

## METHODS OF TEACHING ESP VOCABULARY

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**Abstract:** *One of the tasks of the teacher involved in English for Special Purposes is teaching vocabulary or terminology. According to the level and specialty, terminology is more or less complicated. For Technical Institutes and Universities, the teacher needs to continually improve his course books and set modern standards for methodology. The texts of the courses should be updated and a diversity of exercises and tasks should be used in the process of teaching.*

**Key-words:** *ESP, EAP, engineering, EAP course-book*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The specialty literature and resource books published in the last 25 years have developed a subject that is still of great interest and sometimes controversial, which is English for Specific Purposes Teaching. A subdivision of ESP is English for Academic Purposes that is the domain of research and study for the teachers involved in academic programmes or working in Technical Institutes and Universities all over the world. Most of them encounter the same problems that tend to be shared and debated in articles having the purpose of clarifying and solving the issues that appear in their every day work. These articles have become more frequent and divers lately, involving teachers from parts of the world that recently entered that stream of knowledge implying using English language in each branch of activity, and we refer to many countries from Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa and South America that need to ‘discover’ ESP with its shortcomings and rewards [1]. Due to its importance for the global economy and science, there are specific journals [2] that publish articles for EAP/ESP showing the interest in the domain and the enhanced number of teachers and students who are involved in the process of teaching and learning English appropriately for study. Similarly, the vocabulary chosen for study tends to be based on academic texts. As an EAP practitioner for about two decades, I would suggest some methods I use in teaching specialty vocabulary for engineering.

### 2. THE COURSE-BOOK

Working in a field that is not always welcoming for the English teacher can be tiring and time consuming when you have to search for materials, mainly specialty texts, for every class. It is always helpful if you have a textbook for teaching specialty. However, some extra materials can be used, especially if we have found the article or paragraph to serve us right for vocabulary. Anyway, the textbook can offer the texts to help us teach the terminology required by a certain specialty, the related exercises and even some grammar notions seconded by exercises using the same words that were taught up to that moment. The teacher should develop the course book in a short period of time, according to the number of classes in the curriculum, and usually the piloting of the courses is done on the first series of students. This is one reason why the courses should be modified from time to time and updated according to teacher and student needs and the evolution of science. A method for improving the course book is by using the internet where you can also find some reliable texts and pictures for specialty, of course taking into consideration the copyright. The courses for merchant marine were improved using the following methods:

1. Inserting pictures in the text to make the book more attractive and the power point presentation more interesting. The students can better understand what is explained in the text if they have a visual aid.

2. Adapting the latest information in a certain field to make the text of your units more interesting and appealing. The students will be interested in the content and learn the vocabulary implicitly.

3. Including updated terminology and abbreviations which are explained by means of text and pictures.

4. Creating reading or matching exercises based on new information.

5. Making different types of puzzles so that students can easily memorise the terminology.

6. Using information from the specialty text for grammar purposes when teaching or revising the numeral, the comparison of adjectives and adverbs, and also for pronunciation.

7. Developing grammar exercises for intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced students, who already know grammar and can practice by themselves without getting bored.

The teachers could create a multitude of vocabulary exercises once they are used to develop material for EAP classes. We will give some examples of vocabulary exercises suitable for pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate students.

### 3. VOCABULARY TASKS AND EXERCISES

a. The first task is used for learning the vocabulary from the ‘Description’ part and memorising the terms in connection to the pictures. The terms refer to the history of navigation and are not frequently met, so they could be recognized by students who have visual memory, by connecting the words to the drawings. Even if the names of the crafts are not frequently used, the words from the descriptions are part of the main maritime vocabulary. The information should be found in the course-book or presented during the course in Power Point.

b. The second type of exercise can be created by any teacher using special designed sites on internet, such as ‘Armoured Penguin’. The level is chosen according to the students’ knowledge. An exercise like the one below can be designed to meet the needs of the intermediate, upper-intermediate or advanced learners. This specific task for new vocabulary includes ship types and ship structure terminology that should be acquired during a seminar or a course. Even if the teacher starts the following class with a revision of the vocabulary taught previously, it is difficult for the students to remember all these terms. In order to use the vocabulary, the students should repeat the terms, or to be exposed to them for as many times as possible. Although many linguists believe that repetition is old fashioned, others, like Cook (1994) said: “Repetition and learning by heart, though condemned by pedagogic and acquisition theorists, are two of the most pleasurable, valuable, and efficient of language learning activities, and they can bring with them sensations of those indefinable, overused yet still valuable goals for the language learner: being involved in the authentic and communicative use of language.” [4] Although we are not in favour of mechanical learning, repetition is essential in learning technical terminology in another language.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Picture</u>
<u>1 Originally a Portuguese fishing boat with lateen sail for local trade, it developed in a seaworthy ship for carrying bulk goods.</u>	<u>A curragh</u>	 i.
<u>2 The larger type of three-masted trading vessel in use in northern and southern Europe during the 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries.</u>	<u>B cog</u>	 ii.
<u>3 Chinese ship built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with a single stern rudder and pontoon type hull divided into watertight compartments.</u>	<u>C caravel</u>	 iii.
<u>4 An early coastal merchant ship, which began as a small flat-bottomed coaster developed by the Germans.</u>	<u>D junk</u>	 iv.
<u>5 A two-masted ship with the foremast square rigged and the mainmast fore-and-aft rigged and that was very much used in the Northern Sea.</u>	<u>E brig</u>	 v.
<u>6 Basic boat used for fishing and for the transport of goods and people built starting with the 5<sup>th</sup> century on the west coast of the Celtic Ireland.</u>	<u>F carrack</u>	 vi.

Vocabulary exercise based on 'Ship Types' unit. Find the 26 words in the word search puzzle about cargo carriers.

R S C C L K R G T E E L F D A  
W E M H L A N E D M W Q B E E  
C T N U E I R R E N K A D I G  
A E B I L M A U A F R M C F R  
R L N D A O I D T G E H A I E  
G G N A B T E C E A A R R U M  
O A R A R R N C A T N D R Q E  
H H V I R C A O C L N R I I P  
O B O I D R D H C A J Y E L I

Y C C V R C E L L U L A R F H  
T K W Y R E T H G I L J N K S  
P F I L E S S E V H S A L U E  
P N T A N K E R G E A R S G P  
G E R Q S L G Y A W C H A M E  
I N I F Q O Q L A M Y S O Q U

The 26 words from the puzzle are given in the table below according to the colors from the puzzle in order to be better recognized. When the puzzle is rendered to the students it has only one color, but if we want, we can give the words in different colors, although it might not be helpful. If the students are not able to solve the puzzle, a key is offered. The key does not look like the colored square we solved, but as an easier puzzle.

ABOARD; BARGE-CARRYING; BULK; CARGO; CARRIER; CELLULAR; CHEMICAL; CONTAINER; CRANE; DERRICK; DRY; EMERGE; FLEET; GAS; GEAR; GRID; HANDLING; HATCH; LASH-VESSEL; LIGHTER; LIQUEFIED; NATURAL; OBO; REEFER; SHIP; TANKER

We can create an easier exercise for the beginners with only 10 or 7 words to be found, or we can work in groups or pairs and place beginners into more advanced groups in order to get them helped.

aboard ship tanker container reefer cargo fleet	p o a e a r e r e s h i p f e o e f i c e f o c a t a t a d l r n f a b l r p e e i e n o s g h e g r a k a c o n t a i n e r i f r e e f e r d r l d r r o e r t
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c. Another type of vocabulary exercise, which is very effective, can also be created on internet and it is based on synonyms. It is an invaluable way of expanding the students' vocabulary, particularly nowadays, when reading is not a very common activity among young generation. It can be also designed for antonyms, if the text or the topic permits it. The same type of exercise is frequently used for general English, at different levels, or if we deal with prefixes and suffixes, so that the students are used to the structure.

Vocabulary exercise: Match each word from the first column with its synonym from the second column.

Word	Sinonim	Answer
a. adherence	1 breach	a. – 12
b. breadth	2 barrel	b. – 10
c. bulk	3 cover	c. – 7
d. cask	4 seaport	d. – 2
e. funnel	5 secure	e. – 6
f. harbor	6 smokestack	f. – 4
g. dues	7 loose	g. – 9
h. infringement	8 pirating	h. – 1
i. liability	9 fee	i. – 11
j. overlap	10 latitude	j. – 3
k. seaworthiness	11 indebtedness	k. – 5
l. smuggling	12 adhesion	l. – 8

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Teaching terminology of any kind is the most important activity of the English teacher working in a faculty other than philology. There is an international tendency towards specialisation in a certain domain of activity, and globalization by different methods, one of them being English language. In our opinion, the course-book is very important for EAP, because it is a great help for the English teacher. At the same time there are at least two requests that should be accomplished and these are the authentic material used for the reading or listening part of the textbook, and the diversity of the tasks and exercises. While the texts for speciality should be improved and updated frequently, the exercises should be creative, original and effective for teaching purpose.

**REFERENCE**

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- [3] The definitions were adapted from *Liners, Tankers and Merchant Ships*, Robert Jackson and *Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea*, I.C.B. Dear & Peter Kemp, images taken from: <http://www.google.ro/search?hl=ro&q=maritime+history>.
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