

## This Issue

This special issue of the *ESpecialist* received contributions from teachers that participated of the XXI National Seminar of English for Specific Purposes and the IX National Seminar of Specific Purpose Languages that took place in Caxias do Sul, RS, in 2007. At the same time it was held the II Regional Seminar of the Teaching of Languages for Specific Purposes. Their contribution includes themes such as Education of Teachers of Languages for Specific Purposes, Instructional Material Design, Instructional Texts as a Textual Genre, Course Design for Language for Specific Purposes, Teaching Proposal of Critical Reading, Pedagogical Actions for the Teaching of Reading of Press Opinion Articles, Latin Teaching through Workshops, Use of Compound Terms in German, and the Relevance of Pragmatics and Speech Act Theory in Didactic Materials.

When Universidade de Caxias do Sul decided to host and carry out these events with Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo as a partner, the University was giving a continuation to the work it had started nearly fifteen years ago, and started the implementation of the specific purpose language teaching approach in Portuguese language classes and, later on, in the foreign language classes of its undergraduate courses.

The attendance of researchers, post-graduate and undergraduate students, and of public and private school teachers from several regions of Brazil to the events evidenced the continuous need of a meeting to socialize knowledge and share experiences, as well as to reflect on the tendencies in the teaching of the specific purpose approach. The attendance of professors Dra. Maria Antonieta Alba Celani and Dra. Rosinda de Castro Guerra Ramos, both from PUC/SP, pioneers of the ESP project in Brazil, was a confirmation of the trust they had already demonstrated when they assigned the responsibility for the accomplishment of these meetings to the faculty members from UCS's, Languages Department, especially the professors of Portuguese for Specific Purposes (LIFE) and of English for Specific Purposes (PALII).

In the first article Fontana addresses the Education of Specific Language Teachers and focuses on autonomy that, seen as a socio-cognitive competence to think and act through one's own resources, is an essential requirement in their education. There are varied inter-related factors that exert an influence on the construction of autonomy. The author calls attention to the awareness raising, the critical reflection, the appropriation of theoretical and methodological knowledge, the decision making and self-management of the presupposed knowledge in the competence of teaching languages for specific purposes. In this context, the author concludes that the appropriation and construction of knowledge emerge as factors with a strong impact on the education of the autonomous teacher who is able to create and implement courses of study as well as disciplines for specific purposes.

In the second article, Oliveira calls attention to the important reflexes resultant from the making, distribution, and consumption of instructional materials generated by the influence of information and communication technology (ICT). With this paper the author aims to introduce the concept of learning objects (LO) as a new multidisciplinary way of thinking, producing, distributing and reusing instructional materials in a virtual environment. It also includes a literature review, advantages and pedagogical implications.

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The third article brings the analysis of the instructional text as a textual genre by Marinello, Boff and Köche. The authors present some theoretical assumptions about textual genres, besides characterizing and analyzing the instructional text. In their conclusions they suggest activities related to reading and writing of the mentioned genre for high school and university students. This paper is part of the research called *Reading and text production from the textual genre perspective*, done at Universidade de Caxias do Sul, Campus Universitário da Região dos Vinhedos.

In the fourth article, Marques and Gariglio report the design of a course on Language for Professional Purposes. It is part of the Program of Study in Engineering, Society and Technology - PROGEST, at CEFET-MG, and is based on the language for specific purposes approach. According to the authors, their objective is to clarify the interactions between the diverse uses of the language, giving priority to the working environment of the professional/students enrolled in the course.

The fifth article, by Dib and Fonseca, reflects on the construction of the standard beauty concepts published by the media through the analysis of a set of practices applied in an English class. The questionnaire answered by the students was developed by a web site called AWARENESS NETWORK. The authors used, as theoretical support, the voices of Bakhtin (2003) and Vygotsky (1973, 1998, 2001) and as research methodology, the ethnographical method (Erickson, 1984, Moita Lopes, 1996).

Fontana, Pressanto and Paviani present, in the sixth article, the result of a series of activities carried out with two groups of freshmen and a statistically significant conclusion on the development of reading competence. The research consisted of the application of a Higher Education reading sequence, focusing on the opinion article genre, starting from the notion of genres (Bakhtin, 1992, Bronckart, 2003) and didactic sequences (Dolz, Noverraz and Schneuwly, 2004). Besides the application of the reading activities in series, the research included the production of genres in chain.

In the seventh article, Mascarello observes today's presence of Latin as a universal language, and discusses the possibility of its inclusion in the syllabus of elementary and high school programs as an auxiliary subject to Portuguese language learning. His statements are based on his experience in the teaching of Latin with the specific purpose language approach that evidences the presence of Latin in scientific and legal texts, in botanical and zoological terminology, in heraldry, in terms that are practically untranslatable and are part of the oral and written everyday language in Portuguese-speaking countries.

In the eighth article, Pickbrenner considers the role of noun compounds in German legal texts, and describes their incidence. The research raises data that can support the teaching of reading for specific purposes in German, from the recognition of singularities, regularities, functions and occurrences of compound terms, formed by one or two nouns in articles of Civil Law Doctrines. The data suggest that compounds perform a relevant cohesive function throughout the text. The author presents some suggestions for the teaching of reading for specific purpose in Law.

In the last article, Gutierrez turns her attention to the presence of Pragmatics and Speech Act Theory in English Didactic Materials directed to foreign students. She focuses on the treatment given to greetings, favoring, this way, the development of communicative skills in the target-language. One of the author's proposal is to promote discussions between teachers and professionals of this area about the importance of including pragmatic content in didactic materials.

**M.R.**

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