) belongs to English for Specific Purposes (ESP), an approach to EFL teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning (Hutchinson/Waters 1987: 19). In general, ETP is centred on the language appropriate to activities in the broad field of tourism and hospitality, and the instruction is geared towards enabling learners to successful fulfill occupational tasks and engage in active interactions in their work. The desired general outcome is to enable the learners to function effectively in their prospective spoken and written interactions with customers/clients, colleagues and other stakeholders in the industry, which requires more than linguistic knowledge as it depends on the awareness of the language appropriate for the given context, participants and topics.

Concerned with contextually effective communication, pragmatic competence might be seen as opposed to grammatical competence that is related to the decontextualized usage and the mastery of language code (Canale 1983). As frequently noted, there is an imbalance in the attainment of the two in favour of the latter (see subsection 1.3.). A way to start reducing this discrepancy is to approach the polyvalent grammatical forms so that their pragmatic facets are reflected in the instruction. In this regard, the insights drawn from theoretical studies can prove valuable and informative for ETP teachers.

Since tense and aspect are among the linguistic roots of pragmatics (Leech 2014), they should be addressed as such in the ETP instruction. Thus, the linguistic analysis of these grammatical forms as the "devices conductive to politeness" (Leech 2014: 179), or politeness devices in our terms, is expected to yield favourable results. The analysis could contribute to the linguistic research of politeness, as its pragmalinguistic aspect has been somewhat neglected (Leech 2014: ix). In this respect, this study is an attempt to take the deictic expressions from the pragmatic wastebasket where they have been put, although they always convey much more than what is said (Yule 1996: 10–16).

1.2   Politeness framework

The Speech Act Theory, fully formulated by Searle (1969), served as one of the pillars of the politeness studies. Politeness is conceptualized in linguistics as strategic conflict avoidance (Kasper 1990: 3; Cf. Culpeper 2011). With their ground-breaking study originally published in 1978, Brown and Levinson (1987) illuminated this multi-layered phenomenon and provided the model widely applied by scholars and researchers for politeness and pragmatic competence studies.

Drawing on Speech Act Theory and other previous models, Leech formulated a new framework of politeness in his very last monograph. To be polite, as Leech (2014: 3) puts it, is "to speak or behave in such a way as to (appear to) give benefit or value not to yourself but to the other person(s), especially the person(s) you are conversing with". Thus, the phenomenon of politeness, in broad terms, is conceived as "communicative altruism"

(Leech 2014: 3–8). For Leech (2014: 25) face is "the positive self-image or self-esteem that a person enjoys as a reflection of that person's estimation by others". Using the labels neg-politeness and pos-politeness, Leech (2014: 11–26) treats face-threat mitigation as the function of neg-politeness only, whereas he sees face enhancement as the function of pos-politeness.

In this maxim-centred model, five pairs of maxims (which are related to particular classes of speech acts/events and are the matching pairs with regard to the asymmetries in O(the other person(s)/S(peaker) orientation, high/low value, pos-/neg-politeness) are suggested as substrategies of the superconstraint, the general strategy of politeness (Leech 2014: 50). Politeness is a scalar phenomenon on both pragmalinguistic (context-free) and sociopragmatic (context-sensitive) scales. The appropriate degree of politeness can be assessed with regard to the parameters of *vertical distance* (*power)*, *horizontal* (*social*) *distance*, *cost/benefit*, *strength* and *self/other territory* (Leech 2014: 103).

1.3   Previous research

As observed by the authors engaged in in-depth literature reviews (Watts 2003: xi; Culpeper 2011: 392; Leech 2014: 29), the past decades have seen an enormous interest in theoretical and empirical research on politeness in various fields. The prevailing strand of research has been set within the field of Cross-Cultural Pragmatics and focused on interlinguistic politeness, for which the insights provided by Blum-Kulka (1982) and Wierzbicka (2003) largely paved the way. The most comprehensive research, carried out by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) within the CCSARP project, focused on the realization patterns of requests and apologies in eight languages/varieties. The empirical research confirmed that the languages differ in the range of pragmalinguistic options, the degree to which these options are realized and the manner in which they combine to realize the speech act. These studies also proved the reliability of discourse completion tasks in collecting data, and thus facilitated the subsequent research. The greatest interest has been put on the differences between requesting strategies in English and other languages, but also other speech acts in other languages were investigated (Hebrew: Blum-Kulka 1982; Japanese: Kitao 1987; Olshtain & Cohen 1990; Spanish: Díaz Pérez 2006; Serbian and German: Schlund 2014; Russian: Krulatz 2015).

The results on the inter-language variability have affected the area of EFL/ESL by bringing to the fore the pragmatic domain in the context of language acquisition. Blum-Kulka's (1982) claim that language learners often fail to realize their communicative acts in terms of social appropriateness and pragmatic effectiveness generated interest in the strategies employed by EFL/ESL learners. Throughout the growing body of research, the inadequate pragmatic knowledge of the EFL/ESL learners, including ESP learners (Sirikhan & Prapphal 2011; Halupka-Rešetar & Knežević 2016; Taghizadeh 2017; Kreishan 2018), compared to the native speakers' linguistic performance, was reported.

Research has shown that learners lacked the ability to realize successful speech acts in different social contexts (Halupka-Rešetar & Knežević 2016) and pragmatic failures were noted in both pragmalinguistics and sociolinguistics (Sirikhan & Prapphal 2011). Overall, the studies supported Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998: 234) claim that "grammatical development does not guarantee a corresponding level of pragmatic development". The majority of studies focused on use rather than EFL learning (Kasper & Schmidt 1996), yet the last decades have seen a shift in the orientation (Olshtain & Cohen 1990; LoCastro 1997; Juan & Campillo 2002; Rose 2005; Jianda 2006; Rueda 2006; Fraser 2010; Kusevska 2014; Barron 2016; Taghizadeh 2017). However, few studies focused on pragmatic development in ETP students. In addition, no research has been found that surveyed tense and aspect as pragmalinguistic devices in ETP. In fact, no previous study focused on the use of grammar items as politeness devices in this specific genre (Tourism English) of spoken discourse.

Some of the studies investigated the linguistic components of polite behaviours. Noteworthy are Fraser's analyses of pragmatic markers (Fraser 1996), conversational mitigation (Fraser 1980) and the speech act aspect of hedging (Fraser 2010), as well as Thomas's (1983) concept of pragmatic failure, the inability to understand "what is meant by what is said". The useful insights on the link between politeness and deixis were provided by Haverkate (1992), who confined the analysis to the conditionals, Trommer (2011), in the corpus research on *wondered/was wondering*, and by a few inter-language studies (e.g. Díaz Pérez 2006).

2   METHODOLOGY

2.1   Aims of the study

The current study focuses on the pragmatic facets of tense and aspect with two complementary aims: 1) to identify and set forth a characterization of tense and aspectual verbal forms used as the internal pragmatic modifiers contributing to politeness in ETP, and 2) to highlight the relevant points and outline the proposals for ETP teachers.

2.2   Corpus

As politeness is related primarily to spoken language, it would have been ideal to perform a corpus-based analysis of speech corpus from tourism discourse. As no such corpus was publically available, the data for this study comprised the corpus of approximately 34,000 words created by excerpting speech-like text samples (*Listening scripts*) from four Tourism English textbooks (of the B1/B2 and B2/C1 levels) (*English for International Tourism* (Jacob/Strutt 1997), *English for International Tourism* (Strutt 2003),

Tourism 2 (Walker/Harding 2007), and *Tourism 3* (Walker/Harding 2009).[1] The scripts used in the analysis are based on authentic language production and cover the typical interactions tourism employees engage in. They can be broadly classified into three categories: employee-customer interaction (dialogues with guests/clients during check-in, check-out, at travel agency, car hire, etc.), employee-employee interaction (dialogues with colleagues at meetings, conversations between a travel agent and a tour operator, etc.), and monologue-like extracts (delivering commentaries on tours, giving lecture, a speech, or a presentation).

2.3   Procedure

The scripts were scrutinized page by page looking for the instances of tense and aspect conveying politeness. The relevant instances were noted down and counted manually. The qualitative analysis, supplemented with the quantitative data, was primarily oriented towards pragmalinguistics but not neglecting the socio-pragmatic aspects. Hence, it relied on Leech's (2014) model (see 1.2.) and adopted his tools for classifying and exploring linguistic elements, with past tense modals considered under the rubric of hypothetical past. The occurrences in conditional sentences and of *would* not related to the hypothetical willingness meaning were disregarded from the analysis. As regards the distribution of the identified verbal forms, the analysis followed Leech's (2014) classification of speech acts (apologies, requests and other directives, and other politeness sensitive speech acts including offers, invitations, suggestions etc.). However, it slightly diverged from this model regarding the utterances of the type *S's attempt to elicit the information from H.* Given its prominence in the register, this type was considered, according to Searle's (1969: 69) proposal, a (real) question, i.e. a speech act with the following felicity conditions: 1) S does not know the answer/the information, 2) it is not obvious to both S and H that H will provide the information at that time without being asked, and 3) S wants this information. However, the analysis did not neglect Leech's (2014: 60) claim that such utterances fall within the category of requests.

3   RESULTS

3.1   Quantitative data

Table 1 lists the identified occurrences of the tense and aspect verbal forms employed due to the syntactic manipulations for politeness effects, i.e. as the internal pragmatic modifiers in

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1   The same corpus was used in the other analyses (e.g. Radovanović 2018).

ETP. As shown in Table 1, of the identified forms hypothetical past tense is most frequently found in this usage, followed by that of the progressive aspect. It is apparent from this table that tense is used for politeness in a very few instances in our material.

Politeness device		Instances
Hypothetical past tense	*could*	43
	would	6
Tense	Past	3
	Future	1
Progressive aspect	present	1
	future	10

Table 1. Tense and aspect as politeness devices

The distribution of the identified forms across the speech acts is presented in Figure 1. As it reveals, relevant instances were found in only three types of speech acts. As politeness devices, verbal forms are most often found in requests, far less frequently in questions and only rarely in suggestions.
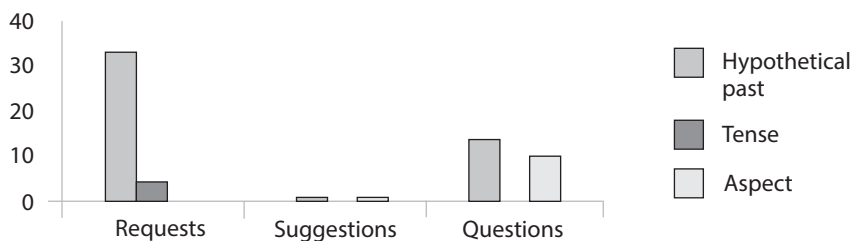

Figure 1. Politeness devices across speech acts

3.2   Theoretical account

3.2.1   Hypothetical past tense

Generally, the mood markers are the most frequent pragmalinguistic devices in all speech acts. As shown in Figure 1, the hypothetical past tense forms of the ability/possibility and willingness modal auxiliaries (modals) (*can*/*could*, *will*/*would*) dwarf the other investigated verbal forms and are used most frequently in the speech acts of neg-politeness such as (1).

(1)   Could you just sign here? (Walker & Harding 2007: 129)

Given that "the more a request offers choice to H, the more polite it is" (Leech 2014: 88), in this typical example of on-record strategy for performing directives three strategies of neg-politeness are incorporated to mitigate the imposition on H: the question form, ability modal, adverb *just* used as a modifier in the sense of *only* (a downtoner) and the past tense. Thus, H's negative response would not be offending if (s)he could not comply with speaker's wishes due to some reasonable reasons, although the very goal of S's making the request is to gain compliance. As (2), an S-oriented request, illustrates, S can employ further lexigrammatical forms to mitigate the directive force. Due to the *if*-clause, an unstated hypothetical condition is sensed and neg-politeness is reinforced with another implicit option of non-compliance.

(2)   Well, if I could just finish? (Walker & Harding 2009: 133)

Yet, the interpretation based on the semantic features of the incorporated politeness markers, however, does not justify the general high frequency of *Could you* in requests. It is, however, fully accounted for by the high degree of conventionalization and standardization (Brown & Levinson 1987: 70; Fraser 1996: 178), i.e. pragmaticalization (Leech 2014: 14). Although it is nominally the interrogative by which S seeks for a *yes/no* response (Fraser 1996: 178), the likelihood of getting a negative answer is almost non-existent.[2] Hence, non-compliance with the request is only purported and the extent to which H has an option not to perform the requested action is more apparent than real. As due to pragmaticalization a weakening of pragmalinguistic politeness arises, *Could you* occupies the middle ground of politeness.

Likewise, the interrogatives with volitive modals have become routine ways of making requests, such as (3), and a part of a ready-made toolkit of politeness (Leech 2014: 76).

(3)   Would all foot passengers please proceed to the disembarkation point on B deck. (Jacob & Strutt 1997: 120)

Requests with *will/would* are more direct than the ones with *can/could*, which accounts for the significant discrepancy between the frequency of *would* and *could* in the investigated register. The possibility of the H's negative response to the request is minimized, as volitional questions cannot be denied without impoliteness – then H behaves impolitely in evaluating his own wishes or goals as higher than those of S (Leech 2014: 154).

Due to the semantic contribution of the hypothetical past tense, *could/would* in questions can be placed on the pragmalinguistic politeness scale on a higher level in comparison to *can/will*. The past form distances the request from the deictic centre of the communicative act (*I-here-now*) and places it in some possible world of unreality,

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2   This is even more obvious given the term *whimperatives* occasionally used for these interrogative devices (Wierzbicka 2003: 77).

thereby making the request more indirect and distancing it further from the direct S's imposition, which accounts for the questions rendered by means of *could/would* as (4).

(4)   Would that be a non-smoking room, sir? (Walker & Harding 2007: 129)

Although the sense of unreality is greatly reduced by pragmaticalization, the past form indicates slightly greater tentativeness in (1)–(3) since, indicating that the request belongs to some unreal world, S expresses the belief that the action is unlikely to be performed (Leech 2014: 168).

3.2.2   Tense

The concept of distance also accounts for the use of tenses as pragmatic modifiers. In fact, any closer investigation of politeness by necessity tackled distance (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984; Brown & Levinson 1987; Díaz Pérez 2006), however with imprecise terminological distinctions (see Spencer-Oatey 1996). We make use of the conceptual nature of distance. The canonical function of tense as a deictic category is to indicate the remoteness in time from the deictic centre, i.e. temporal distance. However, temporal distance figures as "a basic linguistic metaphor" (Fleischman 1989) and is easily meta-phorically transported into other distances: the distance in reality, i.e. epistemic distance and social, i.e. sociopragmatic distance.

Temporal distance systematically extends to convey distance in the pragmatic com-ponent (Fleischman 1989: 2), and the past tense of the verb *wonder* can be considered a case in point which gives proof of the connection between politeness and deixis (Trom-mer 2011: 202). The simple or progressive past tense form of mental state verbs, typically *want* and *hope*, with a first-person subject in indirect questions as (5), does not have past time reference. Rather, it is related to the speaker's state of mind, therefore labelled *attitudinal past* (Quirk et al 1985; Trommer 2011).

(5)   I was wondering if you could arrange for a bottle of champagne to be in our room when we come… (Strutt 2003: 135)

Example (5) employs the combination of several neg-politeness strategies. The past tense form detaches both S and H from the request in view of its presence and face-threat-ening potential (Trommer 2011: 202). By putting *wonder* in the past tense, S seems to suggest that (s)he is now prepared to abandon that attitude, thus avoiding confrontation with H's wishes (Leech 2014: 69). The past form thus indicates S's reduced expectations regarding the H's compliance with the request.

The past tense form used as a device of distancing to convey politeness in (6b) calls for additional explanation.

(6a) Tourist: Hello. Are you full?
(6b) Receptionist: What were you looking for? (Walker & Harding 2009: 132)

The request (6b) is rendered in the past tense although it refers to the clearly present situation, H's current preferences regarding the available accommodation. As S wants specific concrete information, (s)he employs the straightforward question to ask for it. However, as *What are you looking for?* may be impolite in this on-record request, S opts for a remote tense. This form does not indicate that S treats the situation of *looking for* as the past one, and thus not valid at the time of the utterance. Rather, temporal distancing mitigates the directiveness of the speech act.

Also, in (6b) temporal distance is metaphorically extended into the social realm. The chosen distancing element is directed towards raising horizontal distance, which is closely related to the sociopragmatic appropriateness of a linguistic device. As (6b) is uttered during the telephone conversation that generally tends to be clear, precise and informative, it may be regarded in terms of 'politeness appropriate for the situation' (which seems even more justified as (6a) can be seen in terms of 'underpoliteness'), whereas *Would you mind telling me…?*, although ranked higher on the pragmalinguistic scale, would result in 'overpoliteness' in this conversational exchange.

Since in English an affirmative sentence in the future directed towards the addressee is characteristic of a command, and not a polite request (Schlund 2014), example (7) deserves a comment.

(7)   Great, so the total price will be… (Strutt 2003: 140)

Judging from (7), it can be speculated that politeness effects are also produced by temporal distancing in the future and that changing the tense to the future (more accurately changing the mood) serves as a distancing element in neg-politeness strategy. Temporal distance, remote in the future, metaphorically extends into the epistemic distance. The transposition is from the world of reality to some future non-factual, and thus possible, world. By (7), S makes a request for payment, but although the stated price is the information at the time of the utterance, S places this fact in some possible world, and thus mitigates the imposition on H. As such, the mechanism of distancing in reality contributes to the politeness effect of the future tense.

3.2.3   Progressive aspect

As a syntactic modifier, verbal aspect, primarily the progressive form of the mental state verbs, increases the degree of politeness. The past progressive form, as shown by example (5):

(5) I was wondering if you could arrange for a bottle of champagne to be in our room when we come… (Strutt 2003: 135)

increases tentativeness and downgrades the directness level of a request even further (Trommer 2011: 190), whereas the present form, as in (8), lacks the additional distancing effect of the past tense. The progressive in (8) stresses the doubtfulness of the suggestion, which implies that S's expectations regarding the H's agreement are reduced.

(8) I am assuming it'll be all right to get them each a complimentary drink. (Walker & Harding 2007: 134)

The semantic notions of the progressive aspect (temporariness, inconclusiveness) account for the tentativeness effect conveyed by the progressive form. Given that the stative verbs are used in the progressive, the inconclusive overtone of the progressive lessens S's professed commitment to the mental states indicated by the verb (Leech 2014: 170).

This account, however, does not hold for the progressive future tense form generally favoured in the second-person subject questions by tourism employees about means of payments, such as (9a), the customer's future activities or the forthcoming services needed (Radovanović 2018: 376). The comparison of two utterances with the same illocutionary force, (9a) and (9b), indicates that the progressive form as a syntactic modifier in the on-record requests mitigates the face-threat.

(9a) Will you be paying by credit card? (Walker & Harding 2007: 129)
(9b) Will you pay by credit card?

Due to the retained volitional meaning of *will* in (9b), the question can be interpreted by H as an enquiry about his/her intentions with the focus on the current state of his/her volition, thus as rude and intrusive as S is invading into his/her personal space (Quirk et al. 1985: 210, 216). Hence, the progressive serves to express S's respect for H's freedom of action and choice, and thereby is used to establish rapport with a customer. Two kinds of goals are pursued in communication, illocutionary and social (Leech 2014: 89). Enquiry (9b) meets the illocutionary goal, yet, the social goal regarding maintaining good communicative relations with H may not be met. Owing to the semantic contribution of *will*, (9b) has a somewhat imperative function, so that it may sound like a demand for payment by credit card. Accordingly, it may give rise to H's hostile attitude, as S is felt to be imposing his will or opinion. On the other hand, (9a) does not violate the neg-politeness tact maxim, "Give a low value to S's wants" (Leech 2014: 89), hence the direct imposition on H is avoided.

4   DISCUSSION

Thus far the studies that dealt with linguistic encodings of politeness within different frameworks have linked tense and aspect with politeness under the rubrics of syntactic downgraders (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain 1984), play-downs (Watts 2003), linguistic hedges (Fraser 2010), and internal pragmatic modifiers (Thomas 1983; Leech 2014). The analysis presented in the current study has confirmed this link and provided further insights. The findings are largely consistent with the previous proposals, apart from those concerning the future-reference forms. However, the results need to be taken with caution. Certainly, the one instance of the future tense conveying politeness does not provide conclusive results. Moreover, the qualitative analysis of the future progressive form might be contradicted in terms of the *matter-of-course* meaning (Leech 1987: 67) as a relevant semantic component. It seems plausible, though, that the investigated function of this verbal form is based on the pragmatic rather than semantic grounds.

Interestingly, the quantitative results were beyond initial expectations. Two possible explanations for the overall low frequency of tense and aspect as politeness devices in our data (Table 1) can be offered. For one thing, this might be due to the generally rare tendency of native speakers to use these verbal forms for politeness purposes, as hinted previously (Díaz Pérez 2006; Trommer 2011). A firm conclusion, however, would require much more reliable empirical findings. Further, the quantitative results can be ascribed to the lack of politeness strategies in the ETP textbooks' listening materials, as discussed below. Moreover, the question arises as to what extent the analysed material creates access to real-life situations. This is not a new issue, though. Considerable criticism has previously levelled at the authenticity of language samples in ELT textbooks based on the argument that language samples need to more closely approximate the results of conversation analysis (Taghizadeh 2017: 235–236).

As learners do not possess universal strategies resulting in adequate speech act production (e.g. Blum-Kulka 1982; Wierzbicka 2003), and there is the transfer of speech act strategies from their native language (Thomas 1983; Kasper & Schmidt 1996), pragmatic strategies should be taught. Although the complete change of speech act behaviour requires a long term stay within the target speech community (Thomas 1983: 110; Olshtain & Cohen 1990: 57), pragmatic competence is teachable. The arguments presented in theoretical (Thomas 1983; Rueda 2006; Leech 2014) and empirical research on the effectiveness of instruction in pragmatics in EFL/ESL teaching (see Rose 2005) provide strong support to the position that "the instruction makes a difference" (Kasper & Schmidt 1996: 160). The disparity between learners' and native speakers' pragmatic competence may be attributed to factors related to input (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei 1998: 234). These can be due to the amount and quality of pragmatic input provided by means of teacher talk, or the lack of reliable pragmatic input provided in teaching materials.

Consequently, we advocate for raising awareness about the contextualized appropriate input in ETP instruction. As tense and aspect verbal forms are clearly teachable pragmatic

features, the pragma(linguis)tic failure resulting from "teaching-induced errors" (Thomas 1983: 101) has to be overcome. We also argue for the combination of both types of pedagogical intervention, explicit and implicit (Rose 2005: 393), which parallels Ellis's (2002) distinction between two senses of awareness: learners can be made aware of the properties of the language as they experience these in input, and they can be made aware in the sense of developing explicit knowledge. We thus recommend the provision of explicit metapragmatic information (Rose 2005: 393) and heightening students' metapragmatic ability to analyse language use in a conscious manner and focusing on "what is meant" (Thomas 1983: 98).

Considering the importance of the evaluating teaching materials in an ESP course (Hutchinson & Waters 1987: 96), the textbooks' merit for the pragmatic development also came under scrutiny. Overall, the textbooks used in the analysis are not equipped as expected given the importance of pragmatic competence for communication success in ETP, and the issues identified partially coincide with the previously expressed criticisms (Olshtain & Cohen 1990; Juan & Campillo 2002; Rueda 2006; Barron 2016). As ETP is primarily a topic-based and functions-oriented course, the speech acts and the language functions relevant for professional practice are not neglected, but are occasionally presented with a high level of generality and simplicity (e.g. the simplistic treatment of the apology strategies). Few linguistic items are addressed with the explicit attention given to politeness (indirect questions (Strutt 2003: 58), or conditionals (Jacob & Strutt 1997: 85)). We could agree that the presentation of politeness is focused mostly on the conventional, formal linguistic markers (LoCastro 1997; Juan & Campillo 2002). To illustrate, there are no examples with the modal adverb *possibly* used as a downtoner, whereas the discourse particle *please* frequently occurs as a polite formula.

The insignificant exposure to the pragmalinguistic functions of the investigated grammatical items is provided. Being the multifaceted linguistic devices and most prominent carriers of politeness, modals require substantially more consideration. Irrespective of the type of modality conveyed, different language functions are often lumped together under the semantic labels as obligation, permission, etc. (Strutt 2003: 128; Walker & Harding 2007: 126), and the unavoidable overlaps of functions and the subtle semantic differences are not addressed. As regards tense and aspect, the standard pedagogical practice is followed. The presentation of tenses encapsulates the rules of the aspect values with temporal reference. The textbooks thus fail to address the non-temporal functions of the Past Simple as well as of the Future Continuous/Progressive other than "to describe a situation in progress at a particular time in the future" (Jacob & Strutt 1997: 47).

Hence, given the desired level of the students' pragmalinguistic competence and based on the foregoing analysis, several points should be taken as relevant in inducing pragmatic awareness and possible inclusion in the metapragmatic provision in ETP. For one thing, the differences between the most frequent modals in terms of a partially ordered scale of pragmalinguistic politeness (e.g. from the imperative to more wordy expressions) and regarding the sociopragmatic scale (with respect to the level of formality,

status, etc.) and speech acts/events need be highlighted. The correlation of indirectness and politeness and the possible internal modifiers deserve emphasis, since learners tend to rely on formulaic expressions across all levels of language learning and the variety of strategies used does not increase (Kusevska 2014). The input is also to include the pragmatic choices regarding tense and aspectual forms, given that non-native speakers do not tend to resort to these pragmalinguistic devices, either alone or in combination (Díaz Pérez 2006: 173), and thus it is advisable to make students overtly aware of the pragmatic choices regarding these forms. The differences in the appropriateness of the available verbal forms regarding the content, the speaker's goals and specific situations can be explicitly stated. In this regard, the frequent functions of the Future Continuous Tense without any notion of progressivity and for politeness purposes (see Radovanović 2018) need be emphasized. The notion of distance should also be included in the metapragmatic provision, as it as a relevant concept crucial for expressing unreality in English.

5   CONCLUSION

The paper has argued that tense and aspect verbal forms should be addressed in the ETP instruction as the pragmatic modifiers contributing to politeness. From the angle of linguistic research, the study has confirmed the association between the investigated linguistic items and politeness. The relevant forms were identified and the theoretical account of the hypothetical past, past tense and progressive aspect was provided, thereby contributing to the linguistic research of the syntactic expressions used for politeness purposes. In addition, the analysis shed light on the politeness effects conveyed by the future-reference verbal forms. However, these proposals should be taken as inconclusive and possibly indicative of the need for future research, more so given the major limitation of the study regarding the materials used for the linguistic analysis.

From the angle of language teaching, the study has tackled only the tip of the iceberg of the complex pragmatic competence development, yet it has emphasized its relevance and pointed to one way of overcoming the pragma(linguis)tic failure resulting from teaching-induced errors. The suggested approach is based on raising students' pragmatic awareness, including explicit metapragmatic information. Pointing to the interface of grammar and pragmatics instruction, this study has highlighted proposals regarding the input but also pointed to the relative merit of ETP textbooks for the development of pragmatic competence. This suggests that the teachers' engagement in enriching and developing appropriate materials is needed, since even when they exist the published materials do not always provide the type of texts and activities that a teacher is seeking for a given class (Mićović & Stojov 2011).

In this regard, the current study has added to the rather limited number of works that are developmental in nature and focused on teaching practice. As such, it could prove

useful at least as a starting point in addressing the ETP learners' pragmatic competence attainment, as well as indicating some directions for future research.

LITERATURE

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POVZETEK

Od slovnične do pragmatične kompetence: glagolski čas in aspekt kot sredstvi za izražanje vljudnosti v angleščini za potrebe turizma

Da bi zmanjšali verjetno odstopanje med pragmatičnim in gramatičnim razvojem učencev angleščine za potrebe turizma (AJT), je potrebno v poučevanje vključiti pragmatične aspekte polivaletnih slovničnih paradigem. Prispevek opisuje analizo glagolskega časa in aspekta z dvema dopolnjujočima se ciljema: 1) določiti in ponuditi opis rabe različnih oblik glagolskih časov in aspekta, ki imajo funkcijo notranjih pragmatičnih modifikatorjev, s katerimi se doseže višja stopnja vljudnosti v AJT, ter 2) predstaviti ugotovitve in oblikovati predloge za učitelje AJT. V analizi, ki je usmerjena predvsem v jezikovno pragmatiko, smo uporabili besedila za slušno razumevanje iz štirih učbenikov. Analiza je potrdila povezavo med analiziranimi jezikovnimi elementi in izražanjem vljudnosti. Posebej se je osredotočila na teoretični okvir za rabo preteklega pogojnika, preteklika in nedovršnih oblik, osvetlila pa je tudi vljudnostne aspekte, izražene z glagolskimi oblikami v prihodnjiku. Prav tako predlagamo, da se pri poučevanju AJT spodbuja jezikovnopragmatična zavest učenca.

Ključne besede: pragmatična kompetenca, angleščina kot jezik stroke turizma, glagolski čas in aspekt, vljudnost

ABSTRACT

To start reducing the probable discrepancy between English for Tourism Purposes (ETP) learners' pragmatic and grammatical development, the pragmatic facets of the polyvalent grammatical categories should be reflected in the instruction. The study focused on tense and aspect with two complementary aims: 1) to identify and set forth a characterization of tense and aspectual verbal forms used as the internal pragmatic modifiers contributing to politeness in ETP, and 2) to highlight the relevant points and outline the proposals for ETP teachers. The listening scripts from four textbooks were used in an analysis primarily oriented towards pragmalinguistics. The study confirmed the association between the investigated linguistic items and politeness, and provided the theoretical account of the hypothetical past, past tense and progressive aspect, but also shed light on the politeness effects conveyed by future-reference verbal forms. It also suggested an approach in ETP instruction based on raising students' pragmatic awareness.

Key words: pragmatic competence, English for Tourism Purposes, tense, aspect, politeness