



**ASp**  
la revue du GERAS

**73 | 2018**  
**Varia**

---

**Magdalena Sowa, Jarosław Krajka, *Innovations in Languages for Specific Purposes – Innovations en langues sur objectifs spécifiques, Present challenges and future promises – Défis actuels et engagements à venir***

Bern: Peter Lang, 2017

**Shona Whyte**

---



**Édition électronique**

URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/asp/5099>  
ISSN : 2108-6354

**Éditeur**

Groupe d'étude et de recherche en anglais de spécialité

**Édition imprimée**

Date de publication : 1 mars 2018  
Pagination : 112-117  
ISSN : 1246-8185

**Référence électronique**

Shona Whyte, « Magdalena Sowa, Jarosław Krajka, *Innovations in Languages for Specific Purposes – Innovations en langues sur objectifs spécifiques, Present challenges and future promises – Défis actuels et engagements à venir* », *ASp* [En ligne], 73 | 2018, mis en ligne le 01 mars 2018, consulté le 08 mai 2019.  
URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/asp/5099>

---

Ce document a été généré automatiquement le 8 mai 2019.

Tous droits réservés

---

Magdalena Sowa, Jarosław Krajka,  
*Innovations in Languages for Specific  
Purposes – Innovations en langues sur  
objectifs spécifiques, Present challenges  
and future promises – Défis actuels et  
engagements à venir*

Bern: Peter Lang, 2017

Shona Whyte

---

## RÉFÉRENCE

Sowa, Magdalena & Jarosław Krajka. 2017. *Innovations in Languages for Specific Purposes - Innovations en langues sur objectifs spécifiques. Present challenges and future promises - Défis actuels et engagements à venir*. Bern: Peter Lang. 343 pp. ISBN 978-3631-71921-3.

- 1 *Innovations in Languages for Specific Purposes: Present challenges and future promises* is a volume of seventeen articles in French or English edited by Polish academics Magdalena Sowa and Jarosław Krajka of Maria Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin. It is published by Peter Lang in the collection *Lubliner Beiträge zur Germanistik und Angewandte Linguistik*, with series editors Janusz Golec and Hans-Jörg Schwenk. The series showcases Polish research in literature, culture, linguistics, as well as foreign language didactics and applied linguistics. This appears to be the first volume which is not either in German or about the German language.



- 2 The editors' introduction is a short preface provided in both French and English versions. The articles have an abstract in English, and references and author bios are given at the end of each chapter. There is no general reference list or index to the volume.

## Summary of main content

- 3 The articles are organised into six sections: cross-linguistic dimensions, course design, tasks and skills, teaching resources, digital tools, and assessment. Each includes two to four chapters in French, English or both, for a total of seventeen articles (eight in French, nine in English) by twenty authors including practitioners, researchers, and teacher educators. The seven articles contributed by researchers based in France are all written in French and deal with French for specific purposes. Of the remaining papers, half are by Polish authors, four in English and one in French, and the remaining five are in English, from authors in Spain, Italy, and Turkey.
- 4 The authors in this collection are concerned with a variety of specific purpose domains, including business, law and social sciences, medicine and technical sciences, and academic or teacher preparation papers. Similarly, the approaches adopted differ from chapter to chapter such that the volume offers an eclectic collection. Contributions range from theoretical papers concerning the nature of language for specific purposes (LSP) didactics and its relation to other fields (Challe, Luzón, Richer), through chapters on LSP methodology covering needs analysis, specific competences, course design, and pedagogical concerns (Belliet & Mangiante, Campoy-Cubillo, Carras, Chojnacka, Gajewska, Kozlova & Rodríguez-Inés, Mourhlon-Dallies, Parpette, Plastina) to empirical studies involving materials design, discourse analysis, and learner attitude surveys (DzĘciol-PĘdich, Kiliçkaya, Komur-Thilloy & Musinova, Luczak, Mokwa-Tarnowska). I examine each of these broad areas in turn, beginning with the empirical studies.

## Empirical research

- 5 Three of the chapters which involve the analysis of data are concerned with student attitudes to LSP needs and practices. **Luczak** conducted a small-scale action research study to investigate students' needs in English for Legal Purposes, both in recruitment interviews and in their current positions. Seventeen trainees in Polish companies or international accounting firms responded to four open-ended questions, and findings revealed that during the recruitment process they participated in oral interviews and performed translation tasks, while once in post they were particularly involved in drafting contracts, writing reports, and corresponding with clients. The author draws conclusions for the design of writing activities in university legal English courses.
- 6 At the other end of the LSP design process, **Mokwa-Tarnowska** investigated student satisfaction with technology-mediated instruction. She presents the results of an attitude survey conducted with some 250 students at proficiency B2/C1 in a range of disciplines at Gdańsk University of Technology. The students took online language modules at the Language Centre involving technologies such as Kahoot and Thinglink to increase multimodal learning and interactivity, then completed a post-course questionnaire including seven mainly yes/no questions (e.g., can you learn technical English with the materials developed in Thinglink?). Respondents were generally positive in their answers, although the author concedes that no information on learning outcomes is available.
- 7 A third attitude study used interviews to collect data. **Kiliçkaya** examined students' views of peer assessment of microteaching tasks which she implemented in a TEFL<sup>1</sup> course at Mehmet Akif Ersoy University in Turkey. Content analysis of semi-structured interviews with thirty-two mainly female students identified problems related to friendship bias and feelings of illegitimacy as novice teachers, but also advantages for discouraging "free riders" (individual students who fail to pull their weight in group work) and with respect to the development of pedagogical skills.
- 8 Two further chapters involved the constitution of a corpus of LSP-related materials and analysis of data with an eye to LSP pedagogy. **Dzęciol-Pędlich** analysed ten blogs for and by business English teachers. She found examples of classroom materials and lesson plans, discussion of needs analysis but little reference to content knowledge, and information on conferences and seminars for professional development. Perhaps as befits this specific domain, she found material was often directed at the business sector, that is, professional language training as opposed to state school or university contexts, and that business English bloggers were also inclined to promote their own commercial publications.
- 9 Something of an outlier in this category, and the only one in French, **Komur-Thilloy & Musinova** present a comparative analysis of recipes published in English, French, Polish and Russian magazines. Sixty-four recipes are analysed in terms of composition (i.e., main elements), segmentation (i.e., layout), and communicative situation (i.e., lexicogrammatical choices), highlighting crosslinguistic differences which the authors suggest make the corpus useful for genre analysis in the L2 classroom.

## LSP methodology

- 10 Turning to LSP methodology, a main focus of much of the volume, four key chapters are on French. **Parpette**, whose seminal work with Mangiante (2004) is frequently cited by French contributors to this volume, offers an authoritative account of French for Specific Purposes (FSP = *français sur objectifs spécifiques*, FOS). She describes five steps in programme design: i) need for language education, ii) analysis of situation, iii) needs analysis for both internal and external stakeholders, iv) synthesis of requirements, and v) design of teaching materials. She describes this as "a common sense approach without theoretical problems" (p. 56) and gives the examples of medical French (Fassier & Goy 2008) and French for academic purposes (*Français sur objectifs universitaires*, FOU). She also discusses institutional factors constraining FSP activities which conspire to make course creators the main actors, and highlights the growing role of students of French as a foreign language as potential FSP course creators.
- 11 Carras and Mourlhon-Dallies provide further discussion of teacher and learner expertise in FSP contexts. **Mourlhon-Dallies** discusses matching exercises drawing on Work Analysis and Workplace Studies, moving from simple lexical and grammatical exercises to richer tasks which draw on discourse features and interrogate professional practice. She claims that the adaptation of matching exercises offers a useful middle ground between commercial textbooks and more sophisticated specific purpose needs. Since the technique is drawn from the repertoire of the general language teacher, it is especially appropriate for language teachers who may not feel fully legitimate in a wide range of specific professional contexts. **Carras** analyses two examples of FSP courses, again paying particular attention to the instructor, whose three main functions, she argues (i.e., to transmit information, organise learning activities, and evaluate learners), are compromised by learners' generally superior subject knowledge. She emphasises the need for teachers to accept a distinction between linguistically and professionally appropriate utterances.
- 12 The question of assessing LSP learning is addressed in more detail in a chapter by **Beillet & Mangiante**. This paper discusses evaluation both in terms of student feedback on LSP courses and teacher assessment of learning outcomes, using as a case study a French for academic purposes course at the University of Artois.
- 13 Five more chapters, this time written in English about ESP, also tackle questions of LSP methodology. Moving from broader to narrower perspectives, **Campoy-Cubillo** examines listening comprehension from a number of angles related to language teaching and testing in ESP and EAP contexts, and with particular reference to video. She draws on the seminal work of Lynch and Vandergrift on (academic) listening, Biber, Paltridge and Swales on LSP genre, and Ockey and Wagner on video texts in English as a Second Language (ESL) testing to propose an integrated framework for teaching and assessing multimodal listening in LSP contexts. **Gajewska** discusses new policy in Poland with respect to LSP teaching which places additional demands for materials development on instructors. She draws on Mondada's (2002) work on professional talk and workplace interaction as situated action, and sees university LSP as fertile terrain for the development of effective teaching and learning materials.
- 14 In the first of two chapters involving corpus linguistics, **Kozlova & Rodríguez-Inés** report on the Expert Field Environment Collaborative Training (EFFECT) project on LSP

teaching in social sciences at the Universita Autonoma de Barcelona. The authors brought together teaching materials drawing on existing practice and specialised corpora in the area of social studies to create a corpus which is searchable by students and teachers for LSP teaching and learning.<sup>2</sup> The authors offer recommendations for its exploitation both for data-driven learning (Boulton 2015) and teacher education (Krajka 2007) which bear comparison with another recent corpus created by Johnson (2017) in Italy.

- 15 Different methods were used by **Plastina** in her chapter on a six-week English for Medical Purposes (EMP) course, which employed data-driven learning techniques to teach pain descriptors to graduate students in clinical pathology at the University of Calabria. Fifteen participants created and analysed their own “Pain corpus” using AntConc tools, and completed guided learning tasks to refine their understanding (concordance lines, comparison with BNC collocations). In the same EMP domain, **Chojnacka** offers a careful analysis of the affordances of mobile learning, specifically the use of vocabulary tutors on smartphones. She reviews a previous study of user feedback on the application Memrise and discusses the development of a new tool, the Mobile Medical English Companion, drawing on Stockwell and Hubbard (2013). The paper outlines technological and pedagogical considerations and offers a model of “matrix components” to inform discussion between practitioners and software developers.

## Theories in LSP didactics

- 16 The theoretical chapters, two in French and one in English, draw on a wide range of bibliographic references to offer an overview of different areas of LSP teaching. **Challe** offers a wide-ranging theoretical overview of historical approaches to research in teaching French for specific purposes, contrasting French research by Schön and Bronkard with more practically oriented work on methodology and discourse domains (Selinker and Douglas 1985) in the English-speaking world. She accords special attention to the teacher, whom she views as a conductor who orchestrates learning in complex specific purpose contexts. **Richer**, too, underlines the complexity of much work in LSP. He makes the argument that the action-oriented approach which underpins the Common European Reference Framework for Languages (CER) is more appropriate to FSP than communicative approaches are. He draws heavily on Le Boterf's (2011) management guide to adapt Chomsky's (1965) concept of competence for professional contexts, which he then applies to the CER framework to propose a model for FSP didactics incorporating elements of both. **Luzón** takes a different approach, turning instead to English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and calling on Jenkins, Mauranen and Seidelhofer, and especially Finnish research in Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) by Kakaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen. Like Carras, she emphasises the importance of communicative competence and pragmatic awareness, as opposed to narrower proficiency measures and native-speaker norms.

## Strengths and weaknesses

- 17 It should be clear from the above summary that this book offers a wide range of perspectives on its topic, drawing on a variety of specific domains, methodological approaches, and teaching contexts in two major European languages and in five countries. The editors underline the "diversity of target learners and instructional

contexts” (p. 9) in their introduction, as well as their ambition to provide a “forum for exchange of experiences of researchers and practitioners from a number of countries” (p. 10). Perhaps inevitably, the reader has a sense of fragmentation and dispersion: What possible connection can there be between EFL teacher training in Turkey, a contrastive analysis of recipes in French and Russian magazines, or the English needs of Polish graduates in law? A stronger editorial hand might have helped with this difficulty, which is, of course, common to many LSP research collections. As it is, this reader had the impression of a book of two halves: French authors writing in French about French, and other European researchers working on English in Poland and elsewhere. A more analytical introduction and choice of subsections, more efforts to make links between chapters, and certainly an index would have been appreciated. Indeed there is no information on peer review, a process which can offer useful opportunities for such cross-fertilisation and thus aid the reader in developing a coherent overall perspective on the studies offered in the collection.

- 18 However, the eclecticism of the book is also a source of strength. One of the virtues of the collection is its treatment of a number of key issues in LSP research across several chapters, thus providing a range of perspectives from a variety of contexts of use. The role of the language teacher is one important dimension, tackled notably by Parpette and Carras. Another concerns learner autonomy, particularly with respect to corpus linguistics approaches involving data-driven learning (Kozlova & Rodríguez-Inés, and Plastina), but also regarding the potential of technology-mediated learning (Chojnacka). A third important strand is perhaps evaluation and assessment, discussed by Belliet and Mangiante in terms of course design, but also by Carras and Mourlhon-Dallies with respect to classroom teaching. A rich and timely collection, *Innovations in languages for specific purposes* should offer something of interest to many ASp readers.

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHIE

- BOULTON, Alex. 2015. “Applying data-driven learning to the web”. In Leńko-Szymańska, A. & A. Boulton (eds.), *Multiple Affordances of Language Corpora for Data-driven Learning*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 267–295.
- CHOMSKY, Noam. 1965. *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- FASSIER, Thomas & Solange TALAVERA-GOY. 2008. *Le français des médecins*. Grenoble: PUG.
- JOHNSON, Jane Helen. 2017. “The SocWoC corpus: Compiling and exploiting ESP material for undergraduate social workers”. In Sarré, C. & S. Whyte (eds.), *New developments in ESP teaching and learning research*, 133–151.
- KRAJKA, Jarosław. 2007. ‘Corpora and language teachers: from ready-made to teacher-made collections’. *CORELL: Computer Resources for Language Learning* 1, 36–55.
- LE BOTERF, G. 2011. *Repenser la compétence. Pour dépasser les idées reçues : quinze propositions*. Paris: Éditions Eyrolles.

MANGIANTE, Jean-Marc & Chantal PARPETTE. 2004. *Le français sur objectif spécifique*. Paris: Hachette Français Langue Étrangère.

MONDADA, Lorenza. 2002. "Interactions et pratiques professionnelles : un regard issu des studies of work". *Studies in Communication Sciences* 2/2, 47-82.

SELINKER, Larry & Dan DOUGLAS. 1985. "Wrestling with 'context' in interlanguage theory". *Applied linguistics* 6/2, 190-204.

STOCKWELL, Glenn, & Philip HUBBARD. 2013. "Some emerging principles for mobile-assisted language learning". *The International Research Foundation for English Language Education*, 1-15.

## NOTES

1. Teaching English as a Foreign Language
  2. This corpus is available at <<http://effect.projectesainternet.com/>>.
- 

## AUTEURS

**SHONA WHYTE**

Université Côte d'Azur, CNRS, BCL, shona.whyte@unice.fr