

ABSTRACT

VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION: THE TEXT AS A SOURCE IN THE CLASSROOM

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The objective of this study is to contribute to the discussion on vocabulary instruction, and investigate, systematize and discuss procedures ESP teachers have used to teach vocabulary, both planned and unplanned, in the EFL reading classroom, in terms of criteria for text selection, procedures for vocabulary presentation and memorization of unknown words. The study is based on two premises: first, that reading comprehension is dependent on prior vocabulary knowledge, but also that reading is a major source of new vocabulary learning, that is, a relationship of "reciprocal causation" (Stanovich, 1986, cited in Harley, 1995); and second, that vocabulary learning profits from extensive exposition to the language (Krashen, 1989), but also from systematization as research on memorization has shown (Craik and Lockhart, 1972, Stevick, 1976, 1982; Baddeley, 1990). The research was carried out with three ESP reading course teachers from *Centro de Comunicação e Expressão – UFSC*. The results showed that, as for the criteria for text selection, the teachers mentioned topic familiarity and authenticity of the text, having similar views as to topic familiarity, but different views as to authenticity. In terms of the procedures for vocabulary presentation, a wide range of activities was used, mostly following the top-down approach to reading. As to the procedures for memorization, teachers capitalized very little on the possibilities presented in the specialized literature. Ultimately, the results suggest the need for workshops involving ESP as well as EFL

teachers, aiming at studying and discussing the procedures involved in vocabulary instructions.