CALHANDRA PINTER DE SOUZA SANTOS

RAISING PRAGMATIC AWARENESS OF SIMILAR STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH THROUGH RELEVANCE THEORY

Dissertation presented as a prerequisite for obtaining the Master degree from the Postgraduation Program of Faculdade de Letras of Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul.

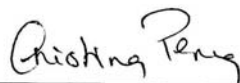Advisor: Dr. Cristina Becker Lopes Perna

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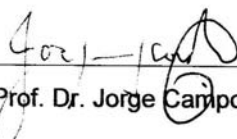
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To my parents, Maria and Edu.
After all, it is all about them.

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RESUMO

É provável que características pragmáticas da língua inglesa sejam ignoradas no ambiente escolar de ensino de língua inglesa. O desenvolvimento da consciência pragmática em língua inglesa é importante devido ao fato de que isso pode decidir se uma interação comunicativa é bem-sucedida ou não. Com o objetivo de obter uma interação bem-sucedida no aprendizado de língua, os professores deveriam não só destacar formas linguisticas e regras sintáticas, mas também reconhecer a língua como socioculturalmente enraizada. As ambiguidades das estruturas em língua inglesa, que podem aparecer durante o processo de aquisição da língua, são possíveis de serem resolvidas por inferência e reconhecimento da implicitude de enunciados – ambos aspectos pragmáticos que podem ser negligenciados durante o ato de ensinar. Para a aquisição da língua inglesa acontecer, é necessário incorporar características pragmáticas no ensino. Devido ao fato da Teoria da Relevância de Sperber e Wilson (1986; 1995) lidar com comunicação humana, ela é a teoria escolhida para integrar aspectos naturais da cognição humana com o processo inferencial de enunciados, no intuito de promover consciência pragmática da língua inglesa através do ensino de atividades inferenciais.

Palavras-chave: ensino de inglês como segunda língua, consciência pragmática, Teoria da Relevância, performance pragmática.

ABSTRACT

Pragmatic features of the English language are likely to be ignored in the ELT classroom. The development of pragmatic awareness of English language is important due to the fact that it may decide whether communicative interaction is successful or not. In order to obtain a success in language teaching, teachers should not only address linguistic forms and syntactic rules, but also recognize language as socioculturally driven. The ambiguities of English language structures that appear during the second language acquisition process may possibly be solved by inference and the recognition of the implicitness of utterances – both pragmatic aspects that may be overlooked during teaching. For the second language acquisition to take place in learners, it might be necessary to incorporate pragmatic features into the teaching of English. Since the Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson (1986; 1995) deals with human communication, it is the theory chosen to integrate natural aspects of human cognition to the inferential process of utterances, in favor of promoting pragmatic awareness of English language through the teaching of inferential activities.

Keywords: teaching of English as a second language, pragmatic awareness, Relevance Theory, pragmatic performance.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The act of communicating in a second language is not just simply transferring words from the mother tongue to the target language, it involves much more than that. Every language possesses its own features, issues regarding politeness, expressions and ambiguities that, most of the times, are not well developed in second language teaching. The area of linguistics that deals with these language characteristics is pragmatics, which can be defined as the type of study that "necessarily involves the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said" (YULE, 1996, p. 3). This area is often overlooked by teachers of English when instructing their learners.

Second Language Acquisition is the area of linguistics that is concerned with the study of people who are learning a language posterior to the learning of the first one as a child. The settings of second language acquisition can come from different natures, informal second language learning and formal second language learning. The first one regards the learning in naturalistic contexts, whereas the second accounts for the situation exposed in the paper, in which the specialized language instruction takes place. Both contexts are the object of study of second language acquisition scholars, who try to develop approaches to teaching English as a second language based on the principles of second language theories. Applied linguistic scholars who study SLA are frequently concerned with the implications of theory and research for teaching second languages. Each theory employs different theoretical frameworks and achieves different interpretation of research findings, as the two theories that will be revisited in chapter 2, Behaviorism and Monitor Theory.

Although approaches to teaching English as a second language are based on linguistic theory on the field of second language acquisition, most of them fail in the purpose of improving learner's performance in a second language. Most approaches focus on the teaching of linguistic structures and phonological aspects, some of them are also concerned with the teaching of common expressions of the target language; however, the

teaching of these features are often disconnected from real life communication and the real use native speakers make from these features. Since most students probably intend to learn English as a means of communication with the rest of the world, most methodologies fail when teaching learners to be successful in communicative interactions. Misunderstandings and ambiguities are possible to be avoided with the proper instruction to learners; that is the reason why pragmatic aspects are so important to be integrated in the teaching of a second language.

Ambiguities in English language are one of the main interests in this paper. Some similar structures in English language may be confusing to Brazilian learners of English, such as the following dichotomies: **Simple Past** and **Present Perfect**, and **Will** and **Be going to**. These structures are often taught separately and the implications of the uses of each linguistic form are not presented to students. The teaching of these structures is mostly characterized by the eliciting of the verbal form together with exercises without any contextualization in real life. The difference of each of the pairs is not possible to be distinguished only by the syntactic and the semantic level: the pragmatic feature enrooted in each structure is what produces the final implications of each employment. For a native speaker their distinction and application is natural; for the language leaner, it is necessary that these slightly contrasts be taught. In order to teach the adequate uses of each dichotomy, teachers should incorporate into their teaching, pragmatic properties, such as the implicitness of utterances and the inferences derived from each use.

The Relevance Theory by Sperber & Wilson (1986; 1995) is concerned with the inferential process of humans, and its principles are applied to the study of each pair of similar structures. It combines semantic and pragmatic aspects of language regarding human cognition. With the theory, each structure is likely to be analyzed by its production of cognitive effects in communication by its ostension, jointly to the communicative intention each one carries. Using relevance-theoretic fundamentals, the implications of each use can be compared by the derivation of premises regarding the context built. Therefore, this theory is used as a base to develop inferential activities aiming at raising pragmatic awareness of English language by Brazilian learners of English.

In chapter 2, I revisit early second language acquisition approaches, such as Behaviorism and Monitor Theory, which are based on investigation of different natures,

but both have contributed significantly to linguistic theory on the field. In addition, they have influenced most current approaches to English language teaching, which are exposed in the same chapter. These approaches are assessed according to the extent of semantic-pragmatic account each of them integrates in their methodology, aiming at promoting pragmatic knowledge of language in learners.

In chapter 3, I revise the foundations of Relevance Theory by Sperber ad Wilson (1986; 1995), its origins in Grice's Inferential Model up to the Principle of Relevance. The semantic-pragmatic interface contained in it is exposed as well as the pragmatic performance in communication that can be raised by the combination of the theory's principles and the teaching of pragmatic aspects of language.

In chapter 4, I present the structures in competition that cause ambiguities in communication for Brazilian learners of English laand the possible reasons for the misunderstandings caused by misuses of language on the students' part. After that, an analysis under the relevance theory is presented as a suggestion to incorporate pragmatic features, such as inference and implicitness, to the teaching of English language. Finally, activities are proposed in order to raise pragmatic awareness of English language in Brazilian students.

2. LINGUISTICS APPLIED TO LANGUAGE TEACHING

This section revisits the two main approaches to second language acquisition that based most approaches to the teaching of English language as second or foreign language. Furthermore, these approaches are assessed according to the amount of pragmatic aspects each one incorporates in its methodology.

2.1 APPROACHES TO SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

The study of second language acquisition (henceforth SLA) has a recent history. It does not have records of when it first started, however, it could be said that it began in the last 40 or 45 years. According to Ortega (2008), its initial development happened in the 1970s, but its ample expansion in research and theorizing occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. The area of SLA consists of studying and researching about how second languages are learned, meaning that it is the study of the acquisition of a non-primary language – a language beyond the native language.

The definition of the term *second* in SLA means any other language other than one's language – it does not matter which language it is, where it is learned, or how it is learned. By times, it would contrast with the term *foreign language*, as this would refer to languages that are not naturally spoken outside the classroom, as for instance, in the Brazilian reality. Our country has as its official language Portuguese, and English does not belong to one of the official spoken languages in the country. English here plays the role of an international language, which we Brazilians use for different objectives, such as listening to music, communicating commercially with other countries, reading manuals from imported products, for example. Conversely, *second* would relate to a situation in which English becomes a language of instruction in the schools, as in the Philippines, for instance.

Ellis (1994, p. 12) considers of great importance the act of distinguishing both terms, affirming that "the distinction between second and foreign language learning settings may be significant in that it is possible that there will be radical differences in both what is learnt and how is learnt." The way each one of the concepts is viewed by teachers and professors may modify the way the professionals will work with their students and the results that will come from this.

Despite the previous argumentation, both terms have a history of interchangeability, which will be kept in this work. If it were to be considered only one definition, the field of SLA would be restricted to only one context and would be not productive enough to account for all the possibilities of how language acquisition takes place.

The theories of SLA have the aim of explaining the observed phenomena that occur in the process of acquisition, and, in addition, making predictions about what is possible and what is not possible to happen in the process. The importance of a theory in SLA lays on helping us to understand the phenomena we observe (VANPATTEN & WILLIAMS, 2008). For instance, there is one SLA theory, the *Affective Filter Hypothesis*[1], which states that the learner must feel comfortable with the learning environment and have a positive attitude toward language learning, in order to achieve a more successful performance. By contrast, if the environment is stressful, learning will probably not take place. Therefore, the hypotheses presented by theories have meaningful roles and consequences for L2 instruction. In the case above, by getting to know the *Affective Filter Hypothesis*, teachers are able to work on the psychological state of the student, and to promote better results in the student's learning process. The area of SLA maintains relationship with and is influenced by other fields, however, its origins rests on practical orientation to language teaching (VANPATTEN & WILLIAMS, 2008).

2.1.1 Behaviorism

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[1] See Krashen (1982; 2009) and subsection 2.1.2.5.

Before the 1990s, the SLA field was divided into two periods: the first one is characterized by the use of behaviorism, and the second, the postbehaviorist era (VANPATTEN & WILLIAMS, 2008, p. 17). Behaviorism was borrowed from psychology to account for both L1[2] acquisition and L2 SLA, and the use of structural descriptions of language. The behaviorist perspective was developed by the psychologist B. F. Skinner, in the 1940s. It attempts to explain human behavior without allusion to internal and mental processes. Instead, it is elucidated by the effects the environment has upon subjects. Its main keywords are *stimulus, response, reinforcement, conditioning, habit, frequency, and punishment*.

Since its origin, behaviorism not only accounts for human behavior, but also animal behavior. It is necessary to highlight one of the most famous experiments made by Skinner, in which some of the previous keywords are likely to be originated from. The Skinner box is also known as the operant conditioning chamber, which originated his theory of *operant conditioning,* "it refers to conditioning in which the organism (…) emits a response, or operant (…), without necessarily observable stimuli: that operant is maintained by reinforcement" (BROWN, 2000, p. 22-23).

The operant conditioning chamber is equipped with one or more levers that an animal can press, one or more stimulating lights, and one or more places where reinforcements (like food) can be delivered. The experiment runs in the following path: a starved rat was put inside the box. If the rat pressed a lever, a small amount of food would be dropped on a tray. The rat would easily learn that when it pressed the lever it would be given some food. The behavior of pressing the lever (*habit*) is reinforced by food (*reinforcement*).

If the lever pressing was reinforced by the rat receiving the food while the light was only on (*stimulus*), response, such as pressing the lever, would continue to be made while the light was on. On the other hand, this would probably not happen in the dark. This action would create discernment between light and dark and association by the rat (SKINNER, 2010).

Regarding L1 acquisition, behaviorism's major hypothesis asserts that when a child imitates the language produced by those around her, her efforts in trying to reproduce what she heard would receive positive reinforcement, which could be a praise, for

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[2]L1 = first language

instance. Encouraged by the praise, the child would continue to imitate and practice language, until she formed habits of language use. The child's behavior would be shaped by the reinforcement that she received, as well as the quality and quantity of language heard. Behaviorists consider all types of learning, including language learning, as the acquisition of new behavior:

> "Learning consists of developing responses to environmental stimuli. If these responses receive positive reinforcement, they will become habits. If the responses receive punishment, they will be abandoned." (VANPATTEN & WILLIAMS, 2008, p. 19)

Frequency plays a significant role in the strengthening of associations – every time a response is made to the stimulus, this relationship is strengthened. The opposite also occurs, in case the individual is not given any stimulus, the response behavior probably decreases, leading to its extinction. Hence, continuous repetition is central to the creation of new behaviors. The associations made among the responses are "triggered" by external stimulus; the environment is the source of everything the child needs to learn.

In Skinner's experiment, the rat would react to the light on without even thinking about the action it would perform. In language learning, after repeated drilling of a linguistic construction, for example, the learner would utter the expression without realizing; the association developed by the learner would be similar to the one of the rat. Behaviorists affirm that this process does not include mental processes, that it is only related to responses to stimuli, through either reinforcement or punishment. Reinforcement encourages continuation, whereas punishment does the opposite.

Thus, for behaviorism, a child learns a language through imitation of the sounds and structures she hears in the environment. If her attempts of speaking receive positive response, she will probably do them again; if she is not given a response or receives a negative one, the repetition is less likely to happen. Language learning is purely the construction of habits, and it is viewed as developed as any other type of learning: imitation of models, practice and provision of feedback. For behaviorists, "the notion of

'idea' or 'meaning' is explanatory fiction, and that the speaker is merely the locus of verbal behavior" (BROWN, 2000, p. 9).

Regarding SLA, the learning of a new language happens in the same path according to behaviorism. When learning a L2[3], the individual has to imitate right models, then create new habits in order to acquire the L2. Also, reinforcement of imitation and correction of inappropriate imitation makes the learning process easier. The output plays an important role in this theory, since behaviorists believe that error correction (punishment) would lead to the creation of a new behavior and, at a later stage, the learning, and the production of L2. The participation of the learner is fundamental for the learning process. In behaviorism, in relation to SLA, the main difference from child first language learning compared to a L2 learner lies in the fact that the L2 learner possesses previous habits, meaning his L1. Consequently, for learning a L2, the learner has to overcome his L1, creating a new set of habits.

In its relation to linguistics, it can be said that behaviorism is closely connected to structural linguistics, considering that both have similar theories of language. For structural linguistics, language is based on a finite set of predictable patterns – this is one of the resemblances between structural linguistics and behaviorism, according to VanPatten & Williams (2008):

> The goal of structural linguistics was entirely descriptive. Explanation – why the language operates as it does – was not seen as within the purview of linguistics. Because structural linguistics portrayed language as based on a discrete and finite set of patterns, it blended easily with behaviorism, which viewed learning as the acquisition of a discrete set of behaviors. (VANPATTEN & WILLIAMS, 2008, p. 20)

According to the excerpt above, the combination of the ideas from behaviorism with the concepts of structural linguistics, the area of applied linguistics would view the L2 learner's assignment as limited, being only imitation and internalization of patterns. This thought would lead to a series of repetition of structures of the target language, such as grammatical sentences, non-contextualized expressions, and syntactic structures.

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[3] L2 = second language.

As it was stated before, for SLA to happen, according to behaviorist theory, L2 had to overcome L1 through the creation of new habits. New habits would be created depending on reinforcement or punishment aiming at successful learning – which does not happen immediately in SLA. At that time, if the learning was not successful, the blame would fall partly on *transfer* – one important concept for SLA until nowadays. For behaviorism, *transfer* would be the transferring of L1 habits with the objective to develop a L2. In order to avoid this negative transfer, repetition of correct models and negative feedback would be suitable strategies to exterminate errors that could form bad habits. Here, error was viewed as a signal of incompetence on the learner's part.

Despite its success in the 1940s and 1950s as a theory of learning and teaching, behaviorism was overcome by new research in the fields of psychology and linguistics in the 1960s and 1970s. Soon L1 research began to reject some of the main behavioral ideas, such as the fact that children's speeches demonstrated that the process of learning a language is far more complex than only the acquisition of habits and construction of analogies. Conversely, these speeches showed that children possess an innate capacity for learning a language. Notions of ungrammaticality and original speech constructions made by children are some of the evidences that led linguists to believe that much of children's knowledge is innate and that language learning is guided by a specific mental faculty, being unique and different from other types of learning.

These conceptions presented previously affected research on SLA, and consequently, research and work with L2 learners. It was evidenced that the behaviorist theory was not able to explicate learner errors; in addition, the conclusions showed that the errors committed by learners when acquiring grammatical structures followed the same path of children learning their L1. This led to conclusions that considered SLA as related to internal processes and that L1 errors have little influence on the SLA process. According to VanPatten & Williams (2008, p. 25), these thoughts were developed by the Creative Construction Hypothesis, by Dulay & Burt (1975), which considered language learning a creative process in which the learner makes unconscious hypotheses on the basis of input. Input regarding innate mechanisms was a basic element for the Monitor Theory, the following theory to be discussed.

2.1.2 Monitor Theory

The monitor theory was developed by Stephen Krashen in the 1970s and 1980s and it is particularly important to SLA, since it was the first theory elaborated specifically regarding the process of L2 acquisition and teaching. It is probably the most famous and influential theory among instructors of English and it is essential to understand SLA as a whole process. This is the first theory that tries to explain common occurrences in language learning, such as age related to learning, psychological factors, and effects of instruction.

According to White (2008), monitor theory appears to be associated to Chomsky's theory of language, even though it was never mentioned in Krashen's works. Chomsky's theory "was interested not only in describing language, but also in arriving at an explanatory level of adequacy in the study of language" (BROWN, 2000, p. 9). It states that human beings are uniquely endowed with a special and specific faculty for language acquisition, meaning that our linguistic knowledge is part of our biological endowment. As children possess this biological endowment, the input will be the trigger for language acquisition to happen. Krashen relates this fact to SLA, asserting that an analogous process occurs in acquisition: children's L1 acquisition and SLA processes operate similarly.

The monitor theory has the purpose of explaining the process of learning and it consists of five interrelated hypotheses. Each of the hypotheses presents a particular point of view on the processes of L2 learning. These hypotheses are: The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis[4], The Natural Order Hypothesis, The Monitor Hypothesis, The Input Hypothesis, and The Affective Filter Hypothesis.

2.1.2.1 The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

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[4] In Krashen (1982; 2009), the author presents as The Acquisition-Learning Distinction.

According to Krashen (1982; 2009), there is a difference between L2 acquisition and L2 learning: the act of developing abilities in L2 goes through two stages: one works subconsciously (in the acquisition), and the other works consciously (during learning). Both systems are interrelated, but the acquisition seems to be a lot more important. For the author, the process of language acquisition is very similar to the process occurred among children when acquiring L1 and L2. Meaningful interaction is required in the target language, aiming at natural communication, meaning that the speakers are not worried with the form, but with the action of conveying and understanding the messages. Inside classrooms, teachers have the same preoccupation of providing situations in which students feel free to communicate using their knowledge of the language when producing utterances, looking for effective communication. Krashen (1982; 2009) also affirms that, when it comes to language acquisition, error correction and explicit teaching of rules are not relevant. The correction comes from the own individual – self-correction, when he realizes his mistakes by conscious awareness based on a "feeling" of grammaticality developed during the acquisition process.

In L2 learning, error correction and the presentation of explicit rules appear to be helpful. Krashen's Monitor Hypothesis[5] has, as its main claim, that learning is accessible to the performer only as a monitor. He affirms that the first step when transmitting an utterance is producing it based on the information of the acquired system, and then the "formal" knowledge of the L2 may be used to change the output of the acquired system. The use of this "monitor" seeks accuracy when producing an utterance.

Also, as additional information about L2 acquisition and L2 learning, there is the fact that the characteristics of the L2 learner differ from a very young child acquiring a L1, considering the environment in which the learner is inserted in and the learner's own characteristics. To exemplify the difference in context of the learners, and to elucidate Krashen's thoughts, Lightbown & Spada (2006) propose four examples of different language learners:

> (1) a young child learning a first language; (2) a child learning a second language in a day care or on the playground; (3) adolescents taking a

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[5] The Monitor Hypothesis will be fully explained in section 2.1.2.3.

foreign language class in their own country; (4) an adult immigrant with limited or disrupted education working in a second language environment and having no opportunity to go to language classes (LIGHTBOWN & SPADA, 2006, p. 29)

There are big differences in acquisition if we compare examples (1) and (3): the differences come up from the environment in which the subjects of the examples are inserted in, the input they received due to their context, and even what the EL[6] (in this case) means to each one of the subjects – supposing that English is example (1)'s L1 and example (3)'s L2. Learners in the classroom spend less time in contact with the target language and they are probably exposed to a smaller amount of discourse types – sometimes the teacher is their only source of input. Moreover, the language provided to learners is more formal if compared to the language in use in most of social settings. It is the teacher's duty to supply different "kinds" of English to learners in order to achieve accuracy and communicative skills towards proficiency. By logic, L2 learners have already acquired a language, a fact that can help or interfere in the learning of a L2. On one hand, knowing a language previously can help in having the idea of how languages work. On the other hand, the previous knowledge can lead to incorrect guesses based on the aspects of the L1.

2.1.2.2 The Natural Order Hypothesis

Research in language acquisition showed that there is a predictable order of acquisition of grammatical features, that is, some structures are acquired earlier than others. Clearly, this order does not happen to all acquirers fixedly; however, there are meaningful similarities when it comes to statistics. Krashen (1982; 2009), cites the study of Brown in 1973, which states that children acquiring language as L1 had a tendency of acquiring certain grammatical morphemes earlier than others:

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[6] EL for English language

For example, the progressive marker *ing* (as in "He is play*ing* baseball".)
and the plural marker /s/ ("two dog*s*") were among the first morphemes
acquired, while the third person singular marker /s/ (as in "He live*s* in New
York") and the possessive /s/ ("John'*s* hat") were typically acquired much
later, coming anywhere from six months to one year later. (KRASHEN,
2009, p. 12)

Following Brown's study of L1 acquisition, Dulay and Burt published, in 1974 and
1975, their results of the study applied to children acquiring English as L2, concluding that
these children also possessed a "natural order", independently of their mother tongue. The
orders of acquisition differed from children acquiring L2 to the first group, but the studies
confirmed undeniable similarities.

The language that learners yield give support for the hypothesis of the acquisition of
morphological features in a fixed order, as well as corroborates the idea of developmental
stages in the acquisition of specific syntactic structures (ELLIS, 1994). The morpheme
studies, which were carried out among adults acquiring English as L2, helped in the
understanding of both language acquisition and language learning among adult learners.
Nonetheless, it does not mean that the person has to be taught in the order researched. It
just indicates the manifestation of the acquired system without the contribution or
manifestation of the conscious grammar, that is, the monitor. Therefore, when the
performance of the learner is monitor-free, the result is the occurrence of the natural
order for grammatical morphemes, the order that is similar to the one seen in a child.
When the performance is monitored, the natural order is perturbed. In order to better
understand the role of the "monitor" within the theory, I proceed to the monitor
hypothesis.

2.1.2.3 The Monitor Hypothesis

This hypothesis brings the metaphor of a monitor that every adult learner has
functioning in favor of language learning. In the acquisition-learning hypothesis, these two

processes coexist in the adult learner, but it does not explain their roles in the learner performance. Yet, the monitor hypothesis states how acquisition and learning work specifically. Acquisition is the process that starts the learner's speech and his consequent fluency, whereas learning has the function of being the monitor, or editor. The utterances produced by the acquired system can be corrected by the monitor.

Hence, this hypothesis suggests that formal rules, meaning conscious learning, have a restricted role in the L2 performance. According to Krashen (1982; 2009), the limitations of the formal rules became evident by research in the field along the years. The findings proposed that L2 performers use conscious learning when three conditions meet, and even though, they are not always sufficient. The first condition is the time that a performer takes to think about rules in order to achieve communication effectively. The second one is the focus on form, that is, to think about correctness – sometimes the time is not enough. The last one is to know the rule, meaning that students learn a small portion of rules despite of the amount of L2 exposition. Krashen affirms that "Linguistics has taught us that the structure of language is extremely complex, and they claim to have described only a fragment of the best known languages" (KRASHEN, 2009, p. 16).

The use of the monitor in communication happens when the performer finds himself in a situation in which the three conditions are met: when there is enough time to think, when the focus on form is sought, and the performer knows the rule. Thus, the pattern of error changes, resulted from the conscious grammar. On the other hand, in a monitor-free situation, the focus is on communication, not on the form, so, the system of error will be different, probably similar to the results obtained in the natural order hypothesis. The use of the monitor permits performers to provide particularities that are not yet acquired.

Although the monitor hypothesis is central to the monitor theory, it does not work alone. For the use of the monitor to happen, the next two points play important roles: the input, which stimulates the acquisition, and the affective filter, which may determine a successful learning.

2.1.2.4 <u>The input hypothesis</u>

Followers of the monitor hypothesis believe that acquisition is central whereas learning is more peripheral, yet the aim of input hypothesis is stimulating acquisition. Its followers also affirm that we acquire language only when we comprehend language whose structure is slightly beyond our level of knowledge. The first two statements are:

(1) The input hypothesis relates to acquisition, not learning.
(2) We acquire by understanding language that contains structure a little beyond our current level of competence ($i + 1$). This is done with the help of context or extra-linguistic information. (KRASHEN, 2009, p. 21)

Statement (2) raises the doubt of how it is possible for performers to understand language that contains a structure which they have not acquired yet. As an answer to this question, there is the fact that performers in the process of communication, make use not only of their linguistic knowledge, but also of the context, knowledge of the world, and extra-linguistic information. In the excerpt above, the symbol i means the acquirer's level of competence, and $i + 1$ represents the stage immediately following i. The skill of speaking fluently is not possible to be taught directly; instead, it emerges after the acquirer has constructed linguistic competence by comprehending input (RICHARDS & ROGERS, 2001). Input hypothesis also contains two more statements:

(3) When communication is successful, when the input is understood and there is enough of it, $i + 1$ will be provided automatically. (...)
(4) Production ability emerges. It is not taught directly. (KRASHEN, 2009, p. 22)

The $i + 1$ equation will be supplied spontaneously if there is enough amount of comprehensible input. By comprehensible input, it means the speech that the learner understands from the context in which it is inserted and the language used. As it is expressed in the excerpt above, the fluency is not developed directly, the utterances will occur when the performer feels ready. This production of "readiness" happens differently

from one person to another, in different moments of life. Accuracy is not a characteristic of early speech, it is developed over time as the acquirer hears and comprehends more input.

As support evidence, the author reports the case of L1 acquisition among children. The "caretaker speech" used by parents, babysitters or people surrounding children is one example of modified speech people make when talking to young children. The speech is modified in order to make children comprehend what is being said, it is characterized by being syntactically simpler than adult discourse and "roughly-tuned" to the linguistic level of children. Krashen also asserts that caretaker's speech is not adapted to the level of each child, yet, it has the tendency of getting more complex with the growing of the child.

The same happens in the L2 acquisition, since the L2 acquirer, child or adult, is an acquirer. "Foreigner talk" (LIGHTBOWN & SPADA, 2006) is one term which relates to the type of discourse native speakers use to simplify communication with foreigners. Its characteristics are a slower rate of speech, repetition, use of yes/no questions rather than wh- questions, and other strategies to make understanding comes easily to people with limited communication.

Foreigner talk is one example of strategy native speakers use to communicate with non-native speakers, which in many situations may help in the next – and last – item of the monitor theory, the affective filter hypothesis. When changing the pattern of the talk, native speakers may create a more comfortable environment for the non-native speaker, whose affective filter is influenced according to one's feelings.

2.1.2.5 <u>The affective filter hypothesis</u>

This hypothesis presents a metaphor in order to base its main statement: the emotional state of the learner influences the acquisition and learning of a L2. It posits that the learner's emotional state can act as a filter that impedes or blocks necessary input for acquisition. There are three affective variables that have greater influence on success in L2 acquisition:

> (1) *Motivation.* Performers with high motivation generally do better in second language acquisition (usually, but not always, "integrative").
> (2) *Self-confidence.* Performers with self-confidence and a good self-image tend to do better in second language acquisition.
> (3) *Anxiety.* Low anxiety appears to be conducive to second language acquisition, whether measured as personal or classroom anxiety. (KRASHEN, 2009, p. 31)

Therefore, motivation and self confidence collaborate for the affective filter to stay low, and it consequently makes learners receive more input, interact with confidence, and be more receptive to input. Anxiety provokes the affective filter to get high, which hinders acquisition.

The affective filter hypothesis attempts to explain the relationship between emotional aspects and the process of L2 acquisition, demonstrating that there is variation among learners. According to Richards & Rodgers (2001, p. 133), there is the belief of a rise of the affective filter during adolescence, as fear and embarrassment are common at that age, and this may contribute for "children's apparent superiority to older acquirers of a second language".

The development of the field of SLA can be noticeable according to the refinement of such theories and experimental studies. The goal of SLA is to understand and attempt to describe how learners learn, meaning the processes underlying the acquisition of non-native languages. Therefore, SLA focuses on second language development as a phenomenon, whose findings can contribute in order to construct a more scientific basis for language instruction. Most of the ELF/ESL approaches are based on SLA research, as can be seen in the next subsection.

2.2 APPROACHES TO TEFL/TESL

Although the first book related to method and techniques of how to teach EL was launched only in 1945 – Fries' *Teaching and Learning Language as a Foreign Language* –

the *Grammar-Translation Approach* was already used in United States in the twentieth century. It has its origins in the Greek and Latin languages, and it was generalized to modern languages. It is characterized by classes taught in the mother tongue with little use of the target language – whose vocabulary is provided in the form of a list of words. The grammatical features provide the rules for placing the words together, whereas instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words. Little attention is paid to the content of words. It serves mainly for grammatical analysis. The only drills are translation activities with no context at all, from sentences from the target language transferred to the mother tongue. Pronunciation is little or, sometimes, not drilled. This approach is not formally used anymore, since it seems not to fulfill students' needs and does not consider the context in which the student would be placed. According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), this method has no advocates and there is no theory as a basis for its practice – there is no literature that offers justification or rationale related to it.

The *Direct Method* was a reaction against the former approach. It is originated from the so-called natural methods from the nineteenth century, whose principal and most famous researcher was L. Sauver (1826-1907), according to Richards & Rodgers (2001). The main objective is to apply natural principles of language, such as oral interaction and avoidance of translation. The lessons start with a brief dialogue in the target language, presented orally and with actions or pictures, in which the mother tongue is never used. The most used activity is a series of questions in the target language based on the previous dialogue given to students. Grammar is taught inductively by experience, and the culture is associated with the target language. There is not a register of the use of this method (or approach) nowadays, however, it appears to have influenced some other approaches that came later.

The *Audio-Lingual Approach* or *Audio-Lingual Method* takes some aspects from the *Direct Method*, but it is mainly based on Behaviorism, the language acquisition theory developed by Skinner (subsection 2.1.1). In this approach, new material is presented in dialogue form; there is little or no grammatical explanation, the grammar is taught by inductive analogy, rather than deductive explanation. It attends to structure and form, it demands memorization of structure-based dialogues. Language items are not necessarily contextualized, and the use of student's native language is forbidden, as well as

translation. The skills are sequenced: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Successful responses are reinforced, and there is a great effort to prevent student's errors. Some English courses use this approach until nowadays, claiming that the retention of knowledge is successful when the student first develops the oral aspect of the L2 through habits, to later stimulate the other three skills.

The *Natural approach* was developed by Tracy Terrel and Stephen Krashen in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with the purpose of incorporating naturalistic principles for teaching communicative abilities. For both Terrel and Krashen, the communication is the primary function of language, and their approach emphasizes the primacy of meaning, and the importance of the vocabulary is stressed. Language teaching is essentially based on lexicon and only consequently the grammar that determines how the lexicon is explored to produce messages can be understood. Here the grammatical structure does not require explicit analysis or attention by the language teacher, by the language learner, or in the language teaching materials. It compounds the acquisition/learning hypothesis (acquisition is an unconscious process, whereas learning is conscious), the monitor hypothesis (conscious learning operates as an 'editor' that repairs what has been acquired), the natural order hypothesis (there is a predictable acquisition order of grammatical structures), the input hypothesis (the relationship between the input provided to the learner and the language acquisition), and finally the affective filter hypothesis (the learner's emotional state can act as a filter that blocks input necessary for acquisition)[7].

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching method built on the coordination of speech and action. Developed by James Asher, a professor of psychology at San Jose University, in the late 1970s, it is drawn under some principles of Krashen's Natural Approach, since Krashen affirms in his *input hypothesis* that people acquire language best by understanding input that is slightly beyond their current level of competence (subsection 2.1.2.4). It reinforces associations in the learning process, focusing on oral proficiency by developing listening first and then the ability to speak. The use of the **imperative** is essential, therefore, it is an activity of stimulus-response, and the use of memory, which is accessed often in order to keep the associations made reinforce the learning processes. It is common among kindergarten classes and used in common child

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[7] For further information, go to subsection 2.1.2.

games, such as *Simon Says*, in which there is one person who says an action for the other participants to perform.

The *Content-Based Language Teaching* (henceforth CBLT) emerged in the 1980s. One of its first proponents is Saint Augustine, although it seems to have appeared at different times in the history of language teaching (RICHARDS & RODGERS, 2001). Its proponents claim that,

> if classrooms should focus on real communication and exchange of information, an ideal situation for second language learning would be one where the subject matter of language teaching was not grammar or functions or some other language-unit of organization, but content, that is, subject matter from outside the domain of language. (RICHARDS & RODGERS, 2001, pp. 204-205)

This means that it focuses on learning about something and not learning about language. It integrates the presentation of topics and tasks from subject matter classes within the context of teaching L2 or foreign language. It emphasizes real communication: language is used for specific purposes, the instruction addresses students' needs, and it is built on the previous experience of the learners. The use of several skills together stimulates self-confidence and motivates the students in the study of EL. In classes that work with projects or interdisciplinary subjects, the CBLT is used in the integration of language and content, showing to be successful when it is well-applied.

According to Willis (1996), one of its proponents, in the *Task-Based Language Teaching* (henceforth TBLT) students have to complete tasks, while experiencing real situations. "Activities that involve real communication are essential for language learning; activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning; language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process" (RICHARDS & RODGERS, 2001, p. 223) are examples of the principles which base this approach. It is justified by the claim that engaging learners in a task work affords a better setting for the activation of learning processes than activities that focus on form. Therefore, it supplies better opportunities for language learning to happen. The emphasis is on the process, instead of the product; the tasks focus on communication and meaning. The achievement

of the task and the use of authentic language are motivational for students. When trying to accomplish a task, the student goes through full opportunities for input and output processes; for instance, the negotiation of meaning is a necessary element of L2 acquisition. Challenges and problem-solving seem to be examples of reasons to use TBLT in the classroom to motivate students.

Both CBLT and TBLT's main principles were inherited from the *Communicative Language Teaching* (CLT) or *Communicative Approach[8],* which has its origins in the 1960s, and it is to be found in the changes of British language teaching. Wilkins (1976), a British linguist, together with a group of scholars, began to investigate the possibility of developing language courses on a unit-credit system. By the analysis of communicative abilities, he came to conclusions of what a language learner must hold considering his needs to understand and express ideas. He tries to show the systems of meanings that based the communicative uses of language. He delineated two kinds of meanings: notional categories (concepts such as time, sequence, quantity, location, frequency) and categories of communicative function (requests, denials, offers, complaints).

CLT in language teaching began from a theory of a language as communication. The aim of language teaching is to develop what Hymes (1971) regarded as 'communicative competence'. Hymes created this term to contrast the current communicative view of language and Chomsky's conception of competence. Chomsky claimed that the emphasis of linguistic theory should be to characterize the abstract abilities speakers possess that enable them to produce grammatically correct sentences in a language. Hymes asserted that this view of linguistic theory was sterile, and that linguistic theory should be seen as part of a more general theory that incorporated communication and culture.

The main features of CLT are the fact that meaning is paramount, the dialogues used are communicative-centered and not memorized, contextualization is a basic premise, language learning is learning to communicate, and comprehensible pronunciation is sought. The use of the mother tongue is accepted where it is feasible, and translation may be used when students need or benefit from it.

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[8] In times it will be referred as *Communicative language teaching*, *communicative approach* or just *CLT*, since all of them talk about the same approach and the same principles.

According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), CLT has a rich theoretical base. Some of its additional conceptions are the following:

1.   Language is a system for the expression of meaning.
2.   The primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication.
3.   The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.
4.   The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse. (RICHARDS & RODGERS, 2001, p. 161)

The fundamental ideas regarding CLT seem to be very valuable when it comes to an approach that seeks for the communicative competence of the learner. However, it has been shown ineffective for this purpose. According to Lamb (2003), some of the possible reasons for this lack of success lie on the fact that some of CLT's concepts have been overlooked. Research supports the idea of incorporating principles as collaborative learning, meaningfulness in communication and learner-centered teaching, but their practice in everyday classroom remains the same, not incorporating the CLT's concepts into class activities, teaching language separately in chunks. Also, communicative competence is discussed from the linguistic point of view in CLT, nevertheless, there is not a record of a deep linguistic investigation or study on how to develop this competence in the learner (LAMB, 2003).

In order to develop any communicative competence in the learner, the approaches should bring linguistic features, such as semantic and pragmatic aspects of EL. The combination of semantic and pragmatic properties in favor of awareness raising, in SLA, is the theme of the next section.

2.3 SEMANTIC-PRAGMATIC INTERFACE

In this subsection, I will work with the semantic-pragmatic interface benefiting SLA. The blending of both linguistic properties develops important abilities in EL that sometimes are forgotten when teaching (such as how to apologize, request something, etc). First, a distinction will be made to separate semantic from pragmatic features; after that, the approaches presented before will be analyzed regarding semantic and pragmatic accounts. Finally, the necessity of new strategies for pragmatic awareness raising will be highlighted.

2.3.1 The Semantic-Pragmatic distinction

The proposal presented in this realm is to stimulate the inferential process of the learner when acquiring a second language, in order to incorporate pragmatic components into the teaching of EFL/ESL. The means of putting this in practice is through the development of the interface between semantics and pragmatics in the teaching process. On that ground, it seems convenient to expound the limits of each area, semantics and pragmatics, regarding each of their objects of study, their constitutions and distinctions, as well as a brief historical review.

The origin of the term pragmatics is more current in relation to semantics. The definition of pragmatics of how it is used currently comes from the philosopher Charles Morris (LEVINSON, 1983), whose major concern was to indicate the principal features of *Semiotics*. As semiotics is a general science of signs, Morris defined its three branches of investigation – syntax, semantics and pragmatics. In this division, syntax is the study of the formal relation of signs one to another; semantics as the study of the relations of signs to what they denote; finally, pragmatics as the study of the relation of signs to their users or interpreters (HUANG, 2007).

Since Morris' use of the term, Carnap (1942) embraced a different view of the threefold division, presenting an order of abstractness among the three terms, starting with syntax as the most abstract, being followed by semantics, and then pragmatics. Therefore, syntax supplies input to semantics, which consequently supplies input to pragmatics.

In the 1950s, the *ideal language philosophy* and *the ordinary language philosophy*, two lines of thought in the analytic philosophy of language, rose. The first one was composed by the philosophers G. Frege, A. Tarski, and B. Russel, who were involved with logical systems of artificial languages. However, their success occurred in the field of semantics of natural languages; being the current formal semantics based on their investigations through followers such as R. Montague and D. Davidson. Concepts such as proposition[9] and propositional calculus[10] are often related to formal semantics. Conversely, the ordinary language philosophy emphasized the study on natural languages instead of formal languages as the previous scholars. J.L. Austin, who was one of the leaders of this school, together with H. P. Grice, P. Strawson, J. Searle, and the later L. Wittgenstein (LEECH, 1983; HUANG, 2007). In this panorama, the theory of speech acts[11] was developed by the philosopher Austin, and the theory of conversational implicature[12] by Grice, both significantly important theories for pragmatics.

In the 1960s, Carnap's definition of pragmatics, this one as being the study of aspects of language that required reference to users o the language, had influence on a new born area of linguistics, the *generative semantics*. Jerry Katz, J. R. Ross and George Lakoff were its main developers, who challenged their former teacher, Noam Chomsky, towards the treatment of the language and of the relationship among syntax and semantics. These studiers were interested in philosophical works by Austin, Grice, Strawson and Searle, whose books influenced their work.

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[9] According to Lyons (1977, p. 141-142), proposition "is what is expressed by a declarative sentence when that sentence is uttered to make a statement".

[10] According to Lyons, (1977, p. 141-142), the propositional calculus can be explained by the relationship among sentences and propositions. The relationship among sentences and propositions is the following: the different sentences can express the same proposition, and one sentence can express more than one proposition. The propositions may be true or false: *true* can be represented by a T, and *false*, by a F. The calculus of the truth values is determined by a two-valued system – either a proposition is true or false, its negation would have the opposite value.

[11] The Theory of Speech Acts is often ascribed to Austin, whose ideas were improved and systematized by his pupil, J. R. Searle. The theory's main idea is that "the uttering of a sentence is, or part of, an action within the framework of social institutions and conventions. (…) Saying is (part of) doing, or words are (part of) deeds" (HUANG, 2007, p. 93). Examples of speech acts: greetings, requests, complaints, invitations, compliments, refusals, etc.

[12] This theory introduced the notion of implicature, divided in two types: conversational and conventional. The conversational implicature can only be understood in the context of the particular utterance, whereas the conventional utterance is associated with the linguistic form, specifically with the meaning of particular words in which the same inference is always conveyed. For further studies, Grice (1975).

Levinson' book, *Pragmatics* (1983), elevated pragmatics as an important subfield of linguistics, bringing valued concepts and background about the area. The field of pragmatics is in constant growth; in the past decades, theories as Politeness Theory by Brown and Levinson, and the Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson emerged in order to explain human communication.

Both semantics and pragmatics are the two subfields of linguistics which are concerned with the study of meaning – this conception is of common agreement in linguistics research. Nevertheless, questions involving definition, bounds, distinction and overlapping may bewilder scholars, linguists and philosophers of language. Lyons (1987) presents his distinctions through the development of dichotomies: meaning versus use, conventional versus non-conventional meaning, truth conditional versus non-truth conditional meaning, context independence versus context dependence, literal versus non-literal meaning, proposition versus utterance, rule versus principle, and competence versus performance.

Yule (1996) affirms that semantics is concerned with the study of the relationships between language forms and entities in the real or imaginary worlds. Yet pragmatics deals with the study of the relationship holding between linguistic forms and their users/speakers. Therefore, pragmatics is concerned with context as well as people's intentions, assumptions, goals, beliefs. These areas are clearly interrelated and complementary for the study of language and distinct thought.

For Carston (1998), the distinction of semantics and pragmatics rests on the consideration of being both two types of cognitive process engaged in understanding utterances: decoding and inference. This is the author's division:

> The decoding process is performed by an autonomous linguistic system, the parser or language perception module. Having identified a particular acoustic stimulus as linguistic, this system executes a series of deterministic grammatical computations, or mappings, resulting in an output representation, which is the semantic representation, or logical form, of the sentence or phrase employed in the utterance. (CARSTON, 1998, p. 1-2)

Therefore, the decoding process involves a succession of concepts with logical properties, differently from the second type of cognitive process, the pragmatic inferential one, which unites the linguistic contribution with other accessible information aiming at achieving an interpretive hypothesis related to the speaker's informative intention. As Bach (1999) points out, it is easier to apply the distinction between both terms than to explain them. However, it cannot be denied that both terminations are interrelated and possess a strong connection.

According to Bach (1999), three of the dichotomies presented previously by Lyons are specifically influential. The first one is truth-conditional versus non-truth conditional meaning, in which semantics deals with truth conditional and pragmatics with non-truth conditional meaning. There are problems with this termination, since there are some linguistic features that do not denote anything and do not contribute to truth-conditional meaning, such as *Good Morning!* and structures like imperatives.

According to Huang (2007), the second and important pair has been influential for a long time, the conventional versus non-conventional meaning. Semantics concerns the conventional aspects of the meaning, whereas pragmatics deals with the non-conventional ones. This is also a problematic view because the conventional meaning of some linguistic expressions is combined with use, as discourse deictic expressions. Words as *anyway, after all, besides, by the way* can only be semantically specified according to their use.

The last of the three most important distinctions is related to context dependency. When a linguistic feature does not suffer the influence of the context, then it is related to semantics. Conversely, if it varies in conformity with the context, then it concerns pragmatics. Huang (2007, p. 215) affirms that "this characterization of the semantics-pragmatics distinction, however, rests on a mistake assumption that content has no role to play in semantics". Deitics such as *I, here, now, today* have their semantic content defined by contextual information.

Récanati (2006), makes a division of the two areas based on the role that interpretation plays in both of them. According to the author, the semantics interpretation is the "process whereby an interpreter exploits his or her knowledge of a language, say L, to assign to an arbitrary sentence of L is truth-conditions". (RÉCANATI, 2006, p. 54) Yet, the pragmatic interpretation is a completely different process, it is related to human action

and intentions: when a person acts, there is a reason why he does what he does. "To provide an interpretation for the action is to find that reason, that is, to ascribe the agent a particular intention in terms of which we can make sense of the action" (RÉCANATI, 2006, p. 54). Therefore, if there is an explanation available by logical thought, it can always be overlooked by the pragmatic effects of the context. Hence, both areas are complementary for the interpretation of facts and actions.

The incorporation of semantic and pragmatic features into the teaching of EL is greatly important. For instance, it is not only important to know what an utterance communicate, but its intention implied when it is uttered. As one example, the future forms used in English, **Will** and **Be going to**. The utterances "I will buy a car" and "I'm going to buy a car", although their linguistic form is different, in the semantic level, they have the same meaning. What differentiates these utterances is the pragmatic role each one expresses. Whereas the first reveals a possible wish, the second implies a planned already made. The combination of pragmatically and semantically determined constraints are also used as support for the comprehension process of utterances. For example, words as *someday* and *maybe* can be semantically and pragmatically linked to the use of **Will**; yet, *next year* and *next weekend* are constraints concerned with the use of **Be going to.**

Despite of their importance to language learning, most EFL/ESL approaches do not take advantage of linguistic theory in their syllabuses, as it can be seen in the next subsection.

2.3.2 Approaches and the Semantic-Pragmatic account

The instructor of EL has the objective of teaching the language as a communicative tool. However, it is not unusual to see pragmatic aspects of EL being overlooked in the communicative classroom. Pragmatic awareness may determine whether a successful communicative interaction happens, and therein lay its importance. When it comes to language learning, successful communication is not only being able to address linguistic forms, but also recognize language as being culturally driven.

As we know, communication is not always successful, and in a foreign language it probably will be double work. It is not only important to know the meaning of words or the correct verb conjugation, but also to know what is implicit in communication. Learning activities that deal with semantic and pragmatic abilities, such as knowing implicitness, identifying context, meaning, and developing inferential processes contribute to the acquisition of the language as a whole). Nonetheless, most of EFL/ESL approaches do not incorporate pragmatic notions, such as the learner's inferential process, in their syllabuses.

From the most common approaches seen in 2.2, the *Grammar-Translation Approach* and the *Direct Method* are the oldest ones: the first does not even consider context, based on the assumption that the focus should be on form. The second, even though it is said to be a reaction against the previous one, presents the class content based on dialogues as an attempt of contextualization; however, it does not address appropriateness of language, since the main learning activity is a list of questions to be answered. Although it seemed, at that time, a revolutionary method, it does not consider the fact that communication is not based on a list of questions to be answered; rather it is exchange of information among two or more people and not a matter of coding or decoding.

The *Audio-Lingual Approach* or *Audio-Lingual Method* is the first approach to be based on linguistic research, whereas the previous ones do not have an epistemology of the area. Pragmatic aspects do not make part of this approach: the main conception here is that language is acquired by habit formation, thus, the activities are presented as by means of structures and it focuses on form. It attempts to prevent students from committing errors as well as developing memorizing structures. The Audio-Lingual Method does not consider communication as being part of internal processes and often there is no contextualization in the syllabus.

The *Natural approach,* based on Krashen's Monitor Theory, does not present instructions on how to apply activities, and not even addresses which suitable activities should be done in order to make learning happen. This approach is more concerned with mechanisms involved in the acquisition process, which will reflect in the methodology and strategies used by the teacher, such as the *silent period*[13] by which students go through, when the teacher must respect the timing each learner possess until he starts producing in

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[13] For further information about the silent period, see Brown (2001) and Larsen-Freeman (2000).

L2. The source of L2 is the teacher, who is expected to provide comprehensible input that will trigger the acquisition of language. Pragmatic aspects of language are vaguely mentioned, only by the assertion that meaningful language should be taught, and avoidance of form-focused activities is sought. The *Total Physical Response* (TPR) is one of the strategies used by the Natural Approach scholars to present comprehensible input to learners. Due to the fact that it is performed in the **imperative form**, commands such as "open you book", "stand up" and simple question such as "where's John?" could be answered with gestures and actions, with no need for verbal responses or further explanation on the teacher's part. Based on the idea that children acquire language by first listening and then producing, Asher developed TPR aiming at making the learner comfortable with the L2, regarding his own time to begin uttering in L2. Although TPR may be used in different levels, it seems to be limited for advanced levels, and it does not introduce any notion of pragmatic component or appropriateness of language.

Content-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) uses the subject matter content for language teaching purposes. Since it is built on the previous experience of students, it is said to promote motivation and to be effective, as language is used as a medium to impart informational content of interest to the learners. For its advocates, CBLT makes students work with meaningful language and content, within the context of authentic material and tasks. They also affirm that communicative competence involves more than just using language conversationally – it also includes the ability to read, discuss and write about content from other fields (LARSEN-FREEMAN, 2000). CBLT stresses the contextualization of language and the meaning of words in expressions which may help students understand more language. It partly deals with pragmatic and semantic aspects as the direct relationship of meaning of words and expressions contextualized in the content. Although context is essential to language learning, it is not enough to achieve communicative competence; CBLT treats language as a tool and the content comes first, therefore, suitability is likely to be left aside.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), as CBLT, attempts to supply students a natural context for language use. As it is based on problem-solving tasks, the interaction among learners is considered a strategy that facilitates language acquisition, due to the fact that learners have to work to understand each other and to express their own

meaning. Learners exchange ideas about the activity to be done, hence, the source of input is not just the teacher, but the classmates as well. This method is similar to the previous one when considering aspects of language, such as context and meaning, and also considers language as a tool. One of the problems that may come up is the fact that learners might make use of other strategies, as gestures and pointing outs, to make themselves understood, instead of searching for adequacy of linguistic expressions.

Among the approaches discussed above, CLT appears to be one of the few that considers pragmatic aspects of a language. If considering Hymes' view of communicative competence, as communication, this approach is said to promote great opportunity for the learners to develop the four abilities in a foreign language. Moreover, the communicative approach is known to be used in several Brazilian English courses and regular schools where EL is one of the subjects, but if CLT is used for communicative proficiency, why is the success in communication not guaranteed?

Andrewes (2005) exposes a clear critique about CLT's principles and practice in the classroom. CLT so far has not had any great successors or serious challengers, thus, it has been the prevailing methodological tendency in EFL/ESL teaching. From this fact, the author presents what he considered contradictions of CLT. One of the most significant inconsistent propositions is that CLT emphasizes "real-life communication". In his view, classroom situations do not grant real communicative activities; in addition, lower level students do not have sufficient linguistic capacity to function effectively. For that reason, several classroom learning activities are characterized by being "pre-communicative", meaning that they provide communicative skills for later use in the "real world".

Andrewes also sees the role of the teacher in CLT as an issue. Since the teacher is the one who knows his group, he will be the one who has to make the decisions about what type of communicative skills should be developed for the students so as to face the so-called real world. If the utterances produced by students are acceptable or not, this would be settled by the teacher's criteria, not developing the learners' autonomy to deal with situations. Role-playing, proposed by CLT as an interactive social activity, is claimed not to be effective, according to Andrewes, because it does not address the social context of the classroom.

When learning a language, students should be able to engage in a conversation properly and make themselves understood. Communicating in another language is not simply transferring words from the mother tongue to the target language. It is not just a matter of being grammatically correct – in terms of grammatical rules –, but being fully understood when uttering a message. When communicating in a foreign language, people should be able to associate linguistic aspects of a language to the social, cultural and pragmatic features in order to be understood and understand what one is saying. The means used to do it, is by developing pragmatic awareness in students.

2.3.3 Awareness raising

In SLA, pragmatic features are often missed, such as the ability of managing a conversation properly, the use of appropriate words and expressions, and the implicitness of utterances. In order to promote pragmatic knowledge, making it as part of everyday classroom while instructing students, the teacher should develop pragmatic awareness in students. According to Alcón and Jordá (2008), pragmatic awareness is,

> "the conscious, reflective, explicit knowledge about pragmatics. It thus involves knowledge of underlying appropriate language use in particular communicative situations and on the part of members of specific speech communities". ALCÓN & JORDÁ (2008, p. 193)

As Alcón & Jordá expose in the excerpt above, pragmatic awareness can be developed under explicit knowledge. Therefore, activities developed attempting to make students aware of pragmatics are one of the main concerns in this paper. The objective is to raise the pragmatic awareness of language learners.

EL, as any other natural language, possesses its own characteristics when it comes to communicative situations, such as requests, commands, orders, apologies, etc. The adequate use of expressions and speech acts is what makes communication successful in a

L2. As the objective of language teaching is to guarantee effective communication, the teacher should prepare students to communicate properly in any given situation or context.

When instructing students to communicate, the teacher, then, should teach in an integrated action, uniting the semantic meaning of words and the pragmatic aspects of the subject taught. Not only the teacher must have knowledge of pragmatics, but he has to know how to apply it and to teach students to become aware of the skill. As could be seen with the advent of new methodologies, the main focus was primarily the study of grammatical rules and vocabulary. However, to produce utterances the issue of adequacy rises. The example below illustrates it quite well:

> NNS: I have a favor to ask you.
> NS: Sure, what can I do for you?
> NNS: You need to write a recommendation for me.
> (GOLDSHMIDT *apud* GASS & SELLINKER, 2008, p. 4)[14]

The example above could sound natural for a Brazilian-Portuguese native speaker, nonetheless, for native speakers of EL it does not. The implications brought by the modal "need" are too strong for the non-native speaker to understand. This misunderstanding may lead to serious arguments among interlocutors.

Some of the methodologies already presented are used mostly by English courses as a formula for the students to learn EL in the fastest and most effective way possible. However, they fail in not applying recent linguistic research in the area, functioning as recipes for language teaching. The result is classes in which the focus-on-form environment dominates; or a meaningless learning of prepared structures, which are just memorized.

For proper communication to happen, students need to be helped in developing pragmatic awareness, which is part of the communicative competence[15]. In developing pragmatic awareness in L2, learners must be able to comprehend messages, by cognitive processing, which goes beyond spoken or written words. Also, students need to learn

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[14] NS stands for Native Speaker and NNS for Non-Native Speaker.
[15] Pragmatic is inserted as pragmatic ability in Hymes' communicative competence. For further information, Hymes (1971).

strategies to solve misunderstandings and other problems that may come up during the process of communication. However, to achieve all these results, the teacher should rethink his practices in favor of a methodology that incorporates linguistic research in the field of pragmatics, enriched with grammatical instruction. According to Lamb (2003):

> It is crucial that second language (L2) methodologies incorporate linguistic theories related to the phenomenon of inferencing. Textbooks and teachers' manuals should have some foundation on the interface of Semantics and Pragmatics and the tasks should play the role of instruments for L2 learners to relate with the target language. Additionally, pedagogical materials must account for the state of art of present linguistics. (LAMB, 2003, p. 9)

When teaching, teachers often elicit the grammatical form, being the main topic of textbooks and the center of the classroom subject. Although the grammaticality of utterances is a significant issue for communication to happen, it is also important for the utterance to be meaningful, as well. As stated above, the teaching of L2 should combine linguistic research concerned with the skill of inferencing. The inferential process involves making guesses by information exposed, and interpretation plays an important part when assessing the given data. An effective teaching, in which the teacher integrates semantic and pragmatic aspects of language, develops more effective learning in students, preventing them from misunderstandings and misinterpretation of ambiguities that natural languages possess. Huang (2007) gives the example (1.6) of an utterance whose interpretations (*a* and *b*) are both acceptable:

> *John has had nine girlfriends.*
> a. John has had at least nine girlfriends.
> b. John has had exactly nine girlfriends.
> (HUANG, 2007, p. 7)

The utterance can lead to both readings, it can be considered lexically and logically ambiguous. In this case the same utterance has two different meanings. The syntactic

ambiguity has to do with "every way ambiguous" constructions – those ones that the number of analyses is represented by the number of binary tress[16] – which the most common are prepositional phrases, coordination and nominal compounds. In the case of the utterance above, the construction of trees would not be helpful, since there would be only one tree construction, hence, the issue here is a semantic ambiguity. If we were to use the propositional calculus, the two-valued calculus of propositions used in formal semantics, the result would be the following:

(1) John has had nine girlfriends.

Therefore, John has had at least nine girlfriends.

By the truth-conditional semantic calculus, only one interpretation would be accepted as being true, in this case, the first one, *a*. The second reading could never be understood by semantic calculus, so how can we administer this ambiguity? One of the suggestions the author gives is Gazdar's view (1979) that to obtain a one-side reading it is necessary to make use of a pragmatic inference called a conversational implicature. The prevalent idea of implicature regards what is suggested in an utterance, although it is not precisely entailed by the utterance. The conversational implicature assumes that the speaker is following Grice's cooperative principle and/or the maxims[17], depending on the objective of conveying additional meaning that is not obtained literally. This means that when the speaker flouts a maxim, he is still working cooperatively, disregarding a maxim in order to add extra information to the utterance. Huang (2003, p. 8) concludes that from the semantic calculus the entailed reading is the example *a*, whereas reading *b* is conversationally implicated. The author reaches the conclusion that this division of labor between pragmatics and semantics permits people to prevent unnecessary semantic ambiguity and "preserve semantic parsimony".

During SLA process, the teacher should present to students what results their utterances may have, meaning that when we say words we have an intention to do it, but the final utterance may entail different things and we might end up being misunderstood. To avoid possible misinterpretations, it is necessary to unite the semantic reading of

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[16] Binary trees are mostly used in syntactic analysis and computational science, and it consists in a tree data structure in which each node has at most branches. For more information HAEGEMAN, L. *Introduction to Government and Biding Theory.* Malden: Blackwell, 1994

[17] Grice's maxims and the Cooperative Principle will be explored in the next chapter.

sentences with the pragmatic use we make from them. None of the approaches presented before incorporate semantic calculus or implicated premises in their syllabuses as strategies for effective communication.

In Huang's case, the teacher has to deal with an utterance that possesses two interpretations. And when the opposite happens, when two utterances may have the same reading? The examples below illustrate it:

(2) a. John worked at *Wal-Mart*.

b. John has worked at *Wal-Mart*.

Therefore, at one point of his life, John worked at a store called Wal-Mart.

Both utterances entail, by semantic calculus, that 'John worked at Wal-Mart at one point of his life'. For Brazilian Portuguese speakers, the interpretation of both utterances would be the same, so how may the teacher differentiate them to students? In trying to use Huang's strategy, working with the conversational implicature, the result will probably be the same, (2a) and (2b) would conversationally implicate that at one indefinite time of his life, John labored at a place whose name happens to be *Wal-Mart*. These two strategies can be used by a teacher of English to make students understand the difference in speech when **Simple Past** and **Present Perfect** are employed, while promoting the development of pragmatic awareness of students. The two strategies seem to fail in this purpose, indicating the need of a more elaborated theory that unites the two aspects involved here: semantic and pragmatic aspects of learning a second language.

For a L2 student to interpret both propositions and interpret them differently, he will first need the context in which the sentence was uttered, but it will not be sufficient. The learner must necessarily recognize the intentions embedded in the use of each of the syntactic structures, for this to happen, he has to be able to be aware of the pragmatic features of both structures. When people communicate something, their intentions sometimes are enclosed in their propositions, therefore it is the receiver's job to try to comprehend them by making use of communication strategies. As strategies, the use of the truth-conditional calculus would probably seem limited in the treatment of this type of language phenomenon. Following Huang's line, using the conversational implicature could not give sufficient evidence for inferences to achieve the desirable comprehension and the knowledge of how to differentiate the two utterances.

Relevance theory – which will be further explored in the next chapter – is a communication model that joins aspects of cognitive, semantic and pragmatic features. This theory proposes another view of the concept of context, presenting the hypothesis of the existence of a cognitive deductive system. Moreover, it presents the notion of premises and implicated conclusions, which do not necessarily rise from what is said. Conversely, Grice states that the implicatures are obtained from what is said when there is obedience or flouting of the maxims. In addition, Relevance Theory proposes a more suitable explanation of how the deductive process works, activating information of the logical entry, encyclopedic entry and lexical entry. Inferencing and deducting are keywords in the path of raising pragmatic awareness of language learners.

If the comprehension is not guaranteed among speakers of the same language, the L2 learner will have a more strenuous work to achieve effective communication. Relevance Theory seems to be a helpful tool in understanding how communication takes places and which processes are involved in it. The theory intends to explain the nature of the pragmatic meaning in human communication. In order to work with a L2, it is first necessary to acknowledge the inferential process of the learner and to stimulate it by means of awareness raising activities, aiming at effective communication in L2.

3. FOUNDATIONS OF THE RELEVANCE THEORY

This chapter will deal with the foundations of Relevance Theory (henceforth, RT), a theory that deals with the study of human communication and its features. The theory is based on Grice's inferential model of communication, therefore, its main concepts need to be expounded in order to achieve a full explanation of why RT accounts for the inferential process of the language learner.

3.1 GRICE'S INFERENTIAL MODEL

The philosopher of language, Herbert Paul Grice (1975), was an important character in the history of pragmatics. He introduced basic and significant concepts, such as implicature. His theory, the inferential model of communication, lies on the notion of *intention*. Grice's model is the first alternative replacing the classical code model. In the Code Model[18], the speaker encodes his intended message into a signal, which is decoded by the receiver in the form of an identical copy of the code. The inferential model states that the speaker supplies evidence of his intention to convey a message, which is concluded by the receiver through evidence provided. For Grice, the listener is able to produce inferences from a speaker's utterance, only if the listener understands that the speaker intends to communicate something. He also asserts that conversations are cooperative actions between the interlocutors, there being a set of assumptions guiding the conversation to a cooperative end. One of his main concepts, the *cooperative principle*, affirms that communication is a way of mutual cooperation between speaker and hearer,

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[18] The main ideas of the Code Model are: "talk involves the encoding of thoughts into words/language by the speaker and the decoding of thoughts from words/language by the hearer; and the encoding of thoughts to words and the decoding of thoughts from words in a one-to-one relationship" (TURNBULL, 2003, p. 20) For further information, Weaver (1949) and Turnbull (2003).

meaning that during the act of communication they respect some specific principles of communication. The cooperative principle is: "Make your contribution such as is required, at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (GRICE, 1975, p. 45)

Together with the definition of the cooperative principle, Grice stipulated some maxims of conversation, which have four principles, quantity, quality, relation and manner. They are expressed as follows:

The maxims of conversation:
Quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true.
(i) Do not say what you believe to be false.
(ii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
Quantity:
(i) Make you contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
(ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
Relation: Be relevant.
Manner: Be perspicuous.
(i) Avoid obscurity.
(ii) Avoid ambiguity.
(iii) Be brief.
(iv) Be orderly.
(GRICE *apud* HUANG, 2007, p. 25; GRICE, 1975, p. 45-46)

The maxims state what interlocutors have to do to engage in a successful conversation in a maximally efficient and cooperative way. Participants have to speak sincerely, in a relevant and clear form, while supplying sufficient – not excessive, not lacking – information. Grice later admitted that people do not respect all the maxims all the time while talking. However, they are respected in some level. The maxims generate inferences beyond the semantic content of the sentences uttered, called *conversational implicatures*. This term has the objective of contrasting with concepts such as *logical implication, entailment* and *logical consequence* (LEVINSON, 1983).

There are two types of implicatures, the already mentioned *conversational implicature*, and the *conventional implicature*. The latter is defined as independent on the maxims and the cooperative principle, opposing to the conversational implicature, which is

originated from the observance of the maxims. The conversational implicature can only be understood in the context of the particular utterance, whereas the conventional utterance is associated with the linguistic form, specifically with the meaning of particular words, in which the same inference is always conveyed.

The maxims were developed for the participants to work on cooperativeness and intentionality. Violating any of the maxims would cause the breaking of regular norms; nevertheless, people break rules with a purpose. Therefore, the act of violating any of the maxims would have a reason as well, as in the following example:

> A: Can you tell me the time?
> B: Well, the milkman has come.
> (LEVINSON, 1983, p. 97)

The maxims of relation and quantity seem to be violated, as B appears not to be relevant, but A recognizes B's intention with the answer; B appears not to have provided enough information as well, however, the results coming from this interaction would probably be the following:

> A: Do you have the ability to tell me the time *of the present moment, as standardly indicated on a watch, and if so please do so tell me*
> B: *No, I don't know the exact time of the present moment, but I can provide some information from which may be able to deduce the approximate time, namely* the milkman has come
> (LEVINSON, 1983, p. 98)

It is necessary indeed a certain knowledge about the routine of the conversation participants or even associated events in order to generate conversational implicatures. Nonetheless, it is a significant example in showing that flouting one maxim has a real purpose in communication. From this model, the RT was created with the main concept of Relevance, a maximization of one of the maxims, in which the flouting of a maxim is

explained as being part of the speaker's 'strategy' *in pro* of the relevance contained in the utterance.

3.2 THE RELEVANCE THEORY

In *Relevance: communication and cognition*, (Sperber & Wilson, 1986; 1995), the authors present an inferential approach to pragmatics whose origins lie on Grice's inferential model. Grice suggested that in order to communicate, people have to follow a Cooperative Principle (CP) that stands for describing how people behave while communicating. Together with the CP, Grice introduced four maxims that represent specific features that people observe or flout when communicating. One of these four maxims, the maxim of relation – be relevant – is the focus in RT, which proposes that humans possess an inherent characteristic of paying attention only to phenomena that seem relevant to them. People respond to stimulus that somehow are related to the interest or are significant to the matter at hand.

Grice's notion of implicature, firstly introduced by his approach, is also modified by Sperber & Wilson's theory. In Grice's model, the idea of implicature consists in its formation by the gap between what is said and what is beyond the words in communication. In RT, the inferential process involved in communication occurs equally in both levels, the explicit and implicit ones. Thus, RT's authors introduce a new concept of explicature in analogy with the term implicature. The assumption that is implicitly communicated is an *implicature*; the explicitly communicated assumption is named *explicature*. Some structures in English language contain implicit content in their use, for example the pair *Will/Be going to*, when expressing future:

(3) a. Mary will travel to Rome.

b. Mary is going to travel to Rome.

By the natural stimuli of the use of both forms, we could say that the explicatures that both structures generate is the fact that *Mary wishes/thinks about travelling to Rome.* Hence, the explicature is encoded by logical thoughts. Nevertheless, only from (3b) it is

possible to infer that Mary is in fact travelling to Rome, since the use of *Be going to* implies a plan already made, generating then an implicated premise. By the development of aspects of Grice's inferential model, RT is a proposal that focuses in an ostensive-inferential communication that seeks to explain the processing of the information during the act of communicating.

3.2.1 The Ostensive-Inferential Model

Sperber & Wilson (henceforth S&W) present a model that describes the inferential capacities of human comprehension. The authors suppose that the inferential process is not demonstrative, meaning that it may fail in the best circumstances. It is possible to happen that the addressee, in a specific situation, is not able to decode or deduct the communicative intention of the communicator. At least the addressee may try to develop a supposition based on evidences given by the communicator's behavior, but it would only be a supposition, not a proof. On the other hand, the authors also affirm that any information that is available to the addressee can be used as a premise in the inferential process.

The authors give the idea that the process of inferential comprehension is 'global', opposing to 'local'. By 'local', they mean a deductive reasoning from fixed premises or auditory perception, which is context-free or related to the contextual information established. Whereas a 'global' process, meaning empiric scientific reasoning, has free access to all the conceptual information inside memory. Therefore, RT aims at studying both human communication and cognition.

For the authors, there are two properties in human communication: the first one is the *ostension*, by the communicator. This suggests that the communicator, while producing ostensive stimulus, is trying to convey two intentions: the informative intention, in making manifest a group of suppositions to the addressee, and the communicative intention, in making his informative intention mutually manifest. In other words, the communicator intends to reach cognitive effects in order to generate the communication. The intention,

as a psychological state, must have its content mentally represented: the communicator must have the representation of the group of suppositions in mind, which is intended to be made manifest to the addressee.

As a second property of human communication, there is the inferential characteristic by the addressee, signifying that it settles a proportional balance between the *contextual effects* and the *processing effort*, resulting in degrees of relevance. When there are more contextual effects and less processing efforts, the result is greater relevance; less contextual effects and more processing efforts, lesser is the relevance. However, a greater processing effort together with greater contextual effects, results in the rising of relevance. Therefore, the ostensive-inferential communication implies ostensive stimulus, with the objective of calling the attention of an audience and focusing on the communicator's meaning.

The ostensive communication and the inferential communication make part of the same process, although seen by different points of view: the communicator is involved with the ostension, and the addressee is involved with the inference. "Ostensive-inferential communication consists in making manifest to an audience one's intention to make manifest a basic layer of information" (S&W, 1995, p. 54). Hence, it can be represented by conceptions such as informative and communicative intention:

> *Informative intention*: to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumption (I) (S&W, 1995, p. 58)
>
> *Communicative intention*: to make it mutually manifest to the audience and communicator that the communicator has this informative intention. (S&W, 1995, p. 61)

The informative intention intends to make information X as mutually manifest, whereas the communicative intention intends to inform the addressee the intention of making X mutually manifest. Thus, the communicative intention applies in a different level than the informative intention. The ostensive-inferential process of communication deals with the capacity of the addressee in recognizing at least the informative intention. This happens due to the fact that X was intentionally communicated, what leads the addressee

to believe in the relevance of the utterance. According to S&W (1995), every act showing ostension by a communicator, comes with a tacit guarantee of relevance.

When engaging in ostensive communication, the communicator helps the audience in focusing attention on relevant information, hence contributing to the fulfillment of the informative intention. But there is another reason for engaging in ostensive communication: "mere informing alters the cognitive environment of the audience. Communication alters the mutual cognitive environment of the audience and communicator" (S&W, 1995, p. 61). This allows different interactions and further possibilities of communication among people, which will be addressed in the next subsection.

3.2.2 Mutual Cognitive Environment

The concept of mutual cognitive environment opposes Schiffer's[19] concept of mutual knowledge (1972) and Grice's common knowledge. Both terms represent strong assumptions, and in addition, the idea of mutual knowledge seems far from reality for the RT creators. Nonetheless, S&W do not deny the possibility of human beings sharing information. The point is to what extent do people share parallel knowledge? Human beings along their lives experience life and from it they derive information and build possible representations on it. These representations are never exactly the same. Even the ones who share the same environment, their view of life experiences would be different to some extent. Among the reasons people do not build the same representations is the fact that reduced physical environments will affect someone's life in a different way and also our different cognitive capacities. People's perceptual capacities are efficiently diversified from one person to another, and inferential capacities vary not only concerning efficacy. Hence, people who speak different languages will dominate and learn different concepts,

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[19] Schiffer affirms that communication consists of the 'sender' intending to compel the 'receiver' to think or do something, juts by making the receiver recognize that the 'sender' is attempting to cause that thought or action. In the process of communication, the 'sender's' communicative intention happens to be mutual knowledge to 'sender' (S) and 'receiver' (H). For instance, S knows that H knows that S knows that H knows (ad infinitum). For further information, SCHIFFER (1972); LEVINSON (1983).

as a result, they may build different representations and draw different inferences. In the case of a L2 learner, other than acquiring L2 rules, the learner will try to recognize other concepts besides his own – he will have the duty of developing pragmatic features in order to survive in another language.

RT presents the cognitive environment of an individual as a set of facts that are manifest to him. To be manifest, then, is to be perceptible or inferable; even if the physical environment was the same for both individuals, their cognitive environments would still be different. The cognitive environment is built by all the factors that the person is conscious of, and all the factors that he has the capacity of being conscious about the physical environment. The memorized information is one of the components of the cognitive capacities.

It is during the communication that suppositions become manifest, meaning that they are inserted in a context of shared suppositions. Along the act of communicating, some suppositions may become more manifest than the others for both communicator and addressee. The cognitive environment is formed by these suppositions, becoming mutual when the suppositions involved in the communication become manifest for both participants. The concept of cognitive environment, then, happens to be more suitable if compared to the ideas of mutual knowledge and/or common knowledge.

There is no guarantee of what can become mutually manifest for the participants. However, the cognitive environment gives enough information for the communication to occur. Hence, the mutual cognitive environment is a group of suppositions mentally represented and considered true. What happens is a situation of mutually manifestness in which the cognitive environment is shared by the participants. It is through the mutual manifestness that the cognitive effects (called contextual effects by Grice) are achieved. When one of the speakers communicates ostensively, he intends to alter the cognitive environment of the hearer. The construction of conceptual representations and the activation of central processes of the mind are evidenced in the ostensive-inferential model.

The context in RT, then, is the group of premises with the objective of making the interpretation of utterances possible, it is a psychological construct in which the hearer establishes suppositions about the world and comprehends the utterance. If, for Grice, the

context was given, for S&W, the context is built and not fixed. The formation of the context is based on old assumptions to new information that is added during the act of communicating. The new information is processed on what is already known, composing the grounds for a new context. There is the existence of shared information, nevertheless, it is not a rule that the context is made by already stated information. In the next subsection, I will show how this new information works in the inferential process by a deductive device proposed by the authors.

3.2.3 The Deductive Device

According to RT, in the ostensive-inferential model, during the process of interpretation, the mind goes through a deductive device that enables people to derive implicated conclusions. This hypothesis is used by the authors aiming at elucidating people's spontaneous inferential skills, and, considering human comprehension features, it explains the logical and cognitive components that constitute the basis of the inferential nature of human communication. For S&W, this device is:

> an automaton with a memory and the ability to read, write and erase logical forms, compare their formal properties, store them in memory and access the deductive rules contained in the logical entries for concepts. (SPERBER & WILSON, 1995, p. 94-5)

As already stated by the previous subsections, during the communicative process some suppositions become more or less manifest to speaker and hearer. This group of suppositions is what compounds the cognitive environment. If these suppositions become mutually manifest, then the mutual cognitive environment is obtained. The context is defined by a group of premises – mentally represented information – used to interpret utterances, which are formed by suppositions the hearer created by his knowledge of the

world, which affects the comprehension of the utterance. One example of how world knowledge affects the understanding of utterances is used by Silveira & Feltes (2002):

A: Drink?
B: I'm a Mormon.
(SILVEIRA & FELTES, 2002, p. 29; PILKINGTON, 1992, p. 77)

The example above by Pilkington is used by Silveira and Feltes to exemplify the possible suppositions or implicatures that can be originated by the hearer from his encyclopaedic information:

(a) Whisky is an alcoholic beverage,
(b) Mormons do not drink alcohol.
(c) B does not drink alcohol.
(d) B does not want whisky.
(SILVEIRA & FELTES, 2002, p. 29)[20]

Therefore, the deductive device proposed by S&W takes as input a group of suppositions which, by its possible conclusions, will be inferred. The calculus is only similar to the standard logical process; the device enables the derivation of infinite conclusions from a group of premises, which are constructed along the mental process, since they are not prefixed.

If, for Grice, the implicatures could be obtained by "what is said", S&W propose that implicatures are not necessarily obtained by "what is said", and they are divided into implicated premises and conclusions. In order to implicate premises and conclusions, the deductive device accesses information of different natures: the logical, encyclopaedic and lexical nature. Each one of these types of information corresponds to a specific entry. The

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[20] Author's version.
Original:
 (a) Uísque é uma bebida alcoólica.
 (b) Mórmons não bebem álcool.
 (c) B não bebe álcool.
 (d) B não quer uísque.

logical entry regards a finite, little and constant group of deductive rules that are applied to logical forms, which they belong. They are related to computational information. The encyclopaedic entry consists in information about the extension or denotation of the concept – objects, events and/or their properties. This type of information is representational, and varies from individual to individual. The lexical entry is composed by linguistic information about the natural language of the concepts, the syntactic and phonological information.

The distinction between the logical and encyclopaedic entries reflects simultaneously the formal distinction among computation and representation processes, as its complementation. The content construction of an utterance must involve abilities such as identify the words that compose it, recover the associated concepts, apply deductive rules and their logical entries (SILVEIRA & FELTES, 2002, p. 32-33). S&W propose that there are two deductive rules that can make part of a logical entry: they are the elimination rules, which can apply to the group of premises and achieve to conclusions that passed through the process of elimination:

And-elimination
    (a) Input: (P and Q)
    Output: P
    (b) Input: (P and Q)
    Output: Q

Modus Ponendo Ponens
    Input: (i) P
         (ii) (If P then Q)
    Output: Q
(S&W, 1995, p. 86-87)

The deductive rules are naturally part of the comprehension process. The elimination rules function as a way of analyzing information in order to validate or eliminate premises to reach conclusions in the deductive process. The outcome is likely to be the most appropriate and suitable assumption based on the interpretation of utterances, and the discarding of unnecessary information.

In this deductive device, the comprehension process is non-demonstrative, as it is not possible to be proved, only confirmed. The inferences are based on a non-trivial calculus, which means that the truth of premises makes the truthfulness of the conclusion just likely. This occurs through the process of hypotheses formation, and the posterior confirmation of these hypotheses according to the world knowledge of the person and the evidences available to him. Although S&W do not believe that "*all* deductive inference must be accounted for purely in terms of deductive rules" (S&W, 1995, p. 102), they argue that a deductive rule system is an extremely efficient device in diminishing the number of suppositions that has to be separately supplied in memory, in order to achieve the conclusions of the arguments, to extract the implications acquired from the new conceptual information and to increase the impact of the new information over the conceptual representation supplied world.

Therefore, the function of this device is, essentially, to analyze and manipulate the conceptual content of the suppositions. This is accomplished by the elimination rules linked to the logical entries of the concepts. For S&W, in the deductive process of a supposition, in regular circumstances, there is a computation of its non-trivial implications, never the trivial ones[21]. This means that the trivial implications do not play an important role in the comprehension process.

Summarizing the comprehension process, when a group of assumptions is placed in the deductive device memory, all the deduction rules in the logical entries are accessed. These rules are classified into two very distinct groups: the analytical and synthetic rules. An analytic rule selects only one assumption as input, whereas a synthetic rule selects two separate assumptions as input. For instance, the *and-elimination*, which selects only one assumption as input is and analytical rule, while the *Modus Ponendo Ponens* rule, which selects a conditional assumption and its antecedent as input, is a synthetic rule.

Hence, it can be affirmed that any conclusion obtained from an initial group of assumptions by a derivation that uses analytical rules is analytically implicated by this group of assumptions. Consequently, any implication that is not analytical is then synthetic. S&W expose both implications:

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[21] S&W achieve at one point when implications and logical implications are used opposing to trivial implications.

Analytic implication
A set of assumptions **P** analytically implies an assumption *Q* if and only if *Q* is one of the final theses in a deduction in which the initial theses are **P**, and in which only analytic rules have applied.

Synthetic implication
A set of assumptions **P** synthetically implies an assumption *Q* if and only if *Q* is one of the final theses in a deduction in which the initial theses are **P**, and *Q* is not an analytic implication of **P**.
(S&W, 1995, p. 104)

Then, the analytical implications of a group of assumptions are the ones required and sufficient for the comprehension and the apprehension of the content. Yet, the synthetic implications of a group of assumptions are the ones whose derivations involve the application of at least a synthetic rule. For instance, (4) (a-c) synthetically implies (5) (a-b):

(4) a. Julie is going to work tomorrow.

b. If Julie is going to work tomorrow, I don't have to work.

c. If I don't have to work tomorrow, I won't wake up early.

(5) a. I don't have to work tomorrow.

b. I won't wake up early tomorrow.

The difference between the nature of the two examples of implications is related to the way in which the implications are derived. The analytical implications of a given assumption are intrinsic to it, whereas the synthetic implications are not. The synthetic implications are based on supposition originated from memory information of the deductive device. As S&W affirm (1995, p. 107), assumptions entering the memory of the deductive device have four feasible origins: they can come from perception, linguistic decoding or encyclopaedic memory, or they can be combined to the memory of the device as a result of the deductive process itself.

It can be said that the assumption derived or recoverable from encyclopaedic entries are old information, while the assumptions derived from perception or linguistic decoding are newly presented information and become old in the course they are processed. A contextual implication is considered new information in the sense that the deductive

device can be derived into two subgroups, when [P] represents new information and [C] old information:

Contextual implication
A set of assumption **P** *contextually implies* an assumption *Q* in the context **C** if and only if
(i) the Union of **P** and **C** non-trivially implies *Q*,
(ii) **P** does not non-trivially imply *Q*, and
(iii) **C** does not non-trivially imply *Q*.

One of the functions of the deductive device is, also, to do the spontaneous and unconscious derivation of the contextual implications of any newly presented information within a context of old information. The contextual implications are *contextual effects*: they are the result of significant interaction of new and old information, which functions as premises in a synthetic implication.

S&W declare that the notion of contextual effects is essential for the description of the comprehension process, since in the course of communication, the hearer recovers or builds and then processes a certain number of assumptions. The authors also consider the notion of contextual effects essential for the characterization of relevance. One of the necessary conditions for relevance is the existence of contextual effects: the greater the contextual effects, the greater the relevance. The next subsection will deal with the *principle of relevance* and its key features.

3.2.4 *The Principle of Relevance*

Principle of Relevance
Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance.
(S&W, 1995, p. 158)

The relevance principle was created by S&W as a useful theoretical concept, not used in the common sense of the word. It defines the relation of balance between cognitive effects and processing effort, in order to explain how individuals interpret information in communicative contexts (SILVEIRA & FELTES, 2002, p. 38). This term attempts to explain the idea that individuals pay attention only to phenomena that provide relevance to them. This means that people commonly focus their attention to stimuli that signalize our interests or are related to the situation at the moment.

The relevance principle is the basis of the theoretical support of the model proposed by S&W. Considering the ostensive-inferential model (3.2.1), it asserts that human communication possesses two features that work jointly: it is ostensive by the speaker, and, also, inferential by the hearer. The authors state that in any process of communication, involving sense and perception, our attention can be caught or not. Nonetheless, they also affirm that the speaker, while producing an utterance (and at the same time producing stimuli), makes mutually or more manifest, both for himself and for the hearer, that he intends to make mutually or more manifest a group of assumptions. This is the intention of informing and achieving cognitive effects, thus, the utterance itself is the evidence (ostension) of the informative intention of the speaker.

In the course of communication, when an utterance captures the attention of the hearer, it leads to the construction of conceptual representations on the hearer's part. Therefore, everything that can be reached by the hearer's attention, which can be produced by stimuli from the utterance, may originate assumptions and inferences in the conceptual level. In this process, the stimuli caused by the ostension of the utterance will activate the formation of assumptions and inferences, which will be reinforced or discarded in the path of communication.

For communication to happen, the informative intention must go to the next level, in which it will become a communicative intention. When a person communicates by ostension, he produces a given stimuli aiming at carrying out the informative intention, making it mutually manifest for both speaker and hearer. When making a group of assumptions mutually manifest, the speaker creates a cognitive environment. If the assumptions become mutually manifest for both speaker and hearer, then the mutual cognitive environment (subsection 3.2.2) is formed.

In this process of communication, the deductive device (subsection 3.2.3) has a great role, since this process involves interpretative performance with inferential features by the hearer.

Before determining whether a piece of information is relevant or not, there is the need to clarify the relation of relevance established by S&W. For the authors, there are degrees of relevance in a given information, basing this "calculation" in a cost-benefit relation. This cost-benefit relation, in turn, is founded on the relation of contextual effects and processing effort:

Relevance
Extent condition 1: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that its contextual effects in this context are large.
Extent condition 2: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that the effort required to process it in this context is small.
(S&W, 1995, p. 125)

Explaining the excerpt above, the greater the contextual effects and the lesser the processing effort, the greater the relevance; the lesser the contextual effects and greater the processing effort, the lesser the relevance. However, when there is greater processing effort that is compensated by contextual effects, the relevance increases. Aiming at illustrating the relationship of processing efforts and relevance, consider the following context built by the suppositions (6) (a-b)

(6) a. Hospitals often need blood donors that can only donate if they have specific requirements, such as being in general good health and feeling well; being at least 17 years of age, upper age 60; weighing at least 110 pounds, among others. Excluders to donating blood are the ones who have been tested positive for HIV; have lived, for the past year, with a person tested positive for hepatitis; have made a tattoo for the past year, among others.

b. Julie and Marcos' friend, Tom, needs a blood transfusion, and both want to donate him blood.

The suppositions (7) and (8) would have the same amount of contextual effects in this context:

(7) Julie got a tattoo seven months ago.

(8) Marcos lived with Matt, who was tested positive for hepatitis three months earlier.

Both (7) and (8) have the same amount of contextual effects in context (6), therefore, both are relevant. Both suppositions transmit the contextual implication of (9):

(9) Julie and Marcos should not donate blood to Tom.

Hence, (7) and (8) are relevant in this context. Now, in order to exemplify how the relevance is affected by the processing effort contained in a supposition, there is the comparison of (7) and (10) below:

(7) Julie got a tattoo seven moths ago.

(10) Julie got a tattoo seven moths ago, and by that time, Madonna got a music award.

When (7) and (10) are processed in the context (6a-b), they have the same contextual effects. The extra information in (10) has no relation with the context and does not have any contextual effects. However, this extra information demands extra processing effort, it presents more conceptual material, hence, more deductive rules and processes. By the definition of relevance, presented in RT, (10) is less relevant than (7), as the latter achieves the same contextual effects with lesser processing effort.

S&W declare that relevance is a non-representational property of the mind, as it represents mental calculation of effects and effort. The relevance occurs spontaneously and unconsciously, it is not something a person can follow or violate (SILVEIRA & FELTES, 2002, p. 46). The appropriate representation can be considerations about what is weakly relevant versus what is more relevant, considering a given utterance.

As relevance is based on the relation of effects and effort, the initial context (which is built in the course of communication) has to be the most profitable possible in order to achieve optimal relevance:

Presumption of optimal relevance
(a) The set of assumptions I which the communicator intends to make manifest to the addressee is relevant enough to make it worth the addressee's while to process the ostensive stimulus.
(b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one the communicator could have used to communicate I.
(S&W, 1995, p. 158)

The presumption of optimal relevance is, then, carried in all acts of ostensive communication, according to S&W. All utterances are considered ostensive stimuli, and if they are not, they are only noises and, consequently, not significant. These ostensive stimuli must reveal the speaker's intentions, guaranteeing the relevance. This means that an individual, when producing an utterance, requires the hearer's attention and, while doing it, he is suggesting that the utterance is relevant enough to deserve attention. The ostensive stimuli allows relevance expectations and relevance is achieved if the informative intention of the speaker is recognized. Therefore, every act of ostensive communication automatically carries a presumption of relevance.

The semantic and pragmatic aspects of RT are enclosed in the main characteristics of the comprehension process, such as in the input that triggers the formation of assumptions and how the information is used in the inferential process, for example. However, there is the need of setting the boundaries between what is concerned with semantics and what is concerned with pragmatics, and at which point they meet and interact. The next section will discuss the limits and the roles the two areas play in RT.

3.3 THE SEMANTIC-PRAGMATIC INTERFACE IN RT

Many different theories can be called semantically or pragmatically driven. However, before following such a nomenclature, there must be a distinction between each of the terms. In the case exposed here, the distinction between both notions is related to the consideration that each one of them represents two kinds of cognitive processes employed in understanding utterances: decoding and inferencing.

According to Carston (1998, p. 1), "the decoding process is performed by an autonomous linguistic system, the parser or language perception module". The process is the following: after a person identifies a particular stimulus as being linguistic, the so-called system carries out a series of grammatical computations – or mappings – having an output representation as an outcome, which is the semantic representation of the sentence

employed in the utterance. "It is a structured string of concepts, which has both logical and causal properties" (CARSTON, 1998, p. 2). The pragmatic process, also a cognitive one, unites the linguistic contribution to other available information aiming at achieving a suitable interpretive hypothesis regarding the speaker's informative intention. According to RT, the inferential process of interpretation is restricted and led by the communicative principle of relevance, which permits the hearer to search for a comprehension that interacts successfully with his cognitive system and counterbalances with processing efforts.

In the interpretation process described by RT, the decoded semantic representation is considered to work as a template or assumption schema, which consequently needs pragmatic inference to achieve the proposition intended by the speaker. The formation of assumptions based on the communicated proposition is conditioned by pragmatic inference, not by the determination of referents of ambiguous expressions. RT is a theory that comprises semantic and pragmatic aspects together with considerations of human cognition.

Carston (1998), a RT researcher, separates what would be relevant-theoretic semantics from relevant-theoretic pragmatics, as an attempt to clarify the roles each one of the areas play in RT. Semantics is assumed to be the relation between bits of linguistic form and the cognitive information they encode, instead of a relation between forms and entities in the external world – as classical definitions may evoke. Linguistic meaning may supply two different kinds of input when pragmatic inferential processes take place. The first one is that linguistic forms can convey concepts, which operate as constituents of mental representations created in the process of inferential computation. Thus, the concepts conveyed by linguistic expression used in an utterance trigger the formation of explicatures – the assumptions based on explicit communication. The second type is the possibility of linguistic forms encoding procedures. Different from constituents of conceptual representation, procedures function as constraints on some features of the inferential phase of comprehension. For instance, the example below exemplifies it:

a. Squirrels love peanuts.
b. Moreover, squirrels love peanuts.

c. They love them.
d. LOVE (SQUIRRELS, PEANUTS)
(CARSTON, 1998, p. 23)

The example above serves to illustrate the second type of input provided by linguistic meaning. The author affirms that most nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs appear to convey a concept which keeps relations with other concepts. The conceptual representation that corresponds to the proposition expressed by the utterance in (a) is possible to reside in a structured string of concepts encoded by the three words (d). It is not certain that it will function exactly this way, but it is possible to happen, as the encoded concepts may be adapted by pragmatic processes of enrichment and loosening[22].

Both types of input can provide information and instruction to the hearer to lead him in the pragmatic inferential process of comprehending an utterance. Connectives, such as *but* and *after all*, for example, do not contribute to any conceptual representation, instead they signal what kind of inference process the hearer should carry out when deriving contextual effects of propositions communicated by the utterance. According to Carston:

> What the use of these linguistic elements does is greatly increase the salience of a particular inferential relationship, so that, in those cases where the intended interaction is not already obvious to the hearer, the connective saves him the effort of trying to work out what sort of inferential computation he is to perform. (CARSTON, 1998, p. 24)

As the passage above states, these linguistic elements increase some features in the inferential process. As a result, they function as saving effort used in the comprehension process, enriching the cognitive effects of an inferential processing mechanism that is led by the search of relevance.

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[22] Enrichment is the logical strengthening of a lexical concept that contributes to the proposition expressed by the utterance, to its truth-conditions. Loosening does not interfere in the proposition expressed by the utterance or affect its truth-conditions; it stands in a relation of interpretative resemblance with the linguistically encoded concept used to represent them. Enrichment is often substituted for words such as narrowing and strengthening, whereas loosening is often named broadening or weakening. For further information, see Carston (1996).

At this point in which the semantic level is limited, some of the pragmatic tasks are the reference assignment and disambiguation. Disambiguation, which is concerned with the main issue of this paper, for example, is considered inherently constrained due to the fact that the linguistic system provides a restricted group of specific options for pragmatic selection. What would be a later task for pragmatics is the selection of the intended context, the assumptions that would be generated by the previous communicated assumption, acting with the search for relevance.

The basic claiming in relevant-theoretic pragmatics is that the human cognitive system is guided by the maximization of relevance. In other words, the subsystem of human mind works jointly, aiming at reaching the most cognitive effects as possible with the least processing effort desirable. The conception is that people's perceptual system has developed in a way that people automatically reply to stimuli that appear to have cognitive effects. The mind representations created by the most cognitive effects are input to the conceptual inferential system. This system, then, acts the most integratedly and efficiently as possible, making use of accessible existing representations in order to reach the greatest number of cognitive effects.

Carston (1998) makes some statements about aspects of human behavior, quoting S&W when she affirms that humans, while trying to interpret each other's behavior, seek for the intentional feature even when physical features are available. This occurs due to the fact that people frequently designate beliefs, desires and intentions to each other, therefore, an interpreting system seems to be predisposed in our cognitive system, causing people to tend to interpret other's behavior erroneously – this is called mind-reading capacity. S&W justify the utterances and other types of *ostensive* behavior as being characterized by having a particular intention, which the authors name *communicative intention* – the intention to make manifest an intention to inform something to somebody.

The role that mind-reading plays in RT, then, is in interpreting ostensive behavior, containing an intensity of relevance for the addressee and the attention dispensed. The *communicative principle of relevance* states that every act of ostension communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance; this reinforces the previous idea, in other words, there is the presumption that if something catches the attention of someone, it is, then, at least a little bit relevant. "Processing by the addressee's cognitive system in line

with this presumption is automatically triggered by an ostensive stimulus, irrespective of the actual intentions of the producer of the stimulus" (CARSTON, 1998, p. 14). Hearers use this strategy naturally in the comprehension process; they try to follow a course that demands least effort, they search for an explanation that pleases the relevance expectation, and they quit after finding one suitable interpretation.

RT is, then, a theory involving both semantic and pragmatic features as two different cognitive processes that work jointly in the inferential process. The theory attempts to describe what is involved when the process of understanding utterances takes place. When inferring, people often create assumptions based on the information available that seems relevant to them – in form of linguistic expressions, non-linguistic sounds, gestures, etc. In order to perceive these clues that lead to the interpretation, people necessarily have to develop an ability or skill of pragmatic nature. Scholars have proposed the term *pragmatic competence* in order to define the ability of using language in appropriate ways, respecting the culture preserved in language. Notwithstanding, some doubts and issues are created, such as if it is a matter of competence or performance. And if we are talking about competence, can we "teach" someone abilities? Or if pragmatic is culturally-driven, is it possible for a L2 leaner to acquire it? These issues, among others, related to L2 pragmatics are the theme of the next section.

3.4 PRAGMATIC PERFORMANCE

In the last chapter, section 2.3.2, it was stated that, for an act of communication to be efficient, it is necessary that pragmatic aspects are not overlooked in the act of communication. The term *pragmatic competence* is used by Celce-Murcia & Olshtain (2000, p. 20) as being a group of rules internalized by a speaker, of how to use language in adequate ways, considering the participants in a specific communicative interaction and the context in which it is inserted. However, relevance-theoretic pragmatics is concerned with aspects of cognition and a performance system, not a competence system. A performance system is related to the activation of cognitive processes by appropriate

stimulus rather than internalized rules. In the case of performance in L2, appropriate stimuli, in the form of awareness raising activities, would activate cognitive processes in favor of the development of pragmatic awareness in L2.

The term *competence* was first coined by Chomsky (1980) in an attempt to differentiate it from another termination, *performance*. For the linguist, competence refers to the speaker's unconscious knowledge of his language, evident in his ability to produce and to understand an undetermined number of sentences. Yet, competence concerns the actual production and comprehension of language in specific instances of language use. Pragmatic competence is one of the components of this linguistic competence that Chomsky stated. He presents the grammatical competence, as being the computational aspects of language, meaning knowledge of form and meaning; and the pragmatic competence, as the knowledge of appropriate language use, of how to use grammatical and conceptual resources to reach certain ideas or purposes (CHOMSKY, 1980, p. 59).

Carston (1997, 2002) affirms that this definition of pragmatics, as a competence system independent of communication, is not the case of RT, whose field is ostensive-inferential communication. In addition, the author herself doubts of the existence of such pragmatic competence system. RT pragmatics is not possible to be part of linguistic competence, as the theory it is not only concerned with only linguistic stimuli, but rather with all possible ostensive stimuli that seeks for intentional communication. Moreover, it does not deal with a competence system; instead it deals with the performer, which processes information also accessing linguistic information. Therefore, relevance-theoretic pragmatics is related to pragmatic performance, rather than competence.

RT researchers mostly deal with the inferential process in L1, there being few papers concerning RT and L2. Thus, the pragmatic performance referred previously is mostly related to L1. Regarding the terms competence and pragmatic competence in L2 literature, there are notions of *communicative competence*, previously mentioned in section 2.2, proposed by Hymes (1972) from a theory of language as communication in L2. For the scholar, to achieve communicative competence is the main purpose of language teaching. Hymes also inspired the creation of this term in order to contrast Chomsky's concept of competence. Chomsky states that the focus of linguistic theory should be characterizing the abstract grammatical abilities speakers possess over their language, whereas Hymes

believed that linguistic theory should incorporate communication and culture. For the latter, communicative competence is the knowledge of the appropriateness of an utterance to a particular situation or context and of its sociocultural significance.

Canale and Swain (1980) proposed a review of communicative competence for language teaching. Among their three communicative competence components there are the grammatical, the sociolinguistic and the strategic competences. Pragmatic competence is not part of the components; instead, the authors include *pragmatic ability* as belonging to the sociolinguistic competence, as a rule of use. Discourse competence was added to the other components by Canale (1983) in his review of the communicative competence framework. Later on, Bachman (1990), suggested a review model in which the pragmatic competence is embraced and divided into two subgroups: sociolinguistic competence and illocutionary competence.

The ability of communicating properly in another language is not simple to achieve, as it can be seen by the growth of subsequently methodologies of good communication, in speaking or even reading in a mother tongue. The issue of competence suggests that people should be "equipped" of language knowledge in order to be competent in one. However, in the best of the hypotheses people may be equipped and are possible to commit misunderstandings in communication acts. If this happens in L1 communication, in L2 communication then the percentage must be doubled. Due to this fact, it is more likely to mention performance, which involves phenomena related to human cognition and the time of speaking itself. Since the pragmatics developed by RT is concerned with pragmatic performance rather than competence, and as in the paper I adopt RT as the guide for inferential processing in favor of the pragmatic awareness raising, the path adopted here is, then, the development of pragmatic performance in L2 through awareness raising activities. Therefore, in order to promote pragmatic awareness and improve pragmatic performance in L2, the teacher should try to develop communicative abilities in L2. Is it possible to teach students such pragmatic abilities?

It is argued by scholars (ESLAMI-RASEKH, 2005; BROWN, 2001) that pragmatic knowledge is likely to develop in parallel with lexical and grammatical knowledge, without the need of demanding any pedagogic intervention. Nevertheless, Kasper (1997), based on her research in the field, shows that the pragmatics of adult L2 learners and native

speakers are very different. The author also asserts that even advanced language learners, while communicating, commit pragmatic errors, errors concerning politeness values or intended meaning of messages. Thus the author suggests that there is a need for L2 teaching to concentrate attention on the pragmatics of the language. She also acknowledges that researchers in this field often indicate the positive impact instruction has when aiming at raising learners' pragmatic awareness.

Bardovi-Harlig (1997) affirms that not only it is possible for L2 learners to acquire L2 pragmatics, but she also states that many aspects of L2 pragmatics are not acquired without the help of instruction, or they are learned in a slower speed. Hence, according to her studies in the field, there are strong points that indicate that teacher's intervention may facilitate the acquisition of L2 pragmatic ability.

As L2 pragmatic instruction has demonstrated to be effective and influential with L2 learners, activities that are useful for improving pragmatic awareness in L2 is one of the goals. Activities aiming at awareness raising are the ones planned to develop recognition of how linguistic forms are used appropriately in context.

By means of awareness raising activities, learners internalize information about pragmatic features of language, as, for instance, what strategies are used for requesting in their L1, compared to strategies in L2. Another example is an expression that may be offensive in one language, may not be in another. Or even the subject of the next chapter, which are the implications of the use of each similar structure, considering **Will** and **Be going to**. What a person possibly wants to imply when choosing **Present Perfect** instead of **Simple Past**, when talking about a finished action. The purpose of developing awareness raising activities is to expose students to the pragmatic aspects of L2 and supply them with tools they need to achieve the contextually appropriate language use. These activities are planned to make students aware of the differences in L1 and L2 communication, when choosing one or another syntactic structure, this will be the theme of the next chapter.

4. ANALYSIS OF SIMILAR STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

During the SLA process, students may have some difficulties to deal with similar structures, that means, syntactic structures that may possess parallel definitions, or corresponding meaning, or even may lead to the same interpretation. The ambiguities created by utterances of natural languages do not seem to be possible to be solved only by semantic analysis, which appears to be limited for this purpose. The semantic analysis, by logic calculus, is restricted since it does not cover the aspects of language use. In order to achieve a better comprehension of analogous structures in a language, there is the need of an analysis of the use of language regarding the context in which they are placed. The development of pragmatic awareness in L2 students seems to be necessary, and it can be promoted by teacher instruction focusing on the field of pragmatics.

As most of the syllabuses in Brazilian EL courses are based on a sequence of grammatical structures, the best way to teach such structures is an important issue in language teaching inducing aspects such as disambiguation of sentences in verb forms. To avoid double interpretations and to prevent misusage of the language, teachers should integrate pragmatics into the teaching of syntactic structures. In order to develop pragmatic awareness in students, teachers should promote an adequate analysis of these structures in their context, and the effects they produce when used.

RT is the theory chosen to help the analysis of the structures, as it makes an interface between semantics and pragmatics in the study of human communication and cognition. In this chapter, I propose an interpretation method of utterances in form of activities, containing each pair of syntactic structures in competition, using RT, aiming at awareness raising of students. S&W state that humans adopt the maximal relevance in comprehending utterances; this is true not only concerning utterances' interpretation, but also general human cognition. The maximum relevance is obtained by high cognitive effects with low processing efforts, which are established according to factors such as context and the interaction of new and old information, for instance. RT divides the

meaning of utterances into explicatures and implicatures, which are explicitly and implicitly communicated meaning.

EL contains syntactic structures that, at a point, become ambiguous, generating confusion to L2 learners. The following pairs are examples of similar structures in competition: **Simple Past** and **Present Perfect**; **Will** and **Be going to**. This means that the explicatures they generate, at some levels, may be considered the same; however, it is in the implicit level that the disambiguation is possible to be solved. Therefore, the derivation of implicatures of each structure is going to be the focus when analyzing both structures and planning activities of awareness raising.

As textbooks play an important role in the syllabus of undergraduate English language courses that qualify new teachers, they shall be the main source of data for the analysis of the similar structures in EL. Headway, Top Notch, and American Inside Out are the textbooks chosen since they are the most used and sold textbooks in undergraduate language courses, high schools and informal language courses – which are the target public of this paper. The first pair of structures analyzed is *Simple Past* and *Present Perfect*: the analysis first presents an introduction of probable causes of their misuse regarding the Brazilian reality; after that, assumptions embedded in the employment of each structure are introduced; finally, possible premises derived from exercises are pointed out.

4.1 SIMPLE PAST AND PRESENT PERFECT

The dichotomy **Simple Past** and **Present Perfect** has always been an issue for language teachers in Brazil. The problem in making students comprehend the differences between the tenses comes from the fact that the **PP**[23] has a different employment in EL than in Brazilian Portuguese. When learning English, some students try to transfer some words and aspects from their mother tongue to the target language, originating some of the most common misunderstandings in language learning. In Brazilian Portuguese

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[23] PP meaning *Present Perfect*

(henceforth BP), the *Passado Perfeito Composto* would be the equivalent for the English
PP. Both verb tenses possess similar composition:

(11) *Eu tenho feito exercícios*[24].

Subject + auxiliary verb ter + main verb in the participle form + complement

The version of this sentence in English **PP** and its construction compared to BP
Passado Perfeito Composto is the following:

subject	auxiliary verb	main verb in the participle form	complement
I	HAVE	PRACTICED	EXERCISES.
EU	TENHO	PRATICADO	EXERCÍCIOS.

Both tenses share the particular feature of having the conjugation of only the
auxiliary verb according to the subject. However, the only use of BP *Passado Perfeito
Composto* is used to express an action that happened in the past and continues to the
present time[25]. This conception is commonly transferred to English, in which students take
for granted that **PP** has just this application. Nonetheless, **PP** has two extra employments,
that are "to express indefinite past" and "to express an action that started in the past and
finished recently before the time of speaking". Therefore, the complications are prone to
happen again. Besides having extra second and third uses, if compared to its BP equivalent,
PP becomes similar to **SP**'s use. Hence, BP students confront several difficulties of
comprehension, ending up incapable of comprehending and consequently employing **PP** in
sentences.

In order to make clear when **SP** and **PP** become similar in use, one of the main
apprehensions and the cause of for Brazilian teachers of English, I look over the most used
and common English grammars available for Brazilian teachers of English and students. The
reason why I give priority to English grammars as a source of explanation, other than
academic articles about the theme, is because grammars are much more available to EL
learners if compared to articles. Moreover, articles have their own style of speech that

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[24] Example taken from CUNHA & CINTRA, 2001, p. 395.
[25] For more information: CUNHA & CINTRA, A Nova Gramática do Português Contemporâneo, 2001, p. 388-540.

might lead to some difficulties in comprehension, and, besides, they focus on scientific aspects of language, which is not the main concern for learners who search in EL a means of communication, and not the study of the properties of language. Thus, The Oxford English Grammar presents the following:

> The simple past is primarily used when the situation was completed before the time of speaking and writing. (…) The simple past is primarily used for situations that include the time of speaking and writing. (THE OXFORD ENGLISH GRAMMAR, 1996, p. 254-5)

It also presents secondary uses for **SP**:

> The backshift past is used in indirect speech or thought in a backshift from the present tense. (…) The attitudinal past is used as a more polite or a more tentative alternative to the present with verbs of thinking or wishing. (…) The hypothetical past is used mainly in hypothetical conditions that relate to present or future time, those that convey belief in the non-fulfillment of the condition. (THE OXFORD ENGLISH GRAMMAR, 1996, p. 256-7)

Regarding **PP** use, the same grammar states that:

> Essentially, it refers to a situation in past time that is viewed from the perspective of present time. (…) The state present perfect refers to a state that began before the present time of speaking or writing and continues until that time. (…) The vent present perfect refers to one or more events that have taken place in a period that precedes the present time e of speaking or writing. The period within which the event or events took place is viewed as relevant to the present. (…) The present perfect competes with the past, which occurs more frequently. The present perfect is generally excluded if there are expressions that refer to a specific time in the past. (…) On the other hand, the past is generally excluded in the presence of expressions that refer to a period of time extending to the time of speaking or hearing. (THE OXFORD ENGLISH GRAMMAR, 1996, p. 270-4)

The *Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (1999) does not present **SP** and **PP** features separately; on the contrary, the structures come together in a comparison between their uses and common occurrences in determined verbs:

> Both the present perfect and the simple past tense are used to refer to an event or state in the past. In addition, both can be used to refer to a state of affairs that existed for a period of time. The primary difference in meaning between the two is that present perfect describes a situation that continues to exist up to the present time, while the past tense describes a situation that no longer exists or an event that took place at a particular time in the past. (LONGMAN GRAMMAR OF SPOKEN AND WRITTEN ENGLISH, 1999, p. 467)

Nevertheless, the grammar brings that in order to differentiate the meaning and make explicit that the use of time adverbials is frequent. Afterwards, the book brings a list of examples of most common adverbs applied with each tense.

Swan (2005) presents the following uses for **PP**:

> We use simple past for many kinds of past events: short quickly finished actions and happenings, longer situations, and repeated events. (…) The simple past is common in stories and descriptions of past events. (…) The simple past is often used with words referring to finished times. (…) In general the simple past is the 'normal' one for talking about the past; we use it if we do not have a special reason for using one of the other tenses. (SWAN, 2005, p. 394)

Swan's book, *Practical English Grammar*, is intended for intermediate learners and teachers of English. It consists of giving simple and practical explanations for the most difficult EL issues to learners. His conceptions about **PP** are the following:

> We use present perfect specially to say that a finished action or event is connected with the present in some way. If we say that something has happened, we are thinking about the past and the present at the same time. (…) We normally use the present perfect to announce news of recent events. (…) When we talk about finished events with words that

mean 'at some/any time up to now' (like *ever, before, yet, recent, lately, already*), we normally use the present perfect. (…) We can use the present perfect to say that something has happened several times up to the present. (SWAN, 2005, pp. 438-440)

As can be seen above, Swan introduces the uses of both **SP** and **PP**, confirming that both forms can be used to talk about past events. Although this general idea has already been exposed by the other grammars, Swan brings the most pragmatic explanation of each forms' application, such as the **SP**'s explanation "In general the simple past is the 'normal' one for talking about the past; we use it if we do not have a special reason for using one of the other tenses", the author implies that there can be another possibility for expressing past than just **SP**. And when he says "We use present perfect specially to say that a finished action or event is connected with the present in some way", he suggests that, in the use of **PP**, there is relevance embedded in the employment, and this connection is made through speech. S&W (1995) affirm that the true communicative intention is the intention to have one's informative intention recognized**.** Therefore, the communicative intention contained in the use of the **SP** is different from the **PP**: while in the first one the focus is on reporting an action happened in the past, the second case focuses on the own action. Hence, the communicative intention of **PP** is stronger itself, the desire of making the uttered fact relevant is justified by the use of **PP** structure.

When applying **PP**, it is not possible to include speech time words in the utterance, unlike the **SP**, in which the past time words often occur. However, words that also express duration or indefinite time, such as *for, since, yet, already, ever*, are frequently used with **PP**. These words may help or not students when they are making their choices while speaking, due to the fact that they can be used as pragmatic constraints on the process of comprehending utterances. Pragmatic constraints in the sense that past time words such as *yesterday, last week, last month, last year* are never used with **PP**, so, logically, their use would probably guide learners to the choice of using **SP**. Whereas the use of *since* and *for* is likely to lead learners to choose **PP** more frequently than **SP**. Although these time words seem as cues and, therefore, helpful in the learning of EL, the point here is to attempt to make learners more aware of EL as a whole: this means that I do not aim at instructing students how to base their thoughts and guesses only on the existence of specific words in

the utterance, but instructing them to make their suppositions by the utterance on the whole context. In addition, time words are not the main concern here. On the other hand, I does not deny their use as strategies to help students toward the appropriate choice between **SP** and **PP**.

Since the propositions will only focus on both tenses, without auxiliaries to interfere in the hearer's comprehension, it is possible to use examples from Reichenbach's analysis that do not use any time word in his utterances:

> a. Sarah left the party.
> b. Sarah has left the party.
> (REICHENBACH, 1947; SWART, 2007)

The author states that the main difference between the two sentences is that (b), besides expressing a time event, also has an important connection to the time when the proposition is uttered. From (b) the hearer obtains the idea that Sarah left and the result is that she is not at the party at the moment, giving matter to this fact. Yet, in (a) the only report of the proposition is the leaving. Reichenbach's explanation about the distinction between **SP** and **PP**, lies on the concepts of event (the action expressed), the speech time (the time of the utterance) and the reference time (the time of the event). According to the author, the relationship among these three features would help people to understand how both structures work. Reichenbach's inheritance can be seen in some books such as *English Grammar in Use*[26], by Raymond Murphy, in which a time line is drawn containing time of speaking, time of event, and time of space that the utterance occupies according to its tense, in order to illustrate the explanation already given. Despite of seeming useful for students in making them visualize the space time of the utterance and the event, it does not provide enough explanation in favor of pragmatic awareness of EL. Most of the illustrations made through this prospect do not give sufficient information for students to

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[26] MURPHY, Raymond. Essential Grammar in Use: a self-study reference and practice book for elementary students of English. Cambridge: Cambridge University: 2007.
MURPHY, Raymond. Essential Grammar in Use: a self-study reference and practice book for intermediate students. Cambridge: Cambridge University: 2002.
MURPHY, Raymond. Essential Grammar in Use: a reference and practice book for advanced learners of English. Cambridge: Cambridge University: 2005.

know how to apply **SP** and **PP** in different situations. The lack of contextualization probably hinders students when they face themselves in situations in which they must know how to use the language appropriately.

With the purpose of teaching students to deal with possible problems that may rise in communication, the teacher should expose the grammatical rules and pragmatic notions involved in both structures. One possible way to raise pragmatic awareness is to teach students how to make predictions about the language and to demonstrate the implications of their choices in L2 conversation. To develop pragmatic awareness in students, teachers could integrate pragmatic derivation of premises in certain contexts, eliciting the implicitness of certain structures in EL. The generation of inferences by each of the structures is what will possibly help students in achieving effective communication in L2. Since RT deals with how the informative effects of communication are obtained, the hypothesis here is to use RT as the process of drawing premises in L2. As the theory asserts that informative effects are achieved by recognition of informative intention, this is the case of these similar structures for each one possesses informative intention to be recognized by the student learning a L2. In the next subsection, the informative intention of each structure is going to help in the presentation of pre-constructed premises aiming at awareness raising.

4.1.1 Constructing implicated premises from the employment of both structures

When talking about the process of communication, S&W (1995) state that "utterances are used not only to convey thoughts but to reveal the speaker's attitude to, or relation to, the thought expressed; they express 'propositional attitudes', perform 'speech-acts', or carry 'illocutionary force'" (S&W, 1995, p. 11). Regarding **SP** and **PP**, I believe that each form has a propositional attitude enclosed in itself, in the sense that when the person utters something using each structure, he has an intention behind it, which is embedded in each structure. The speaker's communicative intention can be perceived just by the use of each structure. Nevertheless, this perception, based on the structure's employment, is

common to EL native speakers, whereas to L2 learners this perception is acquired with the help of instruction. When teaching EL, teachers should include the assumptions generated by the employment of each structure, promoting the discernment among utterances and the consequent awareness on the students' part.

Nishiyama & Koenig (2008) in their article tried to answer the following question *Why do writers or speakers choose a perfect form to describe an eventuality that occurred or started in the past?*. Aiming at answering the question, they constructed some formulas and arrived at the conclusion that the choice of a perfect form is guided by speakers' desire to give support to addressees to understand the coherence of the discourse they hear. For the authors,

> When a sentence containing a perfect form introduces a perfect state, additional discourse relations can be established on the basis of the relations that can exist between the perfect state and eventualities described in the surrounding text. More generally, the presence of an additional eventuality (the perfect state) either prevents conflicting inferences to be made or increases the number of discourse relations between discourse segments. (NISHIYAMA & KOENIG, 2008, p. 207)

This means that the choice of using **PP** instead of **SP** may help prevent addresses from processing conflicting inferences and adding information to the utterance. As one example of this statement, the authors used the following lines:

> b. But today the sacred ceremony **has become** more than just a funeral rite. (Cooper 1996, July 12) (*X_*= Today the sacred ceremony is more than just a funeral rite.) (NISHIYAMA & KOENIG, 2008, p. 209)

The argument encoded in (b) is that the event of the ceremony became more than a funeral rite, and the use of the **PP** representing the past leads readers to infer that the ceremony is more than a funeral rite and, in addition, it implies a relevance of the fact in relation to the present. Therefore, just the fact that the author employs the **PP** form implies ostension and the consequent relevance of the utterance.

From the grammars used in the research (Oxford, Longman, Swan's) it is possible to establish that there are implications in speech when each of the structures is used. One possible way of demonstrating the implications produced by each structure is by the comparison of their employments in the same situation. To illustrate it, I shall take an example from a textbook, <u>American Headway 1</u> (SOARS, 2001, p. 104). The task is to tell the teacher about Ryan, a fictitious young man talking about his own life. The textbook brings as a suggestion of possible answers, the sentence *He's lived in a foreign country*. Taking the book's example and the context in which the exercise is inserted, there is a comparison of the original sentence with its version in the **SP** tense below:

(12) a. He lived in a foreign country

　　b. He has lived in a foreign country.

Aiming at promoting awareness raising, teachers should point out the possible premises created by each structure's employment combined with other factors, such as the explanations given by the grammars, together with the context provided by the activity. The premises implicated by the use of each structure are the following:

(12a) He lived in a foreign country.

　　P1 He had an experience abroad.

　　P2 This experience is finished.

Implicated conclusion: He does not live in a foreign country anymore.

Comparing to Reichenbach's analysis, (12a) only reports the fact of the utterance, whereas in (12b) the employment of **PP** to express the same action gives the idea of relevance already enclosed in the own use of the form. The probable sum of premises would be the following:

(12b) He has lived in a foreign country.

　　P1 He had an experience abroad.

　　P2 This experience is finished.

　　P3 This experience is ostensive.

　　P4 This experience is relevant.

　　P5 This experience has a connection to present facts.

Implicated conclusion: The fact that he lived in a foreign country is important.

The presentation of these pre-constructed premises has the objective of modifying the L2 learner's cognitive environment. The cognitive environment of a person is formed by a group of factors that are manifest to him. Factors such as perceptual capacities, inferential capacities, memory capacities, culture, and world knowledge affect the formation of the cognitive environment. The language of an individual influences on how the person perceives the world and, hence, it also adds content to the person's cognitive environment.

Considering the cognitive environment of a L2 learner, it is possible to say that he may lack some aspects of the L2, since only living experience in that language can develop pragmatic factors (politeness, adequacy, intention). In order to make learners aware of L2 particularities that may come up, teachers could present the pre-constructed premises, making this available information manifest to learners, and changing the learner's cognitive environment. In this case, make explicitly manifest to students a content that will further help these learners in their inferential process, when deciding the most appropriate structure choice in activities.

In another common used textbook in EL courses, the American Inside Out Elementary (KAY & JONES, 2006, p. 69), both structures are inserted in the same sentence: *I went skiing last year, but I've never gone snowboarding.* In this situation, a boy is reporting his life experiences, things that he wanted to do before becoming thirty. Now I compare the implicated premises from **SP** and **PP** occurring with the same verb and construction:

(13) a. I went skiing last year, but I never went snowboarding.

   b. I went skiing last year, but I've never gone snowboarding.

It would seem logical for a L2 learner that if he chooses **SP** to express a certain action in the past time, he should maintain the **SP**, since there seems to be no change in tense. In spite of that, it should be presented to students that a change of tense entails a change in the meaning of the sentence:

(13a) I went skiing last year, but I never went snowboarding.

   P1 The boy skied last year.

   P2 This experience is finished.

   P3 The boy did not go snowboarding last year.

   P4 The boy never went snowboarding.

Implicated conclusion: The boy has experience in skiing, but no experience in snowboarding.

The premises implicated in the original sentence are the following:

(13b) I went skiing last year, but I've never gone snowboarding.

P1 The boy skied last year.

P2 This experience is finished.

P3 The boy did not go snowboarding last year.

P4 The boy never went snowboarding.

P5 The boy is interested in going snowboarding.

Implicated conclusion: The boy has the wish of snowboarding in the future.

If before, for the learner in question, it would be just simple to continue using **SP** for both clauses in the sentences, now, after the derivation is presented, the learner can visualize and get the idea that by each tense choice, taking the context in consideration, a great change is done. One more time the learner's cognitive environment is changed as another group of suppositions became manifest to him through instruction. As stated before, since the cognitive environment of a person is formed by his life experiences, cognitive capacities, together with new information acquired every day, it is the teacher's task to try to alter the student's cognitive environment. Henceforth, when presenting the premises derivation by the use of each tense, the teacher is familiarizing the student with the implications each choice has, making the student aware of the consequences in speech of each tense option. As RT is a theory that aims at explaining human cognition when communicating, the learning of a L2 implies in an extra effort in RT: besides the process of drawing spontaneous inferences in another language, the learner has to simulate reality in communicative situations in the classroom context.

In the third investigation, the book is Top Notch 1 (SASLOW & ASCHER, 2006, p. 89), a book also well-known by Brazilian teachers and English learners, and the context is the following: a girl has just arrived from travelling and she is reporting the trip to a friend. During the conversation, she utters the sentence *It was incredible*. If she used **PP** instead of **SP**, the impression she would leave to her friend would be a little different:

(14a) It was incredible.

P1 The trip was pleasant.

Implicated conclusion: The girl liked the trip.

(14b) It has been incredible.

P1 The trip was very pleasant.

P2 The trip still has effects on the girl.

Implicated conclusion: The girl is still amazed by the trip she took.

The definition and distinction that S&W make between the informative intention and the communicative intention can be applied to the competition between **SP** and **PP**. The first one only reports an action, whereas **PP**, besides reporting an action, includes additional information that will only be recognized in the deductive process of drawing premises by the context in which the utterance is introduced. When using both structures communication happens; nonetheless, it is mandatory to recognize that the results of the communication are not the same.

The presentation of pre-constructed suppositions on the employment of EL structures helps in building previous knowledge that will probably be used in situations when learners have to deal with their own construction of premises in textbook activities. In the path of becoming pragmatically aware in EL, students need to be helped when constructing their knowledge in L2. In the next subsection, I propose that the activities presented by textbooks be worked by students with teacher supervision. The objective is to stimulate learners in constructing their own suppositions derived from the context – the activity proposed by the textbook and the employment consequences presented in this section.

4.1.2 Constructing implicated premises from activities

In order to make students pragmatically aware in a L2, teachers must promote not only recognition of the uses of the structures and their implications, but also make them capable of choosing the correct form in different contexts. Here, the inferential process also involves a group of premises that later will result in a group of conclusions that are logically originated by the previous premises. By the number of premises drawn by the

context, it is possible to legitimate the choice of the use on each structure. This means that through the interpretation of context by students, premises are inferred, some may be disregarded, some may be reinforced, towards a final conclusion that leads students to making the right choice between **SP** and **PP**.

S&W (1995, p. 37) avow that "the context does much more than filtering out inappropriate interpretations: it provides premises without which the implicature cannot be inferred at all". When choosing one or another structure as the most appropriate, L2 learners need a context; the structure can represent either the speaker's intention while describing a situation, or a clue in the construction of the context.

Aiming at trying to be in the learner's position in drawing premises, this paper suggests activities from the three textbooks already used here. The activities were chosen because they require that learners choose between each of the structures studied here.

With the objective of achieving the expected result that is the comprehension of the utterances and, consequently, the right choice between the **SP** and **PP**, learners have to build hypotheses through perception, linguistic decoding, deduction and the encyclopaedic knowledge retained in memory. Learners should remember what was learned, using the knowledge acquired by the presentation of premise derivation of the last subsection, and unite this knowledge to the new suppositions they draw by the new information coming from the activities below:

2 Put the verbs in the Present Perfect or Past Simple.

1. Nat King Cole __won__ (win) many awards, including a Grammy Award in 1959 and Capitol Records' "Tower of Achievement" award. Natalie Cole _____ (win) eight Grammies and many other awards for her singing.

2. He _____ (have) his own TV show in 1956 and _____ (appear) in a number of movies. She _____ (appear) in several TV specials and TV movies.

3. She _____ (receive) a degree in psychology from the University of Massachusetts in 1972. She _____ (live) mostly in California since then.

4. She _____ (be) a recording artist for more than 25 years. She _____ (record) her first album, *Inseparable*, in 1975. With that album she _____ (win) two Grammy Awards in 1976.

(SOARS, 2001, p. 51)

This exercise is about two artists, whose life stories are presented before the activity practice. They are Nat King Cole and Natalie Cole, the first one is a male jazz singer who lived from 1919 until 1965. The second one, Natalie Cole, is an American singer who is 50 years old. In the activity, students must be capable of differentiating **SP** and **PP**. Since **SP** and **PP** only compete when talking about the past, the exercises in which adverbs of duration appear, such as *since* and *for*, will not be analyzed, as they imply a duration in time, other than a finished action.

According to RT, the deductive process risen from new information P together with the old information C, draws premises as contextualization of P in C (S&W, 1995, p. 107). In the following situation, L2 learners unite the old information C (encyclopaedic entries about **SP** and **PP**) to the new information P (sentences to be fulfilled), the contextualization of P in C will originate new suppositions that derive from this relation. These new conclusions are called contextual implications, which are the result of the combination of the new and old information. The following premises and their implicated conclusions are:

(15) Natalie Cole _____ (win) eight Grammies and many other awards for her singing.

P1 Natalie Cole is a singer.

P2 Natalie Cole won prizes for her singing.

P3 This series of events is finished.

P4 Natalie Cole won Grammies.

P5 Grammies are important prizes.

P6 Winning prizes are important.

P7 Winning prizes have relevant effect in singers' careers.

P8 The act of winning is significant.

P9 The importance is in the action of winning, not when.

P10 Present Perfect highlights relevant actions.

Implicated conclusion: **PP** is the most appropriate form to be employed in the sentence. Result: Natalie Cole *has won* eight Grammies and many other awards for her singing.

Due to the value of its communicative intention and the informative content enclosed in the use of **PP**, students are likely to achieve the assumption that **PP** emphasizes

its relevant feature, helping them in reaching the following implicated conclusions. The next activity may lead to the following premises:

(16) He _____ (have) his own TV show in 1956 and _____ (appear) in a number of movies.

> P1 Nat King Cole was a singer.
>
> P2 Nat King Cole died in 1965.
>
> P3 Nat King Cole is not alive anymore.
>
> P4 The fact that he had had his own TV show and appeared in a number of movies cannot be connected to the present time since he is not live.
>
> P5 The facts do not have a connection and relevance in the present time.

Implicated conclusion: **SP** is the right choice, since it reports a fact that is not connected to the present time of the utterance. Result: He *had* his own TV show in 1956 and *appeared* in a number of movies. One supposition is manifest inside a cognitive environment if this environment supplies enough evidence for its adoption. Here the use of the (happening) date makes the importance contained manifest, not in the fact reported, but when it occurred. A similar development of premises is generated by the activity (3):

(17) She _____ (receive) a degree in psychology from the University of Massachusetts in 1972.

> P1 Natalie Cole received a degree in psychology.
>
> P2 Her degree was given by the University of Massachusetts in 1972.
>
> P3 This time is finished.
>
> P4 The time when this action is finished is 1972.
>
> P5 The fact that the date is mentioned shows some relevance of this period.
>
> P6 If the relevance falls on the time, then, it does not fall on the action.
>
> P7 **SP** is the appropriate form for definite past and relevance on time.

Implicated conclusion: **SP** is the most appropriate form to be used in this activity. Result: She *received* a degree in psychology from the University of Massachusetts in 1972.

During the deductive process, some inferences will be reinforced and some others will be left out. In the case of the following activity, there is the reinforcement promoted by the junction of two filling-in activities that possess the same characteristic of presenting the date in the sentences:

(18) She _____ (record) her first album, "Inseparable", in 1975. With that album she _____ (win) two Grammy Awards in 1976.

P1 Natalie Cole's first album is named "Inseparable", and it was recorded in 1975.

P2 This time is finished.

P3 The time when this action is finished is 1975.

P4 The album caused her to win two Grammies in 1976.

P5 Natalie Cole is a singer.

P6 Grammies are singing awards.

P7 Grammies are important awards for singers.

P5 The fact that the date is mentioned in both events shows some relevance of both periods.

P6 If the relevance falls on the time, then, it does not fall on the action.

P7 **SP** is the appropriate form for definite past and relevance on time.

Implicated conclusion: **SP** is the most appropriate form to be used in both blanks. Result: She *recorded* her first album, "Inseparable", in 1975. With that album she *won* two Grammy Awards in 1976.

The textbook <u>Top Notch</u> presents an activity to practice **PP** and **SP**, in the form of dialogs. It is also similar to the previous textbook's exercise, asking students to choose between the two structures in a filling-in exercise. However, <u>American Headway</u>'s activity is presented in the form of text, whose context is constructed by the help of a previous presentation of the artists that the text talks about; and <u>Top Notch</u> presents a dialogue between two people, starting with no previous contextualization for the practice. Therefore, students have to construct their hypotheses along the exercise, using their world knowledge and inferences derived by the dialogue as a whole. Silveira & Feltes (2002) affirm that, regarding textuality, the linguistic structure of sentences only underdetermines what is communicated, as stressing the context's role in the interpretation process. The task of the hearer-reader is to interpret the speaker-reader's intention through inferential strategies along the process of verbal comprehension. Due to this fact, the dialogue below will be regarded as a text, not a mere conversation:

Complete the conversation with the present perfect or the simple past tense. Use contractions when possible.

Joe: _____ this tour before? I hear it's great.
       1. you / take

Trish: Yes, I have. I _____ to Russia with this group two years ago.
       2. come

    It _____ a wonderful trip. _____ here before?
       3. be   4. you / be

Joe: Yes, I _____ Moscow in 2002, but I _____ much of the city.
       5. visit   6. not / see

    It _____ a business trip. I'm really excited about *this* trip!
       7. be

Trish: Me too. I _____ the brochures several times last night.
       8. read

    I can't wait to see all these places again. By the way,

    _____ Peter, our tour guide?
       9. you / meet

Joe: No, but I'd like to.

Trish: Come. I'll introduce you.

(TOP NOTCH 2 WB, 2006, p. 3)

To complete the activity above, learners have to make guesses from possible indications in the dialogue; logical, encyclopaedic and lexical entries and background assumptions. It is the combination of these factors that builds the context in the comprehension process. In some of the sentences of the dialogs below (the same as the dialog above), some **SP** pragmatic constraints appear, such as *ago* and *last night*. The utterances in which they appear are not going to be analyzed, they are going to be previously completed with the verbs in **SP,** instead, since constraints function in the level of the logical entries – they activate only the computational information that logically entails one or another linguistic form. Then the activity would be filled in the following way:

Complete the conversation with the present perfect or the simple past tense.
Use contractions when possible.

Joe: _____ this tour before? I hear it's great.
        1. you / take

Trish: Yes, I have. I _____*CAME*_____ to Russia with this group two years ago.
                2. come

    It _____ a wonderful trip. _____ here before?
        3. be   *4. you / be*

Joe: Yes, I _____ Moscow in 2002, but I _____ much of the city.
          5. visit   *6. not / see*

    It _____ a business trip. I'm really excited about *this* trip!
       7. be

Trish: Me too. I _____*READ*_____ the brochures several times last night.
             8. read

    I can't wait to see all these places again. By the way,

    _____ Peter, our tour guide?
        9. you / meet

Joe: No, but I'd like to.

Trish: Come. I'll introduce you.

Therefore, regarding the other blanks, and considering the fact that the textbook did not provide previous background assumptions, students have to search, in the whole dialog, for useful information that helps in the inferential process. Thus, the derivation of premises of each utterance regarding the insertions of the dialog above.

To complete the blank below, the following premises are constructed:

(19) *Joe: _____ this tour befor? I hear it's great!*

    P1 Joe wants to know if Trish took the tour before.

    P2 There is relevance in the action, showing ostension by the use of the word *before*.

    P3 **PP** is used when the focus is on the action.

    P4 In the exercise, Trish answers the questions with the verb *have* as auxiliary verb.

Implicated conclusion: **PP** is the appropriate form for this question. Result: *Have you taken this tour before? I hear it's great.*

Although the word *before* has to do with time, it carries a presumption of ostension when used in questions. When an interrogative utterance presents *before*, it often implies not only asking for information, but it also suggests interest in what the person is going to say. This interest, in turn, indicates relevance by the person who utters *before*. Hence,

before can be considered a **PP** constraint, since **PP** is the structure that shows ostension by itself.

The next activity also shows ostension, not by the action, but by the **PP** constraint *years ago* that also influences in the sequencing utterances:

(20) *Trish: Yes, I have. I _came_ to Russia with this group two years ago.*

       It _____ a wonderful trip.

P1 Trish was in Russia two years ago.

P2 This action is finished.

P3 This is the second time Trish is in Russia.

P4 Her first time in Russia does not show any relevant connection to the present.

P5 The utterance appears to be connected to the previous sentence.

P6 The previous sentence focuses on when it happened.

P7 In the utterance, the action is not emphasized, then.

P8 **SP** focuses on when.

Implicated conclusion: **SP** is the adequate choice. Result: *It was a wonderful trip.*

The word before also appears in the following activity:

(21) Trish: *Trish: Yes, I have. I _came_ to Russia with this group two years ago.*

      It _was_ a wonderful trip. _____ here before?

P1 Trish wants to know if Joe was in Russia before.

P2 There is relevance on the action, showing ostension by the use of the word *before*.

P3 **PP** is used when the focus is on the action.

P4 Before is a constraint for **PP** employment.

Implicated conclusion: **PP** is suitable for the utterance. Result: *Have you been here before?*

(22) Joe*: Yes, I _____ Moscow in 2002, but I _____ much of the city.*

P1 Joe was in Russia in 2002.

P2 This action is finished.

P3 This is the Joe's second time in Russia.

P4 The utterance mentions the date, 2002.

P5 The whole sentence focuses on when it happened.

P6 If the focus is on the time, the action is not emphasized, then.

P7 **SP** focuses on when.

Implicated conclusion: **SP** is the most compatible choice. Result: *Yes, I visited Moscow in 2002, but I didn't see much of the city.*

(23) *It _____ a business trip. I'm really excited about* this *trip!*

P1 Joe is talking about a business trip.

P2 This business trip happened in Russia.

P3 Joe is talking about his first time in Russia.

P4 Joe has been to Russia before.

P5 This action is finished.

P5 The previous sentence mentioned the date, 2002.

P6 This sentence seems to be connected to the previous sentence.

P7 If they have a connection, this sentence does not focus on the action, but when the action happened.

P8 In the following sentence, Joe is really excited about his second time in Russia; the word *this,* in italics, is ostensive.

P9 Joe is more excited by his second time in Russia than his first time.

P10 His first time in Russia is less relevant than his second time.

Implicated conclusion: **SP** is the best option. Result: *It was a business trip.*

(24) *I can't wait to see all these places again. By the way, _____ Peter, our tour guide?*

P1 Trish wants to know if Joe met their tour guide.

P2 By her previous sentence, it is possible to say that she is anxious.

P3 If she is anxious, this trip is important to her.

P4 Tour guides are important for trips.

P5 It is also important to know the tour guide.

P6 **PP** is the ostensive form for the importance of the utterance.

Implicated conclusion: **PP** is the proper alternative. Result: *Have you met Peter, our tour guide?*

EL textbooks basically contain the same type of activities portrayed here, such as filling-in exercises, circling the correct form exercises, etc. Though they seem a little shallow and seem not to provide real life situations for students, they are good practice for acquiring pragmatic features of EL. The premises and inferences exposed from the previous exercises are suppositions, in the sense that it is not guaranteed that all of them will appear at the same order on the learners' minds. However, it is possible to affirm that students will probably achieve the same implicated conclusions, after the previous exposition of the consequences of the employment of each structure (subsection 4.1.1).

Throughout the inferential process, learners combine the new information (information provided by the sentences) to the background assumptions (in this case, the pre-constructed premises in 4.1.1, the context), inside the memory of the deductive device. During the derivation of premises, learners are able to identify the ostensive behavior of pragmatic constraints as part of the strategies of the ostensive communication as a whole. Thus, the recognition of the ostensive communication is what enables the addressee to make the suppositions exhibited in this subsection.

In the next subsection, another pair of structures in competition, **Will** and **Be going to**, rely on ostensive communication and the communicative intention contained in them, in favor of its pragmatic distinction. Premises are derived by the employment of linguistic forms and subsequently by the context, in the following subsection.

4.2 WILL AND BE GOING TO

The dichotomy **Will** and **Be going to** is the second pair of EL structures that seem confusing for BP learners of English, when they try to apply them in a real life situation. Both structures have the function of expressing actions happening in the future. The distinction between them is sometimes well received by students; however, when they face situations in which they have to choose the appropriate structure between both options, things become more complicated.

Of course, it is part of my knowledge that *Shall, Present Continuous* and *Simple Present* can also express future time. Nevertheless, they were not chosen to take part in this section since it is a logical path in ELT[27] textbooks used in Brazil, to teach primarily **Will** and **Be going to**[28] before including other forms. Reasons such as facility or difficulty related to the teaching order issue will not be discussed here, therefore, they are not part of the analysis.

In BP, regarding written and spoken forms, the future can be expressed in six variants according to Oliveira (2006). However, the most approximate equivalent of **Will** and **BGT**, in BP, would be the *Futuro Simples* (e.g. Eu *chegarei* em casa às sete horas). Although this is the only form of future tense in BP grammars, there is another – and more common (OLIVEIRA & OLINDA, 2008) – way of expressing the future. It is the use of the action verb *ir* (verb *go*, in EL) as auxiliary verb followed by the base form[29] of the main verb in utterances expressing future:

Eu *vou* comprar frutas no supermercado.

Juliana *vai* encontrar sua amiga no parque.

Carlos e eu *vamos* ter um filho um dia.

Even though these forms coexist in BP, the relationship among them does not resemble the relation that **Will** and **BGT** possess. Whereas the distinction kept by both EL forms is a matter of pragmatic account (as it is going to be explored along subsection 5.2), the relationship among BP forms is a matter of formality. As the *Futuro Simples* form is the one presented in grammars and studied formally in the school syllabuses, it is the one considered formal and used in written contexts. The verb *ir* + base form is considered informal and highly accepted in spoken discourse. According to Buthers (2009), this situation has been changing as verb *ir* + base form starts to be accepted in written text also.[30] Since both forms are possible to be used interchangeably without losses and

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[27] ELT for English Language Teaching.

[28] Due to its extension, and to facilitate the flow of the text, *Be going to* is henceforth, **BGT**, in the paper when I quote it. For other author's quotations I will leave the way they published it.

[29] There is a difference between the terminations in English and Portuguese. In Portuguese we call *comprar* as belonging to the infinitive form, whereas the equivalent in English for form of the verb *comprar* would be the base form. Since the paper is written in English, I will maintain the termination base form.

[30] For more information about the linguistic variation of the future in BP, see BUTHERS (2009), OLIVEIRA (2006) and OLIVEIRA & OLINDA (2008)

modification in the meaning of the utterance, BP learners present difficulties when dealing with differences in expressing future in EL.

As English grammars are the most common source available to teachers and students, The Oxford English Grammar, the Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English, and Practical English Usage by Swan, are the three chosen EL grammars to help in the analysis.

According to The Oxford English Grammar (1996, p. 259), "the two most common ways of expressing future time in the verb phrase are with the modal *will* and its contraction *'ll* and with the semi-auxiliary *be going to*". The grammar acknowledges both structures as stating future; yet, in the descriptive part of functions and uses of the future time, the grammar just presents other structures that can be used as representing future: Simple Present, Present Progressive, semi-auxiliaries, and other modals. There is no mention of comparison of both **Will** and **BGT**, only a resemblance of the form *shall*: "some speakers (in the south of England, in particular) use *shall* instead of *will* for the future when the subject is I or we (p. 259)". However, in the subsection where the modals are explored, and in which *will* and *would* are placed together, there is a list of major meanings that modals may portray:

> **Future prediction**
> He*'ll* be nineteen on Friday.
> And as she grows up she'll see that her dislike of Gavin is irrational even if she can't admit it.
> **Present prediction**
> The procedure is very simple and *will* be familiar by now.
> The tourist season *will* be over by now. (…)
> **Habitual prediction**
> Hence if you smile, you *will* feel happy.
> My door *will* always be open to you.
> **…**she'll answer yes to every question you ask her.
> (THE OXFORD ENGLISH GRAMMAR, p. 262-263)

As it can be seen, The Oxford English Grammar does not show any distinction between both structures, nor makes references to the probable employments of **BGT**. In fact, they are only cited as ways of expressing the future. **Will** is mentioned in the section of modals and, due to this fact, its applications are explored. Learners might become frustrated if they do not find the answers they look for, regarding EL, in grammars. **BGT** is

given the classification of semi-auxiliary, which is not sufficient for learners to comprehend and be able to apply it.

Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English's, chapter 6, *Variation in the verb phrase: tense, aspect, voice and modality*, deals with language features mentioned in the title, as tense, aspects, voice and modality. Yet, the present paper does not discuss with issues concerning any of the ones presented by Longman grammar. The pragmatic features are the objective here. Concerning pragmatic aspects, the grammar fails for this purpose, as it just points out the following:

> "…there is no formal future tense in English. Instead, future time is typically marked in the verb phrase by modal or semi-modal verbs such as will, shall, be going to:
> Even more precise coordination **will** be necessary.
> We **shall** give an account of the Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen paradox.
> And she'**s going to** see it." (LONGMAN GRAMMAR OF SPOKEN AND WRITTEN ENGLISH, 1999, p. 456)

The chapter starts with the discussion proposed in the excerpt above: there is not any formal future tense in EL, but there are ways of expressing future. In this grammar, **BGT** is named "semi-modal", as the author considers that this linguistic structure behaves as a modal. Once again, the grammar chosen does not present any appropriate use of each form, any significant difference among them.

In the third grammar chosen, Swan (2005, p. 186), states that future is "a complicated area of grammar: the difference between the meanings and uses of the different structures are not easy to analyze and describe clearly". He adds, saying that this happens due to the fact that sometimes two or more structures are possible to be used with similar meanings. The author cites structures that can have the same significance: **will**/shall, and present forms (I'*m leaving*, I'*m going to* leave). Concerning the uses of **Will**, the author mentions the following,

> When we are simply giving information about the future, or talking about possible future events which are not already decided or obviously on the

way, we usually use **will** + **infinitive**.(…) also used to express our intentions and attitudes towards other people: they are common in offers, requests, threats, promises and announcements of decisions. (…) Giving information about the future: predicting. (SWAN, 2005, p. 186-187)

However, regarding the use of **BGT**, the author exposes:

We use it to talk about future actions or events that have some present reality. If we say that something in the future *is going to happen*, it is usually already planned or decided, or it is starting to happen, or we can see it coming now. The structure is very common is an informal style, specially in speech (because conversation is often about future actions and events of this kind). (…) Plans; (…) things that are on the way; (…) commands and refusals; (…) (SWAN, 2005, p. 188-189)

It is possible to notice pragmatic components of **Will** in Swan's grammar: the form is used to "express our intentions" in utterances such as offers, requests, threats etc. The informative intention contained in the employment of **Will** is visible: when we use it, we want to make a group of assumptions manifest to our addressee.

(25) a. I'll open the door for you. (offer)

b. Will you arrive here early, please? (request)

c. I'll kill you!!! (threat)

Pragmatic particularities of **BGT** are also present in Swan's exposition. The form **BGT** has, among its applications, the function of expressing future that has connections to the present, meaning that learners must find clues in the context given by the utterance as inferential strategies in the comprehension process. The next examples allow us to observe this:

(26) a. John (looking at black clouds in the sky): *It is going to rain*.

b. Maria (looking at a non-ornamental-golden ring on John's right hand ring finger): *John is going to get married.*

In both examples above, the speakers found evidence of their thoughts about the future. In the case of (26a), John perceives the black clouds in the sky as a cause of

probable rain. In (26b), considering that Maria is Brazilian[31], Maria sees John's golden ring in his right hand and infers that he is going to get married; if he was married, he would be wearing it on his left hand; if he did not have a commitment with anyone, he would probably not wear a golden ring on his hand. Therefore, both situations possess indications that imply the use of **BGT** as the appropriate form in the utterances.

The subsequent example addresses the following:

(27) A: Why are you holding a piece of paper?

    B: I _____ write a letter to my friends back home in Texas.[32]

The piece of paper held by interlocutor A suggests that he has already planned to write a letter to his friend; therefore, the best choice for completing the exercises is **BGT**. The act of holding a piece of paper is an ostensive act, therefore, it is relevant. In the inferential-ostensive communication process, the ostensive stimulus aims at calling the addressee's attention and focus on the speaker's meaning.

Also the use of **BGT** by the speaker insinuates that the speaker wants to inform the addressee about a decision that he has already taken. To illustrate it, there is the coming example:

*(28) My family and I **are going to** travel to France.*

The speaker uses **BGT** with the aim of the intention of letting somebody know his intention to inform this person that he has already decided to travel. According to S&W (1995), communication involves the production of ostensive stimuli, in this case, the intentional behavior caused by the use of **BGT** that calls the addressee's attention, who is not able to make sense of it if he does not assume that the speaker intended to convey some information.

In the first pair of structures (**SP** and **PP**), I mentioned pragmatic constraints that each form possesses. In expressing future, **Will** and **BGT** also hold such constraints: *tomorrow, next week, next month, next year, soon*, imply plans and decisions already taken, hence they are **BGT**'s contraints. *Someday, one day, maybe,* words that address uncertainty, and

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[31] In western cultures, the act of a woman wearing an ornamental engagement ring indicates that she is engaged to be married. This is a tradition in places such as United States of America and United Kingdom. In other countries, such as Brazil, for instance, men and women wear matching rings that are used also as wedding rings. For more information: http://1engagement-rings.com/; http://www.brilliance.com/history-of-diamonds.

[32] Example taken from http://www.englishpage.com/verbpage/verbtenseintro.html, accessed in September, 2010.

thus, cannot express plans or decisions already taken, are related to **Will**. I suggest again that, in order to improve learners' performance in EL and raise their pragmatic awareness, the constraints need to be used as strategies jointly with the built context – they should not be regarded as the only indication of structure adequacy, they function as part of the comprehension process, not the only source. As the context is built according to RT, these constraints help to construct the context together with other factors, but not alone.

Now it is suitable to work on the premises that each form generates when they are used. The next subsection will deal with the derivation and assumption of premises, in favor of making learners aware of their choice in EL speech.

4.2.1 Constructing implicated premises from the employment of both structures

Haegeman (1989) in her article, whose theme is **Will** and **BGT** distinction, states that the rules formulated to describe the uses of these syntactic forms[33] "tend to be intuitive and often do not really allow any decisive choice to be made in many instances of usage"(HAEGEMAN, 1989, p. 291). Her article influenced in my choice of structures in competition that are ambiguous to BP learners. In her article she also mentions Reichenbach's type of analysis (the one I used in section 4.1), which focuses on tense representation, instead of a discussed detail of contrasts between them. Reichenbach (1947), focuses on the action expressed, speech time, and the reference time as stated before. However, the paper matter is related to pragmatic aspects such as appropriateness and intention, characteristics that Reichenbach's analysis does not address.

RT deals with utterance interpretation by inferential processing, it is not limited to the grammatical level of interpretation (semantics), it considers the context-based level (pragmatics) of an utterance (HAEGEMAN, 1989; CARSTON, 1998). Again, for EL teachers, who are BP speakers, it is interesting to keep studying EL framework by reading articles and doing linguistic research that deal with issues of aspect, tense, and modality, which are

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[33] The author mentions *Shall* several times in the article, including this quotation, treating it as a type of *Will* equivalent. See HAEGEMAN (1989).

involved in these two structures, in the syntactic level. Nevertheless, learners are concerned with EL as a communicative tool, that is one of the reasons why the focus is on the pragmatic level of **Will** and **BGT**.

The principle of relevance represents the statement that when people communicate, they spontaneously seek for relevance in the interpretation process. For the utterance to be relevant, it needs to create some contextual effects. The utterance has contextual effects if its comprehension in a given context allows the hearer to derive implicated conclusions that are not possible to be derived only by the context or by the utterance itself. Notwithstanding, regarding **Will** and **BGT**, both applied to the same initial context, to the same linguistic features, they generate different suppositions and achieve different implicated conclusions. The following pairs show the different implications:

(29) a. *I am going to travel to Canada.*

b. *I will travel to Canada.*

(30) a. *Julie is going to have a baby.*

b. *Julie will have a baby.*

(31) a. *You are going to arrive early tomorrow, right?*

b. *You will arrive early tomorrow, right?*

The three pairs have both structures used with the same linguistic aspects: same subjects, same main verbs in infinitive, same complement, same initial context. S&W (1995) affirm that the context is built along the course of communication, therefore, the employment itself of each structure influences in the context construction, as the intention behind each application is distinct. So, the same process that **PP** and **PP** bore, **Will** and **BGT** are going to bear: derivation of possible premises generated by the employment of each structure together with other factors, as the explanations supplied by the grammars, and the context supplied by the activity.

In pair (29), the use of **BGT** implies a plan, meaning that the speaker has already decided where to go and has provided things for this to happen. In determined situations, the communicative intention is justified by the only use of **BGT**. Its use intends to inform the action and, at the same time, inform the intention of informing. In (b), the use of **Will** suggests uncertainty of the action, conveying a wish on the speaker's part. Then the premises of each structure are:

(29) a. *I am going to travel to Canada.*

       P1 The speaker wants to travel to Canada.

       P2 The speaker has already planned to go to Canada.

       P3 This experience is ostensive.

       P4 This experience is relevant.

Implicated conclusion: The speaker wants to make manifest that he is going to travel to Canada for sure.

(29) b. *I will travel to Canada.*

       P1 The speaker wants to travel to Canada.

       P2 the speaker may not go to Canada.

Implicated conclusion: **Will** possesses the informative intention of communicating only the speaker's wish.

The suppositions induced by the use of **BGT** are slightly different from the use of **Will** and only perceived by this analysis. Comparing one to the other, **BGT**'s communicative intention is stronger than **Will**'s, since **BGT** is more ostensive than **Will**. S&W (1995) assert that while communicating, "in particular, the communicator must have in mind a representation of the set of assumptions in which she intends to make manifest or to make more manifest to the audience" (S&W,1995, p. 58). When using **Will**, learners make the wish of travelling to Canada manifest; whereas using **BGT**, learners make the wish of traveling to Canada manifest and also the recognition of this wish in the form of a planned action.

In the second pair (30), both cases express prediction, however, their difference lies on very specific implicit details. When **Will** is used, this means that the prediction is based on guessing; however, the employment of **BGT** in predictions is based on evidence and/or visible facts. The premises production is the following:

(30) a. *Julie is going to have a baby.*

       P1 The speaker predicts that Julie will have a baby.

       P2 The speaker is sure that Julie will have a baby.

       P3 The speaker has evidence that Julie is pregnant.

       P4 This action is ostensive.

Implicated conclusion: it is a fact that Julie is pregnant and is going to have a baby.

(30) b. *Julie will have a baby.*

    P1 The speaker predicts that Julie will have a baby.

    P2 The speaker is not sure whether Julie will have a baby.

    P3 There are no evidences of Julie being pregnant.

Implicated conclusion: It is just a guessing that Julie will have a baby.

BGT is more relevant than **Will**, since its contextual effects demand less processing effort from the interpreter: it can be assumed that the use of **BGT** is based on manifest evidence. Hence, when there are more contextual effects and less processing efforts, the result is greater relevance; less contextual effects and more processing efforts, lesser is the relevance. The **BGT**'s employment is an ostensive stimulus. For this reason, the ostensive-inferential communication implies ostensive stimulus, with the objective of calling the attention of an audience and focusing on the communicator's meaning.

The use of each structure in the last three pairs is discriminated in one utterance representing a request and the other utterance representing a command. S&W (1995, p. 50) expose that in general "recognizing the intention behind the ostension is necessary for efficient information processing: someone who fails to recognize this intention may fail to notice relevant information". The use of **BGT** is, again, ostensive in this context. Besides dealing with implicitness, here we deal with a low degree of politeness. The following premises are:

(31) a. *You are going to arrive early tomorrow, right?*

    P1 The speaker wants the interlocutor to arrive early on the next day.

    P2 The speaker is demanding that the interlocutor arrive early on the next day.

Implicated conclusion: The interlocutor is required to arrive early.

(31)b. *You will arrive early tomorrow, right?*

    P1 The speaker wants the interlocutor to arrive early on the next day.

    P2 The speaker is requesting that the interlocutor arrive early on the next day.

Implicated conclusion: The interlocutor is asked to arrive early.

With the derivation of premises by the employment of each structure, learners are able to see the impact their words have when they are uttered. To stimulate pragmatic awareness of EL, it is necessary to make students recognize pragmatic particularities of

each structure in order to make them improve their performance and know how to deal with the choice of linguistic forms.

The next subsection contains activities extracted from three textbooks. To solve the solution of the activities, learners must have to use the knowledge acquired in this subsection along with to the new information provided by the activities. The process of construction of premises by textbook activities is the theme.

4.2.2 Constructing implicated premises from activities

S&W (1995) presume that human cognition is guided by relevance, in the senses that our comprehension device is directed to information that appears to be relevant to us. In RT, the communication is the recognition of the communicative intention by the hearer and interpretation is treated as the process that involves access to concepts and encyclopaedic entries (hypotheses formation) and deduction (reinforcement or discard of hypotheses). Thus, the comprehension of utterances is the processing of new information meeting old information that constitute the cognitive environment. In the course of utterance processing, the context is being built by an initial context. Regarding L2 and the process of choosing one or another structure in competition, the process is basically the same.

In the previous section learners were introduced to pre-constructed premises by the employment of **Will** and **BGT**, assumptions that are embedded in the pragmatic level of each structure. The objective was to raise students' awareness of EL and improve their performance in EL. For this to happen, it is also necessary that they put in practice their acquired knowledge: the activities of textbooks, although they do not always provide real communication, are good exercises for students to practice pragmatic exercises such as inferencing and deducting. When dealing with the textbook activities, learners will have to create hypotheses using the previous knowledge presented to them and their own experience (concepts and encyclopaedic entries). Their hypotheses will be reinforced or discarded, depending on where their deduction device leads them to.

One example of this process is the assumptions created by the next activity. The activity below was taken from <u>Headway Intermediate</u> (2006), in which learners have to choose between the two forms provided, marked in italics:

a 'I've got a headache.'
   'Have you? Wait a minute. *I'll get/I'm going to get* you an aspirin.'

b 'It's Tony's birthday next week.'
   'Is it? I didn't know. *I'll send/I'm going to send* him a card.'

c 'Why are you putting on your coat?'
   'Because *I'll take/I'm going to take* the dog for a walk.'

d 'Are you and Alan still going out together?'
   'Oh, yes. *We'll get married/We're going to get married* next year.'

e (a telephone conversation)
   'Would you like to go out for a drink tonight?'
   '*I'll watch/I'm going to watch* the football on television.'
   'Oh! I didn't know it was on.'
   'Come and watch it with me!'
   'OK. *I'll come/I'm going to come* round at about 7.30.'

f 'Did you phone Peter about tonight?'
   'No, I forgot. *I'll do/I'm going to do* it now. What's his number?'

(SOARS, 2006, p. 47)

In order to choose between **Will** and **BGT,** learners, when dealing with this type of exercise, have to build the context based on the information about the uses and implications of the structures, together with the situation given by the exercise. In the activity above, all the situations occur with two people interacting: here, they are going to be S1 (first person to speak) and S2 (second person to speak). The derivation of premises:

(32) Exercise (a)

P1 S1 has a headache.

P2 S2 did not know S1 was going to have a headache.

P3 S2 offers an aspirin spontaneously.

P4 S2 did not plan to offer an aspirin.

Implicated conclusion: **Will** is the appropriate form for spontaneous actions. Result: *I'll get you an aspirin.*

(33) Exercise (b)

P1 S1 informed S2 that next week is Tony's birthday.

P2 S2 did not know that next week is Tony's birthday.

P3 S2 decided, at the time of speaking, that he would send Tony a card.

P4 S2 did not plan to send Tony a card.

Implicated conclusion: **Will** is the adequate option for decisions that are not planned. Result: *I'll send him a card.*

The deduction process of interpreting information is concerned with the quality of linguistic decoding and other input processes. The deductive device (see 3.2.3) is formed by a group of deductive rules that deal with the semantic properties of assumptions. An assumption, in turn, is a structured set of concepts. Concepts are placed in an abstract level, they address other concepts in our memory, they store types of information and can be sensitive to deduction rules.

Considering (a) and (b), the utterances *Have you?* and *Is it?* given by S2 in both cases, address the information implying that this type of utterance is produced by people that do not know what is happening or do not know about the previous given news. One might think that *Have you?* and *Is it?* may address reflexive questions that look for confirmation; however, this hypothesis is discarded as the context is built during the generation of premises in the course of the activity. The premises of the next activity are the following:

(34) Exercise (c)

P1 S2 is putting his coat.

P2 S2 is putting his coat because he wants to take his dog for a walk.

P3 S2 decided to take his dog for a walk and then decided to put his coat.

P4 S2 planned to take his dog for a walk.

Implicated conclusion: **BGT** is the form to express plans. Result: *I'm going to take the dog for a walk.*

(35) Exercise (d)

P1 S2 is still going out with Alan.

P2 The use of *next year* indicates a plan.

P3 S2 wants to get married next year.

P4 S2 plans to get married to Alan.

Implicated conclusion: **BGT** is the adequate form to express plan. Result: *We're going to get married next year.*

The information that is stored inside memory in the the form of conceptual addresses is divided in three groups: logic, encyclopaedic and lexical as already stated. The use of constraints such as *next year* has to do with a lexical entry that activates information of the

concept in natural language. Here, *next year* activates the information about planning, which leads to the use of **BGT** for plans.

(36) Exercise (e)

P1 S2 wants to watch the football on television.

P2 S2 will not go out for a drink with S1, because he wants to watch the football on television.

P3 S2 planned to watch the football on television before S1 calls.

Implicated conclusion: **BGT** is the best option to express a plan. Result: *I'm going to watch the football on television.*

(36) Exercise (e)

P1 S1 asks S2 to go out for a drink.

P2 S1 did not know S2 already had plans.

P3 S1 did not know that the football would shows on television.

P4 S2 asks S1 to watch the football on television together.

P5 S1 decides, at the time of speaking, that he accepts S2's offer.

Implicated conclusion: **Will** is the suitable form for describing spontaneous actions. Result: *I'll come at about 7:30.*

(37) Exercise (f)

P1 S1 asks S2 if S2 phoned Peter.

P2 S2 forgot to call Peter.

P3 S2 decides, at the time of speaking, to call Peter.

Implicated conclusion: **Will** is the proper form for decisions made at the time of speaking. Result: *I'll do it now.*

The conclusion by deduction in (e) and (f) happened due to the fact that the deductive device is equipped with a group of deductive rules that are applied to the logical form they are part of, and because the device allows the derivation of premises built during the comprehension process. The same process occurs in the next activity.

The activity below was taken from <u>American Inside Out</u>: in the exercise, students have to choose between two options given by the book. Besides **Will** and **BGT**, the activity presents a third form of expressing future that is the Present Continuous. As the paper focuses on the pragmatic distinction between **Will** and **BGT**, only the two occurrences of

both forms in competition are going to be analyzed. The rest of the activity will serve as background for the construction of the context:

(Phone rings.)

Becky: Hello.
Sandy: Hi, Becky, it's Sandy.
Becky: Hiya.
Sandy: Becky, **will you do/are you doing** anything tonight?
Becky: Yes. **I'll meet/I'm meeting** Alex and Suzy in about half an hour.
Sandy: Where **will you go/are you going**?
Becky: To the movies. Would you like to come with us?
Sandy: Yes, I'd love to. Where **will you meet/are you meeting**?
Becky: At their house, but we could meet you in front of the theater on George Street eight-thirty.
Sandy: O.K., thanks. See you later. (Puts the phone down and calls out to Zoë.) **I'll go/I'm going** to the movies with Becky.
Zoë: Good idea.
Sandy: And next time I see David, **I'm telling/I'm going to tell** him to get lost.
Zoë: Hmm. **I'll believe/I'm believing** that when I see it.

(Phone rings.)

Zoë: Hello.
David: Is Sandy there, please?
Zoë: Yes, hold on a minute—**I'll get/I'm going to get** her for you. (Whispers.) It's David.
Sandy: (Coldly.) Oh, hello, David.
David: Look, I'm really sorry I didn't call earlier, but I had to work late.

Sandy: Oh, that's all right—I forgot you were going to call anyway.
David: Listen, I'm really sorry, but I can't see you tonight. **I'll have/I'm having** dinner with my parents.
Sandy: It doesn't matter—**I'll go/I'm going** to the movies anyway.
David: Oh, O.K. Well, **I'll call/I'm going to call** you.
Sandy: When? I mean, all right. Bye.
David: Bye.

(Sandy puts the phone down.)

Zoë: You didn't tell him to get lost.
Sandy: Well, he apologized—and **he'll have/he's having** dinner with his parents. Anyway, I have to go. See you later.

(Later, in front of the theater.)

Sandy: Hi, Alex. Hi, Becky. Where's Suzy?
Becky: Oh, she changed her mind at the last minute. David called her and asked her to go out to dinner at that new Japanese restaurant.
Sandy: What?! Now **I'm definitely telling/I'm definitely going to tell** him to get lost!

Zoë and Sandy

(KAY, 2008, p. 60)

These are the premises that can be produced:

(40) *Zöe: Yes, hold on a minute – **I'll get/I'm going to get** her for you. (Whispers.) It's David.*

P1 David calls and asks to talk to Sandy.

P2 Zoe answers the phone.

P3 Zoe did not know that David would call.

P4 Zoe did not plan to help David.

Implicated conclusion: **Will** is the right choice for actions not planned. Result: *I'll get her for you*.

(41) *David: Oh, O.K. Well, **I'll call/I'm going to call** you.*

P1 David tells Sandy that he is not able to see her tonight.

P2 Sandy has plans and tells David.

P3 David did not know that Sandy had plans.

P4 David spontaneously says he will call her in the future.

Implicated conclusion: **Will** is the best choice for spontaneous actions. Result: *I'll get her for you*.

The relevance, contained in the relationship of an assumption and the context, is considered a strong criterion that allows a person to choose a suitable supposition for an adequate comprehension. The relevance produced by ostension is what accounts for the choice of structures in the exercises of <u>Top Notch</u>. In the next derivation of premises, it is possible to see the ostensive behavior by the use of *maybe* in (1), *yes, we have* in (2) and *next week* in (3):

1. A: What are you doing this weekend?
   B: I _____ a play. How about you?
      see
   A: No plans. Maybe I _____ to the movies.
      go

2. A: Have you decided about your vacation yet?
   B: Yes, we have. We _____ to India!
      go
   A: Wow! When _____ you _____?
      leave
   B: We _____ out on the 20th.
      fly
   A: That's fantastic. Where _____ you _____?
      stay
   B: We _____.
      camp

3. A: Guess what? I _____ into a new apartment next week.
      move
   B: That's great news! I _____ you on moving day if you like.
      help
   A: Thanks! It's this Saturday at 9 A.M. OK?
   B: Oh, no! I _____ my sister at the airport then.
      pick up
   A: No problem. Just come by when you're free.

(SASLOW, 2006, p. 48)

Premises derivation:

(42) Exercise (1)

P1 A wants to know if B has any plans for the coming weekend.

P2 B wants to see a play.

P3 B has plans to see the play.

P4 B wants to know if A has any plans for the next weekend.

P5 A does not have plans.

P6 A might go to the movies.

P7 The use of *maybe* implies uncertainty.

Implicated conclusions: **BGT** is the right option for expressing plans, and **Will** is the right choice for actions that have not been planned. Result: *I'm going to see a play./Maybe I'll go to the movies.*

(43) Exercise (2)

P1 A wants to know if B has already decided about his vacation.

P2 B has already decided.

P3 B informs A that he has already decided.

P4 A, then, knows that B has plans.

P5 A wants to know about B's plans for the vacation.

Implicated conclusions: **BGT** is the right option for expressing plans, and as A was already informed about B's decision, he will base his questions on this information. Result: *We are going to India! / When are you going to leave? / We are flying out on the 20th. / Where are you going to stay? / We are going to camp.*

(44) Exercise (3)

P1 A wants to inform B that he will move to a new apartment.

P2 The use of *next weekend* implies a plan.

P3 A has already planned to move to a new apartment.

P4 B did not know that A was moving.

P5 B spontaneously offers to help A on the moving day.

P6 B will not be able to help.

P7 B had already made plans for the same date of A's moving day.

Implicated conclusions: **BGT** is the best choice for expressing plans, while **Will** is the adequate option for spontaneous actions. Result: *I'm going to move to a new apartment next week. / I will help you on moving day if you like. / I'm going to pick up my sister at the airport then.*

In this section I suggested a procedure of presenting EL structures in competition – **Simple Past** and **Present Perfect**; **Will** and **Be going to** – by means of derivation of premises and the following implicated conclusions based on their uses. Generally these structures are presented in classrooms through the exposition of rules and examples that seems disconnected to real life communication and decontextualized, as it can be seen in some of the approaches to TESL from chapter 2.

SLA theories discuss about the performance of the learner, which most of the times is the source for SLA analysis that supports a theory. In SLA, the linguistic elements to be acquired are not only the ones concerning syntactic (rules), phonological (sound patterns), and semantic (meaning) features. It is also important that pragmatic (use of language in context) aspects are taught to learners in order to prevent possible misunderstandings and to solve ambiguities, while improving their performance in EL. From the approaches presented in chapter 2, only one of them seems to present in its syllabus the use of real life communication in context. However, the presentation appears to be superficial and not sufficient for the learning of EL to be successful. The presentation of real situations it is not sufficient for the learner to develop his performance in communication; the incorporation of pragmatic features, as inferencing, deducting and perceiving implicitness, stimulates the performance and makes communication meaningful for both L2 speaker and hearer.

Although syntactic features such as tense, aspect, modality are important in the teaching of EL in order to make learners proficient in communication, it is utterly necessary to promote their awareness of pragmatic aspects of EL, aiming at pragmatic awareness on the part of students. For this, I suggest some awareness raising activities may be proposed by teachers to improve learners' pragmatic performance in EL.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Pragmatics "is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (CRYSTAL, 1985, p. 240). This means that pragmatics can be considered as being the study of communicative acts in their sociocultural contexts. Communicative acts comprehend speech acts – as requests, greetings, refusals – and also participations in conversation, engagements in different types of discourse, and interactions in complex speech events. Pragmatic ability in a second language, then, is part of the communicative performance of nonnative speakers, hence, it must be incorporated in a model of communicative ability.

Aiming at communicating successfully in a target language, pragmatic aspects of second language must be well developed. When adopting pragmatic awareness as one of the objectives of second language teaching, teachers should give special attention to the pragmatic input they provide to learners. The sources of the exercises chosen for the previous analyses of similar structures are textbooks, since in most cases they are the center of courses' curricula and syllabuses in classrooms. Nevertheless, they do not provide enough information for learners to successfully develop pragmatic awareness. Consequently, learners are likely to make misuse of English language, causing misunderstandings and ambiguities. In order to improve learners' performance and prevent some possible improper uses, teachers should incorporate linguistic theory in the classroom environment, bringing in practices involving pragmatics.

When learning English in a foreign language context, it is likely that the only opportunity of contact that students have with English language conversational norms comes from samples of authentic language or understandable metalinguistic descriptions representing forms of speaking. (GRANT & STARKS, 2001) When presenting English language syntactic structures in competition through activities that involve the

understanding of utterances by the development of inferences from the text, teachers make learners aware of pragmatic properties of a foreign language. Since textbooks fail in promoting this consciousness and the main English language approaches, exposed in this paper, do not combine pragmatic theory to teaching, it is necessary, then, that teachers search for alternatives that aim at developing awareness raising in students.

Even though learners seem to know the grammatical and usage rules, in most cases, they are unable to apply the correct language in context. To be successful in second language communication, learners must be capable of conveying the message they intend, and make the addressee interpret it appropriately. The pragmatic performance of learners is a very important component in a communicative spectrum due to the fact that the main focus is on the role of the hearer in the communicative process, who has to search in the context indications to employ suitable language and make himself understood. In order to look for evidence in the context, the hearer has to make inferences, as well as learners when facing ambiguities in a foreign language setting.

As teachers should deal with the inferential process of learners, it is crucial that a theory that is concerned with the inferential characteristics of human communication and cognition be applied in teaching. The Relevance Theory by Sperber & Wilson (1986; 1995) is chosen as the most likely path learners take when making deductions from a given utterance. The relevance-theoretic scholars state that humans make use of maximal relevance in the understanding of utterances. When maximizing relevance, communicators tend to use the following criteria, their capacities and preferences. The maximal relevance is achieved through the balance of high cognitive effects with low processing efforts. The cognitive effects are carried out along the cognitive process and may be obtained by three types of procedures: adding new information, strengthening of old information, and discharging of old information. The processing efforts are the processing costs of information. Therefore, the balance is reached this way: the more processing efforts, the less relevance, the more cognitive effects, the more relevance.

In the case of disambiguation of structures in competition, teachers present not only the grammatical level of both structures but the pragmatic aspects each one of the structures may implicate. The structures possess a pragmatic component embedded in their use, generating different premises when they are employed. They belong to different

contexts, hence, it is the teachers' job to present students with the impact each structure causes when applied. Their employment is that may be incorporated into the teaching of English language, as learners need to be aware of linguistic forms that are not natural to them. Teachers, then, make manifest some pragmatic features to students.

When learners are taught the distinction of each linguistic form and the consequences of each use, they become able to search for information in the context that may help them, whenever they face a situation in which they have to apply any of the structures. After being instructed about what to look for in utterances so as to use them adequately, learners are likely to be able to dig through evidences in the context. For further studies, I would suggest to include more theoretical-based pragmatic features in the second language instruction, as it may improve students' pragmatic abilities in a second language and, hence, their performance in future conversational situations.

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