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Lecturer nominated by SAES (France)

**Developing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in Europe:  
mainstream approaches and complementary advances**

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Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

Thank you very much for attending sub-plenary lecture devoted to English for Specific Purposes. I also address my most grateful thanks to the Irish organising team and to the SAES, the French society affiliated to ESSE. ESP is still something of a new-comer in the community of English studies, but they both accepted the subject of this lecture and this sub-plenary may well be the first of its kind on this particular theme.

As you may guess from the title, we are going to tackle a very wide subject indeed. While some of you may be listening as experienced ESP insiders, many colleagues will discover the domain for the first time. Yet, to give my audience an even starting point, I would like to open this presentation by giving it a little Irish twist, both to open my subject in a casual way and to pay homage to our hosts.

The hero of the anecdote I want to share with you is Oscar Wilde. As we know, he first studied at Trinity College, Dublin and then entered Magdalen College, Oxford, to read classics. At Oxford, Wilde was already known as someone out of the ordinary with a well-established reputation for effortless superiority and arrogance. So much so that one day one of his examiners wanted to teach him a lesson and gave him a very tricky passage of the New Testament to translate from Greek into English.

It was a very difficult chapter of the Acts of Apostles. It describes the shipwreck of St. Paul and his companions on their way to Italy. It is full of obscure nautical terms which no one could be expected to know unless they had studied them before. Wilde translated it perfectly and the disappointed examiner soon told him to stop. To which Wilde replied: "Please may I go on? I want to see what happened ..."

The story illustrates Wilde's brilliant erudition but it is also an apt introduction to the subject of specialised languages. These are any natural languages used by professional or disciplinary specialists such as lawyers, medical doctors, accountants, engineers – or indeed navigators as we have seen – and they pose linguistic problems of their own since they are supposed to be abstruse in meaning to the uninitiated and because they add one extra layer of complexity to language learning.

To chart my way across the numerous issues involved in this subject, I propose to examine four large areas of interest. The first one is mainly concerned with the past because I feel we need some historical bearings to situate specialised languages in time before we set about examining more scientific and pedagogical questions. The second one focuses on what I call "mainstream approaches". By this, I mean what is generally known as English for Specific Purposes or ESP in the Anglo-American world. The third area of interest will take us to continental Europe for a brief overview of ESP on this scene; and the fourth to France to introduce you to alternative ways of approaching specialised languages that are developing among our French colleagues.

## 1. A short introduction to the existence and study of specialised languages in history

It is a general belief about specialised languages that they are the offspring of recent modernity. It is true that our times have tremendously multiplied and enriched specialised languages, but linguistic specialisation is a very old phenomenon and many instances largely predate modern developments in science and professional activities.

For example, we know that ancient Greek and Latin developed sophisticated discourse for areas of knowledge such as architecture, medicine, astronomy, geometry or law. An extreme example of the historical depth of language specialisation was spotted by John Swales, a renowned authority in genre analysis. In 1997, he published a short note on recently discovered Sumerian clay tablets that date back some 4,000 years BC (Swales 1997). They contain descriptions of how to prepare medicines following the pharmacopoeia of that time and they feature specific abbreviations that were presumably only understood by the community's insiders. Swales concludes that these descriptions may well be the world's earliest-known technical texts that have come to our knowledge.

If we now turn to the potential interest of linguists for this phenomenon in past centuries, we are in for some disappointment. I do not claim I am an expert in the matter, but I have tried to find hints of curiosity in authors such as Aristotle and Cicero who devoted attention to linguistic expression. Yet, I found none. Although some forms of specialised glossaries probably existed in those days, language specialisation does not seem to have excited much intellectual attraction among Greek and Latin thinkers.

The reason for this may be offered by Hannah Arendt in her seminal book *The Human Condition*. She explains that most practical occupations in antique times were carried out by slaves (1998: 81–82). So, all the strenuous labour required to satisfy the bare necessities of life was considered servile and unworthy of free men, especially of the citizens of the polis. As a consequence, linguistic interests then focused on the “logos” dimension of the language, that is to say on the general forms that could be understood by all free citizens, for example eloquence, rhetoric and poetics. Conversely, the laborious efforts of common “praxis” mostly inspired contempt. So, no interest developed for the specialised forms of language that served these activities for they could only be shared by small groups of despised labourers.

This tradition of disregard for practical and specialised activities was to last a very long time. In the 17th century, Blaise Pascal disliked people who posed as specialists. Only “universal men” appealed to him and he professed that it was more beautiful to know something about everything than to know everything about something (1954: 1098–99). Two centuries later, Charles Baudelaire, a French poet, thought the same: “What is the superior man?”, he asked, and his answer was: “It is not the specialist. It is the man of leisure and of general education” (*Mon cœur mis à nu*, 413).

With all due respect for our community, I suggest that this tradition is far from dead today and it may occasionally be observed in our very academic circles. Some colleagues feel that they belong to branches of English studies that are more dignified than others and they tend to regard the teaching and studying of specialised forms of English as ancillary occupations compared to the nobler domains of literature, linguistics or cultural studies. This could be called the “Berlitz stigma” since ESP practitioners sometimes hear that what they do is not that different from what is offered in the Berlitz schools of languages. In many countries, ESP practitioners still strive to gain the type of recognition from their peers that scholars in literature or cultural studies take for granted.

For all these reasons, interest in specialised languages only emerged recently in the wake of mass industrialisation and the accelerating development of science and technology. Our modern world generates widespread specialisation in all human activities and in 1919, Max Weber, a German scientist, wrote:

[S]cience has entered a stage of specialisation that has no precedent and that will continue for all time. [...] Nowadays, a really definitive and valuable achievement is always the product of specialisation. (Weber 2004 [1919]: 7-8)

After the Second World War, the United States emerged as the leading nation of the developed world and gave English its predominance as the *lingua franca* of science, technology and business. This set of combined factors explains the international development of English for Specific Purposes, more popularly known as ESP.

## **2. ESP's mainstream approaches**

It is difficult to set a precise date for the beginnings of ESP. Most authors follow John Swales's (1985: x) suggestion that a paper written by Charles Barber in 1962 marks the origins of its academic developments. Barber explored the ways in which scientific English differs from general English. The functional implication of the study was that it made more sense to teach these characteristics to learners of science than to teach them general English. The international expansion of trade and technology triggered widespread interest in these functional approaches under the larger umbrella name of applied linguistics.

Eagerness for functional acquisitions of English was most acute in non-English-speaking countries which needed massive imports of English-based know-how in science, business and industry. These included many countries in continental Europe, the Middle East, South America and South-East Asia. And indeed many well-known figures in ESP are British and American-born academics who started their careers as expatriate teachers to cater for these needs all over the world. As a result, ESP has now achieved a global presence and journals devoted to ESP studies are published not only in English-speaking countries but all over the world.

The title of this second section mentions "approaches" in ESP and this plural is used on purpose. ESP has not developed as a theory-based discipline but rather as a loosely defined approach to language teaching which essentially takes into account the specific needs of learners for language use in particular domains. For that reason, it has generally been characterised as a learning- or learner-centred approach.

The theoretical fuzziness of the approach first appears in its very name. Indeed, the meaning of the "S" in ESP has long been debated between proponents of English for "special" or "specific" purposes although it seems that "specific" has now achieved an official status of sorts. This is not a moot point, as we shall see later, since the emphasis here is on the "specificity" of needs and use, and not on the underlying "specialty", which is the preferred choice in other lines of research. In ESP, therefore, the purposes are specific but there is no real perception that specialised varieties of a language derive from specialised domains.

Still, the strategic starting-point of ESP is wide enough to accommodate an amazingly large and diversified array of approaches and methods and many practitioners claim they follow the ESP philosophy while doing very different things. It would be near impossible and probably tedious to recapitulate all ESP trends and practices in the context of this lecture, but I propose to give you a tentative idea of the magnitude and diversity of the domain.

In ESP, specialised discourse may be approached from many points of view: register, lexis, terms, discourse, style, needs, contexts, genres, corpora ... The list is practically endless. Then, these approaches are applied to specialised domains to form English for Medical Purposes, English for Academic Purpose, English for Legal Purposes..., the list is also practically endless. The resulting set of potential combinations offers countless lines of study that expand at exponential speed. That offers a picture of the momentum and development of this young field. Yet, I would like to focus briefly on three particularly important and durable lines of interest in ESP: needs analysis, discourse and genre analysis, and corpus studies.

First, analysing learners' needs is at the core of the ESP philosophy. Over the years, literally hundreds of papers have been devoted to needs analyses adopting ever more refined approaches and methods and deriving appropriate teaching programmes to meet these needs.

Then, discourse and genre analyses are also central in the ESP approach. For centuries, language specialisation has seemed to be essentially located in the words used by insiders. The discourse approach situates specialisation above the sentence level and implies that learners need not only use specific words properly but that they need to produce specific types of discourse as well. On these broad lines, various types of discourse analyses have been put forward. For example, following the advances of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* in 1980, many ESP studies have focused on the use of metaphors in specialised texts.

However, the most prolific branch of the discourse approach is arguably the analysis of genres pioneered by John Swales in 1990 in his seminal book *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. In the same book, Swales also explored the concept of "discourse community" (21–29) that has also become a major theme in ESP thinking.

Genre analysis has been deepened and refined in numerous papers and has also become a crucial subject in ESP, so much so that genres have gradually come to be seen as a central hub notion around which most features of language specificity are orbiting. Another interesting outcome of genre analysis is the stimulus it gave to English for Academic Purposes (EAP) where various types of research articles in legal, medical or economic domains are analysed and subsegmented in ever more sophisticated ways.

Finally, corpus analysis has become widespread in language studies but it has been particularly successful in ESP. Alongside huge general purpose corpora such as the British National Corpus, specialised corpora have been built and are accessible online. For example, the British Law Report Corpus, the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English, The Business Letters Corpus... These corpora are used to extract most frequently used words and language patterns which are typical of specialised discourse. Teachers and learners can also build their own specialised corpora to suit to their own needs.

Before closing that brief outline of ESP, I would like to mention two major vehicles of ESP's "mainstreamness". The first one is a scientific journal which plays a leading role in the global projection of the ESP approach: it is the aptly named *English for Specific Purposes* published by Elsevier. This journal is widely considered to be the most influential research journal in the field.

Another publication which provides the ESP approach with a global audience is in fact a collective book published in 2013 under the title: *The Handbook of English for Specific Purposes*. It presents, I quote, "a state of the art survey of research in the field of English for Specific Purposes" (p. 1) and its chapters are written by recognised authorities in the field and cover the major themes of the domain. As its name suggests, *The Handbook* offers beginners and experienced practitioners a useful "how-to guide" and a showroom of accumulated ESP expertise.

If we now turn to the continental European scene, we can measure to what extent these mainstream advances have influenced our colleagues.

### **3. The study and teaching of specialised languages in continental Europe**

A rough way to introduce this section is simply to say that interest for specialised languages emerged in the western European context from the 1970s to the 1990s depending on countries. At the time, language teaching and studies were still largely literature-based and most functional approaches were practically starting from scratch. As a result, most European pioneers in the field essentially found their inspiration in the works of their British and American colleagues.

Before developing on that subject, let me first make an exception for the German-speaking countries. Indeed, in Germany and Austria, interest for specialised languages emerged much earlier than anywhere else. The fast-paced rise of German science and industry in the late 19th century triggered an interest for technical language. The term *Fachsprache* which can be loosely translated as “domain” or “speciality language” appeared as early as the 1920s.

Furthermore, German linguistic interests mainly focused on specialised lexis to ensure high accuracy in meaning so as to avoid technical misunderstanding and to contribute to technical standardisation. One Austrian machine-tool engineer, Eugen Wüster, played a major role in that respect and is widely recognised as the father of scientific terminology. Consequently, the German approach to specialised language still remains more inspired by terminological and technical concerns than, say, the typical ESP preoccupations on needs and genres.

If we keep playing ESP visitors around Europe, we shall be happily surprised to find that two Latin, not Germanic, countries are very active contributors to the field. Indeed, Spain and Italy now have dynamic networks, scholars and publications in major ESP subjects. Spanish is an international language in its own right, but our Spanish colleagues have eagerly adopted ESP in their fast-developing higher education system. Their Asociación Europea de Lenguas para Fines Específicos (AELFE) has worked hard to establish the field on the Spanish academic scene and it publishes a highly regarded and multilingual journal, *Ibérica*. The Spanish ESP community is outward-looking and we are happy to count several Spanish presenters in our ESP seminars here in Galway.

In Italy, the spread of ESP has tremendously benefited from several active pioneers, especially from the intense commitment of Professor Maurizio Gotti from the University of Bergamo. He has inspired several generations of scholars, some of whom are presenting their work in Galway. Professor Gotti is also the founder and director of the well-known “Linguistic Insights” series published by Peter Lang. It started in 2001 and now boasts more than 180 volumes covering practically all aspects of ESP studies, an incredible achievement. The University of Foggia also publishes an interesting bilingual English-Italian journal every year, *ESP Across Cultures* which focuses on the impacts of cultural factors on ESP.

Central and eastern European nations also present an interesting case in the ESP landscape. As we know, the East-West bloc divide cut them off from the global development of *English as a lingua franca* for many years. However, they are catching up fast and are proactive. These countries have mature higher education systems with some of Europe's most prestigious universities. Several have enduring and inventive industrial traditions and can draw on a rich linguistic heritage. Potentially, they are naturally gifted ESP players and they are actively doing their part. Twenty-five percent of our ESP participants in Galway are from central and eastern Europe, including the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Slovenia. This is remarkable and I thank them for their commitment and contributions.

Most of the countries I have mentioned largely take their inspiration from Anglo-American mainstream advances. Obviously, this is the case for France too. Yet, in several respects, French perceptions differ from the generally accepted principles of mainstream ESP and they offer alternative perspectives that may be worth mentioning in the context of this lecture.

#### **4. The study and teaching of specialised English in France: some alternative contributions**

French interests in specialised languages emerged in the 1970s and in the 1980s, higher education establishments were obliged by law to offer tuition in foreign languages to all students irrespective of their disciplines.

This created a huge sector of learners who were not language majors, but who needed teaching in foreign languages, preferably in their disciplinary line of interest. This sector is generally called LANSAD, an acronym which can be conveniently translated as LANSOD, LANguages for Specialists of Other Disciplines. Today, LANSOD vastly outnumbers language majors and is an active recruiter of language teachers, especially in English, the preferred choice of most learners.

The LANSAD concept was coined in the late 1970s by a group of pioneers who started to organise annual ESP conferences. In 1977 they founded a national group devoted to studies and research in *anglais de spécialité* “specialty-based English”, the GERAS. Then, in 1993, they started a journal called *ASp*. To date, GERAS has held 37 conferences and published 69 volumes of *ASp* totalling almost 600 papers. GERAS has also been an active promoter of ESP in ESSE conferences, notably in Aarhus in 2008, in Turin in 2010 and in Kosice two years ago. This year, our two ESP seminars on specialised domains and ESP didactics were initiated by four GERAS members.

A large number of GERAS colleagues conduct research following ESP areas of interest such as needs, genre and corpus analysis and they also work on terminology. However, I shall focus on some differences that are emerging in the French context.

Let us begin with the name of the domain, “anglais de spécialité”, or ASP as distinct from ESP. The very name of ASP suggests a somewhat different outlook. It implies that a specialised language stems from an underlying speciality or specialised domain. Now, specialised domains are very different from specific purposes. Purposes are fleeting realities that depend on learners. Conversely, domains such as law or medicine are stable institutional realities that have existed for a long time. In this perspective, research means studying the relationships between the language and the domains, rather than simply adapting to the specific needs of learners.

A consequence of this is that there is a widely shared consensus in France that language and culture cannot be separated and that studying and teaching one specialised language also implies taking into account the related culture of the domain and of its community. Research on that line is expanding: on the communities of engineers, economists, financiers, mountain guides, diplomats... and on the influence of their cultures on specialised English.

So far, the difference in outlook between ASP and ESP may seem superficial, but it is deeper than appearances suggest and it is also heavy with epistemological consequences. In the ASP view there is such a thing as “specialised languages” and the notion of “specialised varieties of English” or SVEs is gradually gaining ground among French scholars. In ESP, on the other hand, many colleagues still resist the idea. They probably remember what Hutchinson and Waters wrote in 1987: “ESP is *not* a matter of teaching ‘specialised varieties’ of English” (1987: 18). Well, a

growing number of ASP scholars beg to differ. They think that SVEs are language objects that are worth studying and that describing them will serve the needs of learners.

Yet, if you start describing SVEs, you come up with a new difference between ASP and ESP. If SVEs are man-made language objects, they are necessarily social in nature, and they consequently exist in time. In ESP, the temporal dimension does not attract much interest. Learners' needs are mostly today's needs, sometimes tomorrow's, but rarely yesterday's. What ESP promotes is synchrony in the present or projection in the near future. ASP proponents fully agree on this but they also take the long-term past into account. The logical implication of this position is that describing one specialised variety of English requires studying its history. This view is still recent and limited work has been carried out on the subject (mostly in 17th century scientific discourse [Banks 2016], economics [Resche 2013] and finance [Van der Yeught 2012]). Yet, interest is rising and calls for papers on the subject are multiplying.

But then, if we follow the diachronic logic, we come up with a new question: if specialised languages exist in history, when and how do they begin? To answer the question, some scholars have started researching the emergence of same-language specialised glossaries and dictionaries. By itself, a dictionary does not generate a specialised language, but it probably signals that one is in the making. Research into medical and financial dictionaries (Charpy 2011; Van der Yeught 2012: 17–19, 43–44) suggests that the dictionarisation process takes place at times of rapid social and economic evolutions when specialised communities accept intakes of newcomers. These outsiders need to master the community's language and these dictionaries are published to meet their needs. Since new SVEs crop up every year, the dictionarisation criterion may be useful to spot new entrants in the field. Conversely, if researchers start studying a supposedly specialised language without ever finding a corresponding dictionary, they may have doubts as to its existence.

Let me now move on to one theme of interest actively explored in ASP, FASP. In 1999, a French scholar, Michel Petit, coined the new notion of “professionally-based fiction”, “fiction à substrat professionnel” in French or FASP for short. Strictly speaking, FASP is not literature, it refers to legal, medical or financial thrillers where specialised environments play as important a part in the narrative as the plot or the characters. FASP studies are sometimes criticised because these novels are not genuine professional documents. Yet, they are often written by experts and they offer first-class pedagogical support to introduce students to the language and culture of specialised communities. The notion of FASP has been enriched by Shaeda Isani (2004) and FASP research is developing fast and branching out into television, cinema and cartoon FASP.

All these developments in ASP imply that specialist knowledge, in its professional, social or cultural forms, plays a fairly important role in the French approach to specialised languages. This too is fairly distinct from the ESP standpoint. Indeed, many ESP practitioners share the view that specialist knowledge does not naturally fall within the professional sphere of linguists and they do not want to be suspected of pretending they are doctors or lawyers when they do not have the necessary competence.

Conversely, ASP scholars generally think that a fairly good culture of the specialist world, including its historical dimension, helps in teaching the language. No expert on Shakespeare has ever been accused of competing with the Bard, no specialist in American politics has ever been suspected of wanting to run for Senate or the White House. Similarly, a teacher of English for engineering, law or medicine, may want to be culturally aware of these domains without being suspected of intending to design a car, pass judgement or cure patients.

To conclude on this section on ASP, I will indulge in a few personal observations on the subject. I will briefly summarise them in five points (Van der Yeught 2016).



First, I agree that a lot of attention has to be devoted to learners' needs. But to my mind, teachers' needs are equally important. In most countries, teachers' training in ESP or ASP is scarce or lacking and I think that knowledge building on SVEs is a priority to train qualified teachers for the LANSOD sector.

Second, to build scientific knowledge on SVEs, we need a theory which defines objects of study and methods of approach. Yet, I do not think that a theory of specialised languages should be grounded on the central notion of "communication", as is generally believed, but on the notion of "specialisation". The reason is simple: specialised languages do not produce their domains; it is the other around, specialised domains produce their languages. So specialisation should come as the priority and central notion in a theory of specialised languages.

Third, while communication is a linguistic process, specialisation is a mental process. So, to conceptualise specialisation as such, I propose to analyse it as a form of what an American philosopher, John Searle, calls "philosophical intentionality" and especially "collective intentionality" (Searle 1995: 127–147). In that perspective, specialised communities share the same collective intentionality which makes them focus on legal, medical, financial or technological matters and they structure the competences resulting from their activities in the form of specialised domains.

Fourth, these domains need what Searle calls "background knowledge" (Searle: 127–147). This refers to any capacity that makes intentionality possible. Depending on specialisations, these may include the capacity to observe, read, write, calculate, know Latin or statistics. Language is one of these background capacities and it becomes specialised as a result.

Fifth, the function of a specialised language is not so much to "communicate" in general terms but to serve its domain's purpose which derives from its founding intentionality. The aim of SVE studies should be to describe all LANSOD SVEs as serving specialised purposes. These descriptions will provide the accumulated knowledge necessary to train teachers and to serve the needs of learners.

Whether one agrees or not on this contribution, I think we need a theory linking together specialisation, specialised communities, domains and languages so that some coherent explanatory landscape emerges.

Now, you may think this is far too theoretical and miles apart from ESP. In fact it is not. These theoretical propositions and ESP are complementary. We can compare ESP to a space rocket's very effective second stage which meets the needs of learners. What I am suggesting is a first stage to achieve theoretical takeoff, build knowledge on satisfactory scientific grounds and satisfy the needs of teachers. In my view, these two stages are indispensable to make the rocket successfully reach its objective.

## **Conclusion**

Time is flying and we are reaching the end of this lecture.

In conclusion, I would like to address two wide-ranging issues: one is general and theoretical, the second one is more personal and experiential.

The first issue is linked to the situation of SVE studies nowadays and in their prospective future. I hope I have convinced you that this domain is wide, complex, dynamically tackled and rich of a

large choice of different approaches. My concern is that it may be reaching a state of entropy where approaches multiply, but also move away from one another as they develop, at the risk of generating fragmentation and incoherence. I think we need a phase of consolidation to build a holistic view of the domain. Not at all to direct, restrict, constrain or criticise, but rather to highlight how apparently opposed approaches are complementary and combinable.

Insisting on learners' or teachers' needs seem to be diametrically opposed trajectories. In fact, the second approach complements the first one and serves its purpose. Putting emphasis on synchrony or diachrony is apparently contradictory. Yet, at a higher level, the two positions combine to bring more fruitful results. As I see it, the domain requires an overarching bigger picture, let's call it a "general theory", which transcends differences and recomposes them into a fully-fledged scientific discipline.

The second issue is linked to the way SVE practitioners experience their particular position within the context of English studies. To put it simply, let us say that most SVE teachers start their careers as qualified teachers of English who hope to carry out successful research in, say, literature, linguistic or cultural studies. Yet, because of unpredictable career scenarios, they end up with positions in the LANSOD sector.

And there, they suffer from the double LANSOD syndrome. On the one hand, they are generally cut off from their English studies home base and their work on specialised English is not really accepted or valued in English studies. And so, they suffer from a first loss of intellectual legitimacy. On the other hand, their communities of adoption generally regard them as mere linguists deprived of the intellectual authority valued in the medical or scientific contexts. And so, they suffer from a second loss of intellectual legitimacy. Call it lack of recognition or confused identity, the bottom line is that they no longer know where their intellectual and professional home is.

Today, I would like to tell these colleagues that their particular position is not a non-position. They do not stand nowhere in relation to English studies, they stand in a very special place, they stand at the "edge of inside". The edge of inside is an evocative expression, but it is not my invention. I am borrowing it from an American Franciscan priest, Richard Rohr, and I suggest it correctly describes the position of LANSOD teachers.

As qualified teachers of English, they are English studies insiders, but as LANSOD practitioners they no longer belong in the group of the core insiders. They work at the boundaries, in the doorways and on the bridges of English studies which lead outside to other professional and disciplinary groups. As insiders, they know what excellence means in English studies, but as edge insiders they have also experienced excellence in science, engineering or medicine. They are involved in constant change, inside and outside their community, and, sometimes better than insiders, they can see which outside changes may be good for the inside. They do not see different groups as competitors, but as partners.

There are downsides to being edge insiders. Core insiders may distrust them and regard them as renegades to the values of the group (remember the "Berlitz stigma"), but there are upsides too. LANSOD edge insiders operate in the shifting territories of our globalised modernity where professions interact and disciplines merge. They play a complex and uncomfortable role, but a crucial one too and they feel they have a lot of outside treasures on offer for English studies.

On their behalf, I am grateful to you all, for making us, edge insiders, feel comfortably at home in this ESSE conference.

And now, dear colleagues, thank you very much for your enduring patience. Please, the floor is yours and I'll be happy to answer your questions.

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