УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ „СВ. КИРИЛ И МЕТОДИЈ" – СКОПЈЕ

ШКОЛА ЗА ДОКТОРСКИ СТУДИИ

ФИЛОЛОШКИ ФАКУЛТЕТ „БЛАЖЕ КОНЕСКИ"

Студиска програма: АНГЛИСКИ ЈАЗИК

Sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences in Business English courses in higher education in North Macedonia

Кандидат

М-р Линдита Фаузи Скендери

Ментор:

проф. д-р Солзица Поповска

Април, 2022

Скопје

Abstract

In recent years, there has been an increase in the interest of researchers of Applied Linguistics in general, and ESP specifically, regarding the development of pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence in ESP. However, the focus on Business English has not been specific as much as it is necessary. This obviously includes North Macedonia too. There are some studies conducted in this field, but, there can never be something such as too much research. Business English is a course in programs of Economics, Marketing and Finances as well as Business Administration, and students are given the opportunity to learn and prepare themselves for their future job. Nonetheless, one of the many questions that arise is whether the development of pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence is an objective for Business English teachers at all? And then there are other follow-up questions regarding the external factors that affect these objectives, such as conditions, books or students' prior knowledge of English.

The idea for this study came as a need more than anything else. Seeing students after two or three terms of attending a Business English course, lacking pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences, motivated me to get into this research and see the outcomes of teaching Business English in the Higher education in North Macedonia. It seems that our students just broaden their knowledge they have been taught prior to coming to university. If they have a certain level of proficiency in English, they improve very little after attending these ESP courses. That is why this study aimed to research if these competences are possessed by students who study Business (or similar fields) through a survey, and if not, see where the problems may lay, as well as suggest possible recommendations for improvement.

The participants were 256 learners of Business English, who at the time attended this course, in 5 different universities in North Macedonia. The results showed that they are not competent regarding these two competences, which took us to the second part of the research, the testing step. The results of the test showed an increase, though not enough, in the experimental group learners' competence improvement that they had received through instruction, during a full term at the University of Tetovo. The research findings show us that these learners can really improve their competences, and the necessary steps that need to be taken are all analyzed in the discussions part. The study has important outcomes regarding books that are used, the conditions

where Business English is taught and the impact of explicit methods of teaching these competences.

Key words: *Business English; Competences; Sociolinguistic; Pragmatic; Higher education;*

Апстракт

Во последниве години, се забележува зголемување на интересот на истражувачите на применетата лингвистика генерално, и конкретно на англискиот јазик во функција на струката, во однос на развојот на прагматичната и социолингвистичката компетентност во АЈФС. Сепак, фокусот на деловниот англиски јазик не бил специфичен колку што е потребно. Овде очигледно е вклучена и Северна Македонија. Има некои студии спроведени на ова поле, но тоа не значи дека е направено големо истражување. Деловниот англиски јазик е настава за програми за економија, маркетинг и финансии, како и за бизнис администрација, а на студентите им се дава можност да учат и да се подготват за нивната идна работа. Сепак, едно од многуте прашања што се појавуваат е: Дали развојот на прагматичната и социолингвистичката компетентност е воопшто цел на наставниците по деловен англиски јазик? Има и други дополнителни прашања во врска со надворешните фактори кои влијаат на овие цели, како што се: условите, книгите или претходното познавање на англискиот јазик на студентите.

Идејата за оваа студија дојде како потреба повеќе од било што друго. Гледајќи студенти (по два или три семестри) кои ја следат наставата по деловен англиски јазик, а притоа немаат прагматични и социолингвистички компетенции, ме мотивираше да го спроведам ова истражување и да ги видам резултатите од наставата по деловен англиски јазик во високото образование во Северна Македонија. Се чини дека нашите студенти само ги прошируваат своите знаења кои ги усвоиле на предавањата пред да дојдат на универзитет. Доколку имаат одредено ниво на владеење на англискиот јазик, тие многу малку се подобруваат по посетувањето на наставата по англиски во функција на струката. Затоа оваа студија имаше за цел да истражи дали овие компетенции ги поседуваат студентите кои студираат Бизнис (или слични области) преку анкета, а ако не, да се види каде може да стојат проблемите, како и тоа да се предложат можни препораки за подобрување.

Учесници беа 256 студенти кои следат деловен англиски, кои во тоа време посетуваа настава по АЈФС, од 5 различни универзитети во Северна Македонија. Резултатите покажаа дека тие не се компетентни во однос на овие две компетенции, што нè одведе до вториот дел од истражувањето, чекорот на тестирање. Резултатите од тестот покажаа подобрување во развивањето на компетентноста на учениците од експерименталната група што го добија

4

преку настава, за време на целиот семестар на Универзитетот во Тетово. Наодите од истражувањето ни покажуваат дека овие ученици навистина можат да ги подобрат своите компетенции, а потребните чекори што треба да се преземат се анализирани во делот за дискусија. Студијата има важни резултати во однос на книгите што се користат, условите каде што се изучува деловен англиски јазик и влијанието на експлицитните методи на предавање на овие компетенции.

Клучни зборови: *деловен англиски; компетенции; социолингвистика; прагматика; високо образование.*

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed by myself and that it has not been submitted, in any previous application for a degree in this or any other institution. This work presented is entirely my own, except where stated otherwise by reference.

Dedicated to my daughter, Amarda.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Solzica Popovska. She was a huge support throughout all this time, guiding me from the beginning of my doctoral studies. I have to say her professional support and psychological guidance have made me work very hard even when I thought I couldn't do it. I am also thankful to my parents who always worked hard so I can get where I am today, and my husband who never stopped believing in me. Thank you for making this academic journey easier. Forever grateful.

Contents

List of tables

List of figures

List of graphs

Graph 1. Subjects surveyed by University

Graph 2. Subjects surveyed by age group

Graph 3. Competences that students are familiar with

Graph 4. Using competences during course

Graph 5. Classrooms equipped by University

Graph 6. The options that students have been taught in their BE course

Graph 7. Learning-objective factors in learning BE

Graph 8. Psychological-subjective factors in learning Business English

Graph 9. I prefer activities in pair or in group rather than individual ones

Graph 10. I like listening to audio materials in English and discuss them

Graph 11. Large groups of students stop me from active participation in class

Graph 12. I prefer the use of the mother tongue in the class rather than English

Graph 13. My previously learned English is not good enough for the level required in Business English

Graph 14. I never feel secure when answering something in class

Graph 15. I find it hard to reply when the teacher asks me

Graph 16. I feel embarrassment when I have to answer in class

Graph 17. I feel nervous when I can't understand the teacher

Graph 18. I feel ready to communicate in English in a real business setting in a near future with the materials that have been taught to

Graph 19. I learn about other cultures through the materials offered

List of Abbreviations

ESP   English For Specific Purposes

SLA   Second Language Acquisition

EFL   English As A Foreign Language

BELF   Business English As Lingua Franca

ESL   English as a Second Language

NNS   Non-native speaker

CLT   Communicative Language Teaching

1. Introduction

The world is continuously becoming more competitive and this makes success depend more on the communication skills of professionals. These skills represent the speakers' ability to understand and be understood. According to a LinkedIn Research article, good communication skills are among the most demanded soft skills in the world of business (Berger, 2016). Communication can be verbal or nonverbal, formally or informally so as to transmit provocative opinions and ideas, through gesture, action, etc. People are able to speak, but we must learn to speak well and communicate effectively and this communication is an essential part of any type of company. Additionally, having good communication skills is crucially important in the business world. Any kind of communication requires a two-way process of delivering and receiving a message, in order for communication to successfully occur (Markovic and Salamzadeh, 2018).

This is what makes young learners and graduates pay more attention to developing their communicative skills. When we talk about successful communication in Business, it is unavoidable to know that English is the language which connects all the bridges in the business world. English, as a global language, is being relied on as such, in all kinds of fields such as media, commerce and technology. This has made people put emphasis on the ability to communicate in English.

In some countries, speaking English has even started to be considered as a "basic skill" (Fraser, 2010) just as important as numeracy and literacy. In language context, these skills are referred to as competences. Indeed, the ability to communicate does not only mean speaking skills, but other skills too, reading, listening and writing, respectively.

In North Macedonia, just as in other developing countries, the main focus of English teaching has been on knowledge of the English language as a system. However, it's time to place the focus on the ability to communicate successfully internationally. This is an obvious need because of the major changes that have happened politically and economically, mainly because of the globalization of the job market. Not only are graduates freer to move in different countries to find a job, but even if they choose to live here in North Macedonia, there are many different international companies that use English as their official language of communication. Achieving communicative competence in a foreign language, English in our case, depends on several factors such as teaching methodology, the types of materials used in the classroom and student's personal motivation which plays a huge role in developing these competences.

The term "communicative competence" as a defined goal to be achieved in foreign language teaching has found great popularity among teachers, researchers and students since its introduction as a term by Hymes in the mid-1960s. Since then, many researchers have given various definitions of communicative competence. Leaning on Hymes, Bachman believes that communicative language ability as a concept is a competence for using knowledge appropriately (1990). According to Canale and Swain, communicative competence is "synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill" which is needed for communication (cited in Bagaric 96). While Hedge (2000) defines communicative competence as knowledge of language rules and how these rules are used to understand and produce the appropriate language in different socio-cultural backgrounds. These competences have changed the focus of language studies from grammar to pragmatism and discourse. Learning languages is basically a skill-based learning and educational institutions need to train their students in the direction of developing all the skills that will help them build a career in the corporate world. Young graduates are aware that, regardless of the profession, knowledge of English is crucial to successfully navigate into this great and unpredictable world.

The English language has been used for specific aims in various fields for decades now. Today, in language schools and universities, there is English for Medicine, Arts, Business etc. These courses are known as English for Specific Purposes. It is known with the abbreviation ESP, and it represents a branch of applied linguistics that is intended for learners from specific areas. As such, it is perhaps the most appropriate branch where the emphasis may be put on the development of communicative competence. This does not mean that professionals do not need to know the language, but they should definitely know how to use that language within their profession. The focus of this subject is the student's needs, related to his future profession.

One of the types of ESP is Business English. Business English is defined as "the study and practice of composition with emphasis on correctness, propriety, spelling, punctuation, and the forms of business correspondence" (Merriam Webster). Savignon (1972) believes that communicative competence is an ability to function in a real business setting, and that's what students of Business English courses expect to achieve. That's why there is a need for research on the development of communicative competences which will help students be able to communicate successfully in their jobs in the future.

According to the Common European Language Framework (CEFR, 2001), communicative competence consists of three important competences: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic.

Linguistic competences are related to the knowledge of grammar, and also include other components of knowledge such as phonology and syntax. If a student knows when and how to use grammatical rules, it means that he has the linguistic competence.

Sociolinguistic competences are related to cultural and social rules. They deal with the social dimension of language use. It is not enough for our use of the foreign language to be grammatically correct, but we need to pay attention to other elements such as expression of courtesy, formality; how to properly address people, or to know which topics are taboo in different environments (Koran, 2016).

When learning the mother tongue, sociolinguistic elements are adopted in a natural way without any particular obstacles or misunderstandings by the speaker. From the very birth of children, they grow in a given cultural context, and the process of integrating socialization in everyday life occurs simultaneously. But when one begins to learn foreign language, these elements can be understood or used in different ways. Without sociolinguistic competences even the most grammatically correct sentences may give a different meaning than what the speaker had in mind (Mizne, 1997).

Apart from sociolinguistic competences, pragmatic competences are communicative competences, which, according to CEF, deal with the functional use of language resources. These competences also relate to the level of discourse, such as the cohesion and coherence of a textual understanding of the types and forms of the text, the use of irony, parody, etc. (CEF, 13). These competences are even more difficult to adopt due to various factors, such as the lack of appropriate materials, insufficient teaching staff, but also the insufficient knowledge of language by teachers. The paper will concentrate on sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences in foreign language learning, especially in the study of business English which are less researched in North Macedonia.

1.1 Objective of the study

The main objective of this research is to find out whether sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences are developed in Business English teaching in higher education in the Republic of North Macedonia. The thesis also examines how much communicative competence development depends on classroom input and the materials used for the course. The surveys conducted with teachers of Business English in 5 universities in North Macedonia and their students, will show whether these competences are represented in Business English teaching materials in their studies. At the same time, we will identify the other factors that hamper the development of these competences, and fail to prepare students for the ability to communicate in English in the future in a real business setting as part of their profession.

In accordance with the purpose of the research, the issues that this research seeks to answer are the following:

- Are sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences developed in Business English courses in higher education in North Macedonia?
- Do professors have conditions, i.e., time, sources, books and enough linguistically competent students to develop sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences?
- What factors are most common among students in North Macedonia in hampering the development of these competences?
- Which methods help in developing the socio-pragmatic competences of students?

The following hypotheses will occupy a central place in this paper:

- Students fail to develop the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences of Business English courses in higher education in the Republic of North Macedonia
  From this hypothesis, the following sub-hypotheses arise:
- Teachers fail to develop sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, as curricula are not appropriate.
- Most students do not speak English at the required level to be able to develop sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences.

1.2 Structure of the study

The doctoral thesis is divided into six parts. The first part gives the theoretical framework with an explanation of the purpose, hypotheses and issues related to the thesis. It gives an overview of the importance of English in general, and English for Specific Purposes, moving to the role of Business English and the possession of communicative competence in graduates, who aspire to be part of the business world.

The second part provides an overview of literature review in the field of ESP and communicative competences, in particular research related to the development of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences in business English teaching. It begins from General English, to ESP, then moves to what others have said about Business English. Moreover, communicative competences are reviewed and analyzed based on the CEFR.

The third part contains the methodology and methods that were used in the realization of the research. It also explains which universities were involved, how many students, and how many professors took part in the survey.

The fourth section will deal with the results of the analysis of books, student questionnaires and interviews conducted with professors.

The fifth part of the thesis includes discussion of those results, including a more detailed analysis such as correlation of responses and the use of other statistical analyses, which were analyzed via the SPSS program. The results that prove the hypothesis are explained and compared to other similar studies conducted in other countries.

The sixth section includes the final observations that arise from the discussion which includes the significance of this research and its application in teaching, as well as identifying the disadvantages of the research. Hence there will be recommendations for further research in this area. Also, it is planned to incorporate both the identification and the disadvantages of the research and based on them to give suggestions for more thorough research.

I THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 English for Specific Purposes

What this part of the study includes is in fact a review of what has already been said and researched about English for Specific Purposes and communicative competences. Furthermore, it also includes reviews about teaching materials, their evaluation and development, the role of the teacher in the ESP class and in the process of finding a good material to teach in the Business English classroom.

The English language is undoubtedly one of the main languages in the world, connecting countries, people, businesses and all that requires a tool that makes communication possible.

English became a very important language somewhere after World War II. As technology, economy and science began to rise, it was inevitable to have a language that would make things easier. Since the United States were the most notable power regarding the economical aspect, the role of the "main language" fell upon English. Prior to that period, the importance of speaking any foreign language, including English was a sign of well- rounded education but, at that time English began to be considered as "the key to the international currencies of technology and commerce." (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.6).

However, non-native speakers came across difficulties and there appeared a need for a narrowed scope of English, which would make communication easier for non-native speakers of English (Ahmed Abdullah, 2005). Besides the flourishing of technology, science and economy, there was a major inspiration that was seen in the linguists, because all eyes were on them, since they were the ones who could somehow transfer the knowledge of English to people. As Widdowson stated, it was discovered that the language we speak varies from one context to another and, this, indeed, brought the need to create branches of English, which would be narrower, and would meet the needs of smaller groups of people.

In other words, the expansion of English, made the focus to be put on the learner, which would improve learning, and needless to say, increase motivation. Those times were the starting point of making English for specific purposes (ESP) to grow as one of the most prominent areas of EFL teaching today.

However, today, even though it is broadly used and taught, we must go through the absolute and variable characteristics, introduced by Dudley-Evans & St. John, (1998) as given below, who

gave a broader definition of ESP: "the careful research and design of pedagogical materials and activities for an identifiable group of adult learners within a specific learning context" (298).

Absolute Characteristics

- *ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner.*

- *ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines that it serves.*

- *ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.*

Variable Characteristics

- *ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines.*

- *ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English.*

- *ESP has its subdivisions, or branches, such as EAP, EST (English for Science and Technology), and English for occupational purposes. English for Business is part of English for Occupational/professional purposes, and it is named as English for Business and Economics (EBE), in some research studies. In the last few years, Business English has become a field of great interest for scholars, facing a dramatic increase (Hewings, 2002). Nevertheless, it is still in the phase of "infancy" regarding Master (2000), and it will remain underrepresented for a long time.*

Figure 1, shows that ESP is just a branch of English as a Foreign Language, or as a Second Language, and most importantly, it is an approach. When we say this, we must bear in mind that ESP is not a product, by which we must also avoid by all means the idea that ESP is a special variety of English, because it is not. However, what can be concluded from this figure, is that all of these branches and approaches have their roots which keep the tree standing straight and firm, and these roots are communication and learning.
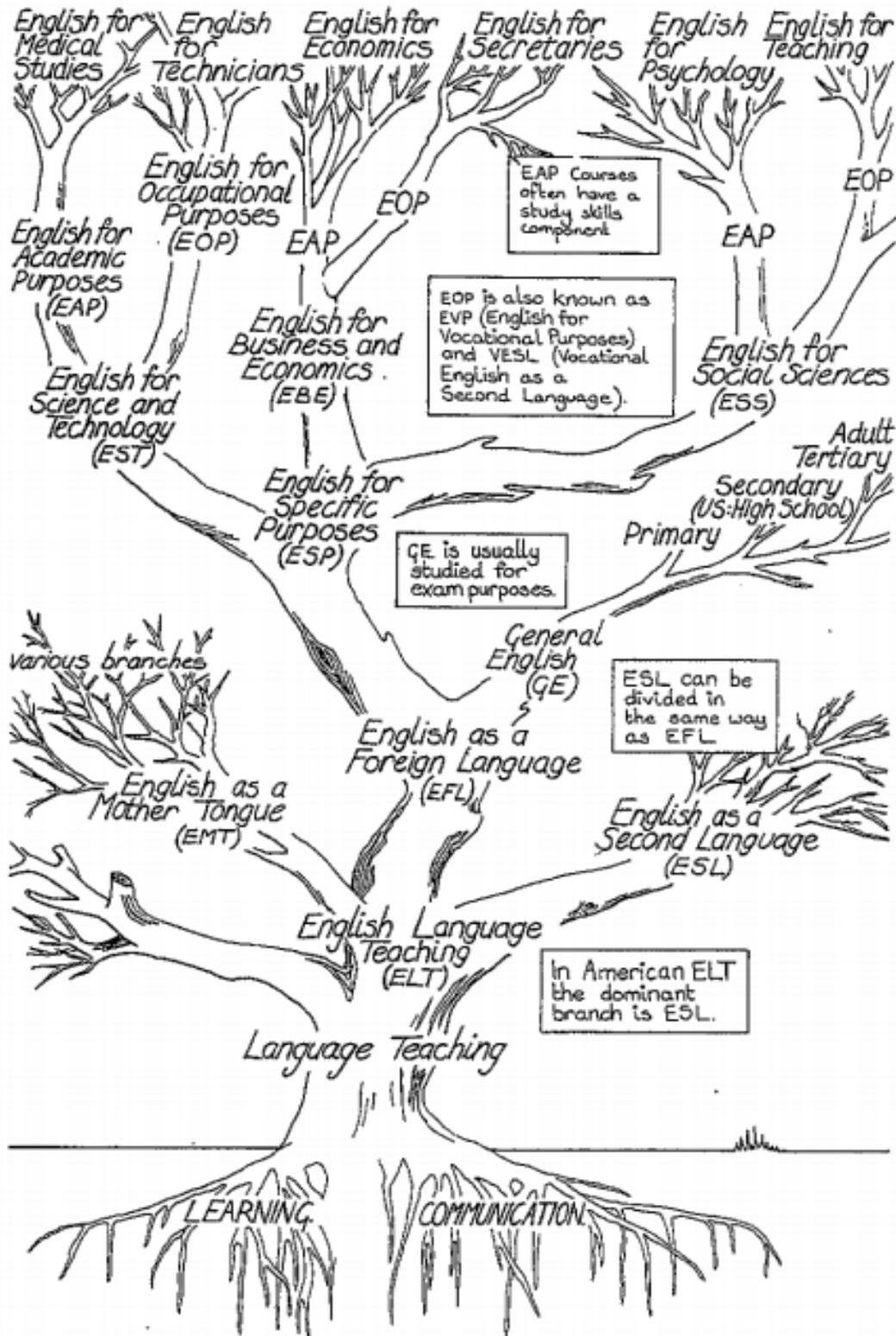
Figure 1. The tree of ELT." Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 17.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) admit that ESP has some features that are sometimes referred to as "typical". Those features are likely to be met by the learner in the target situation. Additionally, the language is used for specific purposes. However, none of these facts should make ESP a "matter of teaching specialized varieties" or make it look different from any other form. What Hutchinson and Waters (1987) say is that there is common ground that includes all the uses of English, and the features that sometimes can show ESP as different, should not separate it as a special form of language.

When explaining the figure of the tree shown above, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) tend to clarify some issues through that figure. They compare communication to the tree, in the way that there is so much more hidden beneath the tree, which for example makes the leaves hang like that. It is the complex structure which supports those leaves. That, according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) is just like the complexity of communication, where an important difference should be made between performance and competence, just as "Chomsky did with regard to grammar" (p.18).

Another thing Hutchinson and Waters (1987) tend to clarify is the issue of the methodology used in ESP. According to them, there should not exist something like ESP methodology, because it makes no sense to create a methodology specially for ESP courses. What they suggest instead is saying that there is a certain methodology used in ESP, which shows results, but the same methodology could be used in any other classroom of language learning. This, as the authors argue, would avoid ESP from looking different from other kinds of language, and help it focus on principles of efficient and effective teaching.

1.2 Business English as Lingua Franca

Business English, later in 2007, Business English is named as Business English as a Lingua Franca, appearing as a relatively new feature, not often used and met in literature. English as lingua franca, just as Seidlhofer (2011) describes it, is the medium that is used when it's the only option to communicate; while Cogo/House (2018) sees ELF as an open-source phenomenon.

There are some particular and important differences between the EFL and BELF, which should help clear our understanding of BELF, that is used by business professionals (Kankaanranta & Salminen, 2013), as shown in the table below:

Criterion	EFL	BELF
Successful interaction require	NS-like language skills	Business communication skills and strategic skills
The speaker/writer aims to	Emulate NS discourse	Get the job done & create rapport
NNSs are seen as	Learners, "sources of trouble"	Communications in their own right
Main source of problems	Inadequate language skills	Inadequate business communication skills
"Culture"	National cultures of NSs	Business community cultures and individual cultural backgrounds
English is owned by	Its native speakers	Nobody – everybody

Table 1. Comparison between EFL and BELF approaches (Kankaanranta & Salminen, 2013)

BELF communication in fact, takes place mostly between non-native speakers of English, with participants who come from different lingua-cultural backgrounds. As such, its characteristics are simplified English, terminology that is specific for Business in general, and "*a hybrid discourse practices originating from the speaker's mother tongues*" (Kankaanranta & Planken, 2010, p 392). Seen from two aspects, the definition of BELF focuses on the pragmatic strategies in the three components of Communicative competence as defined by Canale and Swain (Jonsson 2013). BELF doesn't achieve that ideal language of Hymes, as Kankaanranta, & Salminem (2007) strongly stand for, but works on making sure that the ability of getting a message, even with many grammatical mistakes, instead of a perfect lexical and grammatical sentence (Kankaanranta, & Salminem, 2007 p.4).

BELF in fact aims to simplify the ways that lead students to a clear communication, in different business settings, that is followed by managerial and corporation communication too (Kankaanranta, & Salminem, 2007).

In essence, what makes BELF different from a "natural" language is that it is "highly situation-specific, dynamic, idiosyncratic and consequently, inherently tolerant of different varieties" (Kankaanranta, M., & Salminen, 2013); so the difference lays in the strategic skills, such as ability to make questions and ask for clarifications, as very important in achieving a successful communication in Business setting (Mauranen, 2006).

1.3 The role of the teacher in Business English

In the 70s and 80s, a real lecture was the model where there was little participation of the learner, not to say no participation at all (Zouhayir, 2020), and this made the teacher the center of the whole process, with absolute authority. The teacher as the knowledge holder, has its roots deep back in history, from Greek societies, where the learner was expected to listen and his participation was limited to note-taking only (Sutherland, 1976).
Linguists have researched, written, suggested, explained a lot about the teacher's role in the English language classroom. Teacher's roles have changed quite a lot during the last few decades, due to conditions and other external factors which do not depend on us. As a teacher, there might be situations when one needs to be in the role of the trainer, or a consultant, a manager, a director. All of these roles, besides the conditions, are sometimes limited and depending on the methods that the teacher chooses to use in his/her teaching.

Jessica Contreras (2015) in her research - Learners and Teachers Roles in Communicative Language Teaching CLT- argues that a teacher's two main roles are a facilitator, and independent participant. In the first one the teacher obviously serves as the one who facilitates and guides the process of communication in the classroom. In the latter one, he is in fact just as much as in the first one, but he considers himself as one independent learner too, among the other learners. Other secondary roles are:

- *Needs analyst*

When having this role, the teacher uses assessment, as formal, and conversations for example, as informal part. These two forms could help him understand the needs of the learners, and find a way to respond to those needs.

- *Counselor*

In this role, the teacher is expected to use feedback to help students achieve effective communication, either on the side of the speaker showing his intention clearly, or from the hearer's interpretation of the message he hears.

- *Group process manager*

In this third role of the teacher, the author believes that the teacher should avoid correcting errors of students, rather focus on organizing the classroom as a setting for communicative activities.

In the case of ESP teachers, they are often seen as capable of developing materials proper for their class. But, Dudley-Evans and ST. John (1998) disputes this myth claiming that these two things are not related, and that only a small group of good teachers can be good material developers. They furthermore differentiate English for General Business Purposes from English for Specific Business Purposes. The learners of English for General Business are at their early career, while the learners of English for Specific Business Purposes are experienced in their job and need courses tailored for only a few specific language skills (Dudley-Evans and ST. John, 1998, as cited in Berezcky, 2008). Because of these specific expectations, the teacher of Business English is also named as ESP practitioner (Swales, 1985) and later as "trainer" (Ellis and Johnson, 1994).

Bocanegra-Valle (2010; 157) observes that ESP practitioners are indeed challenged to be:

- ➢ Familiar with the content, the language of the subject
- ➢ Teaching of adult learners
- ➢ Ready to spend time on evaluating, developing material
- ➢ Ready to review materials
- ➢ Rely on expert' colleagues' knowledge
- ➢ Creative and flexible

Hutchinson and Waters (1987), state that ESP is a course that meets the learners needs. This, according to the authors, leads us to believe that a big part of the teacher's work is to design appropriate courses which will serve various types of learners. In other words, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) aim to explain that the General English teachers course designing is usually determined by "tradition, choice of textbook or ministerial decree" (21), while for the ESP teacher course design represents a very important part of the workload and this makes it a substantial part of the whole teaching process of ESP.

In Business English, however, all of these above-mentioned roles can be needed, but there are others that must be added as a "must-have" value, in order to achieve the objectives of teaching Business English. A BE teacher should be able to design a curriculum that is built on the basis of his students' needs. That curriculum has to increase motivation and encourage progress in students. Ellis and Johnson (1994) compare Business English teachers to trainers who sometimes can be found within a company, or in language schools, and higher education programs, regardless of the country. They furthermore believe that it is important for them to have any type of experience in management or business, but this is not always the case. English language teachers who have moved into business English, quite often need guidance on the leap between teaching and training, connection between language and job performance, and very importantly on the management of demand. Above all, every teacher or trainer needs to know something of the business environment, just as much as the nature of learners' needs, and finally possess skills to use the appropriate teaching techniques in the course of Business English. In the process of teaching Business English, the variety of teaching styles can appear as a problem in achieving the expected outcomes. Richards (2001) strongly advocates the need for training teachers prior to teaching Business English, because their unpreparedness can result in failure regardless of the good design and content of the book.

1.4 Communicative approach

Language teaching is a complex issue and belongs not only to teachers (Takala 1983). As such, it should be seen as a system made of other sub-systems and interrelationships. Communicative language teaching could mean many different things to people. While for some its adoption of a "functional" syllabus, there are others who find the meaning of CLT in an increased participation of the learner in decisions pertaining to course content, along with a more "humanistic," learner-centered style of teaching" (Savignon & Berns, 1983, p. 2). Nonetheless, there are others, who see communicative language teaching as an expansion of audio lingual programs which may include activities made within small group activities, role play, and lastly "games" which give learners an opportunity to use what they have learned.

Both language and teaching and education in general are a kind of "artificial" science, in the sense that they are not something natural but made by the humans themselves, or they are a product of the human mind (Calfee, 1981). The relationship between all of the resulting elements is complex, and it was shown initially by Takala in 1980, as the general language teaching model. The model, as shown below, illustrates how all of the necessary components are connected to each other, and

depend on each other, and their effectiveness causes the functionality of the whole language teaching process. All these "artifacts' ' (Takala, 1981, p.26), such as education, curricula, schools and others, are important in the same way, and give support to each other for the main goal which leads towards the needs of the learner.

LEARNER (GROUP)

Level 5: Level of the learner system: level of language learning

Level 4: Level of the teaching system: tactics

EVALUATION

TEACHER EDUCATION

TEACHING

TEACHING MATERIALS

EXAMINATIONS/ EXPECTATIONS

CURRICULUM/SYLLABUS

PLAN OF TEACHING

ORGANIZATION

Level 3: Level of scientific development of language teaching: strategy

APPROACH: CURRICULUM

PLANNING

RESEARCH/EXPERIM.

THEORIES OF LANGUAGE TEACHING & LEARNING

SCIENTIFIC BASE

- linguistics
- psycholinguist.
- sociolinguist.
- applied ling.
- education
- lang. planning

Level 2: Level of the school system: infrastructure

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

TRADITIONS OF LANGUAGE TEACHING

Level 1: Level of society: motives of language teaching

LANGUAGE POLICY (societal support)

NEED OF LANGUAGES

PERSONAL MOTIVES

LINGUISTIC CONDIT.

INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS, COOPERATION & DIVISION OF WORK

Figure 2. General model of the language teaching system (Takala, 1980).

29

In modern school environments, language teaching and learning are among the most crucial matters. A good number of teaching and learning have been introduced over the decades, and all of them have aimed to meet learners' needs, but not all of them have made it. One of the strategies that has survived as one of the most important theories is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Savignon, 2002).

The Communicative Language Teaching Approach is an approach more than a theory (Savignon, 1987). Contrary to the existing traditional theories, CLT approach offers a wide range of opportunities which can be put to practice by both teachers and learners (Kennedy, 2002). Baugh (1993) explains that in the early 70s teachers thought that the needs and demands of the students were not responded to by the traditional concepts of language teaching and learning. In other words, grammar and vocabulary were not put in the first place as the most important or the only important issues to be learned, since social aspects of learning, and interpersonal interactions were just as important as the first ones (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). Wong (2005) similarly claims that CLT as an approach was created because explicit grammar knowledge did not offer learners the capability of communication needed in English. This could lead us to the idea that "language learning does not only mean training and language skills" but it also concentrates on the ability of the learner to communicate. CLT was somehow born after Chomsky's "inadequacy of linguistic competence" (Regina & Chinwe, 2014).

Developing the communicative competence needs of the learners is what we can say that the goal of the CLT is in fact. Additionally, it encourages practice of authentic situations of speaking, as well as participation of students in these situations. Chambers (1997), believes that CLT stimulates the use of authentic, and spontaneous language for the aim of building students' fluency in speaking. These activities that stimulate the functional language are practiced and done under teachers' guidance instead of their control. In a communicative classroom, learners are regularly placed in situational transactions and roleplay exercises (Crookall, & Oxford, 1991) that will involve selecting, sequencing, and arranging words, sentences, and utterances to achieve unified spoken discourse.

Dos Santos (2020) believes that communicative language teaching depends on a few factors in order to be organized and used appropriately, and help both learners and teachers in the whole teaching-learning process of the language. Few of these factors are: lack of language proficiency by students, which does not allow the teacher to explain everything students ask with

a simple language. Additionally, the importance that has been given and continues to be given to other traditional methods in the language learning classrooms, has played a role in students who can't see CLT as a helpful method. This makes them go the old way, focusing on grammar and vocabulary, not paying enough attention to what CLT has to offer. Furthermore, social and cultural backgrounds based on social behavior of students may have the role of the potential limitation for CLT. This is not a thing that happens in small countries like North Macedonia, where the students are usually from the same cultural background, despite their nationality. What is also a disadvantage of CLT, or an obstacle in achieving the class outcomes, is the class size. In these cases, Dos Santos (2020) claims that students are not able to communicate with their teacher or peers in large classes, and end up feeling like they are being taught with other teaching methods.

1.5 Communicative competence

The roles that were discussed and gone through in the previous part, are normal and present in almost all of the types of classrooms. Communication is the transfer of information between two or more individuals or groups, in order to achieve mutual understanding. The word communication derives from the latin word "communico" and it could have few meanings in English such as partake, join or make something common. Communication is a means by which we inform, persuade, motivate and guide individuals towards a common goal. When communicating, the sender encodes the message and the receiver decodes it. However, nothing can be achieved if people cannot manage to communicate with each other and convey their messages. If the decoded message is different from the encoded one, there is miscommunication (Williams and Kemper, 2004).

However, besides conveying information, communication requires the ability of one person to maintain connection with other people. Through verbal communication people learn about the existing ideas, thoughts, products and services of the sender of the message.
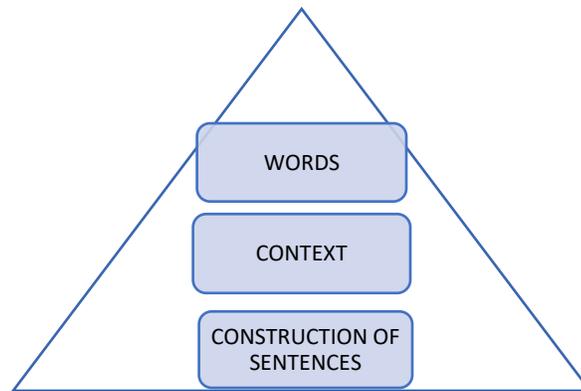
Figure 3. Main elements of verbal communication

(Nalebuff and Brandenburger, 2000)

The main elements of verbal communication are the following (Nalebuff and Brandenburger, 2000):

a) *Words (spoken or written) that contain the main point of the message being sent,*

b) *Context, which explains the message and*

c) *Construction of sentences, which must be clear in order to avoid noises, i.e. misunderstanding of the message.*

If there is good communication, the risk of possible mistakes is reduced, but never inexistent. Communication skills, as well as competences are especially important. This is especially true when learning/teaching a foreign language, such as English. Communication in the classroom can be developed in different ways such as through lectures or discussions, questions or answers. Even small talk with friends, helps learners improve their communications skill and make them more "competent" in communicating. When we discuss communication as competence, it is necessary to say that it is very important for the learner to know how to use the language instead of learning about it.

In the last century, there has been an increased interest in research upon communication as a competence. It has been a field of interest for different scholars, with psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic or socio-semantic background. The goal of learning a foreign language is gaining sufficient knowledge about a language which enables the speaker to communicate effectively with native or non-native speakers of that language.

In the distant 1960s, Chomsky was the one who distinguished competence and performance. He drew this distinction similarly to Ferdinand de Saussure' concepts of "langue" and "parole" (Matola, 1993). According to him, the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language is competence; while performance is in fact the actual use of language in concrete situations. Chomsky states that competence is not reflected by deviating from the ideal in actual performance: "*A grammar of a language purports to be a description of the ideal speaker-hearer's intrinsic competence*" (as cited in Tarvin, 2014, p.2). Tarvin (2014) furthermore believes that any error in production may therefore be related to one of many elements, including competence that affect performance.

However, Chomsky's competence is seen as to omit the linguistic ability when we refer to the production or use of grammatically incorrect utterances which at the same time are appropriate "to the context or the situational and verbal context of the utterance" (as cited in Mede and Dikilitaş p.15). Chomsky's view has also been criticized because of this limited definition given for competence, because it is about abstract grammatical knowledge (Matola, 1993), and the restricted sense of linguistic competence, which supposes that the construction of grammatical sentences can be independent of all linguistic context (Roulette,1979).

Tracing it back to its origin, communicative competence appeared as a term by Hymes (1972) opposing the notion that was introduced by Noam Chomsky, in the 1960s, as linguistic competence. The reason behind this necessary movement in the theory of communication, was that the pure linguistic competence could not be used as a theoretical ground for teaching and learning methodology. In simple words, Hymes aimed to see communicative competence as an ability to produce language that will be contextually appropriate. The reason why Chomsky's theory was criticized is the very narrow and rigid concept of grammatical competence, and it lacked the sociolinguistic part (Halliday, 1979).

However, there are different models of communicative competence introduced by linguists. The development of these models happened in the 70-80s as a need for greater authenticity in literature. Different opinions, different scholars, but all of them gave their contribution to the much-needed further development of communicative competence as a concept.

To begin with, Widdowson, was the first one to present a distinction between competence and capacity. What he saw as competence was knowledge of linguistic and sociolinguistic

convention, whereas he referred to capacity as ability to use knowledge as means of creating meaning in a language (Bagaric 2007; Tuan, 2017).

Initially Canale and Swain (1980) and later Canale (1983) created the now well-known model of communicative competence, comprised of 4 dimensions, as follows:

- *Discourse competence, in one word would mean fluency. They introduced this as the ability of a learner to use, produce and combine grammatical forms and meanings.*

- *Grammatical competence, or is the mastery of the language code (Alan Maley). It could be used by teachers for accuracy in language use.*

- *Sociolinguistic competence was defined as appropriate use of the language in different social situations.*

- *Strategic competence was the efficacy of communication.*

Not resembling the earlier linguists, Savignon (1972) chose to lay an accent on ability. She describes communicative competence as "the ability to function in a truly communicative setting" (cited in Bagaric, p.96). For developing communicative ability, Savignon (1991), highly suggests form-focused exercises with meaning-focused experience, without disqualifying grammar, but focusing on it depending on the communicative needs of the students. Regarding the difference between competence and performance, she sees the first one as an underlying ability and the other one as an open manifestation of competence. In line with Bachman and Palmer (1989), she sees communicative competence as interpersonal, dynamic and relative.

Except these two, much later than the previous ones, Breen and Candlin (2001) offered another division of communicative competence, and their concepts are presented in the table below, with the two previous models of Savignon (1997) and Canale and Swain (1980), as shown in the table below (table 2).

Canale and Swain (1980)	Savignon (1997)	Breen and Candlin (2001)
Grammatical competence – Knowledge of the rules of the language and skills in using them.	**Language arts –** reinforces the rules of the language through systematic practice.	**Ideational knowledge system-** factual knowledge of the world (concepts, purposes for language)
Socio-linguistic competence – using the correct language level for a given situation.	**Language for a purpose –** emphasizes message rather than the from/structure (students use the language to achieve a goal)	**Interpersonal knowledge system –** knowledge of social behaviors, relationships (communicative strategies, gestures, tone of voice, etc.)
Discourse competence – linking thoughts logically and correctly.	**Language for personal use –** highlights the affective domain as well as cognitive abilities.	**Textual knowledge system –** knowledge of the form of the language (grammar, vocabulary, etc.).
Strategic competence – using any number of strategies to overcome gaps in language knowledge.	**Theater arts –** includes role playing and simulation activities.	
	Beyond the classroom – involves real interaction.	

Table 2. Communicative competences, Klimovienė, G., Barzdžiukienė, R., & Račkauskaitė, N. (2016).
106

Tarvin (2014) compares three different situations, where the need for communicative competence is a reality. These three situations are when an immigrant moves somewhere in a new country, another one when a student joins a second language classroom, and when a business person meets a colleague from another part of the world, for the first time. He defines communicative competence as the ability to use or communicate, "in a culturally-appropriate manner" (Tarvin, 2014, p.2) giving meaning and accomplishing social tasks fluently and efficiently through extended interactions. He emphasizes that it is a must for L2 speakers to possess the ability to use language; furthermore, they must also include the social-cultural component;

followed by the ability to express meaningful phrases, instead of just answering grammar questions or memorizing words.

Competence, according to Mugford (1999) is the knowledge of language grammar as well as the factors behind it such as levels of formality, connotation, among others style and register, too. Performance happens when one uses the sociolinguistic knowledge he possesses when interacting with others in society (Hudson, 1988). This statement is followed by Hymes (1972) who emphasized that in addition to the linguistic competence, the language user has another intuitive system in which the rules of grammar would be useless. Based on this Hymes' argument, "communicative competence" as a concept includes linguistic competence, implicit and explicit knowledge, the rules of grammar and sociolinguistic knowledge of the rules of language use in contexts. He also states that communicative competence involves the following:

a) what is formally possible,

b) what is feasible,

c) what is the social meaning or value of a given utterance,

d) and what actually occurs.

The term "competences" is not easy to determine. This is the main reason why many experts in the field have made attempts to elaborate on the term and show the most relevant meaning of the term, especially in the context of second language teaching. Canale and Swain (1980) achieved to define communicative competence in the context of second language teaching as a combination of knowledge of basic principles in grammar, knowing how to use the language in social settings in order to perform communicative functions, and the ability to combine those utterances and communicative functions; always following the principles of discourse. According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence involves four areas of knowledge and skills; as follow:

✓ Grammatical competence (sometimes referred to as linguistic) is the acquisition of phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic rules.

36

✔ Sociolinguistic competence which touches on the learning of pragmatic aspects of various speech acts such as the cultural values, norms and other socio-cultural conventions in social contexts.

✔ Discourse competence, which is about mastering the ability to combine meanings and grammatical forms and last, strategic competence which represents mastering verbal and non-verbal strategies to enhance communication's effectiveness (Canale and Swain, 1980).

When communication skills are greater and more diverse, the more likely it is that English (especially Business English) will be successful. Possessing important communication competences means having the ability to convey important data, information and knowledge to the interlocutors.

1.6 Main communicative competences

Hymes (1972) notes that first and the most important is that speakers must have the ability to use language itself, including the ability to form grammatically possible and feasible locutions. Canale and Swain (1980) believe that speakers are expected to demonstrate the inclusion of the socio-cultural component of cultural appropriateness. While Savignon (2002) sees that regurgitating memorized phrases or answering correctly on grammar tests is not enough, because speakers must be able to make meaning. According to Palloti (2010), if speakers want to accomplish their expected tasks in a manner that is almost unconscious, they must use language in effective ways. Finally, according to the authors Hall and Doehler (2011), when we talk about social and extended communicative tasks, speakers' ability to achieve them, requires skills and understanding to decode and encode messages with an intent which is socio-culturally appropriate, is seen as a must.

The table below lists the main features of communicative competences, as described by Hymes (1972); Canale and Swain (1980) Hall and Pekarek Doehler (2011) and Palloti (2010).

1. Having the ability to use language
2. Demonstrating the inclusion of the socio-cultural component of cultural appropriateness
3. Making meaning
4. Using language in ways that are effective
5. Achieving communicative tasks in social, extended interactions

Table 3. Main communication competences Source: (Hymes (1972); Canale and Swain (1980); Hall and Pekarek Doehler (2011); Palloti (2010))

When researching communicative competences, it is important to note that the first and main role of the language teacher is to help learners get along in real-life situations and there is a necessity to focus on communicative competence in teaching.

Throughout the years there have been different models of communicative competence discussed and followed. All of the existing major models of communicative competence show that despite terminological differences, the general concept is shared in all of them, since researchers have added or removed elements to the models proposed by previous scholars.

1.7 Components of Communicative Competence according to CEFR

The Common European Framework of Languages is one of the most important and used frameworks for reference when communication is in question. It was created after a series of historical events, which focused on what the learner should be able to do when he uses the language for communication. Initially, in the 1960s the initiatives for language learning for communication were taken, followed by more specifications for language learning objectives. In the 1990s a descriptive scheme of L2 proficiency was created. Then, in 2001, CEFR was officially launched at the beginning of the European Year of Languages. Today, CEFR is the second most translated document of the Council of Europe, after the convention of Human Rights. (2017, p.13) presents Communicative competences as composed of linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic

competences. Since linguistic competences are mostly taught and given attention to, this doctoral thesis includes only sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. The latter two are least known to the students, and less practiced during classes too, especially in the courses of ESP, such as Business English.

1.7.1 Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence is undoubtedly much more than just grammar as learners could think. CEFR presents linguistics competences in a few subdivisions which offer a clear picture of what indeed these competences are. Besides grammatical accuracy, there are other components such as vocabulary control, phonological control and orthographic control. The picture below shows how CEFR divides the components of Linguistic competence:
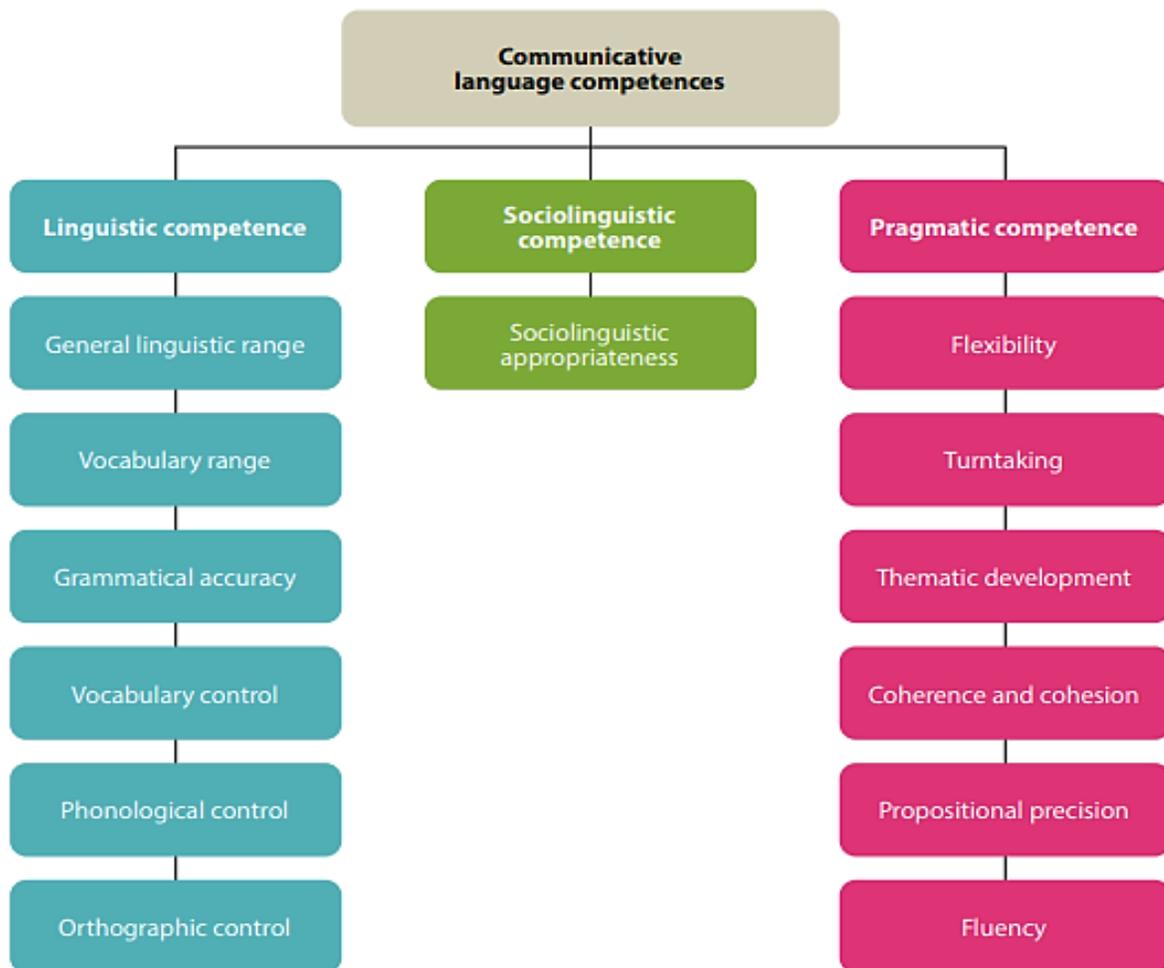
Figure 4. CEFR, Communicative competences

39

Its importance is not neglected, but without possessing socio-pragmatic competence, especially in the business world, grammatical knowledge could end up with "awkwardness, embarrassment, rudeness, failure of the speaker's message to get through, all of which result in communication breakdown" (Choraih, Loutfi & Mansoor, 2016, p.187), or just as Hymes (1971) argues there are some rules without which the grammar rules would be useless (278). These statements do not neglect the importance of grammar in communicative competence. As Hymes (1980) affirms, linguistics has a vital role and linguistic materials are indispensable (p.4). Instead, the aim is to highlight the strong connection of sociolinguistic, pragmatic and linguistic competence. In case a learner misses socio-pragmatic competences, he can end up in an unwanted miscommunication, especially when it comes to serious business environments.

1.7.2 Sociolinguistic competence

Sociolinguistic competence is a branch of linguistics, combined between sociology and linguistics (Spolsky, 1998). Hymes (1962) refers to it as ethnography of speaking, which aims to examine the use of a language in three contexts: situation, speaker and speaking habits all as one subject. Spolsky (1998) also sees sociolinguistics as the most hyphenated field of linguistics, which has grown to that position after three decades of being accepted as a branch in the whole scientific study of languages. According to him, sociolinguistics is a field of study which is not hard to be recognized among human communication. A conversation between a mother and a child, two friends, or strangers in the street, is something that contains more than just a simple conversation. It represents more than just language, since it represents their relationship or their geographical background and this is exactly what sociolinguistics studies. In other words, in some aspects, sociolinguistics is a combination of society and language, but complemented with other fields such as gender studies, political science, history and social psychology (Spolsky, 1998, p.7).

Sociolinguistics also serves to show the social and regional variation of the speakers. For example, speakers have variations of grammar and pronunciation, which are exactly the points where we can see whether we are dealing with a native or non-native speaker of a certain language (Sugar, 2015).

But, language is also a social construct (Choraih, Loutfi and Mansur, 2016). This teaches us that language is also the knowledge of the sociocultural rules and their appropriate use. It is easy to put this together, and recognize the importance of sociolinguistic competence but the

process of achieving it remains very far from easy, difficult to grasp and teach (Ritchie, 2011). Grammatical competence has been one of the main objectives for a very long time, until researchers brought up materials about the importance of other competences, without which, grammatical competence would find it hard to make speakers fully competent in communicating in English.

Sociolinguistic competence generally includes the set of competences owned by the speaker in terms of social context, such as people, places, cultural aspect and setting too. So, a speaker that is able to righteously communicate with people, especially native speakers, in this case, native English speakers, knowing how to properly greet, ask, tell jokes, always being culturally aware of the words he chooses, then he has developed sociolinguistic competence.

Sociolinguistic competences have been under the interest of many SLA researchers, ever since their introduction in the beginning as a constructive part of communicative competences. Savignon (1983) saw sociolinguistic competences as a speaker's ability to understand the social context being aware of the roles of the participants in the conversation, the type of information they share, and undoubtedly the function of the interaction. Additionally, according to her, sociolinguistic competence is knowledge of stylistic norms and 'uses of the language in establishing and maintaining social relations" (Savignon ,1983, p.123).

Brown for example refers to sociolinguistic competence as knowledge of some language and discourse rules (Brown, 2000). In addition to those rules, he explains that here some other elements make a person be competent in the sociolinguistic aspect, such as dialect, figures of speech, naturalness and choice of register among many other elements.

Mugford (1999) explains that the importance of sociolinguistic competence is not limited to the practice of structures and vocabulary in simple and complex exchanges. Through sociolinguistic competence students can demonstrate how they can use language in and outside the classroom. Additionally, Mugford (1999) explains that sociolinguistics helps speakers manage information in the target language, and most importantly, use the language they are learning to enrich the already possessed knowledge.

Alptekin (2002) defines sociolinguistic competence as the ability to use language that is appropriate to social contexts. According to him, "social context" includes beliefs, norms, values. Moreover, the author sees sociolinguistic competence as a potential to choose appropriate topics for any type of communicative event.

Sociolinguistic competence could also be seen as an ability to communicate appropriately by choosing to use the right words and expressions, having the right attitude towards a specific relationship, place or topic. In practice, many English learners can do really well in class but not necessarily have sociolinguistic competence. Kramsch (2014) emphasizes that like never before there is a great tension between two points such as what students are taught in the classroom and what they will need in the real world once they leave the classroom. The last decades have been a witness of changes which have made language teachers uncertain of a few important issues such as what indeed they are supposed to teach and prepare their students.

Omaggio (2001) considers sociolinguistic competence as not treated as a topic and not seen as an indispensable aspect of language. This, according to him happens because of the following reasons:

a) Language teachers avoid sociocultural teaching due to lack of time and their curriculum.

b) Lack of teachers' confidence in the ability to teach the socio-cultural aspect of foreign language.

c) Student attitudes which are usually found challenging by teachers when trying to guide these students to understand, appreciate and use the target culture (Mede & Dikiltas, p. 18).

We can note that sociolinguistic competences are really important in learning/teaching English. According to the authors Coupland and Jaworsky (1997) a language's grammar strongly impacts the process of learning new information, and it can be simply seen how tenses affect the information and data we acquire, which, in other words, explains how real, true information can be conveyed in an erroneous way. Examples (Mugford,1999):

1. **First example:** Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California are part of Mexico- Correctly structured sentences but wrong facts caused by the incorrect use of the tense.

2. **Second example:** Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California were part of Mexico- correct statement and fact, with correct tense.

3. **Third example:** (To a senior professor, in Mexico, in Spanish) ¡Explica por favor nuevamente! (Explain it again, please) – the request is correct regarding tense and structure, but appears inappropriate in terms of social context, degree of formality and verb form choice. The correct would look like this: ¡Explique por favor nuevamente! The use of third person singular in Spanish can be used to denote formal *you* (English) – *usted* (Spanish).

From the examples above, we can see the significant role of sociolinguistic competence in the way language is used to communicate. Additionally, it also impacts the interaction, sharing and acquisition of new knowledge. Hence, this shows that interacting with native speakers might be a well-grounded tool that will assist learners comprehend the way language is used in a socio-linguistically successful manner.

Mede and Dikiltas (2015) list two basic ways of introducing and teaching sociolinguistic competence. The first one according to them is resorting to cultural models where learners are explicitly/implicitly taught cultural elements ingrained in language use. The second one, the integration of speech acts as situations where learners are simulated to use the language considering the socio-pragmatic factors such as social status of the hearer, the degree of imposition or the request-content.

There are many researchers that indeed advocate the development of pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences as an instructional goal even in early language instruction (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003;), however they also claim that nobody, neither learners nor teachers should expect immediate mastery, but set realistic and eventual goals instead.

1.7.3 Pragmatic competence

Sociolinguist Jenny Thomas introduced the term pragmatic competence in 1983 in "Intercultural Pragmatic Failure" (Applied Linguistics). In that article, she defines pragmatic competence as "the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a certain goal and to understand language in context".

According to Crystal (1997) pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics where the language is studied from the user's point of view. This is done through users' choices and constraints they encounter while using the language (as cited in Herraiz Martinez, 2018). According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is the study of a speaker's meaning, contextual meaning and of how more is

communicated than said. Pragmatics, in other words, leads to a situation where two or more speakers are able to understand each other clearly.
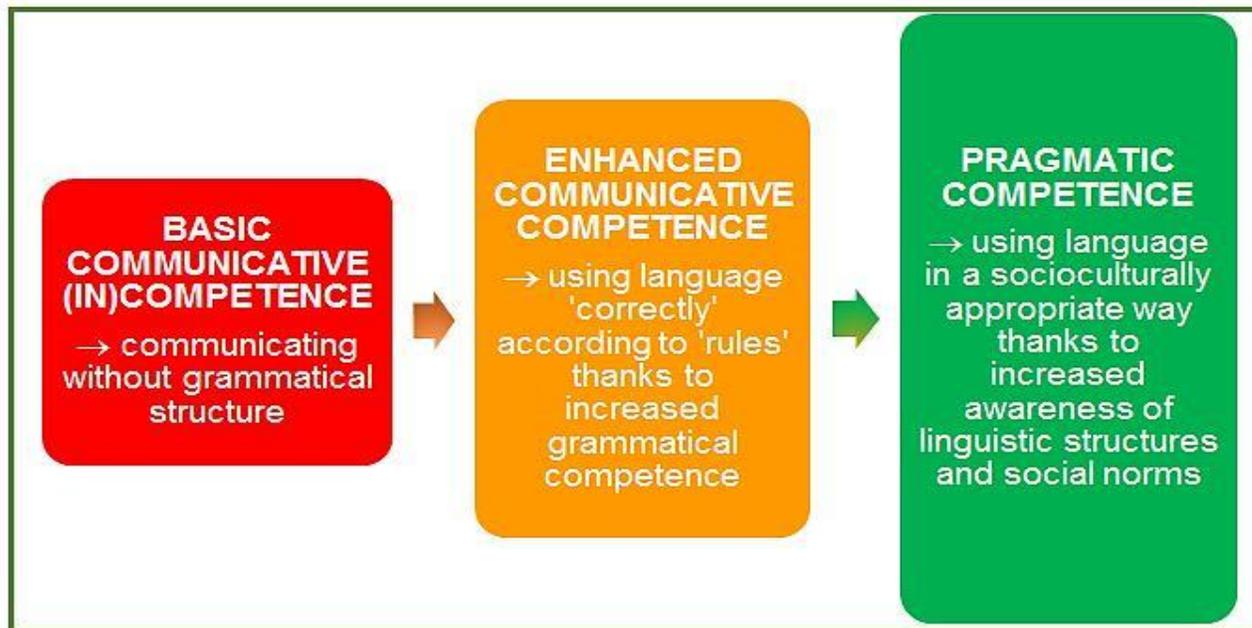
Figure 5. The meaning of pragmatic competence (Wierzbicka, 2003)

Pragmatic competence is the key to effective communication in English as a foreign language. It is exactly this competence that has become a very attractive field of study for linguists and researchers, because it helps the learner master the language, not just have a good command of it. (figure 5).

What the figure above shows is that one can have basic communicative competence in a language, and he is able to convey a certain message without grammatical structure. However, when we add grammatical rules, the competence of communication gets much improved. But, the peak is achieved when a learner possesses pragmatic competence, and is able to use the language while being aware of linguistic structures.

So, being pragmatically competent means the learner has the ability to use the language in complex communication where social distance and indirectness are required and expected to be taken into consideration (Kelly, 2003).

According to Taguchi (2009) pragmatic competence is 'the ability to use language appropriately in a social context'. If not practiced and taught, in communication between people from different cultural backgrounds, pragmatic competence can end up in a complete failure. This

is also known as pragmatic failure. As such, it is quite common in the business world negotiations. According to Xu (2016), pragmatic failure in business English is mostly spotted in the inappropriate use of fuzzy words, tense, mood and personal pronouns as in the example (Gass, 1997):

1. **First example:** 'I have 30 years' (J'ai 30 ans). In French, 'avoir' (to have) is used to express age contrary to 'to be' in English.

It's important to note that there can be devastating processes that pragmatic failure can trigger for a second language learner (figure 6). Hence, it is important how much effort the professors will make to help students master English as a foreign language.
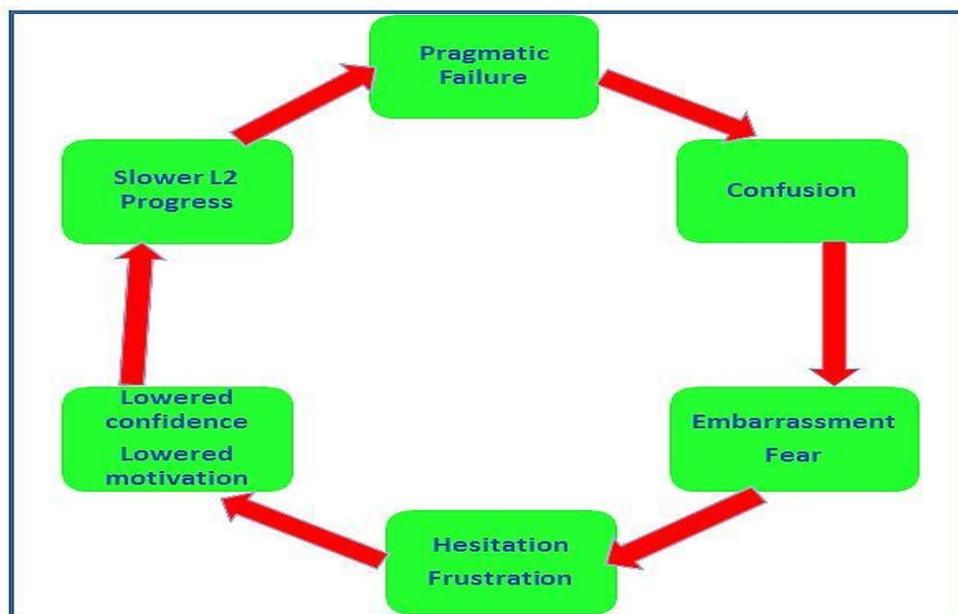
Figure 6. The process of pragmatic failure (Wierzbicka,2003)

Bialystok (1993) sees pragmatic competence as :

1. the speaker's ability to use language for different purposes;

2. the listener's ability to get past the language and understand the speaker's real intentions (e.g. indirect speech acts, irony and sarcasm); and

3. the command of the rules by which utterances come together to create discourse. (cited In Rueda, 2006, p.174)

There are many reasons why people should acquire pragmatic competence. For example, Allami and Naeimi (2011), see pragmatic competence as crucial for developing healthy communication. Furthermore, they state that lacking this competence can in some cases bring in failure in communication, followed by severe consequences. Garcia (2004) has the opinion that pragmatic competence is one of the building blocks of language instruction. Tulgar (2016) sees pragmatic competence as an integral part of a language curriculum. However, this requires a need for further research aiming to raise much more awareness considering the significance of pragmatic competence and to come up with better and more productive suggestions and solutions.

In linguistics, pragmatic competence is the ability to use language effectively in a contextually appropriate way. Pragmatic competence is a basic aspect of more general communication competence. Pragmatic competence is understood as knowledge of the linguistic resources available in a given language for the realization of certain illustrations, knowledge of the subsequent aspects of speech acts, and, finally, knowledge of the appropriate contextual use of the linguistic resources of that particular language.

According to Thomas (1983) the linguistic competence of the speaker will consist of grammatical competence ("abstract "or decontextualized knowledge of intonation, phonology, syntax, semantics, etc.) and pragmatic competence (ability to use language effectively to achieve a particular goal and language in context). This is parallel to the division of lycheeism by Leach (1983) into "grammar" (which denotes the decontextualized formal system of language) and "pragmatics" (the use of language in a purpose-oriented speech situation in which the speaker uses language to produce a certain effect in the mind of X (the listener).

What's interesting about this decision-making process [in the use of communication language] is the several principles that agree to define the nature of pragmatic competence. According to the authors Balconi and Amenta (2010) individuals make choices and build strategies based on some of the unique properties of pragmatic/communicative competences, such as (figure 7):

a) **variability:** *a property of communication that defines the range of communicative possibilities, among which communicative choices are formulated;*

b) **possibility for negotiation:** *the possibility for making a choice based on flexible strategies;*

c) **adaptability:** *the ability to modulate and regulate communication choices in relation to the communicative context;*

d) **meaning:** *the degree of awareness achieved through communication choices;*

e) **uncertainty:** *the possibility of renegotiating pragmatic choices of how the interaction takes place in order to fulfill communicative intentions;*

f) **dynamics:** *development of the communicative interaction of time. (96)*
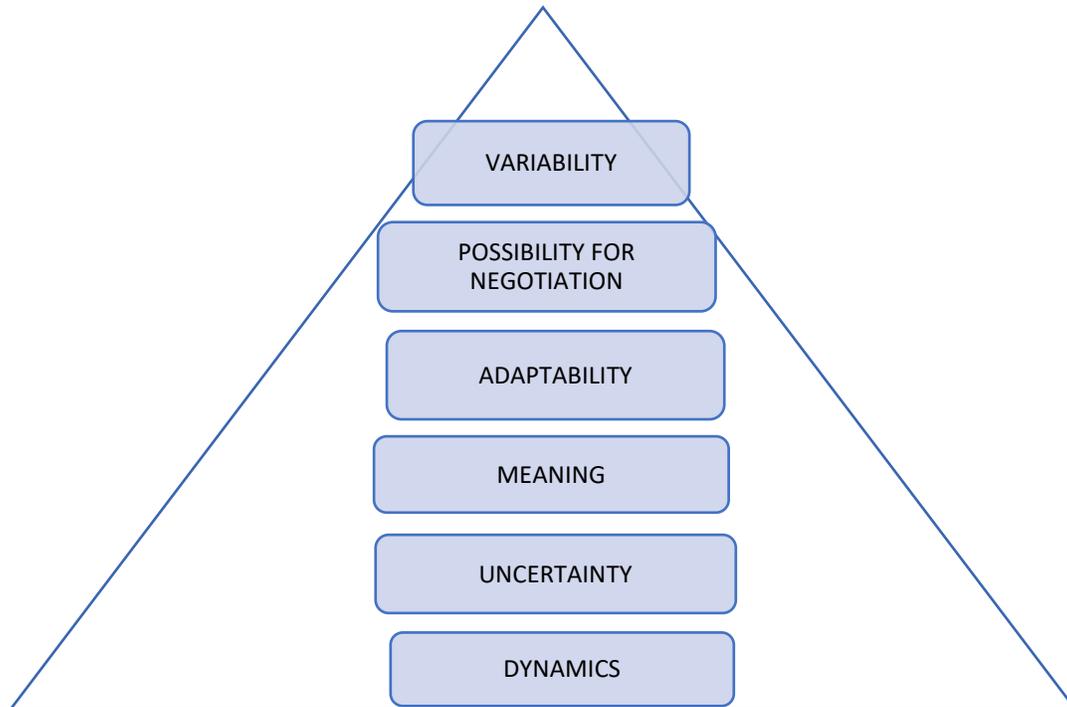
Figure 7. Properties of pragmatic/communicative competences

Source: (Balconi and Amenta, 2010)

In the model of communicative competence by Canale and Swain (1980) pragmatic competence is included as an important component. They define pragmatic competence "as the knowledge of contextually appropriate language use" (cited in Rueda p.173), and identify it as sociolinguistic competence. According to Canale (1988) pragmatic competence includes illocutionary competence and knowledge of the pragmatic conventions which are necessary for executing acceptable language functions.

Literature in the field of pragmatics and the second or foreign language classroom becomes even more important. Kasper and Schmidt (1996) explain that opportunities for the full range of human interactions are limited, and as a consequence learners have more difficulties in acquiring appropriate language use patterns. Related to these ideas, Schmidt (2001) talks about the need of a pedagogical intervention where two of the following goals would be achieved. First, learners

would become aware of their previous knowledge and they would find ways to take advantage of it by using their existing pragmatic foundations in appropriate socio-pragmatic contexts. Second, "helping learners to acquire the linguistic forms of utterances as well as the social and contextual features" (Schmidt, 2001, as cited in Rueda, 2006, p.176)

When it comes to pragmatics in business communication, it seems that its importance is somehow diminished, even though we all know its important role. Pikhart and Koblizkova (2017) claim that intercultural linguistics, as a pragmatic discipline, is not given the importance it deserves. According to them, using politeness strategies for instance, as part of intercultural linguistics, can really improve business communication efficiency. Furthermore, when doing business internationally it is inevitable to use polite communication principles in order to avoid inappropriate communication with the counterpart.

Besides the importance of pragmatic competence in general communication, there is an absolutely inevitable role of these competences in business writing. According to Wu (2013), possessing politeness principles, as pragmatic ones, will help participants break down different foreign trade barriers.

1.7.3.1 Requests

Requests are one of the most used speech acts in human communication (Stavans & Shafran, 2017). They are known as face-threatening acts by nature (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Through a request, the hearer's freedom of action is impinged (Blum-Kulka, 1984) and unfavorable answer from the addressee can always happen (Stavans and Shafran, 2017). In order to avoid offense (Stavans and Shafran, 2017), and minimize imposition (Daskalovska et al., 2016), indirect request strategies are used by the speaker.

There are three major levels of directness as proposed by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1987):

a. the most direct, explicit level;

b. the conventionally indirect level;

c. non conventional indirect level, i.e. the open-ended group of indirect strategies (hints)

The *table 4* below shows sub-divisions of requests as illustrated by Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1987).

Descriptive category	Examples
1. Mood Derivable	Leave me alone
2. Performative	I'm asking you not to park the car here
3. Hedged performative	I would like you to give your lecture a week earlier
4. Obligation statement	Madam, you'll have to move your ca
5. Want statement	I really wish you'd stop bothering me
6. Suggestive Formulae	How about cleaning up?
7. Query Preparatory	Could you clean up the mess in the kitchen? Would you mind cleaning up…
8. Strong Hints	We've left the kitchen in a right mess.
9. Mild Hints	I'm a nun (in response to the persistent boy)

Table 4. Request strategy types (Blum-Kulka & Olshtein, 1987, p.202)

The first five strategies (Mood derivable, Performative, Hedged performative, obligation statement, want statement) are of the direct and explicit level. The strategies under 6 and 7 (Suggestive Formulae, Query preparatory) are conventionally indirect, while the last two, under 8 and 9 (Strong hints and mild hints), are non-conventionally indirect.

1.7.3.2 Politeness

It has been under the attention of many researchers the issue whether politeness as a phenomena belongs to sociolinguistic or is a pragmatic component. Speech acts are considered to be a universal pragmatic element (Leech, 1983), but, it has also been given a sociological content due to the fact that speech acts are used differently across cultures (Tanto, 2018). It is not always expected for us to be polite, sometimes we may act impolitely too. However, politeness in communication is quite a sociolinguistic thing, and may be different in different cultures, in other words some cultures have completely different systems of politeness. For example, in one of the main Indonesian languages, Javanese, the speaker should decide on the speech style prior to addressing the hearer.

This happens because they have three different variants and in the case of using the word *now* they have to decide which one to use between: *samenika* in high style, *saniki* in middle style, and *saiki* in low style (Wardhaugh, 1999).

Yule (1996) admits the possibility of treating politeness as a fixed concept, or etiquette within a culture. He also gives green light to specifying the number of principles for being polite within a certain culture. However, Brown and Levinson (1987), *Theory of Politeness*, list three key factors which have great influence on people's language choices, such as the social distance between people who communicate with each other; followed by their relative power; and lastly, the degree of imposition that is involved in the communication. Holmes and Stubbe (2015) interpret politeness as an indication to the idea that the more powerful participant in the communication is concerned towards constructing good relations at the workplace, which is equally important to developing and maintaining collegiality.

1.8 Teaching materials

Initially, the ABC of teaching sometimes has to be found in the teaching materials. "Materials' ' in fact, could be anything that facilitates the process of teaching. The form they are given or shown to learners could be linguistic, visual or auditory. Furthermore, they can be printed, through live performance, or played on cassette, CD-ROM, DVD or the Internet' (Tomlinson, 66). The key role of teaching materials could indeed go from instructional, as they are generally made for, to experiential or elucidate. They could also have an exploratory role as well, through which learners can be informed about the language and be stimulated to use the language.

The role of materials used for instruction in the classroom, cannot, by any means stand alone, without interacting with teachers, students, methodology and definitely, curriculum (Richardson, 1990). This is also supported by Hutchinson and Waters (1998), who advocate for the importance of firm relationship between instructional materials and other elements mentioned earlier. This relationship enables, in the full form, a realization of successful outcomes, whereas the lack of one of the elements in the interaction could reduce or diminish the effectiveness of teaching and learning process.

But, what in fact are materials for teachers and what for learners?

It is very important to say that teaching materials, especially coursebooks are sometimes seen as a must by teachers and learners respectively. Especially when we talk about not so

experienced teachers, who don't know where to start from, the coursebook, regardless of its flaws, appears as a salvation for doing what is expected from them in the classroom.

For some teachers, it is the primary teaching resource, whereas some others see them as a supplement in their teaching process. Sometimes coursebooks are a method of controlling large traditional classes. Sheldon (1988) sees textbooks as the visible heart of any ELT programme, even though they could be a "necessary evil" (237).

In the 90's, Hutchingson and Torres wrote about the importance of textbooks in the ELT classrooms, saying that textbooks have a vital role and a positive impact in the everyday job of teachers. According to them, textbooks, despite being criticized by some researchers, will still continue to survive because they "still satisfy certain needs" (1994; 317). Contrary to them, Swan sees danger in the use of ready-made textbooks because, according to him, "they seem to absolve teachers of responsibility" (1992: 33). According to Greenall (1984) these not-so-positive opinions on textbooks come because of their commercial exploitation, public assessment and selection for the classroom use (as cited in Sheldon p.237). Lastly, they could also exert some kind of a "backwash" (Sheldon, 1988, p.238).

In the past, things were quite more difficult, and teachers had less access to sources for teaching. Nowadays, not all, but most of the teachers in the world have almost unlimited access to thousands of textbooks, hard copy or electronic versions. Even self-designing materials by teachers has become easier, not because teachers are smarter than our previous generations of teachers, but because we have access to different materials, and inspiration for designing and compiling materials for our courses, has become much easier.

In order to achieve the goals, objectives of the course, a teacher should evaluate the materials that will be used in the classroom, with the learners. Material evaluation has been introduced by Cunningsworth in early 1984, but it has become a topic of interest for many other researchers such as Sheldon in 1984, Tomlison in 1998, McGrath in 2002, and others as well. An evaluation shows whether something fits the purpose, as Hutchingson and Waters (1986) state in their book (p.96). They clearly state that there is no such a thing as good or bad material for teaching, but rather a degree of fitness of something within its purpose. This can teach us that without evaluating a book, or any teaching material, a teacher cannot know whether these sole materials fit in the purpose of the course. Of course, this is closely related to the experience of the teacher, just as mentioned earlier in the possible roles that are expected from an ESP teacher.

Evaluation is of utmost importance, even today when electronic versions of books and materials have overtaken the educational world. In this era of technology, where Web 2.0 applications are a tool which enables Internet users to be able to invent, produce and sell content often skipping the "hard" format such as printed books, CD's or DVD's (Daradkeh et al, 2012). However, despite this, Razmjoo (2007) claims that a book is seen as an indispensable vehicle for foreign language acquisition by many students who feel secure and have a sense of progress and achievement. They seem to become more confident and satisfied, and find the book as a tool where they can always go back and revise (Razmjoo, 2007).

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) consider that materials can be evaluated, developed or adapted. Evaluation is selecting from existing materials; developing materials means writing your own materials and modifying existing materials represent the process of adaptation. (96)

The interest of researchers and linguists on evaluation has risen over the last two decades, and many definitions have been given on it as an important act in finding good learning materials. Richards et al define evaluation as "the systematic gathering of information for purposes of making decisions" (as cited in Vasiljevic, 3). Learning materials' evaluation has not started now, it might have been different, easier or harder, but it has been discussed since decades ago. Shevach Eden, in his article "Evaluation of learning material", in the early 1984, claims that evaluation of learning materials should be done in order for the teacher to be able to use the maximum of the curriculum. He mostly means books by learning materials, so that's how I will use it too in the few following paragraphs. He lists several goals of evaluation as below: (1984; p.283)

a) *reaching decisions about the selection of suitable learning material*

b) *determining the learning potential of the learning material*

c) *improving the learning material*

d) *understanding the problems and processes of developing learning material*

e) *giving an opinion of a textbook*

The first one, *reaching decisions about the selection of suitable learning material,* is usually done by teachers who want to decide carefully which materials to use. Sometimes, prior to starting to use a material, a teacher should be able to see if there are difficulties while learning

from that specific textbook. Very important is to be able to see if the book adapts to the learning conditions. Not rarely, using learning material is beneficial , but there might be a need to improve some things so teaching becomes more effective, and the outcomes are better at the end. This could be mostly didactic changes.

The process of evaluation may seem a little but this does not make it less used in the field of applied linguistics. Lynch (1996) describes evaluation as a systematic attempt to gather information which help in making decisions, while Rea-Dickins and Germaine (1994) see evaluation as an intrinsic part of teaching and learning. Evaluation plays a key role in education and that gives a vital importance for teachers because it provides valuable information (Romanowski, 2016). In the educational process evaluation has a substantial role mainly for course books, so later teachers can use them as a source, while using it as a self-study source. Before the implementation of learning programmes, as well as during their implementation the core of the curriculum is constituted by these elements, that's why if we want to come up with relevant information, evaluation has to be done very thoroughly.

So, evaluation could be done for different reasons, based on different criteria. These criteria could be set by teachers who are interested in evaluating a certain learning material. (Eden, 1984). There are checklists based on some generalized criteria, but they do not have real influence on the educational decision- making process of ELT coursebooks, and the way they are, they do not reflect the whole story (Sheldon, 1988, p.240). Cases are not rare, if not often, when teachers choose to follow the criteria of "popularity", which means they choose the book which works well for somebody else; believing that someone somewhere must be doing something right (Sheldon,1988). What is important to mention, is that there can be no global criteria that would fit all of the reviews of the coursebooks, anywhere in the world. That is not possible, according to Sheldon, who believes that a set of criteria could be taken as a basis, but, teachers or evaluators, can and should make necessary changes based on the factors that surround them.

Sheldon (1988) talks thoroughly about the reasons that lay behind the need of evaluating learning materials and coursebooks respectively. He believes that coursebooks are usually not a happy compromise, because, due to many external factors, teachers are found in front of a decision, and they have to choose a coursebook which in most cases does not teach what teachers want to. In his paper, he talks about a few issues which make coursebooks a problematic field. Among some practical problems that he talks about are the aspects of dividing levels such as beginner or

intermediate, neglection of cultural appropriacy, the use of whole-sentence dialogues contrary to what they tend to teach. For some good reasons, coursebooks are seen as a way of making quick profit, and when a product is used for a quick profit, there is a lot of space for mistakes, lack of adequate materials and this, in the case of coursebooks ends in mismatch between the final product and the initial aims and objectives of the teachers.

Ellis (1997) introduces two types of materials' evaluations, predictive and a retrospective one. The first one, is that type of evaluation which is done before using a certain coursebook, which means a teacher does an evaluation to help him choose the best book possible for what he expects to achieve. On the other hand, retrospective evaluation of a coursebook means doing the evaluation after using the certain material.

The predictive evaluation, according to Ellis (1997), could be carried out in two ways by teachers. One is through following the reviews made previously by reviewers, which is not a bad decision to be made. Sometimes inexperienced teachers don't know where to start from when thinking of an evaluation, so, reading and analyzing reviews that have already been done by others who are more experienced, is of great help. Another way to carry out a predictive evaluation, is to use a checklist or available guidelines that could be found on different sources. They are not perfect, but can surely help. Of course, one should be aware that this kind of evaluation might lack a level of "scientific" feature, as Ellis (1997) observes. Instead of the whole book, there could be done something like predictive evaluation of tasks. Surely, just as any other type of evaluation, this could be bound to have its certain limitations, but it's still something that could help. Vasiljevic (2011) suggests a model of systematic predictive task evaluation, which is seen as a step that enables teachers to find out how some features may have an effect on the learners' performance. The model that she proposes is made of three suggested dimensions of task design, input, output, and procedures. According to her, this type of systematic predictive valuation of tasks, can not only help teacher's development, but also make it easier to carry out a retrospective evaluation.

The retrospective evaluation, as we learn from Ellis (1997), can be done in two ways. The first one is impressionistically or through collecting information systematically. Teachers do the impressionistic evaluation through assessing how much certain tasks work. While the empirical one, or systematic one is clearly harder to carry out. Ellis (1997) suggests that a successful way of carrying out an empirical evaluation is through micro-evaluation, which, as he observes, is when

a teacher chooses a type of task which he has an interest in, and evaluates this empirically, in detail. Micro-evaluations series can create the basis for a following macro-evaluation (Ellis, 1997).

When a teacher does not like what is being offered for a specific course, then he decides to design his own material, or develop a material that will in fact follow the objectives of the course. Thirdly, as a combination of the first two, the teacher can choose one of the available sources, develop an extra material, and through this he does material adaptation.

Tomlinson (2011) believes that material development is a practical undertaking and as such it involves the production, evaluation, adaptation, and delivery of material all in one. Additionally, he describes material development as a field of academic study, where as such it studies the principles and procedures of the design, writing, implementation and evaluation of materials; while as a practical undertaking, it starts with the production, continues with evaluation, followed by adaption and ends with the delivery of materials (Tomlinson, 2011, p.270) Tomlinson (2004) argues that the importance of developing teaching materials has indeed begun to be treated seriously by researchers and academics around the mid-1990s. Notwithstanding their importance prior to that period, he believes materials have been seen as "examples of methods" (Tomlinson, 2001, 66), rather than means for exploration. In 1993 he founded the Materials Development Association (MATSDA) for organizing and running conferences and workshops. Nowadays, there are many organizations and institutions who run materials development modules.

According to him, when teachers or special groups start working on material development, what they mostly try to focus on is on the materials and points which worked or work for students, and learners too. Based on that, they carefully choose what the materials should include. Of course, sometimes it is hard to know how to decide what in fact works for learning, especially a language. Materials should not be "clones" of previously successful materials, but contrary to that, should be built upon some well analyzed criteria for learning a language. He furthermore lists his universal criteria that he uses when developing materials: (p.271)

1. *Exposing learners to a rich, comprehensible and meaningful input of language in use.*
2. *Engaging learners effectively and cognitively in the language experience.*
3. *Through achieving positive effect learners will develop communicative competence*
4. *Using those mental resources that are usually utilized when L2 language learners acquire and use their Ll.*
5. *Language learners can benefit from noticing the salient features of their input.*

6. Give learners more opportunities to use language in order to achieve communicative purposes (Tomlinson, 271).

As we said earlier, materials can be evaluated, developed or adapted. Adaptation is essentially a process of "matching" what the books offer and what we have (Sheldon, 1988). There must be reasons to consider why we need to match the two factors in adapting certain teaching materials. These reasons, according to McDonough and Shaw (1993; 85) depend on the whole range of variables operating in the teaching situation, and one teacher's priorities may differ from those of another. The reasons covered may include (a) aspects of language use, (b) skills, (c) classroom organization and (d) supplementary material (McDonough and Shaw, 1993; 87). These reasons don't always need to be absolute, because there is no absolute notion of being right or wrong in the context of changing a material that you use. Finding defects in a teaching material is relative, and as such, should really be seen as a normal process when authentication of materials is suggested. The factors that can play a role in the creation of the need to change and adapt a material, can sometimes be found in the type of priorities that teachers have. Sometimes, grammar is seen as decontextualized, or role play as not necessary.

If we stop and try to understand what adaptation really is, we can say that it is the process of something trying to suit a given situation or environment. In this case, when talking about books it could be said that adaptation is when teachers, mainly, try to match what they have with what they need.

After all of what was said above, a question arises related to the effect of global materials in the learning outcomes of the learners. In other words, if we disregard costs, time and textbook commercialism worldwide, we can be sure that global textbooks will still be effective in different parts of the world, used with all types of learners. Even though it is hard to achieve it, global textbooks in some cases should be avoided because learners from different countries cannot learn the same things in the same way and expect the same learning outcomes. The objectives are specific and that's why things should be done differently when conditions allow it. Tomlinson (2012), based on his experience, strongly suggests that materials should be designed and developed by selected teachers, organized by the Ministries of Education. This, as he claims to have been possible and also successful in few countries, could bring to the development of the materials which will satisfy the needs of learners.

To sum this up, textbooks can have all the roles we want them to have, be it activity source, a form of a syllabus, a self-study source, supporter of the beginning period for teachers and loads of others. What we can't let them be is our "boss" (Cunningsworth, 1995), either from the position of the learner or the teacher.

1.9. Achieving pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence through EFL coursebooks

Studies show that there is a disconnection between ESP courses and workplace communication needs, and that's the part where problems arise, not only for ESP learners, but for ESP teachers too, where issues like materials, class size or even time allocation for the course appear as obstacles (Le, 2017). These problems can be learner oriented and teacher oriented too. Le (2017) lists some learner-oriented problems such as heterogeneous language proficiency or lack of general English proficiency, followed by lack of motivation caused by different factors and lastly passive learning style. Moattarian and Tahririan (2014) believe that the ESP teachers may find it difficult to have a curriculum that matches the necessary content, the learning styles, or even teaching activities, or methodology for their students of all levels of language proficiency because of students' heterogeneity in language proficiency. In a simple example this could be explained through a reading task. If there is a suitable, easy reading task for low-level students, it could easily, or surely become boring to high-level students. That same reading task can be made more challenging for the better students, to match their needs and level. However, when the task will be attractive for high-level students, it will appear as a nightmare for the low-level students. In this situation, studies show that teachers are obliged to go levels beyond ESP, to teaching general English, not rarely ending up translating most of the material presented, in order to satisfy the needs of basic level students (Le, 2020).

Regarding the teacher-oriented problems in teaching ESP generally, Le et al. (2017) consider the following issues as problematic in teaching ESP: lack of necessary knowledge, excessive workload, out-of-date materials, large size of ESP classes and time allocation. They consider that teachers usually lack necessary knowledge, and expect that they are excessively loaded with other duties at work, sometimes teaching other courses too, and this makes it harder for them to teach the right material, and choose the right materials too. Sometimes, due to a lack of experience, materials can be out of date, and they don't give a hand to the teacher in reaching the objectives.

What is also very important, crowded large class size in ESP result in teaching constraints (Nguyen, 2015),

Communicative competence, as any other competence, should be carefully included in the curriculum planning, as well as syllabus design if we want to achieve validity in the outcomes of the whole EFL/ESL learning process. Yates et al. (2016) strongly suggest the inclusion of pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic skills in the ESP curricula. There is a step that should be taken, and that's a transition from the existing syllabus to the communicative-based syllabus, or as Kern (1990) choses to name this as "competency-task based syllabus". A thorough preparation of these syllabuses would bring teachers two benefits: the ability to list what is expected from the students after that certain course, and two, the methodology that the teacher should use in order to give the student what's needed. So, achieving this requires changes in all the contents of the process, including the teacher's roles, the choice of teaching materials, activities that are organized in the classroom, and most importantly the needs of the learner (Mede and Dikiltas, 2015). Wei (2019) suggests that the teachers should prepare interesting, life-related language materials, through which they will encourage students to take part in activities such as role-play or story-telling activities.

When discussing whether pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence should or not be taught in EFL or even in ESP, there is another question that is quite important to be asked. Are these two competences sufficiently included or represented in the course books that are served to students, chosen (or not always) by teachers? Tens of opinions have been given in the last decades if not earlier, concerning this issue. There is a mild inconsistency between the methodology of teaching language and the specific needs for using that same language. This inconsistency has lately become more distinctive than before. This could be seen as some type of a tension, and Kramsch (2014) observes that this tension is greater than ever, and that teachers themselves are not sure what to teach to students and what in fact those students will need to possess as a knowledge, how much they should be prepared for the real world outside the classroom.

A matter of concern is in fact the reliability of course books in the process of teaching pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence. There are researchers who think that the course books are not a reliable source for teaching these competences, and Bardovi-Harlig (1996) is one of them. He believes that if we expect to provide learners with pragmatic input, then we should work harder and more carefully in including these types of contents in ELT coursebooks. He supports this idea

through criticizing the way how speech acts are presented in course books. According to him, speech acts are usually presented very narrowly, and usually by decontextualized phrases. Contrary to him, there are a handful of researchers who do see potential in the course books regarding their reliability. Bouton (1994) thinks that maybe they are not ideal but without coursebooks this process of acquiring pragmatic competence by learners would be slower and harder. Additionally, Koike and Pearson (2005) find a hope in the use of course books, because, as they believe, during the course, through the use of course books the student will have the chance to get feedback and this will open him a path towards learning and improving.

Another important matter is the way of transmitting these competences to students, explicitly or implicitly. Studies show that it doesn't necessarily mean that offering information explicitly in classrooms is always adequate. However, neither does (in)formality of certain forms presented passively as saying "could is more formal than can" without any further explanation (Wang, Zhang and Wannaruk, 2019). Skehan (1989) claims that explicit teaching in the EFL classroom helps students achieve more direct awareness of language learning strategies, and this constitutes a very important, if not the most important individual difference factor in L2 acquisition. Seliger (1975) conducted a study and ascertained that adult ESL learners in the US were able to retain knowledge of rules after explicit instruction.

The process of becoming pragmatic and socio-linguistic becomes even more complex when we talk about students who are majors in Business. In a survey by International Business Machines, 67% of Chief Executive Officers ranked communicative competence as the most important key factor which helped employees become successful in the globalized market (Global English, 2016). This need for being communicatively competent has of course influenced directly English language teaching and research in this field too (Kankaanranta, A., & Louhiala-Salminen, 2010).

Students are expected to be competent in different business settings. They don't know whether linguistic competence, or possessing other practical competences will make them successful in their career. They can normally become competent for their job through task-based learning, which requires their involvement in real-life tasks, such as sales presentations, business writing, applying for a job etc. Most of these activities are hindered by different external and internal factors, which will be discussed in the discussion and results below.

Holistically viewed, mastering these competences in EFL generally, and ESP specifically, is a very hard process. It is evident that teaching how to use language in a classroom setting is not

a simple task that could be changed readily, it requires changes in different areas, and willingness to do these changes, which can be sometimes hard not only for the teachers, but for the students too.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This part of the thesis goes through some of the relevant studies regarding the achievement of communicative competence in Business English, conducted in different countries. The researchers' interest in achieving communicative competence in English generally, and specifically in Business English, has increased rapidly in the last two decades.

Bojović (2013) conducted research on the importance and development of students' communicative language ability in ESP courses in Belgrade, with 4 experimental groups of students. She aimed to determine the level of communicative language ability of students. Except for communicative language ability the research included its psychological-pedagogical factors and educational-demographic variables. The results of her study show that the appropriate duration of teaching programs oriented in communication increase students' ability to effectively communicate in English language. This, according to the author, is achieved through implementing speaking skill strategies, which also turned out to decrease the anxiety of students at the end of the study. The students who had lower levels of anxiety showed better results in their overall communicative competence, and this tendency continued even when the communicative task became more complicated. Also, the study shows that the decrease of anxiety led to the increase of students' self-confidence, which helped students show much better results in various contexts.

In line with this research, Ivana Nešić (2018) investigated few aspects of the development of communicative competence in students of Business English in Serbia. Initially, she aimed to see students' attitudes towards the use of communicative approach in the classroom, and how that impacts their communicative competence in general. Also, Nešić added another part to research, that of the role of the psychological factors in students' communicative competence. For the first part, the author came to conclusions that students of Business English prefer the use of some communicative activities in their course, however, this preference did not show a high impact on their communicative competence in general. Related to the role of psychological factors in students' communicative competence, the author discovered that students who were highly motivated showed better results, as well as students with lower levels of anxiety who did better than those students who had higher levels of anxiety during the class.

There are studies which emphasize the pragmatic aspect of communicative competences. Zhang et al. (2019) focused on 4 face-threatening acts: *refusal, request, complaint,* and *advice* in their research. They aimed to see how students who attend Business English classes produce these acts

in their first year of studies compared to third-year students. The results showed a difference between these two groups, where the students of third year showed noticeable improvement. According to the authors, this is a result of the access these students have had in typical expressions which are used when speakers apologize, make a request, advise or complain about something in a business context. It is also important to add that except the length of teaching Business English, the study revealed that there are other important factors which highly impact the development of pragmatic competence, such as textbooks, language proficiency of students, explicit instruction and the use of multimedia sources.

When mentioning textbooks, it is important to address the issue of not having enough research on business English books regarding their content in the context of pragmatic competence. To fill this gap in literature, there are some studies who have offered analysis of textbooks for Business English regarding the pragmatic content. One of these studies was conducted by Solouki (2019), who compared four textbooks in the prism of pragmatic content, focused on *refusals, complaints, requests* and *apologies.* He drew conclusions that the pragmatic content in the four textbooks analyzed is not satisfactory. According to him, except for not having enough speech acts, another disappointing result is that the number of these speech acts does not happen to increase with the rising levels of the textbooks. Lastly, his conclusion is that the low exposure of students to pragmatic content may be one of the reasons that students end up realizing these speech acts inadequately.

Similarly, Furko and Munos (2013) claim that pragmatic markers are left aside and not given the necessary attention in Business English coursebooks. Based on this, they conducted a study focused on pragmatic markers met in some widely-used Business English coursebooks. They attempt to investigate the input of certain pragmatic markers, in order to see if this input is facilitating enough in the process of acquiring socio-pragmatic competence. The results of their study show that coursebooks are mostly oriented towards written language, lacking pragmatic markers which makes teachers appear as responsible for making pragmatic markers missing in the process of learning English language.

Requests are closely related to politeness. A prominent study which shows the connection of politeness with requests is that of Blum-Kulka in 1982. The experiment was done with three different groups of speakers, such as adult learners of Hebrew, adult native speakers of Hebrew and adult English native speakers. The results of the experiment showed the high sensitivity to

interpersonal relationships noticed in the strategies used by both learners and native speakers. The author came to the conclusion that less direct forms were preferred by learners rather than speakers of both languages. Additionally, the author argues that social norms play a significant role in the strategies chosen.

Later in 1984, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain conducted another study which included native and non-native speakers of eight languages. The results also showed that there is a close connection between realization of speech acts and the cultural factors, especially noticed in the directness of speech acts, which is closely related to politeness. These two studies, especially the second one conducted in 1984 served as the basis of other studies conducted afterwards.

Alemi & Razzaghi, (2013) added another study in this part of pragmatics and sociolinguistics in the Business English textbooks. They analyzed the presence of politeness markers in the textbook of *Business Result.* They consider that the lack of appropriateness may make the speakers appear rude in communication, contrary to grammatical errors which can only appear as a language problem. Alemi & Razzaghi, (2013) point out that the presence of politeness is able to "minimize interpersonal frictions and establish rapport and management" (p. 110). Without underestimating the value of grammar, their aim is to show the importance of holistically preparing students in all the components of communicative competences. Their research shows that Business Result, suffers from inadequacy of politeness markers and this according to the authors, textbook developers should be more attentive when designing these materials if the development of communicative competence is aimed to be achieved holistically.

Pragmatic competence seems also to be missing in the communication of students who are grammatically proficient (Latif, 2001), and the reason for this could be dug somewhere into the type of instruction (Choraih, Loutfi & Mansoor, 2016). Several studies have revealed results which support the impact of explicit instruction in developing communicative competence, because it helps students perform native-like responses (Rose and Ng 2001; Takahashi 2001) and it could draw students' attention better leading to improvement of students' pragmatic competence which lag far behind than other competences (Choraih, Loutfi & Mansoor, 2016).

Researchers have had less focus on the sociolinguistic competences, especially in Business English teaching. There are studies who have been focusing on the development of the sociolinguistic competence in EFL classroom in general, but when it comes to the sociolinguistic competence in Business English courses, the number of studies is lower.

If studies show that Business English textbooks lack material for developing pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence, this could be a result of not evaluating the books that are offered to students. Scholars like Cunningsworth (1995), and researchers such as Patel and Jain (2008) emphasize the importance of textbook evaluation for effective language teaching. Čepon (2004) conducted an in-depth qualitative research with Business English teachers in Slovenia, aiming to see their perceptions on textbook evaluation. From the interviews with the teachers, she came to conclusions that teachers usually follow their intuition when choosing a book, rather than going for textbook evaluation. According to her, BE teachers in Slovenia, are fully aware of the importance of applying pre-use evaluation of the textbook, but they don't necessarily understand all of the evaluative criteria. Additionally, as Čepon (2004) states in her study, the teachers don't see all the criteria applicable for all types of the textbooks.

Culture in general, as well as intercultural communication in business settings have attracted considerable interest in the studies of socio-pragmatic competences. Weaver (1983) compared culture to an iceberg, as in the figure below:
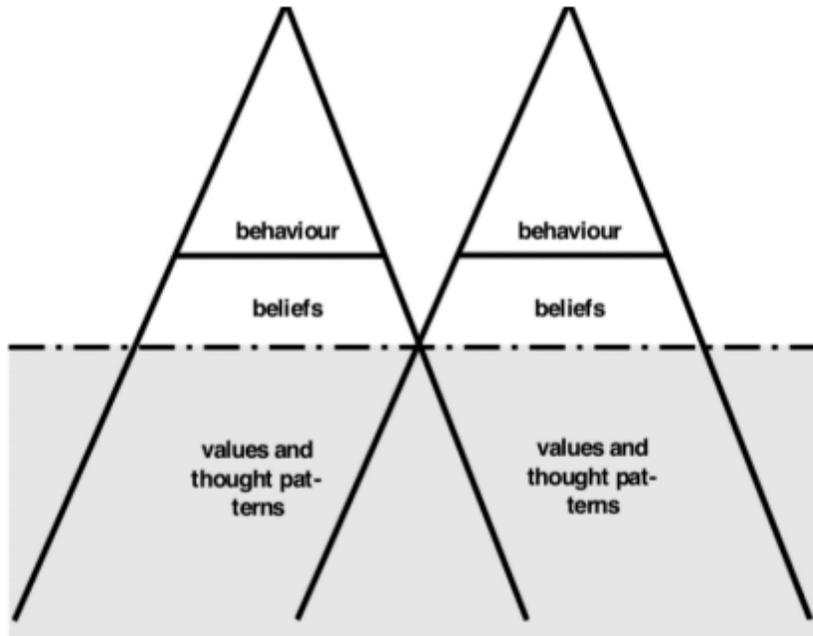
Figure 8. Weaver's Iceberg theory (Weaver, 1993, p. 135)

Through this iceberg shown in figure 8, Weaver (1983) explains that culture is presented in two ways, one that is visible, and the invisible one. In the first one, what we usually see is music, literature, and games. Whereas in the invisible one there are modesty, emotions and justice, things that we don't usually see. Learners don't usually consider they learn something about another culture unless movies, songs or artists are involved. Regardless of this possible students' approach, culture cannot be separated from language learning (Kramsch, 1993), and intercultural communication is what makes people interact effectively with people from other cultures.

Some studies show that intercultural communication seems to be lacking in the communication of Business English majors (Yang 2015; Li & Lei 2021). According to Li & Lei (2021), this lack of intercultural communication in students comes as a result of a few factors. Initially, the authors list the lack of coherent input of intercultural content, in a systematic way. Another thing according to the authors is the way how the curriculum is designed, followed by syllabus design too. What is also a very important factor in this issue, is the level of knowledge teachers possess about intercultural business communication. According to Li and Lei (2021), it is not enough for teachers to be linguistically fluent only, because if they don't possess some knowledge regarding business communication, they will not be able to prepare the students for a successful communication in the business world, especially culturally wise. In these situations,

according to the authors, teachers should be trained prior to starting teaching and working with Business English students. They conclude that intercultural communication competence cannot be cultivated if there are no highly qualified teachers. Well-prepared teachers should leave their comfort zone, and engage themselves in more modern ways of including culture in their teaching process. Lastly, but very important too, authors list the teaching materials as a problem in achieving intercultural communicative competence in students.

Culture is also important in business English communication when it comes to avoiding mistakes which could cause an offense to the speaker. Loukianenko (2004) claims that cross-cultural awareness in business communication should be given more importance through using teaching materials which expose students to cross-cultural communication. According to the author, teachers should work on developing students' critical and analytical thinking skills, since this would enable learners to gain the practical skill of knowing what to use in each situation. In her study, the author analyzes some important differences between American and Russian culture in business communication. These differences are spotted in *Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism/collectivism* and *masculinity/femininity.* She finds differences in the way these features are used in the communication of the two sides, American and Russian. From the analysis she has done, Americans tend to reduce power distance, whereas Russians make it more obvious. Also, Russians try to use the collective image, while Americans seem to be ready to take more responsibility for their actions and lean more on individualism. This study shows us how important it is to add the cultural component in the process of teaching Business English, in order to prepare students to properly involve themselves in communication which will not put them in an uncomfortable situation in their future job.

When culture is discussed, it should be said that many things are part of it when it comes to communication in the business world. In communication between native and non-native speakers of English, the use of idioms is not rare. Native speakers of English use idioms naturally, without being aware that idioms are not always understood by non-native speakers. The main difficulty regarding idioms is their appropriate use as part of the figurative language, especially when speakers try to translate from the native language (Monica-Ariana & Anamaria-Mirabela, 2015). Monica-Ariana and Anamaria-Mirabela (2015) discuss the need of incorporating idioms in the process of teaching Business English. The authors note that teaching idioms to students just to make them prepared for the job market in Romania is probably not that much necessary. But, they

strongly believe that teachers' job and course objectives should clearly aim to prepare students for the international job market in multinational companies. Being equipped with knowledge beyond the linguistic competence, students will find themselves ready to operate professionally in any kind of work environment. Monica-Ariana and Anamaria-Mirabela (2015) investigated whether students of Business in Romania are familiar with idioms and their perceptions of idioms importance in business communication. According to the authors, the answers were pretty discouraging, as the vast majority, 93.7 % did not even know what idioms are, 83.3% of the students surveyed did not even consider idioms as relevant in their communication in business setting, and 100% of them said that even translation does not help in understanding the meaning of idioms. This study showed that students at college level are not exposed to idioms and that's why they don't even show interest in learning idioms, or giving idioms the needed importance.

Another part of this dissertation is the role of technology and multimedia in developing communicative competence in Business English courses. One of the most important opinions on the role of technology in teaching ESP in general is exposing students to realistic situations (Arno-Macia, 2012). It can also maximize the learners' learning potential (Trinder, 2009). Using multimedia and offering technology enhanced language learning can motivate students to learn the language quickly (Jeong, 2018). In Business English classes, technology is a very important element which needs to be used (Abrudan & Horea, 2018). According to their research, we live in an era of technology, and as such, teachers should find ways to incorporate technology in the classroom to attract students in the teaching process of English. Their results show that the majority of the Business English students who participated in the research, prefer using technology in the English class because it helps them enrich their vocabulary. According to Abrudan & Horea (2018), when exposed to technology assisted learning, students are able to improve their listening skill, which sometimes is left behind. They also claim that when the class of Business English is offered through traditional methods only, students lose interest and what is more important, students can't connect theory with practice. One of the ways technology can be used in Business English courses is through video materials where students watch an example of a business meeting (Farani & Yustisia, 2019). In a video of a business meeting, according to Farani & Yustisia (2019), students can see in practice how people introduce themselves, how they shake hands (or if they shake hands), and what is appropriate to wear at a business meeting. This would help in raising

awareness about some cultural aspects which are sometimes unnoticed in reading materials from the textbooks.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The research questions and the above-mentioned hypotheses are treated by quantitative and qualitative analysis. This combination of methods gave a multidimensional and clear picture of the situation that is being researched. A survey was conducted with students who attend a Business English course in higher education institutions in the Republic of North Macedonia, that is in five different higher education institutions, private and public ones, as the University Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, the University American College in Skopje, the University Goce Delcev-Stip, the South East European University and the University of Tetovo.

First, the teachers were contacted in order to get information about the books and other materials which they use in their course. Regarding those books, the survey and interviews were designed.

Contrary to the initial plan, these interviews were not administered directly due to time and lack logistics, so the questions were given to teachers in a form of a questionnaire, to elicit teachers' perception of the textbooks regarding sociolinguistic and pragmatic content, as well as their own background knowledge about these competences. Additionally, the questionnaire aimed to answer whether there are conditions for developing these specific competences, i.e. whether they follow fixed curricula; if they have enough time available for practicing such exercises, and whether they use books that give them the possibility to develop these competences.

The survey with the students which was conducted partially electronically, and partially physically, aimed at finding out whether the students are able to recognize the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, whether they encounter such exercises in teaching, and which factors hinder them to practice and develop such competences. The questionnaires include close ended questions, Likert Scale questions and multiple-choice questions. In order to alleviate the difficulties that might occur during data analysis, only few questions are open ended ones.

Questionnaires were chosen because they are a popular research instrument, especially in the social sciences, because of the large amount of the information they gather, quickly and readily. Open-ended questions in both questionnaires were quite important in our qualitative research but I still faced the disadvantage of having it difficult to make reasonable and valid comparisons among respondents. Then, there were also the closed-ended questions included in questionnaires,

which even though being considered as narrow sometimes, or biased, they still took us towards important quantifiable information.

The results of the questionnaires have shown which competences are least developed and which are the reasons behind that. Those results generated ideas for choosing two types of least developed competences, and exercises were prepared to be taught and practiced among our students for a semester. At the end of the semester these students were tested in order to determine the effect of exercises and the progress of the development of the chosen competences.

The answers of the teachers' interviews and students' questionnaires are analyzed, compared and discussed in order to get to fruitful conclusions at the end.

3.1 Subject of the research

Students are expected to become competent in communication at the end of Business Courses in their studies, which will prove the objectives of the course itself. The subject of this research is whether pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences are taught to higher education students in Business English courses at the universities in North Macedonia.

The linguistic aspect of English language is given more attention to EFL classes, which leaves behind the importance of gaining pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences in Business English.

3.2 Aims of the research

Pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences are the key to being able to communicate effectively in a real business setting. The main aim is to find out if these two types of competences are taught to students and acquired by them, at the level that would make them communicate effectively in their future profession. Lacking these competences can put them in a position where they will end up in miscommunication. This means that this research strives to:

- o find out if the books offer the right content regarding these competences
- o find out if there are conditions for the teachers to teach students these competences;
- o identify some factors which hinder students from developing these competences in the classroom;
- o raise awareness of the importance of explicit methods of teaching these competences

3.3 Participants

Since the main purpose of this study is to find out if sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences are being taught by teachers and developed by students, both of these groups are part of my research. Besides teachers and students, the research includes an analysis of teaching materials, course books in this case, that are used at the 5 universities which were part of the research.

The number of teachers who agreed to take part in this research is 8, out of the total number in North Macedonia which could go up to 20. The total number of students who were planned to take part in this research is over 250. All of them were majoring in Business or Economy, depending on the study programs of their faculties. All of the students who participated in the survey are non-native speakers of English, studying in private or state universities in North Macedonia. Variables such as gender, major of study or birth place were not considered relevant for the study.

3.4 Methods

The first stage of the research was the analysis of the books which are used in the Business English courses at the five universities. This was followed by the online questionnaire. The questionnaire was made available for all of the participants at the same time and the time for filling it in was also the same. Then the gathered data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively, and the results were presented in graphs, pies and charts. We used the descriptive and the contrastive method to analyze the results and draw the conclusions from the data analysis. In the research the dependent variable is gaining pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences in Business English courses in Higher Education, while independent variables are books, conditions of teaching and teaching methods which impact students' development of these competences. In the data processing survey, the descriptive and conclusive statistics are used, and it presents the results with tabulated and graphical frequencies, including numerical frequencies, valid percentages, standard deviations. Then the calculated statistical Pearson correlation (the connection between two or more variables), the linear regression (the level of dependence between two or more variables) are actually the introduction to the linear regression line, as well as the statistical methods of averaging (Tuckey test type and independent t- test). The experimental part of the research is more concentrated in delivering more detailed and thorough results regarding the differences between the experimental and control group. Firstly, the linear graph is presented,

71

which is a very straightforward tool that helps us understand the trends, variability and seasonality of the series. In our case we have a variable and not a time series so we would be able to identify the nature of the pattern that the points of the groups have. After the graphic presentation there is a summary of descriptive statistics which is very helpful, here are included the mean, median, standard deviation skewness, kurtosis, Jarque Berra statistics that helps us to identify if the variables have normal distribution. Average mean or arithmetic mean is alone not a very helpful indicator since it does not tell which of the numbers differ more and how much overall numbers differ from it, that is why the standard deviation is given to give the overall dispersion from the mean of the variable values.

Detailed tabulation is done for the both groups to see the relative frequencies of the given intervals. Relative frequencies present the rate between the absolute frequency for a given interval, divided by the total number of observations of the sample. To be more specific to the tabulation is added also the cumulative frequencies and cumulative percent. Lastly there is an ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). ANOVA is termed a univariate procedure because we use it to assess group differences on a single metric dependent variable, it is a statistical technique used to determine whether samples from two or more groups come from populations with equal means (i.e., Do the group means differ significantly?) Both ANOVA and MANOVA are particularly useful when used in conjunction with experimental designs; that is, research designs in which the researcher directly controls or manipulates one or more independent variables to determine the effect on the dependent variable(s). ANOVA and MANOVA provide the tools necessary to judge the observed effects (i.e., whether an observed difference is due to a treatment effect or to random sampling variability), (Hair et al., 2014).

3.5 Instruments

1. In this study, the first instrument used for data collection was an informal type of questionnaire for teachers, with open-ended and closed-ended questions, which consisted of 15 items, with a validity of 0.82 Alpha-Cronbach coefficient.

2. The second instrument used for data collection was also an informal type of questionnaire for students, in two parts. The first part included 15 open-ended and closed-ended questions, while the second part contained 11 items with Likert scale alternatives and a validity of 0.72 Alpha-Cronbach coefficient.

3. The third instrument was a test which was given to two groups of students, control and experimental, which was divided in two sets of questions, where one was testing the knowledge gained considering idioms, while the second part was aimed to test the ability to make a polite request.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. Analysis of books

Initially, as mentioned in the previous chapter too, it was hard to come in touch with the teachers who teach Business English in North Macedonia. However, after getting there, I was informed that books that are being used are *Market Leader, Business Result, ProFile and Business English 1 &2 (Macedonian Authors).*

It is normal to admit that any kind of assessment that is done for a coursebook, especially a predictive one, is hard to note all the flaws of a course book or material. It is bound for any kind of material evaluation to have its limitations, and as Sheldon claims, we should know that an assessment of a coursebook should be seen as a rule of thumb activity and no definite yardstick is expected to be provided at the end (as cited in Vasiljevic, 2011, p.4)

There are global coursebooks, local and localized coursebooks. Tomlinson (1998) points out that global coursebooks are not prepared for a particular culture, or a group of learners from a particular place, but can be used in any class of learners, who are at the same level of language. A local coursebook, on the other hand, is a type of coursebook which draws on a national curriculum since it is specifically produced for a country, or group of learners. However, there are cases when teachers rely on global coursebooks, but make a localized coursebook, which is sometimes known as a *glocal* coursebook, and this is something that Tomlinson sees as favorable, because having successful outcomes sometimes depend on matching the target learners with the environment they learn in (as cited in Villanueva de Debat, 2014).

When it comes to teaching English, teachers usually choose out of hundreds of books published by well-known publishers such as Macmillan, Oxford University Press, Cambridge University press, Pearson or similar other publishers. These are coursebooks intended to be used anywhere, and this makes them global coursebooks. Gray (2002) claims that EFL coursebooks which are produced in English speaking countries, are used in every country. Teachers are mostly not fully satisfied with what is offered in the book, so they skip some parts, add some others, invent activities that are combined with the tasks given in the books, only to fit their students' needs (Lopez-Barrios & Villanueva de Debat, 2014).

Type	Definition	Target learners (L1, age group and sociocultural background)	Location of course	Institutional context	Target exams
Global	intended for use in any part of the world by learners of a specific foreign language level and age range	heterogeneous/ homogeneous	worldwide	schools (official curriculum), language schools, universities	Possible preparation for a target exam
Localised	a global coursebook adapted or localised to make it fit with the learners' background and a national curriculum	homogeneous	a specific country or region	schools (official curriculum)	Possible preparation for a target exam
Local	specifically produced for a country or region, sensitive to learners' background, draws on a national curriculum	homogeneous	a specific country or region	schools (official curriculum)	Possible preparation for a target exam

Figure 9. Contexts of use of three different types of coursebooks (Mario Lopez Barrios and Elba Villanueva de Debat, global vs local: does it matter)

It is expected, and normal to some extent, that teachers choose to use global coursebooks, because of many factors. Local or localized coursebooks are rarely chosen to be made because of the financial aspect. In commercial terms, these kinds of coursebooks do not yield a high profit, and as such are not preferred by publishers. However, teachers who are persistent, despite the obstacles, choose to design their own textbooks, because they realize that global coursebooks sometimes underestimate the values of their learners, and prefer to engage students' existing skills through the use of their own materials. However, whatever teachers choose to do, global coursebooks will remain to be the main resource used for teaching by teachers in most parts of the world (Tomlinson, 2003). The idea of changing the coursebook materials time after time should be taken into consideration by teachers, because it is some kind of help for them to deal with materials which are organized and effective in terms of their objectives (Cunningsworth, 1995).

75

4.1.1 Market Leader – Longman Pearson by David Cotton David Falvey Simon Kent

Market Leader is considered to be one of the best materials to teach Business English, for business people and students of Business English too. This book is used by one lecturer in one of the Universities in North Macedonia, and as such, it became part of this evaluation. It is much harder to analyze a coursebook without using it, but it took a long time to go through it and see what it offers to its learners. *Pearson Longman Market Leader* is considered different and one step ahead of others in terms of the content within. This is because of its partnership with two important newspapers such as *Financial Times* and *Guardian*. Including articles from these two eminent newspapers in the textbook has made *Market Leader* include formal and real business-like content, which has proved to be attractive and interesting for students.

It consists of 12 units, which are based on topics that arise great interest to people involved in business in some way. These topics are listed as we can see below:

✔ *Careers*
✔ *Companies*
✔ *Selling*
o *Revision Unit A*
✔ *Great ideas*
✔ *Stress*
✔ *Entertaining*
o *Revision unit B*
✔ *New business*
✔ *Marketing*
✔ *Planning*
o *Revision Unit C*
✔ *Managing people*
✔ *Conflicts*
✔ *Products*
o *Revision Unit D*

As we can see, after three units, there is a Revision unit, and in total there are four revision units, which serve to students for revising what they have been taught for the three previous units.

Each unit is divided into a few subsections, such as: *discussions, texts, language work, skills and case studies.* But what's inside these units and sections?

Discussions tend to offer interesting activities, where business-oriented topics are discussed and students can exchange ideas about them. Few of these topics are initiated here: talking about career plans, shopping habits, discussing corporate entertaining, stressful situations, qualities of a good manager etc. The aim of the *Discussions* is to improve learner's fluency through discussion activities.

The coursebook also gives special importance and attention to *listening* and *reading*, since it has included these two skills in each unit, in the section of *texts*. Reading is practiced through authentic given materials, with topics and content from the *Financial Times,* while listening skills are expected to be developed through authentic interviews with business people. As expected, all of the audio files, except in the CD, are also present at the end of the book in the written form.

Vocabulary is taught through different types of exercises, which are usually presented and practiced through matching exercises, completing missing words in sentences or texts, or crossing out unnecessary words given. However, in the beginning of the coursebook, the authors suggest the use of the Longman Business English Dictionary, which according to them can really help in vocabulary building. This textbook pays more attention to building, and this is seen in some studies conducted by teachers who use it. Except teachers, students give more attention and importance to vocabulary thinking that it will help them build better communication skills (Phỉ, T., Nga, T. L. P., Đào, 216)

When it comes to the most critical part, Grammar, *Market Leader* has chosen to teach it through the section of *Language work*, and the lessons that are included are:

Market leader Pre-Intermediate
Modals 1 (ability, requests, and offers);
Modals 2 (must, need to, have to, should);
Present simple and present continuous,
Past simple and past continuous;

Past simple and past perfect;

multi-word verbs;

verbs and prepositions;

reported speech,

conditionals;

time clauses;

passives.

Some studies show that *Market Leader* textbooks give focus to business writing through business emails, advertising, writing reports, and formal letters (MacDonald, 2012).

As a book, it is clearly focused on developing communication skills, and in the section of *skills*, there are exercises which help the development of essential business skills such as making presentations, taking part in meetings, telephoning or negotiating.

What is also important to mention is that there are *Case Studies* in the end of each unit, linked to the topic of that given unit. Based on realistic business problems, these case studies can really give students an opportunity to develop communication skills that are important in the business context such as meetings, presentations and negotiations, and they also allow students to develop social management skills, the spirit of teamwork, critical thinking, very often problem solving and decision-making tool (Radyuk & Pankova, 2017). The Case studies are related to the business topics of each unit. They are based on realistic business problems or situations and allow students to use the language and communication skills they develop from that certain topic.

4.1.2 Business Result: Elementary and pre-intermediate level - John Hughes and Jon Naunton (2010)

A detailed analysis is undoubtedly a huge amount of work that needs to be done. There is a whole world within, which of course cannot be analyzed thoroughly in a chapter of a PhD thesis. *Business Result* was one of the textbooks used in three institutions, though in different semesters; South East European University, University of Tetovo and University American College Skopje.

If we start from the main physical aspect of the book, a textbook should be attractive for learners, and very importantly include CD or other materials.

The publishers believe that this series of books are practical, present and practice functional language that can be used in a work environment. Additionally, the book offers case studies, which are authentic and deal with key business issues.

What the publishers write online is that *Business Result provides skills and strategies for different business scenarios, such as talking to suppliers, entertaining customers, or updating colleagues. These help students to communicate confidently in everyday situations. They focus on key expressions, and then build up to a final task in which they put the new language into practice. Language and skills practice is available through activities in the Student's Book, the Workbook (available on DVD-ROM or online), and practice files on the Teacher's and Student's Websites. (website)*

Business Result, comes as a single book, where the workbook is included in the book, at the end of it, in the forms of Practice files, per each unit. *Business Profile Elementary* consists of 12 chapters. It also contains a CD, which includes audio files, all included in written form too, at the end of the book.

Business Result Elementary consists of 12 independent units, which can be taught separately without depending on each other. The topics that are covered are the following:

- *jobs, products and services, location, technology, communication, contacts, departments, employment, competition, teamwork, travel, schedules*

Whereas *Business Result Pre-Intermediate* contains 16 units, with these topics:

Companies, contacts, visitors, new products, employment, customer service, travel, orders, selling, new ideas, entertaining, performance, future trends, time, training, your career.

➢ **Grammar**

Grammar content is presented as *Language at work,* and the units that are covered in these two levels, are below:

Elementary	Pre-Intermediate
present simple, be, possessives	Present simple
present simple	Present continuous

there is/there are	Asking questions
adverbs of frequency	Past simple (video)
past simple regular verbs	Present perfect (video)
past simple irregular verbs – time expressions	Comparisons
prepositions of place and movement	Countable and uncountable nouns
present continuous	Present continuous (going to and will for plans, arrangements and decisions)
Comparatives	Modal verbs for obligation, necessity and permission
present continuous, present and future, superlatives	The passive
going to, infinitive of purpose	First conditional
present perfect	Present perfect with for and since
	Future predictions
	Second conditional
	Modal verbs for giving advice
	Revision of grammar and tenses

Table 5. Business Result grammar content

The videos that are added to some of the grammar lessons, are only available to students who have the code to access online learning via their website **www.oxfordlearn.com**, which is hard to play in the class due to lack of technology supplies in the lecture rooms.

➢ **Vocabulary**

It is necessary to say that these books offer a wide amount of vocabulary, which can be learned by learners. Vocabulary is in fact quite crucial in being able to communicate in a business environment, in many situations even without grammar. As McGrath (2002) claims, learners can end up having poor communication skills because of poor vocabulary, rather than lack of grammar

as many would think. Webb and Nation (2017) observe that there are certain learning conditions which need to be established if we expect results in vocabulary learning. If these required "conditions are put into practice in specific learning activities" then vocabulary learning will rise (Cao, 2018, 2).

Differently from *Profile* and *Market Leader, Business Result* does not offer a section which is titled as Vocabulary or something similar, but it does give an important place to vocabulary building through sections *Working with words.* There are exercises which deliberately facilitate vocabulary learning, such as through highlighting words in a text, and then doing 2-3 exercises using these words afterwards. Such an example is given in the first unit of *Business Result Pre-Intermediate*. Learners are given a text with few words in bold:

Provides, sales, produces, based, employees, specializes, subsidiary, competitor. (pg 6)

This is what happens in most of the units in the first 2-3 exercises. Additionally, in the workbook, in each unit, the first three exercises are used to facilitate vocabulary learning through matching, filling the gaps, or choosing the correct word out of 2 given options.

An extra asset of this book is the opportunity to learn online, through a code given in each coursebook. There are different kinds of materials, including videos which help learners improve what they already know, and quite surely, learn new skills and words.

Figure 10 is an example of how glossary is offered in these online materials, where except the definition of new words introduced in the text, there are examples given, and a sound that pronounces the word if the learners don't not know how to read a certain word.

Unit 1 Glossary

	Word	Definition	Translation	Example
▶	annual	relating to a period of one year	_____	The average annual growth rate was 8%.
▶	based in	working or living in a particular place	_____	The company is based in Chicago.
▶	commercial	connected with buying and selling goods and services; connected with carrying goods or passengers who pay	_____	This was the first commercial flight across the Atlantic.
▶	community	all the people who live in a particular area, country, etc. when they are talked about as a group	_____	He does a lot of voluntary work with the local community.
▶	competitor	a person or an organization that tries to be better than others, especially in business	_____	We are cheaper than our main competitor.
▶	convenience food	food that you buy frozen or in a box or can, that you can prepare and cook very quickly and easily	_____	Convenience food is not always unhealthy.
▶	employ	to give someone a job to do for payment	_____	We employ over 200 people.
▶	employee	a person who is paid to work	_____	How many employees does the company have?

Figure 10. Unit 1 Glossary from Business Result e-learning

4.1.3 Business English 1 – Biljana Naumoska – Sarakinska/ Aneta Naumoska (2018)

In one of the previous chapters, the importance and need of creating materials that are not global was discussed. It happens that individuals or groups of teachers, according to respected laws in different countries, join together and create something that will help students have greater interest in learning, and get better learning outcomes. The creation of these materials helps teachers avoid global textbooks. When saying avoiding global textbooks, it does not mean completely avoiding some content of commercial and global textbooks, but, focus on the needs of the learners, depending on their country, culture, expectations etc. This requires teachers who are experienced, and possess the ability to evaluate the needs of their students. This is the case of the next material that will be discussed in the next paragraph. This material is used at the University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, and was compiled and designed specifically for the needs of the students of this University. This does not mean that it would not serve students of Economics in other Universities in North Macedonia, but, until now, it has been used only inside this University.

Sheldon (1988) claims that it is some kind of a paradox that self-prepared materials, or home-grown-materials often do not have the luxury of being credible as published textbooks, regardless of the lack of inadequacy of the latter ones. This could be a reason for the manipulation that is done to students through the glossy covers made specially for satisfying students' expectations about the quality (238).

It is a local coursebook, but this does not necessarily make it less good than the other global books that can be used in the courses of Business English.

If we start from the physical aspect of evaluating it, of course it is not as aesthetic as the previous books analyzed, because it is not published by global publishers as OUP, PEARSON or CUP. It does not include a CD as most of the global materials do, but this is quite normal for materials that are prepared by individuals compared to other materials. It is important to say that it is consistent with the outcomes of the curriculum and it is appropriate for the subject area.

It is not divided into levels, but in the foreword the authors believe that is B2/C1 level in accordance with CEFR. It is indeed, quite different from the pre-Intermediate level of *Business Result*, because it directly jumps to exercises which are very hard to be understood or even done by students who possess little knowledge of English. The reading texts that are offered in the book are exclusively business oriented, followed by discussions and assignments which are thought to expand the knowledge of students in terms of vocabulary.

Contents of the book are divided into three sections, such as: *Reading and vocabulary; Grammar focus; Practice and revision.*

The topics that are covered in the sections of reading and vocabulary are:

- ✔ *Basics of economy,*
- ✔ *Money markets,*
- ✔ *international trade,*
- ✔ *International financial institutions,*
- ✔ *Mergers, acquisitions and takeovers,*
- ✔ *Joint ventures, Management functions,*
- ✔ *Banks and banking,*
- ✔ *Financial planning,*
- ✔ *Stocks,*

✔ *share and stakeholders.*

Grammar is also given its place in the book, and according to the level the materials offered are exactly the type of practice which expects students to be able to know them, having learned them previously and now revising them. A typical example of this is the fact that in the first chapter, all of the tenses are revised, through examples. The tenses that are included are:

Business English 1
present simple
present continuous
past simple
past continuous
present perfect
present perfect continuous

After that, there are three exercises given to complete regarding the tenses. Each chapter is closed with a part of practice and revision of the whole chapter, including a translation assignment, where a text is given and students are asked to translate in Macedonian.

Besides the revision of tenses, other grammar lessons that are covered are *modals, prepositional phrases, passive voice, relative clauses, reported speech, conditional sentences, collocations, adjectives and adverbs.* Few of these are similar to what are covered in the other books too, but, the difference between this coursebook and *Business Result* (upper intermediate), is that in the latter one, tenses are separately taught in different units, not revised in one unit.

Also, the difference in presenting grammar in this coursebook from *Business Result*, is the form it's introduced. These two authors have chosen a direct form of introducing grammar, with explanations for given grammar sections, while in Business Result, the word grammar is even avoided, and it is used as Language at work; and no definitions or details are given. They are implicitly incorporated into exercises which do not give you the idea that you as a student are dealing with grammar.

Regardless of the right content of the book, and the professionalism of this "in-house" material (Bahumaid, 2008; Núñez Pardo 2019), there is still a deficiency which is met in most of the local/localized course books, and that is the lack of CDs, which can avoid the monotonous fare of the lecture. However, later in the discussions of the results we will see that the conditions where we teach allow the use of CDs or similar materials.

4.1.4 ProFile 1 – Oxford University Press – Jon Nauton & Mark Tulip

Profile 1 published by OUP, is another course book that is used in one of the Universities that were part of this research. It is one of the oldest books published, and there is no new version as it happens with other course books.

It is more similar to *Market Leader* in the way how sections are divided, rather than with the other books analyzed earlier. *Profile 1*, is meant for learners of Pre-intermediate and upper-intermediate level of English. There is no elementary level as in *Business Result*.

The sections that are offered in each of the 12 units, are divided into: *Talking business; Vocabulary; Reading; Listening; Grammar; Language for; speaking; writing.* Prior to discussing the content of the units, it is important to say that *ProFile*, is maybe the only book out of the 4 books we talk about, that includes direct teaching of the four language skills, *reading, writing, listening and speaking*.

The topics that are covered from grammar are the following:

Business English 1
be, have,
have got;
present simple;
present simple and continuous;
countable and uncountable nouns;
past simple; present perfect;
comparatives and superlatives;

the future;

1st conditional and future time expressions;

2nd conditional;

---

the passive;

---

past continuous and used to.

Besides the exercises in the book, there are additional direct explanations of each grammar lesson, the form, use and many examples. The vocabulary is given an important place, through different kinds of exercises, and as an addition, the end of the course book has a glossary of 300 hundred words with their meaning.

It surely lacks themes of temporary teen culture, because it was published a long time ago, and this, undoubtedly makes students as young adults uninterested in the topics that are covered. Typical examples of showing this are for instance texts about mobile phones which were used two decades ago, that are very different from smartphones. Similarly, they have texts which discuss whether businesses should invest in going online, while this is something outdated today as we know even businesses in North Macedonia are almost fully available online, let alone companies and businesses in developed countries. Last, but not least, there is a text that talks about the newspapers. Unfortunately, for our students who were born in the 2000s or after, newspapers do not represent a means of information, since they have access to information through all types of social media in their smartphones.

After this individual analysis of each course book, I will go through these course books again, following Sheldon's Textbook evaluation sheet (1998).

Availability

These course books are not easily available, since they are only sold in Skopje, and for students from other cities it becomes a problem to go to Skopje to get the book only. This is not true for the *Business English 1* book which is found in the copy shop of the University Ss. Cyril Methodius. A huge problem in North Macedonia, especially at state-owned institutions, as a teacher you don't have the right to oblige students to buy the original book, so most of the students

choose to print the online version and use the copy, unfortunately. This cuts them out of the chance to have access to online interactive workbooks (as in the case of *Business Result*) and the CD, which goes together with the original course book.

User definition

In the case of the three global course books, the level of the materials is precisely defined, since those books are prepared carefully by a group of people. In the case of the Macedonian course book, it is supposed according to the authors, that the book is B2/C1, which is a little bit above the expected knowledge of first year university students.

Layout graphics

The three global course books are colorful, and according to me, they have a great mix of text and material on each page. The Macedonian course book, on the other hand, has chosen a traditional way of book design, without colors and images.

Accessibility

All of the books analyzed above, are clearly organized in sections that the authors have thought of including. However, given the fact that a lot of finances are spent on publishing global course books, it is obvious that these course books compared to local ones include indexes, vocabulary lists, more advice on using the materials etc.

Linkage

The units stand individually, on their own, and they can be taught individually, without depending on each other. However, there is, in some form, a pattern of grammatical progression, because they start from the essential lessons to the harder ones. This means that they haven't put the passive in the beginning, but have left it for the end as a more complicated part of grammar.

Physical characteristics

There is little or no space to write in either of the books, the books are not too large nor too heavy.

Appropriacy

All of these course books offer an interesting material, but depending on the time they have been published, the interest that these materials can arise in students varies. For instance, *Business Result,* being published later than the other global course books in our research (aside from the *Business English* 1 published in 2018), contains more up-to-date materials which can get the attention of the learners. A typical example would be the fact that there are reading passages about doing business in Dubai, which is a very attractive place for students. The same cannot be said about other course books. As per the course book of Macedonian authors, the materials are neither old, nor new, but they are materials that speak generally about finances, economy or marketing. These topics indeed, can never be outdated, because they are the basics of economy and business.

Authenticity

The coursebooks contain obviously realistic content, and the tasks offer "real-world" language to the learner.

Sufficiency

When deciding which book to choose, teachers always try to make sure they will have enough materials to teach. These coursebooks seem to be quite enough to stand on their own, considering the fact that they are made to stand on their own, as authors have claimed this in the introductions of these course books. Instead of insufficiency, I would say *Market Leader* and *ProFile*, offer a little more material that should be covered in 90 minutes (an average length of lecture for Business English in North Macedonia). In case of insufficiency, global coursebooks, especially *Business Result* as published in 2017, offers interactive workbooks with different videos which can be used in the classroom, if the institution offers better working conditions for the teachers.

Cultural Bias

EFL coursebooks, just as other coursebooks, should not contain PARNSIP (politics, alcohol, religion, sex, narcotics, pork) topics, in order to avoid making students feel uncomfortable. As UNESCO observes, in a world "full of inequalities, injustice, racial and religious tensions and divisions'' (as cited in Diveki, 2018), teachers should be careful about how to prepare the students

to face these challenges without offending them. It is important to note that these controversial topics are not inexistent in these course books, but they are reduced to some minimum. Drug use, or other narcotics and pork are not mentioned anywhere, as well as religion or religious issues. However, alcohol and gender inequality are mentioned as shown further on.

Alcohol is used somewhere as a drink during a business lunch, as in the examples below:

> *I'll have a glass of red wine, please.*
>
> **(Business Result Elementary, pg 88, exercise 2)**
>
> 1. *Chinese consumers have always drunk wine with their food.*
>
> 2. *Anita: OK. Shall we order a bottle of wine?*
>
>   *Teo: Yes. Why not?*
>
> (**Business Result Pre-Intermediate, page 54 & 155)**

This by no means looks offensive to me as a teacher, but alcohol is considered to be part of PARSNIP topics, and as such it could be preferable to be avoided in the coursebooks which are used globally. Additionally, sometimes introducing the target culture in the classroom carries a risk through which some learners might choose to switch off the whole learning process, retreat into their inner world, thinking that this way they defend their own integrity (Prodromou 1988).

Gender inequality

Gender inequality in Business English textbooks has been present since the 70s. Even later, Bataineh (2017) concluded that women were "equally represented in terms of visibility, and less visible when dealing with firstness" (as cited in Vázquez-Amador & Lario-de-Oñate, 2022, p.155). Additionally, it is worth mentioning that according to Cotton, Falvey, & Kent (2006) *Market Leader* features most female professions as well as highest number of female managers (as cited in (as cited in Vázquez-Amador & Lario-de-Oñate, 2022, p.149). No matter how much this topic is being avoided, there are still traces of it in these course books. There are few situations where we can notice that women are not being treated equally as men in the business world.

> *It's not how they described it to me. At the interview they said*
>
> *that their target was to have 45% of management positions*
>
> *filled by women. But five years later, I'm still here in the same*
>
> *office and two men who arrived at the same time as me have*
>
> *been promoted above me. It's very disappointing - I really*
>
> *thought I had a big future here.*
>
> **(Business Result Pre-intermediate, page 155, audio script 54/1)**

Another situation is found in *Market Leader*, as shown below.

The first one is an audio file , whereas the second one is a question for discussion.

> *CD1. 46 Listen to the final part. What two reasons are given for why women report higher levels of stress than men?*
>
> *What is a good work-life balance for you? Is it easier for men than women to be a manager?*
>
> **(Market Leader, p.46)**

There are no PARSNIP topics found in *Business English 1*, used in Ss. Cyril and Methodius. Additionally, knowing what to say in a meeting, lunch or conference with guests or business partners, is exclusively taught through sociolinguistics. It is not enough to be grammatically correct when trying to convince people to cooperate with you, or invest in a million-dollar project in your country. You, as a future business partner, should be competent to say the right things, and very importantly in most situations, know what to avoid saying or doing in that meeting. This type of competence, in these analyzed coursebooks is not given the right place that it deserves.

We will see a few examples below.

> *Making small talk and developing a conversation*

> *Look at the topics below. Which ones is it normal to talk about in your country when you meet someone from abroad for the first time?*
>
> *Work- family- the journey- money -the visitor's country- politics- interests - holidays*
>
> **(Business Result, Pre-Intermediate, pg 46, Business Communication)**

Stimulus/practice/revision

The course books materials are interactive, there is plenty of material which encourages and expects students to interact and engage themselves more. In the question "Is the material likely to be retained/remembered by the learners", I would say that this is something that depends on the learning style of the students, however, we like it or not, the more interesting the topics, the more students will remember and retain the things they learn in the classroom.

Flexibility

These criteria for evaluation include the reason why teachers decide to go for their own materials. Not for the financial reasons, or the time that is put in designing the particular material, but in the idea that it will be shaped according to one's own experience, combined with students' needs and the conditions that we teach in. Global coursebooks that are assessed in this thesis are very good in most of the aspects, however, technology is a must if one wants to use all of the extra resources as part of the course book. As the conditions are problematic in our country, and as the result teachers should bring from home their own laptops or CD players, most of these materials end up not being used at all. That's why, in this section, we can say that out of all the books assessed, *Business English* 1& 2 are more convenient regarding the flexibility.

Guidance

It is usually related to the teacher's notes, and yes, all of the global course books offer quite a good guide for teachers, especially *Business Result* which also gives some other options on how to present or do a task. That's of great help for teachers, however, from my experience, it rarely happens that teachers use the notes from the teachers' book, and tailor the class according to the existing conditions.

Business English 1 and 2, used at Ss. Cyril Methodius does not contain teachers notes, so it is left to the teacher to organize the class and present the material to the students.

4.2 Pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence in these course books

Pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences are harder to be taught in ESP classes, because teachers have different opinions on the issue of where the focus of the class should be put on. Some teachers focus on grammar, while others on vocabulary. Whenever the discussion of these competences arises, many teachers believe that it is not very important for students of Business to be pragmatically and sociolinguistic competent, if they lag behind in grammar knowledge.

But, according to researchers and linguists, sometimes fluent speakers who are good in mastering grammar and possess rich vocabulary may still be unable to produce language that is socio-cultural and contextually appropriate (Zhang, Wang & Wannaruk, 2019).

These coursebooks contain a solid content of pragmatic content, and below we will see some examples that were found in these course books.

Austin (1962) clearly states that being pragmatically competent means to be able to use the rules of appropriateness and politeness, understand them and finally formulate speech acts.

Introductions

Introducing yourself is essential part of communicative competences, and as such is part of the descriptors in CEFR, as stated below:

*"Can establish basic social contact by using the simplest everyday polite forms of: greetings and farewells; **introductions**; saying please, thank you, sorry, etc." (*The CEFR Illustrative Descriptor Scales: Communicative language competences, p. 137)

This is found under the requirements of sociolinguistics competence, for the speakers of the level A2, and as such, we find exercises in *Business Result Elementary* and *Pro-file Pre-Intermediate*.

It's Stephanie's first day at work, and she is introducing herself to other staff in a meeting. Listen to her introduction and put a-e in the correct order (1-5).

    a.   I have just finished a degree in Business Studies….

    b.   … but this is my first real job, and I'm really looking forward to working with you….

    c.   ….and I'm joining the marketing department…..

    d.   Hi everyone, My name's Stephanie…

There are three other exercises which help students practice their way of introducing themselves when joining a new company.

Match expressions 1-6 to responses a-f. Then listen and check.

1.   Hello. My name is Alek Gorski. __   a. pleased to meet you, Eva.
2.   I'm Eva, Maria Da Rocha's assistant. __   b. No. How do you do?
3.   This is my assistant, Elzbieta Wozniak. __   c. How do you do, Mr. Gorski?
4.   It's good to see you again. ___   d. I'm fine.
5.   How are you? __   e. Nice to meet you.
6.   Do you know Elzbieta?   f. And you.

Business Result, Elementary, p.10

While in *Business Result,* we come across exercises that not only show how we can introduce ourselves but someone else too.

In a corner, there are key expressions listed, divided into four groups, such as:

Saying hello and introducing yourself

- *Hello. My name is … /I'm …*
- *Pleased to meet you.*
- *Nice to meet you (too).*

Saying goodbye

- *Nice meeting you.*
- *Have a good journey.*
- *Goodbye/Bye.*

Introducing someone

- *This...*
- *Do you know?*

Saying hello to someone you know

- *It's good to see you again.*
- *How are you?*

(Business Result, Elementary, p.10)

In *Market Leader pre-intermediate,* the act of introducing is involved in the textbook, but in different parts of the book, and without many explanations. The authors assume that students at pre-intermediate level should be able to introduce themselves and introduce someone else to a third person.

What do you say to a business contact when:

- You introduce yourself
- You introduce another person
- You are introduced to another person?

    (Market Leader, p.54)

This exercise is followed by two other listening activities where learners have the chance to listen to authentic audio-materials where introductions are practiced.

Requests

Making a request, as a pragmatic competence, and adding politeness to it, as a sociolinguistic element is present in all of these course books, though in different formats. In *Business Result elementary,* there is only one example of a polite request, as it can be seen below:

-polite request

e.g. May I see you for a moment, please?

e.g. How may I help you sir?

(Business Result elementary, p.31)

It is a part of teaching modals, under the modal of *May*, no other links are made to the pragmatic aspect of polite requests and their use in business content.

In the *Market Leader*, the presentation of making requests is similar to *Business Result Elementary*, through modals. In the section Language review, this is how *modals* are presented:

We use can and could to:

- make requests. Can I make a phone call?

Could you tell me the time, please? (a little more formal)

We use would to:

- make requests. Would you open the door for me, please?
- make offers. Would you like a glass of water?
- describe imaginary situations. I would buy a Ferrari if I had enough money.

(Market Leader, p.141, Grammar Reference)

Additionally, requests are practiced I few other types of exercises, as well as included in the section of *Useful language* as it stands below:

REQUESTS

Could I use your printer, please?

Do you mind if I take a map?

(Market Leader, p.57)

In *Profile* 1, student's book, we find an exercise which teaches polite requests directly, or explicitly. The example is shown below:

We use would and could to make our request more polite, especially to people we don't know.

How does Joyce Mayle write these ideas more politely?

1. I want to stock these items.

2. Send me your brochures and price lists.

3. Ask one of your sales representatives to visit me.

(ProFile, p.35, exercise 3)

Whereas, in *Business Result*, in the pre-intermediate course book, we come across polite requests, introduced explicitly in the very first chapter in the following form:

Complete these questions with I or you.

1. Could ___ speak to you for a moment?

2. Can_____ tell me your name?

3. Can___ have another drink, please?

4. Could ____ call me again tomorrow?

5. Would ____ repeat that, please?

6. Could _____ help me for a moment?

(Business Result, Pre-intermediate, p.9)

In *Pro-file Pre-Intermediate*, we also come across polite requests, as in the following example:

Match the telephone requests (1-4) with their answers (a-d) below.

1. Can you send me your latest catalogs, please?....
2. I'd like to speak to someone in sales, please…..
3. Could you confirm the delivery date for this part?
4. Would you ask here to call me?

a. I'll put you through to the showroom.
b. I'll put one in the post straightaway.
c. Yes, of course. I'll ask her to ring you this afternoon.
d. I'll find out and ring you straight back.

Then, in the following exercise students are asked to listen a conversation, and then answer two following questions:

a. What different expressions are used to make requests?

b. What verb form is used in the replies?

(ProFile Pre-Intermediate, page 34, Language for, Telephoning)

Seen from the pragmatic aspect, modal verbs function like other aspects of language, and indicate different meanings or speech acts like obligation, permission, request, order, etc.

Apologies

Speech act of apologizing is different from that of requesting, since requests happen before an event in other words their aim is to cause an event, whereas apologies happen after an event. Or as Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984) observe, signal the "fact that a certain type of event has already taken place" (206). Bergman and Kasper (1993) claim that the purpose of apology is to re-establish social relation harmony after the offense is committed.

According to CEFR, in the part of Sociolinguistics, a level A2 speaker:

*"Can handle very short social exchanges, using everyday polite forms of greeting and address. Can make and respond to invitations, **suggestions, apologies**, etc."*

This means that a course book of English, in the level of A1-A2 should include politeness in the way we greet, and furthermore become able to respond to speech acts such as invitations, suggestions and apologies. The examples below are found in the coursebooks that were analyzed in this chapter.

An explicit way of introducing the speech act of apology is found in *Business Result Elementary*, under the section of P*ractically speaking,* titled *How to apologize*. There are two exercises. The first activity is a listening one. After listening, students are expected to answer two questions;

> How does the speaker apologize??
> What reason does the speaker give?
> **Business Result Elementary p.33**

The second exercise stands like this:

Work with a partner. Take turns to apologize in these situations and give a reason.

- You are late for a job interview.
- You didn't book the hotel for your boss.

Implicitly, few exercises can be considered a source for teaching the inclusion of apologies, since in many situations, apologies could be taught without students being aware of it. The implicit teaching method is indeed meant to create opportunities "for learning without the student's awareness of what has been learned" (Talley & Hui-Ling, 2014 p.39).

☐"I am sorry"; explanation or account of the situation,

> That's strange. It isn't here. Sorry about that
> **(Business Result Elementary page 121, 27)**

We come across few performative verbs used to express an apology, and they include formulaic expressions of regret such as: (Olshtain, 1984)

Sorry:

☐ Sorry, I'm busy then.

(Business Result, Elementary, page 52)

☐ Sorry, I'm a little late. (BR, Pre-Intermediate page 23)

Apologize:

- I do apologize for that. (BR, Pre-Intermediate, page 151)
- He apologized for losing his temper (Market Leader, p.97)

Excuse:

☐ Excuse me, is this seat free? (Business Result Pre-Intermediate, page 10)

☐ Excuse me, I can't find the ticket office? (BR, Elementary, page 120)

The second example is also an indirect request, such as "*Could you help me find it*" or similarly asked, through a hint.

 Suggestions

In the Pre-Intermediate level of *Business Result*, *suggestions* are introduced, in 6 different exercises, under the section of *Business Communication*.

Initially, students are stimulated to discuss the company's logo, which will trigger them to give suggestions to the level they are able to. Then, two listening activities follow, where students are introduced to suggestions and responses to suggestions, as following:

● Why don't we…?	I'm not sure about that.
● Maybe we should …..	OK. Let's…
● We could ….	Fine
● How/what about….	I don't think that will work.
● I suggest …..	That's a great idea!
● Shall we…?	Yes, I think we should….

(Business Result Pre-Intermediate, 52)

Suggestions are also introduced in *Profile pre-intermediate,* in two exercises. The first one is a reading activity, while the second one is a listening activity, and after that, students are expected to use phrases to complete gaps in a given dialogue. The expressions given are:

- Couldn't we
- Shall we
- Let's
- What if
- Shall I
- Why don't we
- How about

Profile 1 -Pre intermediate p.58

In the third exercise, students are asked to listen four given problems of some people and give suggestions to these problems below, using the phrases introduced in prior exercises:

- My car won't stop!
- The photocopier is always breaking down!
- We need a website but nobody here knows how to make money.
- HTP was one of our best customers but they haven't put in a new order for six months. I don't know why.

p.58

Whereas in *Market Leader,* suggestions are not being presented explicitly with explanations. Suggestions are put in a part which is titled *Useful language* instead of being incorporated in direct exercises. The example below shows how *Suggestions* are included in *MarketLeader.*

Useful language

Giving opinions	**Agreeing**
I think...	I think you're right
I'm in favor of...	I (totally) agree
Making suggestions	**Disagreeing**
Perhaps we should...	I don't know about that...
We could...	(I'm afraid) I don't agree...

(Market Leader p.39)

Coherence and cohesion

As listed in CEFR, one of the pragmatic components is coherence and cohesion. In their official descriptor, for the level A1-A2 they expect a learner to be able to: use the most frequently occurring connectors to link simple sentences in order to tell a story or describe something as a simple list of points.:

As Chunmei states, *Cohesion* is the surface structure, including the lexical and grammatical features while coherence on the other hand mostly concentrates "on the logical and semantic relationships in a discourse" (2017, p.1).

In *Business Result*, there are few exercises which could be considered that in a way help students learn to develop cohesive and coherent texts.

In the following example, students are introduced with this component of pragmatic competence, through sequencing words, under the part of *Practically speaking.*

Students are expected to listen to an authentic material and then from what they hear, to put the given stages in order, as it is shown below:

> 1.24.1 Listen to how robots at Staples do their job, Put these stages in order.
>
> a) ___ the person takes the correct items for the order.
> b) ___ the warehouse computer receives customer orders.
> c) ___ the robot returns the box and starts again.
> d) ___ the robot finds the box and delivers it to a human co-worker.
> e) ___ the computer tells a robot to find the correct box.
> **(Business Result, Elementary page 27)**

Additionally, they are asked to listen to the audio again and match the given words to the five stages, as shown below:

> Example: First of all, the warehouse computer receives customer orders.
>
> First of all____ finally ____ after that _____ then ____ next _____.
>
> **(Business Result Elementary page 27)**

According to the CEFR, in level B1, the learners "Can form longer sentences and link them together using a limited number of cohesive devices, e.g. in a story. (14)" And this is what the authors have done with this kind of exercise, in the Pre-intermediate book. Approximately the same sequencing words have been used, but in a longer story, under the section of *Business Communication,* introduced in the form of *giving a report,* on page 28.

Profile, though pre-intermediate just as *Business Result* offers a very simple exercise, as shown below.

Join the pairs of sentences (1-4) using the words from the box in 1. You may need to make some changes to some of the sentences.

1. Her salary didn't increase. She left the company.

2. He is intelligent. He is ambitious.

3. He went to the staff canteen. He went there for lunch with his colleagues.

4. The new recruits felt very welcome. The company organized an induction programme.

(Profile 1, page 11)

This could be following these descriptors of CEFR, the learner who is level a1-a2, "Can link groups of words/signs with simple connectors (e.g. "and ``,"but `` and"because ``). And

" A1 Can link words/signs or groups of words/signs with very basic linear connectors (e.g. "and" or "then")." (CEFR, 14)

However, it also includes another exercise, which is found under SPEAKING, as explained below. Students are given a-f sentences and asked to order them correctly:

a) The flower shops receive the flowers. The shopkeeper removes the bunches of flowers from the shipping boxes….

b) The shopkeeper puts the flowers in the water…

c) The growers tie the flowers in bunches…

d) The shopkeeper adds a solution to some water so that the flowers live longer….

e) The growers harvest the flowers. They use a sharp knife to cut them…

f) The growers ship the flowers all over the world….

(Profile 1, Unit 3, SPEAKING, page 22)

Afterwards, there is a follow-up exercise which requires using the expressions given in the box below to describe the process. The expressions are:

> *First – first of all – secondly – then – after that – next – and now – so now – finally*
> **(Profile 1, Unit 3, SPEAKING, page 22)**

Market leader does not leave this exercise behind, however, the authors have chosen to teach this component of pragmatic competence through the following assignment where students are taught to write a report.

It's a whole page of explanations about the flow of writing a report starting from Executive summary, Introduction, Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations. Then, all these are explained in short paragraphs as shown below:

The executive summary is a summary of the main points and conclusion of the report. It gives the reader a quick overview of the total situation.

The introduction shows the points that will be looked at.

The findings are the facts discovered.

The conclusion is what you think about the facts and how you interpret them

Recommendations are practical suggestions to deal with the situation and ideas for making sure future activities run more easily.

(Market Leader p.129)

What's absolutely missing in all of these coursebooks, are the idioms. This is the reason why they became part of this research, and were presented to a group of students for a whole-term long research.

Regardless of the examples shown, which are just a few, pessimistic overtones of researchers are not little when it comes to the pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences in the EFL/ESP books in general. Pragmatic competences are under-represented in most of the materials (Cohen & Ishihara, 2013), insufficient context, stereotypical characterization of norms (Ren and Han, 2016) since the range of speech acts is limited (Vellenga, 2004)), whereas in many ELT

textbooks we come across stereotypical characterizations of pragmatic norms (McConachy & Hata, 2013). Book creators sometimes tend to simplify things (Jakupčević, E., & Ćavar Portolan, 2021) and this simplification leaves students without sufficient knowledge of pragmatics in their communicative skills (Diepenbroek & Derwing, 2013).

Addressing is also an important part in the beginners' levels of Business English, since one should address people when meeting them outside of the company or in a strictly formal setting too. The terms used to address people in formal settings are met in all of these textbooks, but explicitly are only found in *Profile 1, Pre intermediate,* and Market Leader, as in the two examples below.

FORMS OF ADDRESS

Sir and Madam

In shops and restaurants, staff use sir and madam. Clients never call waiters sir or madam.

Colleagues don't use sir and madam to talk to each other, and employees don't usually use these forms of address when speaking to their bosses.

Mr, Mrs and Ms

Mr, Mrs and Ms, a person's second name are used in more formal business contexts or organizations. Mr or Mrs are never used on their own.

First names

In most British and American organizations first names are used between staff.

ProFile 1, Pre-Intermediate, Unit 5, p.34

In Market Leader, the forms of addressing people are introduced through an exercise of *Socializing and entertaining,* where learners, among other questions for meeting people for the first time, are asked to respond *how you address people (first names or family names?) (Market Leader, p.100)*

Additionally, in a writing task, in Market Leader, students are taught how to use forms of address as below:

> **Salutation**
>
> When you know the name of the recipient:
>
> Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss von Trotta
>
> Note: In AmE, Mr., Mrs. and Ms. include a full stop/period, e.g. Mr. von Trotta.
>
> When you don't know the name of the recipient:
>
> Dear Sir or Madam (BrE) Dear Sir or Madam: (AmE)
>
> **(Market Leader, p.128)**

In the examples above we can see how the authors of *Market Leader* have given comparisons between uses in British English and American English. This is an issue of dialect, which is important in sociolinguistic competence (CEFR, 2001).

In another situation, Market Leader gives space to differences between American English and British English dialects, in a short example of reading and saying numbers:

> 320 = three hundred and twenty (BrE)
>
> three hundred twenty (AmE)
>
> 0 = nought/oh (BrE) I zero (AmE)
>
> **(Market Leader, p.71)**

Other textbooks have examples of dialect awareness-raising through small tips, as shown below.

> **Tip / invoice and bill**
>
> In British English we use invoice in more formal English and bill in informal English. In a restaurant we use bills.
>
> In American English a restaurant bill is called a check, and a banknote is a bill.
>
> **(Business Result, Pre-Intermediate p.81)**

All of this content shown and compared from different books, starting from *Introductions, Requests, Apologies and Suggestions*, are complementary to culture.

After the review of these textbooks, from my personal point of view, *Market Leader* is the textbook which mostly deals with culture, introducing it through different types of exercises. This book includes a section titled *Working across cultures* in each unit, giving students chances to learn about the concept of culture in international business. In the introduction of each unit's content,

Working across cultures aims to raise the learner's awareness of possible problems and misunderstandings that people can come across when doing business internationally, where different cultures are involved.

Students are encouraged to discuss about the culture in general, such as in:

Which countries share a border with your country or are your near neighbors?

2 How is their culture different from yours?

3 Thinking about the rest of the world, which cultures do you think are most different from your own? In what ways?

(Market Leader p.120)

Except giving them chances to learn new things about what culture is through discussions, they are also taught that in some countries, even weather can impact the way they greet you, and this is normal in their culture, as in the dialogue:

OK, so firstly the visible aspects. Earlier I asked you to think about this. What did you come up with?

Al: The weather!

5: Yes, you laugh, but it does have an effect on culture and behavior. Anything else?

(Market Leader, p.166)

Students are also taught how for some people and places religion is very important even in business culture, such as in the sentence below:

Religion plays a big role in Morocco's day-to-day life and business culture.

(Market Leader, p.60)

The most important thing which shows how this book has given the deserved focus to culture, is the introduction of politeness exactly in these sections of *Working across cultures.* Students are exposed to explicit examples of say "no" in a polite way, through many examples, as in:

REFUSING POLITELY

I'm really sorry, but I'm meeting a client then.

Thank you very much for asking, but I'm afraid I can't make it tomorrow.

(Market Leader, p.57)

To prepare students for including politeness in certain international reactions when saying "no", this textbook explains how for example:

Japanese people hate saying "no".
Arabs don't like people turning down their request for a drink or lunch.
Chinese choose other words instead of "no"
Indonesians see a negative answer as embarrassment.
(Market Leader, p.156)

Some of these situations are also introduced in the other textbooks, but they are not identified with culture, and this is the detail that makes Market Leader different.

In conclusion, we can say that these textbooks used in the 5 universities in North Macedonia, in Business English class, contain solid content of the socio-pragmatic competences. The difference between these textbooks is in the way how these competences are introduced. Except *Market Leader,* other textbooks offer exercises which indirectly teach students about certain skills and competences. In these textbooks, students are introduced with speech acts, or politeness strategies in speaking and writing, but in only limited situations, and without further explanations. On the other hand, *Market Leader* is the textbook which directly introduces some certain content of socio-pragmatic competences to students. This happens for example with some speech acts such as requests and suggestions. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, *Market Leader* gives way more importance to *politeness,* than any of the textbooks analyzed. Idioms, on the other hand, are not mentioned directly or indirectly in any of the books analyzed.

4.3 Survey with the teachers

Besides knowing and researching what learners learn, see, or how they percept things, it's quite important to give that level of importance to teachers' perceptions too. They are the ones where students lay their hopes on, institutions set their expectations, and with such a burden and responsibilities, it was inevitable, if not very important to have their opinion too regarding this research. Kramsch (2014) states that teachers are expected "to cover the language teaching materials in line with the curricula and syllabuses provided for them to follow" (as cited in Mede and Dikiltas, 2015, p.15). This shows us one of the basic responsibilities that are expected from teachers, and at first sight, it looks easy, but when analyzed thoroughly, it turns out that this expectation shown in one sentence depends on many factors, which were covered in the survey with the teachers.

Initially, as it was planned, professors who teach Business English in few Universities in North Macedonia, were contacted via email. Instead of at least 10 of them, only 8 accepted to take part in this research. Not surprisingly, they chose the online version of the teacher's questionnaire, due to the time consuming side of meeting in person. The questions in the questionnaire were similar to some questions in the students' survey. However, their differences will be analyzed qualitatively due to the type of questions in both questionnaires and the number of respondents.

The lecturers that took part were as follows: 1 from The University of Tetovo, 2 from the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, 1 from University American College Skopje, 2 from University Goce Delcev Stip and 2 professors from South East European University.

Experience is important in teaching ESP, and an experienced teacher obviously is more prepared to teach ESP to his/her students. ESP teachers work at vocational schools, colleges and universities, and in theory as well as in practice professional ESP teachers are expected to be experts not only in teaching English but they are seen as able to design teaching materials (Ahmed, 2014). In order to become experts, they need long experience in this field. From the answers, we learn that three of the teachers who took part in this survey have more than 15 years of experience in teaching in higher education, followed by two teachers who have 11-15 years of experience, 2 have 6-10 years of experience and only 1 with only 1-5 years of experience in working in higher education.

This question was followed by the question of years teaching Business English. The reason for dividing these two questions was that teaching ESP, Business English in this case, is a lot more

different than just teaching general English. Here we see that only one teacher has 15 years of experience in teaching Business English, 2 of them have 11-15 years of experience, 2 have 6-10 years and three of the teachers have 1-5 years of experience.

A qualitative class requires a lot more than just an experienced or well-prepared teacher. Something that is also a very important tool in achieving the aims is undoubtedly the good book. What in fact could be seen as a good book? Initially, it must be in line with the students' knowledge. A book that is below the students' knowledge or higher than their knowledge, will by all means fail. Here, we have an obstacle because students are not divided in groups according to their competence in English, but they follow the classes according to the term.

Another question in the survey was related to the book they use in their classes. From the responses, the books that are used were: *Market Leader, Business English 1* (without a publisher information added); *Business result* (without the level added), *Profile* and only one teacher wrote that she had made her own materials.

But, when it comes to the books used in the classroom, especially in ESP, it is crucial to choose the right material that catches up with the trends and requirements. For example, teaching Business English with a book that was published 20 years ago will not give you a good hand in teaching.

Teachers were asked the question: Are *you the person who chooses the materials to use in class or is there a council in the department of English Language that decides which books will be used for each English course at the University*? and 5 of the teachers answered that it's a departmental decision. Even though in an open-ended question the answers lead to the result that the book is either suggested by the dean, the council or the department. 3 of them gave answers that mean they are in charge of choosing the material which is used in the classroom. It is important to mention, that in our country, teachers are limited when it comes to choosing a book because there are only 1-2 stores where these kinds of books can be found. Also, the salaries are not as high so that teachers can buy many books and pre-assess the book in order to decide which one to use. So, choosing a good book, or the right book, is a long way which in our country is limited by many obstacles.

In line with the importance of choosing a good book, is definitely the syllabus design. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the syllabus is the document which tells us what will or what should be learned (p.80). It is the overall organizing principle for what should be taught

and learned. Richards and Rodgers (1986) propose a framework where we can see the place and role of the syllabus in program planning. This model shows three levels such as approach, design and procedure. Approach is the basics of planning and language learning. The second level is design, where the practical aspect of the syllabus takes form, and the last one, procedure, is the level of management of the classroom.

Most of the teachers answered that they are the ones who design the syllabus of the class, whereas only one noted that he doesn't design it. Right after this one, teachers were asked how often they change their syllabus, and one of them answered that the syllabus is changed every 2-3 years, the others gave answers that mean modifications are made at the beginning of each semester, materials are updated, supplemented, replaced or modified.

In the question *"How many classes per week do you teach Business English?"*, we see that 5 teachers teach 4 classes per week, while three of them teach three classes per week. One of the questions for the teachers was about the class size and its importance on the quality of teaching. It is thought that smaller groups are better in achieving qualitative teaching. Regarding this, in the question *How many students are there in one group (approximately); and is the size of the group a factor for what you can teach them (e.g. the larger the group, the harder to practice with them different dialogues, simulations etc?,* we got different answers by the teachers. We see that groups are 20-30, 30-40 students who participate in the class. However, one of the teachers answered that the group in fact is large, 150 or more students, over 40-50 come to class. However, their answers were also aiming at the point that large groups of students are harder to deal with.

The next question was "*Do you think that the already designed curricula for Business English give space for developing pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences in students?,* which is the key question in fact. The responses, even though only 8 of teachers have answered, show us that these teachers, at 5 universities, are in fact satisfied with the content of the curricula regarding the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. Only one, has chosen to say no, meaning that the content of the curricula definitely does not help students develop their sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences.

Another question for teachers was *"Do your students know the meaning of these competences?* and their answers were negative. According to them, students major in economics and there is no need to know these terms which are specific for ESP. This could also be an indicator of the lack of explicit teaching of socio-pragmatic competences in the courses they teach.

In the question: What *would you change in the conditions you already work in, in order to improve the development of the above-mentioned competences? (Adding more classes per semester, giving more freedom to the teacher etc.),* their answers are of course different as it is an open-ended question but what is interesting is that in almost all of the answers, we can see that they would add more classes per week. This shows that teachers see it as necessary to have more classes per week because at the moment, with the number of classes they teach English, there is not enough time to work on the development of socio-pragmatic competences. Of course, other changes are listed, such as dividing groups based on students' knowledge of English, which would avoid having students with different language skills in one room. That would really facilitate the whole process of teaching Business English to students who already have a certain level of knowledge of General English.

In the question, have *your courses developed students': linguistic, sociolinguistics or pragmatic competences? The* answers are not surprising. Linguistic competences have taken the most percentage, followed closely by sociolinguistic competences, and pragmatic at the end, with a much smaller percentage. This means teachers are aware of the place and importance that is given to linguistic competences in their courses, compared to pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences. Yet, they think that the existing curricula give space for developing pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences.

The last question, *Do you think your students are ready to communicate in English in a real business setting in a near future with the materials that have been taught to them?,* the answers show that three teachers believe that their students are ready, while the others are not fully convinced and claim that maybe there is a need of one or two more semesters using the same material, at an advanced level, which would make them even more prepared for their future jobs.

Thus, from teachers' answers' who teach Business English in the 5 universities which were involved in this study, we can sum up the following:

- teachers mostly design their course' syllabus, but when it comes to choosing the book, the choice is usually done with the suggestion of the department;

-half of the teachers think that the curriculum does not give enough space to students' development of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences in Business English course, contrary to three who believe the opposite;

- most of them think that their students don't know the meaning of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences as they are major in Business, and according to them, their classes have developed students' linguistic competences more than socio-pragmatic competences;

- among the changes they would like to make are having more classes per week and grouping of students based on proficiency level of English;

- Lastly, there are divided opinions on whether students are prepared to communicate in English in a real business setting in the future. Some of the teachers see their students prepared whereas the others think that students need more semesters of Business English at an advanced level of English, which would help them be ready for their future jobs.

4.4 Survey with the students

4.4.1 Demographic characteristics of the sample and their perceptions of educational competences

Referring to the methodological part of the research where the goals and objectives for an objective and relevant research in this field are clearly emphasized, the analysis of the results begins with descriptive statements about the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample. As we pointed out in the methodological part of the research as a sample of this research are students who are studying a business or economics program, and are attending Business English in the faculties of 5 Universities in the Republic of North Macedonia. So, in Table 6 and Graph 1 with random selection of students resulted:

Table 6. Subject surveyed by University

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	University of Tetovo	49	19.1	19.1	19.1
	SEEU	54	21.1	21.1	40.2
	Cyril and Methodius	75	29.3	29.3	69.5
	UACS	26	10.2	10.2	79.7
	Goce Delcev Stip	52	20.3	20.3	100.0
	Total	256	100.0	100.0	
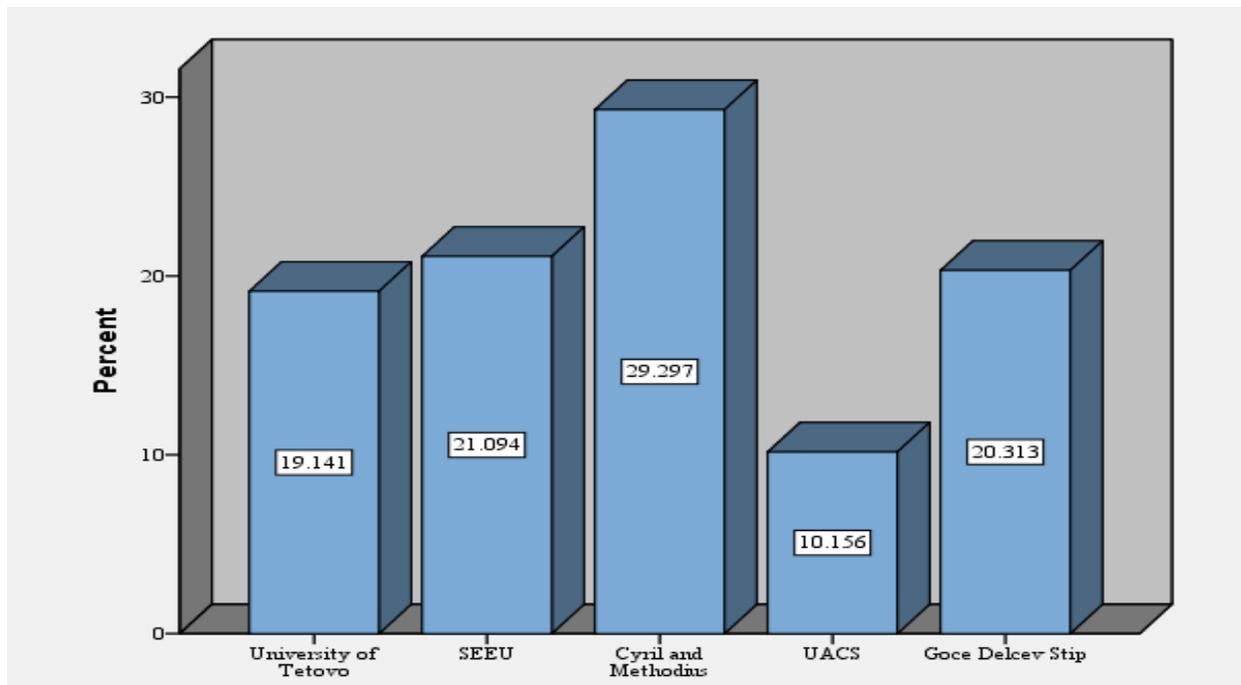
Graph 1. Subjects surveyed by University

So, a total of 256 students were surveyed, including 75 or 29.29% of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, followed by 54 or 21% of SEEU, 52 or 20.3% of the Goce Delchev University in Stip, 49 or 19% of the State University of Tetovo and 26 or about 10% of the American College in Skopje. So, according to the inclusion of students at the national and numerical level of English language departments we can say that we have a highly relevant sample from a statistically significant point of view.

Regarding the age group of the surveyed students, Table 7 and Graph 2 present the numerical data and percentage of students according to the four age groups defined in the research methodology, namely:

Table 7. Subject surveyed by Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	18-19	55	21.5	21.5	21.5
Valid	20-21	146	57.0	57.0	78.5
	22-23	47	18.4	18.4	96.9
	24+	8	3.1	3.1	100.0

Total	256	100.0	100.0
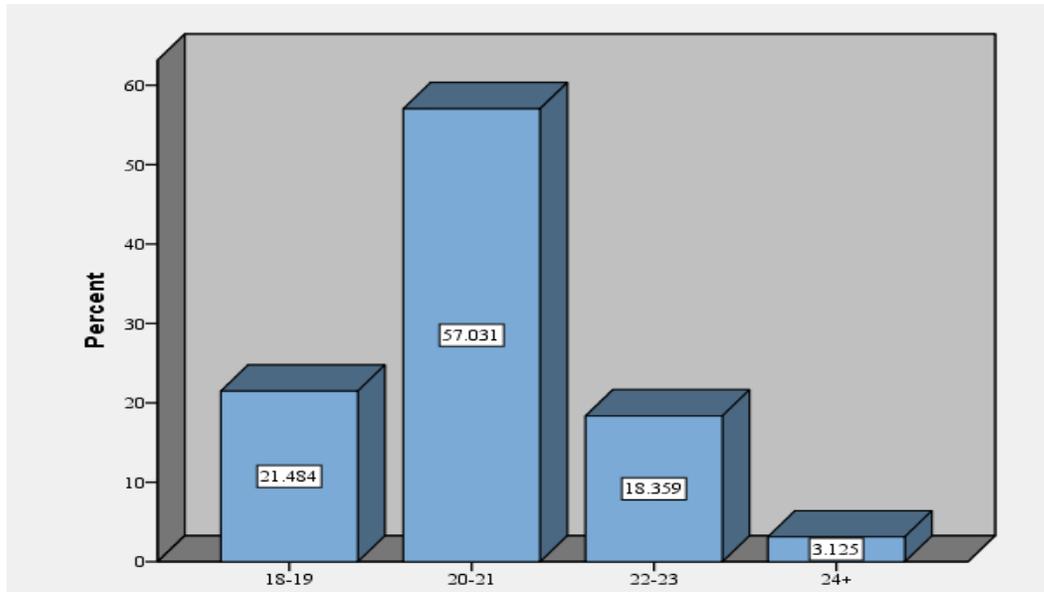
Graph 2. Subjects surveyed by age group

It turned out that the majority of students surveyed, 146 or 57% are in the age group 20-21, then 21.5% of the age group 18-19, 18.3% of the age group 22-23 and with a lower percentage of 3.2% of the age group over 24 years.

Table 8 shows the numerical frequencies and percentage of the surveyed subjects according to the study semester:

Table 8. Subject surveyed by Semesters

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	1	116	45.3	45.3	45.3
	2	66	25.8	25.8	71.1
Valid	3	18	7.0	7.0	78.1
	4	56	21.9	21.9	100.0
	Total	256	100.0	100.0	

119 or 45.3% have attended English for one semester, close to 26% who have attended Business English for two semesters, 23% for four semesters and only 7% have attended Business English for three semesters.

After the statistical analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics of the research sample in the continuation of this part, the perceptions and knowledge of the students about the Communicative competences follow. In this regard, the question was raised how familiar they are with the types of communicative competences where in the following Table 9 and Graph 3 the numerical frequencies and percentages for each type of competences in particular are shown:

Table 9. Competences familiar for subject

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Communicative competences	147	57.4	57.4	57.4
Linguistic competences	29	11.3	11.3	68.8
Sociolinguistic competences	12	4.7	4.7	73.4
Pragmatic competences	5	2.0	2.0	75.4
Communicative competences, Linguistic competences	38	14.8	14.8	90.2
Communicative, Linguistic, Sociolinguistic	15	5.9	5.9	96.1
Communicative, Linguistic, Sociolinguistic, Pragmatic	10	3.9	3.9	100.0
Total	256	100.0	100.0	
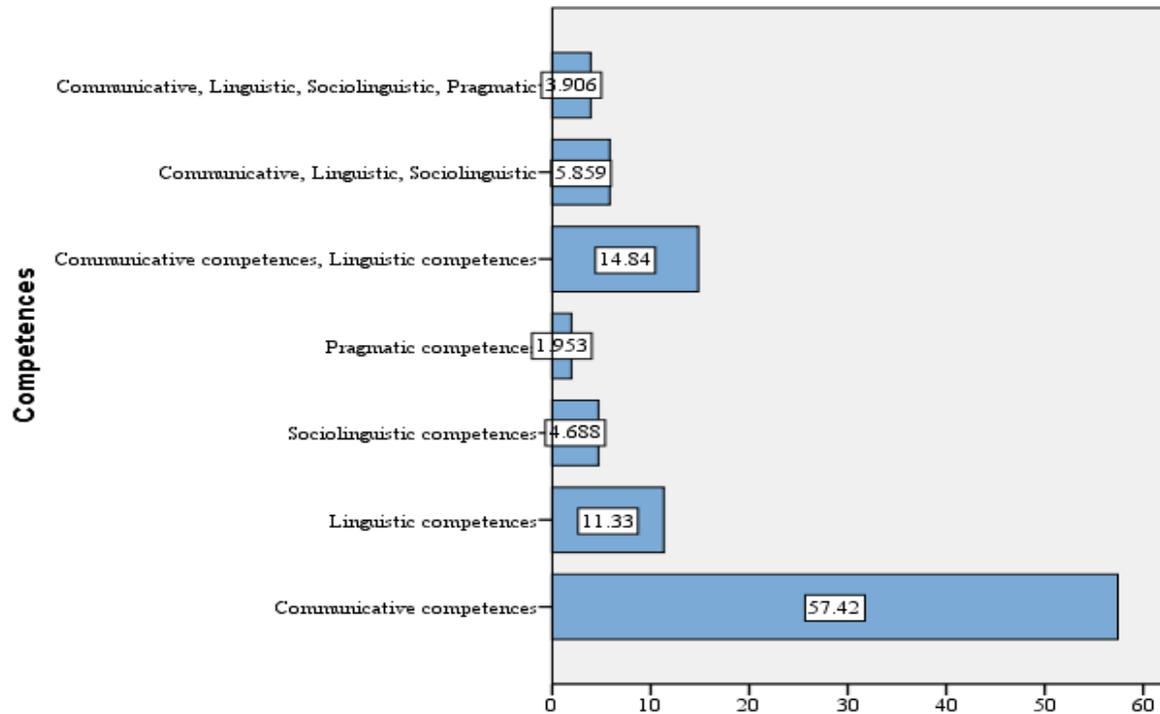
Graph 3. Competences that students are familiar with

So, it turned out that communicative competences are known to students, even in a higher percentage of 57.4% against other types of competences separated, i.e. 11.3% linguistic competences, 4.6% socio-linguistic competences and close to 2% pragmatic competences. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that close to 15% of students have chosen communicative and linguistic competences together, 6% have ticked communicative, linguistic and socio-linguistic competences and 4% four types of competences. For the fact that most of the surveyed students have attended English for one semester, regarding their knowledge of the types of competences is smaller, the results lead us to a conclusion that the students of the third and fourth semesters are those who are familiar with the three or four types of competences.

a). This finding is based on the following results of Table 10 and Table 11:

Table 10. Competences by semesters

		Communicative	Linguistic	Sociolinguistic	Pragmatic	Communicative competences, Linguistic	Communicative, Linguistic, Sociolingui	Communic, Linguistic, Sociolingui, Pragmatic
								Competences
Semesters	1	68	11	0	0	23	9	5
	2	35	8	6	3	7	4	3
	3	8	2	3	1	2	0	2
	4	36	8	3	1	6	2	0

Table 11 presents the Hi-Square coefficient for the frequencies of Table 10 to see if there is a statistically significant difference in the recognition of the types of competences depending on the semester where the student is studying:

Table 11. Pearson Chi-Square Tests for competences by semesters

		Competences
Semesters	Chi-square	32.051
	Df	18
	Sig.	**.022**

So, h^2 = 32.051 with less probability than the second reliability limit (p <0.05) for sig = .022 means that there is a statistically significant difference in the students' knowledge of the types of competences depending on the semester they attend, in other words, first semester students are less familiar with communicative competences than other semester students.

b). Above we analyzed the potential differences between some variables. Now according to the methodological order we will analyze the potential differences of competences according to the list in the survey depending on the university.

Table 12. Competences by University

	Competences						
	Communicative competences	Linguistic competences	Sociolinguistic competences	Pragmatic competences	Communicative competences, Linguistic	Communicative, Linguistic, Sociolinguistic	Commun, LinguisticSociolinguistic, Pragmatic
University of Tetovo	30	5	4	1	6	2	1
SEEU	36	6	4	2	3	1	2
Cyril and Methodius	33	7	0	0	19	11	5
UACS	17	3	0	0	4	0	2
Goce Delcev Stip	31	8	4	2	6	1	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 13. Pearson Chi-Square Tests

		Competences
	Chi-square	45.085
University	Df	24
	Sig.	**.006**

So, according to the above frequencies which are approximate for the universities, Table 13 presents the hi-square and its significance where according to it, $h^2 = 45.085$ with probability less than the first limit of reliability ($p < 0.01$) for sig = .006 there is a statistically significant difference between universities in the acquisition and learning of communicative competences, where the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius and the University of Tetova dominate compared to other universities in this research.

The next question is related to the frequencies of Table 14, i.e. whether the competences are mentioned during lectures and exercises.

Table 14. Using competences during course

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	35	13.7	13.7	13.7
	I am not sure	129	50.4	50.4	64.1
	Yes	92	35.9	35.9	100.0
	Total	256	100.0	100.0	
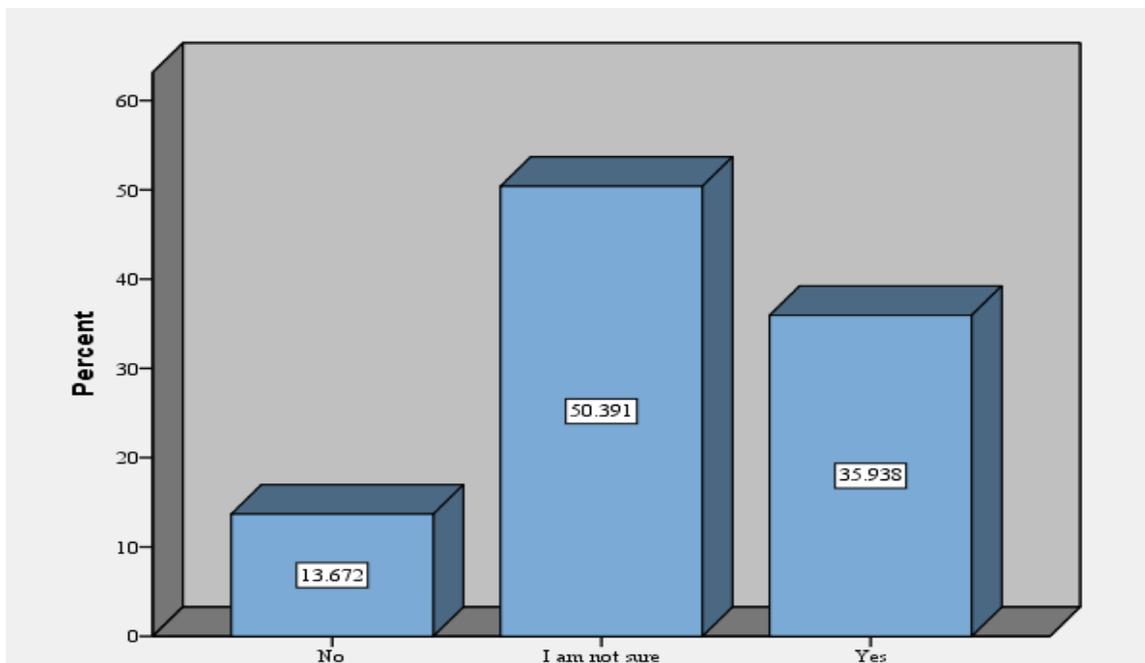
Graph 4. Using competences during course

So, it turns out that over 50% of students are not sure whether or not the above-mentioned types of competences are mentioned, 36% state that these competences are mentioned in the course and 13.6% that they are not used during lectures and exercises.

Table 15 presents the numerical and percentage frequencies of students who give their position on the use of video-audio materials in lectures and exercises:

Table 15. Using video audio materials in classroom

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	No	151	59.0	59.0	59.0
Valid	Yes	105	41.0	41.0	100.0
	Total	256	100.0	100.0	

It turned out that 59% of students state that video-audio materials are not used in lectures and exercises during studies whereas 41% claim that such materials are used.

The data of table 16 show 88 % of students confirming that classrooms are equipped with material-technical conditions, mostly dominated by LCD projectors. There is a group of 11, 7 % who did not choose any of the answers, which means that their classrooms are not equipped with any of the options listed.

Table 16. Classrooms' equipment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Computers	11	4.3	4.9	4.9
	LCD projectors	98	38.3	43.4	48.2
	Internet connection	17	6.6	7.5	55.8
Valid	Computers, LCD projectors	40	15.6	17.7	73.5
	Computers, LCD, Internet	60	23.4	26.5	100.0
	Total	226	88.3	100.0	
Missing	System	30	11.7		
Total		256	100.0		

For an objective scientific correctness as well as to have an overview of students' perception of material-technical conditions depending on the university where they study, especially the existence of a significant difference between public and private universities in Table 17 and Graph 5 we present these data:

Table 17. Classroom equipment

| | Classrooms equipped | | | | |
	Computers	LCD projectors	Internet connection	Computers, LCD projectors	Computers, LCD, Internet
University of Tetovo	6	22	9	1	2
SEEU	2	5	4	14	20
Cyril and Methodius	1	44	2	5	15
UACS	0	0	0	8	17
Goce Delcev Stip	2	27	2	12	6
Other	0	0	0	0	0
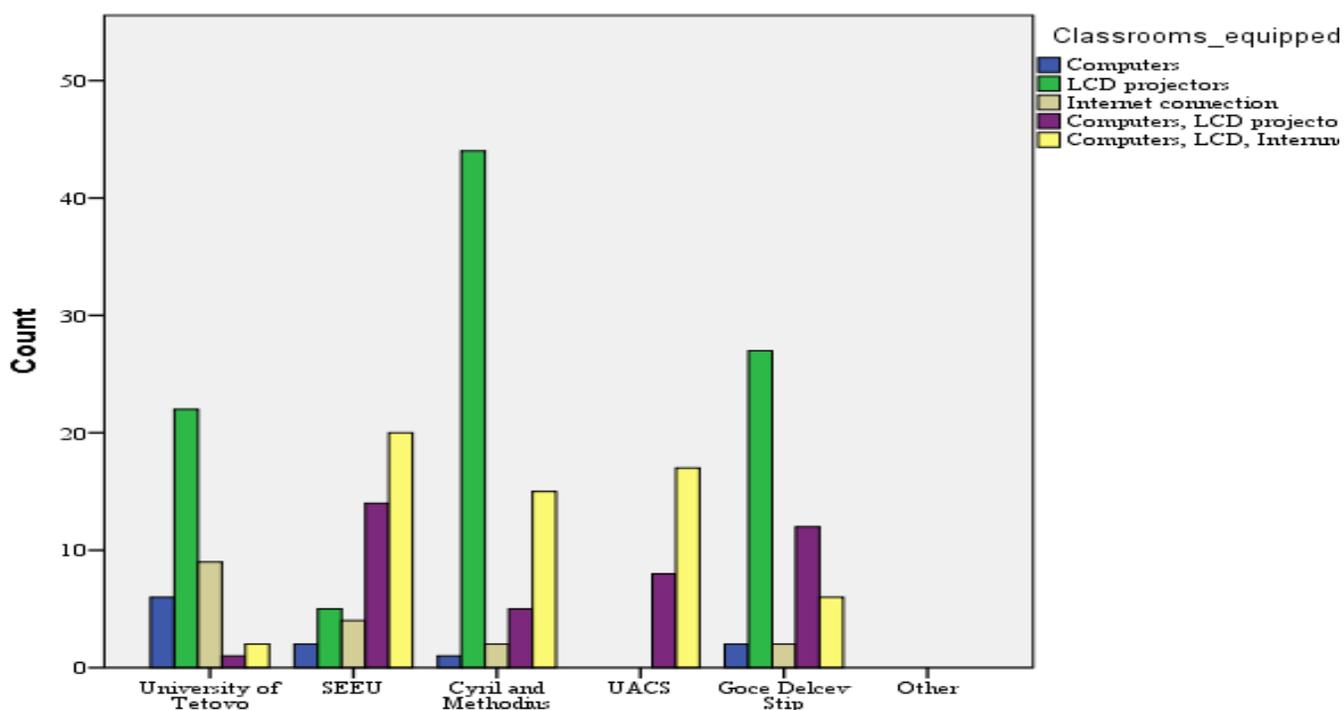
Graph 5. Classrooms equipped by University

To assess the existence of statistical differences between universities according to students' perceptions of material and technical conditions, in Table 18 we reflect the hi-square coefficient for the above frequencies in Table 18.

Table 18. Pearson Chi-Square Tests

		Classrooms equipped
	Chi-square	110.702
University	Df	16
	Sig.	**.000**

So, $h^2 = 110.702$ with less probability than the first limit of reliability (p <0.01) for sig = .000 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between universities in terms of students' perception of the material and technical conditions for lectures and exercises, in other words students state that private universities have more solid and more complete material-technical conditions as opposed to state universities.

The next question was evaluating some of the options that students have learned during lectures or English language exercises, the frequencies are as follows in Table 19 and Graph 6:

Table 19. Tick the options that you have been taught in the Business English course?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Writing a formal email	49	19.1	19.1	19.1
Make and respond to (polite) requests	11	4.3	4.3	23.4
Making and receiving phone calls	2	.8	.8	24.2
Video Conferences	3	1.2	1.2	25.4
Presenting a company	17	6.6	6.6	32.0
Meeting simulations	2	.8	.8	32.8
2 options	52	20.3	20.3	53.1
3 +more options	79	30.9	30.9	84.0
All options	41	16.0	16.0	100.0
Total	256	100.0	100.0	
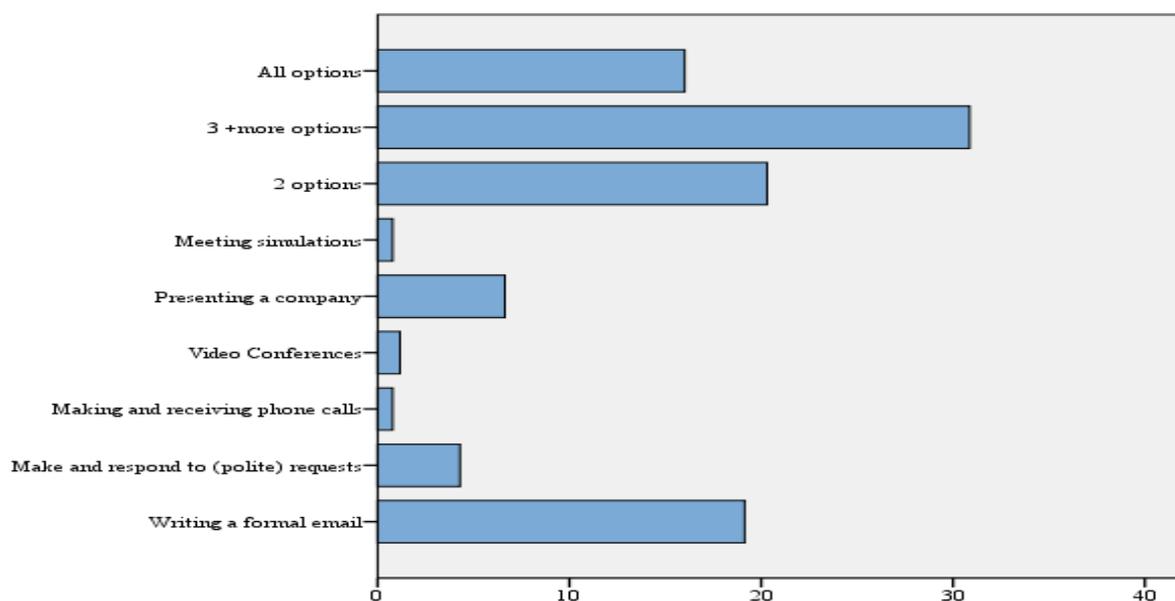
Graph 6. The options that students have been taught in their BE course

According to the frequencies it is clearly seen that 19% have been taught writing a formal email, 6.6% to introduce their company contrary to other non-significant frequencies. On the other hand 30.9% state that they have been presented with more than three options, 20.3% two qualities and 16% all the qualities presented.

Also, for detailed analysis in this segment to see the statistical difference between universities in the context of learning and acquisition of the mentioned options, Tables 20 and 21 present the frequencies and coefficient of Hi-square:

Table 20. Tick the options that you have been taught in the Business English course? By university

	Writing a formal email	Make and respond to (polite) requests	Making and receiving phone calls	Video Conferences	Presenting a company	Meeting simulations	2 options	3 +more options	All options
University of Tetovo	9	2	0	0	6	2	7	18	5
SEEU	13	2	1	0	6	0	10	14	8
Cyril and Methodius	10	0	0	0	2	0	14	29	20
UACS	0	2	1	1	0	0	6	10	6

124

Goce Delcev Stip	17	5	0	2	3	0	15	8	2
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

So, in Table 21 below, h² = 69.497 with less probability than the first reliability limit (p <0.01) for sig = .000 there is a statistically significant difference between universities in the context of learning and acquisition of students, in other words students of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius as well as the University of Tetova lead in learning and acquiring more than three options or qualities compared to students of other universities.

Table 21. Pearson Chi-Square Tests

		In_Business_English_course
	Chi-square	69.497
University	Df	32
	Sig.	**.000**

Also, a special question was devoted to idioms in English by asking students if business idioms in English are known or learned, the frequencies of the following question in Table 22:

Table 22. Business English idioms

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	No	173	67.6	67.6	67.6
Valid	Yes	83	32.4	32.4	100.0
	Total	256	100.0	100.0	

Over 67% stated that they are not familiar with business idioms contrary to 32.4% who have learned business idioms in English during lectures or exercises.

Table 23. Taught about Business English idioms by University

	Business_English_idioms

125

	No	I am not sure	Yes
University of Tetovo	33	0	16
SEEU	37	0	17
Cyril and Methodius	56	0	19
UACS	15	0	11
Goce Delcev Stip	32	0	20
Other	0	0	0

Table 24 below shows the hi-square and its significance where according to it, $h^2 = 3.768$ with greater probability than the second limit of reliability ($p > 0.05$) for sig $= .438$ there is no statistically significant difference between universities in acquiring and learning English business idioms in this research.

Table 24. Pearson Chi-Square Tests difference between universities for idioms' knowledge

		Business English idioms
University	Chi-square	3.768
	Df	4
	Sig.	.438[a]

Students were also asked to show in practice if they have developed sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences through introductions and requests.

The first situation given is shown below together with some of the students' answers.

> *You have just joined a company, and the HR manager introduces you to the staff. You're expected to say a few words about yourself. You say:*
>
> *S1. It's a pleasure to meet you all. I hope that we will do a lot of awesome work in the future. I am looking forward to meeting you all on a personal level in a professional manner.*

S2. Hello, I am ...

S3. My name is Linda, I am 25 years old from Tetovo. I have finished university in Tetovo.

I hope we will have a good time together.

S4. Hello ! I'm a student and my goal is to achieve the most success in this company.

S5. Hello guys,I'm X Person ,from now on I'll be working this X job.Hope so we'll have fun.

S6. Hello, nice to meet you, my name is ... I hope you can guide me...

S7. Nice to meet you, from now on I too am gonna be part of your team

The two other situations were requests, one addressed to the supervisor at work, and the other one to the secretary. Some of the students' answers are shown below.

It is time to submit a project bid at work, but you have not finished it yet. You want to ask your supervisor for an extension. You say:

S1. Can you continue the time for the project?

S2.I was unable to submit the project in time, may I ask for a little more time to do it?

S3. I apologize for not meeting the deadline, I'd be grateful if you could extend it for a little longer.

S4. Sir/Madam. I feel like some parts of the project need further analysis, therefore the project is not finished yet. Is there any possibility for an extension.

S5. Can you give me more time for checking the project.

The second request that students were asked to write was addressed to the secretary. The situation given and students' answers are shown below.

You are a manager of a department in a private company and you are busy working. You need a file that you saved last week but you cannot find it, you want your secretary to look for it. You say:

S1.   Can   you   give   me   a   hand   please?
I can't find the file I saved last week.

S2. Hey Sarah, can you find the x file for me?

S3. I need you to help me find the file.

S4. Can you please check the file from last week

S5. sorry, can you help me please , i can't find a file that i saved last week

S6. Would you mind me spending your time searching for an x file!?

4.4.2. Second part of the students' survey

In the second part of the students' questionnaire, there were 11 statements which measure students' perceptions of some certain factors which can impact students' development of pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence. These statements are then divided into two types of factors, such as psychological and learning factors. The responses are analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

After collecting and analyzing the data for learning-objective factors we come to the conclusion that from the graph below, the dominant factor is the use of the mother tongue in the classroom. This shows us that students may not understand what is being taught to them, which results in preferring the use of their mother tongue.

Graph 7. Learning-objective factors in learning BE

128
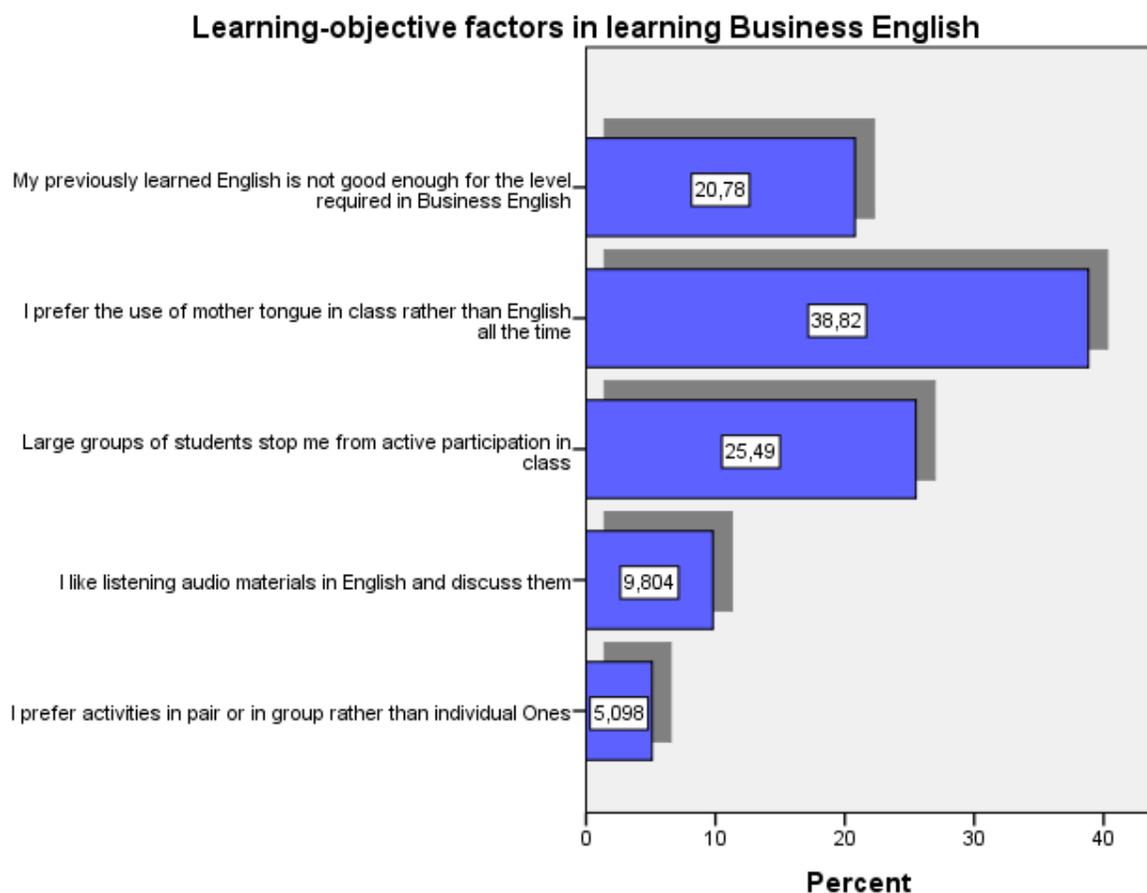
Moreover, we should mention the frequency of the factor of group size in the classroom where 25.49 % of the participants declare this factor as problematic in actively participating in the classroom, which results in lower chances of developing their sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. Additionally, the third factor in this group is the one where students declare that their previously learned English is not good enough for the level required for a Business-English course.

In the second group of the factors, psychological-subjective factors, the dominant factor appears to be the nervousness of students when they can't understand the teacher. The high frequency of 51.37% shows us that students are affected with the feeling of being nervous of not being able to understand what the teacher says, which leads to lagging behind in acquiring the materials offered in the classroom. This factor is followed by the one where students feel embarrassment when they have to answer in the class, which has the frequency of 20, 75%.
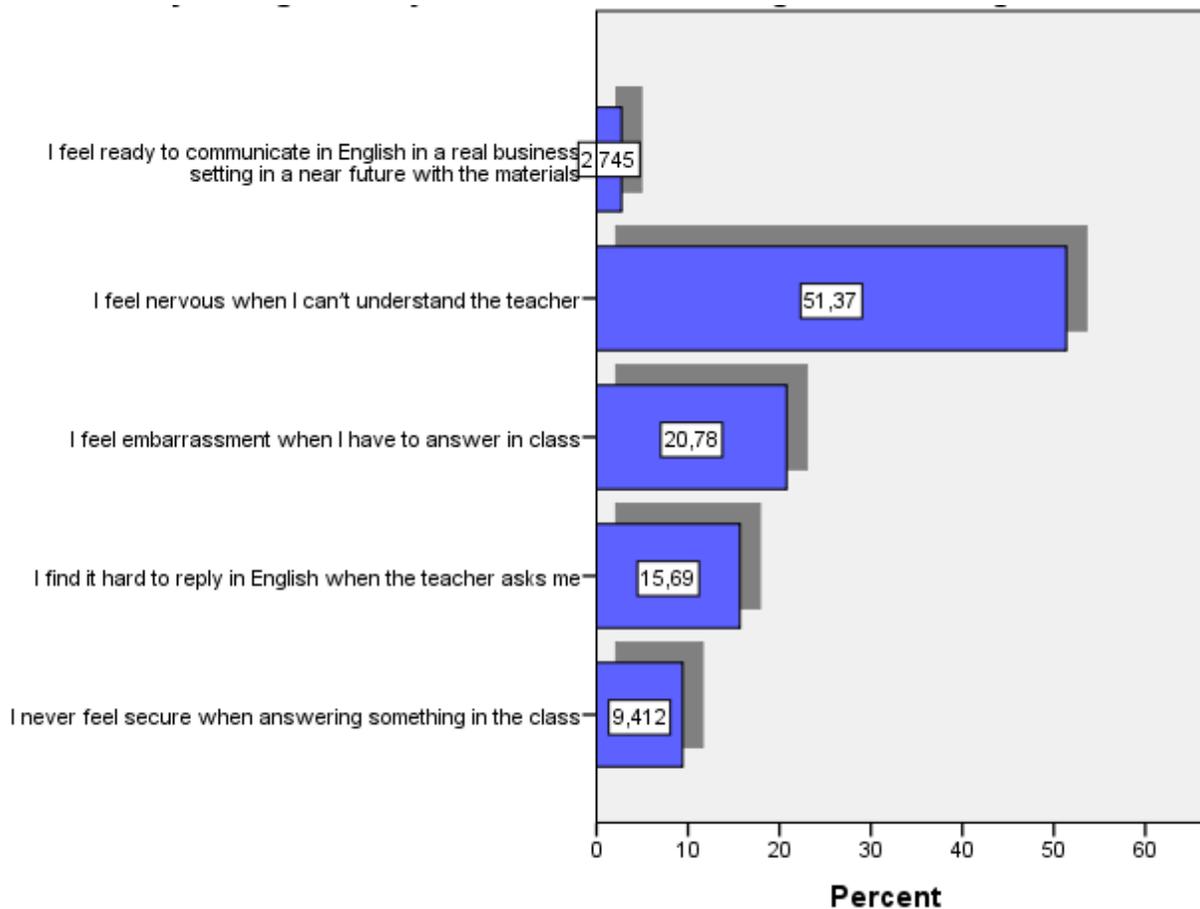

Graph 8. Psychological-subjective factors in learning Business English

So, nervousness because of not being able to understand the teacher in English, and the embarrassment of presenting something in class, are the two most dominant factors which play a significant role in hindering students' development of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence.

The following graphs present the results of students' answers regarding the 11 statements for the psychological and learning factors individually.

The first graph shows the answers for the statement *I prefer activities in pairs or in groups rather than individual ones.*
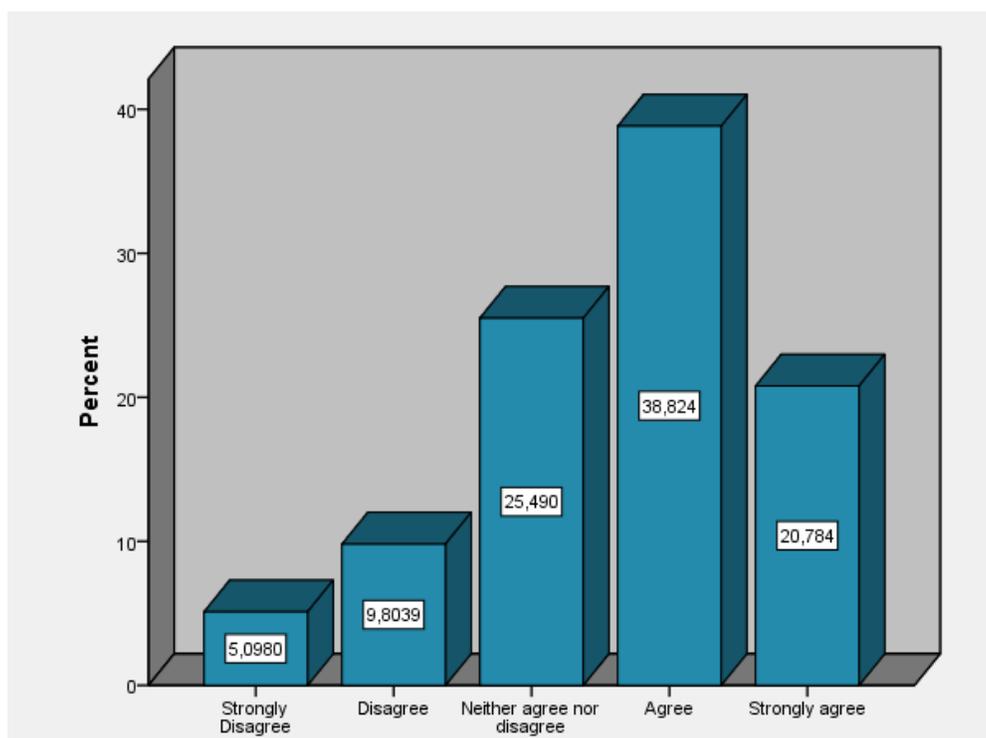
Graph 9. I prefer activities in pair or in group rather than individual ones

From the results obtained, 38.82% said they agree, followed by 25, 49% who neither agree nor disagree. 20, 78% strongly agree with this statement, whereas 9, 80% disagree and only 5, 09% strongly disagree.

Related to their *preferences of listening to audio materials in English*, almost half of the participants, 47, 05 % agree, 17, 64 % express strong agreement, whereas 9.80 % disagree, 3,92 % strongly disagree. It is surprising that 21, 56 have a neutral opinion on this, so they neither agree nor disagree on preferring to listen audio materials in English
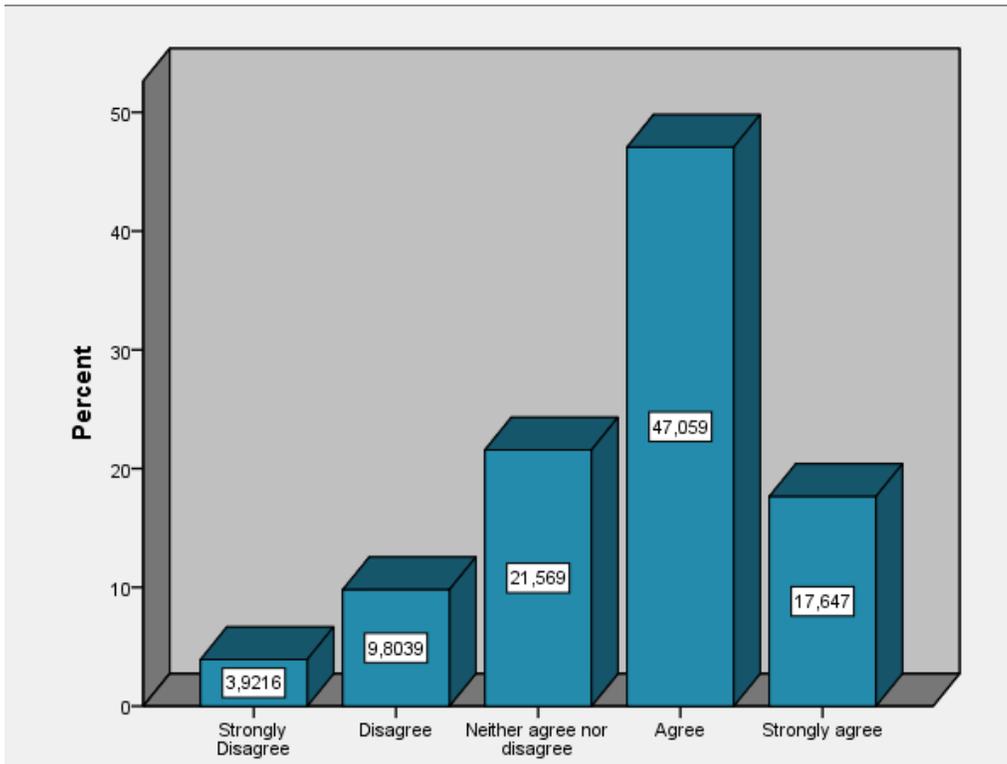
Graph 10. I like listening to audio materials in English and discuss them

The following graph shows the results obtained for the statement *Large groups of students stop me from active participation in class,* which aims to see the psychological impact large class sizes have on the students' participation during Business English class.
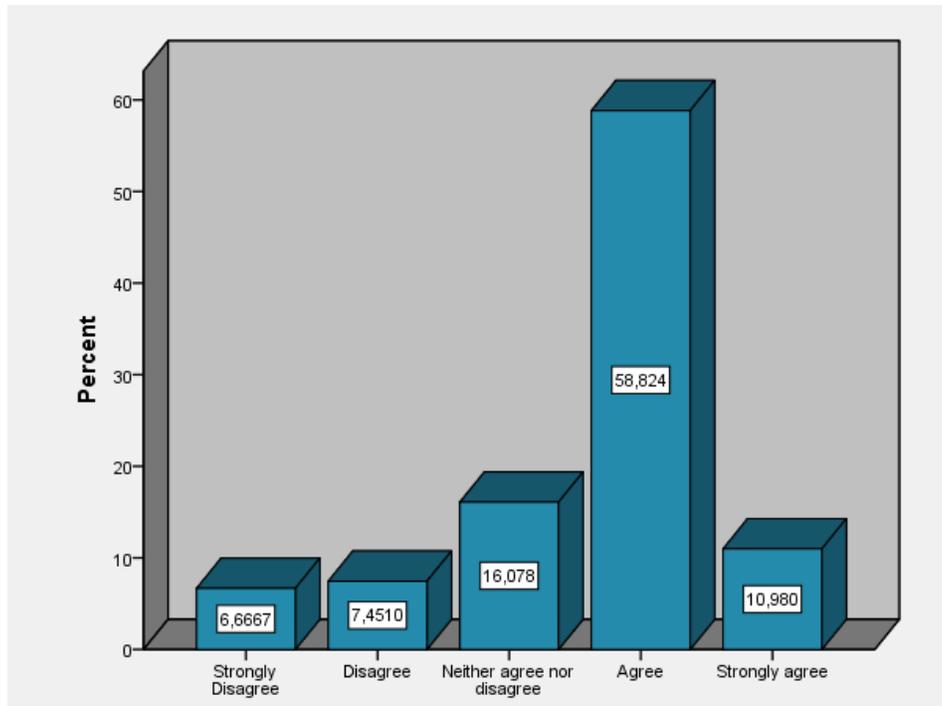
Graph 11. Large groups of students stop me from active participation in class

As expected, the vast majority, 58,82 % have chosen to agree as an answer, followed by another 10,98 % who strongly agree on the statement discussed. There are 16,45 % of participants who neither agree nor disagree. Only 7, 45 % disagree followed by 6.66 % who strongly disagree.

The next graph shows the results for the statement *I prefer the use of my mother tongue in class rather than English all the time.*
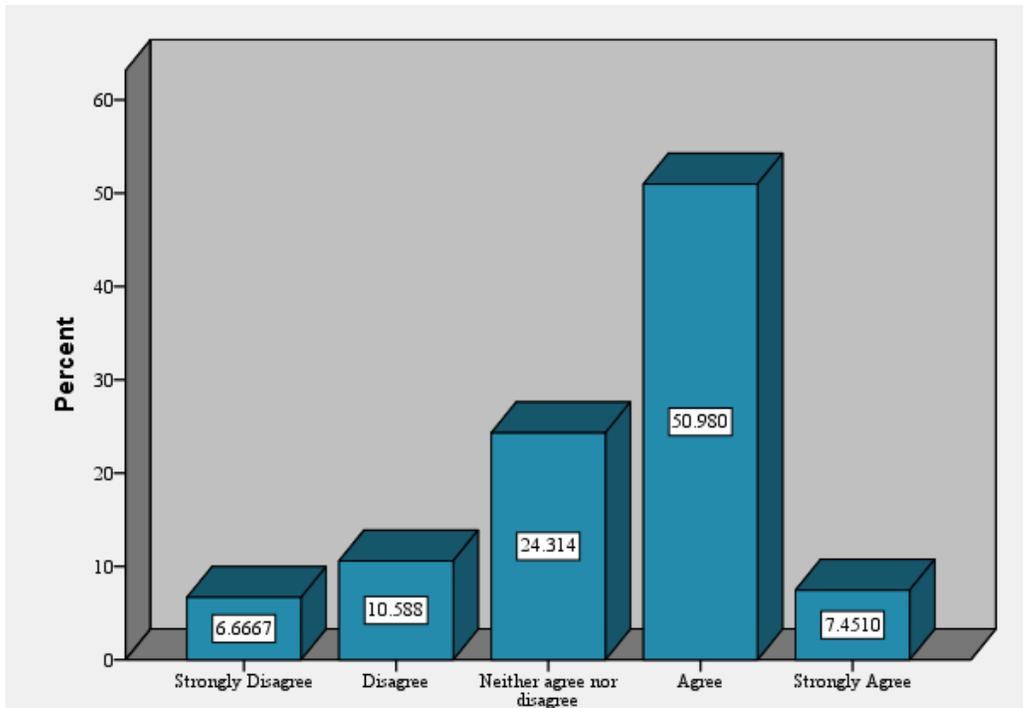
Graph 12. I prefer the use of the mother tongue in the class rather than English

As we can see, most of the students, 50.98 % have agreed on preferring the use of mother tongue over English in the class, as well as another 7.45 % who strongly agree with this statement. There is a group of 24.31 % of students who have a neutral opinion on this, they can' decide which language they prefer to be spoken in the class during Business English. Normally, there are also students who prefer the use of English all the time instead of their mother tongue, and they are 10.58 % (disagree), followed by 6.66 % who strongly disagree with the use of their mother tongue over English.

One of the statements which is crucial to one of the sub-hypotheses, related to the proficiency of the students, is My *previously learned English is not good enough for the level required in Business English.* The results are shown in the graph below.
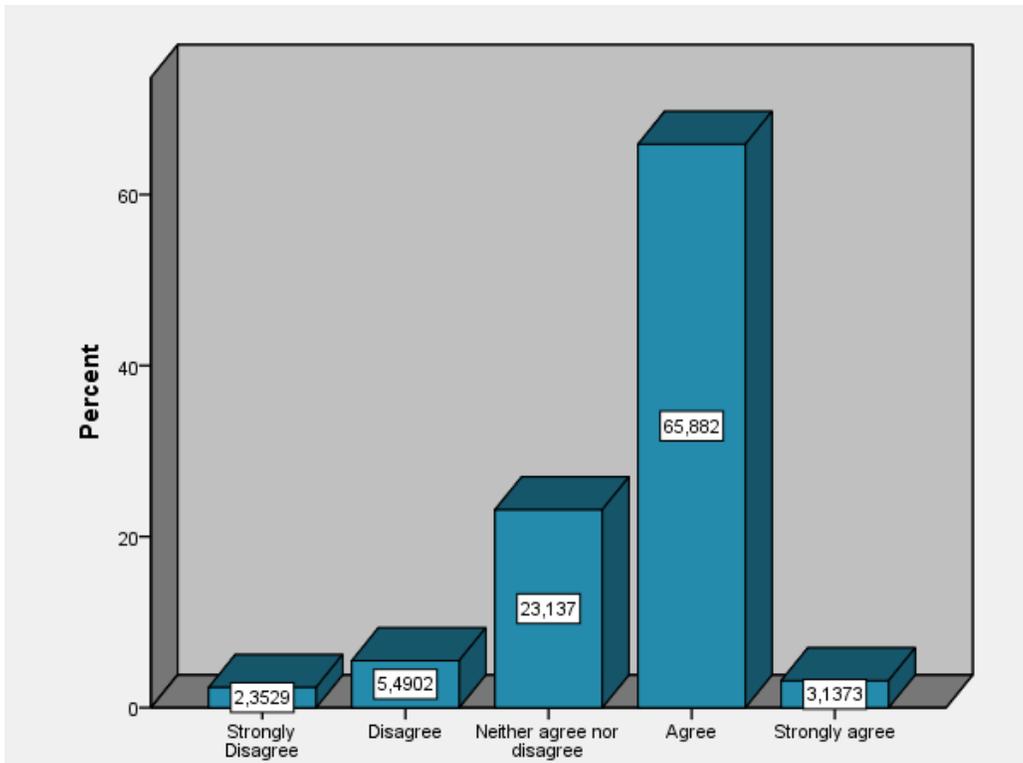
Graph 13. My previously learned English is not good enough for the level required in Business English

Just as hypothesized, students who attend Business English courses in North Macedonia do not have the required level of English proficiency in Business English. The graph shows that 65,88 % agree with this statement, followed by 23, 13 % who neither agree nor disagree. A low group of 5, 49 % disagree. Those who strongly agree are 3,13% while those who strongly disagree are only 2, 35 %.

Few of the following graphs are related to psychological factors which impact students' participation in class. The next graph shows students' answers on the statement *I never feel secure when answering something in the class.*
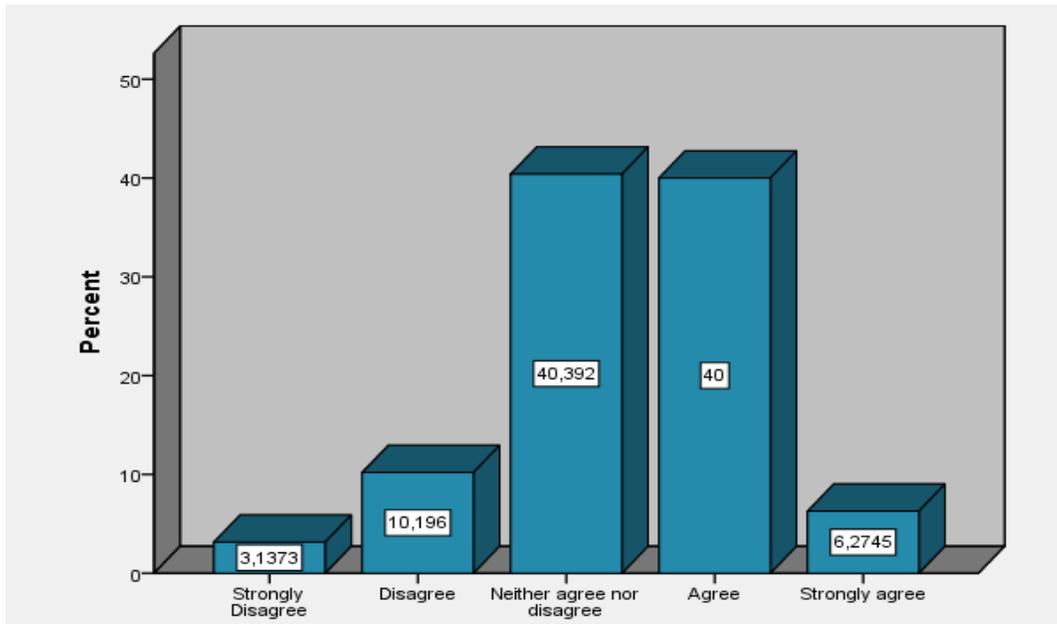
Graph 14. I never feel secure when answering something in class

This graph shows very close results for two options, where 40, 39 % have a neutral opinion, and 40 % agree they feel insecure when answering something in the class. The rest of the options are chosen by a small number of students, or 10, 19 % who disagree, (3,13 % strongly disagree), and 6, 27 strongly agree they feel insecure to answer something in the classroom.

The next graph shows students' answers on the statement. I find *it hard to reply when the teacher asks me.*
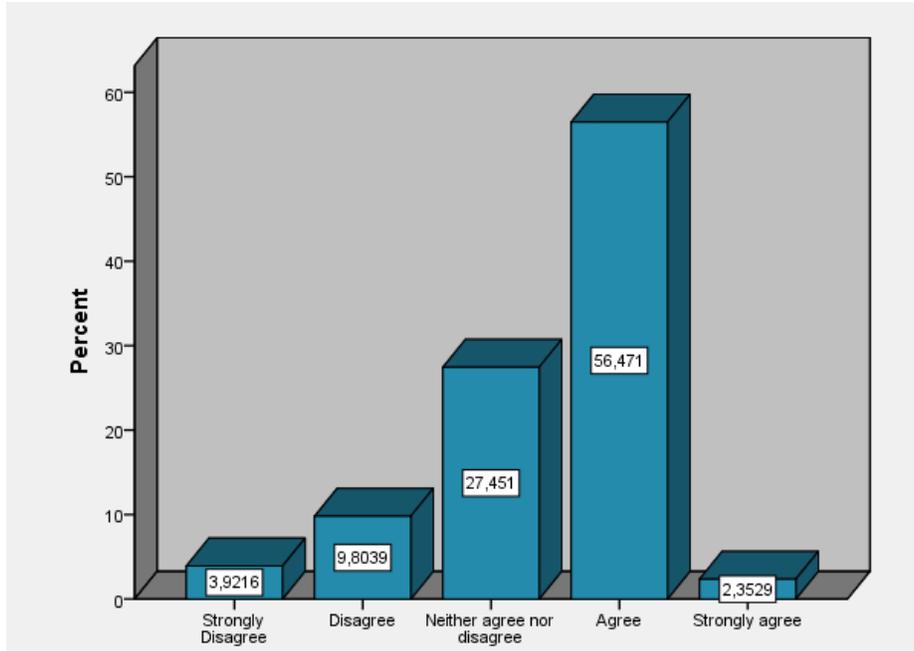
Graph 15. I find it hard to reply when the teacher asks me

The majority, 56, 47 % agree with the statement, 2, 35 % strongly agree. 27, 45 % neither agree nor disagree, 9,80 % disagree, and the last 3, 93% strongly disagree.

The answers that the following graph shows are for the statement *I feel embarrassed when I have to answer in class.*
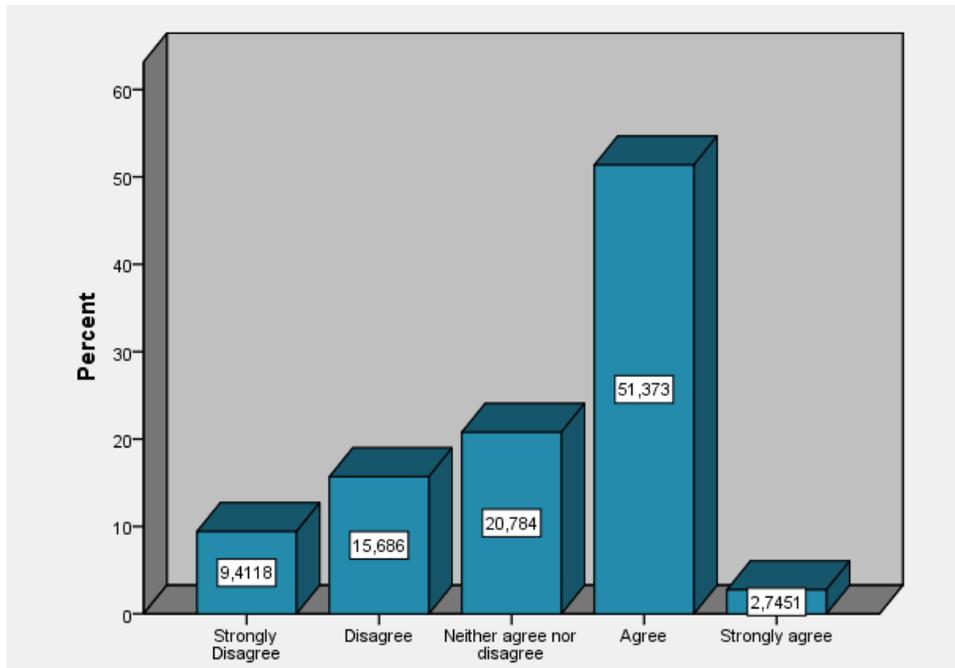
Graph 16. I feel embarrassment when I have to answer in class

The majority, 51, 37 % agree they feel embarrassed when they have to answer in class, while only 2, 74 % strongly agree. 15, 68 % disagree and 9, 41 % strongly disagree. 20, 78 % neither agree nor disagree.

Students also feel nervous in the classroom when they don't understand the teacher, and the next graph shows their answers about this statement.
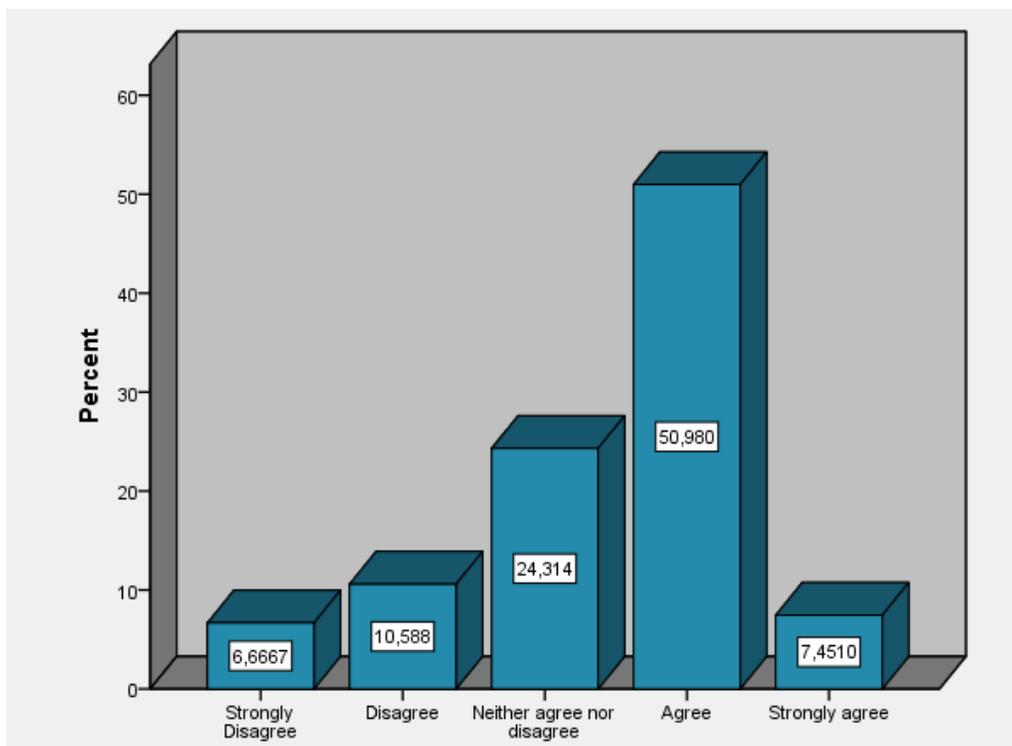
Graph 17. I feel nervous when I can't understand the teacher

Similar to three previous statements related to the psychological factors, results show that more than half of the participants, 50,98 %, agree they feel nervous when they can't understand the teacher, 7, 45 % strongly agree, whereas 10, 58 % disagree, followed by 6, 66 % who strongly disagree. 24, 31 % neither agree nor disagree with this statement.

Fear of being laughed at by peers is also present in students in the EFL. The students were asked to answer how they feel about the statement. I am *afraid that my friends will laugh when I read something,* and the answers are shown in the following graph.
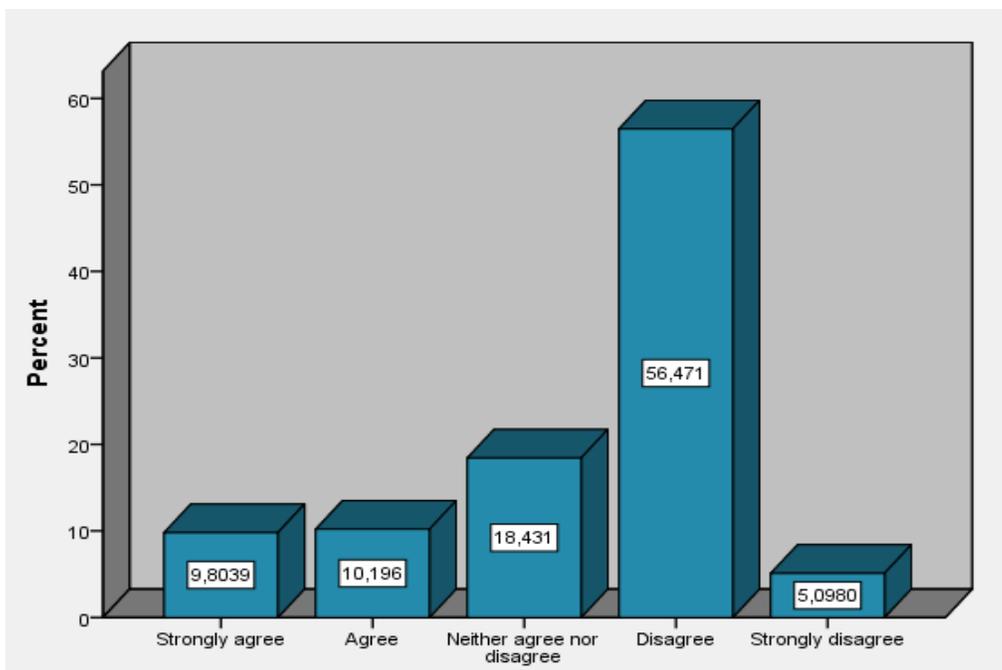
Graph 18. I feel ready to communicate in English in a real business setting in a near future with the materials that have been taught to me

Just as expected, students don't feel prepared to communicate in a real business setting in the future with what they have been taught. The 56, 47 % who chose disagree as an answer confirm this. There is also a group of 5, 09 % who strongly disagree with the statement. 18, 43 % have a neutral opinion. 10, 19 % agree and 9,80 % strongly agree.

Except for the 10 statements divided into two groups of factors, there was a single statement which is not part of any group of factors, but is still very important for this study. Culture, as a very important element in both competences, pragmatic and sociolinguistic, was included in one of the statements in this part. The results of the statement *I learned about other cultures through the materials offered,* are shown in the next graph.
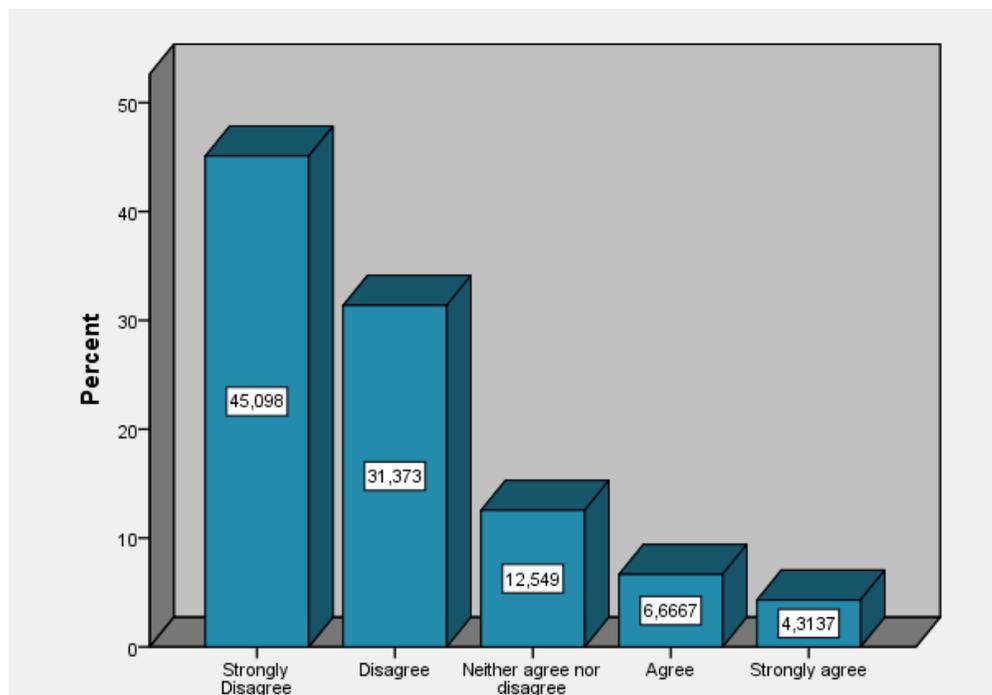
Graph 19. I learn about other cultures through the materials offered

Almost half of the total number of the participants, 45,09 % strongly disagree with learning about other cultures through the materials offered. Another large group of students, 31,37 % disagree about this statement too. 12, 54 % have a neutral opinion on this matter, 6,66 agree, and only 4, 31 strongly agree. From students' answers we saw that:

-students haven't developed their sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. They poorly introduced themselves in a situation of joining a new company, as well as gave vague polite requests regardless of who they were addressing, a subordinate or a superior.

-they were not familiar with idioms at all, and were not aware that they learn about other cultures through the materials offered in the class;

-that they feel nervousness, embarrassment and insecurity when answering something in the class or can't understand the teachers;

-that they prefer their mother tongue rather than English all the time, as well as that their previously learned English was not enough for the level required in Business English.

In the Likert scale statements, we notice high frequencies of the neutral opinions of students, where they neither agree nor disagree. We can't conclude which side they mostly support, but in most cases, it could be a "hidden don't know" (Sturgis et al., 2010) or the respondent, in this case the

student, is somewhere between agreeing and disagreeing (Evans & Popova, 2014). This could also mean that there is something that stops the student to agree or disagree, which could be the lack of English proficiency.

4.5 Results of the experimental part

In the methodology part, it was explained how the research is organized. After getting the results of the questionnaire, it was planned to choose two least developed competences and go on with the next step of the research. **Idioms** were very poorly known, if not known at all, and **making polite requests** was also a part which required much more knowledge for their future careers. These results are not surprising in fact, because these students are considered non-native speakers of English. Even advanced learners of English, NNS, don't appear to be pragmatically competent despite being linguistically proficient (Kasper and Rose, 2002), which originates from negative L1 transfer, overgeneralization of L2 pragmatic norms (Ishihara and Cohen, 2010). What is even more important, and probably not often said, is that even teachers themselves are not necessarily quite competent concerning pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Darmach (2009) claims that teachers assume that they are competent in sociolinguistic and pragmatics, but, unfortunately, studies in the field of pragmatics show that teachers, just as learners of English as a second or foreign language lack these competences (as cited in Sugar, 2015). Similarly, Echeverria Castillo (2009) claims that it happens that teachers of foreign languages do not include communicative competence in teaching because they lack knowledge or awareness, as well as time, and they don't know the importance of using these competences in daily life. Another research conducted by Brubaek (2013) showed that teachers of EFL in Norway mostly focus on other components rather than students' pragmatic competence. They ignore the importance of the pragmatics in the curriculum, indicating that grammar, reading and writing are more important.

Learners might be better in grammar, and possess rich vocabulary, but having these two does not necessarily mean that they are good at communication. In order to achieve the latter, learners should be able to use that vocabulary and grammar in the right context with the people they are speaking to (Daskalovska et al., 2016, p. 55).

As a result, these two competences were chosen as two parts to be practiced and taught more and tested at the end. Explicit teaching is sometimes more than needed, and in this case my

opinion was that students need explicit teaching of some competences, so that they understand, learn and remember those competences. It took a full term, with explicit methods of teaching, paying attention to idioms and making requests to do the experiment with the control and experimental group. As described in the methodology part, at the end students were tested to see if they improved regarding these two competences.

Students were divided in two groups, control and experimental group. The experimental group received instructions at the beginning of the term, and the control group did not. Throughout the whole summer semester of the academic year 2020-2021 we have practiced exercises with the students, online exercises for Business English idioms, as well as exercises where students were taught to make requests, in different given situations. During that semester, students attended online lectures, due to the restrictions of the covid-19 pandemic, and it had its advantages and disadvantages. The good side was that anytime we would have extra time left, it was easy to find exercises online to practice whatever we needed. However, as everything else, it had its weak side, which limited us in some practical involvement of students such as role plays, or group and pair work, (note that Google Meet platform we use does not offer this option).

Explicit learning is a "conscious awareness and intention" (Brown, 2007, p.291) to learn. Additionally, explicit learning is also the process of understanding and acquiring something through rules and regularities (Brown, 2007, p.291).

There are other synonyms which can be used for explicit learning, such as deductive, intentional, conscious etc. It is an active process where students seek out the structure of information that is presented to them. (Billmyer, 1990; Bouton, 9 as cited by Vitale, Sarah J 10 idem 11 As cited by Ji-Young Jung 12 As cited by Lingli Duan 67 1994a; House, 1996; LoCastro, 2001), "metacognitive discussions" (Olshtain & Cohen, 1990), and "corrective feedback" (Bouton, 1994b)13 .
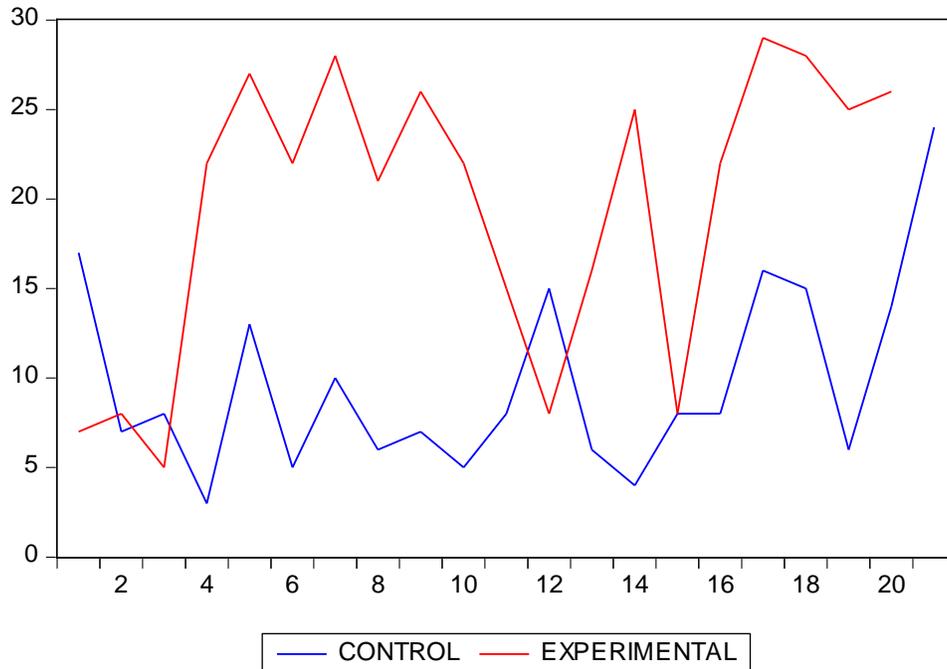
Figure 11. Trends and magnitudes of the variables

The Figure 11 shows the trend and magnitudes of the two variables being analyzed. The control group seems to have less variation among points of students gained and the level of this variable is visibly lower than that of the experimental group. Experimental groups have higher levels and higher variation, which is very strange since it means that some students did very well on their test whilst others did very poorly.

Box plots are tools that display distribution of data sets using 5 indicators, the minimum value, the maximum value, median which is also the second quartile and lastly the first and the fourth quartile. If we analyze the box plot in Figure 12, we can see that there is significant difference considering the mean of the variables and also the variance. The arithmetic means of the points that students gained between two groups is visibly different and as it seems, the average points of the control group is around 10 and the average points of the experimental group is 20. The medians are also at different levels comparing the groups. Control group has a median lower than 10 points, 7.5 to be more precise. Experimental group has a higher median of points, it is around 22 points.

The upper and lower quartiles also are very different and the control group has lower values of these two indicators. Outliers of the control group are, the lower one close to 5 and the highest

143

is close to 25 points. The experimental group has outliers close to 5 and somewhat lower than 25 points.

More information on descriptive statistics is given in Table *32*. Average mean point of the experimental group is 19.5 compared to 9.762 points of mean average to the control group. If we do the difference then there is almost 10 points difference between the groups (19.5-9.762=9.738). The experimental group has higher mean values of points compared to the control group. Control group seems to have lower standard deviation than the experimental group with values being 5.55 and 8.14 points respectively. Standard deviation tells to what extent data are dispersed relative to its mean, in our case the points of the control group are more consistent relative to their mean of 9.762. The higher the standard deviation the higher the dispersion. Skewness and kurtosis show that the variables do not have normal distribution. For normal distribution (or any symmetrical data) skewness should be approximately 0 and kurtosis should be around 3. Values of skewness are 0.99 and -0.62 for control and experimental groups respectively. Values of kurtosis are 1.88 and 3.36 for control and experimental groups respectively.
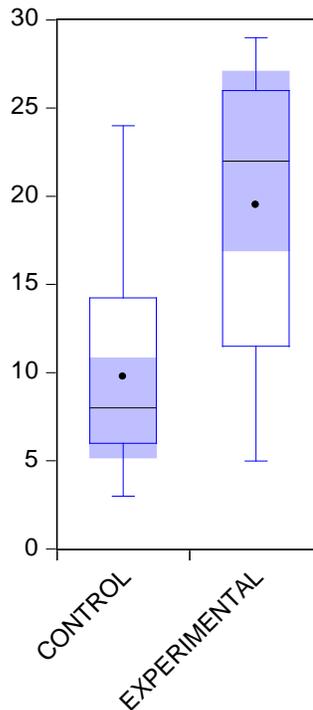
Figure 12. Average mean points control and experimental

The table 26 below the text, contains tabulation for variables of the control group. There are a total of 21 observations. It is very important to emphasize the importance of the sample size

when doing statistical analysis. Results and inferences could differ among the same variables but with different sample sizes. Furthermore, the bigger the sample the closer is the result to the one of the real population. Small samples hold the risk of not being able to deliver the most unbiased and close inference that we could get.

	EXPERIM ENTAL	CONTROL
Mean	19.50000	9.761905
Median	22.00000	8.000000
Maximum	29.00000	24.00000
Minimum	5.000000	3.000000
Std. Dev.	8.140219	5.347006
Skewness	-0.624985	0.993945
Kurtosis	1.879529	3.357197
Jarque-Berra	2.348235	3.569387
Probability	0.309092	0.167848
Sum	390.0000	205.0000
Sum Sq. Dev.	1259.000	571.8095
Observations	20	21

Table 25. Control and experimental values

As we can see only 9.52% of the students from the control group got between 0 and 5 points. 52.38% of students got between 5 and 10 points. 14.29% of the students got between 10 and 15 points. 19.05% got between 15 and 20 points and the last category shows that only 4.76% of students took between 20 and 25 points.

Tabulation of CONTROL				
Sample: 1 21				
Included observations: 21				
Number of categories: 5				
			Cumulative	Cumulative
Value	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
[0, 5)	2	9.52	2	9.52
[5, 10)	11	52.38	13	61.90
[10, 15)	3	14.29	16	76.19
[15, 20)	4	19.05	20	95.24
[20, 25)	1	4.76	21	100.00
Total	21	100.00	21	100.00

Table 26. Tabulation of control group

Compared to the control group, the experimental group shows better results gained by students. None of the students had 0 points, this is the first positive thing that differs this group from the previous one. 25% of students had between 5 and 10 points, this is almost as half as the control group, which had 52.38% of the students in this category. Only 10% of students had between 15 and 20 points. We find the same percentage in the first category (5-10 points) and in the third category (20-25 points). The bigger part of the students, 40% of them, got between 25 and 30 points, compared to the control group where this category completely lacks, thus we see an additional category where the experimental group has better results.

Tabulation of EXPERIMENTAL				
Sample (adjusted): 1 20				
Included observations: 20 after adjustments				
Number of categories: 4				
			Cumulative	Cumulative
Value	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
[5, 10)	5	25.00	5	25.00
[15, 20)	2	10.00	7	35.00
[20, 25)	5	25.00	12	60.00

[25, 30)	8	40.00	20	100.00
Total		100.00	20	100.00
	20			

Table 27. Tabulation of experimental group

Considering the fact that we try to establish whether there is a significant difference between means of points of control and experimental group, we chose to do a one-way ANOVA test for the given data and samples, which as mentioned before are with smaller than 30 observations. ANOVA F- test with 1 and 39 degrees of freedom is 20.694 with a p- value of 0.0001 which is lower than 0.05. The null hypothesis of ANOVA has that the mean points of the both groups do not differ meaning that the two groups have similar mean points and the alternative hypothesis of ANOVA states that the mean points of both groups differ, meaning that the groups have statistically different mean points. With this result and knowing that if p-value is smaller than the given alfa risk of 5% ($0.0001<\alpha=0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis that the mean points of the two groups are not different from each other. This means that the average mean points of the experimental and control group are statistically different and that their difference is not zero. To this point the ANOVA test does not show which group is better but rather it shows that the difference exists meaning that mean points of control and experimental group are not similar.

Sample: 1 21			
Included observations: 21			
Method	df	Value	Probabilit y
t-test	39	-4.549016	0.0001
Satterthwaite-Welch t-test*	32.59469	-4.504031	0.0001
ANOVA F-test	(1, 39)	20.69355	0.0001
Welch F-test*	(1, 32.5947)	20.28629	0.0001
*Test allows for unequal cell variances			
Analysis of Variance			
Source of Variation	df	Sum of Sq.	Mean Sq.

Between	1	971.4344	971.4344
Within	39	1830.810	46.94383
Total	40	2802.244	70.05610
Category Statistics			

				Std. Err.
Variable	Count	Mean	Std. Dev.	of Mean
CONTROL	21	9.761905	5.347006	1.166812
EXPERIMENTAL	20	19.50000	8.140219	1.820208
All	41	14.51220	8.369952	1.307167

Table 28. Test for Equality of Means Between Series

Satterthwaite-Welch t-test has also $p<0.05$ (t-test=-4.45, p-value=0.0001) with which we can reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between two means of two population samples. The lower part of the table gives us the difference between errors of groups and within groups itself. Sum of squared points during the calculation between the control and experimental group is 971.434 (Table 35) with mean of the squares 971.434 points (971.4344/1). Within the group itself the sum of squares of the difference is 1830.81 with 46.944 points (1830.81/39).

Welch's test also rejects the null hypothesis that the means of the two groups are equal ($p<0.05$). This test is very suitable for samples with different number observations, which is the case here since we have two groups with 20 and 21 observations accordingly.

Sample: 1 21				
Included observations: 21				
Method	Df	Value	Probability	
F-test	(20, 19)	2.317665	0.0725	
Siegel-Tukey		1.290313	0.1969	
Bartlett	1	3.284315	0.0699	
Levene	(1, 39)	5.730587	0.0216	
Brown-Forsythe	(1, 39)	2.448793	0.1257	

Category Statistics					
			Mean Abs.	Mean Abs.	Mean Tukey-
Variable	Count	Std. Dev.	Mean Diff.	Median Diff.	Siegel Rank
EXPERIMENTAL	20	8.140219	6.950000	6.300000	18.51071
CONTROL	21	5.347006	4.371882	3.952381	23.37075

Table 29. Variance of the variables

The table 29 shows all the results of the tests for testing the variance of the variables of the two groups. Before proceeding there should be mentioned that the Barlett test in this case is testing only for normality, since as mentioned before the variables do not have normal distribution this test fails to test the equality of the variances. Other tests such as Siegel- Tuckey fail to reject the null hypothesis at α=0.05 but not at 10%, and the Leven test is significant at α=0.05 with p-value of 0.0216.

From the results of the experimental part, we can conclude that the experimental group, (to which idioms and polite requests were explicitly taught) showed better results. The control group (that implicitly practiced the same idioms and the polite requests) has a median of 7.5 whereas the experimental group has a higher median of points, it is around 22 points. Additionally, the experimental group has higher mean values of points compared to the control group. Also, no students in the experimental group had 0-5 points, and the bigger part had between 25-30 points, compared to the control group where almost 10 percent of the students had 0-5 points, and 52.38 got 5-10, which is still much lower than the experimental group. This shows that the higher awareness of what students learn lead to better acquisition of the material and improvement of the competences in question.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The textbooks used by the teachers who took part in this research, were analyzed and generally evaluated from the aspect of socio-pragmatic content in them. From the analysis we can say that the socio-pragmatic content in this book is solid but not enough for helping students develop these competences. Additionally, it is mostly introduced implicitly, through other types of content. Course-books can't be taken as the most important source of input for students to acquire pragmatic knowledge (Zhang, Wang and Wannaruk, 2019), or just as other materials who appear to be under-representing pragmatic use of the target language (Ishihara & Cohen, 2013). Business English textbooks suit neither their stated purposes nor the learners' needs regarding the speech acts (Solouki, 2019). Richards (2001) notes that students should be motivated, and this could be done through textbooks which contain an optimum and balanced amount of speech acts (McDonough and Shaw, 2003). Out of the 4 textbooks reviewed, *Market Leader*, a product of *Pearson Longman*, turned out to be the only textbook which explicitly introduced culture, which gives students possibilities to learn that culture is found in things we do, and say, except in music, festivals, movies and books. Through giving an accent to culture, students are exposed to the idea that culture includes the lack or presence of politeness, the way we greet, apologize, make a request or suggest.

Students were asked if they are familiar with the four terms of communicative competences, linguistic competences, pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences. In general, communicative competences were chosen by a high percentage of 57.4% against other types of competences, i.e., 11.3% linguistic competences, 4.6% socio-linguistic competences and close to 2% pragmatic competences. So, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences were chosen by a smaller number of participants, because they are not aware of their meaning. But, in the question where they were asked to write in their words what do those competences mean to them, the answers they gave were almost all about their idea of communication skills and abilities. There was only one answer about sociolinguistic competence, and no answers about the meaning of pragmatic competences. This also corresponds to teachers' answers who stated that their students probably don't know the meaning of these competences, because they are business majors. So, teachers who teach Business English courses have not introduced pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences to students, since they are aware of students' lack of knowledge of these competences' meaning.

In the questions where they were asked to show in practice their knowledge of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, in writing a request and being polite their answers were vague and poor. They also answered poorly in one of the simplest questions, where they were expected to introduce themselves when joining a new company. If other parts are less presented in books, the act of introducing yourself has been met in almost all the books analyzed above. This still doesn't help students acquire this basic skill. In CEFR, regarding the sociolinguistic competence, starting from the very first level of A1, speakers are expected to be able to "establish basic social contact by using the simplest everyday polite forms of: greetings and farewells; **introductions**; saying please, thank you, sorry, etc." (122)

Out of the total number of 256 participants, 149 answers were given. There were some good introductory sentences, yet, most of the answers given were not satisfactory. Some of the students' answers, which are among the satisfactory ones, are shown below.

> *S1. Hello everyone. My name is...I am looking forward to working with you and this company.*
>
> *S2. Good morning, my name is _____ I am_____ years old and I am a marketing manager. I am very excited about this opportunity and I look forward to working with all of you.*
>
> *S3. I am very honored to be part of this amazing company. Hope we can all have productive work relations. I intend to put in all my effort in the job.*
>
> *S4. I would like to introduce myself. My name is K.J. and it will be a pleasure to work for this company, and to have you guys as colleagues*
>
> *S5. It's a pleasure to meet you all. I hope that we will do a lot of awesome work in the future. I am looking forward to meeting you all on a personal level in a professional manner.*

We also come across explanations of what they would say, instead of writing the exact words they would choose to say when introducing themselves, as in the examples below:

> *S1. I introduce myself; I hope we'll be able to work with understanding in the future.*
>
> *S2. I would introduce myself, tell them why I would like to work with them.*
>
> *S3. Great, say my name, my work position and I am looking forward to working with them.*
>
> *S4. I present myself and probably talk about my accomplishments in work*
>
> *S5. A quick introduction about myself and why I'm qualified for the job, exhibiting confidence.*

In few of the answers, there are also informalities used such as shown below:

S1. Nice to meet you, from now on I too am gonna be part of your team

S2. Hello, friends my name is ... idk. basic introduction

S3. I'm going to do my best.

These answers show us that these students are unprepared, and not able to produce a simple introduction when they join a new company. There was no statistical difference between universities, meaning that regardless which university they come from, generally, most of them have poor or no basic skill of introducing themselves, which tells us that these students are not ready to begin working after graduation, in an English-speaking environment, due to lack of basic communicative skills.

In one of the questions students were asked to tick one of more options that they have been taught in their course, out of

- *Writing a business email*
- *Making and responding to (polite)requests*
- *Making and receiving phone calls*
- *Video Conferences*
- *Presenting company*
- *Meeting simulations*

In this question, making and responding to polite requests, was ticked by 139 students, and surprisingly, we received 135 requests in the first one, and 139 requests in the second question of writing a request. The results of the two questions related to requests were presented in the previous chapter, but here, we will go through an analysis from different aspects.

In the situation given:

"It is time to submit a project bid at work, but you have not finished it yet. You want to ask your supervisor for an extension. You say:",

We see different kinds of requests. Initially, we have to say that only 135 answers were given. In only 39 of them we find the marker *"please"*. House and Kasper (1981) think that "please" is amongst the most common politeness markers. It is used when the speaker wants to

show respect to the hearer, and sometimes ask for the speaker's help. We came across preparatory request strategies (i.e. could you/do you mind/can you), as in the situations as in:

S1. Could you please give me an extension? I just have to perfect the project.

S2. Please, could you please expand the project deadline?

S3. Would you mind giving me a few days to finish it?

And four other situations only, where we see a low level of directness implied. Lastly, what is very important to be mentioned here is that students lack knowledge of being formal in some situations. Without paying attention to who the request is being made, they have given some very informal requests which are not proper for the situation given, as in the examples below*:*

S1. Can we make a deal, grant me a favor Which Im gonna pay later.

This student has used *gonna* instead of going to, which is used in informal colloquial English. This tells us that he is not aware that in a situation like this, it is mandatory to be more formal and avoid informal language. Formality is not limited by politeness but it is tightly related to it. In this sense, it is the type of category which is seen as metapragmatic judgment, and as such, as McConaty and Hata (2013) suggest, these skills are easily acquired through role plays and explicit discussion.

There was another question in the survey where students were asked to write a request but from a different angle. In the previous one we had an employee requesting something from his/her supervisor, while in the second one, the request goes the opposite way in the pyramid, from the manager to his/her secretary, addressed to a subordinate.

Prior to discussing the answers, it's important to mention that compared to the earlier request, with approximately the same number of respondents, we have a rise of the presence of *"please",* which is found in 89 of the answers. It is interesting to know why the very same students choose to use the marker *please* twice more in a request that is made to somebody that works for you, rather than to someone who you work for. This is not what can be found in other research related to the role of power and distance in determining the directness or indirectness of a request. Tanto (2018) finds out that when a speaker of a higher position wants to achieve his purpose,

requests through using bald on-record strategies, and the marker *please* is not often met or used in these kinds of conversations. Similarly, Aribi (2012) in his research notes the fact that *please* as a softener of the situation is not often found when the requester is in a lower social position than the requester. This leads us to a conclusion that most of the students who attend Business English courses in North Macedonia are not aware of politeness in general, how to use it, when to use it in business and professional communication. The reasons could be different, and conclusions can't be drawn easily, but, the lack of explicit methods of teaching the pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences may be listed as a possible cause of this. As NNS, students in this research may not be aware of the differences between their native language and English, and this can be a result of the great focus on grammar and discourse rules of English language as the target language in their prior, or current learning of English which leads learners to pragmatic errors and as a final result, ending in miscommunication (Aribi, 2011).

The little word *please* according to Fraser (1996, as cited in Aijmer, 2009), signals illocutionary force: "[w]hen please occurs before an imperative structure, it signals that the speaker intends the utterance to be taken as a request, and only as a request" (p. 63). Except to the (illocutionary), *please* mark politeness too. Regarding this, Sato (2008) concludes that *please* occurs varying between a directive force and politeness.

Here, we got only 138 responses, out of 256 total number of respondents. There were some very vague answers given such as:

You are a manager of a department in a private company and you are busy working. You need a file that you saved last week but you cannot find it, you want your secretary to look for it. You say:

S1. Can you find the file?

S2. Sarah, can you find the file because I can't.

---

*S1. Could you please look for an X file? I **really** need it*

In all of those answers, there is only one situation of downtoners such as the following:'

---

*S1. Could you please look for an X file? I **really** need it*

Using the preterite form *could*, instead of can, means that the speaker involves a higher degree of politeness (Huschová, 2021; Huddleston and Pullum, 2002,).

In this question, *could* was used way less than *can*, respectively 29 compared to 95 times of *can*, out of the total number of requests.

We mostly come across *could as* consultative devices, and in few cases, we find *would you mind*. There are 24 situations where we find could you such as:

> *S1. Could you please find a file that I saved last week for me?*
>
> *S2. Can you please find me the file that we made last week about the ...*

When can/could as in the two examples above, are directed to a second-person subject, in interrogative structures, they convey indirect requests, which means that the addressee is the responsible person which carries out the action which is beneficial to the speaker (Huschová, 2021).

In the answers, we also see an imperative form, far from politeness content, which is used as in the following example:

> *S1. Help me please!*

Some studies show that when the speaker feels equal to the hearer/requestee, regarding social power, the speaker tends to mix the strategies, even though we could use one specific strategy (Tanto, 2018).

This is what we also came across in some of the answers, as in the example below:

> *S1. Hello. I want you to finish the work to find a file that I saved last week that I can't find, please find this for me. Thnx.*

The student is not aware of the differences between formality and informality. He has written a request that is a combination of a few models if we consider the scale of Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989). He begins with a want statement, "*I want you to*" through which he desires that the hearer will carry out the request. There is also an imperative form of requesting as in *"find for*

me this", even though he thinks that using please will make the request look less than a direct order. Disregarding the grammatical mistakes, the request is completely informal as we see a contraction as *can't* and *thnx,* which must not, by all means be used in a communication that is expected to be formal, between an employer and a secretary.

Regarding the query preparatory as in "*would you mind*" we see this in only three situations such as the examples below:

> S1. *sorry, would you mind to help me find that file, please look it for me*
>
> S2. *Would you mind helping me find the file from last week*
>
> S3. *Sorry to bother you but I couldn't find the file. Would you mind helping me?*

It is important to mention that students have no basic knowledge of the proper form of addressing someone, since the majority of requests did not have an addressee at all. In only two situations, **Mrs***.* was used, as below:

> S1. *Mrs. Ana, can you come in please?*
>
> S2. *Dear secretary, I need a file that I saved last week. I can't find it. I beg you to look for that if you find it for me .*
>
> S3. *Mrs. Smith, would you be able to come to my office and help me find a file that I obviously host ?*

Obviously, only in the last example the **Mrs**. is properly used, whereas in the first one we see how students are not able to address people formally.

After analyzing these responses in this specific request towards a secretary, something else is noticed regarding gender perceptions.

In the first request, where students are expected to talk to their supervisor, there is not a single case where they are addressing a woman. Most of the requests are without addressing anyone, but in the examples where there is an addressee, we come across the term **sir** very often as in the examples below:

> S1. *Mr. __, I have to tell you that I haven't finished the project bid for this reason __... Would you extend the time for submitting a little more please?*
>
> S2. *Sir, can you give me extra time to finish this?*

> *S3. Sir, I have not finished my project . Is it possible for me to stay overtime?*
>
> *S4. Dear sir, I am writing to ask for more time...*

While in the second group of *request*, addressed to a secretary, similarly, in most answers there is no addressee, but, when there is, the addressee is female as in the examples below:

> *S1. Jessica, could you please find me.... I checked... but I can't seem to find it anywhere. Thank you*
>
> *S2. Excuse me Ana, but I have an issue with finding the file about Grouper I have saved last week. Can you please help me find it?*
>
> *S3. Angela, I've been looking for this file but I can't find it. Can you please help me?*
>
> *S4. Sarah, can you find the file because I can't.*

These answers with female names show how our students still have gender discrimination regarding the business positions, since they don't see a woman to be their supervisor, as much as a man to be their secretary. Unfortunately, this can't help us draw conclusions but this could be a result of the culture in our country, as well as the content in the textbooks used for Business English. Even though studies show that the content in Business English textbooks have improved regarding gender inequality, we see that it will need some more time in the change of people's perceptions regarding the roles of women and men in the business world.

In the experimental part of the study, which was done after a full semester, students of the experimental group wrote more complete requests. The situation given and their answers are shown below.

> ***Your company has bought a new projector for the conference room. You don't know how to use it yet, but your coworker has already used it several times. You would like your coworker to show it to you how to use the projector during his/her lunch break. How would you ask him to help you?***
>
> *S1. Hi John, it would really help me if you could take some of your time from your lunch break and show me how to use the projector, please?*
>
> *S2. Could you please teach me how to use the new projector?*
>
> *S3. Can you teach me the ropes of using this projector?*
>
> *S4.I know it's lunch time and you are on a break but I would be very happy if you would help me. I don't know how to use the projector. Can you help me with that?*

S5. I'm sorry to bother you while you are eating. I have a presentation later today and I need your help. I can't seem to make that projector work, no matter what I try. I've seen you present a few times and I hoped you could teach me how. Is that OK?

S6. I would like to learn the ropes of using this projector, could you find some time to help me?

Disregarding some mistakes, which have not been analyzed during this research, we can see how requests are clearer after being introduced through explicit methods throughout the whole semester.

Politeness is a constituent of social interaction which can also act as a mediator for establishing rapport and minimizing interpersonal frictions (Alemi, 2013). This is tightly related to culture, and it turns out our students are really not aware of the cultural content in their course, and this is proven by the results where most of them disagreed with the statement *I learned about other cultures through the materials offered.* This answer tells us that they don't know that even greeting, asking or negotiating are also parts of a culture. Maybe this lack of awareness comes from what they understand by culture, as Liddicoat et al. (2003) define culture as the system of values and beliefs as cultural artifacts, but there are also some invisible components such as behavior and speech of people. As earlier said, Weaver (1993) conceptualizes culture as an iceberg with two levels: the visible and invisible one. Participants' answers prove Weaver's iceberg theory. Students are not aware that the books teach them about cultures in so many ways. Doing business nowadays requires more than useful language skills, since it has been opening toward the cultivation of an open attitude to different world's cultures. In order for students to be aware of culture, teachers should choose explicit ways of teaching students about intercultural communication.

Additionally, they were very little or not familiar with idioms, which also is quite an important cultural element, when talking to English or American people, even in the business context. Idioms are used broadly in both British and American business communication as well as in international cooperation. Needless to say, where and when business is conducted in English, and what is important in idioms is that misunderstanding them can sometimes, if not often, lead to quite inconvenient situations between partners in business and that can result in further problems in business deals (Chernenko, 2016). They can't achieve the expected communicative competence at the end, and a reason for this difficulty in communicating in English includes among other issues, actual speech use of idiomatic expressions and slang. From the answers, we see that over 67% stated that they are not familiar with business idioms contrary to 32.4% who have learned

business idioms in English during lectures or exercises. What serves as a proof for this, is the fact that in the following question where they are asked to list one or two examples of idioms, the answers are very disappointing. Only eighteen answers were given, among which only few are idioms, such as:

S1. In the red

S2. Get down to business

S3. In the black

S4. Cut corners

S5. Hands are tied

There were also answers like:

S1. Better late than never

S2. A picture is worth thousand words

The last two are not even idioms, but this tells us that students are not even aware of the difference between a saying and an idiom.

The analysis of the results of the questions that checked students' knowledge of socio-pragmatic aspects show that our students are not able to produce native-like speech after the end of their Business English course. They are unaware of the differences between native language and English, in conveying a message during the pragmatic transfer, which not rarely results in misunderstandings between the participants, and can also often cause serious breakdowns in communication. Lack of pragmatics in the EFL classroom in general, especially in ESP, means that there is no real bridge between the language and the culture (Ishihara and Cohen, 2010).

Different countries have different cultures especially when it comes to different ways of doing business, so, communicating should raise particular interest for a cross-cultural study. For instance, American business writing can be more reader-oriented, as well as detailed, and quite often very precise, while the culture of writing in Balkan countries does not necessarily need to be the same with the American one. Mizne (1997) believes that there are different factors behind the

159

hard side of acquiring sociolinguistic competence, but of the main is the large amount of variance in cultural rules of speaking; or in other words, what might be appropriate to say in my culture may be completely inappropriate in another culture, even when the situation is totally the same. However, the learner as a "victim" is often unaware of these differences. So, according to Mizne (1997), the speaker thinks that using the rules of speaking of his native culture in communicating in the foreign language will serve him an environment where he is completely understood.

The lack of cultural components in the classroom can lead students to socio-pragmatic failure. It is quite important to establish an overall sense of culture among students, all this in the target language. However, in a question about students' preferences over the use of the mother tongue in the classroom, we mostly got students who agree with using the mother tongue over English in the class, which does not mean that they don't like English, but, they don't understand everything in English. With these results, we see that the teacher, who is expected to achieve certain goals at the end, has an obstacle which cannot be overcome easily. So, we come in line with what other studies have shown, where conclusions are that cultural content is hard to be taught in the classroom, especially in classes where students have limited language proficiency (Mizne, 1997). Proficiency is a decisive factor in developing pragmatic competence in EFL (Röver's, 2001), it also helps EFL learners respond better than native-speakers of English (Cunningham, 2014).

As we know, ESP is usually designed for adult learners, at a tertiary level institution, and in a professional organization. This, in other words, means that ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. In order to know which students belong in which level, we must test them. Unfortunately, out of all the Universities who were involved in the survey, only South East European University has a level exam for all the students, and this makes it easier for the teachers to achieve the objectives. All of the other universities, teach Business English in our case, for all students enrolled in the economics or Business faculty, without knowing in advance what level do students belong in. The fact of not knowing the level of the students limits the teachers in a few points. One, is that they don't know what book to use. If they have a major group of students who are in elementary school, teachers face obstacles because Business English is hardly taught to elementary proficiency level students. If in the same group, they have students who are Intermediate, or Upper Intermediate, they will never be able to help them get better with their English, with books that they have chosen to use. In this case, what happens at most of our

universities, in North Macedonia, in non-leveled Business English classrooms, is that students who have little knowledge of English, are not taught what they can understand. Furthermore, the intermediate students, who expect to enrich their knowledge of English at the end of the term, end up staying where they are, not learning anything new, in a classroom where there are mates who speak English very little. The teachers cannot find the golden mean, and not only demotivate the students at the end, but themself too, by not achieving improvement in their students at the end of the term.

And in our case, results showed that unfortunately, most students do not speak English at the required level to be able to develop sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. A very high percentage of students, 65.88%, statistically significant result, showed that students who participated in the survey are aware that Business English requires a higher level of proficiency than what they have. So, they see that for the material that is offered to them, they do not possess the knowledge that is required. V. K. Nguyen (2015) finds out that previous courses of General English fail to provide students with the needed background to obtain immediate levels necessary to start ESP courses.

In addition to the fact that they are not previously prepared for this level of information and type of knowledge offered, they end up being unprepared for the future and this is proven by the answers we got from the question *I feel ready to communicate in English in a real business setting in a near future with the materials that have been taught to me?*, where 135 students disagreed. There was a similar question for the teachers, whether they see their students prepared to communicate in English in a real business setting in the future, and their answers were mostly *agree*, which tells us that teachers think that their students are in fact prepared for the future, communicating well in Business settings, contrary to students who are those who possess this knowledge.

It is not good to see that we don't have a compatible opinion by teachers and students regarding this statement. Teachers believe that their students are ready, well-equipped with the right knowledge related to their future job, while the students see themselves not prepared for environments where English will be required to be used professionally, which can lead us to a conclusion that changes should be made in the way these students are taught.

The teachers who took part in our research have divided opinions on the question: *Do you think that the already designed curricula for Business English give space for developing pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences in students?* Only three of them answered **yes**, while 5 of them gave answers which show that the curriculum does not give enough attention to communicative, respectively pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences. Teachers should be involved in curriculum design, in order to give the real direction to objectives and aims of the course they teach, however, their part in the curriculum design requires experience in the course they should teach, and additionally, some other pedagogical qualifications and knowledge.

One of the questions for the teachers was about the class size and its importance on the quality of teaching. It is somehow thought that smaller groups are better in achieving qualitative teaching. It's been quite a challenge to scholars and experts, and teachers too, to provide sufficient evidence which identifies the connection between class size and student achievement (Mulryan-Kyne, 2010, P. 176). There are some problems which have been noted by researchers in other studies such as anonymity and passivity among students when the class size is large. Additionally, poor engagement of students with course content is thought to be an effect of large classes too. Low motivation and low participation level are some of the consequences of being taught in large classes (Biggs, 1999; Carbone & Greenberg, 1998; Ward & Jenkins, 1992).

The results from our survey showed that a large number of students in the room plays a negative role in the participation of the student in the course activities. Amour (2017) drew similar results to ours, in her research about the impact of class size in teaching and learning. According to her, both students and teachers showed that large classes have certain negative effects on teaching and learning. Some of the reasons listed were the feeling of isolation, where students feel like not being recognized in a large group, and this stops them from partaking in the class activities. Whereas for teachers, class size makes the teaching process much harder because assessment is not done properly and not enough time is given to students, or in other words, there is a lack of opportunity to express themselves.

The teachers in this study answered that the groups are approximately 20-25, (in two cases only 100+ in lectures). They claim that the larger the number, the harder the practice. But, amidst the teachers, it becomes harder for students too. We have noticed this with our students too. In groups of 70 or more students in the classroom, one can only communicate with 3-4 students who are willing to participate by reading, answering questions or discussing things that open up during

the class. Being asked about the reason the students usually answer that they feel uncomfortable speaking in front of many people. While when in smaller groups, one can see many more students engaging themselves a lot more than one can expect. However, this is also proven in the answers regarding the statement ***Large groups of students stop me from active participation in class*** where not surprisingly we received feedback that matches what teachers think about large classes. Hence, more than half of the participants agree that they don't feel free to participate in large groups of students. This is related to the factors which students cannot control. From the answers we see that they prefer pair work over individual work, they don't feel secure when answering something in class, they find it hard to reply when the teacher asks them, and feel embarrassment when the teacher asks them something, and are afraid their friends will laugh when they read aloud in the class. Besides embarrassment and insecurity, students face another negative feeling, that of being nervous when they can't understand the teacher, and this is because 50.98 % of them agreed on feeling this way when they are not able to understand what is being talked to them. Nervousness because of not being able to understand the teacher was also the dominant factor in the part of psychological factors in this study. In most English course's syllabuses, objectives of the courses vary but generally they state that students are expected to be fluent and efficient in their oral communication in the target language, or even be prepared to analyze or compare information from different types of sources and form their own ideas with what they have learned " (Huiyin, 2016, p. 83). In line with these results, we can see that in Jiangsu University, China, Guerrero conducted research specifically for the factors which hinder students' participation in the English course, and not surprisingly, we see that lack of prior knowledge, doubts in their speaking and shyness are among the most important factors which hinder students' participation in class. This is proven by other researchers too, such Kim (2006) who sees reluctance in students when they should join class discussions, due to low English language proficiency. Some Students in EFL classes can also show low communicative competence and lack the confidence to communicate orally (Wang, 2010), be anxious in the classroom (Mak, 2011), or fear of making mistakes (Savaşçi, 2014) and all this is attributed to conventional teaching which focuses on the teachers' role (Zhao Y., 2007; Xie, 2010).

Another reason why objectives cannot be easily achieved, along with the reasons analyzed until now, is found in another question from the survey related to the classroom equipment. Students were asked about the equipment in the classrooms where English is taught, and it turned

163

out that classrooms are mostly equipped with LCD projectors, and less with internet connection and computers. This is a major obstacle for teachers who want to use other materials such as videos. Students want to listen to authentic, English audio materials, as they answered in question 2 from the second part of the questionnaire. Teachers can't offer this if there is no relevant equipment in the classroom. Having inauthentic materials does not expose students to practices that are required in their future workplace (Kabilan et al., 2021). In this situation, teachers ask students to read the audio scripts, and they don't get the chance to listen to real conversations, read and spoken by native speakers. Well-equipped classrooms are a must, not a luxury. A classroom where there is no stable internet connection, a computer and an LCD projector, is not the ideal place to teach specific competences, as the pragmatic and sociolinguistic ones. From the results of our survey, it turned out that 59% of students state that video-audio materials are not used in lectures and exercises during studies and 41% claim that such materials are used.

There were also students who did not respond to the material-technical conditions in the classrooms and amphitheaters of the faculty (Computers, LCD projectors and internet connection) namely 11.7 %, contrary to 88.% of them indicating that their amphitheaters and classrooms are mostly equipped with LCD projectors and computers. Something that answers one of the research questions of this research, related to the role of conditions of teaching Business English, is found in this question. There was a statistically significant difference between universities in terms of students' perception of the material and technical conditions for lectures and exercises, in other words students state that private universities have more solid and more complete material-technical conditions as opposed to state universities. Studies show that the role of technology in the process of teaching pragmatics in EFL classes will continue to increase, or as Zhang, Wang and Wannaruk (2019) suggest multimedia resources should be systematically implemented to improve the pragmatics of EFL students.

In the second part of the research, from the results of the students' testing, we saw that there is a difference between the control and experimental group. This, in other words, tells us that even with a small difference, explicit, or direct methods of teaching give better results in teaching the socio-pragmatic competences. The results of the survey, in the first part of the student's questionnaire, helped us show that these students are not taught explicitly, since over 50% of students are not sure whether or not the listed pragmatic and sociolinguistic types of competences are mentioned in the class, where 36% state that they are used and 13.6% that they are not used

during lectures and exercises. Studies show that students prefer explicit methods of teaching, because they want to be aware of the content of the course, and what is more important they feel more prepared for their future profession (Kabilan et al,. 2021). Additionally, through explicit methods they will gain clearer learning goals (Brophy, 2010). Lastly, knowing the outcomes of the lesson, through explicit methods, will have higher motivation for learning (Kabilan et al., 2021).

Awareness-raising and production of different activities related to pragmatic and sociolinguistic competence should be in the focus of foreign language learners. According to Flor and Juan (2006) this kind of activity could be tailor-made for different ESP disciplines, through integrating pragmatics in ESP syllabi. Another way learners can benefit from explicit awareness raising activities is the use of *authentic materials* which deal with specific characteristics of these competences, such as *politeness* (Trabelsi, 2011).

In one of our research questions, we asked if teachers of Business English in Higher Education in North Macedonia have time enough to develop these competences, and from their answers we saw that they need more semesters to teach Business English. Additionally, the statistical analysis shows that students who have attended Business English in more semesters, were more familiar with the competences and answered correctly in the questions of making a request. In other words, first semester students are less familiar with competences than students who have attended BE for a longer time. Additionally, students who have attended Business English in 3 and 4 semesters, mostly agreed on the statement about their preparedness to communicate in the future in a real business setting. Time allocation for ESP courses is listed as a teacher-oriented problem regarding teaching ESP by Le et al. (2016) as they see it insufficient for content knowledge and language skills. Short time allocation, as 1-2 semesters, according to Le et al., (2016) showed that ESP students did not succeed in acquiring general communicative competences such as how to handle meetings, conduct oral presentations or write memorandum reports and prepare technical proposals.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The job market in North Macedonia, as well as the global one, where our students may have interest in becoming part of, require these future employees to be skillful in communication that has been practiced and learned during undergraduate studies. This and all other expectations are reachable through some changes that can be made in the whole process of teaching Business English in higher education. However, this might appear as a big challenge to educators, people working on the curriculum design and even more to teachers who are seen as the most important pillar in this issue.

The main hypothesis of this study is that students fail to develop the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences of Business English courses in higher education in the Republic of North Macedonia. This hypothesis was proven from students' answers in basic socio-pragmatic content such as introductions, requests and lastly by the absolute lack of knowledge about idioms. So, except not knowing the meaning of the terms sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence, they were not able to produce simple speech acts of requests, or introduce themselves in a situation of joining a new company. Additionally, students don't see themselves prepared to communicate in a real business setting, which also helps prove this main hypothesis.

This study did not prove the sub-hypothesis that the teachers fail to develop the socio-linguistic and pragmatic competence because of curricula, because the teachers had separate opinions on this matter, but mostly think that the curriculum gives enough space to these competences.

The second hypothesis that most students do not speak English at the required level to be able to develop sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences was proven because students themselves declared that their level of English is not in the level that is needed in a Business English course. This was also supported strongly by the preference of students to use their mother tongue in the class rather than English, which confirms that most of them struggle to understand what is taught to them in their Business English class.

The results of the study, qualitatively and quantitatively gave answers to the research questions.

- Do professors have conditions, i.e., time, sources, books and enough linguistically competent students to develop sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences?

- What factors are most common among students in North Macedonia in hampering the development of these competences?

- Which methods help in developing the socio-pragmatic competences of students?

Apart from the lack of socio-pragmatic content in the textbooks used in universities in North Macedonia, we saw that the classrooms where Business English is taught, seen during the visit to the Universities which were part of the survey, are not equipped with all that a communicative class requires. In some of the classrooms, there were not even basic conditions for teaching. Some others had LCD projectors, but internet connection was not available in most of these classrooms. These are definitely obstacles which don't help the teacher in the process of teaching, and sometimes decrease the motivation of students to attend the class.

Additionally, sociolinguistic competences are not developed in the BE courses in higher education in North Macedonia because of factors which can be changed and some which can't be changed. Teachers claimed they would prefer having more classes per week, as well as more semesters when BE is taught to students. Teachers don't have technical-material conditions which could help them use all types of exercises in the class, so they are prevented from using the books as they should be used, with authentic audio and video materials. These materials are also preferred by students as they agreed with this statement.

Regarding the factors, the statistical analysis showed that some psychological factors such as embarrassment, insecurity and nervousness affect students' involvement and participation in the BE class, which follows with obstacles for developing socio-pragmatic competences.

The results showed that class size had a negative impact on teachers' jobs, and students' performance too. Based on other studies, and the results of this study, class size does play a role in decreasing students' participation in the class. This, sometimes, as proved in this study, turns out to cause fear, anxiety and insecurity in active participation, and this could lead to poorer results at the end of the semester.

Lastly, the fourth research question about the methods which help the process of the development of these competences in the BE class in North Macedonia, is answered through the experimental part of the research. Exposing students to sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences through explicit teaching methods, showed statistically significant differences between the control and experimental group. There were improvements in the performance of students both in acquiring idioms and performing a polite request. There is a difference whether teachers teach

these competences through explicit teaching. This means that regarding the pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences, which are harder to be learned and acquired, teachers should use every possible chance of explicit method of teaching if they want better results. Students can rarely learn these competences if they are taught implicitly. Teachers don't talk to their students about the importance of these competences, so students are not aware of the importance of becoming competent in a socio-pragmatic context. Results showed that students think that they know what communicative competences are, but it turned out that they don't. Additionally, they think they don't learn about culture from the materials used in the course. Teachers answered that their students do not need to be aware of pragmatic and sociolinguistics competences because they are majoring in Business, which leads us to a conclusion that not enough attention is given to these competences in the class.

The results illustrated that students who partook in the study preferred conventional indirect strategies, such as query preparatory, for expressing requests in English. Also, the number of expressions is limited. These results show that students should be more exposed to various situations, in order to have a richer knowledge on speech acts.

The study results showed that students are not able to learn or improve when groups are not divided based on language proficiency. The students who have little or no knowledge become even more anxious, and lose all of the chances to learn something. Same as them, the students who possess good knowledge of English from their prior education, find classes boring and lose interest to engage themselves in the process of learning Business English. The teacher finds himself in a very demotivating situation, where he can't find a golden means to teach the elementary level students, without leaving behind the high-level students.

Also, the time students are exposed to Business English is not enough. They are taught Business English 2 semesters mostly, in a few universities up to 4 semesters. There is no university which offers Business English courses at all 6, respectively 8 semesters, depending on the type of programs.

Recommendations

Based on the outcomes and results of the survey, it is evident that it is important for every university to test students when they enroll, and after that divide them in groups based on their proficiency level of English. That would help students of elementary level take smaller steps that

will help them grow better in business communication in English, while the intermediate or even upper intermediate students could reach a much higher potential and develop their sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences.

The instruction should mostly be explicit. Even with a very slight difference, the results showed improvement in students' performance after explicit instruction for a length of one semester on certain parts of socio-pragmatic competence.

Additionally, the classrooms where English is taught should be fully equipped with Internet, computers and projectors. In a classroom where there are no these kinds of conditions, a teacher cannot play audios or other authentic materials, cannot use extra materials from the internet, and this affects the expected outcomes of the course. Technology plays an important role in teaching languages generally, especially when it comes to ESP, Business English respectively. Teachers can include materials that could be really helpful in teaching socio-pragmatic competence to students.

The length of time that these students are exposed to Business English as a course is also important. It would be good for Business Schools to have mandatory four to six-semester long courses of Business English, if we expect these students to become communicatively competent and ready to be engaged in their job after graduation. Also, certain pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences are taught only at intermediate, upper intermediate and advanced levels. Because of this, it would be naïve for us to expect that our students in 2 or 4 semesters, with little or no proficiency previously gained in their high school education, are ready for business communication in real work environments.

In order to facilitate the teaching and learning process, groups should be smaller. The number of students in the classroom would give teachers a hand in developing socio-pragmatic competences, through having more time for each student. When the students are less in number in the classroom, they will not feel as they expressed in the second part of the survey. They would participate actively in the classroom, have less fear of speaking in the class, and most probably feel less embarrassment when being asked to talk in front of other students.

In future studies it would be better and more helpful to include a larger number of participants, both learners and teachers. Instead of trying explicit methods for only a semester, as in this research, the research could last longer, two or more semesters, in order to see the real

impact of explicit methods of teaching Business English, in order to develop communicative competence, with the focus on pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences.

VII. REFERENCES

Abdullah G.M. A (2009). Developments of ESP and its Current Implementation. Indian Linguistics Journal, Vol.70 No. 1-4 2009.

Abrudan324, C. L., & Horea325, I. C. (2018). TECHNOLOGY–THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN BUSINESS ENGLISH CLASSES. *Recent Advances in Information Technology, Tourism, Economics, Management and Agriculture*, 959.

Ahmed, M. K. (2014). The ESP teacher: Issues, tasks and challenges. *English for specific purposes world*, *42*(15), 1-33.

Alemi, M., & Razzaghi, S. (2013). Politeness markers in English for business purposes textbook. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, *2*(4), 109-123.

Al-Hessa, S. A. (2014). *The Use of Modal Verbs in Permission, Offer, Obligation, and Possibility by English Ba Major Students at Middle East University* (thesis). Amman. Retrieved from https://meu.edu.jo/libraryTheses/5870cd56caeab_1.pdf.

Allami, H. and Naeimi. A. (2011) A cross-linguistic study of refusals: An analysis of pragmatic competence development in Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Pragmatics,*No.43, 385-406.

Alptekin, C. (2002) Towards intercultural communicative competence in ELT. ELT Journal, 56(1), pp.57-64.

Aoumeur, H. (2017). The Impact of Class Size on Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language: The Case of the Department of English at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University. Arab World English Journal, 8 (2). DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol8no2.25

Aribi, I. (2012). A socio-pragmatic study of the use of requests in English by Tunisian EFL learners. *Journal of Second Language Teaching & Research*, *2*(1), 87-120.

ARNÓ–MACIÀ, Elisabet (2012). The role of technology in teaching languages for specific purposes courses. *The modern language journal*, *96*, 89-104.

Austin, J. L. (1962). How to do things with words. Oxford: Clarendon Press

Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1989). The construct validation of self-ratings of communicative language ability. *Language testing*, *6*(1), 14-29.

Bahumaid, S. (2008). TEFL materials evaluation: A teacher's perspective. *Poznań Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, *44*(4), 423-432.

Balconi, M. and Amenta,S. (2010) From Pragmatics to Neuropragmatics. Neuropsychology of Communication, published by Michel Balconi, Springer.

Bataineh, A. (2017). Analysis of gender representation in pre-intermediate Market leader: Business English practice file. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 7(2), 50-55. Retrieved from https://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_7_No_2_February_2017/7.pdf

Baugh, A. (1993). A history of the English language. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall

Bereczky, K. (2008). The identity of the business English teacher: A pilot study. *UPRT 2008: Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics Edited by Réka Lugossy, József Horváth and Marianne Nikolov*, 83.

Berger, A. A. (2018). *Media and communication research methods: An introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Sage Publications.

Bialystok, E. (1993) Symbolic representation and attentional control in pragmatic competence. In Kasper, G., & Blum-Kulka, S. (Eds.) Interlanguage Pragmatics (pp. 43-57). Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Biggs, J. (1999). Teaching for Quality Learning at University: What the Student Does. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Blum-Kulka, S. 1982. 'Learning to say what you mean in a second language: a study of the speech act performance of Hebrew second language learners'. Applied Linguistics HI/1:29-59.

Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and apologies: A cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns (CCSARP). *Applied linguistics*, *5*(3), 196-213.

Bocanegra-Valle, A. (2010). Evaluating and designing materials for the ESP classroom. In M. F. Ruiz-Garrido, J. C. Palmer-Silveira, & I. Fortanet-Gomez (Eds.), English for professional and academic purposes (pp.143-65). Amsterdam: Rodopi B. V

Bojović, M. D. (2013). Značaj i razvoj komunikativne jezičke sposobnosti studenata u učenju engleskog jezika kao jezika struke. *Универзитет у Београду*.

Brophy, J. (2010). Motivating students to learn – third edition. New York: Routledge

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1978). Universals in language use: Politeness phenomena. In E. Goody (Ed.), Questions and Politeness (pp. 56–310). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Brubæk, S. (2013). Pragmatic Competence in the EFL Classroom: An investigation of the level of pragmatic competence among Norwegian EFL students at the VG1 level. Retrieved 2013-10-17 from: https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/36653/MASTERx-xhelexoppgavenxx7xmarsx2013.pdf?sequence=1

Calfee, R. (1981). Chapter 1: Cognitive psychology and educational practice. *Review of research in education*, *9*(1), 3-73.

Campbell, R., & Wales, R. (1970) The study of language acquisition. New Horizons in Linguistics, pp.242-260.

Canale, M. (1983). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. W. (Eds.), Language and Communication, 2-27. London: Longman.

Canale, M. (1988) The measurement of communicative competence. Annual review of *applied linguistics,*No.8, 67-84.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980) Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. Applied Linguistics, 1(1), pp.1-47.

Carbone, E., & Greenberg, J. (1998). Teaching large classes: Unpacking the problem and responding creatively. *To improve the academy*, *17*(1), 311-326.

Čepon, S. Textbook evaluation as an essential part of BE teachers' professional competence. *Las nuevas tendencias de las lenguas de especialidad en un contexto internacional y multicultural.* 2004

Chambers, F.(1997). Seeking consensus in course-book evaluation. ELT Journal. 51(1), 27-54

Chernenko, S. O. (2016). THE ROLE OF ENGLISH BUSINESS IDIOMS IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION. *М34 Матеріали II міжнародної науково-практичної конференції «Міжнародне*

співробітництво для локального розвитку».–Вінниця: ТОВ «Нілан-ЛТД», 2016.–230 с., 175.

Chomsky,N. (1966) Topics in the Theory of Generative Grammar. In Current Trends in Linguistics 3: Theoretical Foundations, edited by T. Sebeok, pp.1-60. Mouton, The Hague.

Choraih, M. A., Loutfi, A., & Mansoor, A. (2016). The importance of pragmatic competence in the EFL curriculum: Application and implications. In *Arab World English Journal, December 2016 ASELS Annual Conference Proceedings.*

Chunmei, Y. (2017). Realization of textual cohesion and coherence in business letters through presupposition. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *4*(2), 1–5. https://doi.org/10.14445/23942703/ijhss-v4i2p101

Cotton, D., Falvey, D., & Kent, S. (2001). Market leader: Intermediate business English. Pearson Education Limited.

Coupland, N. and Jaworsky,A. (1997) Sociolinguistics, St Matin's Press, NY

Crookall, D., & Oxford, R. (1991). Dealing with anxiety: Some practical activities for language learners and teacher trainees. *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications*, 141-150.

Crystal, D. (1997) A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics. 4th edition. Cambridge, Blackwell, MA.

Cunningsworth, A. (1984) Evaluating and Selecting ELT, London: Heinemann.

Cunningsworth, A. (1995) Choosing your Textbook, Oxford: Heinemann.

Cunningham, D. J. (2014). *The development of pragmatic competence through telecollaboration: An analysis of requesting behavior* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas).

Darmach, A. (2009) Politeness Phenomena as a Source of Pragmatic Failure in English as a Second Language. Universitas Mulawarman, Balikpapan.

Daskalovska, N., Ivanovska, B., Kusevska, M., & Ulanska, T. (2016). The use of request strategies by EFL Learners. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *232*, 55-61.

Diepenbroek, L. G., & Derwing, T. M. (2013). To what extent do popular ESL textbooks incorporate oral fluency and pragmatic development. TESL Canada Journal, 30(7), 1-20. https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v30i7.1149

Divéki, R. (2018). *Teachers' attitudes towards dealing with controversial issues in the EFL classroom: A pilot study* (Vol. 12, pp. 27-54). Working Papers in Language Pedagogy.

Dixon, G. Preparing ESL Business Students for the Cross-Cultural World. *Busyteacher.* https://busyteacher.org/23783-prepare-esl-business-students-multicultural.html

Dos Santos, L. M. (2020). The Discussion of Communicative Language Teaching Approach in Language Classrooms. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, *7*(2), 104-109.

Dudley-Evans, T. and M.J. St John (1998) Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A Multidisciplinary Approach, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Echeverria Castillo, R.E. (2009). The Role of Pragmatics in Second Language Teaching. AYMAT Individual Thesis/SMAT IPP Collection. Paper 479.

Eden, S. (1984). Evaluation of Learning Material. *Internationale Schulbuchforschung*, *6*(3/4), 283–291. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43055436

Ellis, M., & Johnson, C. (2000). Teaching Business English. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Ellis, R. (1997). The empirical evaluation of language teaching materials. *ELT journal*, *51*(1), 36-42.

Ellis, R. (1998) The evaluation of communicative tasks. In Tomlinson, B. (ed) Materials Development in Language

Evans, D., & Popova, A. (2014, April 28). Do you agree or disagree? How to ask the question. Retrieved March 26, 2022, from https://blogs.worldbank.org/impactevaluations/do-you-agree-or-disagree-how-ask-question.

Farani, Y., & Yustisia, K. K. (2019). Using Texts and Videos to Integratedly Teach Culture through Business English Of ESP 1 Subject. *Office Administration*, *2*, 5.

FRASER, SUSAN, MARGARET (2010) t Courses, Dierent Outcomes?' A comparative study of Communicative Competence in English Language learners following `Academic' and `International Understanding' courses at High Schools in Japan , Durham

Furkó, B. P., & Mónos, K. (2013). The teachability of communicative competence and the acquisition of pragmatic markers–a case study of some widely-used Business English coursebooks. *Argumentum*, *9*, 132-148.

Garcia, P. (2004) Meaning in academic contexts: A corpus-based study of pragmatic utterances. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northern Arizona University.

Gass, S., (1997) Input, Interaction and the Second Language Learner. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., Mahwah, New Jersey.

Gray, J. (2002). The global coursebook in English Language Teaching. In Block, D. and Cameron, D. (eds), Globalization and Language Teaching. London: Routledge, pp. 151-167.

Guerrero, S. E. (2019). Hindering Factors That Prevent College English Students from Participating in Class Discussions: A Case at Jiangsu University, China. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, *8*(2), 62-70.

Hall, J. K., & Pekarek Doehler, S. (2011) L2 interactional competence and development. In J. K. Hall, J. Hellermann, & S. K. Doehler (Eds.), L2 interactional competence and development (pp. 1-18), Multilingual Matters, Bristol, UK.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1979) 'Modes of meaning and modes of expression: types of grammatical structure and their determination by different semantic functions'. In D. J. Allerton et al. (eds) Function and Context in Linguistic Analysis. Cambridge University Press, 57–79.

Herraiz-Martinez, A. (2018). Technology and task-based language teaching (TBLT): Exploring pragmatics. *International Journal of Education and Development using ICT*, *14*(2).

Hewings, M. (2002). A history of ESP through English For Specific Purposes, English for Specific Purposes World (a Web-based journal), http://www.esp-world.info/Articles_3/Hewings_paper.htm (12-22-02).

Holmes, J., & Stubbe, M. (2015). *Power and politeness in the workplace: A sociolinguistic analysis of talk at work*. Routledge.

Howatt, A., & Widdowson, H. G. (2004). A history of English language teaching (2nd ed.). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press

Huddleston, R. and Pullum, G., 2002. The Cambridge grammar of the English language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Hudson, R. (1988) Sociolinuistics, OUP

Huiyin, L. (2016). On Guidelines for College English Teaching and Challenges for College English Teachers. English Language Teaching, 9(1), 77-87. http://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n1p77

Huschová, P. (2021). Modalized speech acts in a spoken learner corpus: The case of can and could. *Topics in Linguistics*, *22*(1).

Hutchinson, T. and A. Waters (1987) English for Specific Purposes. A Learning

Hutchinson, T., & Torres, E. (1994). The textbook as an agent of change.

Hymes, D. H. (1972) On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride, & J. Holmes (Eds.), Sociolinguistics: Selected readings (pp. 269-293). Penguin,Harmondsworth.

Ishihara, N., & Cohen, A. D. (2014). *Teaching and learning pragmatics: Where language and culture meet*. Routledge.

Izumi, K. (1996) Teaching sociolinguistic knowledge in Japanese high schools. JALT Journal, 18(2), pp.327-340.

Jakupčević, E., & Ćavar Portolan, M. (2021). An analysis of pragmatic content in EFL textbooks for young learners in Croatia. *Language Teaching Research*, 1362168820986936.

JEONG, K. O. (2018). DEVELOPING EFL LEARNERS'COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH MULTIMEDIA-ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING. *Journal of Theoretical & Applied Information Technology*, *96*(5).

Kabilan, M. K., Ahmad, N., & Abidin, M. J. Z. (2010). Facebook: An online environment for learning of English in institutions of higher education?. *The Internet and higher education*, *13*(4), 179-187.

Kanagy, R., and Igarashi, K. (1997) Acquisition of pragmatics competence in a Japanese immersion kindergarten. In Bouton, L., (Eds.). Pragmatics and language learning, monograph series vol. 8, pp.243-265. Urbana-Champaign: Division of English as an international language, University of Illinois, Urbana-Campaign.

Kankaanranta, A., & Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2007). Business communication in BELF. *Business Communication Quarterly*, *70*(1), 55-59.

Kankaanranta, A., & Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2010). "English?–Oh, it's just work!": A study of BELF users' perceptions. *English for Specific Purposes*, *29*(3), 204-209.

Kankaanranta, A., & Planken, B. (2010). BELF competence as business knowledge of internationally operating business professionals. *The Journal of Business Communication (1973)*, *47*(4), 380-407.

Kankaanranta, M., & Salminen, L. L. (2013). " What language does global business speak?"-The concept and development of BELF. *Ibérica: Revista de la Asociación Europea de Lenguas para Fines Específicos (AELFE)*, (26), 17-34.

Kasper, G. (1996) Interlanguage pragmatics in SLA. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, No. 18, 145-148.

Kasper, G., and Rose, K. (2002) Pragmatic Development in a Second Language. Blackwell Publishing, Inc

Kasper, G., and Schmidt, R. (1996) Developmental issues in interlanguage pragmatics. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, Vol.18, 149-169.

Kelly, E. (2003). PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND FAILURE IN THE JAPANESE UNIVERSITY EFL CLASSROOM.

Kennedy, P. (2002). Learning cultures and learning styles: Myth-understandings about adult (Hong Kong) Chinese learners. International Journal of Lifelong Education, 21(5), 430-445.Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370210156745.

Kim, S. (2006). Academic oral communication needs of East Asian international graduate students in non-science and non-engineering fields. English for Specific Purposes, 25(4), 479-489. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2005.10.001

Klimovienė, G., Barzdžiukienė, R., & Račkauskaitė, N. (2016). Developing Students' Communicative Competence in Business English. *Studies About Languages*, (28), 102-113.

Koran, Elvira. "Developing Sociolinguistic and Pragmatic Competences in English as Foreign Language (EFL) Students at University Language Schools (Iraqi Case)." *International Black Sea University*, 2016.

Kramsch, C. (2014) Teaching foreign languages in an era of globalization: Introduction. *The Modern Language Journal,* No.98,pp.296–311.

Kramsch, C. (2014), Teaching foreign languages in an era of globalization: Introduction. The Modern Language Journal, 98: 296–311.

Latha, V. G., & Rajan, P. (2012). Non-native Student's Communication is Affected Due to the Lack of Pragmatic Competence. English Language Teaching, 5(2), p50.

Latif, H. (2001). A Sociopragmatic Study of EFL Moroccan Learners' Requests. Unpublished DESA dissertation, Faculty of Education. Mohamed V, Souissi, Rabat

Le, L. P. (2017). *Aligning specialist English language curriculum in higher education with development imperatives and workplace communication needs in Vietnam: A case study of the Vietnamese petroleum industry* (Doctoral dissertation, Queensland University of Technology).

Leech, G., 2014. The pragmatics of politeness. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Leech, Geoffrey. Principles of Pragmatics. London: Longman, 1983.

Li, F. P., & Lei, D. (2021). Cultivation of Intercultural Communication Competence for Business English Majors. Open Journal of Business and Management, 9, 752-760.

Liddicoat, A. J., Papademetre, L., Scarino, A., & Kohler, M. (2003). Report on Intercultural Language Learning. Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Training.

Littlejohn, A. 2011. 'The analysis of language teaching materials: inside the Trojan Horse. In Tomlinson, B. (Ed.) Materials Development in Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pages 179-211

López-Barrios, M., & Debat, E.V. (2014). Global vs. Local: Does It Matter?

Loukianenko, M. (2004). *The cross-cultural component in teaching business English to native Russian speakers* (Doctoral dissertation, Iowa State University Digital Repository).

Luis Miguel Dos Santos (2020). The Discussion of Communicative Language Teaching Approach in Language Classrooms. Journal of Education and e-Learning Research, 7(2): 104-109.

Lynch, B. K. (1996) Language Program Evaluation: Theory and Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

MacDonald, M. A Review of the Pearson Longman Market Leader New Edition For use in a Business English Conversation Course.

Martínez-Flor, A., & Usó-Juan, E. (2006). Learners' use of request modifiers across two University ESP disciplines. *Ibérica, Revista de la Asociación Europea de Lenguas para Fines Específicos*, (12), 23-41.

Master, P. (2000). The future of ESP. In Master, P. (Ed.)Responses to ESP (pp. 23-26). Washington DC: US State Department

Matola, M. M. (1993). *The sociolinguistic competence in English of first-year students at Vista University (Soweto)* (Doctoral dissertation, North-West University (South Africa), Vaal Triangle Campus).

Mauranen, A. (2006). "Signaling and preventing misunderstanding in ELF communication". International Journal of the Sociology of Language 177:123-150.

McCarthy, M. (1998) Spoken Language and Applied Linguistics. Cambridge University Press.

McConachy, T., & Hata, K. (2013). Addressing textbook representations of pragmatics and culture. *ELT journal*, *67*(3), 294-301.

McDonough, J. and Shaw, C. (1993), Materials and Methods in ELT, Oxford: Blackwell.

McDonough, J., & Shaw, C. (2003). Materials and methods in ELT (2nd ed.).UK: Blackwell

McGrath, I. (2002). Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching. Edinburgh Edinburgh University Press.

Mede,E. and Dikilitas,K. (2015) Teaching and Learning Sociolinguistic Competence:Teacher's Critical Perceptions, *Participatory Educational Research,* Vol.2(3), pp.14-31

Mizne, C. A. (1997). Teaching sociolinguistic competence in the ESL classroom. Senior Thesis Projects, 1993-2002. http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_interstp2/20

Moattarian, A., & Tahririan, M. H. (2014). Language needs of graduate students and ESP courses: The case of tourism management in Iran. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics*, *5*(2), 4-22.

Monica-Ariana, S., & Anamaria-Mirabela, P. (2015). Idioms in business communication. *THE ANNALS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ORADEA*, 172.

Mugford,G. (1999) Sociolinguistic Competence in Foreign Language Teaching: The Secrets behind Language Grammar. Sociolinguistics applied to the Language

Class, taught by Dr. Gerrard Mugford, University of Guadalajara, School of Modern Foreign Languages.

Mulryan-Kyne, C. (2010). Teaching Large Classes at College and University Level: Challenges and Opportunities. Teaching in Higher Education,15,(2), 175 – 185

Nalebuff, B. and A. Brandenburger (2000) Competitive and cooperative business. Harper Collins, New York.

Nešić, I. (2018). Razvoj komunikativnih kompetencija u nastavi poslovnog engleskog jezika u visokom obrazovanju. *Универзитет у Крагујевцу*.

Nguyen, V. K. (2015). Towards improving ESP teaching/learning in Vietnam's higher education institutions: Integrating project-based learning into ESP courses. References 248 International Journal of Languages, Literature and Linguistics, 1(4). Retrieved from http://www.ijlll.org/vol1/44-CL00006.pdf

Nore, G. (1990). Peer tutoring in vocational literacy skills.

Núñez Pardo, A. (2019). A Critical Reflection on Developing and Implementing In-house EFL Textbooks. *PAPELES*, *11*(21), 11-31. https://doi.org/10.54104/papeles.v11n21.581

O'Keeffe, A., Clancy, B., & Adolphs, S. (2019). *Introducing pragmatics in use*. Routledge.

Ohta, A. (2001) A longitudinal study of the development of expression of alignment in Japanese as a foreign language. In Kasper, G., & Rose, K. (Eds.). Pragmatics and language teaching, (pp.103-120). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Olshtain, E., & Cohen, A. (1990). The learning of complex speech act behaviour. *TESL Canada journal*, 45-65.

Oweis, T. (2013). A literature review on communication strategies in language learning. *European scientific journal*, *9*(26).

Pallotti, G. (2010) Doing interlanguage analysis in school contexts. In I. Bartning, M. Martin, & I. Vedder (Eds.), Communicative proficiency and linguistic development: intersections between SLA and language testing research (Vol. 1, pp. 159-190). Eurosla. Retrieved from http://eurosla.org/monographs/EMhome.html

Patel. M. F., & Jain, P. M. (2008). English language teaching: Methods, tools, and techniques. Jaipur: Sunrise Publishers & Distributors.

Phỉ, T. T. T., Nga, T. L. P., Đào, T. T. T. A., & Thắng, T. H. M. EVALUATION OF THE COURSE BOOK MARKET LEADER-ELEMENTARY.

Pikhart, M., & Koblizkova, A. (2017). The Central Role of Politeness in Business Communication: The Appropriateness Principle as the Way to Enhance Business Communication Efficiency. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, (45).

Prodromou, L. (1988). English as cultural action. *ELT journal*, *42*(2), 73-83.

Radovic Markovic, M., & Salamzadeh, A. (2018). The importance of communication in business management. In *Radovic Markovic, M., & Salamzadeh, A.(2018). The Importance of Communication in Business Management, The 7th International Scientific Conference on Employment, Education and Entrepreneurship, Belgrade, Serbia*.

Radyuk, A. V., & Pankova, V. Yu. (2017). Developing Business English skills using case studies in the framework of multilevel education. Training, Language and Culture, 1(3), 30-38. doi: 10.29366/2017tlc.1.3.2

Razmjoo, S. A. (2007). High schools or private institutes coursebooks? Which fulfill communicative language teaching principles in the Iranian context? Asian EFL Journal, 9(4).

Rea-Dickens, P. & Germaine, K. (1994) Evaluation. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Regina, E., & Chinwe, U. V. (2014). Strategies for developing communicative competence in English as a second language (ESL) situation. *World Journal of Management and Behavioral Studies*, *2*(3), 74-79.

Ren, W., & Han, Z. (2016). The representation of pragmatic knowledge in recent ELT textbooks. ELT Journal, 70(4), 424–434.

Richards, J. C., J. Platt, and H. Weber (1985). Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics. Harlow: Longman.

Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J.C. (2012, May). Global ESL Coursebooks Issues & Options. Seminar on English Language Curriculum (ELC) presented at the meeting of ICSA, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran.

Ritchie, M. (2011). Developing sociolinguistic competence through intercultural online exchange. In S. Thouësny & L. Bradley (Eds.), Second language teaching and learning with technology: views of emergent researchers (pp. 123-141). Dublin: Research-publishing.net.

ROMANOWSKI, P. (2016). Business English course books–why and how to evaluate them?. *Alkalmazott Nyelvtudomány, XVI. évfolyam, University of Warsaw Poland*.

Rose, K. R. & Ng, C. (2001). Inductive and Deductive Teaching of Compliments and Compliment Responses. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (eds.), Pragmatics in Language Teaching (pp. 145-70). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

ROULET, E. 1979. Linguistic Theory, Linguistic Description and Language Teaching. London: Longman.

Röver, C. (2001). A web-based test of interlanguage pragmalinguistic knowledge: Speech acts, routines, implicatures. Dissertation Abstracts International, 62.

Rueda, Y.T. (2006). Developing Pragmatic Competence in a Foreign Language in Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal (8) pp. 172-182

Salam,A., Khalek,A., and El-Koumy.E. (2004) Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language: A Comprehensive Approach. Suez Canal University, Egypt.

Sato, Shie (2008) 'Use of 'please' in American and New Zealand English'. - RXUQDORI3UDJPDWLFV 40, 1249–1278

Savaşçi, M. (2014). Why are some students reluctant to use L2 in EFL speaking classes? An action research at tertiary level. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 116, 2682-2686. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.635

Savignon, S. J. (1983). *Communicative competence: Theory and classroom practice : texts and contexts in second language learning*. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.

Savignon, S. J. (2002) Communicative language teaching: Linguistic theory and classroom practice. In Interpreting communicative language teaching: Contexts and concerns in teacher education. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut.

Savignon, S. J., & Berns, M. S. (1983). Communicative Language Teaching: Where Are We Going?. *Studies in Language Learning*, *4*(2), n2.

Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), Cognition and second language instruction (pp. 3-32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Seidlhofer, B. (2011). Conceptualizing 'English' for a multilingual Europe. *English in Europe today: Sociocultural and educational perspectives*, 133-146

Sheldon, L. E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT journal*, *42*(4), 237-246.

Solouki, H. (2019). Pragmatically-oriented input in business English textbooks: The case of speech act realization. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, *9*, 46–57. https://doi.org/10.32038/ltrq.2019.09.04

Spolsky, B. (1998). *Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stavans, A., & Webman Shafran, R. (2018). The pragmatics of requests and refusals in multilingual settings. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, *15*(2), 149-168.

Sturgis, P., Roberts, C., & Smith, P. (2012). *Middle Alternatives Revisited. Sociological Methods & Research, 43(1), 15–38.* doi:10.1177/0049124112452527

Sugar, M. I. ANALYSES OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCES IN THE ELT TEXTBOOKS IN A2 LEVEL ACCORDING TO THE CEFR.

Sutherland T.M. (1976) The Lecture Method. NACAT Journal. 1976 pp. 29-33

Swales, J. (1985). *Episodes in ESP: A source and reference book on the development of English for science and technology* (Vol. 1). Pergamon.

Taguchi, N. (2009) Pragmatic competence in Japanese as a second language: An introduction. In N. Taguchi (Ed.), Pragmatic competence, 1-18, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.

Takahashi, S. (2001). The Role of Input Enhancement in Developing Pragmatic Competence. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (eds.), Pragmatics in Language Teaching (pp. 200–22). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Takala, S. (1983). Contextual Considerations in Communicative Language Teaching.

Takala, S., (1980), "New Orientations in Foreign Language Syllabus Construction and Language Planning: A Case Study of Finland." Institute for Educational Research, University of Jyvgskylg, Bulletin No. 155. (Also in ERIC ED 218 925.)

Tamah Sherman and Jiří Nekvapil Sociolinguistic perspectives on English in business and commerce

Tarvin, L.D. (2014) Communicative Competence: Its Definition to Teaching and Relationship with Interactional Competence. University of Missouri.

Thi, P. D. H. (2019). Vietnamese teachers' perceptions of integrating intercultural communicative competence (ICC) into business English teaching. *ThaiTESOL Journal*, *32*(2), 17-31.

Thomas,J. (1983) Intercultural Pragmatic Failure. in Key Concepts in Linguistics, Volume 4, edited by Kingsley Bolton and Bry B. Kachru.

Tomlinson, B. (1998b). Comments on Part B. In Tomlinson, B. (ed.), pp. 146-148.

Tomlinson, Brian (2011). Material development in Language Teaching (2nd Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Trabelsi, L. B. N. (2011). *Importance of management of competence in improving organization's competitiveness case of Tunisia* (Doctoral dissertation, KDI School).

Trang, M. P. T. H. ANALYSING & EVALUATING READING ACTIVITIES OF THE TEXTBOOK MARKET LEADER & SUGGESTING FOR IMPROVEMENTS. *HỘI THẢO*, 57.

Trinder, R. (2009). The potential of blended learning environments in terms of beneficial language learning conditions. In I. Gonzalez-Pueyo, C. Foz, ´ M. Jaime, & M. J. Luzon (Eds.), ´ Teaching academic and professional English online (pp. 35–56). Bern, Switzerland: Lang

Tulgar, A. (2016). The role of pragmatic competence in foreign language education. *Turkish Online Journal of English Language Teaching* (TOJELT), 1(1), 10–19

Vasiljevic, Z. (2011). The Predictive Evaluation of Language Learning Tasks. *English language teaching*, *4*(1), 3-10.

Vázquez-Amador, M., & Lario-de-Oñate, C. (2022). The role of women in Business English textbooks (1970s-2010s). *ESP Today*, *10*(1), 145–168. https://doi.org/10.18485/esptoday.2022.10.1.7

Vellenga, H. (2004). Learning Pragmatics from ESL & EFL Textbooks: How Likely? TESL-EJ, 8(2). http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume8/ej30/ej30a3/

Wardhaugh, R. (1999). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics/Ronald Wardhaugh.–.

Weaver, G. (1993). Understanding and coping with cross-cultural adjustment stress. In R.M.

Webb, S., & Nation, I. S. P. (2017). How Vocabulary is Learnt. Oxford Handbooks for language teachers. Oxford: OUP.

Wei, X. (2019, December). A Study on Sociopragmatic Failure in Business English Interpreting Under Negative Cultural Transfer Effects and Countermeasures. In *6th International Conference on Education, Language, Art and Inter-cultural Communication (ICELAIC 2019)* (pp. 411-414). Atlantis Press.

Wierzbicka, A. (2003) Cross-cultural pragmatics. The semantics of human interaction. Second edition. Mouton de Gruyter, New York.

Williams, K; & Kemper, S. (2004) Hummert ML enhancing communication with older adults: overcoming elder speak. J Gerontol Nurs .30(10) :17-25

Wong, W. (2005). Input enhancement: From theory and research to the classroom. Taipei: McGraw-Hill Education.

Wu, Y. (2013). Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF). *International Education Studies*, *6*(10), 130-138.

Yang, X. Q. (2015). Adult Business English and the Cultivation of Intercultural Business Communication Competence. China Adult Education, No.13, 165-167.

Yule, G. (1996) Pragmatics. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Zhang, L. (n.d). English in China and Chine in the world. Retrieved from englishinchinaandchineseintheworld.doc

Zhang, Y., Wang, F., & Wannaruk, A. (2019). Pragmatic Competence in Business Context: A Case Study of Thai EFL University Students. *Suranaree Journal of Social Science*, *13*(2), 1-24.

Zouhaiyr, E. (2020). *The Role of the Teacher in the Communicative Approach*. Sultan Mulay Sliman University.

8. APENDICES

8.1. Appendix 1 Students' questionnaire

Part I.

Dear student, I want to thank you for accepting to take part in this research. This survey is part of my PhD research on the topic "Sociolinguistic and Pragmatic Competences in Business English Courses in Higher Education in R. Macedonia". It is anonymous, so feel free to be honest while answering.

1. Choose the University where you are studying
   a) University of Tetovo
   b) SEEU
   c) Cyril and Methodius
   d) UACS
   e) Goce Delcev Stip
   f) Other

2. Age
   a) 18-19
   b) 20-21
   c) 22-23
   d) 24+

3. How many semesters have you attended Business English course?
   a) 1
   b) 2
   c) 3
   d) 4

4. Circle the competences that you are familiar with?
   a) Communicative competences
   b) Linguistic competences
   c) Sociolinguistic competences
   d) Pragmatic competences

5. Please write down with your own word what those competences mean to you (if you

previously   ticked them, if not skip the question)

6. Has your teacher ever mentioned these competences during the course?

    a) Yes

    b) No

    c) I am not sure

7. Does your teacher use video and audio materials in the

    classroom? Yes/ no

8. Are the classrooms equipped

   with: Computers

   LCD projectors

   Internet connection

9. Do you believe that the book used is appropriate for developing your communication skills in real business setting in the near future?

10. Circle the options that you have been taught in the Business English course? (You can circle more than one)

    a) Writing a formal email

    b) Make and respond to (polite) requests

    c) Making and receiving phone calls

    d) Video Conferences

    e) Presenting a company

    f) Meeting simulations

11. Have you been taught about Business English idioms?

    a) Yes

    b) No

12. If yes, can you list one - two examples of idioms? (If not, skip this question)

13. You have just joined a company, and the HR manager introduces you to the staff. You're expected to say few words about yourself. You say:

14. It is time to submit a project bid at work, but you have not finished it yet. You want to ask your supervisor for an extension. You say:

15. You are a manager of a department in a private company and you are busy working. You need a file that you saved last week but you cannot find it, you want your secretary to look for it. You say:

Part II.

	Strongly disagree	disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	agree	Strongly agree
1. I prefer activities in pair or in group rather than individual Ones					
2. I like listening audio materials in English and discuss them					
3. Large groups of students stop me from active participation in class					
4. I prefer the use of mother tongue in class rather than English all the time					
5. My previously learned English is not good enough for the level required in Business English					
6. I feel ready to communicate in English in a real business setting in a near future with the materials that have been taught to me					
7. I never feel secure when answering something in the class					
8. I find it hard to reply in English when the teacher asks me					
9. I feel embarrassment when I have to answer in class					
10. I feel nervous when I can't understand the teacher					
11. learn about other cultures through the materials offered					

Thank you very much!

8.2. Appendix 2 – Teacher's questionnaire

1. University where you work

2. Years working in higher education

3. Years teaching Business English

4. Which book/s do you use in your course

5. Are you the person who chooses the materials to use in class or there is a council in the department of English Language that decides which books will be used for each English course in the University?

6. Do you design your syllabus?

7. If yes, how often do you change it? (If not, skip this part)

8. How many classes per week do you teach Business English?

9. How does the amount of classes per week affect the design of syllabus, or the material that should be developed within a semester? For example, do you think that more classes give you more possibility to develop different competences?

10. How many students are there in one group (approximately); and is the size of the group a factor in what you can teach them (e.g. the larger the group, the harder to practice with them different dialogues, simulations etc?

11. Do you think that the already designed curricula for Business English give space for developing pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences in students?

12. Do your students know the meaning of these competences?

13. What would you change in the conditions you already work in, in order to improve the development of the above-mentioned competences? (Adding more classes per semester, giving more freedom to the teacher etc.)

14. Which competences have been taught in your class:

      Linguistic competences

Sociolinguistic competences

Pragmatic competences

15.Do you think your students are ready to communicate in English in a real business setting in the near future with the materials that have been taught to them?

8.3. Appendix 3 - Sheldon's textbook evaluation checklist (1998)

FACTUAL DETAILS

Title: . . . .
Author(s): . . . .
Publisher: . . . . Price: . . . .
ISBN: . . . . No. of Pages: . . . .
Components: SB/TB/WB/Tests/Cassettes/Video/CALL/Other . . . .
Level: . . . . Physical size: . . . .
Length: . . . . Units . . . . Lessons/sections . . . . Hours . . . .
Target skills: . . . .
Target learners: . . . .
Target teachers: . . . .

ASSESSMENT (* Poor ** Fair *** Good **** Excellent)

Factor	Rating and comments
Rationale	
Availability	
User definition	
Layout/graphics	
Accessibility	
Linkage	
Selection/grading	
Physical characteristics	
Appropriacy	
Authenticity	
Sufficiency	
Cultural bias	
Educational validity	
Stimulus/practice/revision	
Flexibility	
Guidance	
Overall value for money	

Summary

Skenderi, L. (2022). Sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences in Business English courses in higher education in North Macedonia. Doctoral thesis

Introduction. Communicating in English around the world today does not represent a special skill but an inalienable need. This is in line with communication in the business world, which thanks to globalization is removing borders and barriers, and brings people and countries closer from every corner of the world. However, this communication in the world of international business is made possible by the use of English which still continues to be the main language in connecting different people, places or companies worldwide. Clear communication in the business world should not be taken for granted because it requires much more than what we think we know when trying to convey a message. A clear message should be conveyed not only through speaking, but writing too. So, the speaker in any kind of business environment should be able to transmit a clear message orally and in written form too. The ability to communicate effectively is a competence. Communicative competences have been discussed and researched for a long time now, and there are few models which are discussed briefly in the thesis. However, the Common European Framework, CEFR (2001) is the model which was used and followed in this study. CEFR divided communicative competences in three types of competences: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. These competences are expected to be taught to students in the Business English course, which is quite important in their professional development throughout their undergraduate studies. Speech acts, politeness, coherence and cohesion and even idioms, are just some of the elements of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. These are not easily teachable to students, because many factors impact their development. Sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences have been a subject of research for many researchers in different languages, especially in the English language around the world. However, in North Macedonia, there are not many studies which have dealt with these competences for Business English specifically. This is the reason we chose to make this the subject of this study too. More concretely, this study is research about the development of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence in Business English courses in higher education in North Macedonia.

Aim: Pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences are an inevitable element which makes speakers able to communicate effectively in a real business setting. The main aim of this study is to find out if these two types of competences are taught to students and acquired by them, at the level that would make them communicate effectively in their future profession, either in spoken or written form of communication. The study also intends to find out if the textbooks used in Business English courses in North Macedonia contain the right material regarding these competences. Additionally, another aim is to find out if there are conditions for the teachers to teach students these competences, which is related to the technical-material conditions such as computers, overhead projectors and internet connection in the environments where this course is taught to students. Among the aims of the study is to identify some factors which hinder students from developing these competences in the classroom, and finally finding out whether explicit methods help in the students' development of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences.

      Methods: The study contains both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Initially, the textbooks used by the teachers in Business English courses in 5 universities in North Macedonia, were analyzed and reviewed in general regarding their content in general, then they were analyzed specifically regarding the sociolinguistic and pragmatic content. The textbooks that are analyzed in the study are *Market Leader* pre-intermediate, *Business Result Elementary* and *Business Result pre-intermediate*, *Business English 1* and *Profile pre intermediate.* We also administered a survey through a questionnaire, with 8 teachers of Business English and 256 students who study any kind of economics school in these five universities in North Macedonia: University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, University of Tetova, South East European University, University American College Skopje and University Goce Delcev-Stip. The gathered data of both teachers and students' questionnaires were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively, and the results were presented in graphs, pies and charts. The descriptive and the contrastive method were used to analyze the results and draw conclusions from the data analysis. In the research the dependent variable is gaining pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences in Business English courses in Higher Education, while independent variables are books, conditions of teaching and teaching methods which impact students' development of these competences. In this data processing survey, the descriptive and conclusive statistics are used, and it presents the results with tabulated and graphical frequencies, including numerical frequencies, valid percentages, standard deviations. Then the calculated statistical Pearson correlation (the connection between two or more variables),

the linear regression (the level of dependence between two or more variables) are actually the introduction to the linear regression line, as well as the statistical methods of averaging (Tuckey test type and independent t- test). Additionally, the study contains an experimental part which lasted a whole semester with students of Economics faculty at the University of Tetova, The results of the tests at the end of the term are shown in a summary of descriptive statistics which is very helpful, including mean, median, standard deviation skewness, kurtosis, Jarque Berra statistics which helped us identify if the variables have normal distribution.

Results: From the analysis of the textbooks, we concluded that these textbooks used in the 5 universities in North Macedonia, lack in the socio-pragmatic content. Also, we saw that most of the content which teaches students these specific competences are introduced implicitly, without specific explanation. So, these books expect students to develop these competences indirectly, without giving further explanation. The content of speech acts was poor; however, *requests* were among the most mentioned speech acts, either directly or indirectly through modals or other types of exercises. Other speech acts such as apologies, suggestions or complaints were presented even less than requests. Idioms were not found in any of these textbooks. Market *Leader,* from the qualitative analysis, turned out to be the only textbook which mostly focused on sociolinguistic competence, presenting exercises of that content clearly and explicitly. The teachers' answers were analyzed qualitatively, because the questions were open-ended. From their answers we learned that they choose the book that they use in their course, however with suggestions of the department. Also, they design their own syllabus, with changes at the beginning of the semester. They also showed belief that the content of curriculum regarding the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence is satisfying. Their answers showed that their students are not familiar with sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, but these competences have been developed in the classes they teach. Lastly, they believe that their students are ready to communicate in a real business setting in the future. The analysis of the students' questionnaire showed that students are not aware of these competences and haven't developed them either in the level they should. We saw this through asking them the basic act of introducing themselves when joining a new company, as well as through writing a request both to a subordinate and a superior. In neither of these three situations, they showed good and satisfying results. Also, students showed no knowledge of English idioms. Then the second part of the student's questionnaire helped us draw conclusions about the factors that may affect the development of these competences. We saw that students

don't actively participate in groups with a large number of students, which happens most of the time in these universities. They like listening to audio materials in English, but the results showed that the classrooms are not fully equipped with the material-technical conditions. Additionally, they declared that their previous knowledge of English is not enough for the level required in Business English. Also, we learned that they prefer the use of the mother tongue over English all the time. Except these learning-objective factors, we saw that psychological factors also play a role in hindering the chances of developing these competences. Nervousness, embarrassment and insecurity are among the factors which students feel in the classroom, especially when they can't understand the teacher. Lastly, but very important for this study, students declared that they don't learn about other cultures in the BE course, and that they don't see themselves prepared to communicate in a real business setting in the future. After that, some of the students who had participated in the survey, spent a whole term of being exposed to more explicit methods of teaching sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences and were tested to see if they gained more knowledge of making polite requests and business idioms.

Conclusion: The analysis of students' answers in the questionnaire proves the main hypothesis that sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences are not developed by students in the courses in Business English in universities in North Macedonia. The students failed to produce simple introductory sentences, as well as requests, regardless of who they are addressing, a subordinate or a superior. Additionally, they possessed no knowledge of idioms, because their teachers had not mentioned the idioms in the course. Also, the textbooks contained no idioms at all. This study also proved the sub-hypothesis that most students do not speak English at the required level to be able to develop sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, because students agreed that their previous knowledge of English is not good enough for the level required in Business English. However, we partially failed to prove the sub-hypothesis that the reason for not developing these competences is behind the curriculum content. The teachers claimed the curriculum gives space to the development of the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. Our qualitative analysis helped us draw conclusions that the sociolinguistic and pragmatic content in the textbooks used is not satisfactory. Also, teachers' opinion on adding more classes per week and 1-2 semesters more so the students would be prepared to communicate effectively in the future, could mean that even them as teachers think there is something that needs to be changed in order to prepare students to be more socio-pragmatically competent. Teachers were aware that their students don't know the

terms of sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, but still believe that these students are prepared to communicate in a real business setting in their future job. Very importantly, in this study we saw that students don't participate actively in their English course because of the large number of students in one group. Besides not participating in the class, students showed that they also feel nervous when they don't understand the teacher, feel embarrassed and insecure when answering something in class. According to the answers, with a high statistical value we saw that students prefer the use of their mother tongue rather than English. This was also the dominating factor among the learning-objective factors, while among the psychological-factors it was feeling nervous when not being able to understand the teacher. So, both of these dominant factors are connected to each other, because students can't understand their teacher in English most of the time, they feel nervous and consequently prefer the use of their mother tongue. In the experimental part of the research, after a whole semester of exposing students to more explicit teaching of polite requests and idioms, the results showed that there was a good statistical difference between the control and experimental group. The experimental group had much better results, and this proved the effectiveness of the explicit introduction of the material, which answered the research question about the methods which could help students develop these competences.

Резиме

Skenderi, L. (2022). **СОЦИОЛИНГВИСТИЧКИ И ПРАГМАТИЧКИ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ ВО НАСТАВАТА ПО ДЕЛОВЕН АНГЛИСКИ ЈАЗИК ВО ВИСОКОТО ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ ВО СЕВЕРНА МАКЕДОНИЈА.** Докторски труд

Вовед: Комуникацијата на англиски јазик ширум светот денес не претставува посебна вештина, туку неотуѓива потреба. Ова е во согласност со комуникацијата во светот на бизнисот, која благодарение на глобализацијата ги отстранува границите и бариерите и ги зближува луѓето и земјите од секој агол на светот. Сепак, оваа комуникација во светот на меѓународниот бизнис е овозможена со употребата на англискиот јазик кој сè уште продолжува да биде главен јазик во поврзувањето различни луѓе, места или компании ширум светот. Јасната комуникација во деловниот свет не треба да се зема здраво за готово бидејќи бара многу повеќе од она што мислиме дека го знаеме кога се обидуваме да пренесеме порака. Јасна порака треба да се пренесе не само преку зборување, туку и преку пишување. Значи, говорникот во секој вид на деловно опкружување треба да може да пренесе јасна порака и усно и во писмена форма. Способноста за ефективно комуницирање е компетентност. Комуникативните компетенции се дискутираат и истражуваат веќе долго време, а има малку модели кои накратко се дискутирани во тезата. Сепак, Заедничката европска рамка, ЗЕЈР (2001) е моделот што беше користен и следен во оваа студија. ЗЕЈР ги дели комуникативните компетенции на три вида компетенции: јазични, социолингвистички и прагматички компетенции. Овие компетенции се очекува да им се предаваат на студентите во наставата по деловен англиски јазик, што е доста важно во нивниот професионален развој во текот на нивните додипломски студии. Говорните чинови, учтивоста, кохерентноста и кохезијата, па дури и идиомите, се само дел од елементите на социолингвистичките и прагматичките компетенции. Овие не се лесни за учениците, бидејќи многу фактори влијаат на нивниот развој. Социолингвистичките и прагматичките компетенции се предмет на истражување на многу истражувачи на различни јазици, особено на англиски јазик ширум светот. Меѓутоа, во Северна Македонија нема многу студии кои се занимаваат конкретно со овие компетенции за деловен англиски јазик. Ова е причината поради која избравме ова да биде предмет на оваа студија. Поконкретно, оваа студија е истражување за развојот на социолингвистичката и прагматичната компетентност на курсевите за деловен англиски јазик во високото образование во Северна Македонија.

Цел: Прагматичните и социолингвистичките компетенции се неизбежен елемент што ги прави говорниците способни ефективно да комуницираат во реални деловни услови. Главната цел на оваа студија е да открие дали овие два типа на компетенции се учат од студентите и се стекнуваат од самите студенти, на ниво што би им помогнало ефективно да комуницираат во нивната идна професија, било во говорна или писмена форма на комуникација. Студијата, исто така, има намера да открие дали учебниците што се користат во наставата по деловен англиски јазик во Северна Македонија го содржат вистинскиот материјал за овие компетенции. Дополнително, друга цел е да се открие дали има услови наставниците да ги учат учениците на овие компетенции, што е поврзано со техничко-материјалните услови како што се компјутери, проектори и интернет конекција во средини каде што овој предмет се предава на студентите. Меѓу целите на студијата е да се идентификуваат некои фактори кои ги попречуваат студентите да ги развијат овие компетенции во училницата и конечно да се открие дали експлицитните методи помагаат кај студентите да ги развијат социолингвистичките и прагматичните компетенции.

Методи: Студијата содржи и квалитативна и квантитативна анализа. Првично, учебниците што ги користат наставниците во наставата по деловен англиски јазик на петте универзитети во Северна Македонија, беа анализирани и прегледани општо во однос на нивната содржина, а потоа беа анализирани конкретно во однос на социолингвистичката и прагматичната содржина. Учебниците кои се анализирани во студијата се: *Market Leader pre-intermediate*, *Business Result Elementary* и *Business Result pre-intermediate, Business English 1* и *Profile pre-intermediate*. Спроведовме и анкета преку прашалник, со 8 професори по деловен англиски јазик и 256 студенти кои студираат каков било вид на економско училиште на овие пет универзитети во Северна Македонија: Универзитетот „Св. Кирил и Методиј“, Универзитетот во Тетово, Универзитетот на Југоисточна Европа, Универзитетот „Американ Колеџ“ - Скопје и Универзитетот „Гоце Делчев“ - Штип. Собраните податоци од професорите и од студентскиот прашалник беа анализирани и квантитативно и квалитативно, а резултатите беа претставени во табели и графикони. За да се анализираат резултатите и да се извлечат заклучоци од анализата на податоците се користени описниот и контрастивниот метод. Во истражувањето зависната варијабла е стекнувањето прагматични и социолингвистички компетенции во наставата по деловен англиски јазик во високото образование, додека независни варијабли се книгите, условите во наставата и

методите на настава кои влијаат на развојот на овие компетенции кај студентите. Во оваа анкета за обработка на податоци се користи описна и конечна статистика, а резултатите ги прикажува со табеларни и графички фреквенции, вклучувајќи нумерички фреквенции, валидни проценти, стандардни отстапувања. Тогаш пресметаната статистичка Пирсонова корелација (врската помеѓу две или повеќе променливи) и линеарната регресија (нивото на зависност помеѓу две или повеќе променливи) се всушност вовед во линијата на линеарна регресија, како и статистичките методи за просекување (Tuckey тип на тест и независен т-тест). Дополнително, студијата содржи експериментален дел кој траеше цел семестар со студентите на Економскиот факултет на Универзитетот во Тетово. Резултатите од тестовите на крајот на семестарот се прикажани во резиме на описна статистика која е многу корисна, вклучувајќи и средна вредност, медијана, искривување на стандардното отстапување, куртоза, статистика на Jarque Berra која ни помогна да идентификуваме дали променливите имаат нормална дистрибуција.

Резултати: Од анализата на учебниците заклучивме дека на овие учебници што се користат на 5-те универзитети во Северна Македонија им недостига социо-прагматична содржина. Исто така, видовме дека повеќето содржини кои ги учат учениците на овие специфични компетенции се воведени имплицитно, без конкретно објаснување. Значи, од овие книги се очекува од учениците да ги развијат овие компетенции индиректно, без да дадат дополнително објаснување. Содржината на говорните чинови беше слаба, но сепак, *барањата* беа меѓу најспомнуваните говорни чинови, директно или индиректно. Други говорни чинови, како што се *извинување, сугестии* или *поплаки* беа презентирани уште помалку од барањата. Во ниту еден од овие учебници не се најдени идиоми. *Market Leader*, од квалитативната анализа, излезе како единствениот учебник кој најмногу се фокусира на социолингвистичката компетентност, прикажувајќи ги вежбите од таа содржина јасно и експлицитно. Одговорите на наставниците беа квалитативно анализирани, бидејќи прашањата беа од отворен тип. Од нивните одговори дознавме дека тие ја избираат книгата што ја користат во нивната настава, но со предлози на катедрата. Исто така, тие го подготвуваат сопствениот силабус, со промени на почетокот на семестарот. Тие покажаа верување дека содржината на наставната програма во однос на социолингвистичката и прагматичката компетентност е задоволителна. Нивните одговори покажаа дека нивните ученици не се запознаени со социолингвистичките и прагматичките компетенции, но овие

компетенции се развиени на часовите што ги предаваат. И на крај, тие веруваат дека нивните студенти се подготвени да комуницираат во вистински деловен амбиент во иднина. Анализата на студентскиот прашалник покажа дека учениците не се свесни за овие компетенции и не ги развиле на ниво на кое треба. Тоа го видовме преку основниот чин на претставување при приклучување во нова компанија, како и преку пишување барање и до подреден и до претпоставен. Во ниту една од овие три ситуации не покажаа добри и задоволителни резултати. Исто така, студентите не покажаа познавање на англиските идиоми. Потоа, вториот дел од прашалникот на ученикот ни помогна да извлечеме заклучоци за факторите кои можат да влијаат на развојот на овие компетенции. Видовме дека студентите не учествуваат активно во групи со голем број студенти, што најчесто се случува на овие универзитети. Сакаат да слушаат аудио материјали на англиски јазик, но резултатите покажаа дека училниците не се целосно опремени со материјално-технички услови. Дополнително, тие изјавија дека нивното претходно познавање на англискиот јазик не е доволно за нивото потребно за деловен англиски јазик. Исто така, дознавме дека тие ја препочитаат употребата на мајчиниот јазик пред англискиот. Меѓу овие објективни фактори за учење, видовме дека и психолошките фактори играат улога во попречувањето на шансите за развивање на овие компетенции. Нервозата, срамот и несигурноста се меѓу факторите што ги чувствуваат учениците во училницата, особено кога не можат да го разберат наставникот. На крајот, но многу важно за оваа студија, студентите изјавија дека не учат за другите култури на наставата по деловен англиски и дека не се гледаат себеси подготвени да комуницираат во вистинска деловна средина во иднина. После тоа, дел од студентите кои учествуваа во истражувањето, поминаа цел семестар изложени на поексплицитни методи на предавање на социолингвистички и прагматички компетенции и беа тестирани за да се види дали стекнале повеќе знаења за поднесување учтиви барања и деловни идиоми.

Заклучок: Анализата на одговорите на студентите во прашалникот ја потврдува главната хипотеза дека студентите од универзитетите во Северна Македонија во наставата по деловен англиски јазик не ги развиваат социолингвистичките и прагматичките компетенции. Студентите не успеаја да произведат едноставни реченици за претставување, но и барања, без разлика на кого му се обраќаат, на подреден или претпоставен. Дополнително, тие не поседуваа никакво познавање на идиомите, бидејќи нивните

202

наставници не ги споменуваат идиомите во нивната настава. Исто така, учебниците воопшто не содржеа идиоми. Оваа студија ја потврди подхипотезата дека повеќето студенти не зборуваат англиски на потребното ниво за да можат да развијат социолингвистички и прагматички компетенции. Студентите се согласија дека нивното претходно познавање на англискиот јазик не е доволно добро за нивото потребно во деловниот англиски јазик. Сепак, делумно не успеавме да ја докажеме подхипотезата дека причината за неразвивање на овие компетенции е зад содржината на наставната програма. Професорите тврдеа дека наставната програма дава простор за развој на социолингвистичките и прагматичките компетенции. Нашата квалитативна анализа ни помогна да донесеме заклучоци дека социолингвистичката и прагматичната содржина во користените учебници не е задоволителна. Исто така, мислењето на наставниците за додавање повеќе часови неделно и 1-2 семестри повеќе за студентите да бидат подготвени да комуницираат ефективно во иднина, може да значи дека дури и тие како наставници мислат дека има нешто што треба да се промени за да се подготват учениците да бидат социопрагматски покомпетентни. Наставниците беа свесни дека нивните студенти не ги знаат поимите на социолингвистичките и прагматичките компетенции, но сепак веруваат дека овие ученици се подготвени да комуницираат во реални деловни услови на нивното идно работно место. Многу е важно што во оваа студија видовме дека студентите не учествуваат активно на часот по англиски јазик поради големиот број студенти во една група. Освен што не учествуваа на часот, учениците покажаа дека се чувствуваат и нервозни кога не го разбираат наставникот, чувствуваат срам и несигурност кога одговараат на нешто на часот. Според одговорите, со висока статистичка вредност видовме дека учениците повеќе ја сакаат употребата на својот мајчин јазик отколку англискиот. Ова беше и доминантниот фактор кај објективните фактори за учење, додека кај психолошките фактори е нервозата кога не може да се разбере наставникот. Значи, и двата доминантни фактори се поврзани еден со друг, бидејќи учениците најчесто не можат да го разберат својот наставник на англиски јазик, тие се чувствуваат нервозни и последователно претпочитаат употреба на мајчиниот јазик. Во експерименталниот дел од истражувањето, по цел семестар на изложување на студентите на поексплицитно предавање на учтиви барања и идиоми, резултатите покажаа дека постои добра статистичка разлика помеѓу контролната и експерименталната група. Експерименталната група имаше многу подобри резултати, а тоа ја докажа ефективноста на

експлицитното воведување на материјалот кој одговори на истражувачкото прашање за методите кои би можеле да им помогнат на учениците да ги развијат овие компетенции.