

LSP at a Crossroads in the AI Era: Redefining Complexity, Mapping Trends and Augmenting Corpus-Driven Pedagogy

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Challenging traditional assumptions that tie textual specialisation strictly to advanced proficiency levels (such as the CEFR's proficiency scale), I will first present empirical findings from computational linguistic feature extraction which aimed at evaluating text types ranging from peer-reviewed research articles to accessible summaries and press releases. Based on these findings, and on the help of Generative AI (GenAI), I will deconstruct the implicit link between language specialisation and linguistic complexity and argue that communicative competence in specialised domains does not inherently require advanced-level grammatical or syntactic structures. This will lead me to suggest that LSP instruction can be integrated much earlier in the EFL curriculum than conventional framework descriptors usually tend to imply. While this highlights how digital tools can certainly serve as critical instruments for linguistic research, I will then explore how technology can transition from analytical resources to pedagogical tools for teaching through a comprehensive systematic review of the literature on technology-enhanced LSP learning and teaching. This meta-analysis maps historical trajectories and trends from decades of empirical data, evaluating how diverse digital tools have historically served the specific needs of LSP learners. Finally, I will zoom in on one particular pedagogical approach highlighted by this systematic review: Data-Driven Learning (DDL). While DDL has traditionally relied on reference and expert corpora (and, to a lesser extent, learner corpora) to drive constructivist, discovery-based mastery of discipline-specific phraseology and genre conventions, its future is rapidly evolving. I will examine how the emergence of GenAI and Large Language Models (LLMs) complements current corpus-based approaches. Rather than viewing GenAI as a replacement for empirical text exploration, I will advocate for a hybrid model where corpus tools and GenAI are leveraged in parallel. This will lead me to consider such an integrated approach as a way to provide both educators and students with the flexible and individualized tools necessary to adapt to the shifting demands of the 21st-century professional landscape.

Between Stories: An Anthropological Approach to Change and the Messy Middle

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The field of language education, like many others, is navigating profound technological, institutional, and societal change. Roles are being redefined, structures restructured, and many professionals find themselves somewhere between what their work was and what it will become.

Anthropologists have a name for this in-between time – liminality.

In this talk, I offer an anthropological framework for understanding and navigating liminal space. Liminality is not chaos. It is a recognisable phase in any major transformation, with its own logic, dangers, and possibilities. Knowing the pattern helps. Approaching change as a cultural process, rather than a management problem, shifts what becomes visible and what becomes possible.

I explore what liminality looks and feels like in practice: the disorientation, the challenge to professional identity, the wild stories that fill the vacuum when certainty disappears. I also draw on anthropological concepts – ritual, narrative and community – as resources for navigating it.

The central argument is simple: confusion is not failure. It is what being in the middle actually feels like. And there is a difference between being lost and being beyond finding your way.