

TIRF

Language Education in Review Series

English for Specific Purposes

Andy Curtis

Paper Commissioned by Laureate
Languages, Laureate Education, Inc.



WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES?

One of the best-selling books in the religious self-help market is Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Life* (2002). In the subtitle of that book, Warren asks the question, "What on earth am I here for?" Regardless of one's spiritual or religious disposition, for most of us, life is necessarily purpose-driven, as the alternative is to live purposelessly. Therefore, *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP) may turn out to have been something of a misnomer, as everything we do is supposed to serve a purpose. But in the world of English language teaching, there was a sense, in the early days, that some people may have been learning English for no particular reason, known as General English. And if such a thing as 'General English' ever really existed, it would be the complete opposite of ESP, or at least at the furthest ends of a continuum of the English language. Therefore, given that the costs (time, money, effort, etc.) of learning a language well are considerable, early ideas about ESP may have missed the mark. For example, someone learning English as a second or foreign language to vacation in London is clearly a case of language learning for a specific purpose, but it was not considered as such in the early days of ESP. Similarly, although passing a high-stakes national or international English language examination should be seen as a highly specific purpose, it too was not considered as such. Therefore, it seems that some 'purposes' were seen as being more 'purposeful' than others. As the hierarchy of purposes grew, so too did a plethora of sub-genres, from EAP and EOP to EMP, EBP, and EVP (from academic and occupational to medical, business, and vocational English, respectively).

Precise dating of the beginning of any field of academic endeavor, including ESP, is tricky, as it depends on who is doing the dating and who is claiming to have founded the field, but ESP appears to have a history of at least 60 years or so, as of this writing. John Swales (b. 1938) is referred to as one of the founding fathers of ESP. Swales' book, *Episodes in ESP* (1988), charted the origins and rise of ESP, starting with Barber's (1962) article *Some Measurable Characteristics of Modern Scientific Prose*. Swales presented examples of ESP publications over the following 20 years, from Herbert's (1965) *The Structure of Technical English*

and Swales' (1971) own *Writing Scientific English* to Hutchinson and Waters' (1980) *ESP at the Crossroads* a decade later. In the academic world, the launch of a scholarly journal marks a watershed moment in the lifecycle of a disciplinary domain of knowledge. In 1980, *The ESP Journal* was launched, which eventually changed its name to *English for Specific Purposes: An International Research Journal* or *ESPJ*.

In terms of the domain of ESP in the academic world, in the most recent issues of *ESPJ*, its notes for contributors encourage authors to submit articles "on topics relevant to the teaching and learning of discourse for specific communities," including English that is "academic, occupational, or otherwise specialized" (*ESPJ*, Author Information Pack, 2021, p. 1). Topics that are considered for publication in *ESPJ* include, but are not limited to, the following:

second language acquisition in specialized contexts, needs assessment, curriculum development and evaluation, materials preparation, discourse analysis, descriptions of specialized varieties of English, teaching and testing techniques, the effectiveness of various approaches to language learning and language teaching, and the training or retraining of teachers for the teaching of ESP. (*ESPJ*, Author Information Pack, 2021, p. 1)

Such all-encompassing lists raise the question: Is there anything that is *not* ESP? In terms of current concerns, the most recent articles published in *ESPJ* include, for example, reports on vocabulary learning for accounting and finance purposes (Smith, 2020). Special issues of *ESPJ* include *ESP in the Pacific Rim* (Coxhead & Ballance, 2020), *ESP in Asia* (Anthony & Cheng, 2014), and *ESP Research in Europe* (Fortanet-Gómez, 2010).

ESP represents a complex tripartite relationship between the variety of English, the specificity, and the purpose. Furthermore, as every user of every language has their own idiolectal version of that language, then to ‘whose English’ are we referring? And what degree of specificity are we talking about? For example, at one end of a continuum could be learning a second/foreign language or additional language to be able to send a short, simple text message in the target language. At the other end, for example, could be learning a second/foreign language to be able to make an emergency landing in an F-15 airplane. (English is the only de facto language in civil aviation worldwide.) Both are examples of language used for a specific purpose, but the latter may be considered more specific than the former.

Where on the continuum of specificity should a particular type of English and its purpose sit? And does it matter? And if so, why does it matter? It matters because, without specifying what is meant by ‘ESP,’ it is not possible to engage in a meaningful discussion of the concept. As Professor Dan Douglas, one of the leading experts on specific-purpose language testing, put it in a recent lecture: “How specific is specific? How do we distinguish between and within domains of language in terms of the characteristics of the target language use situation?” (Douglas, 2020).

WHAT DO WE CURRENTLY KNOW?

In order to know where we are now, in terms of knowledge within a particular discipline, it is necessary to take a brief look back, to see from where we have come. For example, early ESP textbooks had titles such as *English in Basic Medical Science: English in Focus* (Maclean, 1975) and *The Language of Medicine in English: English For Careers* (Bloom, 1982). Following those works, Carter (1983) proposed different types of ESP, including English as a restricted language, for example, as used by a waiter or a pilot, and English for Academic and Occupational Purposes, such as English for Medical Studies. More recent publications on ESP have given us a sense of where the field is at this point in time. China currently

drives much of the research on ESP. For example, Ai et al. (2020) reported on their action research study of student presentations as a way of teaching and learning ESP. In relation to newer fields of ESP, Zhang et al. (2020) reported on the recent growth of interest in English for Public Speaking, which they describe as “gaining prominence and popularity around the world, and this is especially true for university students in China” (p. 1).

As Albert Einstein is reported to have said, “Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts” (Toye, 2015). Regardless, quantity-based issues continue to be the focus of ESP research in China, for example: “How large a vocabulary do Chinese computer science undergraduates need to read English-medium specialist textbooks?” (Bi, 2020, p. 77). Bi’s study focused on “Chinese computer science undergraduates who have already *mastered* about 3,300 general English word families prescribed by the Ministry of Education before entering university” (p. 77, emphasis added). However, it is ‘memorization’ of individual words that is being measured, which may have very little relationship to someone’s ability to actually use the language to communicate. In another recent example, which reiterates the ways in which China is shaping the field of ESP, Dong and Lu (2020) reported on “the potential of integrating corpus-based and genre-based approaches to teaching rhetorical structures in a discipline-specific EFL academic writing course at a university in China” (p. 138).

Other countries are, of course, also engaging in ESP research. For instance, Chaplier (2020) collected data from professors of specialized English in a French scientific university, “to lay the foundations for an epistemology of specialized languages” (p. 69). Camiciottoli (2020) analyzed Italian and Japanese companies’ investor relations communication policies when using English as a lingua franca. In Brazil, Monteiro and Hirano (2020) reported on what they refer to as “the uneven participation of Brazilian scholars in the international community” as a result of “some perceived prejudice against Latin-American research” (p. 15). And Arnó-Macià et al. (2020) researched how

engineering students at three universities in Spain and Austria perceived their ESP courses. They concluded that, in terms of ESP curricula, “In an increasingly internationalized context, it is necessary to *reappraise current ESP courses* in order to find out the extent to which they are adapted to the ever-changing needs of engineering graduates in a globalized world” (p. 58, emphasis added). And in spite of China’s current dominance in ESP research, some experts in the field suggest that the next big player in ESP will be the Pacific Rim (Coxhead & Ballance, 2020). As Coxhead and Ballance admit, although the Pacific Rim covers a vast geographic area, it is the cultural and linguistic diversity of that region that makes ESP experts like themselves believe that that is where the next big growth spurt in ESP will take place, which they describe as a “dynamic but potentially under-reported area of the globe in ESP” (p. 75).

Returning to Dong and Lu’s (2020) work, their paper highlights three key areas within ESP: genre, corpus, and discipline. A foundational work in the area of genre analysis is John Swales’ (1990) *English in Academic and Research Settings*. As Swales put it, “Genre remains a fuzzy concept ... especially in the US [where] genre has become associated with a disreputably formulaic way of constructing ... particular texts – a kind of writing or speaking by numbers” (p. 33). In 2015, the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* published a special issue celebrating 25 years of genre analysis (Lancaster et al., 2015) in recognition of Swales’ contributions and the impact of his work in the field of ESP. Although Swales challenges the idea of “formulaic ways of constructing text,” such formulae are important when we move from one set of linguistic and cultural norms within a particular speech community to another. An example of a speech community would be the air traffic controllers mentioned above, as all of them have to learn how to use words for letters, for example, alpha for a, bravo for b, etc., to reduce the likelihood of miscommunication.

WHAT IS ON THE HORIZON?

When considering possible futures, context is key (Curtis, 2017). At the time of writing (early 2021), the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic is expected to re-shape most areas of most people’s lives, for many years to come, perhaps especially language education, as it is by its nature inherently international. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, predictions of any kind were unlikely to be highly accurate, as the number of confounding variables for the global language education industry continues to multiply (e.g., regarding international travel). However, since the advent of COVID-19, much of what we thought we knew about the global economy has had to be re-examined and nothing is off the table. At best, we are looking at some kind of ‘new normal,’ in which, for example, major international language education conferences, bringing thousands of people from around the world together in confined spaces for extended periods of time, may be seen as potential pandemic hotspots, or even as super-spreader events. Travel and tourism, healthcare, and the hospitality industries have also been impacted. In fact, there may be few areas of our lives that will not change, in some cases, dramatically and permanently. Nonetheless, any attempt at planning for the future entails some degree of speculation, starting with the key question: What does the COVID-19 pandemic mean for the future of English for Specific Purposes?

In ESP (and all areas of language education), we can expect to see a dramatic increase in the use of online technologies for the delivery of ESP courses, for a number of reasons. These include limiting the gathering of large groups of people who are occupying the same physical space, during the same time, for example, in a convention center or lecture theater. Another permanent post-pandemic change may be a move away from face-to-face towards online testing of, in this case, ESP competences. According to Suvorov and Hegelheimer (2013):

Computer-based [language] testing, once viewed as a convenient delivery vehicle for traditional paper and pencil tests ... has undergone important changes since the late 1980s ... this area has witnessed major developments since the 1990s including computer-adaptive testing, new item types, integrated skills assessment, and automated evaluation. (p. 1)

It is likely that those changes will not only continue but accelerate. Some of the world's largest language testing contexts, such as China, are likely to make rapid moves towards online rather than face-to-face language testing, including ESP testing. However, the challenges of test security, such as confirming the identity of the test-taker or ensuring that test results have not been falsified (Keung, 2018), would need to be addressed if the ramping up of online testing were to be possible, with reliable and valid test results.

In terms of online ESP courses, Ding (2020) considers the following: What constitutes an effective instructional video, from the perspectives of Chinese EFL learners? The author concludes that such videos are “a source of authentic language input and an opportunity for learners to be engaged in language and culture” (p. 236). One of the advantages of this move to online ESP courses is accessibility, so that anyone with a stable, secure Internet connection can access the material at any time, and review the material as many times as needed, as long as they have the necessary hardware and software, with sufficient bandwidth, etc. Such a change would be a major step towards the notion of individualizing ESP teaching and learning in ways that are not possible in regular brick-and-mortar classrooms. However, balancing the long-term cost savings of online ESP course delivery will be the upfront costs in terms of time, as the making of instructional videos, even short ones, can take a great deal more time than is often assumed.

Another potential future area in ESP is likely to involve increased customization. Although ESP is, by definition, about specialized language, that degree of specialization is likely to increase. For example, rather than English for Medicine, we can expect to see ESP

for specialized medical sub-genres, such as English for Epidemiology, Virology, and other pandemic-related fields of study. As greater funding is made available to expand research and development, international collaboration in such areas will be needed, and such collaboration is likely to take place in English (as well as other languages). Furthermore, it is entirely possible that a new field of ESP will emerge soon, perhaps abbreviated as EPP, for English for Pandemic Planning (Purposes). Such a shift could be at the level of global policymaking, as English is one of the six official languages of the World Health Organization (WHO), along with Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish.

In contrast, one of the major growth areas within ESP in recent years has been English for Travel and Tourism, but the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on that industry have been described as catastrophic (Jackson, 2020). That kind of long-term industry damage may also apply to other previously major areas of ESP, such as English for the Hospitality Industry, including hotels, restaurants, and bars. Some sources estimate that as many as 50 million jobs in tourism may be lost as a result of the pandemic. Likewise, English for Air Traffic Control and other aviation-related ESP programs may experience a dramatic downturn. For example, in May of 2020, it was estimated that air travel had dropped more than 90% in Europe and the USA, since the start of the pandemic, with returns to pre-pandemic levels of travel not expected for some years to come (Turak, 2020).

This discussion of pandemic-related changes in the world of ESP raises the question of where those jobs will go. English for Eldercare is likely to be one place, not only as the result of people living longer, but also because eldercare homes around the world turned out to be COVID-19 hotspots. Such a disproportionate pandemic death toll in eldercare facilities highlights the need for more staffing and more training, including ESP language training for all Personal Support Workers, many of whom are from countries where English is not the first language, but who are employed as relatively cheap labor in the UK, the USA, Canada, and elsewhere (Bulmer, 2020). We may also see the beginnings of other new and emerging fields of

ESP, such as English for Environmental Purposes, as a result of the growing awareness of the climate crises facing Earth. In short, there are myriad opportunities for service providers in the business of ESP in the post-pandemic world economies.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?

In this section, we will consider the implications of the details presented in the three sections above for international language education service providers. In one of the most-cited papers in ESP over the last 30 years, Grosse and Voght (1991) traced the development of LSP (Languages for Specific Purposes) in the USA and announced that “after more than a decade of growth and development,” LSP in the US had “come of age” (p. 181). From that jumping-off point, attention has focused on needs analysis or needs assessment, in terms of what students need to learn, and assessment of ESP language proficiency.

Although the idea of a ‘negotiated curriculum’ is not new (Ennis, 1995), it has made something of a comeback as greater degrees of specificity in ESP require greater degrees of negotiation between the client and the service providers and between the learners and the teachers, for example, to distinguish between wants and needs. Liu et al. (2011) surveyed nearly 1,000 students at six different universities in Taiwan to distinguish between three areas of ESP – needs, wants, and lacks – in relation to the question: “Is what I need what I want?” (p. 271). Liu et al. found important “discrepancies between the students’ perceptions of needs and the actual courses they took, thereby highlighting the importance of understanding needs as a complex, multiple, and conflicting concept” (p. 271).

There is also the question of whose needs. Ever since Richard West (1994), who traced the term *analysis of needs* back to 1920s India and wrote his state-of-the-art article on needs analysis in language teaching, the assumption has been that *needs assessment/analysis* refers to students’ needs only – as though nobody else had any needs. That exclusive assumption may have come as a result of the shift from teacher-centered to

learner-centered language instruction. But for whatever reasons, the needs of the other parties, including the institution, the sponsor (usually the employer), and the ESP teachers have historically been assumed to be of relatively little or no consequence. As Salas et al. (2013) put it, “ESP is not simply about learners’ needs. ESP also depends on the possibilities of ESP professionals who need to be honest about ... what they can and cannot deliver” in relation to “constraints of time, budget, space, English proficiency levels, and other factors” (p. 12). Therefore, a key policymaking practice in ESP is the negotiation of needs and wants in relation to what is and is not possible, with the resources available. A negotiated curriculum is one in which the curriculum is based on the wants and the needs expressed by the learners and other stakeholders. It is a curriculum which adapts as the learners’ competence levels change, rather than being set out and predetermined, from beginning to end, before the course or the program begins (Ennis, 1995).

ESP testing and assessment will continue to be a major concern in relation to ESP policy planning and curriculum development. In *Key Issues in Testing English for Specific Purposes*, Tratnik (2008) wrote,

When devising an ESP test, one should aim at creating good and dependable measures of language ability which need to be as authentic as possible, provide accurate and reliable measures of language ability, have beneficial effects, and be practical and economical in terms of administration, time, money and personnel. (p. 7)

Leaving aside ‘good measures of language ability’ as being too vague to be of practical use, the second descriptor, ‘as authentic as possible,’ highlights some important issues in ESP testing. Authenticity in language testing and assessment is an area in its own right, with many papers on authenticity in language testing published recently (see, for example, Al Khazaleh, 2020; Burton, 2020; Huang & Jiang, 2020). The bottom line is ‘the more authentic the better’ but that view largely depends on how ‘authenticity’ is conceptualized.

Elder (2016), in her paper on a specific-purpose language test for healthcare professionals, explores the limits of authenticity in testing language for specific purposes, and notes the degree of disagreement in the field on this point: “The term used to denote such linkage between a language test and the relevant non-test setting is authenticity, although the notion is somewhat contested in our field” (p. 147). To continue to use the ESP example of Aviation English (AE), when we talk about ‘authentic’ AE, are we talking about the AE used in the UK, the USA, or elsewhere? Which of the several dozen accents and dialects in English are we referring to when we refer to ‘authentic’ English in ESP testing? Also, the possibilities regarding what is ‘as authentic as possible’ are determined by what is “practical and economical” in terms of “administration, time, money and personnel” (Tratnik, 2008, p. 7).

In connecting ESP testing, authenticity, and the worldwide shortage of healthcare professionals, Manias and McNamara (2016) analyzed an oral English proficiency test for professional registration of immigrant health professionals in Australia. These researchers focused on standard setting in ESP, which they describe as “the process by which qualified assessors follow comprehensively developed and documented procedures to interpret the sufficiency of a language test performance in relation to the language demands of the professional domain” (p. 235). Based on their qualitative study, Manias and McNamara (2016) developed four ESP language-related criteria: fluency, intelligibility, appropriateness of language, and resources of grammar and expression. In addition, they also identified four language-related aspects of clinician engagement: professional manner; patient awareness, in terms of participants “putting themselves in the patients’ position ... thinking about what the patient was likely to be experiencing” (p. 235); information gathering; and information giving.

In terms of implications for ESP policymaking, curriculum development, and related aspects, preference is likely to be given to service providers of ESP programs who can carry out valid and reliable pre- and post-course ESP testing, based on a thorough understanding of the unique linguistic and cultural demands of

the context, and the requirements of the endpoint language user. From that understanding, customized, authentic, and level-appropriate course materials could be developed, to be delivered effectively and efficiently in an online environment.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES?

- The journal *English for Specific Purposes*, many articles from which are cited in this LEiR paper, is still the most reliable source for cutting-edge research in ESP:
<https://www.journals.elsevier.com/english-for-specific-purposes>
- For more higher-education-oriented research and resources, the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* is also a reliable source for leading research in EAP:
<https://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-english-for-academic-purposes>
- Routledge published a series of six books on ESP, between 2015 and 2018, with more books in that series being planned:
<https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Introductions-to-English-for-Specific-Purposes/book-series/RIESP>
- The most recent book in the Routledge series is Laurence Anthony’s *Introducing English for Specific Purposes* (2018):
<https://www.routledge.com/Introducing-English-for-Specific-Purposes/Anthony/p/book/9781138936652>
- The Routledge series also includes Lindy Woodrow’s *Introducing Course Design in English for Specific Purposes* (2017), Sunny Hyon’s *Introducing Genre and English for Specific Purposes* (2017), and James Dean Brown’s *Introducing Needs Analysis and English for Specific Purposes* (2016), all of which are comprehensive introductory overviews:

<https://www.routledge.com/Introducing-Course-Design-in-English-for-Specific-Purposes/Woodrow/p/book/9781138100671>

<https://www.routledge.com/Introducing-Genre-and-English-for-Specific-Purposes/Hyon/p/book/9781138793422>

<https://www.routledge.com/Introducing-Needs-Analysis-and-English-for-Specific-Purposes/Brown/p/book/9781138803817>

- For a more historical/predictive perspective, Sue Starfield's (2014) paper, "Current and Future Directions in English for Specific Purposes Research," in *Revue Française de Linguistique Appliquée*, has been made freely available. It is interesting and helpful to see which of Starfield's 'predictions' appeared to have been accurate, and which ones less so:
https://www.cairn-int.info/article-E_RFLA_191_0009--current-and-future-directions-in-english.htm#
- Connecting ESP and EAP, Rosemary Wette's (2018) entry *English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP)* in the *TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching* is a clear, concise summary:
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0199>
- For practically-oriented, teachers' perspectives, the Macmillan Education One Stop English has a number of (freely available) articles on teaching ESP:
<https://www.onestopenglish.com/business-and-esp/english-for-specific-purposes-esp/144578.article>
- The most recent book on ESP is *English for Specific Purposes Instruction and Research: Current Practices, Challenges and Innovations* (Palgrave, 2020), which is edited by Kenny, Nalan, Isik-Tas, Elvan Eda, Jian, & Huang:
<https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783030329136>

REFERENCES

- Ai, B., Kostogriz, A., Wen, D., & Wang, L. (2020). Student presentations as a means of teaching and learning English for specific purposes: An action research study. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 25(2), 223-237.
- Al Khazaleh, S. (2020). A content analysis of the authenticity of the reading texts in the seventh grade EFL book in Jordan. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching*, 7(3), 977-990.
- Anthony, L., & Cheng, A. (2014). ESP in Asia. *English for Specific Purposes*, 33, 1-3.
- Arnó-Macià, E., Aguilar-Pérez, M., & Tatzl, D. (2020). Engineering students' perceptions of the role of ESP courses in internationalized universities. *English for Specific Purposes*, 58, 58-74.
- Barber, C. L. (1962). Some measurable characteristics of modern scientific prose. In J. Swales (Ed.), *Episodes in ESP: A source and reference book on the development of English for science and technology* (pp. 1-16). Prentice Hall.
- Bi, J. (2020). How large a vocabulary do Chinese computer science undergraduates need to read English-medium specialist textbooks? *English for Specific Purposes*, 58, 77-89.
- Bloom, G. (1982). *The language of medicine in English: English for careers*. Regents Publishing.
- Bulmer, L. (2020, May 21). How the pandemic would have been different if PSWs were regulated. *Maclean's*. <https://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca/index.php/how-the-pandemic-would-have-been-different-if-psws-were-regulated/>
- Burton, J. D. (2020). Raters' measurement of test-task authentic engagement in L2 oral-performance assessment: An exploration of scale development. *System*, 90, Article 102233. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/system/vol/90/suppl/C>
- Camiciottoli, B. C. (2020). Using English as a lingua franca to engage with investors: An analysis of Italian and Japanese companies' investor relations communication policies. *English for Specific Purposes*, 58, 90-101.
- Carter, D. (1983). Some propositions about ESP. *ESP Journal*, 2, 131-137.
- Chaplier, C. (2020). L'engagement de l'enseignant-chercheur en Anglais de spécialité: Cas d'une université scientifique / The commitment of researchers in English for specific purposes: The case of a scientific university. *Journal of Languages for Specific Purposes*, 7(1), 69-81.
- Coxhead, A., & Balance, O. (2020). ESP in the Pacific Rim. *English for Specific Purposes*, 58, 75-76.
- Curtis, A. (2017). *Methods and methodologies for language teaching: The centrality of context*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ding, Y. (2020). What constitutes an effective instructional video? Perspectives from Chinese EFL learners. In B. Zou & M. Thomas (Eds.), *Recent developments in technology-enhanced and computer-assisted language learning* (pp. 236-256). IGI Global.
- Dong, J., & Lu, X. (2020). Promoting discipline-specific genre competence with corpus-based genre analysis activities. *English for Specific Purposes*, 58, 138-154.
- Douglas, D. (2020, May 5). *Learn with experts 1: Professor Dan Douglas on testing for specific purposes*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaN-DkbqUnQ>
- Elder, C. (2016). Exploring the limits of authenticity in LSP testing: The case of a specific-purpose language test for health professionals. *Language Testing*, 33(2), 147-152.
- English for Specific Purposes: An International Research Journal. (2021). *Author information pack*. <https://www.journals.elsevier.com/english-for-specific-purposes>
- Ennis, C. D. (1995). Teachers' responses to noncompliant students: The realities and consequences of a negotiated curriculum. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 11(5), 445-460.
- Fortanet-Gómez, I. (2010). ESP research in Europe. *English for Specific Purposes*, 29, 221-223.
- Grosse, C. U., & Voght, G. M. (1991). The evolution of languages for specific purposes in the United States. *Modern Language Journal*, 75(2), 181-195.

- Herbert, A. J. (1965). The structure of technical English. In J. Swales (Ed.), *Episodes in ESP: A source and reference book on the development of English for science and technology* (pp. 17-27). Prentice Hall.
- Huang, R., & Jiang, L. (2020). Authentic assessment in Chinese secondary English classrooms: Teachers' perception and practice. *Educational Studies*.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03055698.2020.1719387>
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1980). ESP at the crossroads. In J. Swales (Ed.), *Episodes in ESP: A source and reference book on the development of English for science and technology* (pp. 174-187). Prentice Hall.
- Jackson, E. (2020, April 22). 'Catastrophic': Tourism industry decimated from COVID-19 will need more help if it wants to survive. *Financial Post*.
<https://business.financialpost.com/news/retail-marketing/tourism-catastrophic-hit-covid-19>
- Keung, N. (2018, December 8). More than 400 students in India told to retake language tests after Niagara College flags concerns. *The Toronto Star*.
<https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2018/12/08/400-students-in-india-told-to-retake-language-tests-after-niagara-college-flags-concerns.html>
- Lancaster, Z., Aull, L., & Perales-Escudero, M. D. (2015). 25 Years of genre analysis. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 19, 1-5.
- Liu, J-Y., Chang, Y-J., & Sun, Y-C. (2011). Is what I need what I want? Reconceptualising college students' needs in English courses for general and specific/academic purposes. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 10(4), 271-280.
- Maclean, J. (1975). *English in basic medical science*. Oxford University Press.
- Manias, E., & McNamara, T. (2016). Standard setting in specific-purpose language testing: What can a qualitative study add? *Language Testing*, 33(2), 235-249.
- Monteiro, K., & Hirano, E. (2020). A periphery inside a semi-periphery: The uneven participation of Brazilian scholars in the international community. *English for Specific Purposes*, 58, 15-29.
- Salas, S., Mercado, L. A., Ouedraogo, L. H., & Musetti, B. (2013). English for specific purposes: Negotiating needs, possibilities and promises. *English Teaching Forum*, 51(4), 12-19.
- Smith, S. (2020). DIY corpora for accounting and finance vocabulary learning. *English for Specific Purposes*, 57, 1-12.
- Suvorov, R., & Hegelheimer, V. (2013). Computer-assisted language testing. In A. J. Kunnan (Ed.), *The companion to language assessment* (pp. 1-20). John Wiley & Sons.
- Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. (1988). *Episodes in ESP: A source and reference book on the development of English for science and technology*. Prentice Hall.
- Swales, J. (1971). Writing scientific English. In J. Swales (Ed.), *Episodes in ESP: A source and reference book on the development of English for science and technology* (pp. 37-44). Prentice Hall.
- Toye, F. (2015). "Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts." *British Journal of Pain*, 9(1), 7.
- Tratnik, A. (2008). Key issues in testing English for specific purposes. *Scripta Manent*, 4(1), 3-13.
- Turak, N. (2020, May 14). Air travel won't return to pre-crisis levels until 2023, IATA chief warns. *CNBC*.
<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/14/coronavirus-air-travel-wont-return-to-pre-crisis-levels-until-2023-iata-chief-warns.html>
- Warren, R. (2013). *The purpose-driven life: What on earth am I here for?* Zondervan Publishers.
- West, R. (1994). Needs analysis in language teaching. *Language Teaching*, 27(1), 1-19.
- Zhang, X., Ardasheva, Y., & Austin, B. W. (2020). Self-efficacy and English public speaking performance: A mixed method approach. *English for Specific Purposes*, 59, 1-16.

LEiR Series Statement

TIRF is partnering with like-minded organizations to produce papers in the TIRF Language Education in Review (LEiR) series. TIRF's Trustees are pleased to be working with Laureate International Universities to produce the first set of papers in this series.

Via collaborative efforts, this series features papers on some of the most relevant areas of concern in language education. The LEiR publications appeal to a broad audience through presenting practical issues in a reader friendly approach, for individuals in and close to the field of language education.

To learn more about the LEiR series, please visit: <https://www.tirfonline.org/publications/publications/language-education-in-review-leir-series/>

Copyright Statement

This paper produced in the TIRF Language Education in Review (LEiR) series is licensed under the following Creative Commons license type: "[Attribution-NonCommercialNoDerivs](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)" (CC BY-NC-ND). This license type allows third parties to download the paper freely and share it with others. Please note that papers are restricted from being edited by third parties and may not be used for commercial purposes. Individuals using this particular paper must credit both TIRF and Laureate as joint owners of this paper's copyright.



To reference this paper, please use the following citation:

Curtis, A. (2021). *TIRF language education in review: English for specific purposes*. TIRF & Laureate International Universities.



Andy Curtis

Dr. Andy Curtis received his M.A. in Applied Linguistics and English Language Education, and his Ph.D. in International Education, both from the University of York in England. He is currently working with the Graduate School of Education at Anaheim University, based in California, USA. From 2015 to 2016, he served as the 50th President of the TESOL International Association. In 2016, Dr. Curtis received one of the Association's 50-at-50 Awards, when he was voted one of the Fifty Most Influential Figures in the Field, over the last 50 years. He is currently a member of TIRF's Board of Trustees.

Dr. Curtis has published approximately 150 articles, book chapters, and books. He is the editor of a nine-book TESOL Press series, *ELT In Context*, and the editor for a five-book series, *Applied Linguistics for the Language Classroom* (Palgrave Macmillan), which includes his book on *Language Teaching Methods and Methodologies*. In recent years, Dr. Curtis has been recognized for his ground-breaking work in two new fields: New Peace Linguistics and Virtual Reality in Language Education.