

Introduction

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Globalization and the internationalization of higher education have transformed the scope and purpose of language learning. Trends in migration and the promotion of student mobility and cultural exchange necessitate innovative approaches to language teaching, especially at the tertiary level. Although English medium instruction (EMI) has been adopted by default at many universities in non-English speaking nations—in particular throughout Europe—in order to attract international students and temporary exchange students (Ackerley, Guarda, & Helm, 2017), university degrees offered in other foreign languages abound. Some universities have further embraced their identities as multilingual and multicultural institutions, offering courses taught in local minority languages and/or foreign languages (Veronesi & Nickenig, 2009). Such trends have accentuated the linguistic and cultural diversity of the contemporary university. Many incoming exchange students, international students, and foreign-born resident students require structured support in improving their proficiency in the official medium of instruction of their degree programs and learning the expectations and norms of the academic genre and culture in their new educational system, while outgoing exchange students must prepare in advance for study in a foreign country in order to reap the full benefits of study abroad. Against this background, the expressed need for the teaching of languages for specific and academic purposes (LSP and LAP) has never been so profuse.

It was with this contemporary reality in mind that the Language Centre of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (unibz) organized an international symposium on teaching LSP and LAP in higher education on 29 June 2018. The symposium was conceived as a continuation of a series of symposia on teach-

ing and assessing English for specific and academic purposes held at unibz in recent years (Ennis & Prior, 2020), but sought to expand the local discussion to other languages. With the aim of providing researchers and practitioners of LSP and LAP a venue in which to share and explore approaches, methods, and practices across languages, institutions, and nations, the symposium accepted papers focusing on any aspect of teaching, learning, and assessing the three mediums of instruction of unibz: English, German, and Italian.

The symposium succeeded in attracting international participation, with thirty-six speakers from fourteen countries in attendance. The symposium also offered perspectives from nations which have been underrepresented historically in the academic discourse on teaching LSP/LAP, including Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Oman, and Russia. Speakers presented case studies, action research, and classroom experiences on a multitude of interrelated elements of LSP/LAP.

The sharing across languages and contexts produced many insights into the state of the art from which six core conclusions could be drawn (Bonetto, Ennis, & Unterkofler, 2018). First, there is a blatant gap in research on LSP and LAP instruction for non-traditional and migrant students, as the proportion of students who can be identified as such has increased rapidly in recent years, and their needs as older and/or foreign-born learners diverge from those of traditional students (Michalak, Grimm, & Lotter, this volume; Steckley, 2020). Second, it is not only foreign and second language learners who lack the field-specific language and general academic skills necessary for study, but there is a growing recognition that even most “native-born,” “traditional” students could benefit from formal instruction in LSP and LAP in their L1s (Graßmann, this volume). Third, although some researchers and practitioners still operate on the assumption that the instruction of LSP and LAP cannot commence until students have acquired upper intermediate (B2) or advanced (C1) language proficiency (the so called “common core” hypothesis), there has never been any empirical evidence to support this practice (Sarré, 2019) and numerous colleagues have found it necessary and fruitful to begin at the pre-intermediate (A2) and intermediate (B1) levels, (Nitti & Ballarin, this volume)—which is also why three chapters in these proceedings are set in the primary and secondary school settings. Fourth, there is an urgent need for research and an international academic discourse on teaching LSP/

LAP in higher education which embraces all languages, without becoming English-dominant (Guilbaud & Tual, 2018). Fifth, one of the biggest challenges facing university LSP and LAP instructors—who rarely view themselves as experts in the fields their students are studying (Basturkmen, 2018)—is finding ways to collaborate with professors of other subjects (de Souza Gomez, this volume; Nitti & Ballarin, this volume). Finally, while most universities have fully embraced internationalization as a marketing tool, there was an overwhelming consensus at the symposium that language instruction remains marginalized as a non-academic and, in some cases, an extracurricular endeavor which receives minimal institutional recognition and support.

The present proceedings of the *International Symposium on Teaching Languages for Specific and Academic Purposes in Higher Education: English-Deutsch-Italiano* offer a comprehensive, but by no means exhaustive survey of these and other themes. Like the symposium, it includes selected papers written in English, German, and Italian. Unlike the symposium, these proceedings are organized into four thematic sections which transverse target languages and educational settings.

The first section, *Pedagogical Reflections in LSP*, samples from diverse methodological perspectives on LSP and LAP teaching. Stefania Cavagnoli begins by highlighting the specificity of legal communication in Italian—which is distinct from both general Italian and the specialized communication observed in the legal systems of other countries—and suggests that non-specialist instructors of legal Italian collaborate with their students, approaching each course as a form of action research by exploiting students' expertise in their field and including them in the language acquisition process. Next, Sarah Strigler describes the practice of using *error charts*, which classify and quantify each learner's errors across compositions, in order to self monitor and gradually increase grammatical accuracy in academic writing in English. Nicoletta Cherubini makes her case for integrating the art of negotiation into foreign language education as a means of developing the social and emotional competences necessary for global citizenship. Finally, Renata de Souza Gomez—returning to the theme of collaboration—presents two examples of teaching materials for technical English developed in tandem with students and their subject professors within a critical literacy framework.

The second section, *Classroom-Based Research*, focuses on (improving) the efficacy of particular teaching methods and practices. Simona Floare Bora and Awad Alhassan report the results of a qualitative study of the challenges both native and non-native English language speakers face engaging in *collaborative academic writing* and make their recommendations for designing collaborative writing tasks. Next, Aleksandra Sudhershnan expounds upon the results of an action research project involving a business English course—which alternated between self-directed learning on Moodle and face-to-face lessons based on TBLT—to offer suggestions for the implementation of *flipped learning* in ESP. Renata Cavosi Silbernagl then shares her experiences using *individual glossaries* to develop technical vocabulary in German, as well as vocabulary learning strategies and learner autonomy. Relying on survey data and an analysis of course syllabi, Paolo Nitti and Elena Ballarin explore the differences in teaching methods, language skills instructed, and starting CEFR levels in Italian LSP classrooms, observing that the instruction of specialized language can in fact begin at the pre-intermediate (A2) level, provided that teaching methods and content are adapted, and that there is a close collaboration between language teachers and teachers of other subjects. Using examples from teaching German for the field of design and art, Ulrike Arras and Brigitte Widmann conclude the section by arguing in favor of teaching *excerpting* as an information processing strategy necessary for comprehending the content of specialized texts.

The third section, titled *LSP and Language Acquisition*, turns to factors and processes in the learning of special languages. For example, Eleni Peleki's exploratory study finds no gender differences in the metacognitive competences, reading comprehension, reading speeds, and self-concepts of multilingual high school students enrolled in a German course, but does find stark differences between genders when correlating self-concept with metacognitive competence. Víctor Zirate extends the research on the phenomenon of the *final field* found in German sentence structure to L2 oral communication in academic contexts. And, in their second contribution to the proceedings, Elena Ballarin and Paolo Nitti analyze a local corpus of oral presentations given by international students at an Italian university for evidence of L1 interference in L2 academic discourse.

The final section, *Implementing LSP to Meet Institutional Challenges*, connects practices and processes like those discussed in the previous three

sections to the institutional frameworks within which they occur. Vaijayanthi Sarma, for instance, argues that despite the *three-language formula* in the Indian education system, most students enter her EMI STEM university with insufficient English proficiency to achieve, but that the early assessment of proficiency and the offering of extracurricular English for specific academic purposes courses—combined with sufficient peer and instructor support—has proven effective at helping less proficient students. Operating within a comparable institutional context where students must meet stringent language requirements in three languages of instruction simultaneously, Michael Joseph Ennis recounts how the offering of a business English track of courses via blended and distance learning—as an alternative to a general English track taught entirely face-to-face—successfully increased student attendance and participation in optional, extracurricular language courses by focusing on student needs. Using their university as a case study of internationalization in higher education, Eva Seidl and Birgit Simschitz present the results of a survey administered to incoming exchange students, finding that in addition to instruction in German as a foreign language and useful tips about studying in the host country, students require various other forms of institutional support as well as a broader conceptualization of academic orality and literacy in order to take full advantage of study abroad. Likewise supporting her professional reflections with survey data, Cristina Boscolo advocates for the reconceptualization of Italian language centers as not merely service providers that help Italian students meet language requirements, but as centers that are integral in fostering the academic literacy necessary for study at Italian universities. Regina Graßmann offers an example of what Boscolo proposes by describing a program at a German university where both L2 and L1 speakers of German have access to courses in academic and professional language, whereby L1 speakers particularly benefit from instruction in academic writing. The final paper in this book, by Magdalena Michalak, Thomas Grimm, and Simone Lotter, surveys methods of teaching German as a foreign language in German primary and secondary schools and evaluates the efficacies when applied to instructing foreign-born pupils with migrant backgrounds.

As with all conference proceedings, many of the papers presented herein are "works in progress" in need of additional data collection and analysis and/or refinement of findings and conclusions. Notwithstanding this obvi-

ous limitation, the editors are confident that readers will find in each contribution fresh ideas and relatable observations which inform the teaching of LSP and LAP in their own contexts. Moreover, we hope that the publication of this book spawns further research and reflection within this burgeoning field of research and professional practice.

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