

## Like Plato's 'two worlds': LSP practitioners' roles between the academia and the profession

Verónica Muñoz  
Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto (UNRC), Argentina  
[veronicamunoz@ing.unrc.edu.ar](mailto:veronicamunoz@ing.unrc.edu.ar)

Gisella Fuenzalida Caspar  
Universidad Nacional de La Rioja (UNLaR), Argentina  
[gfuenzalida@unlar.edu.ar](mailto:gfuenzalida@unlar.edu.ar)

Gabriela Galfioni  
Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto (UNRC), Argentina  
[gabrielagalfioni@ing.unrc.edu.ar](mailto:gabrielagalfioni@ing.unrc.edu.ar)

Valentina Roccia  
Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto (UNRC), Argentina  
[vroccia@hum.unrc.edu.ar](mailto:vroccia@hum.unrc.edu.ar)

*(First received: September 23, 2024; accepted: October 30, 2024)*

### Abstract

This reflective article aims to contribute to the analysis of the roles of practitioners of languages for specific purposes. We analyse and evaluate theoretical discussions on the roles of practitioners in the field of English for specific purposes (ESP). This issue, of academic and pragmatic concern, should be re-oriented considering fundamental theoretical underpinnings that can better equip scholars to discuss ESP practitioners' roles. For a better understanding of these roles, it is essential to consider the dual identity of the ESP field, lying between the academia and the profession. ESP practitioners are dwellers of two territories, like Plato's 'two worlds': the abstract or intelligible world of academic disciplines, and the material or sensible world of professional jurisdictions. Then, we argue that it is necessary to discuss ESP practitioners' roles contextualising them to their real settings, a contextualisation which would be misleading if this dual identity were not considered.

*Key words:* ESP practitioner, roles, academia, profession

### Resumen

Este artículo reflexivo busca contribuir al análisis de los roles de los profesionales de lenguas para fines específicos. Contemplamos y evaluamos discusiones teóricas sobre los roles de los profesionales de inglés para fines específicos (IFE). Esta temática, de interés académico y pragmático, debería reorientarse considerando fundamentos teóricos esenciales que puedan proporcionar herramientas a los especialistas para discutir los roles de los profesionales de IFE. Para una mejor comprensión de estos roles, es fundamental considerar la doble identidad del área de IFE, que se sitúa entre la academia y la profesión. En este sentido, los profesionales de IFE habitan dos territorios, como los 'dos mundos' de Platón: el mundo abstracto o inteligible de las disciplinas académicas, y el mundo material o físico de las jurisdicciones profesionales. Por ello, argumentamos que es necesario discutir dichos roles enmarcándolos en sus contextos reales, contextualización que no sería adecuada sin considerar esta doble identidad.

*Palabras claves:* profesional de IFE, roles, academia, profesión

## Introduction

Language for specific purposes (LSP) has had a long tradition of academic development throughout the world. At present, the field has a leading role not only for the scientific research and teaching of languages but also in areas such as lexicography, media, marketing, and scientific communication (Basturkmen & Elder, 2004; Bhatia, 2008; Hyland, 2002; Master, 2005; Swales, 2000). LSP is a generic term encompassing different disciplines linked ontologically, pragmatically, epistemologically, and methodologically. The ontological and pragmatic dimensions are the parameters that most evidently cut across the several movements, which look at the same social reality: particular varieties of language used for specific purposes (Belcher, 2009; Hyland, 2022; Hyland & Jiang, 2021).

Within the broad spectrum of disciplines, theories, and approaches that simultaneously draw on and feed LSP, English for specific purposes (ESP) has risen as a prominent field, whose production impacts beyond the Anglophone applied linguistics community. It is in this field, ESP, where we will focus on in this article. The specific attention to ESP in this paper can be explained for two reasons. First, this is our area of expertise in national Argentinean universities. Second, the decades of continuous development of ESP, since the 1960s, have resulted in a mature field surpassing the boundaries of a mere approach and branch to the teaching of English. At this point of the manuscript, we use general words such as *area* and *field*, and avoid the use of phrases such as *academic discipline*, as this will be a central issue of discussion in this work.

As a mature field, ESP has accrued a body of sound scientific knowledge and theory based on research approaches and applications that extend beyond educational scenarios (Bell, 2021; Bruce & Ding, 2019; Ding, 2019, 2022; Ding & Bruce, 2017; Hyland, 2019, 2022; Hyland & Jiang, 2021). The bulk of this production has been centred around linguistic studies that have contributed pertinent evidence about the language targeted for teaching purposes mainly at university. However, as a field contextualised in applied linguistics and in the social sciences, ESP is concerned with language as a social phenomenon. As a consequence, the research trends, orientations and interests have taken new directions responding to changes in society. One such turn, still in the making, has been a rising concern with the individuals who carry out the ESP activity. Again, for the moment, we use *individuals* and avoid specific terms like *teachers* intentionally, as this will be another central issue of discussion in this manuscript. The greater interest in the individuals who put the ESP field into movement has brought about theoretical discussions and, to a lesser extent, empirical studies, both of which have focused on different dimensions. One of the main concerns pivots around the roles that ESP ‘practitioners’, as usually referred to in the literature, have. The emphasis and effort put in this discussion can be partly explained because of the dynamic and multifaceted nature of the field and, more importantly, because of the need to better understand the individuals who participate in the field as well as the practices in which they engage.

It is in this research line, the roles of individuals in LSP, and particularly ESP, that we wish to focus on in this article. We acknowledge the importance of this discussion. However, the discussion, as an issue of academic and pragmatic concern, should be re-oriented considering fundamental theoretical underpinnings that can better equip scholars to analyse and evaluate the roles of the individuals involved in ESP. One of the main caveats is related to the interplay between individuals and context: we are social beings immersed in and constituting social contexts, which simultaneously shape us as social beings. From this perspective, individuals cannot be studied without being contextualised.

It follows, then, that individuals' roles in ESP cannot be discussed and analysed in isolation from the context that makes these roles meaningful. This fact may represent a special challenge in the field of ESP. For the reasons discussed in detail later in this article, the particular situation of the ESP field in contexts like Argentina may make it an area with a double identity, one in which the frontiers between the academic domain and the professional domain become blurred. For instance, in Argentina ESP is different from other cases, the prototypical case being medicine, where medicine students are trained academically at universities and then, after graduation, become medicine practitioners (doctors) who very frequently practise their professions outside universities in institutions such as hospitals and other health centres. Unlike these prototypical cases, in Argentina English teachers are trained academically at university and become ESP practitioners who practise our profession at university itself. That is, our professional praxis develops in the same academic institution where we were prepared and where we qualified as English teachers. In this panorama, practitioners find ourselves at a crossroads, standing in between two realms, the academia and the profession, like Plato's 'two worlds': the abstract or intelligible world, and the material or sensible world.

Therefore, the conceptualisation of context may become a challenge to theoretical discussions if no systematic reference is made to both domains (academic and professional) in an integrative way. In other words, our main argument is twofold: it is not possible to discuss and theorise about ESP practitioners' roles without contextualizing them to the real settings; and this contextualisation will be misleading if the dual identity is not considered. In view of what we have argued, the purpose of this reflective article is to analyse and evaluate theoretical discussions on ESP practitioners' roles, lying between the academia and the profession.

### **Contextualising the 'two worlds'**

As discussed in sociology, most of our daily lives occurs in social groups: collections of people who interact on a regular basis and have a common identity as well as shared expectations related to behaviour, thus building a patterned relationship over time (Giddens et al., 2018; Horton & Hunt, 1988; Kendall, 2012; Macionis & Plummer, 1999; Mohan, 2022; Ritzer, 2018). In these social groups, people maintain their 'self' but at the same time think about themselves as 'us' (Macionis & Plummer, 1999). It is this 'us' that has motivated several scholars to reflect upon ESP practitioners, by looking at them from different dimensions, as for example their roles. This concern is legitimate, considering that as social beings living in social groups, we all have a sense of belonging as well as consciousness of membership and participation. Here we refer specifically to the so-called secondary groups discussed in sociological theory: large social groups whose members share a common activity and common interests (Giddens et al., 2018; Macionis & Plummer, 1999). In secondary groups such as work groups, as stated by Giddens et al. (2018), people play roles after joining the groups to achieve a specific goal, for example to earn a living.

In some contexts, like Argentina, the distinctiveness of the social groups that congregate ESP university practitioners lies in the fact that the field is simultaneously an academic discipline (e.g., Bell, 2021; Bruce, 2021; Bruce & Ding, 2019; Ding, 2019, 2022; Ding & Bruce, 2017; Hyland, 2019; Hyland & Jiang, 2021) and a profession (e.g., Bell, 2021; Bond, 2022; Bruce, 2021; Ding & Bruce, 2017; Hyland & Jiang, 2021; Sizer, 2019), the main argument put forward in this article. Reference to ESP in the literature both as an academic discipline and as a profession can be explained, among other reasons, by the fundamental and necessary relation between academic disciplines and professions, one in which professionals draw on the theoretical knowledge built, legitimated and

certified by the academia, and one in which, in turn, scholars respond to the needs and developments of professions through research and systematisation of theory. In the particular case of ESP, Argentinean practitioners are themselves the ones who simultaneously carry out research and therefore build theory, as well as the ones who put theory into practice in the same context. Despite the increasing interest in ESP practitioners, as stated before, theoretical discussions at times not only abstract practitioners and place emphasis on the individual but also, when reference is made to the context, this dual belonging, between the academia and the profession, may be usually overlooked.

It is surprising that this distinction (academy and profession) is not made, at least not explicitly, when ESP practitioners' roles are under discussion. The distinction between academia and profession, however, is persistently acknowledged in the ESP literature when referring to genres, discourses, communities, students' needs, courses, and branches of ESP, though this division is not recognised when reference is made to the roles of those leading the field. Very frequently, scholars distinguish university from workplace, academic from professional discourses and genres, students' academic communicative needs from professional communicative needs, and English for academic purposes from English for professional purposes. Despite the pervasive recognition of these 'two worlds' in the ESP literature and praxis, it seems that the 'two worlds' exist for everyone (e.g., students) and everything (e.g., genres), except for practitioners themselves. In other words, practitioners' double membership of the academic and professional domains is frequently omitted in theoretical discussions about ESP practitioners' roles.

The poles university-workplace and academic-professional can be said to be non-existent for the ESP field in some contexts. In Argentina, like in other countries, ESP university practitioners inhabit both territories at the same time. As previously explained, ESP practitioners exercise their profession in the academic context, specifically at university. Although the picture is much more complex, for illustration purposes, we can briefly resort to Hyland and Jiang's (2021, p. 14) distinction when referring to differences between English for academic purposes and English for occupational purposes courses, the former targeted to students who want to *study* a discipline and the latter to students who want to *practise* a profession. Although this is a simplistic view of the differences underlying the two worlds, the academic domain and the professional domain, it serves as a starting point. In the following paragraphs, we will briefly point to the distinctive features of academic disciplines and professions, two different but related social groups, though characterising these 'two worlds' would require a thorough discussion, which is beyond the scope of this article.

We begin with the world of academia. Academic disciplines are basic pillars of academia and fundamental organising units of science, as they regulate the production, systematisation, organisation, legitimation, control, accumulation, and communication of academic knowledge. They are not fully homogenous but are dynamic, and they are of very different nature, characterised by multiple dimensions as well as histories, trajectories, and institutional lives (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Kreber, 2009; Krishnan, 2009; Winchester, 1986). In addition, there may be blurred borders among different academic disciplines as well as overlapping points. Academic disciplines constitute entities that transcend the organisation of bodies of knowledge (intellectual branches) for teaching and research purposes. They are configurations of epistemological orientations and sociocultural variables (Becher, 1981, 1989, 1992, 1994; Becher & Parry, 2005; Becher & Trowler, 2001; Christie & Maton, 2011; Hyland, 2000; Krishnan, 2009; Trowler, 2012a, b, 2014a, b; Trowler et al., 2012). As synthesised from the literature,

academic disciplines are fields of knowledge and practices structured as a configuration of epistemological, methodological, social, cultural, institutional, and historical dimensions.

We move now to the world of professions. We will focus on the cognitive and epistemological dimensions of professions (Larsons, 2017), in order to link them to academic disciplines. Professions, as understood broadly, are social entities that organise the division of labour in market systems. They are usually considered not merely as jobs but as vocations (Dent et al., 2016). Professions are central institutions in social systems, as they are crucial to the civic well-being, organisation and functioning of modern societies (Abbott, 1988; Burns, 2019; Dent, 2024; Larsons, 2017; Liljegren & Saks, 2017). Professional practice is largely systematised by and linked to abstract conceptual systems of knowledge built in academia (Abbott, 1988). The legitimation of professional work through academic knowledge, which provides the rigour and scientific foundation to practice (Abbott, 1988), is what links professions to academic disciplines. However, the academic discipline is “the parent knowledge structure that is usually one principal reservoir” (Young & Muller, 2014, p. 9), though not the only one. In addition to abstract conceptual knowledge developed and codified in disciplines inside the academic domain, professions apply different resources and kinds of knowledge, some of which, like skills and techniques, are developed outside academia, in the professional field (Abbott, 1988; Guile, 2014; Young & Muller, 2014).

Professional expertise is based on different forms of knowledge: scholarly certified theory-based knowledge produced by academic disciplines, and acquired through credentials in higher-education institutions (Freidson, 2001; Larsons, 2017), as well as practical know-how knowledge developed from professional experience (Young & Muller, 2014). Thus, professional workplace practices are not based entirely on knowledge from the conceptual structure of academic disciplines and do not involve the mere transfer, to practical problems, of abstract theoretical discipline-based knowledge, built and taught at university, and learnt through educational training in study programs (Guile, 2014). Professional practice, as argued by Guile (2014), requires the use of different resources through action, as practitioners engage in professional work practices under specific circumstances.

As derived from these conceptualisations, the analogy with Plato’s ‘two worlds’ becomes evident: the academic discipline realm is linked to the abstract or intelligible world, whereas the professional jurisdiction is connected to the material and sensible world. The existence of these two spheres may presuppose different norms, traditions, habits, and roles specific to two distinct settings, as is the case of canonical fields such as medicine (mentioned before), architecture, law, and even ESP in other countries. In countries like England, the two spheres seem to be, in some contexts, more clearly defined and distinguished, as, for example, researchers within university academic settings are devoted to the development of theory, whereas ESP practitioners are engaged in other professional activities such as teaching.

### **Discussing the roles in the ‘two worlds’**

In sociology, roles are one of the elements acknowledged as key components of a society’s culture. As commonly conceptualised, roles are culturally defined behaviours expected from a person that has a special status (a socially determined position that a person occupies in a social group or that a group has in a social system) (Boudon & Bourricaud, 1989; Giddens et al., 2018; Horton & Hunt, 1988; Kendall, 2012; Ritzer, 2018; Stolley, 2005). For instance, at university, key statuses are teachers and students (Ritzer, 2018). Therefore, the roles individuals have are associated with a particular

status, and both roles and statuses are socially defined. Expectations of a given role are specified by a social group or society in terms of how a specific role must be performed (Horton & Hunt, 1988; Kendall, 2012). From this theoretical perspective, roles are not uniform either across cultures or across time. In other words, roles are culturally and historically specific. As claimed by Ritzer (2018), if roles are behaviours culturally associated with a specific status (also defined culturally), the multiple conditions and forces shaping the context may have a strong influence on which roles are assigned, how, and for which purposes. In addition, particular contextual circumstances can impact on how individuals understand and adopt certain roles. This may have consequences on the way individuals learn to play roles and how they perform them (the actual behaviour) (Giddens et al., 2018).

As observed from the conceptualisations of academic disciplines and professions, developed above, we, as ESP practitioners, navigate a field whose frontiers are not demarcated sharply. The ESP field in contexts like Argentina, then, is characterised as an amalgam of features distinctive of both academic disciplines and professions. In this landscape, ESP practitioners assume, adopt, and perform several changing roles as a result of overlapping zones, blurred territories, and even contradictory areas. In intersecting zones, the standards of the academic camp and the professional domain may converge and coincide. For instance, both academic disciplines and professions help to organise social life and context. In the case of ESP, the field stands as an academic discipline distinguished from other different (e.g., engineering) and related (e.g., linguistics) fields which regulate the dynamics of universities. At the same time, ESP is a profession that is part of the division of labour within academia (specifically, universities), and serves a civic well-being: education. Both as an academic discipline and as a profession, ESP is structured within the specific context of a university, in a configuration of different actors organised in hierarchies, having different duties, and responding to rules and norms specific to each institution. From this perspective, doing research and lecturing, for example, are activities intrinsic to academic disciplines for the necessary building as well as transmission of disciplinary knowledge and theory, and are also work requirements expected from university teachers-researchers in Argentina.

However, in unclear and imprecise territories, the rules of the academy and the profession may become vague, ambiguous, inaccurate, and roughly defined. This situation can be exemplified by administrative or managerial tasks as well as outreach activities which are included within the social functions that Argentinean universities have as work institutions and are, therefore, expected duties teachers have to do in order to belong to and participate as employees in Argentinean universities. These activities, however, cannot always be performed by all university teachers, such as ESP practitioners, who may hold different positions with varied job requirements, and who may struggle to organise their time to be active members of the academic discipline and simultaneously respond to the diverse tasks demanded professionally by universities as part of their work duties.

What is worse, in contradictory areas the norms of the academe and the profession may be based on opposing and conflicting principles. Different situations can be referred to in order to illustrate this point. Within academia, several activities are expected from scholars in order to guarantee the construction of knowledge and, therefore, the development of academic disciplines, such as tutoring theses and reviewing for journals, to mention some. These activities, however, are specific to and expected in the academic domain, and are traditionally carried out by scholars in order to advance academically. Yet, tutoring theses and reviewing for journals, like other activities, frequently are not paid activities for which practitioners can receive a better income. The rewards

practitioners get from activities such as tutoring theses and reviewing for journals are academic in nature (e.g., prestige and a better status). This may generate conflicting perceptions and attitudes on the part of ESP practitioners, who should respond and adapt to the requirements of the academia with no economic rewards in the form of salaries, wages or stipends.

The last two situations may leave ESP practitioners adrift, as may be the case of Argentinean university teachers in general, trying to understand and perform the different roles expected from them in different situations. In all the cases, even when the academia and the profession intersect, the roles at stake are not rigid and static. Quite the opposite, the roles are diverse, flexible and versatile, depending on the terrains that ESP practitioners navigate.

In what follows, we will briefly mention the terms used in the literature to name the individuals who carry out ESP, and the main roles they have. This article focuses on analysing and evaluating certain theoretical underpinnings framing the discussions about ESP practitioners' roles, rather than on providing an extensive list of such roles. However, we intend to show the variety of roles that are identified, which the literature has explored, quite frequently, without addressing the twofold character of the ESP field in contexts like Argentina, between the academia and the profession.

There exists an abundance of labels used in the literature to identify the individuals who carry out ESP. Most scholars refer to these individuals as *practitioners* (e.g., Anthony, 1997; Belcher, 2009; Bell, 2021, 2023; Blaj-Ward, 2014; Bond, 2020; Bouguebs et al., 2023; Bruce, 2011, 2021, 2022; Charles, 2013; Ding & Bruce, 2017; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Fitzpatrick et al., 2022; Flowerdew, 2019; Hamp-Lyons, 2011; Harwood & Petric, 2011; Hutchinson & Waters, 1991; Hyland, 2006, 2016; Hyland & Jiang, 2021; Ibrahim, 2019; Muhrofi-Gunadi, 2016; Pérez-Llantada & Swales, 2017; Sizer, 2019) and *teachers* (e.g. Anthony, 1997, 2018; Basturkmen, 2014, 2015, 2019; Belcher, 2009; Bond, 2020; Charles, 2013; Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Fitzpatrick et al., 2022; Hamp-Lyons, 2011; Harwood & Petric, 2011; Hyland, 2022; Mehta, 2012; Pérez-Llantada & Swales, 2017; Sizer, 2019). Although these are the preferred labels, other terms have also been found in the literature, such as *professional* (Bell, 2021, 2023; Bruce, 2022; Carkin, 2005; Sizer, 2019), *instructor* (Anthony, 2018; Belcher, 2009; Muhrofi-Gunadi, 2016; Pérez-Llantada & Swales, 2017), *researcher* (Anthony, 1997; Blaj-Ward, 2014; Carkin, 2005; Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Hyland, 2022), *specialist* (Bell, 2023; Belcher, 2009), *linguistic service technician* (Hadley, 2015), and *support staff* (Bruce, 2022), among many others. Therefore, in this article we use the term ESP *practitioner* as it has been the preferred option in the literature and as it reflects the variety of roles that these individuals are claimed to have.

As can be observed, ESP is a multifaceted practice involving diverse activities which range from teaching and researching to doing all types of administrative work like developing curriculum and managing resources, as is the general case of university teachers in countries like Argentina. Thus, as reviewed in the literature, the roles that ESP practitioners may have are manifold, and may vary according to different academic scenarios, as contextualised in distinct universities as well as countries: *teacher, tutor, instructor, researcher, course designer, materials developer and provider, assessor, evaluator, feedback provider, needs analyst, course manager, facilitator, collaborator, co-operator, negotiator, administrator, motivator*, among others listed in the literature. Such a variety of roles exposes the multiplicity of tasks ESP practitioners may have in different institutional and national contexts, which have led scholars to use terms such as 'jack-of-all-trades' (Hyland, 2016) and 'butlers' (Raimés, 1991), highlighting their role as service providers for the larger academic community they belong to (Sizer, 2019).

### **Reaching a corollary from the ‘two worlds’**

As a corollary, we would like to highlight some theoretical underpinnings and caveats that should be considered in discussions aimed at describing, analysing, and evaluating ESP practitioners’ roles. The social situatedness of roles and their cultural meanings presuppose that roles, as well as their associated behaviours, are not timeless and are not transferable to different cultures. If roles are “socially defined expectations of an individual in a given status or social position” (Giddens et al., 2018, p. 79), not all the roles specified for ESP practitioners can transcend the boundaries of the social contexts where the ESP field is redefined. This leads to three main caveats. First, theoretical discussions of ESP practitioners’ roles should be contextually framed, both in specific national regions and in specific institutional settings, as both contexts are characterised by different social, cultural, political, economic, and legislative factors. Second, reference to context should always be made considering the dual nature of the ESP field in some settings, between the academia and the profession. The analysis and debate about ESP practitioners’ roles should be grounded on the particular features that characterise the idiosyncrasies of the academic domain as well as the professional domain, a task that should be done based on the robust theory that has been systematised for the conceptualisation of both academic disciplines and professions in fields such as education, epistemology, sociology, and anthropology. The double identity cannot be neglected and should be considered for sound theoretical discussions about ESP practitioners’ roles. Becoming aware of this is imperative to make sense of the roles, and their associated behaviours, of practitioners in situ.

Another important caveat is that lists of deterministic roles as monolithic categories should be avoided. Rather than investing time and effort in building inventories of universal roles, which may be unnecessary and even counterproductive, it would be probably more fruitful to examine and discuss ESP practitioners’ roles as dynamic categories that will vary depending on contextualised praxis. In order for scholars to provide further systematic and contextualised discussions, more empirical evidence from different local contexts is needed so that theory is not biased by mainstream literature circulated by leading publishing houses.

From a sociological perspective, roles help stabilise and order people’s behaviour and social life (Giddens et al., 2018; Horton & Hunt, 1988). Then, observing ESP practitioners’ roles is necessary for a better understanding of the field and for improved practice. However, as roles are culturally determined by social groups in specific social systems, any attempt to discuss ESP practitioners’ roles should be contextualised, considering the double identity of the field in some contexts as well as the particular characteristics of local settings. Rather than forcing lists of universal roles, we suggest identifying central or general roles that can prove to be transnational and transinstitutional, as well as ancillary or local roles that are valued in specific contexts. In so doing, it will be possible to capture the basic roles that determine the essence of the ESP field as an international endeavour as well as additional roles required in particular contexts. Central or general roles can account for macro-level expected behaviours for ESP practitioners across different countries and institutions, whereas ancillary or local roles can account for micro-level expected behaviours for ESP practitioners in particular countries and institutions. This will not only enrich the discussion but also make theory more meaningful for practical issues relating to how ESP practitioners understand, assume, adopt, and perform the vast array of roles required in different contexts.

As a last word, we would like to state that it is not possible to deny or change the double identity of the ESP field in contexts like Argentina. Quite the opposite, we believe



that, despite the challenges, this duality can and should be embraced. The dual nature inherent in some ESP contexts may present not only challenges but also advantages. After all, as argued by Plato, the ‘two worlds’ are complementary: the abstract or intelligible world where theoretical knowledge is generated, systematised, and legitimated (the academic discipline) interacts with the material or sensible world where disciplinary conceptual knowledge is redefined in situ for particular cases and where practical knowledge is developed as a result of daily experience (the profession). This interplay between general knowledge produced in academic disciplines and contextual knowledge built during professional practice (Young & Muller, 2014) is reconfigured in contexts like Argentina, as ESP university practitioners’ workplace is not elsewhere. Our field of professional practice is university itself. Then, we, ESP practitioners, often become the “custodians” who secure systems of disciplinary conceptual knowledge and simultaneously the practitioners who develop practical knowledge from professional expertise (Abbott, 1988).

## References

- Abbott, A. (1988). *The system of professions. An essay on the division of expert labor*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Anthony, L. (1997). Defining English for specific purposes and the role of the ESP practitioner. *Center for language research 1997 Annual review*, 115–120.
- Anthony, L. (2018). *Introducing English for specific purposes*. Routledge.
- Basturkmen, H. (2014). LSP teacher education. *Ibérica*, 28, 17–34.
- Basturkmen, H. (2015). *Developing courses in English for specific purposes*. Springer.
- Basturkmen, H. (2019). ESP teacher education needs. *Language Teaching*, 52(3), 318–330.
- Basturkmen, H., & Elder, C. (2004). The practice of LSP. In A. Davies, & C. Elder (Eds.). *The handbook of applied linguistics* (pp. 673–694). Blackwell.
- Becher, T. (1981). Towards a definition of disciplinary cultures. *Studies in Higher Education*, 6(2), 109–122.
- Becher, T. (1989). *Academic tribes and territories: Intellectual enquiry and the culture of disciplines*. Open University Press.
- Becher, T. (1992). Las disciplinas y la identidad de los académicos. *Universidad Futura*, 4(10), 56–77.
- Becher, T. (1994). The significance of disciplinary differences. *Studies in Higher Education*, 19(2), 151–161.
- Becher, T., & Parry, S. (2005). The endurance of the disciplines. In I. Bleiklie, & M. Henkel (Eds.), *Governing knowledge* (pp. 133–144). Springer.
- Becher, T., & Trowler, P. (2001). *Academic tribes and territories. Intellectual enquiry and the culture of disciplines*. Open University Press.
- Belcher, D. (2009). What ESP is and can be: an introduction. In D. Belcher (Ed.), *English for specific purposes in theory and practice* (pp. 1–20). University of Michigan Press.
- Bell, D. E. (2021). *English language teachers in higher education: a different tribe?* University of Nottingham. <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>
- Bell, D. E. (2023). Accounting for the troubled status of English language teachers in higher education. *Teaching in higher education*, 28(8), 1831–1846.
- Bhatia, V. K. (2008). Lenguas con propósitos específicos: perspectivas cambiantes y nuevos desafíos. *Revista Signos*, 41(67), 157–176.
- Blaj-Ward, L. (2014). *Researching contexts, practices and pedagogies in English for academic purposes*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Bond, B. (2020). *Making language visible in the university. English for academic purposes and internationalisation*. Multilingual Matters.
- Bond, B. (2022). The positioning and purpose of EAP across the university curriculum: Highlighting language in curriculum policies. In I. Bruce, & B. Bond (Eds.), *Contextualizing English for Academic Purposes in Higher Education. Politics, policies and practices* (pp. 109–128). Bloomsbury.
- Boudon, R., & Bourricaud, F. (1989). *A critical dictionary of sociology*. Routledge
- Bouguebs, R., Rouaghe, F., & Perrodin, D. D. (2023). Teaching ESP in the digital era: Raising ESP practitioners' awareness towards their new roles. *Revue Algérienne des lettres*, 7(2), 146–160.
- Bruce, I. (2011). *Theory and concepts of English for academic purposes*. Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Bruce, I. (2021). Towards an EAP without borders: Developing knowledge, practitioners, and communities. *IJEAP, Spring*, 23–36.
- Bruce, I. (2022). Universities in the twenty-first century: Structures, funding, management and governance. In I. Bruce, & B. Bond (Eds.), *Contextualizing English for Academic Purposes in Higher Education: Politics, policies, and practices* (pp. 9–25). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Bruce, I., & Ding, A. (2019, April 12–14). *Countering commodification in EAP: The need to explore, innovate and transform* [Conference presentation]. BALEAP Conference 2019: Innovation, Exploration and Transformation, Leeds, England.
- Burns, E. A. (2019). *Theorising professions. A sociological introduction*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carkin, S. (2005). English for Academic Purposes. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 85–98). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Charles, M. (2013). English for Academic Purposes. In B. Paltridge, & S. Starfield (Eds.), *The Handbook of English for Specific Purposes* (pp. 137–153). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Christie, F., & Maton, K. (2011). Why disciplinarity? In F. Christie, & K. Maton (Eds.), *Disciplinarity: functional linguistic and sociological perspectives* (pp. 1–9). Continuum.
- Dent, M. (2024). *Professions and professionalism: A research overview*. Routledge.
- Dent, M., Bourgeault, I. L., Denis, J-L., & Kuhlmann, E. (2016). General introduction. The changing world of professions and professionalism. In M. Dent, I. L. Bourgeault, J-L. Denis, & E. Kuhlmann (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to the professions and professionalism* (pp. 1–10). Routledge.
- Ding, A. (2019). EAP practitioner identity. In K. Hyland, & L. L. C. Wong (Eds.), *Specialised English. New directions in ESP and EAP research and practice* (pp. 63–75). Routledge.
- Ding, A. (2022). Bourdieu and field analysis: EAP and its practitioners. In A. Ding, & M. Evans (Eds.), *Social theory for English for Academic Purposes* (pp. 155–175). Bloomsbury.
- Ding, A., & Bruce, I. (2017). *The English for Academic Purposes practitioner: Operating on the edge of the academia*. Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes*. Cambridge university press.
- Fitzpatrick, D., Costley, T., & Tavakoli, P. (2022). Exploring EAP teachers' expertise: Reflections on practice, pedagogy and professional development. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 59, 1–11.

- Flowerdew, J. (2019). Power in English for Academic Purposes. In K. Hyland, & L. Wong (Eds.), *Specialised English* (pp. 50–62). Routledge.
- Freidson, E. (2001). La teoría de las profesiones. Estado del arte. *Perfiles Educativos*, XXIII, 93, 28–43.
- Giddens, A., Duneier, M., Appelbaum, R., & Carr, D. (2018). *Introduction to sociology* (Ed 11). W. W. Norton & Company.
- Guile, D. (2014). Professional knowledge and professional practice as continuous recontextualization: A social practice perspective. In M. Young, & J. Muller (Eds.), *Knowledge, expertise and the professions* (pp. 78–92). Routledge.
- Hadley, G. (2015). *English for academic purposes in neoliberal universities: a critical grounded theory*. Springer.
- Hamp-Lyons, L. (2011). English for Academic Purposes. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (Vol. 2, pp. 89–105). Routledge.
- Harwood, N., & Petric', B. (2011). English for Academic Purposes. In J. Simpson (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (pp. 243–258). Routledge.
- Horton, P., & Hunt, C. (1988). *Sociología*. McGraw Hill.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1991). *English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centred approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: social interactions in academic writing*. Pearson.
- Hyland, K. (2002). Specificity revisited: How far should we go now? *English for Specific Purposes*, 21(4), 385–395.
- Hyland, K. (2006). *English for Academic Purposes: An advanced resource book*. Routledge.
- Hyland, K. (2016). General and specific EAP. In K. Hyland, & P. Shaw (Eds.) *The Routledge handbook of English for Academic Purposes* (pp. 17–29). Routledge.
- Hyland, K. (2019). English for Specific Purposes: Some influences and impacts. In X. Gao (Ed.), *Second handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 337–353). Springer.
- Hyland, K. (2022). English for Specific Purposes: What is it and where is it taking us? *ESP Today*, 10(2), 202–220.
- Hyland, K., & Jiang, F. (2021). Delivering relevance: The emergence of ESP as a discipline. *English for Specific Purposes*, 64, 13–25.
- Ibrahim, H. H. (2019). The role of an ideal ESP practitioner. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*, 9(2), 76–91.
- Kendall, D. (2012). *Sociología en nuestro tiempo*. Cengage Learning.
- Kreber, C. (Ed.). (2009). *The university and its disciplines: Teaching and learning within and beyond disciplinary boundaries*. Routledge.
- Krishnan, A. (2009). *What are academic disciplines? Some observations on the disciplinarity vs. interdisciplinarity debate*. University of Southampton. National Centre for Research Methods.
- Larsons, M. (2017). *The rise of professionalism. Monopolies of competence and sheltered markets*. Routledge.
- Liljegren, A., & Saks, M. (2017). Introducing professions and metaphors. In A. Liljegren, & M. Saks (Eds.), *Professions and Metaphors. Understanding professions in society* (pp. 1–9). Routledge.
- Macionis, J., & Plummer, K. (1999). *Sociología*. Prentice Hall.

- Master, P. (2005). Research in English for Specific Purposes. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 99–115). Routledge.
- Mehta, V. (2012). Pivotal roles of ESP teachers: A study at Arni University. *Journal of Business Management and Social Sciences Research*, 1(2), 92–97.
- Mohan, B. (2022). *Introduction to sociology. Concepts and theories*. Routledge.
- Muhrofi-Gunadi, K. (2016). ESP Practitioners' role and their ethnography: A case study of ESP practitioners at the Indonesian tertiary level. *International Journal of Education*, 9(1), 1–9.
- Pérez-Llantada, C., & Swales, J. S. (2017). English for Academic Purposes. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (Vol. 3, pp. 42–55). Routledge.
- Raimes, A. (1991). Out of the woods: Emerging traditions in the teaching of writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25(3), 407–430. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3586978>
- Ritzer, G. (2018). *Introduction to sociology* (4th ED). Sage.
- Sizer, J. (2019). Is teaching EAP a profession? A reflection on EAP's professional status, values, community and knowledge. *Professional and Academic English: Journal of the IATEFL English for Specific Purposes Special Interest Group*, 52, 26–34.
- Stolley, K. J. (2005). *The basics of sociology*. Greenwood Press.
- Swales, J. (2000). Languages for Specific Purposes. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 20, 59–76.
- Trowler, P. (2012a). Disciplines and interdisciplinarity: Conceptual groundwork. In P. Trowler, M. Saunders, & V. Bamber (Eds.), *Tribes and territories in the 21st century: Rethinking the significance of disciplines in higher education* (pp. 5–29). Routledge.
- Trowler, P. (2012b). Disciplines and academic practices. In P. Trowler, M. Saunders, & V. Bamber (Eds.), *Tribes and territories in the 21st century: Rethinking the significance of disciplines in higher education* (pp. 30–38). Routledge.
- Trowler, P. (2014a). Academic tribes and territories: The theoretical trajectory. *OsterreichischeZeitschrift fur Geschichtswissenschaften*, 25(3), 17–26.
- Trowler, P. (2014b). Depicting and researching disciplines: Strong and moderate essentialist approaches. *Studies in Higher Education*, 39(10), 1720–1731.
- Trowler, P., Saunders, M., & Bamber, V. (2012) *Tribes and territories in the 21st century: Rethinking the significance of disciplines in higher education*. Routledge.
- Winchester, I. (1986). On disciplines. *Interchange*, 17(2), 178–185.
- Young, M., & Muller, J. (2014). From the sociology of professions to the sociology of professional knowledge. In M. Young, & J. Muller (Eds.), *Knowledge, expertise and the professions* (pp. 3–17). Routledge.