
Foreword

Welcome to the first online edition of *ESP Across Cultures*. After ten issues of the paper version of the journal (volume 1 appeared in 2004), we are about to begin a new adventure in an attempt to adapt to these rapidly changing – and economically challenging – times. It is with some regret that we have decided to do away with the paper version of the journal: however, it is hoped that this loss will be more than counterbalanced by the prospect of an exponential increase in terms of outreach and potential readership, and hence visibility, now that the journal is freely accessible online. Not only is this latest issue available online, but so are all the previous issues of *ESP Across Cultures* starting from volume 1, thus constituting an overall body of work to date of almost 100 papers altogether, all of which can be accessed and downloaded free of charge.

An important achievement in 2014 for *ESP Across Cultures* was receiving official recognition from ANVUR (Agenzia Nazionale di Valutazione del Sistema Universitario e della Ricerca), Italy's national agency for the evaluation of the university system and research, in classifying the journal as having an 'A' rating, the highest possible rating. This has been possible because of the combination of the journal's policy of double-blind peer reviewing which ensures that only a select number of papers submitted actually get published, the quality of the Editorial Board, many of whose members are affiliated to academic institutions outside Italy, and the growing reputation of the journal within the international community of scholars involved in ESP.

The previous issue (volume 10) was devoted to the theme of 'academic English across cultures'. This current issue is miscellaneous with papers covering a fascinating variety of topics, though all having to do with specialized discourse in English seen from a cross-cultural perspective.

The first paper in this volume is by Lucia Abbamonte who adopts a stance largely based on Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) in order to examine the outcomes of bilingual, bicultural encounters in US institutional settings, where Latina victim-survivors of domestic violence narrate their experience of abuse either in (non-standard) English, or with the assistance of a Spanish-English interpreter. The author considers issues of language contact and cultural hurdles bearing in mind the context of societal patriarchal conservatism, as well as gender-based and ethnic discrimination.

Mahmood Reza Atai and Farhad Tabandeh investigate the frequency, types and functional characteristics of lexical bundles in a corpus of applied linguistics research articles written in English comparing those written by native English-speaking academics with those written in English by Iranian academics. Their findings suggest that Iranian writers use fewer bundles with different functional types compared with the ENL writers. Their analysis of subgenres reveals both frequency and functional variations, with the highest density of lexical bundles found in 'abstracts'. The authors also discuss some of the pedagogical implications of the study for EAP writing courses.

In her paper Flavia Cavaliere compares the British and the Italian 'Code of Ethics for Social Work' from a lingua-cultural stance. Basing her investigation on the Appraisal Framework, the author selects examples from the two codes for her analysis so as to highlight the extent to which different lexico-grammatical choices and rhetorical strategies convey different underlying values and beliefs. Through her analysis the author offers possible reasons for such differences, which reflect variances in the socio-cultural backgrounds of the two countries in question.

Michela Giordano's study is a comparative analysis of the criteria used in three English-speaking countries – the UK, the USA and New Zealand – to evaluate the clarity of language and the usability of institutional and governmental websites which have committed to adopting Plain English and to using more user-oriented web editing techniques. A selection of institutional websites from the three countries are analysed so as to discover whether and to what extent reader-focused clear communication and user-friendly layout and design succeed in transforming bureaucratese into clear, intelligible texts.

Claudia Ortu's paper focuses on the differences and similarities in the discourse of two governments towards trade union protests in the public sector, comparing the situation of the British 'Winter of discontent' of 1978-79 with the 2010 public sector strike in South Africa. The author argues that despite a number of differences, both events come within "the same socio-historical context: that of the long wave of neoliberal hegemony". The author adopts a pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation theory combined with Systemic Functional Linguistics in its Hallidayan version. The analysis shows how the different political cultures influence both the rhetorical strategies and the use of language, especially at the experiential level.

In his paper, Francesco Pierini argues that while ESP as a whole has a well-established role in language teaching, Business English still presents some problems of definition. The author thus provides an overview of the studies in this field, identifying the main characteristics of Business Discourse/Business English based on the literature to date. He also identifies similarities and differences between Economic Discourse/English for Economics and Business Discourse/Business English asserting that economics and business are two related but distinct disciplines.

Margaret Rasulo's paper examines the spread of knowledge through popularization processes in Content and Language Integrated Learning where English is the subject language. She affirms that non-language subject knowledge can be accommodated and re-contextualized so as to encourage learning through the mediating act of popularization. The author uses a corpus based on replies from a questionnaire and transcripts from interview sessions conducted among teachers already teaching Science and History classes in English or attending a Ministry-funded CLIL training course. The author also suggests a number of discursive strategies within a popularization framework.

Once again, I would like to thank the members of the Editorial Board for their precious work in terms of refereeing papers and offering suggestions and advice on how to improve the journal. I would also like to thank all those scholars who are not on the Editorial Board but who have kindly agreed to referee papers for our journal. The last time we publicly thanked external referees was in issue 8 (2011). Since then the following have all reviewed papers for our journal.

Donna Bain Butler
 Biook Behnam
 Claudio Carcereri de Prati
 Richard Castle
 Ross Charnock
 Carmel Coonan
 Viviana Cortes
 Belinda Crawford

Katrien Deroey
 Gabriella Di Martino
 Wolfgang Dressler
 Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha
 Zohreh Eslami
 Debbie Folaron
 Joseph Foley
 Giuliana Garzone

Davide Giannoni
Julio Gimenez
Nigel Harwood
Margareta Hydén
Gill Kirton
Kaisu Korhonen
Becky Kwan
Shahrazad Mahootian
David Malinowski
Gabriella Mazzon
Andrea Musolff

Hilary Nesi
Minako O'Hagan
Munir Shuib
Viviana Soler
Roger Thompson
Anna Thornton
Shonna Trinch
Margherita Ulrych
Willy Van Langendonck
Maurizio Viezzi

I hope that you will enjoy this latest selection of papers and that you will take full advantage of the journal's free access to explore this and previous issues.

Christopher Williams
(Chief Editor)