LEARNING AND PRODUCING ESP VOCABULARY: STUDENTS' SELF-PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract. Neglected for a period of time in the literature, the study of vocabulary witnessed a revival of interest with the advent of ESP (English for Special Purposes). Many early books and articles on ESP pointed out that some of the major differences between ESP and General English reside in word length, word complexity and the high frequency of specialized terminology. One way to guide learners through the 'forest of specialized vocabulary' is to reinforce the strategies that might help them to get to their destination – learning the language.

This study investigates some issues concerning the learning and production of specialized vocabulary starting from a questionnaire administered to first-and second-year students enrolled in the Faculty of Electronics, Telecommunications and Information Technology in our university. The results show that the students use a great number of strategies to acquire specialized vocabulary, the preferred ones being metacognitive strategies, especially those connected to the use of English language media. The study also indicates that the main objective reason for failing to pronounce and/ or write new specialized words is the complexity of technical vocabulary, while the common subjective reason has to do with lack of attention.

Keywords: ESP; vocabulary learning; VLS; spelling abilities; pronunciation abilities.

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