

**REFLECTIONS ON ESP TEXTBOOKS:  
THE CASE OF ENGLISH FOR ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING  
IN THE ACADEMIC CONTEXT**

**Dr Miloš D. Đurić, *English for Electrical Engineering – Modules 1 and 2*, Belgrade,  
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Natalija Panić Cerovski

Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade, Serbia  
E-Mail: natalija.panic@fil.bg.ac.rs

1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The textbook *English for Electrical Engineering*, published by the Faculty of Electrical Engineering (University of Belgrade) and Academic Mind is part of a wider ESP and EAP research of the Senior Lecturer Dr. Miloš D. Đurić, and it explores various aspects of language expression that is manifested in spoken and written electrical engineering discourses. Furthermore, the textbook is based on recent trends in both ESP methodology and EAP methodology and represents the result of the author's extensive experience in teaching Academic English at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering in Belgrade. Even though primarily written for students of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, this textbook provides effective teaching material for all non-experts interested in electrical engineering discourse. Written in a clear, accessible style, the textbook prepares students for the examination whilst helping them to acquire, develop and learn to apply a wide range of ESP skills typical of electrical engineering discourse.

Suitable for engineers of diverse profiles (not only electrical engineers, but also mechanical engineers and civil engineers), this textbook utilises academic and professional contexts to develop understanding of the main principles of engineering and fundamental sciences (i.e. mathematics and physics) while simultaneously consolidating previously acquired English language skills. The textbook is endowed with clarity, simplicity and refinement. It focuses on broad range of electrical engineering topics. It opens with the "Preface" (p. 1-2), which sets the scene. The author briefly states the objectives and the methodology he employed. The textbook is comprised of the following parts: "Grammar – brief reminder" (p. 177-209), "Concise list of common and frequent grammar errors" (p. 210-211), "List of relevant irregular verbs" (p. 212-215), "Writing a CV, résumé" (p. 216-219), "Cover letter and motivation letter" (p. 220-221), and "Bibliography" (p. 222-223) that contains 31 bibliographic entries. The rest of the textbook is organized into two thematic modules. In other words, the first thematic module covers Units 1-14 (p. 1-85), whilst the second one covers Units 15-28 (p. 86-176).

## 2. SUMMARY

The textbook *English for Electrical Engineering* is primarily intended for students of Electrical Engineering and it represents a valuable resource for an ESP or EAP course. It is geared towards improving students' knowledge of English grammar whilst simultaneously it expands their vocabulary thereby developing both their receptive and productive skills. More precisely, the textbook is divided into two widely conceived thematic modules comprising twenty-eight carefully selected main texts some of which are accompanied by additional reading material. The pertinent thematic context appropriately motivates students to engage in professional discussions and express their views and ideas on a range of different electrical engineering topics while the engaging tasks accompanying the texts trigger the curiosity of potential readers prompting them to further delve into the subject of English electrical engineering discourse.

The selection of texts in this textbook is the result of the author's pretested, amended, assessed and reassessed textbook versions in which Dr. Miloš D. Đurić wished to identify some common aims of acquiring English for Specific Academic Purposes and learning the specific electrical engineering language and computer science materials. Not surprisingly, he integrated these materials into one coherent whole. Furthermore, this textbook is based on purely personal experience of the author and has evolved over the period of more than a decade, during which time he has worked with electrical engineering and computer science students at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering (University of Belgrade).

Based on the new "Bologna" syllabus, this textbook follows the newly acquired syllabus in a chronological fashion with two modules to match two academic subjects, more specifically, *English 1* and *English 2*. Both modules develop the specialist language typical of electrical engineering discourse that future engineers need in order to communicate confidently at work.

## 3. PART I (UNITS 1-14)

The problem of balancing out the interest and needs of electrical engineering students and finding an appropriate criterion for structuring diverse corpus material resulted in author's division of the material into widely conceived thematic units ranging from introduction to electrical engineering, physics, mathematics to atomic and nuclear physics. Each unit includes carefully selected texts, which are followed by various exercises in the form of specially designed tasks. Material that is not required for the examination is highlighted as "additional" material to allow more advanced or highly motivated students to stretch themselves further in the realm of English electrical engineering discourse.

The students are expected to use the material in the active way. For example, they are tasked with preparing Microsoft Power Point presentations and summarizing the specific material found on the Internet. In addition to this, the author included the tasks in connection with taking notes, writing summaries and comments, creating tables, to name just a few. Moreover, the author wants to equip his students with useful phrases and constructions that they might use later in their professional development. At the same time, students are presented with some practical language tools for their future communication in the engineering world. The language exercises, which accompany each unit, are aimed at improving students' reading, writing and speaking skills. Nonetheless, the textbook contains the tasks that indirectly improve students' listening comprehension, since they are tasked with finding podcasts on electrical engineering topics.

#### 4. PART II (UNITS 15-28)

The second part/module is a selection of topics that show a diversified potential of combining communicative method and direct method whilst illuminating themes, such as measuring instruments, renewable energy resources, robots, computer networks, integrated circuits and artificial intelligence. The pertinent thematic context of this part of the textbook motivates students to appropriately engage in discussions and express their view on a range of different electrical engineering and computer science issues. Since the author took into consideration the theory of multiple intelligences, one may notice that the tasks, which accompany the texts, are stimulating, creative, refreshing and engaging and trigger the students' curiosity by prompting them to delve further into the English discourse of electrical engineering and computer science. Backed by author's deep understanding of the English Language Teaching methodology and based on his experience in teaching with ground-breaking CALL technologies, the units within this part include interactive exercises involving the creative use of the Internet.

The texts abound in skill-building activities, ranging from cloze tests to creative use of the Internet. The first obvious merit of improving skills lies in the fact that this textbook is a collection of predefined materials, and as such may only serve as a loose matrix for further acquisition of skills pertaining to the specific field of electrical engineering. With so much information readily available in the form of text material, some units explore instances of diverse communicative events. Students are encouraged to build on the core lexis through their own Internet research. Having completed homework, they are invited to present their ideas in the form of reports, tables and Power Point presentations. They are expected to share the results of their research with other fellow students.

#### 5. EVALUATION

The present textbook focuses on English electrical engineering discourse and ESP communication skills needed for a career in academic research, commercial engineering and scientific contexts and settings. It is not surprising that *English for Electrical Engineering* is ideal both for electrical engineering students, scientists and practicing engineers.

The topics of the textbook are interesting since they grew out of the author's heterogeneous handouts and lecture notes. Each unit of this textbook represents a challenge that the potential readers are presented with. Moreover, this effect is achieved by using varied motivational strategies. It goes without saying that every page of this textbook is meticulously composed.

Furthermore, this textbook may serve as a starting point for English teachers who wish to design a similar ESP course, geared towards the needs and sensibilities of their own students. ESP teachers will find this textbook useful both when designing teaching material and in the ESP teaching process itself. In addition to this, the textbook may also be utilized in scientific and technical translation practice, discourse analysis of the specific language material, etc.

Reviewed by a panel of experts, language reviewers, linguists and electrical engineers, who are at the same time University Professors at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering in Belgrade, the textbook *English for Electrical Engineering – Modules 1 and 2* written by Dr. Miloš D. Đurić, enables potential users (electrical engineers, linguists interested in this discourse type and this register, and other non-specialists) to achieve higher level of proficiency in ESP and EAP whilst preparing them to carry out communicative tasks in the electrical engineering context.