

THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AND THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY:  
REPORT OF AN EXPERIENCE

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Feeling the need for a better integration between students and the university library, teachers of Inglês Instrumental at UFRGS decided to implement activities in the course which would help the students to get a clearer idea of what the university library would offer them. The activities were planned together with the librarians of the Central Library and consisted of a guided visit to the premises with a slide show and some written tasks to be done in the library proper and in the classroom as well.

During the course of Inglês Instrumental as teachers were developing reading techniques and strategies it was felt the need for training students to use the university library resources properly and thus equip them for their academic life.

Besides the activities in the classroom, students should be encouraged to read extensively on their own and be fully aware of the information they could get from reference materials in general. Reference books on general subjects are mainly available at the Central Library, whereas, at the specialized libraries there are more specific materials.

With this aim in mind some activities were planned with the help of the librarian team in charge of the reference material section in the Central Library at

A guided tour to the library was organized for groups of 12 to 15 students. The tours were preferably scheduled at the students class period so that they could all attend. During the visit it was presented an audio visual about the organization of the library and the range of services the university offer.

The students were then taken to the various sections of the building where specific instructions were given about the library system. Proper tools were placed on their hands to enable them to make independent searches for knowledge. They had the opportunity to get in touch with the various kinds of publications in English that existed for different information needs such as:

Encyclopedia Britannica  
Webster Dictionary, Oxford Dictionary  
Who's Who  
Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature  
Statesman's Year Book  
Book of Quotations  
World Guide to Abbreviations of Associations  
Dissertation Abstracts International

The visit lasted about one hour and a half. After the visit students were assigned two tasks as homework in order to reinforce the instructions received during the visit:

- a) Finding out about your university library
- b) Using reference books

The first one dealt with questions on the organization of the library proper, how to use the system and the different kinds of publications available. The latter referred to more specific items so that the student was forced to actually use the reference books in order to find the answers.

Later on in the classroom the work continued this time with a unit entitled "Using the Library". This unit was especially prepared by the ESP teachers to train the students in the use of reference books as well as reading strategies such as skimming and scanning.

After the activities were all finished and handed in, the students received an evaluation sheet in which they were asked to give their opinion and suggestions about the various tasks carried out.

The evaluations were analysed both by the teachers and the librarians and according to the results some aspects were modified. It was decided to write the exercises in English and not in Portuguese as they were previously done. Some of the questions were changed, new ones added and some suppressed. The guided tour was also rearranged by the librarians.

The activity proved to be worthwhile as many students confessed they had never been to the Central Library before. Quite a few were not aware of the many resources they could get from the library and did not know how to use them. It was noticed that most of the students who take Inglês Instrumental are first years and this fact encourages the ESP team to continue with the activity, trying to improve it each time it is conducted, taking into account the suggestions given not only by the students themselves but the librarian as well.

So far the activity was carried out twice: 2nd semester of 1982 and 1st semester of 1983. It is the intention of the ESP team to continue with it, and for that there is the full support of the librarians whose contribution has been valuable to the success of the activity.

## APPENDIX 1

### UFRGS - ESP - English for Specific Purposes Reading Comprehension in English for Academic Purposes

#### Finding out about your university library

The aim of this activity is to make you fully aware of the help you can get from the university library. Answer it in Portuguese.

1. How is the library system organized in our University?
2. How many faculty libraries are there in UFRGS?
3. Where can most of the reference books on general subjects (e.g. encyclopaedias and dictionaries of different kinds) be found?
4. What can you do when the library does not have the book you want or the journal article you are looking for?
5. Give one title for each reference book below which you can find in English in our Central Library.
  - a) a well-known English language encyclopaedia:
  - b) a well-known dictionary of the English language:
  - c) a biography dictionary:
  - d) a directory of institutions of education:
  - e) a guide to countries:
6. Give the titles of two periodicals written in English which the Central Library takes.

APPENDIX 2

UFRGS - ESP - English for Specific Purposes  
Reading Comprehension in English for Academic  
Purposes

Answer the questions below in PORTUGUESE.

USING REFERENCE BOOKS

1. Periodical literature

What source would you use in order to trace an article published some years ago by TIME Magazine or NEWSWEEK?

2. Which library or libraries have the work by Saul Bellow "Herzog" translated by Silvia Rangel and published in 1976?

3. Check whether the data on the population of Rio Grande do Sul is up-to-date in the Statesman's Year Book.

Answer:.....Page:.....

4. Famous quotations by famous people. Who are the authors of the quotations below?

a) "Freedom in a democracy is the glory of the state, and, therefore, in a democracy only will the freeman of nature deign dwell."

Source:

Page:

Answer:

b) "Envy is the basis of democracy."

Source:

Page:

Answer:

5. What source does the Central Library offer in order to answer the following?

a) Catherine Deneuve's address.

Source:

Page:

Answer:

b) Who is Humphrey Bogart?

Source:

Page:

Answer:

c) What is "ragtime"?

Source:

Page:

Answer:

6. What do a) WAPOR, b) WHO and c) UNESCO stand for?

Source:

Pages:

Answer: a)

b)

c)

7. Who publishes the periodical Godwana Newsletter?

APPENDIX 3

AVALIAÇÃO DA VISITA À BIBLIOTECA CENTRAL

1. De acordo com os objetivos do Inglês Instrumental, a visita à biblioteca foi:  

<input type="checkbox"/> excelente	<input type="checkbox"/> medíocre
<input type="checkbox"/> boa	<input type="checkbox"/> fraca
  
2. A visita lhe trouxe novas informações:  

<input type="checkbox"/> sim	<input type="checkbox"/> não
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3. Avalie cada parte da visita:
  - a) O audio-visual foi:  

<input type="checkbox"/> excelente	<input type="checkbox"/> medíocre
<input type="checkbox"/> bom	<input type="checkbox"/> fraco
  - b) A visita com guia foi:  

<input type="checkbox"/> excelente	<input type="checkbox"/> medíocre
<input type="checkbox"/> boa	<input type="checkbox"/> fraca
  - c) As tarefas de consulta aos livros foram:  

<input type="checkbox"/> excelentes	<input type="checkbox"/> medíocres
<input type="checkbox"/> boas	<input type="checkbox"/> fracas
  
4. Você já havia usado a Biblioteca Central anteriormente?  

<input type="checkbox"/> com bastante freqüência
<input type="checkbox"/> algumas vezes
<input type="checkbox"/> raramente
<input type="checkbox"/> nunca
  
5. Você acha que esta visita pode ajudá-lo a usar a biblioteca com mais eficiência?  

<input type="checkbox"/> sim	<input type="checkbox"/> não	<input type="checkbox"/> um pouco
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6. Dê sugestões para melhorar esta atividade.