A CASE STUDY ON THE TRAINING OF THE TECHNICAL STAFF OF UNIFESSPA THROUGH THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

UM ESTUDO DE CASO SOBRE A FORMAÇÃO DO PESSOAL TÉCNICO DE UNIFESSPA ATRAVÉS DO ENSINO DE IDIOMA INGLESA

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Resumo: Este trabalho tem por objetivo apresentar os passos e todo o processo de um projeto institucional de desenvolvimento de proficiência em Inglês: Curso de Capacitação dos Servidores Técnicos da Universidade Federal do Sul e Sudeste do Pará (UNIFESSPA), com o apoio da pró-reitoria de extensão (PROEX Unifesspa). O interesse desta pesquisa foi o de contribuir para o desenvolvimento da proficiência em língua inglesa dos servidores. Para tanto, procuramos embasamento das pesquisas de Dias (2012), Dell'sola (2012) e Péret (2012), e Drey (2015), que discutem os estudos de gêneros textuais, bem como as teorias e práticas de ensino em Língua Estrangeira. Foram desenvolvidos no curso, os gêneros notícias de popularização da ciência, e-mail e biodata, no uso da Língua Inglesa, entre outros gêneros textuais que serviram de apoio para o desenvolvimento das habilidades, em primeira instância de leitura e escrita, e posteriormente de fluência da fala e compreensão oral. Sendo assim, este projeto foi desenvolvido com o propósito de ajudar os profissionais técnicos nas suas competências regulares e habilidades comunicativas no uso de Língua Estrangeira, mais precisamente, a Língua Inglesa.

Palavras-chave: Gêneros textuais, habilidades, Ensino de Língua Inglesa.

Abstract: This work aims at presenting the steps and whole process of an institutional project of proficiency development in English: training of the technical staff of the Federal University of South and Southeast of Pará (UNIFESSPA), with the support extension of pro-rector (PROEX Unifesspa) department. The interest of this research was to contribute to the development of the English language proficiency of the technical staff. Therefore, we based our studies on the researches of Dias (2012), Dell'sola (2012) and Péret (2012), and Drey (2015), discussing the studies of textual genres, as well as the theories and teaching

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practices in Foreign Languages. In the process of the developed course we worked with *science popularization news, e-mail and biodata* genres in the use of English, among other genres which have been useful as support for the development of skills in the usage of the English Language. Firstly, we started on reading and writing skills and later on fluency of speaking and listening skills. Thus, the project was developed with the purpose of helping the technician servers in their ordinary skills and communicative skills in a foreign language, more precisely, the English Language.

**Keywords:** Textual genres; Skills, English Language Teaching.

**INTRODUCTION**

This work aims at analyzing the “Institutional Project of Proficiency Development in the English Language: Training of Technical Staff of the Federal University of South and Southeast of Pará (UNIFESSPA)”. It is a university extension project that integrates teaching and research, linked to the Institute of Linguistics, Letters and Arts of UNIFESSPA, which aims to qualitatively implement academic experiences in the university-society relationship, with an emphasis on the social transformation of the Community of Marabá, strengthening and expanding the extension activities of UNIFESSPA.

This project presents a set of research and extension actions implemented in the years of 2105/2016, guided by a common objective: to improve the capacity of the Institution’s staff in the administrative work related to the internationalization of the university, based on the development of Proficiency in English, with the development of activities of reading and listening comprehension.

UNIFESSPA started to have a Degree in English Language in its degree course table at the year 2009. Since then it has graduated some classes of English Language teachers. With the advent of this course, several other study and project opportunities have been designed and implemented to improve the quality of training of these teachers and students in general from this institution.

Among the several implementations in favor of the academic community, arose in us the thought of developing a project for the development and application of this training course for Unifesspa administrative technicians, since we are involved in a project, which is the internationalization of Brazilian universities. With this, it aims to stimulate the entire academic community to improve the acquaintance of the English
language, through the international proficiency exam, the TOEFL (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language).

This exam has been applied to the students of the various Unifesspa courses. It is not an exclusionary, but inclusive, exam in which the students can do it more than once until they reach the minimum grade required to be admitted in face-to-face English-language courses, which are already being developed through the Science Without Borders Program.\(^3\)

The Science Without Borders project foresees the use of up to 101,000 scholarships in four years to promote exchange, so that undergraduate and graduate students take internships abroad in order to establish contact with competitive education systems in relation to technology and innovation. In addition, it seeks to attract researchers from abroad who wish to establish themselves in Brazil or establish partnerships with Brazilian researchers in the priority areas defined in the Program, as well as create opportunities for company researchers to receive specialized training abroad.

Considering the implementation of this course and the academic reality of Unifesspa, we elaborated the following questions that will serve as a guide for the development of this work: 1. What is the importance of the genres used as Language English teaching? 2. What are the greatest difficulties encountered by the technical staff in the teaching and learning process of the foreign language? 3. With the methodology of teaching through genres was there a development in the learning of the technicians?

The objective of this practical work is to develop English language skills of the Institution’s staff, through teaching actions based on textual genres that promote the achievement and / or improvement of reading and text production skills in order to improve The proficiency in the English language, allowing the access of the administrative staff and undergraduate students of Unifesspa to the face-to-face courses at the Science without Boarders program, through the International Exam of Proficiency - TOEFL.

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\(^3\) Science Without Borders Program is a program that seeks to promote the consolidation, expansion and internationalization of science and technology, innovation and Brazilian competitiveness through international exchange and mobility. The initiative is the result of a joint effort of the Ministries of Science, Technology and Innovation (MCTI) and the Ministry of Education (MEC), through their respective development institutions, CNPq and Capes, and Secretariats of Higher Education and MEC Technological Teaching. My translation.
The specific objectives of the project were: To develop communicative and academic abilities in English, in order that the technician-student obtains approval in the examinations of proficiency in that foreign language; To develop oral comprehension and production skills in English, in order to enable the student to perform academic activities in foreign institutions at a higher level, as well as to develop written English comprehension and production skills for the same purpose; To expand the theoretical knowledge and the practices of literacy that guide the teaching-learning of the English language for a citizen education and integrated to the globalized society.

This work is justified under the assumption that language education is a right of learning (Article 23 and 26 of the Universal Declaration of Language Rights). Historically, in our country, the learning of foreign languages has been insufficiently performed to fulfill this right. It was necessary to think of the preparation of the servants in the development of linguistic proficiency, mainly in the English language, so that they can participate and succeed in the academic activities to be developed abroad.

The present project proposes to contribute to reduce this need through the development of intensive English courses, with face-to-face coaching activities at the Federal University of the South and Southeast of Pará (UNIFESSPA). Therefore, the present project of a training course for Unifesspa technical staff was developed with the objective of improving, developing and expanding the knowledge and linguistic skills of the English language in Unifesspa administrative technicians, since they are the most directly involved in the communication with foreign speakers, speakers or teachers who may be in contact with through the new actions and measures carried out in the internationalization process of Brazilian universities.

In the first chapter we will discuss theoretical aspects and definitions that support our research. The aim of this research is to contribute to the learning process of the actors involved, namely, the Unifesspa technical staff and the student-mediator. With the theoretical foundation presented, we will justify and analyze better the choices of the subjects presented in the classroom discussions.

In the second chapter we will describe the behavior, performance, practice and role of such actors involved in this process of teaching and learning English through textual genres, namely: News of popularization of science, E-mail and Biodata, which we will expose next.
In the third and final chapter we will exemplify some practices and applications of tasks developed with the genres worked in the classes. And finally, we will make our considerations about the results obtained and the analyzes.

1 Theoretical basis

In this chapter we will present some concepts about the teaching of genres and the teaching-learning of the English language, taking into account the arguments of Cunha and Miccoli (2016, pp. 80-159), regarding the issues of communicative teaching involving digital contemporary technologies.

According to our bibliographic research on the subject we decided to develop a project that look on the needs of improving the English language skills of Unifesspa technical staff. With this, we thought of and elaborated strategies of reading and of written and oral production involving the textual genres of Popularization of science, E-mail and Biodata.

It is important to elucidate that studying and applying textual genres enables students to put linguistic knowledge into practice, allowing them to experience real situations of language use through activities with the role of developing written and oral communication. For, according to Schneuwly and Dolz (2004), textual genres are necessary tools for acting discursively (speaking / writing) in the various spheres of society. The communicative situation in which the speaker-enunciator is, determines the most appropriate type of textual genre. (SCHNEUWLY AND DOLZ, 2004, p.38)

In the development of this work, we will use as corpus of analysis, the experiences tested in the classes applied in the course, as well as the reports of the classes, the performance of the activities carried out by the students, taking into account the studies of Textual Genres (Teoria e prática de ensino em LE) from Dias and Dell’Isola (2012), and relativizing with A prática docente na universidade, from Masetto (1992) and Docência no ensino superior, from Pimenta & Anastasiou (2002).

Ramos (2004) highlights among foreign authors who present researches for the work with genres, Swales (1990); Caudery (1998); Swales (1992) and Feak (2009); Hyland (2004); As well as among the Brazilian researchers, besides himself, Ramos (2004); Aranha (2002); Christopher (2007); Borghi et al. (2010) that discuss and present works aimed at the use of genres as strategies and / or teaching objects.
In order to develop such proposals for teaching strategies, we must not fail to mention, however, that the teacher is assigned several responsibilities inherent in this process. Lopes-Rossi (2006) highlights the crucial role of the teacher in conducting teaching based on genre conceptions:

Cabe ao professor criar condições para que os alunos possam apropriar-se de características discursivas e linguísticas de gêneros diversos, em situações de comunicação real. Isso pode ser feito com muita eficiência por meio de projetos pedagógicos que visem ao conhecimento, à leitura, à discussão sobre o uso e as funções sociais dos gêneros escolhidos e, quando pertinente, à sua produção escrita e circulação social. (LOPES-ROSSI, 2006, p. 75)

Still attentive to these questions let us see what Penny Ur tells us in this regard:

In principle, the teaching process of presenting, practicing and testing correspond to strategies used by many good learners trying to acquire a foreign language on their own. They make sure they perceive and understand new language (by paying attention, by constructing meanings, by formulating rules or hypotheses that account for it, and so on); They make conscious efforts to learn it thoroughly (by mental rehearsal of items, for example, or by finding opportunities to practice); And they check themselves (get feedback on performance, ask to be corrected). (UR, 1996, p.103)

And, continuing with the analysis of the context in which the student is engaged, it is believed that:

Esses alunos são sujeitos históricos e contextualizados, com características e especificidades próprias, a serem conhecidas no processo de efetivação do ensino e da aprendizagem. Na maioria das vezes, estão muito distantes dos alunos idealizados que gostaríamos de encontrar na sala de aula. Esses grupos interagem com os docentes por períodos determinados, e não existe menos garantia de que um processo que funcionou com um grupo vá funcionar novamente com outro. (PIMENTA & ANASTASIOU, 2002, p. 193)

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4 It is up to the teacher to create conditions so that the students can appropriate discursive and linguistic characteristics of diverse genres, in situations of real communication. This can be done very efficiently through pedagogical projects aimed at knowledge, reading, discussion about the use and social functions of the chosen genres and, where relevant, their written production and social circulation. (LOPES-ROSSI, 2006, p.77) My translation.

5 These students are historical and contextualized subjects with their own characteristics and specificities, to be known in the process of teaching and learning. Most of the time, they are way far from the idealistic students we would like to meet in classrooms. These groups interact with teachers for certain periods, and there is no less guarantee that one process that worked with one group will work again with another. (PIMENTA & ANASTASIOU, 2002, p.193) My translation.
According to Pimenta and Anastasiou (2002), the student should have malleable attitudes, be able to deal with the new and the unforeseen, being fundamental to achieve a good performance and success in the activities developed. Groups of students that are inserted in different contexts, and even at different times, require different methodologies to achieve a more meaningful result.

For Ramos (2004) however, teachers still in academic preparation, although exposed to language learning in general, do not always have contact with this discourse or have an appropriate linguistic and discursive mastery for the elaboration of genres conveyed in the academic-professional world. And, according to Marinho (2010), training in written production focused on academic discourse has traditionally not been offered (not even in Portuguese), and the alternatives to assist students in this writing process are still scarce.

Thus, the teacher must draw up didactic strategies that will constitute a process of search, scientific construction and criticism of the knowledge produced, showing its relevance so that the student can see the importance and urgency of seeking this knowledge. Thus, the role of the teacher in the academy is to cultivate knowledge, mediating students to the information society, enabling reflection through which they can acquire the necessary wisdom for the construction of human knowledge, pointing out the need to disseminate and internalize modes of action as knowledge, concepts, skills, procedures, beliefs and attitudes that will be expanded and developed in the classroom, with the interaction of teachers and students.

When learning a particular foreign language, many learners face some difficulties, and because of that, it is common for them to give excuses as the main motivators, such as “I can not assimilate English, I do not have an inclination to learn, I hate English, I am very busy, I can not afford to pay for a language course, and English is very difficult.”

According to Schumacher, students use these excuses when they can not learn English satisfactorily, consequently, such excuses work as a “self-suggestion” so that they do not actually learn. Thus, the author explains in her work that “Before any attempt, one must firstly recognize his difficulties to learn, if they really exist, but never say that you can not.” (Schumacher, 1999, p.23)
Another well-known and widely questioned justification is that the English-language educational foundation was weak. Many scholars find barriers at the higher level because they have not had the elementary and indispensable knowledge at the fundamental and medium levels.

The little time, or almost none, for the execution of the activities is also a relevant questioning, the students know that they need to make use of the language to be learned through activities, but because they carry out professional and family tasks, time for studying becomes scarce.

Students often point out many reasons for their obstacles in second language learning and teaching, however, regardless of the reasons and justifications, students are somehow attending classes in schools and academies to learn something, and Brown’s advice to teachers is to motivate their students in any and all situations, because the motivation stimulates the student to action, and being motivated in the classroom, we will conquer interaction between the students and between the students and the teacher.

One of the more complicated problems of second language learning and teaching has been to define and apply the construct of motivation in the classroom. On the other hand, it is easy catchword that gives teachers a simple answer to the mysteries of language learning. ‘Motivation is the difference, I have heard people say, between success and failure. If they’re motivated, they’ll learn, and if not, they will not.’ (BROWN, 2001, p.72)

Providing motivation is the first step to be taken. Students who are driven to research, read, write, speak, listen, ultimately, act, unfold better and reach their goals more easily. Students with motivation find time to do the activities, pursue knowledge of the base, which has not been learned in elementary and high school, and know the potential of their ability to seek and learn even now in another reality, the academics.

Within this perspective, we sought to teach classes with some attractions and diversities, such as videos, music, images, curiosities, all related to the themes, activities and texts proposed for the classes.

1.1 Genre teaching and English language teaching
Bazerman (2006) and Hyland (2004) argue that through genre studies, students acquire the ability to understand the intentions of the authors. In addition, students find out that writing is a means of ‘power’ in which meanings and intentions are transmitted through it.

Dias and Dell’Isola (apud Marcuschi 2005), point out that in this sense, both the official documents and the needs of foreign language teachers and students point to the need for textual genres to be worked in the classroom, since they “…contribuem para ordenar e estabilizar as atividades comunicativas do dia-a-dia”\(^6\). (DIAS & DELL’ISOLA, 2012, p.20)

Still in this same line of thought, Cristovão (2005) points out that it is the teacher’s role, when deciding to teach language through textual genres, to analyze the context in which they will be developed. As well as, the language skills that students can master and those that need to be worked on due to the chosen genre. It is also necessary to analyze the texts of the genre, so that the language mechanisms can be elucidated.

In order to better understand the use and functionality of what has become a textual genre, Ramos tells us that it is:

\(\text{(...) um processo social dinâmico, com um ou mais propósitos comunicativos, altamente estruturados, e convencionalizado, reconhecido e mutuamente compreendido pelos membros da comunidade em que ele rotineiramente ocorre. Além disso, entende-se que opera não só dentro de um espaço textual, mas também discursivo, tático (estratégico) e sociocultural. (RAMOS, 2004, p. 115)}\)^7

According to Bonini (2001), genres, in this sense, are the elements that, through enunciation, make possible the discursive production. Ultimately, genre is the characterization of discourse, but it is rather a type of utterance, that is, a genre of utterance.

Concerning to the use of the English language, Crystal declares that according to Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language,

\(^6\) “... contribute to order and stabilize the day to day communicative activities” My translation.
\(^7\) (…) a dynamic social process with one or more communicative purposes, highly structured, and conventionalized, recognized and mutually understood by the members of the community in which it routinely occurs. In addition, it is understood to operate not only within a textual space, but also discursive, tactical (strategic) and sociocultural. (RAMOS, 2004, 115) My translation.
English is used as an official or semi-official language in over 60 countries, and has a prominent place in a further 20. It is either dominant or well established in all six continents. It is the main language of books, newspapers, airports and air-traffic control, international business and academic conferences, science, technology, medicine, diplomacy, sports, international competitions, pop music, and advertising. Over two-thirds of the world’s scientists write in English. Three quarters of the world’s mail is written in English. Of all the information in the world’s electronic retrieval systems, 80% is stored in English. English radio programmes are received by over 150 million in 120 countries. (CRYSTAL, 1987, p.358)

Based on these theoretical contributions, we highlight the three genres that we decided to use as steps to improve the language skills of the Unifesspa technical staff, namely: News of Popularization of Science, E-mail and Biodata.

1.2 The genre News of Popularization of Science

The news is a textual genre of a journalistic nature. And for us to understand the functions of this genre, particularly with regard to the peculiarities that deal with the featured genre, now composed of the news, and more precisely ‘News of Popularization of Science’, it is important to understand fundamentally the meaning represented by the term - textual genre.

Let’s look at what Motta-Roth and Lovato (2009) tell us in the introduction to their article:


\(^8\)It is emphasized that “society’s everyday access to scientific experience is made through texts of popularization of science - texts about science, produced by scientists, journalists and writers, bearing in mind an audience made up of laymen rather than specialists (Myers , 1990, p.145, 2003, p.265; Cerrato, 2002, p.1). A television documentary, broadcast on an open television, an article or printed report published in a popularizing journal of
According to Motta-Roth and Lovato (2009) citing Myers (2003, p. 267), popularization of Science news texts are essential for the survival of knowledge areas, once society will only support research in discursively constructed areas by the media as relevant. In fact, the action of popularizing science constructs and opens a window for inquiries, therefore, to discussions, about the participants, institutions and forms of authority involved in the production of knowledge, in order to show the face of science as an order of discourse, a terrain of practices that compete with one another for prevalence and hegemony, instead of a monolithic science, with definitive truth character.

Duarte, in her article (1999), says that when we refer to it, we must associate it with the numerous socio-communicative situations that surround our everyday life. All of them have a common purpose, that is, an intentionality intended by the discourse that composes them. These purposes differ, depending on the objective proposed by the issuer through the communicative act.

When it comes to the news, what would be the intention intended by it? Certainly, the genre intends to inform us about a certain occurrence. It is in truth, a very recurrent text in the media in general, whether printed in newspapers or magazines, broadcast on the Internet or portrayed on television.

Because the news composes the category transmitted by the journalistic environment, it is characterized as a technical narrative. Such attribution is conditioned mainly to the linguistic nature, because different from the literary language, which, as a rule, reveals traces of intense subjectivity, impartiality in this sphere is the word of order.

Therefore, because the news is based on facts conditioned to the interest of the general public, in the news, language must necessarily be clear, objective and precise, exempting itself from any possibilities that may lead to multiple interpretations by the recipient.

In view of the foregoing, a characteristic pertinent to journalistic language is exactly the truthfulness of the facts disclosed, predominating the objective character disclosed by the discourse.
1.3 The Email Gender

E-mail\(^{10}\) has become the most widely used means of communication in literate societies. According to Paiva (2004), the term e-mail (electronic mail) is used in English for the transmission system and, by metonymy, for the text produced for that purpose. The appearing of electronic mail divided the society between the “those with the internet” and the “those without the internet”, characterizing in this way who has access or not to the virtual world and consequently a greater social insertion. However, every means of communication has advantages and disadvantages.

We consider as advantages, the speed in the transmission of the email, the low cost, the ease with which the user can be contacted, the possibility of a message being sent simultaneously to several people, the archiving, the printing, the resending, besides being a support for attaching files in various formats.

However, the disadvantages that accompany this tool can lead the user to embarrassing situations. We may have excessive messages received, the possibility of sending the email to the wrong address or even attach files containing viruses, in addition to the invasion of privacy, once we shall at any time send a certain text to another recipient, intentionally or not.

Therefore, in emphasizing the linguistic characteristics to which e-mail refers, we have, in structural terms, that it resembles other genres, such as: the note, memorandum and, above all, the letter. Some elements of the email are: Vocative refers to the person for whom it is intended; Text - characterized by the message itself. Farewell, followed by the sender’s signature.\(^{11}\)

Referring to language, this varies according to the degree of intimacy among the involved interlocutors, and there may even be a reduction of terms, represented by the “inevitable” abbreviations.

1.4 The genre Biodata

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Biodata or biography, a genre also addressed by Ramos (2004), is defined as a textual genre, and as such, is made up of its own linguistic characteristics. Talking about biography certainly does not represent something so unusual, given the recurrence of this type of text in some everyday circumstances, as in school work representing one of the steps to be fulfilled during the research. Effectively, there is no possibility of addressing the deeds related to a particular person without first emphasizing who he/she was.

According to Duarte, in this meantime, we must remember, especially when we emphasize the issue of genders, the discursive purposes to which each of these communication situations is proposed, as already mentioned. Thus, in the biodata genre, specifically, the purpose to be fulfilled is precisely to permit the interlocutor to be informed about the biographical data of someone, that is, of that person’s life. In this way, it is equivalent to say that, in order to fulfill this purpose (reporting on the life of a particular person), the chronological order of events, from the moment of birth, represents a factor of extreme preponderance.

Ramos (2004, p. 75) reports that when working with the biodata genre, he took into account that this genre has relevance in the professional life of the future teacher, once it serves as a subsidy not only for the training and performance of the language teacher, as well as for their education and their constitution as a citizen capable of criticizing, and skilled in the practice of the discursive phenomena that surround their professional life in social relations, being present in periodicals and books of the area, in information made available on the Web by professionals, among so many others. In addition to acting as an incentive in the motivation and interest of students in producing texts, due to the fact that they are generally shorter texts that do not require students to take a long time to produce.

Ramos ratifies the choice of this textual genre stating that it:

[...] incorpora informações de natureza pessoal e envolvem vários elementos léxico-gramaticais já familiares e estudados previamente no curso pelos alunos (falar sobre si, produzir perfis com dados pessoais, histórico do que fez ou faz etc.), demandando, neste caso, a recontextualização desses elementos para a construção do gênero biodata. Decorre dessas razões, sua escolha para compor o

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1.5 What is proficiency?

Being proficient in a particular language seems to be a fairly obvious concept for most people, it would be someone to be able to speak in a certain language without embarrassment or obstacle. Others, perhaps paraphrasing Oliveira (2016, 48), could argue that a person proficient in English would be someone who engages in linguistic activities using English spoken and/or written in a competent way to report or manifest what he/she thinks in a natural way. That is, to maintain an effective communication, to speak with confidence, to start to speak something and to conclude without difficulties.

It is true that in general the term proficiency has been used to make reference to the knowledge and skills of a speaker of a foreign language.

For countries where the official language is not English, there are well-established proficiency tests such as Cambridge Proficiency Examination (CPE) and TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), which measure, support and regulate proficiency of users of the English language.

Oliveira tells us that in any case the proficient apprentice is able to use “language in a range of culturally appropriate ways”. He also reinforces that:

Nesse caso, a cultura deve ser entendida como Cultura com C minúsculo, ou seja, o aprendiz sabe como adequar sua fala e sua escrita a contextos socioculturais específicos no momento de interagir com pessoas que ocupam posições de sujeitos específicas no ato de interação comunicativa. Além disso, ainda segundo este autor, o aprendiz proficiente tem acesso a “áreas da cultura como teatro, cinema e literatura”. Agora já devemos entender o termo cultura como sendo Cultura com C maiúsculo, ou seja, o estudante proficiente conhece os cânones intelectuais e artísticos da sociedade britânica, como por exemplo, os romances de Jane Austen e as peças de Shakespeare. (OLIVEIRA, 2014, p. 48).14

13 [...] incorporates information of a personal nature and involves several lexical-grammatical elements already familiar and studied previously in the course by the students (talking about themselves, producing profiles with personal data, history of what they did or do etc.), demanding, in this case, the recontextualization of these elements for the construction of the biodata genre. Causing due to these reasons, their choice to compose the content and be the genre to start the sequencing of contents. (Ramos 2004, p.75) My translation.

14 In this case, culture should be understood as Culture with a small c, that is, the leaner knows how to adapt his speech and his writing to specific sociocultural contexts when interacting with people who occupy positions of specific subjects in the act of communicative interaction. In addition, according to this author, the proficient learner has access to “areas of culture such as theater, cinema and literature”. We must now at this point
Still regarding to proficiency, let’s look at what Penny Ur informs us:

Language proficiency can be defined in terms of accuracy and fluency; if a learner has mastered a language successfully, that means that he or she can understand and produce it both accurately (correctly) and fluently (receiving and conveying messages with ease). Thus in planning a unit of teaching, it is useful to separate the two aspects, and define clearly the learning objective at any given point in a lesson. When the objective is accuracy, teacher and learners are chiefly concerned with ‘getting the language right’: forming correct sounds, words, sentences. When it its fluency, they are concentrating on the ‘message’: communicating or receiving content. (For more detailed discussion of the accuracy/fluency dichotomy, see Brumfit, 1984.) (UR, 1996, p. 103)

1.6 English language teaching for adults

It is not only in the present time that foreign language teaching has been a lucrative market for many educational institutions. And for that to happen, for a long time scholars and theorists have been bent on research and studies in the search for a perfect and ideal method for transmitting knowledge of a certain language. We can verify more about the conceptions of “what is to teach” and “what is to learn” in Oliveira (2016, pp. 23-38).

Nevertheless, we have in the educational market several methods that were developed for the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Among some, we have the Audiovisual Method, which can be classified as a variant of the audiolingual method, due to the equivalences of methodologies and the theories of teaching in which both are constituted. Thus, in order to understand the principles on which the audiovisual method is based, a brief survey of “audiolinguialism” becomes substantial and how this one was taken as the basis for that one.

After World War II, according to Richards & Rodgers (1986), the teaching of English as LE (Foreign Language) has acquired importance in the world context, since it has become increasingly essential to master the oral aspects of that language, so that the student had a degree of proficiency that would allow him to communicate in a natural way in the foreign language, at the end of his learning, through speech, instead of doing so only by written language, which until then was understand the term culture as being a Culture with a capital C, that is, the proficient student knows the intellectual and artistic canons of British society, such as Jane Austen’s novels and Shakespeare’s plays. (OLIVEIRA, 2014, p. 48) My translation.
conquered mainly by the practice of translating short sentences or literary texts of the language to maternal language and vice versa.

Fernandes (2004, p. 11) emphasizes this in his monograph when he narrates that with the advent of the United States in World War II, a search in the American army arose by staff fluent in several foreign languages (Italian, French, German, etc.) to act as translators and interpreters. The US government then demanded that universities developed a military-oriented foreign language teaching program. Then, it was developed in 1942 and became known as ASTP “Army Specialized Training Program”, a method that gave great theoretical contribution to what would later be called the audiolingual method.

We do not intend to describe and conceptualize the various alternative methods developed for the teaching of foreign languages, because it is a very broad question, and because it is not the determining focus of our work. However, we highlight here some of the most expressive on the market pointed out by Oliveria (2016, pp. 107-138), who details more widely on each of them:

Silente Way - By Caleb Gattegno, which consists of the maximum of silence by the teacher; Suggestopedia or Reservopedia - by Georgi Lozanov, based on techniques that aim at the relaxation of students and with this, the decrease of fear and common anxiety in learning situations; TPR - Total Physical Response - by James Asher, based on body movements; CLL - Community Language Learning - by Charles Curran, based on psychological counseling techniques for teaching foreign languages; In addition to the numerous methods such as: Project Based Learning (PBL), Second Language Acquisition (SLA), English Language Education Program (ELEP), among many others.

There is also an inexorable dubiousness about the question of a sovereign method for foreign language teaching.

It is worth mentioning that in the course of the classes, in addition to the texts written with emphasis on each genre, due to the need for grammatical subsidies and the structure of the target language by the students to better develop, understand and participate more effectively, we chose for not only focusing on the matter of the genres themselves, but working on several aspects that would contribute to the learning and interaction of all the actors involved.

Thus, we approached grammatical aspects such as: Differences between Lyrics and Letters, Both and Bought; Irregular verbs; Negative responses with not
and responding negatively with no; Differences in: Between and Among / Another and Other / Come and Came / Kind = tipo; gentil → Kindness = gentileza / bondade / Mass and Mess / Add and Ad / Principal and Main / Language and Tongue / Table and Chart / Forward and Headed to / Send and Sand.

We also study suffix: -ly, -um; Identification of false cognates; Past tense of regular verbs; Identification of cognates; Translation without dictionary; Markers as proper names; keyword; Prefix -un; Future with Will; Uses of would, should, could, and will in affirmative and negative forms.

We approached the resource ‘Phrase of the day’ as a strategy to present new words through classic phrases that important people have thought of in the past; Reading and repeating emblematic phrases in English; Spellings; Connecting words in sentences; Dictation; Variation of pronunciations and differences of words in some specific cases, as in: receipt and recipe; How to say or mention numbers or dates in readings like: 287 and 2014; Genre musical songs, with the songs ‘I will always love you’ by Whitney Houston; ‘Titanium’ by David Guetta; ‘Amazing Grace’ by Chris Tomlin.

During the exposition of all the classes, we made use of the slide projector for the projection of videos, texts and songs with their respective audios in English.

In all the texts presented during the lessons, we chose to teach them in English followed by a gradual translation, since only a few students were able to understand practically everything in English and others did not. We realized then, that they found this teaching strategy quite interesting.

For the development of this work, although we have consciousness about several types of teaching methods, already mentioned, we believe that was a better choice to work with the most expressive and appropriate teaching practices for each situation of use of the textual genres worked, rather than choosing only one method considered as sovereign.

Penny Ur makes it very clear about this subject of methodologies applied in language teaching:

A language course may be based on pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar, or on the more ‘communicative’ categories of topic, situation and function. Probably, however, the most effective teaching and learning result from a combination of them all, in a systematic but flexible programme in which, for example, topics and situations
provide a context for the teaching of new words, and structures are learned in order to express notions of functions. (UR, 1996, p. 46)

Thus, we found it more interesting to combine different approaches in order to facilitate the acquisition or improvement of the necessary skills for a better understanding and use of the textual genres focused here.

2 METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, we will elaborate on the justification, case study, context, place and duration of the study, participants, research tools and data collection procedures, and the presentation of analysis.

2.1 Justification

Our interest and motivation in this study came from the need to acquire and improve the language skills and abilities of Unifesspa technical staff in the performance of their duties and assignments in the workplace. As well as for the urgent lack of better preparation of them to improve their capacity to perform tasks in the institution regarding administrative work, and actions related to the internationalization of the university, from the development of English language proficiency, and from The development of reading and listening skills in this language.

We have highlighted our theoretical references for the adoption of the theme textual genres throughout this work, but we still refer to Marcuschi (2005, p.35) which also ensures that “work with textual genres is an extraordinary opportunity to deal with language in their most diverse authentic uses in everyday life,” working with genres allows students to participate in real situations of language use through activities that aim to develop oral and written communication.

2.2 The case study

Our case study is in agreement with Brown and Rogers (2006), who investigate the development of linguistic competence and investigate the sequences
of growth over time in a group, an individual, or an institution. In this study, we will present the context, the instruments of research and the analysis of data.

2.3 The context

The Federal University of South and Southeast Pará (UNIFESSPA) has its headquarters and forum in the city of Marabá. Its official opening was on June 6th, 2013, since the creation of the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), based on the dismemberment of the Campus of Marabá, UFPA, which already had academic maturity to receive the new institution of higher education. Regarding Human Resources actions aimed at training and developing knowledge and skills of staff (teachers and administrative staff focused on the internationalization of the University), we can highlight the English Without Borders Program.

The Program is developed by the Ministry of Education (MEC) through the Department of Higher Education (SESu) along with with the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES). The learning of languages, as well as providing a comprehensive and structuring change in the teaching of foreign languages in the universities throughout the country.

At the Federal University of South and Southeast of Pará, the English Without Borders Program is coordinated by the National and International Relations (ARNI). There are three classes with approximately 60 students in total.

Based on this internationalization process of Unifesspa, it was verified that the technical staff of this institution should also take part in a parallel course similar to those mentioned above, once their professional activities at the institution require this preparation regarding foreign language training.

2.3.1 The place and duration of the study

Currently, UNIFESSPA has three campuses, each with its staff, among them, the administrative technicians. Thus, for the application of the course, the demand was very high for the small number of enrollments that could be offered, once as a scholarship holder, we could only teach classes in a single campus because of the distance between them.
Thus, through a series of conveniences and adjustments, the course was applied at Campus Three of Unifesspa, lasting one and a half hour each class, twice a week, due to the fact that campuses were far from each other, and most of the technician staff are from this campus. In this case, the amount was divided in two, being a class consisting of twenty students on Monday and Wednesday, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and the other on Tuesdays and Thursdays at from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., starting in the second half of 2015, beginning on September 8th, 2015, and ending on the eighth day of December 2015.

2.3.2 The participants

This training project for Unifesspa’s technical staff was applied with the objective of improving, developing and expanding the knowledge and language skills of the English language in Unifesspa’s administrative staff. Once they are the most directly involved in communicating with foreign speakers, lecturers or teachers who may be in contact through the new actions and measures carried out in the internationalization process of the Brazilian universities.

Therefore, we aimed to contribute in the attempt to meet these needs through the development of an intensive and face-to-face English course, with face-to-face coaching activities at the Federal University of South and Southeast of Pará (UNIFESSPA).

After a selection process through a questionnaire regarding the students’ interest in the course, their level of knowledge of the target language, their aspirations to learn this language, and among the language use skills, which ones they intended to focus on?

Based on the students’ responses and interest, through evaluation of the data, it was possible to arrange a class of forty students from the three Unifesspa campuses.

2.4 Research tools

As research instruments, we used the questionnaire initially made to better know the profile of the technical-staff students and their aspirations to participate in this training course of foreign language, specifically the English language.
From the students’ answers and from the fact that the common interests to the four skills developed and used in language learning, we decided to work with textual genres. Therefore, after reading and researching, we developed a planning that contemplated such expectations of the students.

Still as a research instrument, we will analyze the exposing of the classes, the students’ behavior in relation to their previous expectations and the classes, and finally we will try to answer the three questions that guided this work.

2.5 Data collection

We made the observation of the questionnaire for the forty students, who are technicians of Unifesspa and participated on the classes taught in this project. The students initially filled out a form with their personal and academic information and answered a questionnaire about their expectations and preferences regarding the teaching and learning of the English Language. After verifying this information, and selecting students with similar aspirations and expectations, it was possible to set up two classes with twenty students each.

2.6 Data collection analysis

It arose in us the idea of making a selection of those ones interested in the course. Therefore, in order search and collect information about the levels of knowledge of the candidates, it would be necessary firstly merge the information to make a leveling of each class.

Facing the need for improvement or even the knowledge of the English language skills by the administrative staff of Unifesspa, we elaborated three questions that were taken as basis for the development of strategies to be applied in the teaching. Then, we first prepared a registration form with the following questionnaire:

First: If the student has already studied a foreign language? If yes, what foreign language, and how long and at what level did it stop and/or is it in progress?
Second: What was his/her interest in learning the foreign language, especially English? And lastly: What skill in particular would him/her like to develop most: Reading, writing, speaking or listening?
From the analysis of this questionnaire, it was possible to assemble two classes of twenty students each, with characteristics and interests in common. Moreover, in meetings with the two idealizing teachers of the project, we investigated some possible subjects and approaches to be used in the course ministration, and we decided to work with textual genres. Namely: News of popularization of science, E-mail and Biodata, through the above mentioned four skills.

The course began on September 8th, 2015, lasting one and a half hour each class, twice a week, totaling seventy-two hours of workload. The hours of extra-class tasks were included for the aggregation of the expected workload. The expository classes were developed with oral and written exercises, and oral and written evaluation tests at the end of each textual genre studied.

Despite the selection and adequacy of leveling made in the organization of the two classes arranged, we could not achieve homogeneous classes due to the choice of the days of classes, because students with profiles very similar ended up choosing different days and classes. It was then that from the first classes of the course, we could see that the profile of the student in the classroom in the academy is closely identical to the profile of high school students from various social situations, it is, most of them never had any contact with some foreign language.

3 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

3.1 Observation

We will describe below the observations related to the textual genres developed in the classes throughout the course. In subtopic 3.1.1 we will talk about News of popularization of science, in subtopic 3.1.2 we will talk about the genre E-mail and finally, in subtopic 3.1.3 we will treat about the genre Biodata.

3.1.1 Note: News of popularization of science

On the September 8th, 2015, we started the class with our introduction to the class, and briefly each student in the class made his introduction. Those who felt
confidence presented themselves in English, and others less confident, did it in Portuguese.

On that day, we worked with the topics: Getting to know what “news of popularization of science” genre is about; Slideshows with English videos on Drones, and we ended with oral and written exercises.

In the next classes, with focus on the textual genre News of Popularization of Science, the following texts were approached: 1. Drone, with assumptions about the theme. 2. Aeromobil - Flying car. 3. Brain implant that decodes intention will let us probe free will. 4. Empathetic budgies yawn when they see their peers do the same. 5. Areas of physical economic Water Scarcity. 6. Lost memories recovered in mice with a flash of light.

3.1.2 Note: Email

We begin the above subject by approaching an overview of the e-mail genre, Similarities and Differences of terms related to e-mail in English and Portuguese: “Cc” X “Cco”, “Cco” X “Bcc”, Attachment, Anexo, HTML, Spam; E-mail address ; Subject ; Opening greetings and salutation; Introduction; Actual message; Attachments; Close remarks; Reading different e-mail templates; Grammar with: Somebody else / someone else / No one else /Who else /Where else.

We believe that the choice of this genre is in accordance with the assertions of Schneuwly and Dolz (2004), who conceive the textual genres as instruments of communication and teaching. Furthermore, the authors emphasize that the classroom should recreate situations that favor the reproduction of social reference practices, in order to help students to act appropriately with the language in a situation of real communication.

In the next lessons, we dealt with e-mail formats and the type of linguistic formality in them; Reading and translation of some e-mail templates; Reading of the e-mail template: “Job application”, by Peter Parker; And writing exercises; Opening and closing, and essential linguistic elements of the e-mail genre; Formal and informal invitation; Informal short messages; Practice and reading e-mail models with an apology; Written exercises with short formal and informal notes in E-mails.
With the text “Internet Service Complaint”, we were impelled to practice expressions as the native speakers do in natural everyday speech. Next, we made a dictation activity.

We also saw and studied the e-mail example: “A job volunteer request” in which someone applied for a job, justifying that he had experience in the field and would like to continue to improve his knowledge as a volunteer.

After each type of e-mail model, in addition to practicing them in the classroom, students had the task of sending a similar email to the teacher. Moreover, some of the students with more fluency and knowledge of the English language were able to write more elaborately, others not so much, and for these, the most deficient aspects were pointed out, and with that, we noticed an improvement in the writing skills of the email genre.

The students had as regular activities the translation and production of e-mails based on models extracted from the internet.

3.1.3 Observation: Biodata

For the use of this genre, we find support in Ramos (2004, p. 75) when he ratifies that it provides subsidies not only for the formation and performance of the language teacher, but also for the education and training of a critical and skilled citizen in the management of discursive manifestations that surround their professional life and in society. Thus, enabling the student [...] to talk about himself, to produce profiles with personal data, history of what he did or does, etc.

Following the course we presented the new subject to be worked, the genre biodata (biography). In making use of this genre, students were encouraged to deal with individual profiles, professional academic context to be presented both orally and in writing, and to practice writing and speaking about their personal and academic trajectories. They were encouraged to do activities in pairs, where each one interviewed the other colleague.

After collecting data from the interview, the students would write a short biographical text within the models studied, and after exchanging their texts with their colleagues, each would read it to the whole class.

In the sequence, a biodata in Portuguese, about a national popular singer “Moraes Moreira” was shown to the students. After reading the text, they would
rewrite it in English. As an extra-class exercise, students would search the internet for a video or story of a public person, choose and write a short biography about that person, following the steps: Who is this person? What can you say about him/her? What are the characteristics of this person? - The activities were carried out successfully and socialized with the class.

We applied these and other strategies for the biographical texts: Kingsley Bolton; Chea Theara; Ann M. Johns; And Penny Ur, also observing grammar aspects and punctuation marks such as:

@ - at sign       # - pound sign       $ - dollar sign
% - percent sign  ^ - carat          & - ampersand
* - asterisk      () - parenthesis    - dash
_ - underscore    + - plus sign      = - equal sign
{} - brace        [] - bracket        | Pipe
\ - backslash     / - forward slash  : - colon
; - semicolon     " - quotation mark  ' - apostrophe
, - comma         . Period            ?-Question mark
~ - tilde         ! Exclamation point

3.2 Analysis of observations

In the development of this work, we could note that each of the textual genres studied in this training course of Unifesspa’s technical staff, namely News of popularization of science, E-mail and Biodata, has in fact aroused curiosity and interest in students in practicing them and applying them. The students developed the activities both in the classroom and in their everyday context, focusing on this case, for e-mail and biodata, for being part of the daily practice of their work environment.

At the outset, as some students in both classes still did not have enough English language knowledge to understand the ministrations of English classes, we decided to present the classes in English followed by a gradual translation. In this way, we understood that students, who did not yet have the basis to understand everything said in English, would learn from the gradual comparison of the
translation. Moreover, those who already had a certain degree of fluency could confirm and gauge their knowledge of the language on the orality.

With the genre News of popularization of science, it was possible to begin a series of studies on aspects of the English language, always focusing on reading strategies: Scanning, Skimming, Predictions, and Typography, in which students pre-read. Through the reading strategy Scanning, the students made a superficial reading in which they would seek to locate specific information without resorting to the linear reading of the text. Being this, a teaching strategy very practiced in the courses of Instrumental Reading.

Then they proceeded to the reading: following the Skimming strategy looking to get a general impression on the subject, and decide if it was relevant to their reading goal. Then they went on to post-reading, also observing the typography (graphic visual elements) which, after predicting, inferring, guessing the words contained in the text, the students observed their own knowledge on the subject; Semantic context, linguistic and non-linguistic context, and knowledge about the structure of texts.

From the study of the e-mail genre, for example, the students felt encouraged and willing to correspond through e-mail (among themselves) and with their teacher in English, whenever they had the opportunity.

Finally, we noticed that the students made use of the biodata genre in order to put it into practice to elaborate their own biography, as well as they felt more comfortable and confident when facing texts of the type.

3.3 Search responses

To use a plausible answer to our first question mentioned in the introduction to this paper: How important are textual genres used in English language teaching? We will use the theoretical framework studied throughout this work. Thus, for the answer to the initial question, we will mention Ramos (2004), who exactly praises our aspirations regarding this questioning when he suggests that:

Cursos baseados em gêneros contemplem atividades que otimizem os objetivos previamente estabelecidos. São atividades consideradas fundamentais aquelas que proporcionam discussões em relação à contextualização dos textos propostos, isto é, seus propósitos,
público alvo, crenças, valores institucionais etc., “assegurando que a discussão dos traços linguísticos possa sempre ser feita dentro do contexto de suas funções no texto” aquelas que capacitem o aluno a ser um produtor competente, ou seja, que se aproprie do gênero e o explore criativamente. (RAMOS 2004, p.117)

To the question on: What are the greatest difficulties encountered by the technical staff in foreign language teaching and learning? We found that these difficulties are related to several factors such as: the impossibility of training due to many activities related to their work, mainly due to the strikes that occur from time to time, generating accumulation of tasks.

We also found that when such servers generally enter courses such as this, they have difficulty completing their stages due to the displacement when this or that course is applied in other locations away from their workplaces. Even when a certain course is applied to the server’s own workplace, even so, during classes, they sometimes did not participate because the departments in which they worked did not release them, or other times they had to leave in the middle of the class to attend some requirement from their bosses.

We emphasize, by the way, that during the course there was a great evasion of the servers due to the displacement issue. Because the course was offered to the servants of the three Unifesspa campuses, in the face of all these reasons, practically all the employees of campuses one and two ended up giving up the course. From then on, the teachers who idealized the course, to attend these servers, opportunized them a second chance by offering the course on campus two, applied by another scholarship holder.

Another very evident factor that disturbed the servants in assimilating the subjects addressed in the study and presentation of the textual genres, was undoubtedly the lack of linguistic and grammatical base of the English language.

Due to all these issues, we justify our actions in the execution of the course, using the citations already mentioned in this paper approaching very well some of these impasses. Schumacher (1999) argues that students generally use pretexts when they can not learn English. What is justified by Marinho (2010), which deals

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15 Gender-based courses contemplate activities that optimize previously set goals. Activities that are considered fundamental are those that provide discussions regarding the contextualization of the proposed texts, that is, their purposes, target public, beliefs, institutional values, etc., “ensuring that the discussion of linguistic traits can always be done within the context of their functions in the text “those that enable the student to be a competent producer, that is, to appropriate the genre and explore it creatively. (RAMOS 2004, p.117) My translation.
with the fact of the lack of basic and prior knowledge of the English language faced by the students. This leads them to the distancing of writing production training geared toward academic discourse.

However, for Pimenta and Anastasiou (2002), the student must have malleable attitudes, be able to deal with the new and the unforeseen. Moreover, to try to soften these clashes that delay and hinder the acquisition of knowledge, we adopt the recommendations of Brown (2001) when he advises teachers to motivate their students in any and all circumstances, once motivation stimulates the student to action, and compelled in the classroom, we will have interaction between students, as well as between students and teachers.

In response to the third question about: With the methodology of teaching through genre would there be a development in the learning of the servers? The answer is positive, because we understand that, as Marcuschi (2002, p. 29) declares that, when we master a textual genre, we dominate a way of linguistically performing specific objectives in particular social situations. By the way, we have seen this happen in dialectical practices in the use of the genres studied in the classroom.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of this work was to analyze the discursive practices in the study of textual genres in the application of a training course and improvement of the abilities related to the English language of the technical staff of Unifesspa.

To do so, based on the various authors and researchers on this subject, which we have mentioned throughout this work, we have chosen and applied several strategies, methodologies and approaches that they have thought of and suggested, contributing also to some didactic-pedagogical ideas and practices that we acquired throughout our activity as a researcher professor.

In conclusion, the oral comprehension skills of students exposed to textual genres improved considerably as the course proposals and stages advanced, once the interpersonal relationships with the use of textual genres occurred more spontaneously and confidently. We were able to experience the concept of Aguiar (apud Burns, 1999) in the course of the classes by observing the excerpts produced by the students and verifying that
these samples of texts enable the teacher to evaluate progress, diagnose areas that need improvement, and analyze the extent to which changes implemented during action research are working.

(AGUIAR, apud BURNS, 1999, p. 43)

The results of this research are a valuable indication that working with textual genres is a very useful tool to develop the proficiency of the four skills namely: reading, writing, listening and speaking of English speaking students. Therefore, we would like to suggest that this proposal becomes a dynamic to be maintained and opportune for not only the technical staff of Unifesspa, but also that it can be extended to other publics as well.

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