

A proposal for the tagging of grammatical and pragmatic errors

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Abstract – Errors should be viewed as a key feature of language learning and language use. In this paper, we focus on the identification and classification of errors that are related to students' grammar acquisition and pragmatic competence. Our objectives are, first, to propose the tagging of grammatical errors and pragmatic errors according to the competences of the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)* and, second, to determine where there is a correspondence between the different types of error. In order to meet these objectives, we designed a grid to tag the pragmatic errors produced by students with a B1 level of proficiency. It was based on the errors found in a corpus of written texts produced by undergraduate students at the Universitat Politècnica de València. Students wrote specific assignments based on the proposals specified in the *CEFR* for the development of pragmatic and grammatical competences. The texts were corrected and tagged manually by raters, who classified the errors using the grids and considered whether the errors were grammatical or pragmatic. Finally, the conclusions of our study were that some grammatical and pragmatic errors coincided and that this correspondence should be taken into account by language teachers.

Keywords – *CEFR*, grammatical error, pragmatic error, tagging

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, grammatical errors have constituted one of the most important issues for research into language acquisition (Ellis 1994; James 1998; Ellis, Loewen and Erlam 2006). As other aspects, such as mental processes, the importance of context, the use of language, specific uses of language, etc., were progressively incorporated into language studies, researchers noticed that these issues had implications for error analysis (Bardovi-Hartlig and Dörnyei 1998; Hasbún Hasbún 2004; Schaeffer 2005, 2011). Grammatical, pragmatic and cognitive errors were also included in the document written by the Council of Europe (2001) for the design of a framework covering the most important aspects to be taken into account

for language learning, teaching and assessment. It was drawn up on the basis of linguistic theories and the progress that had been made by different approaches to the analysis of language. In this study, we argue that there is significant correspondence between grammatical and pragmatic errors and that what they share should be identified in order to avoid the duplication of the teaching of competences and skills whose attainment is deemed necessary for second language acquisition.

The hypothesis of this study is that grammatical and pragmatic errors should be identified and compared in order to improve the identification of important factors in second language acquisition. As a consequence, the main aim of this study was to tag the errors that can be placed into these two categories and show that grammar and pragmatics should be taught using the same learning strategies, since grammar and pragmatic competences could be related to some of the same kind of errors. The objectives set in this study were, on the one hand, to create tags and an analysis grid for the identification of grammatical and pragmatic errors and, on the other hand, to identify where there was a correspondence between the two in order to recognise language processing from the point of view of grammar and pragmatics.

We believe that if speakers of different languages do not understand each other it is not because their languages do not lend themselves to translation, but because they do not share a common linguistic background, this entailing differences in the observation and interpretation of reality. Therefore, the values that words signify are not represented in the same way; that is, understanding another language does not depend on the existence of equivalent structures, but on the equivalence between the concepts emerging from reality and the method of expressing these. Errors exist due to there being elements of language production which learners have not assimilated (Carrió Pastor 2004, 2005; Mestre Mestre 2011; Mestre Mestre and Carrió Pastor 2012). The research model of error analysis began with the work of Corder (1967), which rejected structuralism and based itself on Chomsky's theory about mankind's innate ability to learn a language, which was itself a refutation of Skinner's behaviourism. Later, James (1998: 1) dedicated his attention to the definition, identification and classification of errors, identifying a language error as an "unsuccessful bit of language". For him, "[E]rror Analysis is the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language" (James 1998: 1). He sees ignorance as the cause of errors made by second language users, which he always analyses by comparing the production of L2 speakers to that of L1 speakers, and not to an idealised language. He classifies errors according to their degree of deviance from the norm, and distinguishes four categories of learner ignorance: grammaticality, acceptability, correctness, and strangeness and infelicity. For James (1998: 65), grammaticality is synonymous with well-formedness, and it is context-free. In James' words, "[a]ppeal to grammaticality is an attempt to be objective, to take decisions such as whether some bit of language is erroneous or not out of the orbit of human whim". So, if we can point to a bit of language and say that there are no circumstances where this could ever be said in this way, we are dealing with ungrammaticality.

Errors demonstrate the way in which people are able to navigate the most complex social interactions, even in the face of linguistic and cultural obstacles. Errors detected in writing can provide us with knowledge of production and help us to understand the mechanisms that the speaker of a foreign language employs. What could emerge from second language research is that certain grammatical and pragmatic features cannot be correctly acquired by second language students following the same learning process.

Among the many aspects of second language teaching and learning which have been studied, grammatical errors have been a major focus of attention for many years. This might seem a little outdated nowadays, but it is not so, since grammar is still considered a crucial part of language teaching, with many Canadian immersion studies (Swain 1985; Lightbown 1992; Lyster 1998) showing that comprehension of meaning and content by itself does not necessarily lead to the acquisition of a native-like grammar.

Some authors insist on the importance of grammar, which has been relegated to second or third place of importance in the new communicative approaches. Terrell (1991) explains that grammar is one of the main components of communicative competence, and there is a risk of it being overlooked in the new teaching methodologies. Rutherford and Sharwood Smith (1985) argue that attention to grammar has an influence on the acquisition process. These authors encourage the creation of what they call 'grammatical awareness raising', both inductive and deductive. The importance of this approach is that it highlights the need for students to recognise grammatical structures and, as a consequence, what constitutes an error.

Some authors have also studied the relationship between grammar and pragmatics. Pragmatics is concerned with the difference between the official meaning of a word or sentence and the actual meaning the speaker intends to give it, and, in the end, the meaning perceived by the hearer derived from what the speaker said (Sperber and Wilson 1995; Wilson and Sperber 1998; Verschueren 1999; Rose and Kasper 2001; Wang 2007; Kasper 2010; Archer, Aijmer and Wichmann 2012). A pragmatic approach considers that there is, on the one hand, knowledge of language, which includes the meanings of words and the ways in which they combine, and then, on the other hand, some general pragmatic principles (often called ‘common-sense reasoning principles’), which structure the non-encoded meaning. Kasper (2010: 13) explains the relationship between grammar and pragmatics in this way: “not all grammatical features are good candidates for studying the relationship between pragmatics and grammar [...] not all aspects of pragmalinguistic knowledge have a grammatical counterpart”.

Focusing on pragmatics, Grice (1975) proposed a co-operative principle of language by means of which speakers of a language should make a contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, for the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which the speaker is engaged, by observing the following maxims:

- Quality: try to make your contribution one that is true.
- Quantity: make your contribution as informative as necessary, but not more.
- Relevance: do not say what is not relevant.
- Manner: be brief and orderly, avoid obscurity and ambiguity.

In this sense, pragmatic principles are the cognitive principles that enable us to enrich information by reasoning strategies and language learners should follow the maxims in order to produce pragmatically correct discourse. There have been some studies that have focused on the correct production of language from a pragmatic perspective (Kasper 2010; Rose and Kasper 2001; Bardovi-Harlig 1996, 2013). Bardovi-Harlig (1999) first referred to the area of research devoted to the development of the pragmatic system in second language acquisition as ‘acquisitional pragmatics’, but more recently Bardovi-Harlig (2013) has renamed it as ‘L2 pragmatics’. All these studies demonstrate the importance of pragmatics in the broad field of second language acquisition and the more specific area of error analysis. Consequently, modelling the communication process with knowledge of pragmatics offers us the basis on which to explain what knowing a language means (i.e., what language competence is) and to gain insights or draw conclusions from the errors that learners make. This perspective differs from the view that linguistic ability consists of a body of knowledge independent from the principles that determine the way language is used (language performance). On this issue, Bardovi-Harlig (1996: 21) has stated the following:

A learner of high grammatical proficiency will not necessarily show concomitant pragmatic competence. We also have found at least at the higher levels of grammatical proficiency that learners show a wide range of pragmatic competence.

Researchers have approached pragmatic and grammatical errors from different perspectives. Németh and Bibok (2010) distribute these approaches into four categories, with the different ways of understanding the relationship between pragmatics and grammar leading to the establishment of distinct groups of theories. The first of these maintain that grammar and pragmatics are not separate from each other: all matters usually studied within the scope of pragmatics are here considered as grammar. Holistic cognitive grammars (Rumelhart and McClelland 1986) or functional grammars (García Velasco and Portero Muñoz 2002) would fall into this category. The second group views pragmatics as a functional perspective, and not an additional component of a theory of language (Mey 1993; Verschueren 1999). For proponents of this view, pragmatics affects all levels of language and concerns any kind of linguistic phenomena which affect and are affected by the linguistic choices communicators make. A third group would include pragmatics as a component of grammar. For instance Levinson’s (2000) theory of ‘generalised conversational implicatures’, which relates syntax to pragmatics, belongs to this group. The fourth group of

theories sees pragmatics as being separate from grammar. The theories of Sperber and Wilson (1995) belong here, as they consider pragmatics to be a component of cognition.

Corpus analysis has been employed in a number of studies of error analysis and error classification, such as those of Granger (2002, 2003a, 2003b); Pérez-Paredes and Cantos-Gómez (2004) and Aguado-Jiménez, Pérez-Paredes and Sánchez (2012) show. More specifically, the tagging of errors has also been a matter of interest for researchers such as Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982); Dagneaux, Dennes and Granger (1998); Granger (2002, 2003a, 2003b); Díaz Negrillo and Fernández-Domínguez (2006); and Díaz-Negrillo and Valera-Hernández (2010). Error identification has mostly been used for the purpose of establishing which elements of language learning need greater attention in foreign language acquisition and in designing the methodology to employ in language learning (James 1998). In this sense, the categorisation of errors is helpful in that by being able to show which parts of discourse require more attention, it can make a contribution to the key issue of identifying needs in language teaching. Error annotation has become an important aspect to take into account when planning or designing language learning syllabuses, as Díaz-Negrillo and Fernández-Domínguez (2006: 84) explain: “error tagging is indeed inherent to learner corpora and has become a central part of methodology of learner corpus analysis known as computer-aided error analysis”.

Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) suggest two error taxonomies, one based on linguistic categories and another on the way structures have been altered in the learning process. They establish grammatical, morphological and lexical categories, but they do not consider pragmatic or cognitive aspects when carrying out error tagging. James (1998) combines these two taxonomies into a single, bidimensional taxonomy. Also Dagneaux, Dennes and Granger (1998) identify three levels of descriptive annotation: error domain, error category and word category. More recently, Díaz-Negrillo and Fernández-Domínguez (2006) claim that error analysis should incorporate computer-aided error analysis methodology, and they examine the projects on designing error tagging systems to review error categorisations, dimensions and levels of description. In this paper, our aim is not to provide a new tagging system for errors, but to contrast the tagging of grammatical errors with the tagging of pragmatic errors in order to identify those aspects that overlap and should be considered to be the same error for the purposes of error identification. In the following sections we propose several issues that should be taken into account when tagging grammatical and pragmatic errors. Furthermore, our tagging system also takes into account the descriptors identified by the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)* (Council of Europe 2001), with regard to the pragmatic and grammatical competences required for B1 proficiency of English.

2. METHODOLOGY

In the present study, we aimed at identifying errors produced by students at a given level of proficiency (B1) in order to find ways to help them in their language acquisition process. The design of the study was based on the idea that an examination of students' errors can help to identify their level of proficiency and their specific needs in the learning process. To do this, it was thought necessary to provide teachers with guidelines which could help them identify, classify and categorise errors according to the guiding principles provided by the document written by the Council of Europe (2001), the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)*. The recommendations shown in the *CEFR* have been updated and improved on several occasions in order to provide definitions of the competences and levels that foreign language learners need to attain in order to speak a language correctly.

In the preliminary stage, two analysis grids were created in order to facilitate the tagging of grammatical and pragmatic errors produced by students with a B1 level of proficiency in English. Lower levels were not considered, as pragmatic competences are difficult to express and such errors are problematic to detect at lower levels. The grid proposed in this paper, based on Mestre Mestre (2011), was elaborated using the proposals and competences specified in the *CEFR*, which supports the use of the communicative approach (Council of Europe 2001: 13):

Communicative language competence can be considered as comprising several components: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. Each of these components is postulated as comprising, in particular, knowledge and skills and know-how.

Thus, the tagging system elaborated for the present study included two separate parts, since the aim was to help identify errors related to pragmatic misconceptions, as well as errors related to grammar. The first part of the grid was based on the descriptors included in the *CEFR* regarding pragmatic competences, which are described by the Council of Europe (2001: 13) as follows:

Pragmatic competences are concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources (production of language functions, speech acts) drawing on scenarios or scripts of interactional exchanges. It also concerns the mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence, the identification of text types and forms, irony, and parody.

First of all, the guidelines of the *CEFR* (Council of Europe, 2001) were summarised and abbreviated in order to create a simple table which could facilitate the tagging and direct identification of pragmatic errors in language learning, specifically those related to the use of English. For this particular piece of research, the focus was placed on Grice's maxims, described in Section 1 above, and on the various *CEFR* descriptors referring to pragmatic competences. The recommendations and specifications about pragmatics included in the *CEFR* were gathered; Table 1 shows the tags proposed for the tagging of pragmatic errors:

Item	Descriptors		Error	Tag
Rhetorical effectiveness	Quality (Try to make your contribution one that is true)	Try new combinations to get message through	Rhetorical effectiveness	RHQ1
			Getting the message through	RHQ2
		Explain main points	Main points	DSFocus
		Be precise	Precision in the text	RHP
	Sufficient vocabulary			
	Quantity (Make your contribution as informative as necessary, but not more)	Use circumlocution and paraphrases	Accuracy in communication	RHAC
		Explain in own words		
	Relevance (Do not say what is not relevant)	Be precise and concise	Focus on topic	RHF
	Manner (Be brief and orderly, avoid obscurity and ambiguity)	Confine message to what s/he can say	Adequacy to own language limitations	RHA
		Correct discourse		
Get feedback: ask for confirmation				

Table 1. Items for error analysis based on the *CEFR* and Grice's maxims

The grid shown in Table 1 describes the competence the student should achieve, i.e., rhetorical effectiveness. The second column from the left contains the specific maxims under observation as described by Grice (1975), i.e., quality, quantity, relevance and manner. The next column specifies what kind of skill was expected from the learner, e.g., "Trying new combinations to manage to get his or her message through" or "Explaining in his or her own words". Then, the specific errors students make in this particular area are identified and the tags that are used to mark them (RHQ1-2, RHP, RHF, etc.) are also established.

Some examples of the resulting annotation can be seen in (1) – (7):

- (1) We send you a relation of our hotels around the world that you can choose either. <RHQ1>
- (2) Will they <GSS> can interact? <RHQ2>
- (3) The best of this trip was to met Italy and her cities especially the town called Luca, in this town the people go to the places with bike and all the town it's whole of little shops very interesting. <DSFocus>
- (4) The day of the farewell maiden Kat get drunk and she decided that she wants to got Nick, so she stops at an ATM to take some money to pay Nick. <RHP>
- (5) Life is beautiful is a film that relates the life of a Jewish family at the time of the Nazis. The protagonist Guido (Roberto Bernini) and Dora his wife have a child. <RHAC>
- (6) Life is beautiful is a film that relates the life of a Jewish family at the time of the Nazis. <RHF> The protagonist Guido (Roberto Bernini) and Dora his wife have a child.
- (7) In my opinion, college students today have changed Bologna because the plan requires students to attend classes and must pass the courses in the academic year. <RHA>

After this, our attention turned to the way in which grammar is viewed in the *CEFR* in order to complete the second part of the grid, which was designed to identify and classify grammatical errors that may be paired with pragmatic errors. Traditionally, grammar has been included within the linguistic competences necessary to obtain a given level of proficiency, as we have explained in the previous section, and the *CEFR* adheres to this tradition (Council of Europe 2001: 13):

Linguistic competences include lexical, phonological, syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of language as system, independently of the sociolinguistic value of its variations and the pragmatic functions of its realisations.

The grid for the tagging of grammatical errors was a basic part of the design of this analysis and was drawn up regardless of the texts produced by the students and prior to any correction or assessment of the written production. All the issues included in the grid for the tagging of grammatical errors were those recommended by the Council of Europe (2001) and were used to identify and standardise the criteria for the identification and classification of errors, as shown in Table 2.

Item	Descriptors	Error	Tag
Grammatical competence expected	Grammatical accuracy in familiar contexts (syntactic and lexical errors)	Grammatical errors in simple sentences: formation of words, word order, verb tenses, articles, adverbs, voice, auxiliaries	GSS
	Repertoire of routines and patterns associated with more predictable situations	Wrong patterns (infelicities in reproducing the target language)	GP

Table 2. Items for grammatical competence

In the grammatical grid shown in Table 2, the list is reduced to two broad types of errors: accuracy in familiar contexts related to grammatical competence and pattern reproduction. These two items could lead to errors in simple sentences and infelicities in pattern reproduction (GSS and GP).

Some examples of the resulting annotation can be seen in (8) and (9):

- (8) At the heart of this story is the question <GSS>
How anyone learnt the things about life and love? <GSS>
- (9) Hopefully accept our apologies <GP>

Two further stages of work on the texts provided by the students took place subsequently: the collection and the processing of the data. For data collection, three issues were taken into account: the level of ability of the students who produced the texts, the text types included in the analysis and the errors which had been produced by the students. The texts were marked and corrected using the grids shown in Tables 1 and 2 based, as explained above, on the particular descriptors and text types proposed by the *CEFR*. The study presented here considered the texts produced by 90 students enrolled on the Tourism degree with a B1 level of proficiency over three academic years, from 2008 to 2011. The level of language proficiency of the students was established by means of placement tests assessing writing, listening, speaking and reading skills, with specific attention to their grammatical and pragmatic competence.

The *CEFR* suggests a series of text types as useful materials in the classroom: newspapers, instruction manuals, leaflets, personal letters, and so on. The corpus was made up of 206 texts based on such materials, consisting of three text types: narrations and summaries, opinions and formal writings. The distribution of the texts was as follows: 68 texts belonged to the first group, 74 to the second and 64 to the third. The total sample length was 58,092 words. The samples were collected from the written assignments sent in electronic format by the students enrolled on the Tourism degree. The texts were monitored for plagiarism and students were asked to upload the writings onto the platform used for this subject during class time. A greater number of texts was compiled during this period than those stated above, but we only took into accounts the texts of students who had a B1 level for this study, since, apart from trialling the tagging system, we were also interested in determining the errors associated with a particular level of language proficiency, so that the writings produced would be classified according to the level the students demonstrated in the entry exam.

The next stage concerned the processing of the data. The results of the study were analysed and processed. The texts were codified according to the year of production and the text type. Three raters participated in the tagging process. The raters manually corrected the corpus and inserted the tags into the text file (see Tables 1 and 2). The taggers were not native speakers of English, as recommended by Dagneaux, Dennes and Granger (1998: 165). They were Spanish teachers of English with a very good knowledge of English grammar and pragmatics, which was considered essential for the activity of tag assignment. When the tagging was complete, the error-tagged student texts were analysed. The different errors were counted and the results inserted into the proposed grids. The raters observed several coincidences in the tagging of grammatical and pragmatic errors and remarked upon the cases in which this occurred. They also included a categorisation of errors in terms of the source of error (mother tongue interference), but this was rejected because it may introduce subjectivity (Dagneaux, Dennes and Granger 1998: 166 and Díaz-Negrillo and Fernández-Domínguez 2006).

The results obtained for the tagging of grammatical and pragmatic errors were analysed and compared in order to reveal whether there was any possible correlation between the learning of grammar and of pragmatics at a B1 level of proficiency in English. The percentages of the results were calculated in order to observe the discrepancies in the results. No statistical analysis was included in this study as our purpose was to propose a tagging system for pragmatic errors following the competences included in the *CEFR* for B1 level and observe the coincidences with the tagging of grammatical errors. The main aim of this study was to highlight the errors that can be tagged in these two categories and thus demonstrate that they should be addressed by means of the same learning strategies, since grammar and pragmatic competences underlie errors of the same kind.

3. RESULTS

The results extracted after the analysis of the corpus can be observed in Figure 1. We obtained more occurrences due to the simple structure of the sentences written by students. The high number of occurrences may be due to the level of the students involved in this study, who could not construct complex sentences as their competences were not sufficient to do so.

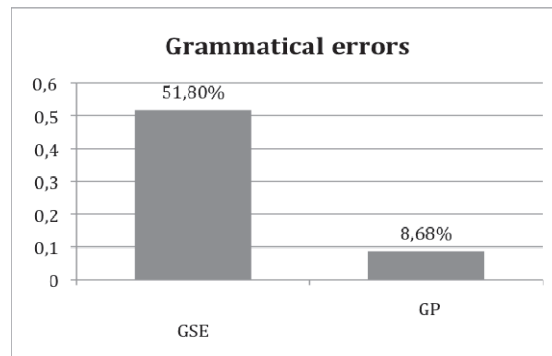


Figure 1. Grammatical errors

The total amount of errors found in this category was 3,444. We noticed that the students tended to prefer simple sentences, as they did not feel competent enough to write complex sentences. The least frequent errors were those related to the use of the wrong patterns.

In order to contrast the tags obtained after the analysis of the texts by the raters, we studied the errors tagged for pragmatic reasons, i.e., the rhetorical effectiveness of students, and the results are shown in Figure 2:

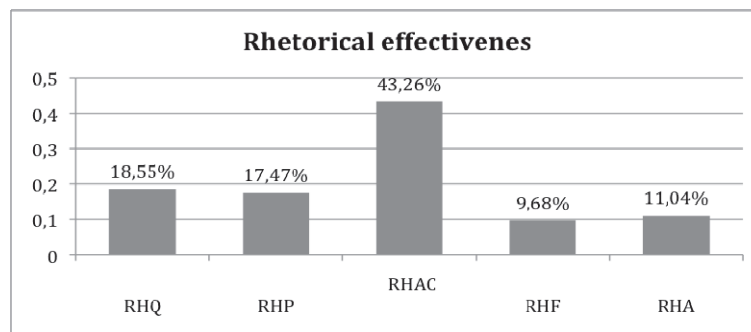


Figure 2. Results of pragmatic errors

The total number of errors tagged in this case was 1,105. The errors due to accuracy were the most frequent, followed by the errors due to rhetorical effectiveness and precision. After the analysis of the results, we considered whether some of the grammatical errors were due to grammatical or pragmatic causes. We also noticed that the grids proposed for the tagging of grammatical and pragmatic errors were useful for raters and all the errors found in the analysis could be placed into the grid. The initial proposal of the raters to identify errors due to the influence of the mother tongue was discarded, as this was considered a cause of errors rather than a possible classification for the tagging system. After contrasting the tagging of the raters, we looked for any coincidence between the two tagging systems, with the raters tagging one error as both a grammatical and a pragmatic error. The coincidence of the grammatical and pragmatic errors analysed can be seen in Table 3:

GRAMMATICAL ERRORS	PRAGMATIC ERRORS
Wrong patterns	Rhetorical effectiveness Accuracy
Grammatical simple sentencing	Accuracy Rhetorical effectiveness Adequacy to own limitations Focus Precision

Table 3. Coincidence between grammatical and pragmatic tagging

We noted that the grammatical errors classified by the raters as the wrong patterns coincided with the pragmatic errors regarding rhetorical effectiveness and accuracy. We also observed that the errors caused by writing simple sentences were classified by the raters as pragmatic errors due to lack of accuracy, rhetorical effectiveness, adequacy to own limitations and focus. Some examples of the coincidence of error tagging can be seen in (10), (11) and (12):

- (10) We download the car and to sleeping<GP>, since the following day it was waiting for us our first day of ski in europa's biggest <GP>ski resort. <RHAC>
- (11) All the film, the protagonist talks the reasons <GSS>of these answers. These histories are success<GSS> that he lives with his friend when there are children's. <RHQ1>
- (12) His pizzeria restaurant will be served >GSS>all types of foods, meats, fish, and as no pizzas, <GSS>that are the speciality of the house. <RHP>

As can be observed in the examples, the raters tagged the errors twice as they considered that, in these cases, the errors were both of a pragmatic and a grammatical nature. The nature of the errors is grammatical most of the times, but when students write a sentence, errors also entail poorness of pragmatic competence. Students should acquire grammatical competence in order to produce rhetorically adequate language.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Initially, a proposal for the tagging of grammatical errors was undertaken in this study and it was observed that some grammatical errors were implicit in pragmatic errors. The elaboration of an analysis grid proved to be a valuable tool as it allowed us to detect the coincidences of the grammatical and pragmatic errors in our corpus. Raters were able to use the grid to facilitate the tagging of errors and to classify them depending on their nature. Furthermore, the methodology we propose for the detection and classification of errors demonstrates that grammatical and pragmatic competences interact intensively in various ways in second language learning. We believe that error tagging is a powerful tool to determine language proficiency and the stages of language learning and development. As Dagneaux, Dennes and Granger (1998: 173) have said, error tagging "can be used to generate comprehensive lists of specific error types, count and sort them in various ways and view them in their context and alongside instances of non-errors".

In this study, the results obtained enable us to propose some guidelines for the avoidance of errors in written language. First, grammar should be considered as a basic part of communicative competence. Second, grammatical errors in simple sentences and accuracy errors in pragmatics are the issues on which the focus should be placed, as they are linked in effective communication, as we have shown in Table 3.

Grammar and pragmatics should be defined as two separate but not independent components of a theory of language that seeks to model grammatical and pragmatic competences. We propose a tagging classification (shown in Tables 1 and 2) that could be useful to detect and classify pragmatic and grammatical errors, but the results shown in Table 3 should be taken into account. In addition to assuming

their close interaction in contexts of language use, it is important to note that certain aspects of grammar and pragmatics are inextricably linked to each other and this may have a significant bearing on learners' ability to achieve communicative competence. Ariel (2008: 1) states: "Any specific instance of language use is neither wholly grammatical nor wholly pragmatic. To pick deixis again, it combines grammatical aspects (there is a grammatically specified difference between *I* and *this*) with pragmatic aspects (pinning down who the speaker is, what object this denotes)". This means that grammar is responsible for what speakers express explicitly and pragmatics explains how speakers infer additional meanings, in this sense, one aspect is embedded in the other.

Communication does not simply consist of packing thoughts or ideas into the form of words so that the reader can unpack and understand them. In order to reach out to readers and grasp their attention, writers need to link their text with whatever background information readers may possess. The most fundamental task of a pragmatic theory is to explain how the intended context is recognised, that is, how the reader is able to work out which of all the assumptions available to his cognitive system at any given time is the set that he/she is intended to use in processing the utterance.

While grammar is responsible for what we express explicitly, pragmatics explains how we infer additional meanings. The problem is that it is not always a trivial matter to decide which of the meanings conveyed is explicit (grammatical) and which is implicit (pragmatic). The study of pragmatics and grammar should enable a methodology to be constructed whereby the two can be distinguished. Grammar and pragmatics are combined in natural discourse and, as a consequence, pragmatic uses become grammatical in time.

Nevertheless, we are conscious that further work and a degree of specification are necessary in order to examine pragmatic and grammatical issues. In future studies, our aim is to propose further tagging systems for errors depending on the level of students' language proficiency and to design a taxonomy of errors classified by level. Furthermore, an examination of the correspondence between different error classifications in second language acquisition, such as that between grammatical errors, lexical errors, pragmatic errors and cognitive errors, could be of interest.

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