



## Specialised English: New Directions in ESP and EAP Research and Practice.

**Ken Hyland, Lilian Wong (eds).**

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Language use is attached to its social contexts. The central mission of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and its sub-field English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is to describe the constraints of social contexts on language use and help learners gain control over the expected communicative practices. *Specialised English: New Directions in ESP and EAP Research and Practice*, edited by Hyland and Wong, is an enlightening display of up-to-date developments in the field of specialized English. The volume emphasizes corpus studies, genre analysis, discourse communities, multilingual environments, and power relations, reflecting the social turn and the critical turn in ESP/EAP. It is essential reading for postgraduate students, teachers and researchers in language education and applied linguistics.

After a brief introduction by the editors, the book is divided into three parts: key concepts (Chapters 1 to 5), multiple texts (Chapters 6 to 11), and pedagogical practices (Chapters 12-17).

In Chapter 1, Mauranen describes the linguistic features of English as a lingua franca (ELF), drawing examples from spoken and written academic corpora. She convincingly explains how language contact, interactive strategies and cognitive processes result in some non-standard expressions in ELF. The ELF phenomenon is studied within multilingual settings where English is used more by non-native speakers than native speakers for international communication. This translingual practice calls into question whether the repeated non-canonical patterns in ELF should be viewed as errors and whether a native-speaker model is relevant to the function of English as a common language.

English as a lingua franca has also transformed workplace communication. In Chapter 2, Lockwood explores the complexity of ‘workplace English’. She creates a multilayered analytical framework for workplace English syllabus design. This model considers the impact of the immediate situation

and the sociopolitical context on language use to ensure that workplace English courses reflect the changing practices at work.

To bridge the gap between school teaching and workplace realities, in Chapter 3, Bhatia introduces Critical Genre Analysis with a focus on interdiscursive performance in professional legal communication. Specifically, he illustrates how a specialized genre is influenced by other related genres, disciplinary conventions, and interactions between producers and recipients. The notion of interdiscursivity facilitates a comprehensive understanding of professional practices.

Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the issues of power and practitioner identity. In Chapter 4, J. Flowerdew examines different power relations embedded in neoliberal universities, profit-driven EAP units, and English as a global language. In addition to these structural forces, in Chapter 5, Ding argues that the EAP profession and EAP literature are also implicated in diminishing practitioners' sense of self-worth. Although individuals can raise their status through scholarly publication, it is insufficient to change the marginal position of EAP in the university hierarchy. Both J. Flowerdew and Ding call on the EAP community to seriously consider this precarious situation. Only when EAP practitioners think and act collectively, can they challenge the unfair status quo and change EAP from a service unit to an academic department, where they have better opportunities for professional development.

Part II moves to texts. In Chapter 6, L. Flowerdew explores the relationship between English as lingua franca and learner English. She reviews corpus-based studies of disciplinary writing in these two fields, noticing their traditional concern with native-speaker norms. As native speakers are not necessarily expert users, whereas non-native speakers could be successful writers of the language, L. Flowerdew argues for expertise rather than nativeness as the yardstick of successful disciplinary writing. A focus on expertise has the potential to offer a practical approach to supporting the academic writing development of students.

In Chapter 7, Hyland traces interaction changes in research articles over the past 50 years, employing his model of stance and engagement. The results imply a preference for weaker authorial standpoints and less engagement with readers. Further research is needed to explore how this change relates to authors' writing goals, disciplinary epistemology and social contexts.

In Chapter 8, Bruce uses a social genre/cognitive genre model to examine how critical thinking is communicated in university essays and fund manager

commentaries. He finds that textual devices at different levels are utilized to express evaluative judgments. His multivariable model provides a holistic approach to critical thinking.

Chapter 9 considers spoken texts. Coxhead and Dang analyze the vocabulary used in university tutorials and laboratories. Their analysis highlights the importance of high-frequency words in comprehending and demonstrating content knowledge. Their finding is illuminating to EAP learners and material developers.

Chapter 10 looks at another interactive context—workplace meetings. Drawing on corpus data recorded in different New Zealand workplaces, Holmes explores how ‘culture order’(i.e., societal norms) influences interactional patterns and professional identity construction in workplace discourse. Based on the discourse analysis, the teaching program aims not to reinforce conformity to established norms, but to develop migrants’ social awareness and analytical skills. This soft critical approach acknowledges the lives of culturally diverse learners and affords them access to a world of options.

Chapter 11, by Parkinson, discusses written and visual meanings in builders’ diaries, a multimodal genre. Since images are non-linear and multifunctional, genre analysis is found to be inappropriate. As such, a social semiotic analysis comes into play as a more sophisticated approach to multimodal texts.

Part III concerns classroom practices. In Chapter 12, Johns addresses the challenges encountered by three secondary Latino students when composing the personal statement in an application for admission to an American university. Their clinging to their native cultures creates a tension between their writing practice (i.e., promoting their neighborhood and families) and the writing requirement (i.e., promoting their achievements). Accordingly, the workshops, she describes, help students explore the writing task and successful texts rather than impose genre conventions on them. Genre analysis is used as a self-directed learning tool to develop their autonomy as writers.

Chapters 13 and 14 deal with data-driven learning (DDL) in ESP settings. In Chapter 13, Anthony notes that DDL is an effective learning methodology but with limited uptake because of operational difficulties. He offers useful solutions and emphasizes that innovative software tools can improve the effectiveness of DDL instruction. Echoing Anthony’s viewpoint, in Chapter 14, Wong introduces a powerful online corpus query platform for disciplinary writing at a Hong Kong university. The platform offers various

search functions and data visualization options, which facilitate data retrieval and interpretation. The accompanying DDL activities not only help learners explore different functions of the platform but also direct their attention to the key features of academic writing. This platform reconciles bottom-up and top-down approaches to corpus use, allowing students to see form-meaning connections in context.

Chapters 15 and 16 focus on feedback. In Chapter 15, Northcott studies the written feedback given by subject and EAP specialists in a disciplinary writing course for postgraduate students majoring in social sciences and medicine. Her analysis suggests that while subject specialists provide effective feedback on content, EAP specialists give useful feedback on language. Since content and language are inseparable, collaboration is desirable. Chapter 16, by Wingate and Ogiermann, examines the oral feedback provided by peer tutors in academic writing tutorials. The discourse analysis indicates that the distribution of directives in the tutor-student consultation decides the teaching style (i.e., dialogic or monologic). The finding is applicable to tutor training.

In Chapter 17, Li and Cargill report an EAP teacher's unsuccessful attempt to foster teacher-supervisor collaboration in a research article writing course in China, where specialized English teaching is in its infancy. They believe that English teachers' growth as ESP specialists will invite more cross-disciplinary collaboration. Such specialization and cooperation involve individual efforts and administrative support.

This book pays particular attention to an under-researched population, EAP practitioners. Although they are in a moral dilemma (Johnston, 2003): involuntary engagement in the hegemony of English vs. the desire to help students succeed in English, they can be change agents, a theme in Chapters 4 and 5. Their meddler-in-the-middle position enables them to create two-way communication between students and authority, which promotes social justice. Increasing recognition of translanguaging practice encourages an open attitude towards variant uses of English, an implying message of Chapter 1. A move away from nativeness as the goal for language teaching, as indicated by Chapter 6, reduces a language bias against non-native speakers. To avoid discrimination EAP practitioners have taken account of students' positions and voices. As with Chapters 10 and 12, the focus is on creating space for students' own understanding and development. Although changes come slowly, they bring about better conditions in academia and workplaces.

Overall, this volume captures current developments in ESP/EAP and points to directions for future research. We highly recommend this book.

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