

Call for papers

Conference

**ESP and Data: Approaches and Methods**

**Friday 12 January 2024**

Maison de la recherche – Sorbonne Université  
28 rue Serpente, Paris 6<sup>e</sup> arrondissement, France

In the course of their work, scholars in applied linguistics (Podesva & Sharma 2013, Litosseliti 2010), and in English for specific purposes (ESP) in particular (Paltridge & Starfield 2011), have regularly raised the question of the epistemological status of the data they use and the methodological approaches to be adopted in order to characterise specialised varieties of English.

Some fields are clearly characterized by a profusion of data. This is the case in science and technology, where certain genres, such as the research article, are readily available. However, the situation is radically different for other specialised domains, where access to discourse is more constrained for legal reasons, linked to confidentiality, or for technical reasons, as is the case for studies on older, non-digitised texts. Beyond questions of quantity and accessibility, ESP scholars have also been interested in what underpins the relevance of data in ESP. For example, the notion of authenticity (Van Leeuwen 2001, Decock and Jacobs 2021) is often presented as a fundamental criterion for the analysis of specialised discourse. Similarly, the notion of representativeness (Biber 1993, Flowerdew 2004, Handford 2010, Handford 2018, Millot 2018) is often mobilized when building corpora of specialized varieties of English.

The processing of this profusion of data has been accompanied by intense reflection on characterisation methods, with recurrent questions on the place to be given to quantitative, qualitative and mixed approaches (Blanchet 2000, Angouri 2010, Wozniak 2019, Zhang *et al.* 2020), although these approaches actually embrace significantly different methodologies. In quantitative analysis, corpus-based approaches, which consist in using the data to prove the existence or absence of an upstream feature, tend to differ from the corpus-driven approaches, where features are defined a posteriori to the quantitative treatment. Moreover, research in specialised English benefits not only from cross-fertilisation between sub-fields of applied linguistics (through its links with language didactics, cognitive linguistics or corpus linguistics), but also from advances in the social sciences in the field of discourse analysis (textometric analysis, indexing, annotation, text encoding protocols, text mining by artificial intelligence, etc.) At the same time, the interest in the context of production of specialised discourses raises the question of the importance of ethnographic and sociological approaches, which allow us to access specialised milieus (let us not forget here that if conversational analysis and semi-guided interviews are both considered as typical examples of qualitative approaches, they contribute very differently to our understanding of specialised varieties).

This conference seeks to provide an overview of current practices in the approaches to specialised varieties of English. The papers may address different issues:

- Are some methodologies more effective than others in dealing with specialised varieties of English?
- What is relevant data for the analysis of specialised varieties of English?
- How do we define authenticity and representativeness of data in specialised English?
- Has the profusion of data in certain fields led to real theoretical advances in ESP?
- How can advances in the social sciences and digital humanities contribute to our knowledge of specialised varieties of English?

- How can we increase the amount of data for occluded, hard-to-reach domains?
- What approaches and methods from the social, or even, experimental sciences, could be beneficial for ESP?
- Is there a place for interdisciplinary approaches in the study of specialised varieties of English?

Paper proposals should be sent by **1 September 2023** to [philippe.millot@univ-lyon3.fr](mailto:philippe.millot@univ-lyon3.fr), [severine.wozniak@univ-lyon2.fr](mailto:severine.wozniak@univ-lyon2.fr) and [fanny.domenec@u-paris2.fr](mailto:fanny.domenec@u-paris2.fr)

### **Abstract of 300 words and 5 keywords**

Notification: **15 September 2023**

### **Références bibliographiques**

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