# VOCABULARY ACQUISITION IN ESP: PERSPECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES / L'ACQUISITION DU VOCABULAIRE SPÉCIALISÉ: PERSPECTIVES, STRATÉGIES ET RESSOURCES / ÎNSUŞIREA VOCABULARULUI SPECIALIZAT: PERSPECTIVE, STRATEGII ŞI RESURSE[1]

**Abstract**: To say that vocabulary acquisition is important in ESP is redundant and axiomatic. This article will bring evidence to support this sentiment and will review some of the essential aspects related to ESP vocabulary. It will attempt to offer some perspectives on what is understood by ESP vocabulary and how much vocabulary the learners need, why it is important to teach vocabulary and how. Some of the elements required for the efficient and successful building of ESP vocabulary are: motivation on the part of the learners, continuous exposure to authentic materials, emphasis on consolidation, and the implementation of good techniques that make this activity pleasant and encourage continuous learning. In this endeavor, old techniques can be adapted to new needs, while new technologies and devices, as well as the online environment, offer fresh perspectives for the teaching and learning of ESP vocabulary.

**Keywords**: ESP, vocabulary, motivation, technique, ICT

**Résumé**: Dire que l'apprentissage du vocabulaire est un aspect important dans le domaine de l'enseignement de la langue anglaise pour les non-spécialistes de la langue est tautologique et axiomatique. Cet article vise à fournir des preuves à cet égard et passe en revue certaines questions essentielles liées au vocabulaire spécialisé. Il cherche également de donner de nouvelles perspectives sur ce que l'on entend par vocabulaire spécialisé, sur la quantité de vocabulaire nécessaire aux apprenants, sur l'importance et la manière d'enseigner le vocabulaire. Parmi les éléments nécessaires à l'acquisition avec succès et efficacité du vocabulaire spécialisé figurent : la motivation des apprenants, le contact continu avec des documents authentiques, l'accent mis sur le renforcement et sur la mise en œuvre de techniques appropriées pour rendre cette activité agréable et pour encourager l'apprentissage continu. Dans cette approche, les anciennes techniques peuvent être adaptées aux nouveaux besoins, et les nouvelles technologies et outils, ainsi que l'environnement en ligne, donnent un aperçu de la situation actuelle de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage du vocabulaire spécialisé.

**Mots-clés**: l'anglais pour les non-spécialistes de la langue, vocabulaire, motivation, technique d'enseignement, technologie et communication

**Introduction**

Over the past decades, English has insinuated itself in almost every walk of life and has emerged as *lingua franca* in many domains. Science and technology are almost exclusively circulated in English, as all major scientific journals publish their articles using this standardized medium that everyone has access to in order to avoid miscommunication and possible errors with serious consequences. Businesspeople from different countries find common ground in this standard medium where concepts that may differ in various cultures are expressed by a particular set of words in English and understood by anybody to have the same meaning.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) deals specifically with these issues and has increased exponentially in importance over the past decades. At international level, communication is accomplished in English in more and more domains, and science, technology, medicine, aviation, the hospitality industry, business and trade have long crossed the borders of individual countries, and function in the global sphere. In this context, grammar is very important for accuracy purposes, but vocabulary is even more helpful, as, in many situations, whether someone uses incorrectly past tense instead of

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present perfect, the message will most certainly be understood if the appropriate vocabulary is used. However, while vocabulary acquisition is regarded by some theorists and practitioners of ESP as a peripheral aspect within the language teaching process, it is seen by others as its focal point.

**Why vocabulary?**

Vocabulary is an integral part of ESP and it is very important for learners to build a consistent body of terms that are specific to and occur frequently in their area of study. It is the basis they will require for their future careers and from which they can continue to build. Averil Coxhead offers two reasons why vocabulary acquisition in ESP is central:

> First of all, teachers and learners need to know that precious classroom time is directly related to their language needs. They should be reading material that contains key ideas and the language of their field and writing using those ideas and language. […] Secondly, understanding and using this special purposes vocabulary shows that these learners belong to a particular group. (Coxhead, 2013: 116)

His point is similar to that of other theorists (Mohan and van Naerssen, 1997) that knowledge of the vocabulary of a subject area helps learners understand better their area of study because it broadens their knowledge:

> the specialist language of a discipline is intrinsic to students' learning of disciplinary knowledge; students need to show their understanding of concepts, phenomena, relations between phenomena etc. by incorporating the specialist language and terminology of their discipline into their writing accurately. They also need to adopt the specialist language in order to make meaning and engage with disciplinary knowledge. (Woodward–Kron, 2008: 246)

It also helps learners contact resources that would otherwise be inaccessible due to the language barrier: reading journals in English, accessing English-written websites or applications on the internet, communicating with peers from other countries and exchanging ideas in their field of knowledge by using English.

However, motivating students to learn vocabulary can be a daunting task in this day and age. Learning vocabulary has traditionally been perceived as boring because it is a long process that requires time and patience, two values that are no longer cherished in today's age of speed. Nowadays, students often ask why they should learn words when they can just look them up on their phones whenever they might need them. One of the simple and commonsense reasons behind the need to build vocabulary is convenience. When engaged in a conversation with an English speaker, you cannot be expected to keep checking the phone every five seconds looking up words or checking translation applications to express an idea to your conversation partner.

Another more complex reason is usage. It is not enough, for example, to look up simple words in a dictionary, be it a specialized one, and be able to pick the right one from a group of synonyms, to grasp nuances and combine correct collocations. That comes with practice and continuous exposure to the specific jargon, not to mention knowledge of the science behind it. If you look up the Romanian word "bob" or "boabă", there is a myriad of possibilities in English, among which: *bean, bead, pea, seed, berry, grain, kernel, grape*, or *pulse*. If you need to use the equivalent for "coajă" and check the dictionary, you may find: *skin, rind, peel, husk, shell* or *shuck*. If a context requires the use of the word "gândac", is it *beetle* or *cockroach*? Reversely, how does one translate *rootstock*? As "portaltoi" or "rizom"? It has both meanings in English. Needless to say, there are important differences between these terms, and choosing the wrong one may even imply you do not know the science, which is a very serious blemish for a researcher. For instance, you cannot call a

member of the insect order *Coleoptera* a *cockroach*, which is in fact an insect of the order *Blattodea*. Thus, if "gândac" refers to *Coleoptera*, it is correct to call it a *beetle*, as not all insects are created equal. Similarly, a botanist or agronomist would never use "rizom de viţă de vie" for the English *grapevine rootstock*, because a rhizome is actually an underground stem, while grapevines do not have rhizomes, but are propagated by grafting, which implies the existence of a rootstock, namely a "portaltoi" (which is a root with a small stem segment) onto which a scion is grafted. However, not all students are interested in such issues of nuance that exist too far away in a possible version of their future. So, motivation also comes with need. A researcher that decides to learn English is determined to accomplish this goal because he or she is highly motivated: English is indispensable for research and for up-to-date knowledge of science, which is now published almost exclusively in English. Many students are still not sure about their future, so motivation comes in smaller amounts in their case.

### What vocabulary?

Before delving into methods and techniques, we must establish what is understood by vocabulary, specifically ESP vocabulary, what needs to be emphasized and how much is required. In their 1991 book on ESP, Kennedy and Bolitho distinguish between technical and sub-technical vocabulary, namely specialty-specific words and words that are not specific to a particular subject area but that can be encountered regularly in scientific or technical texts (Kennedy and Bolitho, 1991: 57-58). Averil Coxhead offers a detailed perspective on what constitutes ESP vocabulary:

> ESP vocabulary can be referred to in the literature by very different names from one study to another. These terms include special purpose, specialized, technical, sub-technical, and semi-technical vocabulary. In essence, such terms usually refer to the vocabulary of a particular area of study or professional use. The range of a word is important in ESP. That is, a specialized word would have a narrow range of use within a particular subject area. This means that specialized words are expected to belong to a particular subject area at university or to a professional discipline. People outside that academic or professional sphere might have some knowledge of this vocabulary but the people inside these areas of language use would be expected to be able to understand and use this language fluently. It is worthwhile keeping in mind, however, that specialized vocabulary does not always mean long Graeco-Latin words or highly technical words that are not used in everyday language. Some perfectly ordinary everyday words can carry very specific meanings in particular contexts. (Coxhead, 2013: 115-116)

An interesting perspective is also offered by Helen Basturkmen who proposes two approaches: 1) there is "a common core of general language […] referred to as 'basic' language" (Basturkmen, 2006: 15) and 2) "there is no common core of language preexisting to varieties" (Basturkmen, 2006: 17). From the latter perspective, Coxhead concludes that specialization should begin early for it would be "easier to conceptualize and operationalize in learning contexts where all students are moving through the same educational system at the same age with a shared first language and language goals." (Coxhead, 2013: 117). This may not be possible in the Romanian system, as most learners come with knowledge of general English from secondary school and most such institutions are either humanities-oriented high-schools or math-and-science-oriented high-schools, where the English class in focused on general language.

With extensive research on vocabulary acquisition, Paul Nation distinguishes among four categories of vocabulary: high-frequency words, academic words, technical words and low-frequency words (Nation, 2001: 11). The high-frequency words represented in Michael West's *General Service List* as 2,000 word families, such as function words (articles, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions or numerals) and common content words

(nouns, verbs, adjectives) (Nation, 2001: 15), are normally the concern of English teachers at beginner and intermediate levels. ESP is, in theory, taught to learners that are at least intermediate in their proficiency, therefore the focus is on technical words, namely those that are common to a particular topic and "differ from subject area to subject area" (Nation, 2001: 12), as well as "those that are formally like high-frequency words but which have specialized meanings" (Nation, 2001: 18). ESP also focuses on academic words, since many areas of ESP are concerned with formal contexts such as scientific articles, books or textbooks, as Nation notes when referring to Coxhead's *Academic Word List*: "It consists of 570 word families that are not in the most frequent 2,000 words of English but occur reasonably frequently over a very wide range of academic texts; the list is not restricted to a specific discipline." (Nation, 2001: 17). The fourth category, the low-frequency words, is in fact the largest and includes "words that are not high-frequency words, not academic words and not technical words for a particular subject" such as "technical words for other subject area, proper nouns, words that almost got into the high-frequency list, and words that we rarely meet in our use of the language." (Nation, 2001: 12).

Nevertheless, given that ESP learners come with varying levels of English proficiency ranging from A1 to C1, the ESP teacher must not ignore or minimize the role of high-frequency words, or consider them already dealt with by previous teachers, as without them there is no understanding of a highly scientific or technical text. Waring and Nation indicate that for the "successful guessing of unknown words" (2004: 12) from a text, the learners need to know at least 98% of the vocabulary in that particular text as "no subject reported adequate comprehension of text with only 80% coverage rate, but at 90% and 95% coverage a few did, and only at the 98% level did most subjects gain adequate comprehension." (Waring and Nation, 2004: 12). Otherwise, they have to keep stopping and checking dictionaries or asking the teacher, which will turn the reading activity into something tedious and discouraging, so the learning process is compromised.

Regardless of distinctions between basic and specialized language, technical and sub-technical vocabulary, or high-frequency and low-frequency words, the basics of what needs to be taught in terms of vocabulary are always the same: form (spelling and pronunciation), grammar (verb forms, plural of nouns etc.), collocations (the possible combinations of words, which is right and which is wrong in a particular context), aspects of meaning (denotation, connotation, appropriateness and meaning relationships – synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, superordinates and translation), and word formation (prefixes, suffixes and compound words) (Ur, 2009: 60-62). In ESP, most of these aspects are particularly important, as specialized words carry specialized meaning, and accuracy is crucial, otherwise the consequences of misunderstanding may be very serious. Wu, for example, insists that understanding word formation is fundamental for ESP learners and it should actually be taught because it helps them recognize and memorize vocabulary more effectively:

> Word formation is a crucial strategy for learners to memorize related words. The knowledge of basic affixes, roots, suffixes, and word formation enables learners to decode them. Decomposing an unknown word into its structural components infer its meaning is called structural analysis. ESP vocabulary learners should be taught the basic strategies of decomposing a word into parts to guess its meaning. Several studies have reported using various affixes to teach students to structurally analyze ESP vocabulary. The instruction resulted in large gains in student abilities to infer word meanings. (Wu, 2014: 123)

In science, for example, it is necessary to know how to spell correctly (most scientific terminology has complicated spelling, with Latin or Greek origin), to choose the appropriate synonym in a given context, to use the correct prepositions (one wrongly used preposition may alter the outcome of an experiment if other researchers try to replicate it),

to recognize subject-specific affixes (phyto-, psycho-, hypo-, hyper-, -rrhea, -osis, -ase, -phil-, -troph- etc.), or to identify among a word family the verbs (produce / produced, grow / grew / grown / growing / regrow, pollinate / pollinated / pollinating / overpollinate), nouns (producer / product / productivity / produce, growing / growth, pollen / pollination / pollinator), and adjectives (productive / unproduced, growing / grown, pollinating), which requires training in the recognition of common endings for the derivation of nouns, verbs and adjectives. If discerning the message is enough in informal contexts, regardless of grammar or spelling errors, in formal and academic ones, misspelling or incorrect choice of words suggests lack of professionalism. And that is one more aspect that makes ESP vocabulary acquisition important.

### What methodology?

Most methodologies work when it comes to building vocabulary, even though they may not be focused on this task. The Communicative Approach, the Task-based approach, even the obsolete Audio-lingualism and its successor PPP (Presentation, Practice, and Production) help with vocabulary acquisition, though in their case this is not a targeted activity, but it rather comes as a byproduct of other activities that focus on task solving, skill development and others, or is "incidental" (Mustafa, 2012: 425). The lexical approach proposed by Michael Lewis and detailed in his 1993 book, *The Lexical Approach*, is undoubtedly the most focused on vocabulary acquisitions, though its proponent rejects the term "vocabulary", introducing instead the concepts of lexis and chunks of language (Moudraia, 2001). Lewis asserts: "fluency is based on the acquisition of a large store of fixed or semi-fixed prefabricated items, which are available as the foundation for any linguistic novelty or creativity." (Lewis, 1997: 15). In a 2005 article, Michael Lewis reiterates the need for teachers to forget their old ways and try something new, forget the classic dichotomous approach to English teaching, namely grammar and vocabulary, and turn towards the discoveries of other studies, like corpus linguistics (Lewis, 2005: 8). Corpus linguistics is also the basis for a very successful method proposed by Tim Johns in the late 1980s and early 1990s, namely Data Driven Learning (DDL), which is a corpus-based approach (Boulton, 2009: 2). The employment of corpus is widely spread in ELT and it is particularly promoted in ESP, where the use of authentic materials is fundamental.

Often teachers induce this previously mentioned dichotomy into the learners' mind: grammar and vocabulary. Taken separately, neither is much to the taste of learners, which is why there are other methods (Communicative Approach, Lexicogrammatical Approach) that can be employed so that both grammar and vocabulary can be taught with ease and without making the learners perceive them like a burden. And this is a major gain because motivation can be greatly improved by good materials and an engaging strategy: "Appropriate teaching materials, learning strategies and the interactions between learners and teachers are the essential components to solve the existing learning difficulties." (Tskhvitava, 2016: 131).

### Techniques, strategies and resources

If vocabulary building is determined as the central purpose of the ESP class, there are countless techniques that help in this regard. Teachers can mix methodologies or select only those aspects they feel most help their learners. It is important to teach vocabulary in such a way as to help learners make sense of future problems and encourage continuous learning. In spite of vocabulary acquisition being perceived as a boring activity by the learners, it is possible to teach ESP vocabulary without making it a chore or even without the perfect amount of motivation from the learners. The teachers can improve their strategy and turn the learning of ESP vocabulary into a pleasant experience:

Vocabulary acquisition is a long-term process, requiring much work. Although some students spend a lot of time on trying to increase their lexicon: to memorize words and collocations for the purposes of oral and written communication, and to understand the vocabulary while listening and reading - the results are still quite poor. One of the reasons is applying ineffective strategies of vocabulary learning. (Tskhvitava, 2016:131)

A major point to be made at this stage is that continuous exposure to the specialized vocabulary is key, it is what precedes in importance any method or technique, as this is in itself a technique. Given that students do not normally do homework or revise their lessons at home (unless specifically required by teachers or under pressure – a test), maximum exposure must happen in class. However, it matters how this exposure is planned:

It is difficult to learn words especially ESP words because they […] are not encountered very often. Vocabulary acquisition is incremental in nature and this means that words are not learned instantaneously but they are learned over a period of time. The number of words learned depends on numerous exposures to a particular word. (Xhaferi, 232).

I normally divide my teaching material into certain topics, specific to the students' field, to go through over a semester. For example, in the case of Ecology students, such topics would be: Air Pollution, Water Pollution, Soil Pollution, Fossil Fuels, Renewable Energy, Endangered Species and others. Each topic has a specific terminology and there are also specialized words that pervade all these topics. Thus, in a desire to expose the students to a large amount of vocabulary and because the classes have limited time, I was careful not to repeat the same terms too often. For example, *greenhouse effect* is normally specific to the topic Air Pollution and I would check it as mentioned that semester, in that specific lesson. And that is how I kept most vocabulary, confined to their specific topic. Two important reasons compelled me to proceed thus. Firstly, I needed the time in each lesson to discuss new terms; I felt the students were otherwise missing important terminology that they might encounter in the future if I did not expose them to as much as possible. Secondly, I thought the students would get bored running into the same terminology too often and possibly think the lessons were stagnant. I was wrong and the result was that they hardy retained any specialized vocabulary because they were exposed to considerable amounts of it, but only once or twice per semester, even though I took care to revise it from time to time.

This made me reconsider the strategy and I included less vocabulary, but more practice time and chances to encounter the same terms more often, more activities that included the specialized vocabulary, more revision-type exercises and the results improved. For example, for my Horticulture students, one of the semesters is dedicated to certain crops that are related, which means a considerable amount of vocabulary is repeated throughout the lessons. Thus, topics such as Grapevine Cultivation, Winemaking, Fruit Trees, Orchards, Vegetable Growing (Olericulture) and Floriculture have the following in common: terminology related to plant propagation and growth (*sowing, grafting, cutting, layering, dormancy, to bear fruit, to ripen, to grow roots, pollination, plant propagation, plant breeding, plant nursery*), plant parts and botanical categories (*root, rootstock, trunk, stem, branch, shoot, bud, blossom, flower, fruit, berry, drupe, bunch, woody, herbaceous, cultivar, fleshy, stone, pip, skin, ripe, edible*), cultivation technologies (*to grow/growth/growing, to plant/planting, to weed/weeding, to spray, to prune/pruning, to train/training, to thin/thinning, to irrigate/irrigation, to harvest/harvesting, to pick/picking, to fertilize/fertilizer/fertilization, to stake/staking, canopy management, pest control, layout, cover crops, transplanting*), tools and machinery (*hoe, spade, rake, mechanical harvester, sprinkler, dripper, pruning shears, cell packs*), soil (*clay, sandy, loam, calcareous, compacted, loose, well-drained, alkaline, acid, depth, amendment, nitrogen, phosphorus,*

*potassium, organic matter, moisture*), environment (*landscape, climate, temperate, frost, rain, hail, drought, sunny, slope, hill, plain, light, heat, humidity, wind*) and many more. These will be easier to retain as they permeate all the lessons throughout the semester. Thus, the activities practicing them will also be focused more or usage and possible combinations (collocations). Of course, there are also terms specific only to a certain topic and cannot be encountered in the others, but these are fewer: *vineyard, grapevine, pomace, destemming, blending, fining, free run, winery, trellis, spur* (in Grapevine Cultivation and Winemaking); *orchard, kernel, fruit tree,* plant names – *date palm, almond tree, cranberry, cornelian cherry* etc. (in Fruit Trees and Orchards); *trowel, crop rotation, gardening tools, companion planting, row cropping, vegetable, legume, herb,* plant names – *leek, cauliflower, turnip, dill, sage, thyme* etc. (in Olericulture); *hanging basket, bedding plants, houseplants, foliage plants, flowering plants, cut flowers, potted plants, cut greens, climbing plants, coniferous shrub, soil mix,* plant names – *orchid, pelargonium, water lily, gerbera* etc. (in Floriculture). Also, there are more similarities among the first four topics related to grapevine and fruit trees because their cultivation is comparable, they are all woody plants and undergo similar works and main stages of growth and cultivation. The last two topics (Olericulture and Floriculture) also share more terminology (*seedling, peat, plot, garden, hotbed, bed, to harden off, compost, annual plant, marketing, shipping*) for the same reason, they are mostly herbaceous plants grown in gardens or greenhouses and with similar cultivation stages and techniques.

So, by the end of the semester, the students will have been exposed to a body of technical (and sub-technical) vocabulary of over 300 words including families of words and collocations. Within four semesters, the regular time allotted to the ESP class in Romanian universities, they will have been exposed to over 1,000 technical words, which fits the minimum in the range proposed by Paul Nation (between 1,000 and 5,000 words), as quoted by Coxhead who also concludes "This means that ESP learners may face an extremely large learning task to fully develop their understanding and use of specialized vocabulary in their subject area at university or in a professional context." (Coxhead, 2013: 116). The conclusion is that combining topics with similar vocabulary will ensure a higher retention rate among the learners.

However, simple exposure to technical words is not enough. The practice activities for revision, consolidation and reinforcement are the ones that make the difference, as the learners see, hear and are required to use the terminology in various contexts. Most standard exercises often employed are: word maps, hangman, puzzles, crosswords, matching games (match with definition, match with an image, match with the characteristics), multiple choice, fill in gaps, cloze exercises, identifying terms in texts and many other types of vocabulary activities. However, I will first refer to two techniques that traditionally are not regarded very highly in general ELT, namely the use of L1 for precise equivalence of technical words and the use of translation as a consolidation exercise. Both these techniques help learners clarify their insight and make simpler connections with their knowledge of the subject area in L1. While they may understand the L2 words or collocations from context or from a definition given, they often fail to see the connection or immediately think of the exact equivalent in L1, even though they have knowledge of it. For example, the learners are given the collocation *plant breeding*. They have encountered the family of the word *breed* before and know it is related to *reproduction, cultivation, rearing*, and *species*. Then, they are given the definition: "application of genetic principles to produce plants that are more useful to humans; the art and science of changing the traits of plants in order to produce desired characteristics." (adapted from www.britannica.com and www.wikipedia.org). We discuss the definition and it is clear they understand what it means, but still fail to retrieve from their background knowledge the term "ameliorarea plantelor". Moreover, another apparently identical term is introduced for comparison – *plant propagation*. The students understand *propagate*, as it is similar to the L1 word "a

propaga", and has similar meaning in L2 – *spread, disperse, scatter, disseminate*, but also *reproduce, breed, procreate, multiply, generate*. Again, the definition is given: "the process of creating new plants from a variety of sources: seeds, cuttings and other plant parts; the reproduction of plants by any number of natural or artificial means." (adapted from www.wikipedia.org and www.britannica.com). This time, the meaning is clearer and they will understand it faster as "înmulțirea plantelor". If presented side by side, *plant breeding* and *plant propagation*, without further explanations or definitions, and given the learners' knowledge that both *breed* and *propagate* have the meaning *reproduce, multiply*, they will draw the conclusion that they both translate the same into L1, namely "reproducerea plantelor", which is not basically wrong, as both techniques include reproduction. However, nuances are important in science and the two terms represent two different and major aspects of agriculture and horticulture, with scientific background, and which are not interchangeable. Thus, clear equivalence of technical terms between L1 and L2 is necessary.

Translation used as a learning technique is also very useful in ESP classes, as it helps both introduce and consolidate technical terms. An overview of the topic of translation in ESP was given in a previous article (Chirobocea, 2018) and I will not insist on the literature review, or go over the benefits of using this technique. Suffice it to say, translation is a global exercise that helps with spelling, usage, accurate equivalence of technical terms, practice of high-frequency words (articles, prepositions, pronouns etc.), grammar, or word order. It also helps with a better understanding of the differences between L1 and L2 and opens discussions about appropriateness according to context or register, and according to meaning relationships (suitable synonyms). If the translation contexts are designed by the teacher (from L1 into L2), they should not sound forced and bookish, but natural, similar to those encountered in authentic contexts specific to the respective field (authentic texts or conversations between professionals).

I often use translation exercises mid-class or towards the end of the class in order to revise and consolidate the terminology discussed at the beginning of the class. Sometimes, I also include some grammar aspect that the students struggle with, such as correctly formulating questions according to tense. This activity works best with intermediate levels of English proficiency, which are the most common among ESP students. Those learners with higher proficiency find the grammar aspect easy and the vocabulary elements helpful, while those with lower levels of proficiency find the grammar part difficult but helpful and struggle with high-frequency words such as prepositions and articles. If the class is mostly made up of intermediate and advanced-level students, then the sentences can contain a variety of tenses as the challenge is appreciated at these levels. If the students are mostly beginners with some of intermediate-level knowledge, then the grammar should only practice a single tense so as to avoid confusion and to actually gain a clear result from the activity.

Another strategy widely employed in ESP for any type of purpose (skill development, vocabulary building etc.) is ICT (Information and Communication Technology), a complex topic tackled in a considerable amount of research in recent years. But technology is not new to the realm of language teaching. The appearance of the computer has made the teaching task both easier and difficult, both simple and complex, as the possibilities are infinite. CALL or Computer Assisted Language Learning has been embraced by SLA (Second Language Acquisition) right from the start (Villalobo, 2012: 12). However, for many years until the 1990s, standalone software for language learning was basically the only option, while "the most traditional and still most common form of CALL programs are behaviorist computer-based gap fill drills, in which students fill in the blanks and answer specific questions in cloze exercises." (Villalobo, 2012: 12). In recent years, mobile devices and their applications have been rising in popularity, given their availability and easy internet connection, as well as their user-friendly quality. The virtual

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medium has also become a major means of learning ESP vocabulary, favored by both learners and teachers (Liuoliene, 2013: 47) because finding such terminology is easier on the internet than in any printed dictionary. The online environment is always up-to-date, it is fast and provides countless contexts for technical words, correlations, explanations, as well as links to more resources. It is favored by the learners because of the independence it offers, and it is favored by the teachers because of the multitude of resources they can use to create ESP materials and techniques.

### Conclusion

Good command of English, as well as fluency, are acquired by vocabulary building, which, in turn, is accomplished by exposing the learners to a carefully selected corpus of authentic materials and to real-life situations where context-appropriate language is used, and where focus on lexis and chunks of language, rather than words is preferred. How this exposure occurs and the choice of techniques used are very important as they will make the difference. Use of the mother tongue, correct equivalence of terminology between L1 and L2, and translation as means of consolidation and revision should not be rejected. They are good techniques and, if used appropriately, they will not fail. Openness to technology, to the use of the internet, to the possibilities afforded by new user-friendly and more easily available devices such as smartphones can bring diversity into the ESP class and connect it more to the realities of the world in which the learners will be required to function. The old and the new can work together successfully to accomplish one of the most important goals in ESP, namely the acquisition of specialized vocabulary.

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