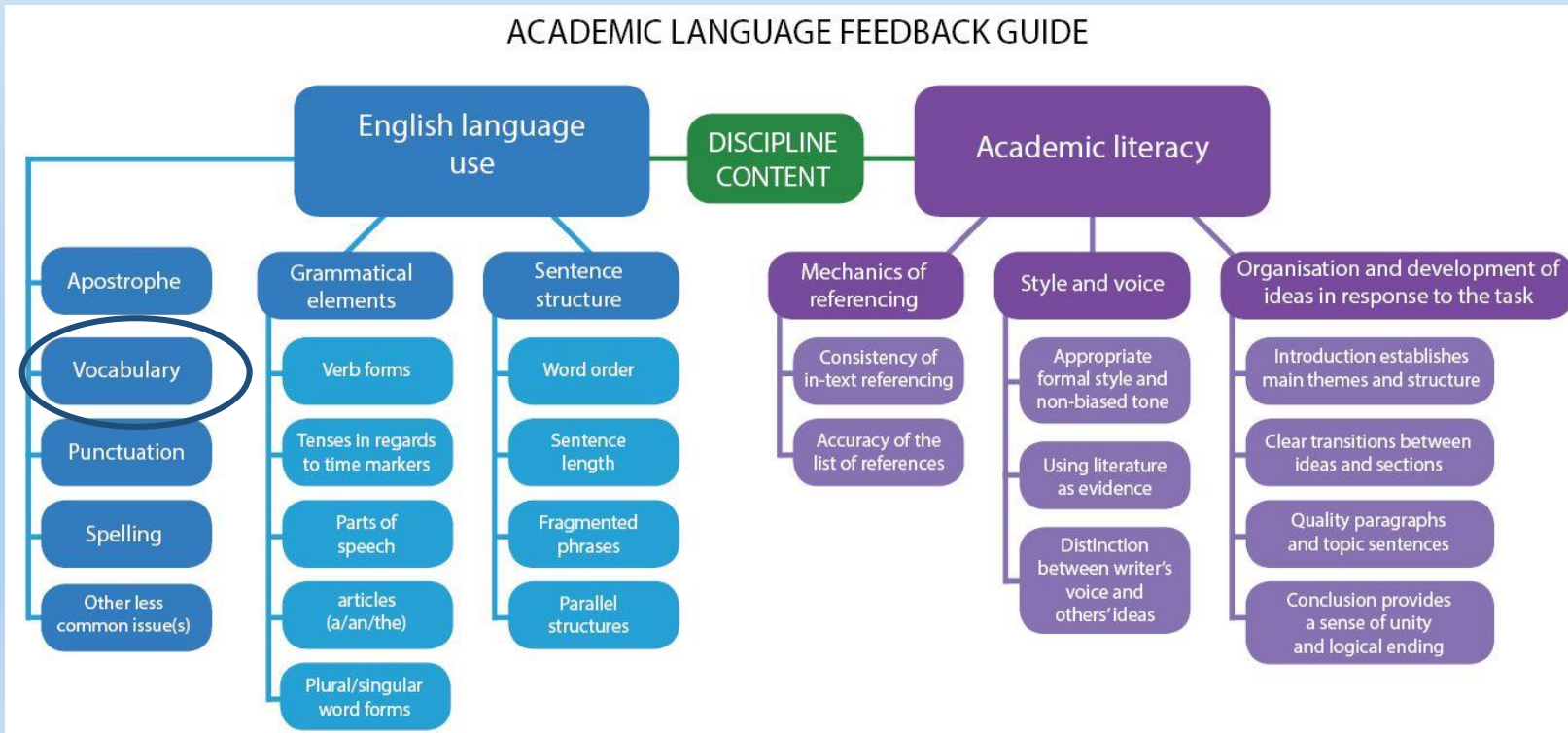


Vocabulary

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Re-visit





Developing your vocabulary

We need to have a wide lexical range to express complex ideas in academic settings. Our vocabulary needs to change according to circumstances. Academic vocabulary can be quite different from the words we use every day. Professional jargon also needs to be learnt for communication in academic and work settings. There are three questions to ask yourself if you are unsure about using words in your assignments:





1. What type of words do you need to know for your studies?
2. Can you identify your own strengths and weaknesses in terms of vocabulary use?
3. What can you do to ensure the continuing development of your lexical range?

There are several types of common mistakes made when learning and using vocabulary in academic settings:



1. Misusing words that may sound similar but have different meanings or denote different parts of speech:

<i>I encountered for all unexpected expenses.</i>		<i>I accounted for all unexpected expenses.</i>	
<i>My mental teacher was helpful.</i>		<i>My mentor teacher was helpful.</i>	

2. Misusing parts of speech and their functions on a sentence:

<i>The students evaluation the course today. (‘evaluation’ is a noun)</i>		<i>The students evaluate the course today. (‘evaluate’ is a verb)</i>	
<i>Lack of reading will effect a student’s range of vocabulary. (‘effect’ is a noun)</i>		<i>Lack of reading will affect a student’s range of vocabulary. (‘affect’ is a verb)</i>	

3. Repetition:

<i>Repetition can be avoided if repeating words are not constantly repeated in a sentence so knowing synonyms is important.</i>		<i>Repetition can be avoided if words from the same family are not constantly used in a sentence so knowing synonyms is important.</i>	
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Continuing with common vocabulary mistakes

4. Making up words:

<i>There were many participators in the study.</i> <u>X</u>	<i>There were many participants in the study.</i> ✓
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5. Misusing common collocations (= words that usually go together in a phrase):

<i>The students were fascinated of their classmates' presentations.</i> <u>X</u>	<i>The students were fascinated by their classmates' presentations.</i> ✓
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<i>They listened me.</i> <u>X</u>	<i>They listened to me.</i> ✓
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<i>This will show an opportunity not to be missed.</i> <u>X</u>	<i>This will provide an opportunity not to be missed.</i> ✓
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6. Using inappropriate style or register:

<i>The guys had stuff to do but they were not allowed to enter the lab.</i> <u>X</u>	<i>The students had tasks to complete but they were not allowed to enter the laboratory.</i> ✓
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Remedies for common vocabulary mistakes

1. Read actively:

- Build your academic vocabulary by noticing the words and phrases in the articles and books you read for your assignments.
- Make your own list of the key words and terms used in your discipline. When reading for your assignments and talking with teaching staff, familiarise yourself with your discipline discourse. Colloquial words may not be the most suitable to use in academic settings.
- Develop your general vocabulary by reading books and newspaper articles that interest you.
- Read transcripts of radio and television programs aired on the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC).

2. Consult dictionaries:

- Independent of your language background, use English-English dictionaries and a thesaurus to find out meanings of new or frequently used words in your discipline. You should not use the word if you are unclear about its meaning.
- Only use your first language dictionary after you have tried an English-English dictionary and consulted your tutors, classmates and friends.
- When you look up words, notice the various parts of speech related to each word and its use.

Remedies for common vocabulary mistakes (continued)

3. Use grammar books:

- Identify your own areas for improvement, for example, parts of speech, pronouns, contractions, verb tenses, prepositions, phrasal verbs and so on.
- Develop vocabulary to talk about language and its structure – it may be a very useful process to engage in.

4. Learn more about word roots, word families and word collocations:

- Familiarise yourself with common prefixes and suffixes and their meanings.
- Locate copies of the Academic Word List and list of Academic collocations.
- Learn new words together with associated prepositions and collocations.

Quick tips

Quick tips

Read academic articles and compile a list of relevant words and phrases to use in assignments.

Improve your understanding of grammar, paying attention to your choice of parts of speech and collocations.

Practise using new vocabulary in your discussions with classmates and in assignments.

Learn more section

Useful links on vocabulary

[Academic word list, Using English for Academic Purposes](#)

[Academic collocations list, Pearson](#)

[English Language Roots: Word Prefixes, suffixes and Syllables, PrefixSuffix.com, English Language Roots reference](#)

Vocabularysize.com Free vocabulary test

<http://my.vocabularysize.com/>

Free English-English dictionary to use on your computer, tablet or smart phone

<http://wordweb.info/free/>

[Module 1: Words](#), ASCENT program, Monash University

Face-to-face support

Who can help with English at Monash?

English Connect –

conversational circles,
peer feedback on your
writing and grammar
workshops



Resources – grammar books

Azar, B. S. & Hagen, S.A. (2009). *Understanding and using English grammar (4th ed.)*. USA: Pearson Longman.

Borjars, K. & Burridge, K. *Introducing English grammar (2nd ed.)*. London: Hodder Education.

Foley, M. & Hall, D. (2012). *MyGrammarLab (Advanced)*. England: Pearson.

Hewings, M. (2012). *Advanced grammar in use: a reference and practice book for advanced students of English (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Murphy, R. (2011). *English Grammar in Use (Intermediate) (3 ed.)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



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