

Lexical based-methodological approaches applied to foreign language for specific purposes teaching and learning

The corpus-based approach taken as a well-established methodology with a multiplicity of applications in different knowledge domains has been largely used in language teaching. It has proven successful in language for specific purposes (LSP) teaching and learning, considering that “the compilation, description, and analysis of domain-specific corpora is one of the widest areas of research in corpus linguistics, especially as regards academic and professional settings” (Campoy-Cubillo, Bellés-Fortuño & Gea-Valor 2010: 3). When it comes to the work with terminology and specialized vocabulary, corpus-approaches derived from the lexicon sciences have taken an increasingly prominent role, such as the corpus-based terminology (Cabré, Amor-Montané & Nazar 2012), also recognized as an approach in terminology acquisition (Gamper and Stock 1998), or the corpus-based terminography (Bowker 1996, Kast-Aigner 2010), an approach with great contributions to LSP corpora compilation (Bowker 1996).

Language methodological approaches to language teaching with a focus on LSP can profit from the use of corpus-based approaches, namely the lexical approach and the data-driven learning.

Considering that “language is fundamentally lexical” (Lewis 2000: 149), lexical chunks or multi-word units are at the core of the lexical approach of Lewis, a learning strategy complementary to the communicative approach. Bearing in mind the technology developments, Lewis advocates the use of language corpora and corpora for specific purposes as tools to work with multi-word chunks, especially collocations.

On the other hand, the “application of computers to language-learning that has come to be known as ‘classroom concordancing’ or ‘data-driven learning’ (DDL)” (Johns & King 1991: iii), a term originally used by Johns (1991), also relies on corpora: “the use in the classroom of computer-generated concordances (...) and the development of activities and exercises based on concordance output” (ibidem). The DDL approach has been effective with writing and grammar skills teaching in foreign languages (Lin & Lee 2015), and according to recent studies, it can also contribute to the increasing of learners’ vocabulary (Soruc & Tekin 2017).

Both these approaches boost students to take an active role as masters of their learning process. These learner-centered approaches to language teaching imply training in the use of corpus tools and the interpretation of the language data. Computer-mediated instruction and practices, specifically in the LSP classroom, promote the learning of specialized vocabulary in a motivating way and, ultimately, the acquisition of specialized knowledge.

Having in mind this close connection between corpus-based approaches and the lexical based-methodologies to language teaching as innovative methods for the LSP classroom, I will discuss in this presentation my experience with a course of “Specialty Language” for foreign students of European Portuguese, that took place in the NOVA University of Lisbon. Although it was a short course, attended by students with different interests in what concerns the knowledge domain, the corpus-based approach has helped to overcome these challenges and proved to be an important resource to deal with terminology and specialized vocabulary in a multicultural environment.

Keywords: corpus-based approach; computer-mediated teaching; terminology acquisition; language for specific purposes; foreign language teaching and learning.

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The use of ICT in the Foreign Language Teacher Training Course: Evidence from Cyprus

Digital technologies in higher education facilitate the learning/teaching process, creating a student-centred environment (Bates and Sangra, 2011; Guri-Rosenblit, 2009, 2010; Johnson et al., 2016). According Alexander et al. (2017) and Wineburg et al. (2016), teachers need to develop digital literacy as e-learning cannot take place without e-teaching. Both teachers and students should have relevant training and support in order to use new technologies in an efficient and effective ways (Gradinarova, 2015; Guri-Rosenblit and Gros, 2011).

Young generation of students can be characterised as “digital natives”, “millennial students” or “Homo Zappiens” (Dede, 2005; Oblinger, 2003; Ubachs et al., 2017), thus they can be easily trained to use digital tools at university (Pappas, 2017; Alexander et al., 2017; Johnson

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