ESP teacher education at the interface of theory and practice: Introducing a model of mediated corpus-based genre analysis

Julia Hüttner *, Ute Smit, Barbara Mehlmauer-Larcher

Department of English Studies, Universität Wien, Campus AAKH/Hof 8, Spitalgasse 2-4, A-1090 Vienna, Austria

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Abstract

One of the effects of the growing importance of global English in professional contexts has been the rise of ESP teaching at all levels. Despite the concurrently increasing demand for ESP teachers, pre-service teacher education programmes in Europe have so far largely neglected this important area. In order to address the professional needs of future ESP teachers, a novel and coherent framework for mediating the findings of corpus linguistics and genre analysis has been developed. The advantages of such a model of mediated corpus-based genre analysis lie in its flexibility of application to diverse ESP settings and target groups, so empowering both student teachers and their future pupils to develop autonomous language capabilities. Following this model, student teachers are familiarized with the potential of specialized corpora as a source of information regarding specific genres, such as contracts of sale, sustainability reports or company profiles, and as a tool in materials development.

This model of mediated corpus-based genre analysis, which will be presented and discussed in this paper, has been implemented in an innovative teacher education project at the English Department of the University of Vienna. Feedback from both student teachers and future employers underlines the positive effects of such a linguistics-informed approach to teacher education.

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1. Introduction

With increasing acceptance, English dominates most Western foreign-language curricula and prevails in the context of teaching language for specific purposes. Evidence of this can be found, for instance, in the fact that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is widely taught at tertiary level in mainland Europe and increasingly also at secondary level. In Austria, for instance, ESP is an obligatory subject for nearly 65% of all students, who attend vocational upper-secondary schools and colleges with specializations ranging from information...
technology to nursing. This situation poses a challenge for European English teachers as they have to accomplish the difficult task of teaching many ESPs, including unfamiliar or newly emerging genres.¹

From the perspective of teacher educators, the impossibility of predicting the genres that future ESP teachers might be teaching in the next 40 years of their professional lives calls for an approach that goes well beyond mere teacher training. In fact, ESP teacher education must enable the future practitioners to autonomously analyse any ESP genre with a view to teaching it to learners who themselves are not necessarily familiar with the conventions of their future discourse communities.

This paper argues for the incorporation of the principles of teacher education (rather than training) and mediation between (applied) linguistic theory and teaching methodology as a basis for pre-service ESP teacher education. As exemplification of the potential of theory-informed teacher education, we will present the rationale and the achievements of graduates of the TESP (Teaching ESP) Module introduced at the English Department of the University of Vienna as part of the general pre-service teacher education programme. We argue that such a model is an ideal means of educating a new generation of ESP teachers who are suitably confident and knowledgeable to incorporate relevant findings and methods from applied linguistics, especially of genre analysis (GA) and corpus linguistics (CL), in their teaching practice.

2. Principles of pre-service ESP teacher education

2.1. The potential of teacher education

As the diversity of the field of ESP and the many disciplines and professional settings concerned do not allow to prepare pre-service teacher students for all possible ‘S’s in ESP (Kaltenböck and Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2002), they require teacher education rather than a mere training approach. The concept of teacher training is based on the assumption of clearly predefined competences and skills that student teachers need to develop in order to deal with predictable problems and requirements. As such, teacher training may have its place in a context where language teaching is mainly associated with procedural aspects of teaching, classroom management, lesson planning, giving feedback or effective eliciting or questioning (Richards, 1998, p. xiv). However, it falls short in terms of the manifold requirements of, for instance, ESP writing. Thus, training is mainly skills-based whereas teacher education aims at the development of defined competences as well as a general capacity to deal with settings and requirements that are not fully predictable. (Richards and Farrell, 2005; Tsui, 2003; Widdowson, 1983, pp. 23–28).

Teacher education as opposed to mere teacher training provides for the understanding of abstract concepts underlying practical techniques in order to enable student teachers to adapt to novel situations and apply their knowledge in varying and changing teaching contexts. (Widdowson, 1990, p. 63) Therefore, a model of teacher education relies on sound theoretical background knowledge derived from various disciplines such as general pedagogy, cognitive psychology and, in the case of foreign and second language teaching, ideas and concepts derived from linguistics, applied linguistics, and second language learning research (Newby, 2003; Roberts, 1998).

2.2. Mediating between theory and practice

In order to fully address the challenges of developing ESP teacher education that is theory-informed and yet relevant to teaching practice, we adopt Widdowson (2003, p. 23) model of mediation. Here, mediation is offered by applied linguistics between relevant linguistic and pedagogic theories and the classroom realities. In this model, theory and practice are considered interdependent and the task of applied linguistics is to formulate principles which are of potential relevance for language teaching. As illustrated in Fig. 1, these prin-

¹ New genres emerge due to the constant development in technology (e.g. homepages, facebooks, blogs) and the creation of new areas of expertise (e.g. through increased interdisciplinarity), such as gender studies did a few years ago. Furthermore, developing areas of practice lead to new genres such as advertorials or infomercials.
principles are critically appraised, adapted and operationalized. Ideally, the relevance and application of principles are evaluated and the results of this evaluation process are taken up by applied linguistics.

In line with this model, language teachers and their educators are not mere implementers of the theoretical constructs of applied linguistics but they take over responsibility as active mediators, helping to create the nexus between theory and language teaching practice. The role and function of applied linguistics in this model is a supportive one and requires close contact and exchange between theorists and practitioners. (Widdowson, 1990, pp. 30–33).

The two end-points of this process, i.e. ‘linguistic theories’ and ‘ESP classroom’, interact in that classroom teaching relies on an accurate description of professional discourse. Such descriptions involve various levels from structural–functional regularities on the macro level to lexico-grammatical patterns on the micro level. To arrive at such a detailed linguistic description of professional discourse, the findings of corpus linguistics and genre analysis appear most relevant and therefore feature centrally in the ESP teacher education model presented in the following.

3. Appraising theories to inform teacher education

In addressing a complex situation such as the kind of ESP teacher education relevant here, the previously described principle of mediation becomes particularly central, as several stages of appraisal and application have to be undergone before a theoretically well-informed teaching practice can emerge. A resulting model of pre-service teacher education for ESP is visualized in Fig. 2 and will be discussed in detail in the following.

Of particular relevance to teaching-oriented corpus-based genre analysis (box D in Fig. 2) is Tribble’s, 2001 model (box C), which in itself shows an appraisal of two areas of linguistics with the potential of informing the teaching of written ESP, namely genre analysis (GA) and corpus linguistics (CL; boxes A1 and A2 in Fig. 2). Therefore, some considerations of the impact of these two linguistic areas feeding into Tribble’s model are called for.

3.1. Genre analysis

While Tribble’s model takes account of various schools of genre analysis (cf. also Tribble, 2002), the main influence is the ESP approach, originally formulated by Swales (1990, 2004) and extended by Bhatia (1993, 2002, 2004) in its applicability as well as theoretical breadth. In this school, genre is defined as:

a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre[, which …] shape[s] the schematic structure of the discourse […] (Swales, 1990, p. 58).

2 This use of ‘appraisal’ here is not related to the systemic functional concept APPRAISAL.
Using the criterion of ‘communicative purpose’ as a novel way of categorising texts is one of the major strengths of this approach in that it turns learners’ and teachers’ attention away from mere surface features of text to the socially situated practice of using texts with specific intentions. However, the precise definition and operationalisation of communicative purpose still constitutes one of the more difficult issues. Despite growing awareness of a need for further clarification (Askehave and Swales, 2001, pp. 197–200), the issue still revolves around the roles of expert members of the discourse community, on the one hand, and, on the other, of analysts in defining or discovering communicative purposes in particular genres (Huettner, 2007, p. 27). Swales (2004, p. 72) has recently included the notion of ‘re-purposing’ the genre, accounting for the fact that an initial definition of communicative purpose will need refinement in the course of analysis.

The ESP approach also features a detailed analytical procedure, (Bhatia 1993, pp. 22 ff) which allows researchers (and teachers) to analyse unfamiliar genres, and thus in a further step makes the relation between purpose and textualisation apparent also to prospective users of this genre. This step-by-step procedure presupposes two levels of analysis. The one deals with the situational concerns of the discourse community and their evaluations of generic purpose and structure and the other with the linguistic analysis, which leads to a linguistic description of the genre regarding three aspects: lexico-grammatical features, patterns of textualisation, and the genre-structuring features or ‘moves’. The latter form rhetorical or discursive units that co-construct the communicative purposes of the genre and can be either obligatory or optional. In letters of application, for instance, “introducing/offering candidature” has been identified as an obligatory move as it amounts to the application proper (Bhatia, 1993, p. 62).

The linguistic analyses that form part of the ESP approach are, however, also highly relevant to the foreign-language learner who needs considerable information regarding the appropriacy and acceptability of particular linguistic choices in individual genres. While much of this information can be arrived at through manual analysis, more detailed information on lexico-grammatical features is possible through the use of corpus linguistics, another area of linguistics whose undoubted importance has been reflected also in language teaching.

3.2. Corpus analysis

Generally speaking, the usefulness of corpus linguistics for teaching hinges on the fact that language corpora offer a possibility for teachers to discover facts of actual language usage; information which is hard to come by with other means (Carter and McCarthy, 1995; Carter, 1998; Gavioli, 2005; Mindt, 1997; Sinclair, 1997).

One major area of this application is the influence of corpus-linguistic findings on teaching materials, including textbooks and learner dictionaries. The ‘selling point’ of these is their presumed proximity to ‘real language use’, especially with regard to presenting actual language use in respects such as typical choice of words (frequency), meaning nuances of near-synonyms and appropriate use of collocations (Kaltenböck and Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2005a, pp. 70–71).
Despite the many possibilities of using language corpora in a teaching context, one of its limitations relates to the question of how representative they can be of language use in general (Hunston, 1995; Kaltenböck and Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2005a, Section 5.2; McEnery and Wilson, 1996). This becomes very obvious when considering LSP, as corpora are rarely subdivided clearly into various genres. Generally, some rough distinction into diverse registers is given, but the demands on the compilers of larger corpora seem prohibitive of distinguishing according to specific genres. These limitations in representativeness lead to an under-representation of particular genres and terms associated with them. (Kaltenböck and Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2005b).

Tribble (2001) offers a possibility of counteracting the limitations of published corpora by using small, highly specific ones. The aim in this is not to represent language use in its entirety, but to focus only on specific genres and thus collate exemplars of these as mini-corpora, for instance contracts of sale, letters of complaint or minutes of meetings. This results in a clear focus of the texts collected, rather than a vague similarity in theme or register, and allows for the analysis of genres that are rare in general language use or have only emerged recently. Furthermore, this approach offers the opportunity for student teachers to develop ICT skills urgently required in modern educational settings (Chambers and Davis, 2001; Kenning, 2007).

3.3. A pedagogy of writing (Tribble, 2001)

Tribble’s model of analysis (box D, Fig. 2) reflects the applied linguistic process of appraisal (see Fig. 1) and involves the following step-by-step procedure. Firstly, texts that are relevant to a specific genre are collected. These are then prepared for their use in a digitalised mini-corpus in three steps: all non-verbal parts like pictures or diagrams are deleted, the remaining text is anonymised, and finally codes are added that mark the formal units of the texts (e.g. heading, sentence, paragraph) as well as the genre ‘moves’. 3 With the mini-corpus thus prepared, the actual analysis can be started by focusing on the lexicogrammar, textualisations and ‘moves’ of the genre. The analysis of the latter two aspects draws on the encodings added to the texts. The lexicogrammatical analysis requires also a large reference corpus (e.g. BNC4) or, at least, the word lists based on these reference corpora. By such a comparison, the lexical patterns typical of the genre under investigation can be identified through making reference to the statistically expected patterns in a large and general corpus. The analytical procedure is aided by the use of a concordancing programme like WordSmith Tools (©Mike Scott, 2008), which can compile word lists, concordances and so-called keyword lists electronically at high speed (for more information see http://www.lexically.net/wordsmith/). While the resulting data cannot be taken as pedagogically applicable findings in themselves, they form useful ‘raw material’ which can then be analysed and interpreted with the view to a teaching and learning situation. A case in point is the degree of linguistic informality appropriate in written business correspondence. Based on a detailed corpus-based genre analysis, Scott and Tribble (2005, pp. 109–129) argue that (apprentice) writers are well advised to refrain from using contracted forms, elision and vague language when addressing company-external contacts, particularly on potentially face-threatening issues.

In sum, the model described above encapsulates a theory-based approach to ESP teacher education. In the following we will present the integration of this model into a pre-service teacher education programme.

4. Adapting the model to a local situation

Given the Austrian situation, student teachers are increasingly aware of the need of becoming more competent with regard to ESP, building on their general EFL teacher qualifications. At the same time, most of them have not gained any first-hand experience in using ESP and, lacking relevant language competences, feel ill-equipped for teaching it. The TESP Module addresses these issues and aims to adjust students’ misconceptions about (teaching) ESP. In general, it attempts to foster language expertise in ESP-relevant texts and to increase the capacity of applying such knowledge in teaching situations. Following the concepts outlined earlier, this is based on a mediated model of teacher education.

3 This process can become difficult, especially when attempting to code embedded moves. (cf. Flowerdew, 2004). However, in the project discussed later, no embedded moves were encountered.

4 More information on the BNC (i.e. British National Corpus) can be found on http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/.
The TESP Module covers four one-semester courses of approximately 28 lessons each, which students are expected to take during their last two years of study (for a schematic overview of the TESP Module see Fig. 3).

The Module consists of two main components, practical language classes and the core courses which provide a linguistically informed approach to teacher education. The former component aims at developing language expertise by providing knowledge about and proficiency in the respective ESP. These ‘World of Work’ courses (box 1 in Fig. 3) introduce students to exemplary fields of specialisation. By focusing on, for instance, basic business, technical or legal English texts, student teachers gain first-hand and low-stakes experience as ESP learners. ‘World of Work’ thus alleviates the students’ (self-perceived) status of complete novices and reduces initial fears.

The core courses (boxes 2 and 3 in Fig. 3) build on this budding ESP proficiency by developing the capacity of how to apply such knowledge in teaching situations. As specified on the TESP Website (Department of English, 2004), ‘Approaching ESP Texts’ aims “to enable students to work with and analyse ESP texts within an applied linguistics framework [...] in order to prepare the students to mediate these insights to language and teaching practice”. This is done in three steps: after a general overview of what can be ‘SP’ about texts, the students are first introduced to genre analysis, whose practical value is illustrated with a well known genre (letters of application) and its presentation in school books. As the genre approach entails new tools and techniques, the second step is dedicated to the students gaining the necessary theoretical and practical insights so that, as a final step, they can apply their newly acquired knowledge in research.

The second core course, ‘ESP Methodology’, aims “to introduce student teachers to different ESP teaching contexts [...] and to provide them with the necessary tools and techniques for developing and implementing ESP teaching programmes”. This course focuses on the application of theoretical background knowledge and data collected in the students’ projects in a practical teaching context. After an introduction to the so-called world of business, technology and science from a foreign-language teaching perspective and to general aspects of methodology in an ESP context, genre analysis features centrally in this course. The concept of a genre-informed approach to ESP methodology is presented and discussed before it is applied in the students’ own genre-based activities. ESP classroom observations and first hands-on experience of ESP micro teaching round off the education programme in this field.

In sum, these courses have the objectives, on the one hand, to provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills that allow them to familiarise themselves relatively quickly with unfamiliar genres and, on the other hand, to apply this knowledge in a teaching situation. On the basis of these new abilities and their role as language experts, students are expected to develop a professional self-image as ESP teachers. To fulfil this admittedly challenging aim, the TESP Module is, as discussed above, based on the principles of teacher education and of ‘mediation’ between (applied) linguistics and foreign-language teaching.

Apart from providing a basis of language description, corpus linguistics and genre analysis enter into a two-way relationship with pedagogy: on the one hand, they are influenced by the applicational ‘screen’ (box B in
Fig. 2) and, on the other hand, they themselves influence teaching methodology in other ways, mostly focusing on the learner as an autonomous ‘researcher’ of language facts. With regard to genre analysis, this mainly involves raising students’ awareness of the social reality of genre texts and their typical structure of ‘moves’, i.e. “discoursal or rhetorical unit[s] that perform[ ] coherent communicative function[s]” (Swales, 2004, p. 228).

By considering both the communicative purposes of texts in professional life, as well as the discursive stages that turn these purposes into text, teaching according to the genre principle addresses the realities of future professional users of these genres. A genre-based approach encourages student teachers and language learners to view texts in their social and professional context and not only as part of the “practice reality” of educational settings. Although often accused of being norm-focused, the genre approach ideally offers insights into the flexibility with which diverse genres can textualise communicative purposes, and also how changed and emerging communicative purposes become features of texts.

With regard to corpus linguistics, direct use of corpora by learners involves their guided discovery of information about L2 language use in the corpora. (Bernardini, 2004; Leech, 1997) Such an approach can be motivating for learners, and encourages a critical reflection on (prescriptive) grammatical rules or the nuances in meaning of near-synonyms. This presupposes advanced learners as regards knowledge of and about the language; a precondition that should be fulfilled by student teachers of English.

If we relate this back to the more general mediation model discussed earlier, the following levels of appraisal can be seen: student teachers are first introduced to genre analysis (Swales, 1990, 2004; Bhatia, 1993, 2004) in ‘Approaching ESP Texts’, which is then operationalised in ‘ESP Methodology’. The application of these findings and insights in a teaching context can be achieved through a so called ‘genre-centred’ or ‘genre-informed’ teaching approach (Flowerdew, 2000; Flowerdew, 2002; Kay and Dudley-Evans, 1998; Skulstad, 1999), which aims at raising learners’ awareness of discursive patterns and genre conventions in order to meet certain communicative purposes. This is achieved by a variety of classroom activities providing students with the opportunity to practice the identification of moves within certain genres and helping them to develop the ability to analyse prototypical move structures. The ultimate aim of such an approach to teaching ESP is to help learners become competent members of a specific professional discourse community (Skulstad, 1999, p. 286).

For that purpose and in the sense of true teacher education as opposed to teacher training, students are set the task to carry out their own genre-informed teaching projects with the aim of realising its potentially high pedagogic transfer value (Kaltenböck and Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2005b). This transferability will also point to the nature of genres and their discourse communities as constantly emerging and changing. Based on this understanding, students will avoid a too narrow and prescriptive view of genre and text structures when applying genre analytic results in the area of language pedagogy (Basturkmen, 2006, p. 55).

5. Corpus-based genre analysis for LSP teaching

5.1. An investigative procedure

Given the aims of the TESP Module, i.e. using corpus-based genre analysis for language teacher education, Tribble’s, 2001 model is adapted in various ways (see Table 1). Most importantly, the clear focus on ESP teaching requires a ‘teaching frame’ (grey shading in Table 1), embedding the students’ genre analyses within (hypothetical) teaching scenarios. As, furthermore, the investigative procedure should be manageable and worthwhile for (student) teachers, the research-oriented analytical steps are downscaled to the absolutely necessary.

As mentioned above, the TESP Module core courses require that the students, in self-selected projects, analyse genres in view of potential teaching situations and developing materials for specific groups of learners, which is reflected in (A) and (G) in Table 1. Influenced by these pedagogical ‘framing steps’, the corpus-based genre analysis starts with describing the genre in question in terms of communicative purpose(s) and discourse community (step B) and continues with the compilation of the corpus (step C), which does not include any encoding as this would exceed the time allotted in the course. As a consequence, step (D) – identifying the moves – is conducted manually. Step (E) of the analysis refers to the lexico-grammatical description. In this step the collection of texts is used as a corpus so as to benefit from the concordancing programme (WordSmith Tools) and the analytical procedure of comparing the mini-corpus with the BNC as reference corpus described above. The final step in the linguistic analysis (F) concerns the analysis of textual patterns which are charac-
teristic of the respective genre. Experience has shown that these larger linguistic units can be described most successfully when the two preceding steps are connected, i.e. that the individual moves are investigated for their lexico-grammatical specificities which leads to the respective textualisations. With the linguistic analysis finalised, students can then interpret their results in terms of the hypothetical teaching situations and use their thus gained insights to develop teaching procedures and materials geared towards the respective learner groups (step G).

5.2. An exemplification

After sketching the model on which the core courses ‘Approaching ESP Texts’ and ‘ESP Methodology’ are based, we wish to concretise its operationalisation and turn to mediated corpus-based genre analyses undertaken within the TESP Module. As students are given a free hand in selecting the topics of their research projects, the genres vary widely, from, for instance, letters to shareholders, lab reports, or company profiles, reflecting personal interest as well as availability of exemplar texts. Given the limitations in time of these student projects, most of these texts were available online, either on the world wide web or in databases; only some students had access to internal business texts thanks to personal contacts. For the sake of illustration, the following discussion will focus on one student project only, namely the analysis of contracts of sale (as summarized in Table 2, with regard to the analytical steps given in Table 1). While being a highly successful student project, and thus an example of excellent, rather than average, student work, it can be considered typical in that the student neither had any prior ESP teaching experience nor any legal knowledge or training.

The analysis of this genre (see Table 2) indicates how applicable this approach is for student teachers with an average background in linguistics and little teaching experience. This clearly implies that such an analysis cannot be a fully fledged treatment of such a genre, but it shows impressively what a (student) teacher can realistically achieve with regard to the analysis of a previously unfamiliar genre. The structure given under (D) shows clearly which communicative purposes are given in the individual textual sections. Furthermore, it differentiates between obligatory and optional moves, which would also help a learner in realising which elements would have to be formulated and which ones simply offer extra information. In the case of this genre it is also interesting to see how formalised some textualisations are; a fact which is most likely conditioned by the legal nature of the genre, but is useful pedagogically in that it can clarify that some formulations are typical of certain moves (see F).

Apart from the revealing corpus-based genre analysis, this project illustrates the pedagogical potential of the approach (see G). In the exercises that the student sketched learners are introduced to the functional and textual specificities of the genre as they are required either to define the individual moves of a contract of sale or to add textualisations that go with specific moves. Additionally, the genre lends itself to introducing learners to some basic legal terminology, and, at the same time, the analysis offers the possibility to differentiate between conventions that need to be taken on practically unaltered and others that can be handled more independently. Based on these insights, learners acquire the necessary knowledge to compose such texts by themselves without falling prey to the one extreme of mindlessly copying phrases or to the other of disregarding genre conventions entirely.

Table 1
The investigative procedure of teaching-oriented corpus-based genre analysis.

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>Selection of genre and description of the teaching situation envisaged (incl. the imagined group of learners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B)</td>
<td>Description of the genre (communicative purpose/s + potential discourse community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C)</td>
<td>Collection of exemplary texts and compilation of the mini-corpus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D)</td>
<td>Description of the ‘moves’ on the basis of the texts included in the mini-corpus</td>
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<tr>
<td>(E)</td>
<td>Lexico-grammatical analysis: comparison of mini-corpus with reference corpus (BNC) with the help of WordSmith Tools</td>
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<tr>
<td>(F)</td>
<td>Analysis of textualisations: connecting investigative steps (D) and (E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(G)</td>
<td>Interpretation of the results with reference to the teaching and learning situation, developing teaching materials</td>
</tr>
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</table>

5 Further examples are discussed in Smit and Hüttner (2006).
Table 2
A teaching-oriented corpus-based genre analysis of contracts of sale (Kastenberger, 2005).

| A | Teaching situation | “In service training for law professionals”: participants in course will learn how to formulate contracts in English as a foreign language |
| B | Communicative purpose and discourse community | “A contract of sale is a legal document whose purpose is to produce written evidence of the promise to sell specific goods at a specific price between two or more parties. The contract of sale also makes this promise enforceable by law. The audience are primarily the seller and the buyer, who are members of the general public, and also lawyers, attorneys and other law professionals” |
| C | Mini-corpus | About 15 contracts of sale of 1–3 pages each, downloaded from the internet |
| D | Genre structure (‘moves’) | *O= obligatory move |
| | (a) Recitals: mention the parties who reach an agreement [O] |
| | (b) Agreement: offers a precise description of the agreement between the two parties with reference to the transfer of goods, property or right from one person to another [O] |
| | (c) Consideration: offers detailed information on the price which is asked for the agreement (cp. b), including the terms of payment [O] |
| | (d) Identification of goods: states that both parties need to classify the goods according to the arrangement |
| | (e) Risk of loss/casualty/damage to property: specifies who is liable for damages incurred to the property or goods prior to the arrangement coming into effect |
| | (f) Warranties: specifies which rights and duties have to be observed by each party in order to keep the contract legally valid [O] |
| | (g) Right of inspection: clarifies that the buyer has the right to check the goods/property before the contract comes into effect |
| | (h) Default: gives regulations in case of a breach of contract |
| | (i) Additional terms and conditions of sale: refers to severability of and alterations to the agreement and respective jurisdiction |
| | (j) Signatures: shows that the contract was read by both parties and that both parties accept the agreement [O] |
| E | Lexico-grammar | Frequent use of the shall-future reflects the contractual character of the genre, focusing on future obligations |
| | Various synonyms for the two contractual partners: buyer, seller, purchaser, borrower, debtor, payee, vendee, vendor |
| | Avoiding personal pronouns indicate the explicit and unambiguous character of the genre |
| F | Textualisations | Obligatory moves: tendency towards fixed phrases (to minimize misunderstanding or lack of clarity); typical formulations are e.g. for move (a) Agreement made and entered into this [date] by and between [name of seller] of [address], herein referred to as ‘Seller’ and [name of buyer] of [address], herein referred to as ‘Buyer’ for move (b) Seller hereby agrees to transfer and deliver to buyer, on or before [date], the following goods: [description of goods]. Buyer agrees to accept the goods and pay for them in accordance with the terms of the contract |
| G | Pedagogical applications | A sketch of how this genre could be taught with suggested exercises |
| | (i) Discovering genre structure (identifying clauses, giving their functions) |
| | (ii) Enlarging on typical collocations (matching exercises) |
| | (iii) practicing verbal constructions: active/passive, tenses (cloze text) |
| | (iv) Negotiating terms of agreement (role play) |
In sum, this student project illustrates the impressive potential inherent in the model of mediated corpus-based genre analysis in that it offers the typical EFL (student) teachers a principled and, at the same time, clearly operationalised approach towards, firstly, familiarizing themselves with and, secondly, introducing learners to the functional and linguistic specificities of new, changing and emerging genres.

6. Conclusions

In response to the growing demand on English language teachers to offer ESP classes in preparation for a globally increasing range of specialized language use, this paper has made the case for a theory-informed approach to ESP teacher education. Embedded in the understanding of education as developing capacities and competences rather than mere skills (Widdowson, 1983), this innovative approach integrates (applied) linguistics and language teaching pedagogy in a multi-layered mediation process (see Fig. 1). In view of the relevance of accurate descriptions of professional discourse to ESP teaching and learning, this mediation process involves the appraisal, adaptation and operationalisation of genre analysis and corpus linguistics and culminates in the model of 'mediated corpus-based genre analysis for ESP teaching' (see Fig. 2). As demonstrated above, this model is not only truly applied linguistic in integrating theory and practice, but also in its applicability in actual ESP educational scenarios. A case in point is the TESP Module of the English Department, University of Vienna, which incorporates the model in its course structure as well as curricular content (see Fig. 3). In brief, the module and its courses realise the principles of education and mediation as regards ESP teaching with the objective to enable the student teachers to act as English language teaching professionals who also draw on their computer skills in accessing professional discourse before analysing it linguistically and appropriating it to the respective pedagogical purposes. Additionally, they develop professionally related IT literacy in terms of mastering corpus software tools. As positive and encouraging feedback from already practising graduates of the TESP Module and future employers underlines, this educational programme, and its underlying applied linguistic model, can be considered successful in that it allows students to develop the necessary competence and capacity as language teaching professionals to act autonomously in familiarising themselves with potentially unknown ESP genres and, at the same time, in operationalising their newly gained insights for teaching purposes.

The findings gathered from the implementation of this module at the University of Vienna suggest that this approach could be fruitfully adapted to other teacher education programmes. As the model is based on generally valid principles, we feel that it has great potential for general applicability also in the context of other languages or for more advanced and writing-focused EFL teaching.

References


