Languages for Specific Purposes in the Digital Era

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Languages for Specific Purposes in the Digital Era is a four-part collection of articles written by nineteen researchers known for their wide experience in the field of specialized linguistics. The theme of the book revolves around specialized professional and academic contexts as it specifically meant to address professionals who apply technology to the processing and Learning/teaching of languages. It discusses the importance of incorporating technological applications and tools along with the use of corpora that can improve language teaching/learning.

The book is divided into four parts; the first part presents the current state of knowledge by illustrating the general issues about learning languages with computers and specifically refers to the European experience. The second part portrays computer-assisted experiences for the development of language competences. The third highlights some of the most effective methods and theories applied on learners. The last part draws attention to some notions that can be employed to enhance the learning/teaching experience. It concludes with a reflection on the methods and tools presented throughout the entire book and some suggestions for further studies.

The first part of the book contains four chapters, which aim to set the context by presenting a broad scope about how technology can facilitate language learning. The first chapter displays a detailed analysis to indicate the relationship between IT and LSP. The second chapter explores how learners’ need of material and learning scenarios outside the limits of more traditional teaching is fostered through the integration of technology in LSP. The third chapter portrays how blended learning and online-extended Moodle can help learners enhance their oral skills. The fourth chapter deals with assessments as a key factor in the process of education which is delivered through student self-assessment and tutor assessment within the GAMILLE Research Group.

As for the second part of the book, it explores a number of issues related to LSP within this domain. This part which deals with the use of lexis in the context of business administration. A certain lexicographical approach is adopted to study the technical terminology and certifies the use of e-dictionaries as an efficient tool to serve this specific purpose. The second chapter of this part considers the legal terminology used by learners through Moodle through writing collaborative legal glossary tasks for teaching legal English as part of ESP courses. The third chapter reports another experience of how Maritime English can be integrated through the use of Moodle as an online tool that facilitates vocabulary learning. The fourth chapter is illustrated through the presentation of a case study that investigates the use of wikis as a tool to enhance the learners' communicative competences.
The third part presents a collection of studies on ESP. The first chapter shows the collaboration of teachers of LSP and translation teachers who combined their efforts and experiences to design LSP courses. They have found that to avoid miss translated texts, authentic documents with specialized genre of language-provided to both the teacher and students-can utilize the corpora in LSP teaching and learning. The second chapter demonstrates the different ways in which corpora can enhance learning and teaching, the benefits of corpus-based approach to business and LSP learners. The third chapter presents the Communicative Theory of Terminology which ascertains that a text cannot be called specialized text unless it is written by a specialist in the same domain e.g. medicine texts should be written by doctors. The fourth chapter aims to show the effectiveness of training MA translation students via corpus-based approach.

In the following part some notions are presented such as Ecolexicon which provides a system of information coordinated according to linguistic which is structured at macro and micro-structural level. The second chapter discusses the audiovisual translation approach (AVT) which is a method that deals with translation of auditory and visual materials. This proposes that media content can be analyzed by the cooperation of corpus using one of the two forms, dubbing or subtitling. The third chapter is concerned with the study of pragmatics through the speaker's contextual and invisible meaning along with the relative distance expression. Finally, the last chapter exhibition of different innovative technological and methodological notions, which were foresee to help guide the future of CALL, LSP research teaching and learning. Some examples of such technological and methodological ideas were presented such as social networks and media as well as games.

The book is a valuable contribution with the various themes aroused, however, from our perspective as readers out of the European context, it is not free of criticism. The book concentrates on the European context contradicts its main claim to address anyone working in the area of natural languages. The editors focus on the idea of incorporating computational corpora in LSP for its valuable contribution to the field, yet the limitation to access considerable corpora such as the British National Corpus (BNC) makes it rather difficult to be utilized by teachers or learners, thus, narrows its use to a certain group of users.

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