

English for Academic and Specific Purposes: A Corpus-Informed Approach to Designing Vocabulary Teaching Materials

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Abstract : Significant shifts in the theory and practice of teaching vocabulary affect teachers' decisions about learning materials' design. Relevant literature supports teaching specialised, authentic, and multi-word lexical items rather than focusing on single-word vocabulary lists. Corpora, collections of texts stored in a database, presents a reliable source of teaching and learning materials. Although corpus-informed studies provided guidance for teachers to identify useful language chunks and phraseological units, there is a scarcity in the literature discussing the use of corpora in teaching English for academic and specific purposes (EASP). The aim of this study is to improve teaching practices and provide a description of the pedagogical choices and procedures of an EASP tutor in an attempt to offer guidance for novice corpus users. It draws on the researcher's experience of utilising corpus linguistic tools to design vocabulary learning activities without focusing on students' learning outcomes. Hence, it adopts a self-study research methodology which is based on five methodological components suggested by other self-study researchers. The findings of the study noted that designing specialised and corpus-informed vocabulary learning activities could be challenging for teachers, as they require technical knowledge of how to navigate corpora and utilise corpus analysis tools. Findings also include a description of the researcher's approach to building and analysing a specialised corpus for the benefit of novice corpus users; they should be able to start their own journey of designing corpus-based activities.

Keywords : corpora, corpus linguistics, corpus-informed, English for academic and specific purposes, agribusiness, vocabulary, phraseological units, materials design

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