

Teaching negotiation in a globalised world: Benefits of a genre approach

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The paper presents a genre-based approach to the study of negotiation within EAP classes and reports on results obtained using a negotiation model meant to increase students' awareness of the generic features of this communicative activity. The model is based on the Pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation offering a double perspective on argumentation discourse, namely a descriptive and normative perspective. The paper, based on desk and field research, aims to help business language students improve their argumentation and negotiation skills by developing discourse skills beyond a simple stage by stage negotiation strategy. To do so it examines the advantages and disadvantages of traditional teaching of negotiation skills and introduces the Pragma-dialectical theory of negotiation developed by van Eemeren and Grootendorst at the University of Amsterdam. The author demonstrates how the practical application of this approach has improved the performance of MA students in Romania.

KEYWORDS: negotiation, English for Academic Purposes, pragma-dialectical theory, discourse analysis, argumentation, intercultural communication



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1. INTRODUCTION

The study argues in favour of a genre-based approach to teaching foreign languages at the academic level illustrated by a type of communicative activity which is highly important for the training of those studying for a degree in Economics, i.e. discourse of negotiation. The study overviews research on negotiation to establish the type and characteristic features of the analysed discourse, followed by some remarks on the benefits of the genre approach to foreign language teaching. The main part of the paper describes the way of teaching negotiation in English to students enrolled in MA programme on Business

Administration based on a generic model inspired by the Pragma-Dialectical Theory of Argumentation. The study draws conclusions on the benefits of the genre approach and offers some remarks on further research directions.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Studies on negotiation

Negotiation is referred to in this study as part of institutional discourse used to resolve conflicts and reach a settlement or compromise, and not in the sense of a discursive strategy in which meaning is negotiated by participants in the communicative event (Martin & Rose, 2007).

The discourse-based approach draws on concepts from socio-linguistics and is descriptive in nature, focusing on the discursive process itself through which communication and interaction unfold, without evaluating the process as good or bad. The major points analysed are: (a) context (the situation in which the negotiation takes place), (b) participant roles, (c) communicative rules and rituals appropriate for a certain communicative situation (the stages of the negotiation, the way in which the negotiation proceeds), (d) forms of discourse (genres), types of language used, and (e) rhetorical strategies that define identities and relationships (including degrees of formality, showing respect for seniority, etc.).

In their analyses, researchers adopting a discourse approach focus mainly on aspects like lexical choice, turn taking design, sequence organisation, overall structural organisation, social epistemology and social relations, as well as the ways in which power and ideology surface in the discourse. Inevitably, in international negotiations issues of cultural differences are also reflected in the language used and behaviour adopted, for example in the use of direct and indirect speech to convey agreement and disagreement.

The genre approach narrows down the analysis to forms of discourse (genres) that are specific for various communicative situations. This may refer to presenting and questioning a position, making

proposals, expressing compromise, bargaining and agreement.

The bulk of research on negotiation has emerged from economics, game and bargaining theory, political science, anthropology and social psychology, contributing to the establishment of a theory of negotiation on the basis of linguistics which studies negotiation as a discourse phenomenon or a genre.

The rapid development of the discourse of negotiation is closely related to the spread of globalisation in almost every field of human activity which brings together people from various cultural backgrounds pursuing the same or similar goals. The term 'negotiation' appears in numerous studies on discourse analysis, pragmatics and sociolinguistics, but its meaning has been used mainly metaphorically or incidentally. In its broadest sense, negotiation can be viewed as a subset of institutional discourse which has as its key features: conflict, cooperation and talk.

2.2 Institutionalised discourse

This study concerns negotiation as a genre encountered in institutional discourse. In defining this term, the study draws on the work of Drew and Heritage (1992), Boden and Zimmerman (1991), Firth (1995), Scollon and Scollon (1995) and Fairclough (1989, 1996), whereby

institutionalised conversation contains discourses (both spoken and written) characterised by a task-related dimension and by the fact that one or all of the participants in the interaction represent a formal organisation, such as a trade union, management, a medical profession, social welfare, a court room, a school or a university.

Institutional interaction may often involve special and particular constraints on the contributions of participants. Depending on the institutional contexts, these constraints may be stronger or weaker. Strong constraints govern verbal interactions in the courtroom, in the classroom or in a medical examination. Business meetings are less constrained whereas casual conversation may be described as having a certain 'looseness' (Goffman, 1974).

Negotiation has been studied as a formal event, with well-established temporal and spatial constraints linked with institutions such as unions, management, trade, and diplomacy. It has seldom been studied as an activity pervading a multitude of social contexts and interpersonal encounters. Seen as an activity, negotiation has been analysed as a communicative attempt to settle potential or real differences in interests among participants in order to achieve mutually acceptable results.

Negotiation can encompass numerous settings but what distinguishes negotiation from other activity

'In its broadest sense negotiation can be viewed as a subset of institutional discourse which has as its key features: conflict, cooperation and talk'

types is that it 'presupposes a particular type of communication that involves an element of 'bargaining', an interaction between two or more social units attempting to define and redefine the terms of their relationship. It deliberately uses communication to change outcomes' (Bell, 1995, p. 72).

Negotiation implies common though mostly conflicting interests, pursuing certain goals and achieving agreement or compromise. Negotiation is therefore structured through social and linguistic interaction in social settings, having the communication process as one of its crucial features.

Current interest in the study of professional communication genres has its origin in the study of genres in literature and various branches of linguistics.

Negotiation was initially the process of haggling in the barter or sale of various goods in the marketplace. The restricted term – *bargaining* – is the one that best defines this early stage of

‘Negotiation was initially the process of haggling in the barter or sale of various goods in the marketplace’

concept. In the early modern period (late 16th century), negotiation broadened its meaning to encompass the sphere of politics, referring to the interchange between rulers and princes.

Beginning with modernism and post-modernism, when traditional values and ways of life were questioned and discredited, the concept of negotiation acquired a significance never encountered before. The frequency of negotiation in modern societies can be explained by the fact that today negotiation is seen as the main response to the crisis in the traditional ways of making social adjustments, the most efficient means of solving conflicts. Thus, modern society considers negotiation as a way of life, a *modus operandi* for the ever-growing number of conflicts in social life.

‘Ours is an age of negotiation. The fixed positions and solid values of the past seem to be giving way, and new rules, roles and relations have to be worked out. The easy cognitive recognition systems of the Cold War have first multiplied and then melted, revealing the necessity of talking things over and out. Negotiation becomes a way of life’ (Putnam & Roloff, 1992, p. 1).

Globalisation, understood as the spread of manufacturing, distribution, financial and capital movements enhanced by ICT (information communication technologies), has brought different styles of negotiation together as never before. The globalisation trend has brought together opposing tendencies. Due to the tensions brought about by two opposite tendencies in modern societies, the tendency towards individualism and the tendency towards collectivism, manifest in all fields of social life, heighten the need for dialogue to accommodate sometimes highly divergent points of view. The intricate connections of social life generate relationships of dependency between individuals and social institutions, relations that are no longer imposed but are freely consented to. Sociologists today see negotiation as one of the most efficient procedures of decision-making.

Due to this new and enriched meaning of negotiation, it has become a defining feature of democratic societies, where individual needs and rights are correlated in a non-conflictual way with larger collective interests.

The evolution of negotiation has influenced also the place where it originally appeared, the market. This is witnessed even in the sphere of economic relations where bargaining – in its restricted meaning – was predominant, a change towards the more general meaning of the concept, with a stress

‘Considering negotiation as a communicative event, one cannot ignore the national dimension, the fact that each culture has its own particularities that make themselves manifest in the respective event’

on principled, reasonable settlements and outcomes (Fisher et al., 1991).

Considering negotiation as a communicative event, one cannot ignore the national dimension, the fact that each culture has its own particularities that make themselves manifest in the respective event. Cultural differences are important for the evolution of the negotiation process, and this is more obvious today, when globalisation phenomena bring together people with different cultural backgrounds. It is, however, difficult to establish whether the differences encountered in negotiation are due to differences in culture, the character of negotiators, or even the differences in the political systems.

Research work in cross-cultural negotiations has been conducted mainly in the field of sociology or discourse analysis and has stemmed from the growing interrelationships among nations due to the phenomenon of globalisation. People from different countries have different opinions about

what is correct or normal behaviour. Sociologists and anthropologists such as Hall (1966), Hofstede (1994), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1993) and others have tried to explain these differences in cultural and behavioural patterns through some aspects of key cultural patterns such as power distance, masculine vs feminine behaviour, individualism vs collectivism, avoidance of uncertainty, etc. (Hofstede, 1994).

In analysing intercultural discourse, the researcher must try to give a balanced cultural description, taking into account the full complexity of cultural topics. The tendency to single out one topic or to give a negative or positive value to it may bring about what is called ‘ideological statement’ or ‘stereotyping’. As Scollon and Scollon (1995) define it, *‘Ideological statement or stereotyping often arises when someone comes to believe that any two cultures or social groups, or, as we prefer to call them, two discourse systems, can be treated as if they were polar opposites’* (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p. 155).

These general cultural ideological statements may bring about oversimplified descriptions of cultural groups by focusing on individual members of cultural groups whose characteristics are then attributed to the whole group.

Cross-cultural communication is a wide domain which interests different categories of researchers

ranging from anthropologists and sociolinguists to speech communication analysts and teachers of foreign languages. While their theoretical interests are often quite different, Scollon and Scollon (1995) argue that they have to share at least a basic set of assumptions in order to avoid stereotyping or overgeneralisation, including the following: (1) humans are not all the same; (2) at least some of the differences among them show culturally or socially predictable patterns, (3) at least some of those patterns are reflected in patterns of discourse, (4) some of those differences in discourse patterns lead directly to unwanted social problems such as intergroup hostility, stereotyping, preferential treatment and discrimination (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p. 156).

2.3 Teaching negotiation – a genre approach

Genres are different ways of using language to achieve socially and culturally established aims. Therefore, one of their most important characteristic features that has to be taught is that they are communicative activities with a well-defined purpose. They are targeted as well as produced by a particular community. The study of genres is indebted to literary criticism, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, cultural anthropology and rhetorical studies (Swales, 1990). An important concept is the idea that the process of institutionalisation renders genres as expressions of the epoch's dominant ideology (Duff, 2000).

'The tendency to single out one topic or to give a negative or positive value to it may bring about what is called cultural ideology or stereotyping'

'Each epoch has its own system of genres, which stands in some relation to the dominant ideology, and so on. Like any other institution, genres bring to light the constitutive features of the society to which they belong ... a society chooses and codifies the acts that correspond most closely to its ideology; that is why the existence of certain genres in one society, their absence in another, are revelatory of the ideology, and allow us to establish it more or less confidently' (Duff, 2000, p. 200).

The various ways in which the concept of genre has been studied in literature and linguistics reinforces Swales's (1990) claim that genre analysis cannot be equated with text analysis. If literary studies are concerned mainly with issues pertaining to the formal and content levels, the linguistic approaches are focused also on the communicative functions of the genre, on its social implications (settings, participants) and on the cognitive models underlying them.

All these aspects are highlighted by the definition of the genre as a non-literary text type.

‘Studies on genre teaching indicate that genres differ widely depending on the academic disciplines’

Teaching various genres within the framework of Language for Academic Purposes has been one of the author’s constant preoccupations as a language teacher for quite a long time. The genre-based approach implies teaching and analysing texts from three perspectives: understanding, decoding and, finally, production. One of the most important achievements of teaching genres would be to foster genre awareness among students.

Studies on genre teaching indicate that genres differ widely depending on the academic disciplines (Hyland, 2006). Thus, genres belonging to the field of humanities, such as essays, letters, and dissertations, have a looser structure, contain more stance items (hedges, explicit markers of evaluation and attitude) than those in the field of science and engineering.

As far as Romania is concerned, before 1989 the use of negotiation as a means of conflict settlement was rare, mainly because in totalitarian societies the idea of individuals or groups with conflicting interests is not accepted and the social dialogue is non-existent. However, the restricted term *bargaining*, was in use and courses on

international bargaining were part of the curricula in the Economics faculties. These courses drew on American references such as, William Scott’s *The Skills of Negotiating* (1981) which was translated into Romanian. There were also diplomatic negotiations conducted before 1989, but due to the lack of information in this field, one cannot arrive at consistent, well-documented conclusions regarding negotiation in that period. Since 1989, however, negotiations have seen a rapid development in Romania together with the introduction of democratic institutions.

As far as training in negotiation is concerned, once again the main source is American books on negotiation, which have been translated into Romanian and are widely used in academic training. The need to teach genres which are part of students’ professional background has become a priority. In LAP (Language for Academic Purposes) classes, the author has tried not only to introduce the genres that helped students improve their knowledge, (in this case, of English) but also to enable students to understand, analyse and produce professional genres in the target language. The reason for this is twofold: firstly, to enable Romanian graduates to obtain jobs in the international market where knowledge of English is a necessity, and secondly, to contribute to the general effort of internationalisation that Romanian universities are making internally at present. More BA and MA programmes in Economics,

‘The way the generic activity of negotiation is perceived is governed by historical and social factors and these may differ from one culture or one country to another’

Management, Science and Engineering are being offered in English not only for Romanian, but also international students.

A genre-based approach to teaching language or in providing courses in English has become part of this trend in Romanian universities. Most of the students enrolled in this course have a good command of English (CEFR – Council of Europe Framework of Reference – level B2 or C1).

Therefore, the focus is less on vocabulary and other linguistic aspects and more on the generic and argumentative aspect of negotiation as a communicative activity.

Despite the variability of negotiation events, a genre-based study of negotiations has its benefits. Firstly, it allows insights into the overall rhetorical structure, distinguishing general and special features. As a result, the participants develop a control of the metalanguage and a critical awareness of their own negotiation skills and abilities. Secondly, the organising principles of negotiations are better understood and more effectively used. Last but not least, from a

pedagogic point of view, genre analysis is valuable if it succeeds in ‘sensitising students to the rhetorical effects and to the rhetorical structures that tend to recur in genre-specific texts’ (Swales, 1990, p. 213).

The study of genres seems a beneficial undertaking because this way some difficulties arising during intercultural negotiations can be overcome. The way the generic activity of negotiation is perceived is governed by historical and social factors and these may differ from one culture or one country to another. Negotiation itself may be perceived differently and have positive or negative connotations. Cultural and generic awareness can be developed in foreign language classes and it can result in the students noticing aspects that are usually taken for granted and go unnoticed otherwise.

‘There is the way the culture institutionalises the pattern of discursive behaviours for negotiators and shares a sense of whether these can be flexibly worked out on each occasion, or must follow an unvarying formula ... There is the way a culture develops a sense of the appropriate styles for speech acts, for example, how to do the acts of ‘consulting’ and of ‘arranging’ and ‘deciding’ and of talking to one’s team or to the members of the other, and so on’ (Mulholland, 1995, p. 81).

The aspects mentioned by Mulholland (1995)

above are usually left out of those courses, very popular in Romania and probably elsewhere, which teach students various skills and, of course, negotiation skills as well. In the language classroom, these skills can be accompanied by generic analysis and linguistic analysis which highlight precisely those aspects that are left out of 'how-to' courses.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Some authors such as Scott (1981) and Fisher et al. (1991) adopt a prescriptive approach and present negotiation as an activity consisting of several well-established patterns of individual behaviour that makes each participant's actions predictable to the other, to a certain extent. Leaders in this field are often lawyers and other practitioners who are very sceptical about the possibilities of learning much from the analysis of the details of the actual talk of negotiation. Some have produced extremely influential reports on general strategies of negotiation such as focusing on interests rather than on positions (Fisher et al., 1991) or on 'how to deal with X'. These courses focus on aspects such as politeness (face saving, face-threatening strategies), negotiating styles (collaborative or competitive), cross-cultural differences, and customs and traditions.

A major drawback of such books is that they ignore linguistic aspects and discourse analysis of the few examples given. They limit themselves to

stating the rules that have to be followed. No simulations or case studies of actual negotiations are available to illustrate the theoretical framework. The cases narrated are, however, useful as a starting point for role-playing and simulations in the classroom.

4 STUDY AND RESULTS

4.1 The pragma-dialectal theory of argumentation

The methodology used in order to postulate a generic structure for negotiations is based on the Pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation that aims at analysing precisely argumentative texts that are dialogic in nature.

In the last 20 years, a group of speech communication scholars of the University of Amsterdam (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2016; Van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2015; Feteris, 2009) together with colleagues from the University of Arizona (Van Eemeren et al., 2015) have been developing a new method for the analysis of argumentative discourse called *Pragma-dialectics*.

Pragma-dialectical theory views argumentation as a dialectical process of problem solving and tries to capture how both participants in the process contribute to the interaction. The ultimate goal is to achieve an analytic overview of argumentative discourse that incorporates everything necessary for a critical evaluation of the argumentative discourse.

This new approach to argumentation uses a dialectical and a normative pragmatic perspective in constructing its critical discussion model. Pragma-dialecticians consider that in every form of communication and interaction, and in argumentation in particular, there is a certain normativity involved.

A major concept that influenced the pragma-dialectical approach is the concept of 'ideal speech situation' postulated by Jürgen Habermas. According to Habermas (1983), human social existence is based on asymmetrical relations of power, constraint and dependence. On the basis of a rational consensus regarding what constitutes ideal forms of human communication, the philosophical concept of ideal speech situation can be used to evaluate the actual systems of beliefs and the modes of communication to help people become emancipated from their oppression and to diminish the repressive character of social interaction as much as possible. For Habermas (1983), it is extremely important that speech should minimise the differences in power between speakers and that ideologies be critiqued.

Besides the ideal speech situation with its validity conditions, Pragma-dialectics has also been influenced by Speech Acts Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1979) and Grice's (1981) concept of co-operative conversational situation. Arguments are

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made via speech acts and have the properties of speech acts. According to the Pragma-dialectical theory, an argument is conceived of as a complex speech act made up of some simpler speech acts and structured at a global level by a set of felicity conditions. A central concept of this theory is that of the *critical discussion*, which is considered an ideal model for disagreement resolution that allows the analyst to examine real life disputation practices critically. What distinguishes critical discussion from other disputes is the fact that the aim of critical discussion is to resolve a conflict. The resolution of a conflict presupposes that both parties in the conflict are convinced that this is the only correct and justified solution. The fact that the only acceptable ending for this discussion is resolution allows for an unlimited number of opportunities to further the discussion. Another characteristic of this type of discussion is that the participants have symmetrical status and that power does not influence its outcome.

The resolution of a dispute ideally passes through four stages which correspond to four different

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phases of a critical discussion (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2016): (a) the confrontation stage; (b) the opening stage; (c) the argumentative stage; and (d) the concluding stage.

The confrontation stage is the one in which one participant in the critical discussion advances a point of view, which then is questioned by the other side.

In the opening stage, the protagonist is prepared to defend his or her standpoint, while the antagonist is prepared to criticise it.

In the argumentative stage, the protagonist presents arguments meant to support his or her standpoint, whereas the antagonist elicits further arguments if he or she is still in doubt. The argumentative stage is the one in which the complex argumentation patterns are displayed.

The concluding stage is shaped by one of the following two possibilities: the antagonist accepts the argumentation as a resolution to the dispute, or

the protagonist withdraws if the argumentation has not been accepted as a suitable resolution.

The concluding stage establishes the outcome of the discussion in the form of a resolution or of a decision that no resolution could be reached.

Critical discussion acts as a grid against which actual real-life disputes or discussions can be assessed via the above-mentioned rules. The deviations from the ideal model help the analyst identify the rationality behind the actions of the discussants and the standards of communication to which the discussants hold themselves.

In negotiation, for instance, a reasonable solution is to reach a settlement through compromise rather than to reach a decision through forcing the issue at stake. The process of bargaining assumes a strategic position on the part of the discussants because they calculate where their best interests lie under conditions of mutual interdependence. The end point of successful bargaining is a commitment to carry out a joint plan of action based on the belief that this is the best both parties can get.

A central problem in the analysis is that the reconstruction known by the name of *analytical overview* should be relevant to the normative analysis undertaken by the scholar and to the intentions and understandings of the ordinary

participants in the piece of discourse under analysis.

The principal use of the ideal model of the critical discussion is to enable the analyst to perform a normative reconstruction of real life argumentative discourse in order to evaluate it, to understand its fallacies and incongruities if present.

Compared to the ideal argumentative conduct, real life ordinary discourse appears as ambiguous, sometimes without explicitly stated purposes, argumentative roles or argumentative procedures. A dialectical reconstruction selects those features of the discourse that pertain to the argumentative structures, functions and content, and ignores other aspects that are less important from the argumentative point of view, such as repair, repetition, back-channeling, etc.

The analytical reconstruction of everyday argumentative conversation uses the following operations in order to select the relevant material: *deletion*, *addition*, *permutation* and *substitution*.

Deletion removes all the material that is considered irrelevant for the argumentative character: repetitions, repairs, false starts, jokes, etc.

Through *addition*, the analyst makes explicit all the unexpressed steps of the argumentation, rendering the material maximally argumentative.

Permutation refers to the fact that the material can be rearranged if necessary so as to clarify as much as possible the dialectical process which has led to a certain resolution. This operation is especially useful in everyday conversation, where the speech is loosely structured and informal. In the more institutionalised types of discourse where formality and planning are more obvious, the analyst won't have to resort to permutations too often.

Substitution attempts to recover the basic underlying speech acts for each step in the argumentation, to eliminate any indirectness and thus to obtain a clear presentation of those elements that fulfil a dialectical function in the discourse.

The aim of such a dialectical reconstruction is to bring the discourse in a form as close as possible to the standard normative model of the critical discussion.

The discussion stages are not explicitly announced or completely externalised. In real life situations implicitness and indirectness are very frequent and can make it difficult for the analyst to recognise the various stages.

4.2 The experiment

During the negotiation courses run with the students enrolled in the Business Administration MA programme, the author uses the concept of

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critical discussion and analytical overview in order to analyse simulated negotiations.

For instance, after a general presentation of the Pragma-dialectical theory, she presents students with an instance of simulated management-union negotiation concerning the topic of a rise in salary. The students are asked to take notes identifying the stages, the proposals and standpoints and arguments.

In this case, the negotiating parties established the agenda and the topic in the opening stage. In the confrontation stage, the union representatives presented the management with a proposal for a rise in salary while the latter not only turned down the amount, but also responded with its own proposal. Thus, this initial exchange of proposals established the disagreement zone, which was the starting point for the bargaining stage proper, in

which both parties presented the arguments aimed at reinforcing their initial proposals. The Union representatives used arguments from authority (for example, there are legal acts that stipulate that salaries should increase in line with the increase in the rate of inflation), statistics (for example, comparing wages in Romania with similar occupations abroad) causal arguments (for example, underpaid workers generating low quality products). The management came up with counterarguments and finally, with a proposal to raise the wages gradually over a given period of time.

This new perspective opened another line of negotiation concerning the timing of the rises, which finally brought the negotiations to an end.

The concluding stage summed up the discussion, established an initial rise in wages and agreed a schedule for the next round of negotiations.

One aspect observed by the students was the fact that arguments were not always relevant and that, sometimes proposals were rejected without any argumentative support.

Based upon the structure of the critical discussion postulated within the framework of the Pragma-dialectical theory a general format for negotiations can be suggested, as shown in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1

Pragma-dialectical format of negotiation

STAGES	MOVES
Opening stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establishing the issue - establishing procedure - introducing discussants
Confrontation stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expressing opposite/different standpoints - establishing positions
Bargaining stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advancing argumentation - requesting further argumentation - advancing proposal - accepting/rejecting proposal - advancing counterproposal
Concluding stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - summing up - establishing further steps - settlement/resort to a third party (mediation)/deadlock

Students attending the course are first offered a general presentation of negotiations from a discursive and generic point of view and are then given a brief course in argumentation (definition of arguments, argument structures, topics, fallacious arguments). This general model is applied to samples of negotiations (mostly simulated due to the difficulty of obtaining real life negotiation transcripts) during the course and the students are requested to perform an analysis and single out the various stages, moves and linguistic strategies used

in order to reach a settlement. The arguments used in the negotiation samples are also evaluated. The analysis performed is both descriptive and normative, as it evaluates samples of negotiations against a normative theoretical model of argumentation. The generic superstructure for the negotiation proposed outlines the phases, sections and moves based on the argumentation tasks and sub-tasks of this communicative event.

Having analysed several negotiation samples,

students then participate in simulated negotiations which are then evaluated by their colleagues. The discussions following these simulations help participants to improve their negotiation and argumentation skills.

In the questionnaires completed at the end of the course 70% of the students acknowledged an improvement in their ability to negotiate or to conduct argumentative disputes. They also noted that the simulated negotiations should be videoed and more time should be allotted to teaching argumentation.

5. CONCLUSION

The concepts of the Pragma-dialectical theory supplemented with a generic perspective can provide a suitable methodology for the study and teaching of negotiation as it offers both a critical, evaluative approach and a descriptive one. It can be included in LAP (Language for Academic Purposes) courses helping students not only to master a genre relevant for their degree (management, economics, business administration, etc.) but also to improve their linguistic abilities. Among the practical consequences of genre studies, an important place is held by the influence of the findings on the process of teaching the respective genres.

The teaching of negotiation as a distinctive communicative activity aimed at reaching

consensus has a wide range of applications in domains such as economics, management, sociology and politics, as well as in any other field in which communicative skills are required. The Pragma-dialectical theory offers by means of its empirical and practical components a methodology for the enhancement of what Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2016) term as *argumentative competence*. The main points that have to be stressed with respect to this concept of argumentative competence is the fact that it is relative, it can be acquired gradually and it comprises various kinds of different competencies.

Therefore, the aim of a teaching programme should focus on a certain type of competence, within the general argumentative competence, for instance, a negotiating competence that can be better defined and understood in the framework of a generic approach. This approach encompasses information concerning the discursive tasks and sub-tasks, the macro and microstructures, as well as a multi-level analysis of interactional moves, argument types and schemes and specific linguistic clues. The teaching of negotiating competence should therefore expand beyond the task of the prescriptive literature (which focuses on strategies and tactics meant to bring about successful results) to an understanding of the argumentation process proper as well as second-order conditions that need to be mastered in order to be considered an effective negotiator. Thus,

training should refer to the identification and evaluation of argumentation schemes, types of arguments and their relevance for negotiation, and also face-to-face politeness strategies that are intended to preserve a collaborative attitude during the negotiation process.

The teaching of negotiating competence within a programme of second language acquisition will have to lay more emphasis on the linguistic aspects through which the generic structure becomes manifest and on the cultural similarities and differences that are mainly noticeable as differences in negotiation styles.

In particular, as far as international negotiation is concerned, it will have to take into account the different cultural communication styles adopted by negotiators, such as the use of high or low context communication, direct or indirect ways of making points. The use of formality to show respect or create distance, the use of emotion and, as

previously mentioned, the conventions regarding turn taking (interrupting or waiting).

The drawing up of textbooks and other teaching materials using the generic perspective will have to generate not only skills but a certain *discussion-minded attitude* in individuals that will improve not only students' ability to use the rules of reasonable argumentation but also the second-order rules, rules that refer to more general organisation principles and values governing democratic institutions.

Developing generic competences such as argumentation competence or negotiation competence, even if somewhat marginal to the tasks of a foreign language teacher, are important as they can make their small but significant contribution to the change in institutional practices leading to greater democracy in international business negotiation and decision-making.

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