

# **ALTE Language Testing Course – ‘Testing Language for Specific Purposes: issues and solutions’**

Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain, 25-26 April 2009

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## **Abstract**

This seminar will present a broad introduction to the area of testing language for specific purposes (LSP). We will begin by briefly outlining the short history of the area and then move to a practical operational definition of LSP. Having done this we will focus on three key issues in LSP:

**Identifying & Reporting Success**                      How do we decide on the criteria for success in our LSP tests? Here we look at recent moves to link LSP tests to the CEFR and discuss the relevance of domain specific benchmarks or standards.

**Content & Language Boundaries**                      It is critical that we identify the boundaries between content knowledge and language knowledge in our LSP tests. What are the possible practical solutions to this apparently insolvable problem?

**Establishing Evidence of Specificity**                      How specific are our LSP tests? How can we demonstrate that these tests are specific to a particular domain?

At all stages in the seminar, there will be brief input sessions followed by individual and group activities (tasks and discussions). The final major activity will see participants analysing a test (ideally one they are working on or are very familiar with) from these three perspectives and producing a brief report based on a template provided by the seminar leader.