


<p align="center">Strategies and Approaches in Teaching Compounding and Derivation in ESP Classes</p>		<p align="center">Linguistics</p> <p>Keywords: ESP, compounding, derivation, linguistic competence.</p>
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<p align="center">Esmeralda Sherko</p>	<p align="center">Department of English Language Agricultural University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania.</p>
<p align="center">Arjan Shumeli</p>	<p align="center">Department of English Language Agricultural University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania.</p>
<p align="center">Luljeta Mine</p>	<p align="center">Department of English Language Agricultural University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania.</p>

Abstract

This article focuses on the emphasis put on word formation while teaching ESP. Teaching terminology makes ESP difficult not only for the students, but also for the lecturers. As the students lack the scientific approach to different topics explained to them, lecturers analyze the texts in detail, dealing with grammar, lexicology, semantics etc. One of the key issues that ESP analyzes in detail is terminology, which is definitely explained through parsing the word into its constituents and dealing with other complex word formation techniques. The basic techniques often dealt with are compounding and derivation. However the lecturer must know the subjects considerably beyond the content s/he is expected to teach, have a strong background in the subjects related to the specialty area, and understand major concepts, assumptions, and debates that are central to the discipline they teach. Thus the role of the lecturer is to analyze texts from the linguistic viewpoint.

1. Introduction to English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

English for Specific Purposes (from now on – “ESP”) is a new discipline taught at universities nowadays instead of General English (GE). Although ESP is perceived as different from GE, in terms of grammar, stylistics and vocabulary, it definitely possesses patterns of word formation and syntactic structures from the language. There is not a clear-cut division between ESP and GE, and teaching ESP basically deals with teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). It cannot be taught or learnt separately, thus teaching grammar is important too. It combines language content relevant to the field of specialty and vocabulary analysis, mainly focused on word formation. Detailed explanation of linguistic rules, structures and grammar should be interwoven, while teaching ESP. There have been different scholars, who have attempted to define ESP so far, providing the following definitions:

‘ESP’ describes language programmes designed for groups or individuals who are learning with an identifiable purpose and clearly specifiable needs (Johnson & Johnson 1998: 105).

Hutchinson et al. (1987:19) state that - *"ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning"*.

As of Hutchinson et al. (1987:53) the difference between ESP and General English could be described as follows: *"in theory nothing, in practice a great deal"*.

Another definition comes from Dudley-Evans (1997) who includes the division between absolute and variable characteristics.

1.1. Absolute Characteristics:

1. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners
2. ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves

3. ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

1.2. Variable Characteristics

1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines
2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English
3. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level
4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
5. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems

2. Compounding and derivation through ESP

ESP in the university context mainly concentrates on language in context in combination with teaching grammar and language structures. Students are generally introduced to the TEFL English way of teaching until they become university students. They are used to the traditional way of learning a foreign language, thus paying attention to reading, speaking, writing and listening. Whereas ESP does not necessarily concentrate on the four skills, it emphasizes the development of different skills depending on their specialty. In fact ESP combines subject matter and language teaching. The necessity to analyze texts and lead the student towards advanced levels of vocabulary introduces the importance of teaching word formation techniques.

Word formation is an indispensable mean in teaching a foreign language, in general and ESP in particular. It goes without saying that knowledge of derivational morphology is a step forward in identifying, comprehending, and memorizing the meanings of new words and the capacity to increase the student's vocabulary span.

In most of the Indo-European languages the most widely used word formation techniques are definitely *compounding* and *derivation*.

Compounding refers to the formation of a new lexeme by adjoining two or more lexemes (Bauer (2003:40), whereas *derivation* refers to the process of forming a new word by adding prefixes or suffixes to an existing word. While most of the specific terminologies deal with derivation rather than compounding, medical English is one of the fields of science which offers probably compounds more than any other, as it includes "*neoclassical compounds*". The concept of neoclassical compounds refers to compound words, formed by combining words of Greek or Latin origin. Almost all European languages bear neoclassical compounds in their language, being actively used among different areas of science. These words have in fact been the subject of different controversies among linguists, whether to be separately studied or within the framework of compounding or derivation. In fact the most prominent term being used is that of 'affixoids', which are further divided into prefixoids or suffixoids. As the name suggests, the first are attached to the beginning of roots and the latter to the end.

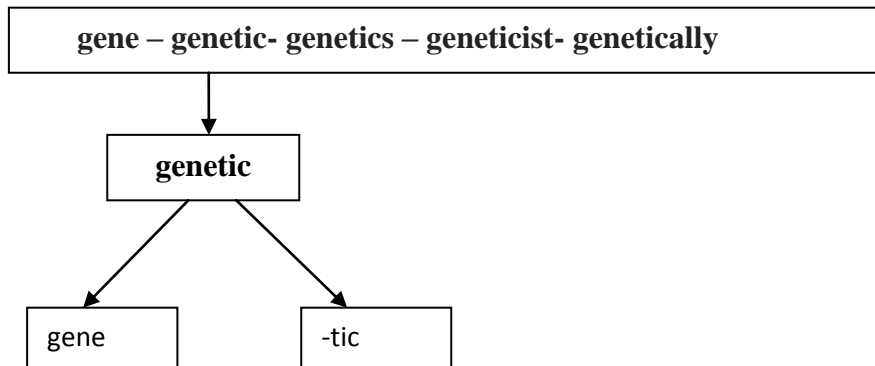
Some examples of neoclassical constituents in ESP texts:

aer/o (air)	requiring the presence of oxygen
-algisia (painful)	sensitive to pain.
ambi- (both sides)	<i>ambidextrous</i> ,
capit/o (head)	<i>capitates</i> , head-shaped.
carcin/o (cancer)	a substance that causes cancer.
cardi/o (heart)	originating in the heart.
hemi- (one-half)	paralysis of one side of the body.
hepat/o (liver)	inflammation of the liver.
heter/o (other)	from a different source.
hidr/o, hidrot/o (sweat)	excessive sweating.
hist/o (tissue)	the breaking down of tissue.
hyper- (beyond normal, excessive)	abnormally high blood pressure.
hypo- (below normal, deficient, under)	abnormally low blood pressure.
labi/o (lip)	pertaining to the lip and teeth.
lact/o (milk) laryng/o (larynx)	the secretion of milk.
lingu/o (tongue)	under the tongue.
lip/o (fat)	fatty tumor.
micr/o (small) mon/o (single, only, sole)	a small part.
mono	involving one
necr/o (corpse)	dead

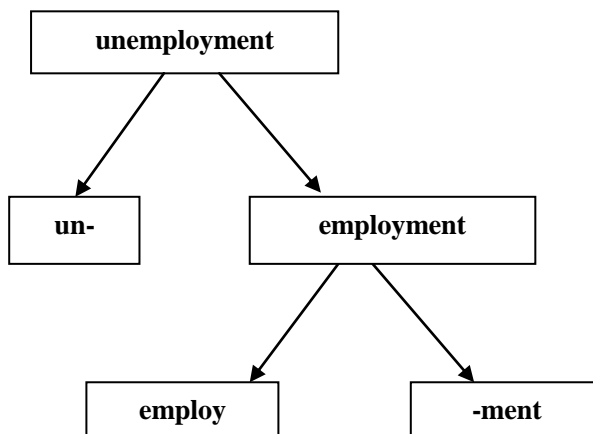
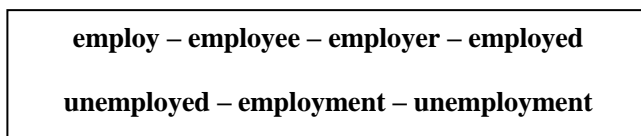
Compounding also introduces the students with the issue of semantics. The semantics of compound words is not always transparent. Unaware of this phenomenon (the opacity of compound words) students often try to guess the meaning of words, thus failing to understand the text {a typical example is the business English term: “*going concern*”⁹}.

Derivation on the other hand provides students with the opportunity to increase their vocabulary, thus being able to understand texts of any kind in the future. The difference between prefixes and suffixes and the ability to analyze words through word trees, leads students to a better understanding of word formation. Some examples from Medical English:

⁹ It is always perceived by students as “*something to be worried about*”, while the meaning of the term is: “*a business that is operating and making a profit*”



Examples from Business English:



The role and competencies of the lecturer and / or the student

Lecturers of English, who are familiar with English as a Second Language, do not need to be experts in medicine, economics or other fields, but they need to have some understanding of the subject area, understand what is involved in the specific area, and be aware of the language requirements involved.

Scrivener¹⁰ (*Learning Teaching*, Macmillan 2005) reassures the too anxious teacher by saying “Go on teaching all the normal English you already teach in all the ways you know how to do already, but use lexis, examples, topics and contexts that are, as far as possible, relevant to the students and practise relevant specific skills.”

¹⁰ **Jim Scrivener** is currently Head of Teacher Development for Bell International. His publications include *Learning Teaching* (Macmillan ELT) which won the ARELS Frank Bell Prize 1995, *Oxford Basics*:

On the other hand, the students lack not only linguistic competencies, but also the scientific approach to different topics explained to them. Thus when they need to consult foreign literature, which mainly happens when they have matured professionally, the basic linguistic skills of approaching texts through analysis of word formation comes into force.

Conclusions

ESP as a university discipline encompasses linguistics and terminology. The role of the English lecturer involves teaching terminology and basic scientific concepts from the linguistic point of view. Thus emphasis is put on word formation, basically on compounding and derivation, as the most productive word formation techniques. The meaning of compounds can be tracked down by parsing the compound in separate constituents, then by analyzing the etymology¹¹ of the constituents separately. The meaning of compounds might be semantically transparent, or opaque. Derivation on the other hand, analyzed through prefixes and suffixes, either provides a new meaning to the word, or transforms it from one part of speech to another.

References

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¹¹ **Etymology** is the study of the history of words, their origins, and how their form and meaning have changed over time