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## TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH FOR INTERNACIONAL RELATIONS: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

*ENSINAR E APRENDER INGLÊS PARA RELAÇÕES INTERNACIONAIS: DESAFIOS E PERSPECTIVAS*

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**ABSTRACT:** Internationalization as a phenomenon or activity naturally entangles the use of multiple languages and or a language as a lingua franca. This is why the teaching and learning of languages for this specific purpose needs to be reflected upon and discussed. This article aims to contribute to these reflections and discussions as it approaches some theoretical conceptions on Internationalization, Intercultural Communication and English for Specific Purposes. In order to verify the application of those concepts, a tentative survey was conducted through a questionnaire answered by undergraduate students of the International Relations Program in the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul. The answers reinforce the need of a mindful attitude towards teaching and learning English for International Relation Purposes as communication seems to play a crucial role in Internationalization.

**KEYWORDS:** Internationalization; English for specific purposes; English for international relations

**RESUMO:** A internacionalização como fenômeno ou atividade naturalmente envolve o uso de múltiplas línguas e/ou uma língua como língua franca. Por isso, os processos de ensino e aprendizagem de línguas para esse fim específico precisam ser refletidos e discutidos. Este artigo pretende contribuir com essas reflexões e discussões ao abordar algumas concepções teóricas sobre Internacionalização, Comunicação Intercultural e Inglês para Fins Específicos. A fim de verificar a aplicação desses conceitos, foi realizada uma pesquisa piloto por meio de um questionário respondido por alunos de graduação do Programa de Relações Internacionais da Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul. As respostas reforçam a necessidade de uma atitude consciente em relação ao ensino e aprendizagem de Inglês Aplicado a Relações Internacionais, pois a comunicação parece desempenhar um papel crucial na internacionalização.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Internacionalização; Inglês para propósitos específicos; Inglês aplicado a relações internacionais

## INTRODUCTION

Internationalization is a reality and a necessity in our society and languages play a crucial role in intercultural communication (BOROWSKA, 2013). As one masters a given language, the whole cognitive framework of understanding is broadened so account for intercultural issues that would have been left behind if not for the language proficiency. This article is an analysis of the challenges and perspectives of teaching and learning English for International Relations in an academic context. Based on a literature review conducted from some theme-related topics and on data collected from students, the study addresses the importance of a different mindset when dealing with language for specific purposes, both on behalf of teachers and students, and the need to be observant of specific language features used in the target field in order to maintain appropriate linguistic a

Additionally, this article aims to report the experience learning English for the purposes of International Relations in an academic environment, bringing issues that should be highlighted when working with language for specific purposes (English for International Relations) regarding linguistic aspects such as vocabulary, syntax, semantics and pragmatics, and metalinguistic aspects or more general assumptions about the nature of intercultural communications in the area.

The following pages feature, firstly, a literature review on Internationalization, Intercultural Communication and English for Specific Purposes, topics which are intrinsically related with the processes of teaching and learning English for International Relations. Next, there is an illustration of theses processes presented with data collected from academic students through a tentative questionnaire. The methodology is descriptive as it attempts to show results from a survey and link them with theoretical assumptions previously discussed. Based on their different backgrounds and the standpoints, students share their perceptions and offer contributions to upcoming related courses.

## INTERNATIONALIZATION

Internationalization is a concept beyond a simple definition, as it refers to the capacity and multiplicity of meanings and resignifications behind the word itself and inserted contexts. It can be related to economic, historical and, as previously put in the objective of this article, linguistic issues. Knight (2005, p. 22) classifies these various meanings of the term in a more generic sense and takes into account the educational and academic conditions of the referred concept: “internationalization on a scale of a country/a sector/ an institution designating the process that consists of an integration in an international, intercultural or global dimension in the purposes, functions or organization of post-secondary education”.

However, it is extremely important to emphasize that internationalization does not come up from the need for educational interaction, but from the political and economic scenario.

In view of the aforementioned concept, it is essential to bring Jane Knight's discussion in her book "Five truths about internationalization", in which she describes five characteristics that this process must have in order to be carried out correctly. They are: improvement and respecting the local context, the fact that it is an adaptable process, taking into account the benefits, risks and consequences, realizing that it is not an end in itself and differentiating globalization from internationalization.

Firstly, international cooperation, in the sense of contributing to social transformations, such as the implementation of public policies that favor intercultural development. Improvement and respect for the local context: international cooperation in the sense of contributing to social transformations, such as the implementation of public policies that favor intercultural development.

About being an adaptable process, it is worth mentioning that internationalization must adjust to the context in which it is included. It is essential that the benefits, risks and intentional and unintended consequences are always analyzed for all possible stakeholders.

A feature that is often overlooked is that internationalization is not an end in itself, but a process of integration of international and intercultural dimensions that influence the activities of the Institution that promotes it, thus, it is a means to achieve an end and not an end in itself.

The author also points out the need to differentiate globalization from internationalization: since they are associated, but different, we can point out that Internationalization is the result of the demands of Globalization. In the words of Jane Knight "[...] while globalization refers to the global flow of ideas, knowledge, people, goods, services and technologies, internationalization, in turn, highlights the relations between countries, peoples, cultures and institutions." (KNIGHT, 2012, p. 14).

It is possible to separate this concept into two processes: internationalization, which is the process of cultural, social and educational integration in which there is interculturality, respect for the cultures involved (International Cooperation); and transnationalization, which differs from the first, as there is an overlap of a culture, generally linked to economic powers, in relation to other cultures involved in this process.

By understanding the limits of what internationalization is, it is interesting to go further and think about this non-fixed term. Authors such as Lima and Maranhão (2009) expand this concept by opening a new way of understanding internationalization considering historical, economic and, in a contemporary way, educational aspects and encompass a definition of passive and active internationalization within the educational universe. Internationalization is not presented as an isolated action, as it will include the cooperation of other means of interaction, at different levels (scientific,

technological...) in the academic environment (CASTRO, 2011). Therefore, the concept seen by the authors is viable for this article, because, indirectly, it brings precepts that help to explain the internationalization of languages in the area of International Relations (IR).

Active internationalization is related to countries in which there are public policies aimed at academic growth, offering job opportunities both within the State itself, as well as abroad. Therefore, it is understood, those countries which apply an active definition, as relevant academic centers, that become the main influence in the theories of IR and languages used as a way of internationalization.

However, the other way of analyzing the concept is passively, which implies a limited interaction of countries classified as peripheral and not very relevant academically, economically and politically. In these regions, it is common to create intellectual elites, which mainly promote the departure of students from their own countries to centers of active internationalization. One of the examples given by the authors is Brazil.

After defining the concept of internationalization and its various characteristics, we can move on to the linguistic area. We can start this part by quoting Kanavillil Rajagopalan (2005, p. 49) to demonstrate the dynamics and relationship of languages and international politics “Languages have their own lives. They change all the time. And these changes are not for better or for worse, but simply accompany changes taking place in other spheres.”

Adding the statistic that:

It is estimated that close to 1.5 million people in the world – that is  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the world’s population – already have some degree of knowledge of the English language and/or are in a situation to deal with it in their day to day. Add to this the even more impressive fact that somewhere between 80 and 90% of the dissemination of scientific knowledge takes place in English. In other words, anyone who refuses to acquire a minimal knowledge of the English language is in danger of missing the train of history. (RAJAGOPALAN, 2005, p. 149).

We have a clear sense of the importance of the English language worldwide. This is due to the political, economic, cultural and linguistic power of the English language that has grown since the rise of the United States as a world power after World War II. We can see the hegemony of the English language, especially in the scientific world, which makes English spread across all areas of knowledge, making meetings, business, research, publications, inventions, technological innovations communicated in this language. It is automatically chosen as a global language (lingua franca) in the sense of communicating with everyone, of any nationality. This is what makes the English language conceived, today, not just as a foreign language, but as an international language.

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) refers to “any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option”

(SEIDLEHOFER, 2004, p.7) and is an alternative term for English as an international/global/world language and International English.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an appropriate systematization for specific scientific environments. This methodology arrived in Brazil in the 1980s, through a study by PUCSP, and aimed at strategies for reading texts in English, especially for the university community that needed to understand specific academic texts that were only found in English. Also, it should be highlighted the importance of teachers to position themselves in the formation of speakers so that they can master the language in all its possibilities, making use of it to achieve the interests of its users.

This technique emerged from the needs presented in a post-war world and with new studies in the field of Linguistics, requiring an understanding of specific areas of the students, which made the teaching of languages no longer focused on grammatical rules, for example, and began to emphasize the actual use of language in a communicative way.

In view of all this, it is necessary first to go back to one of the greatest criticisms of the English School, a school of Traditionalist Theory of International Relations, on the intellectual poverty of the area. In this case study, the field of study is even more restricted, as we are specifically dealing with the role of languages in the internationalization of teaching from different perspectives. The lack of research and debates is extremely harmful to the complete training of professionals. In addition, most of the articles found are focused on the internationalization of companies and the use of English as a Lingua Franca - a common language of social groups that communicate in different languages (MACKENZIE, 2014). Yet the materials that specifically consider the use of the English language are rare.

## INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

IR as a field covers areas that are difficult to define: in addition to covering several subjects, they can be seen in different ways depending on the point of view taken. We can take realistic, ideological and liberal perspectives, constructivists, Marxists, revolutionists etc. We can also consider such relationships from many perspectives such as anthropological, political, economic, among others.

In this article, we decided to take as a starting point a concept used in the book “50 Great strategists of international relations” in its introduction to the thinkers of the Theory of International Society. Griffiths expresses how the authors of this Theory stimulate thinking about international relations as a “social arena”. For the members of the international system, that is, the sovereign States, do not have their relationship limited to the competition of power and wealth, as in the realistic vision of Machiavelli and Hobbes, for example. However, such links go far beyond this view in this case,

approaching the particular rights, authorities and obligations of each nation involved, taking into account fields such as history, sociology and law.

With regard to IR, it is crucial to understand the historicity and growth of the debates in that area, in order to also understand how the internationalization of languages behaves inside the IR. Given this, it becomes possible to analyze the English language in this scenario and where it is established.

Keeping in mind how the main theories of IR in history are formed makes it easier to understand where ideas come from, who the thinkers were and understand the languages imposed during the growth of debates will behave. In order to understand all these points in the same scenario, Jackson and Sorensen in the book "Introduction to International Relations" (2012) dynamically bring this necessary analysis.<sup>121</sup>

The first debate faced by the area is a dispute between Idealism and Realism. After the First World War (1914-18), questions about the reasons for the war to have started or why the powers in this scenario remained in this dispute<sup>122</sup> was the starting point of the IR. The dispute between the Triple Entente (Great Britain, France and Russia) and the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy)<sup>1</sup> has the prospect of a resolution after the entry of the United States in 1917, providing support to the Entente.

In addition to the United States having helped to put an end to the First World War, the participation of the United States of America's president Woodrow Wilson was essential for idealist or utopian liberal thought to form the academic center in the United States of America. Wilson formulated the "14 Points of Wilson", which were one of the bases for the creation of the League of Nations, implemented at the Paris<sup>123</sup> Peace Conference (1919).

Wilson's idealism prior to establishing the end of the war and maintaining the peace in a permanent way would be mediated by an international organization and would act in a rational and intelligent way. Another contribution of this theoretical line was from the British thinker Norman Angell<sup>3</sup>, who in his main thesis, claimed that interdependence would be essential to maintain peace and make war lose importance.

On the other side of the debate is the Realism of the 1930s-50s, which follows the failure of the League of Nations to try to prevent the rise of Fascism, Nazism and Imperial Japan<sup>3</sup>, and applied

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121 To cover the history of IR and the internationalization of the English language in the area, the historical review will be based on debates, contexts and who are the important members that build the thinking of IR.

122 JACKSON, Robert; SORENSEN, Georg. *Introdução às Relações Internacionais*. 2nd ed. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2013. n.2.

123 JACKSON, Robert; SORENSEN, Georg. *Introdução às Relações Internacionais*. 2nd ed. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2013. n.2.

aggressive foreign policies<sup>3</sup> completely contrary to the cooperation attempted by the idealism. The period was characterized by the quest for power by Germany, Italy and Japan and the taking of an International System (IS) based on the balance of power as a way of reaching "peace".

Realists believe that the feeling of German's revanchism grew since the Paris Peace Conference (1919), which imposed harsh conditions on Germany after World War I. These and other factors led to the development of nationalism and, consequently, the ideal scenario for the need for another conflict.

The Realist theory has ancient bases, in Thucydides, Hobbes and Machiavelli, these being different academic centers. However, when it comes to Realism in IR there is a great concentration of theorists in the United States<sup>3</sup>.

Despite the significant academic milieu as English speakers, the main authors of Realism are in the United States. Morgenthau, one of the most important thinkers of this theory and who influenced many IR scholars, was a German fleeing World War II who settled on American soil. That happened in many other areas and was essential in establishing an IR academic force in this region. He influenced other realists such as Niebuhr and Kennan. By contrast, Carr was a British IR theorist and, like Morgenthau, focused on strengthening Realism, as did the Frenchman Aron.

Given this scenario of the first debate, it is possible to see an American concentration, or growth of the American and British IR academic center as one of the protagonists in the new international scenario, which IR proposes to study. However, it is necessary to emphasize the French importance within this scenario since many previous French thinkers were important to form a theoretical basis.

In the second debate, the world entered the Cold War scenario, so IR theories ended up paralyzed to the detriment of the conflict scenario (JJ). Thus, in this new phase of IR, it is focused on the methodological notion of the area, until there IR was understood as in a traditional character with the study of philosophy, international law, the history of diplomacy, areas in which there is a lot of focus on values and ethics.

The new debate arises from the rapid growth of IR studies in the United States, in which theorists of the time brought social science, political science, political philosophy, or economics<sup>124</sup> to a new form and analysis of IR.

This focus was called "behaviorism", in which it sought to see IR in a scientific way, analyzing patterns and moving away from the object of analysis as much as possible. Scholars of the period

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<sup>124</sup> JACKSON, Robert; SORENSEN, Georg. *Introdução às Relações Internacionais*. 2nd ed. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2013. n.2.

sought to understand the behavior of the two superpowers, the United States and the USSR<sup>4</sup>, and the new world order created, bipolar.

On the other hand, the traditionalism of IR, the one that understands the value, ethics and human complexity within the studies of the interactions of international agents<sup>4</sup>, is the other part of this dispute defending the need for history, law, philosophy as bases to understand the complex SI relationship.

However, none of the debates was victorious, but it established the United States as a power academy of IR and, consequently, established the English language, already very present in the area, as essential to understand the debates and new theories that are emerging.

The next one is the third debate - it avoids the debate on how IR should be studied and seeks a discussion on political issues related to welfare, military, and security socio-economy. The scenario of this debate begins in the 1970s, as countries are still suffering the consequences of the Second World War and, in this period, at the center of a bipolar conflict focused on issues of economic, military and technological power. The theoretical see themselves suffering from these IS changes. and thus initiates, in this scenario, a new debate on economics.

With this present context, Neo-Marxism emerged in an attempt to make scholars, theorists and IS actors themselves reflect on the economic underdevelopment of countries considered to be of the "Third World". This theory is based on the ideas of economist Karl Marx. They believe that the capitalist system exists to control the poorest states in the world and strengthen the richest, since they are the ones who hold power in the capitalist system. In summary, "Marxist EPI [International Political Economy] understands international capitalism as an instrument for the exploitation of the Third World by the developed countries" (JACKSON; SORENSEN, 2013, p. 88).

On the other side of the scale is an alliance formed against EPI neo-Marxist ideas, Realism/Neorealism and Liberalism/Neoliberalism. Realistic EPI believes that the economy should be dedicated to strengthening the State and be managed by the State<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, theorists of this line believe that without some hegemonic power it is impossible to have a liberal world economy, so they believe that the existence of a power strong enough to maintain order in the global economic system is essential.

Along this side, there is Liberalism and Neoliberalism, which believe in hierarchy in the economic system, but that human prosperity for all could be achieved in the global free market regardless of its development.

In this scenario, the greater presence of German economists, such as Andre Gunder Frank, due to the Cold War context, inserted the debate, as well as the presence of North American economists and sociologists, such as Immanuel Wallerstein. It is still possible to witness US sovereignty, as a result



of the English language in the IR, but a growth of other original theoretical lines from other regions is visible.

The last major IR debate is the “intraparadigmatic”, in which it presents the confrontation between positivist theories (Realism, Liberalism, International Society and others) and post-positivist theories (Critical Theory, Postmodernism, Feminine etc.)<sup>125</sup>.

The period of this discussion is marked by the end of the Cold War, in which it changed the international agenda from the bipolar perspective, for be about terrorism, democratization, minorities, humanitarian intervention, migrations, environmental security, etc.<sup>5</sup> emerge with great force.

Accompanied by this, academics in the area showed discontent with the methodologies used by IR so far and instigated it, even more, to criticize anti-behaviorists such as Hedley Bull, theorist of the International Society. Therefore, they returned to discuss “how to approach the IR”, because they believed that positivist theories had flaws especially when talk about the proximity of the subject and the object.

In this debate, academic centers are still very present in the United States, mainly in Critical Theory, but there is a great discussion in France of Post-Modernist theory, as it was a thought started by a group of French philosophers<sup>5</sup>. Thus, it is possible to observe a large presence and influence of the English language in the history of IR, but in its philosophical and historical spheres, the presence of French is visible. In addition, other European languages are observed, such as Italian and Greek, which were important to create a basis for concepts of the study of politics and are currently important to understand IR.

English is a language that has to be mastered by speakers of other languages who want to interact in this intercultural scenario. In order to learn it and teach it, it is crucial to be mindful of the purpose of the actual language use.

## ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

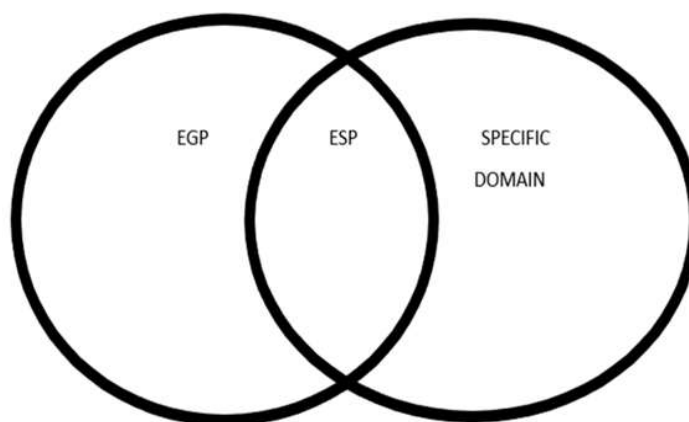
Paltridge & Starfield (2013, p. 2) say that “English for Specific Purposes (ESP) refers to the teaching and learning of English as a second language or foreign language where the goal of the learners is to use English in a particular domain”. Language is employed to communicate, and the ultimate attainment of communication is supposed to be to exchange messages successfully. In this line, it is pivotal that the participants in the dynamics be aware of the purpose of why they are using it. Consequently, they will be more focused on the subtle elements that must be comprised such as special vocabulary, specific structures, and certain pragmatic orientations.

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<sup>125</sup> JACKSON, Robert; SORENSEN, Georg. *Introdução às Relações Internacionais*. 2nd ed. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2013. n.2.

The following picture tries to depict this context.

Figure 1: English for Specific Purposes (ESP)



Source: Pacheco (2022)

English for General Purposes (EGP) is a wide, multipurpose variety of language. In a traditional language school environment, that is the target: to teach and learn English so to be able to use it in different activities, from ordering a meal to participating in a conference. However, language use poses other needs, which are more specific at times, and that should require closer attention and more knowledge of a specific domain. For instance, people interacting in aviation end up using terminological items or structures that can be domain-specific to the point of not being understood by an “outsider” in the field. The specialized language used in aviation has been more recently known as Aviation English (PACHECO, 2019) and then constitutes an example of English for Specific Purposes. Legal or medical purposes are also instances of that.

Viana, Bocorny and Sarmento (2019, p. 2) claim that “English for Specific Purposes does not aim at improving students’ proficiency indiscriminately” and that since “... Students have decided to study English for particular reasons” ... “The gold standard in ESP is to allow students to use English to fulfill their needs (e.g., read a manual, write a dissertation, listen to a lecture, present a sales pitch)”. This is why it is critical that students and teachers have clearly in mind the purpose to which they are learning or teaching the language.

Additionally, teachers have to be aware that they will have to be somewhat familiar with the professional area they are approaching, which may be attained through a collaborative partnership between them with students, as put by Viana, Bocorny and Sarmento (2019, p. 4).

In ESP, teachers’ and students’ roles are different but complimentary. Teachers are the language education specialists; they know (about) English in addition to have pedagogical skills. Students, on the other hand, have some knowledge on their professional field (generally in the first language) and usually have a motivation to learn the language.

As noted by Pacheco (2022), teaching ESP is not restricted to using specific vocabulary without considering the actual structure used or preparing students for particular tests. At times, teachers insist on grammar structures that are employed in EGP disregarding their use in the specific domain, changing examples to items that are familiar to students. This practice can be misleading as learners will still lack information about peculiarities of the target variety of language.

As for the teaching and learning of English applied to International Relations, there are challenges to be overcome, mainly regarding the lack of coursebooks and of more research offering more solid linguistic information as to structures used in the area. Speeches, agreements, conventions and other documents provided by the UN, for instance, make a great source of classroom material, but they have to be adapted so to cope with the language purposes. The below example features a proposed practice available in a coursebook.

Figure 2 – Example of a language activity from an English for International Relations coursebook

## Practice 2

### ***Grammar and communication: modal verbs expressing obligation, possibility, necessity and duty***

*Choose the word or phrase from the list below which best completes the following sentences. The phrase in square brackets [...] will help you decide.*

shall be / cannot be / ought to / is entitled to / may / are bound to / have to be / need not be / are binding on / may be required / are not entitled to

1. By the Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977 the parties to a contract \_\_\_\_\_ always to

Source: Cardirolla (2013)

The exercise is based on a text about the “Tyrer Case”, an episode that has a high impact on human rights. The activity is designed to practice certain modal structures assumedly preferred in international relations – a completely different exercise from a traditional coursebook approaching modal verbs.

English for International Relations is a course offered by the International Relations Program in the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul and it is innovative as it aims to promote language practice within the framework of international relations. Students are required to have intermediate English language proficiency, and classes are developed observing skills such as speaking and writing about a relevant topic in the area. One of the goals of this study is to assess the main

challenges and perspectives in this course in order to confirm challenges faced by the teacher and student and suggest practices that can improve other similar proposals.

## METHODOLOGY

In order to analyze how the aforementioned ideas are applicable to a given teaching and learning reality regarding English for International Relations, a survey was conducted based on preliminary data gathering from 11 students in the IR Program at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, in Brazil. Through it, we propose a descriptive analysis from information collected. The instrument, as seen below, was based on five questions featured in a form sent to informants in a GoogleForms Document, in Brazilian Portuguese, who were given a month to answer.

## “ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS”: DESAFIOS E PERSPECTIVAS

Esse formulário visa estabelecer uma base de dados estatísticos com a intenção exclusiva de utilizá-los para meio de pesquisa e estudo sobre "o papel das línguas na internacionalização" para fins de redação de artigo. Todas as respostas serão anônimas e respondidas por alunos de graduação do curso de Relações Internacionais da PUCRS.

<p>1. Quais eram suas expectativas para a disciplina antes de cursá-la?</p> <p>2. Após cursar a disciplina, o modo como você entende, pensa e/ou se comunica em inglês na área de RI foi modificada?</p> <p>3. Dos conteúdos desenvolvidos no semestre, marque de 1 a 5, sendo 1 sem relevância e 5 de extrema relevância, como você vê o grau de importância dos assuntos a seguir em relação à compreensão e produção de textos relacionados às RI?</p> <p>Leitura e interpretação dos textos trabalhados</p> <p>Estratégia de Leitura (skimming and scanning)</p> <p>Estruturas argumentativas (bicolons, tricolons, constrasting pairs)</p> <p>Prática de produção oral</p> <p>Comunicação intercultural</p> <p>Leitura e interpretação dos textos trabalhados</p> <p>Estratégia de Leitura (skimming and scanning)</p> <p>Estruturas argumentativas (bicolons, tricolons, constrasting pairs)</p> <p>Prática de produção oral</p> <p>Comunicação intercultural</p>
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4. De 1 a 5, sendo 1 sem relevância e 5 de extrema relevância, qual o grau de importância de estudos de inglês aplicado a relações internacionais para um internacionalista já proficiente?

5. Justifique sua resposta à pergunta anterior:

The first question “What were your expectations for the course before taking it?” aimed to understand the expectation of students about the subject before taking the course and, from there, promote possible changes considering the answers to improve the subject and meet the possible expectations from those who will benefit from the subject.

The second question addresses the influence of the course: after taking the course, on the way of communicating and thinking in English in the area of international relations. It aims to understand the relevance that the specific study of the English language had on students and if even people who already had a certain mastery of the language were able to take advantage of the content presented in the classes.

The third question asks the participants to rate from 1 to 5, with 1 being of “no relevance” and 5 of “extreme relevance”, which is the degree of importance of the subjects covered in class. The subjects were: the reading and interpretation of the worked texts, reading strategies (skimming and scanning), argumentative structures (bicolons, tricolons, contrasting pairs), oral production practices and intercultural communication. The result will allow an analysis of the contents of the course in a more democratic way, in addition to helping to understand the importance that students give to the above topics.

The fourth question “From 1 to 5, with 1 being unimportant and 5 being extremely relevant, how important is English studies applied to international relations for an already proficient internationalist?” is supposed to quantitatively offer some kind of measure on the importance of having a subject applied to their specific area in the student curriculum, from a learner’s perspective.

The last question, the fifth, is found as a justification of the previous question, so to offer qualitative information.

The answers will be described and discussed as it follows, in light of the theoretical ideas presented previously.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The answers to the first question expressed, in general, a great expectation with the expansion and improvement of the vocabulary, as well as the learning of a more natural form of communication

and according to the interlocutor's ideas, with more formal expressions in the area of International Relations. The aim of most students was to increase the practical ability of fluency and understanding in diplomatic debates in the English language with linguistic resources similar to those of the mother tongue.

As stated earlier, this is a course offered by the International Relations Program at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, so we thought that the introduction to this debate should be based on the expectations raised by the students. That way, we could have a good basis for comparing the following answers. That is why the question for introduction was based on the expectations of these 11 students, so that we could compare it with the purpose of the course and see if they align.

The second question addresses how the course has changed the way students think and communicate in English in the field of IR. According to the form, the expectations of the students who took the English for International Relations course were met, as most of them demonstrated and perceived a gain in vocabulary and the practice of listening, reading, speaking and writing was improved. In addition, the improvement in the interpretation and use of speeches in the diplomatic field was also noticed by the participants of the classes.

Such results demonstrate consistency with the research, as the students' expectations match the objective of the International Relations discipline. The students analyzed the lack of protagonism of EGP (English for General Purposes) when dealing with issues related to IR, as this "generic" knowledge is not enough to understand the terms created in the area. An example of this is "defection" (STERLING-FOLKER, 2013, p. 122), which has no exact translation into Portuguese, but is extremely important for understanding neoliberal theory in IR.

The third question introduces the relevance given to the contents developed. We started with the practice of oral production and intercultural communication at the top of the priority of PUCRS International Relations students. This means that people prioritize communication exercises in class to achieve the fluency they seek in relation to the field of study. Soon after, the reading and interpretation of texts worked in English for International Relations are classified, thus demonstrating the need found to favor, in the international area, documents and written materials. In view of this requirement, reading strategies (skimming and scanning) prove to be the next relevant topic. Finally, there are the argumentative structures, such as bicolons, tricolons and contrasting pairs, which, despite not being protagonists, in the responses of the participants of this research, are nevertheless fundamental when structuring clear and persuasive arguments.

The answers to these questions allowed us to see that exercising the specific speech of IR subjects was significant for the development of future internationalists. Precisely, the specification of

the other points, involving grammar and reading, allows the speech and expression of ideas to be facilitated by the understanding of vocabulary and, mainly, by the course offered by PUCRS.

In the fourth question, we deal with the importance rating of Applied English to International Relations for a proficient professional. In this question, participants are asked to rate this question from 1 to 5. More than 70% of the students scored the highest possible grade, thus demonstrating the relevance of the specific study as a priority for professionals in the area, even those who have already achieved some fluency, is remarkable. Because the other 30% classified between 4 (18.2%) and 3 (9.1%).

As demonstrated in the ESP data and in the research on internationalization, there is indeed the essentiality pointed out by scholars in the IR area and by language educators, that only general knowledge is not enough to meet the need for knowledge of this language in the IR area. In view of this and most of the students' responses about the relevance of specific studies, it is possible to reaffirm the importance of this class in Undergraduate Programs and the increase in materials intended for this specific learning.

The last question of the questionnaire refers to the fourth and can be seen as a continuation of it. It shows that most of them see the learning of a lingua franca as fundamental in a way dedicated to vocabulary and use in the professional environment, mainly in the international field. The feedback encompasses opinions such as the need to master the English language in several variations, communication with a smaller margin of error and greater clarity from the interlocutor, the relevance of diplomatic and intercultural expression in the field was also pointed out. Even students who claimed to be proficient in English say that the course was necessary to increase their notions of context, topics and discourse on the global stage.

One of the characteristics of the internationalization process stated by Knight (2012) is international cooperation, in which she talks about the social transformations that will generate intellectual development. In this sense, the students' feedback regarding their improvements as an internationalist demonstrates that the subject was able to meet expectations and make a change in the students' future, since they are now more confident in the face of themes, documents and debates related to international relations. As brought by one of the students, who participated in the research, of International Relations at PUCRS:

As I mentioned before, many internationalists have knowledge of the English language in writing and reading, however it is very difficult for them to practice English in technical terms of international relations daily, living in Brazil. Therefore, it is very important to work in class and I believe it is also important because of the relevance of the English language in the international scenario. (informant's answer)

## FINAL REMARKS

Internationalization is a complex phenomenon as it encompasses multiple features - cultural, political, social, to name a few. Communication is the means that allows relations and languages are codes used in communicative dynamics through which they take place. Mastering a lingua franca such as English to make it possible requires not only considerable knowledge about structure, vocabulary and pronunciation, but also a solid understanding about the use of this skills in a particular context.

Intercultural competence assumes some degree of awareness about someone else's background and perspective. Based on that, speakers are supposed to rely on metalinguistic strategies so to adjust their language in order to convey their message appropriately. This is why teaching and learning ESP - and, in the context proposed in this article, English for International Relations, requires a mindful attitude from teachers and learners along the processes. A more focused mindset as for the application of the language features to be studied is imperative in the development of curricula and classes. It is definitely a joint effort from all the participants and this article tried to illustrate that. There is the need for more collaborative studies, approaching interfaces and deepening our understanding of the actual impact of language use in Internationalization.

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