

## Use of Extended Conversation to Boost Vocabulary Knowledge and Soft Skills in English for Employment Classes

**Authors :** James G. Matthew, Seonmin Huh, Frank X. Bennett

**Abstract :** English for Specific Purposes, ESP, aims to equip learners with necessary English language skills. Many ESP programs address language skills for job performance, including reading job related documents and oral proficiency. Within ESP is English for occupational purposes, EOP, which centers around developing communicative competence for the globalized workplace. Many ESP and EOP courses lack the content needed to assist students to progress at work, resulting in the need to create lexical compilation for different professions. It is important to teach communicative competence and soft skills for real job-related problem situations and address the complexities of the real world to help students to be successful in their professions. ESP and EOP research is therefore trying to balance both profession-specific educational contents as well as international multi-disciplinary language skills for the globalized workforce. The current study will build upon the existing discussion by developing pedagogy to assist students in their career through developing a strong practical command of relevant English vocabulary. Our research question focuses on the pedagogy two professors incorporated in their English for employment courses. The current study is a qualitative case study on the modes of teaching delivery for EOP in South Korea. Two foreign professors teaching at two different universities in South Korea volunteered for the study to explore their teaching practices. Both professors' curriculums included the components of employment-related concept vocabulary, business presentations, CV/resume and cover letter preparation, and job interview preparation. All the pre-made recorded video lectures, live online class sessions with students, teachers' lesson plans, teachers' class materials, students' assignments, and midterm and finals video conferences were collected for data analysis. The study then focused on unpacking representative patterns in their teaching methods. The professors used their strengths as native speakers to extend the class discussion from narrow and restricted conversations to giving students broader opportunities to practice authentic English conversation. The methods of teaching utilized three main steps to extend the conversation. Firstly, students were taught concept vocabulary. Secondly, the vocabulary was then combined in speaking activities where students had to solve scenarios, and the students were required to expand on the given forms of words and language expressions. Lastly, the students had conversations in English, using the language learnt. The conversations observed in both classes were those of authentic, expanded English communication and this way of expanding concept vocabulary lessons into extended conversation is one representative pedagogical approach that both professors took. Extended English conversation, therefore, is crucial for EOP education.

**Keywords :** concept vocabulary, english as a foreign language, english for employment, extended conversation

**Conference Title :** ICFLTAL 2023 : International Conference on Foreign Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics

**Conference Location :** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

**Conference Dates :** February 06-07, 2023