



Sara Corrizato  
Valeria Franceschi

## PREFACE

In the past couple of decades, processes of globalization have contributed to an exponential increase of international communication within and outside Europe, thanks to temporary mobility for work and education as well as to migration flows, migratory fluxes resulting in permanent settlement. Advancements in mass communication technologies have also created additional opportunities for the formation of geographically unbound networks and communities for both professional and personal purposes. Due to the impossibility for individuals to use their mother tongue in every communicative context, or to learn several other foreign languages, knowledge of a common shared linguistic code has become necessary to ensure effective interaction among speakers from different sociocultural backgrounds. This role of lingua franca has been undoubtedly filled by English, which has become the working language in multiple areas, such as politics, business, tourism, international safety and academia (e.g. Crystal; Crystal, Facchinetti and Seidlhofer; Cagliero and Jenkins; Seidlhofer; Mauranen). As a result, a need has been highlighted for both students and professionals to acquire the necessary linguistic competence to be part of the contemporary linguistic panorama. Following new European policies aimed at providing these competences to citizens, schools at all levels have included English as a leading subject in their curricula. Universities are also responding by implementing internationalization policies and by increasing the number of English courses even in non-language specialist degree programs. Engineers, healthcare professionals, lawyers, scientists are asked to achieve a specific level of English proficiency in order to graduate, so that they may meet their future needs in the workplace. Taking this into consideration, an approach stemming from ELT has been adopted to meet learners' specific needs by tailoring pedagogical objectives and syllabi according to such necessities. This learner-oriented method (Hutchinson and Waters; Robinson), defined as ESP (English for Specific Purposes), emphasizes the role of the teacher, who is asked to adapt existing materials or to create new ones based on the needs analysis for each specific group of students.

In order to clarify the way in which ELT has developed and branched out into to cater for different learners' needs, including English for Specific Purposes (ESP), pioneers such as Hutchinson and Waters offered a metaphor that compares ELT to a city whose inhabitants led a "comfortable, if not extravagant, life". A number of such adventurers left ELT and founded the city of ESP, which "flourished and prospered", triggering the establishment of other settlements such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for business and economics (EBE), English for science and technology (EST), English for legal purposes (ELP), English for occupational purposes (EOP), English for medical purposes (EMP), and others. Since the first books on this topic were published, other metaphorical cities have grown and met the interests of the ELT and ESP community.

This Issue of Iperstoria aims at looking at ESP and ESP students from different perspectives, both theoretical and empirical. The essays included address traditional as well as emerging aspects in the field, aiming at analyzing multiple facets of the complex universe of English for Specific Purposes. The first four contributions are of a more theoretical nature, while the other three examine the pedagogical implications of ESP courses in higher education for healthcare professionals.

Annalisa Zanola (University of Brescia) offers an interesting discussion of the adjectives 'true' and 'fair', whose interpretation can have significant implications in relation to ESP. By contextualizing the origins of these two terms, whose interpretations may be controversial, the author focuses on their transformations over the centuries and their contemporary use in English for legal and business purposes.

Vanessa Leonardi (University of Ferrara) explores the relationship between ESP and CLIL (Content-Language Integrated Learning) in the context of tertiary level education, highlighting the many elements of convergence between these two approaches. Since CLIL is mainly thought for upper secondary school syllabi, the contributor advocates for mutual collaboration to increase students' awareness of the international role of English outside traditional classroom environments.

Giada Goracci (University of Verona) proposes reflections and theoretical implications on the interrelation between ESP and the new directions in LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender) and queer research to enhance and improve collaboration between queer and non-queer groups in professional settings. Specifically, she suggests that discussion of gender issues from an ESP perspective may promote the analysis of linguistic structures related to identity and the inclusion of queer realities.

Silvia Panicieri's article (University of Verona) focuses on the educational approaches high school teachers in Italy are suggested to implement when facing students with Specific Learning Needs, advocating the need to provide tailor-made pedagogical paths to encourage language learning. Through her article, she



summarizes the recent educational policies by the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR) and, drawing from her own experience as a teacher, she highlights the strategies that can be most useful to guide SLD (Specific Learning Disabilities) learners.

The last three contributions explore various aspects of communication in Medical English, drawing from different linguistic approaches to offer potential activities to be implemented in the ESP classrooms. Nataša Bakić-Mirić and Davronzhon Erkinovich Gaipov (Suleyman Demirel University) discuss the importance of introducing the basic concepts of intercultural communication in mandatory ESP classes at European Medical School.

Valeria Franceschi (University of Verona) focuses on the importance of providing healthcare professionals with the necessary communicative skills to engage in successful communication with international patients. Adopting an ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) perspective, she analyses exposure to non-native accents and meaning negotiation strategies in textbooks addressed to nursing students and provides suggestions on materials adaptation to fit an ELF-oriented syllabus.

Sara Corrizzato (University of Verona) aims at highlighting the relevance of including basic pragmatic principles in EMP curricula for healthcare professionals. Given the necessity to teach communicative strategies to EFL students her contribution focuses on the importance of negative politeness strategies in caregivers-patient relationships.

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