

# USING ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

## PART I

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## Example Word Card & Smart Reading

- To conclude (v)

The researchers **concluded that** there was a correlation between hours of study and eventual grade

**Conclusion:** In **conclusion**, there appears to be little evidence to suggest . . .

**Conclusive:** Many researchers consider this **conclusive** evidence that . . .

**Inconclusive:** Research findings have been **inconclusive** regarding . . .

- [clu] to stop or shut in

Include

Exclude

The size of the financially excluded population in the world is enormous: **according to** the United Nations, **approximately** three billion people around the globe **lack access to** formal financial services – **such as** a bank account, credit, insurance, a safe place to keep savings and a secure and efficient means to receive social benefit payments – through a registered financial institution (Chibba, 2008; UN, 2007). Although this problem is universal, the financially excluded person is more often than not the average citizen in a developing country. Financial inclusion (FI), **within the broader context of** inclusive development, **is viewed as an important means** to tackle poverty and inequality, and **to address** the millennium development goals (MDGs). However, **in the** nascent **literature** on the subject, **there is scant treatment of** the main approaches

- According to \_\_\_\_\_, approximately \_\_\_\_\_ lack access to \_\_\_\_\_
- —such as A, B, and C—
- \_\_\_\_\_, within the broader context of \_\_\_\_\_, is viewed as \_\_\_\_\_
- An important means to address \_\_\_\_\_
- In the literature on \_\_\_\_\_, there is scant treatment of \_\_\_\_\_

ABANDON	ASSEMBLED	COLLAPSE	CONTEMPORARY	DEVIATE	EQUATE	FOUNDATION	INDICATE
ABSTRACT	ASSESS	COLLEAGUE	CONTEXT	DEVICE	EQUIP	FOUNDED	INDIVIDUAL
ACADEMIC	ASSIGN	COMMENCE	CONTRACT	DEVOTE	EQUIVALENT	FRAMEWORK	INDUCE
ACCESS	ASSIST	COMMENT	CONTRADICT	DIFFERENTIAL	ERODE	FUNCTION	INEVITABILITY
ACCOMMODATE	ASSUME	COMMISSION	CONTRARY	DIFFERENTIATE	ERROR	FUND	INFER
ACCOMPANIED	ASSURANCE	COMMIT	CONTRAST	DIMENSION	ESTABLISH	FUNDAMENTAL	INFRASTRUCTURE
ACCUMULATE	ATTACH	COMMODITIES	CONTRIBUTE	DIMINISH	ESTATE	FURTHERMORE	INHERENT
ACCURACY	ATTAIN	COMMUNICATE	CONTROVERSIAL	DISCRETE	ESTIMATE	GENDER	INHIBIT
ACHIEVE	ATTITUDE	COMMUNITY	CONVENTION	DISCRIMINATE	ETHIC	GENERATE	INITIAL
ACKNOWLEDGE	ATTRIBUTE	COMPENSATE	CONVERSE	DISPLACE	ETHNIC	GENERATION	INITIATE
ACQUIRE	AUTHOR	COMPILATION	CONVERT	DISPLAY	EVALUATE	GLOBAL	INJURE
ADAPT	AUTHORISE	COMPLEMENT	CONVINCE	DISPOSE	EVENTUAL	GOAL	INNOVATION
ADEQUACY	AUTHORITY	COMPLEX	COOPERATE	DISTINCT	EVIDENCE	GRADE	INPUT
ADJACENT	AUTOMATED	COMPONENT	COORDINATE	DISTORT	EVOLUTION	GRANT	INSERT
ADJUST	AVAILABLE	COMPOUND	CORE	DISTRIBUTE	EXCEED	GUARANTEE	INSIGHT
ADMINISTRATE	AWARE	COMPREHENSIVE	CORPORATE	DIVERSE	EXCLUDE	GUIDELINE	INSPECT
ADULT	BEHALF	COMPRISE	CORRESPOND	DOCUMENT	EXHIBIT	HENCE	INSTANCE
ADVOCACY	BENEFIT	COMPUTE	COUPLE	DOMAIN	EXPAND	HIERARCHICAL	INSTITUTE
AFFECT	BIAS	CONCEIVABLE	CREATE	DOMESTIC	EXPERT	HIGHLIGHT	INSTRUCTION
AGGREGATE	BOND	CONCENTRATE	CREDIT	DOMINATE	EXPLICIT	HYPOTHESES	INTEGRAL
AID	BRIEF	CONCEPT	CRITERIA	DRAFT	EXPLOIT	IDENTICAL	INTEGRATE
ALBEIT	BULK	CONCLUDE	CRUCIAL	DRAMATIC	EXPORT	IDENTIFY	INTEGRITY
ALLOCATE	CAPABLE	CONCURRENT	CULTURE	DURATION	EXPOSE	IDEOLOGY	INTELLIGENCE
ALTER	CAPACITY	CONDUCT	CURRENCY	DYNAMIC	EXTERNAL	IGNORANCE	INTENSE
ALTERNATIVE	CATEGORY	CONFER	CYCLE	ECONOMIC	EXTRACT	ILLUSTRATE	INTERACT
AMBIGUITIES	CEASE	CONFINE	DATA	EDIT	FACILITATE	IMAGE	INTERMEDIATE
AMEND	CHALLENGE	CONFIRM	DEBATE	ELEMENT	FACTOR	IMMIGRATE	INTERNAL
ANALOGIES	CHANNEL	CONFLICT	DECADE	ELIMINATE	FEATURE	IMPACT	INTERPRET
ANALYSE	CHAPTER	CONFORM	DECLINE	EMERGE	FEDERAL	IMPLEMENT	INTERVAL
ANNUAL	CHART	CONSENT	DEDUCE	EMPHASIS	FEE	IMPLICATE	INTERVENE
ANTICIPATE	CHEMICAL	CONSEQUENCE	DEFINE	EMPIRICAL	FILE	IMPLICIT	INTRINSIC
APPARENT	CIRCUMSTANCE	CONSIDERABLE	DEFINITE	ENABLE	FINAL	IMPLIED	INVEST
APPENDICES	CITE	CONSIST	DEMONSTRABLE	ENCOUNTER	FINANCE	IMPOSE	INVESTIGATE
APPRECIABLY	CIVIL	CONSTANT	DENOTE	ENERGY	FINITE	INCENTIVE	INVOKE
APPROACH	CLARIFICATION	CONSTITUTE	DENY	ENFORCE	FLEXIBILITY	INCIDENCE	INVOLVE
APPROPRIATE	CLASSIC	CONSTRAIN	DEPRESSION	ENHANCE	FLUCTUATE	INCLINATION	ISOLATE
APPROXIMATE	CLAUSE	CONSTRUCT	DERIVE	ENORMOUS	FOCUS	INCOME	ISSUE
ARBITRARINESS	CODE	CONSULT	DESIGN	ENSURE	FORMAT	INCOMPATIBLE	ITEM
AREA	COHERENCE	CONSUME	DESPITE	ENTITY	FORMULA	INCORPORATE	JOB
ASPECT	COINCIDE	CONTACT	DETECT	ENVIRONMENT	FORTHCOMING	INDEX	JOURNAL

JUSTIFY	NEGATIVE	PHENOMENA	RADICAL	SCHEME	SURVEY	VARY
LABEL	NETWORK	PHILOSOPHY	RANDOM	SCOPE	SURVIVE	VEHICLE
LABOUR	NEUTRAL	PHYSICAL	RANGE	SECTION	SUSPEND	VERSION
LAYER	NEVERTHELESS	PLUS	RATIO	SECTOR	SUSTAIN	VIA
LECTURE	NONETHELESS	POLICY	RATIONAL	SECURE	SYMBOL	VIOLATE
LEGAL	NORM	PORTION	REACT	SEEK	TAPE	VIRTUAL
LEGISLATE	NORMAL	POSE	RECOVER	SELECT	TARGET	VISIBLE
LEVIES	NOTION	POSITIVE	REFINE	SEQUENCE	TASK	VISION
LIBERAL	NOTWITHSTANDING	POTENTIAL	REGIME	SERIES	TEAM	VISUAL
LICENCE	NUCLEAR	PRACTITIONER	REGION	SEX	TECHNICAL	VOLUME
LIKEWISE	OBJECTIVE	PRECEDE	REGISTER	SHIFT	TECHNIQUE	VOLUNTARY
LINK	OBTAIN	PRECISE	REGULATE	SIGNIFICANCE	TECHNOLOGY	WELFARE
LOCATE	OBVIOUS	PREDICT	REINFORCE	SIMILAR	TEMPORARILY	WHEREAS
LOGIC	OCCUPY	PREDOMINANCE	REJECT	SIMULATE	TENSION	WIDESPREAD
MAINTAIN	OCCUR	PRELIMINARY	RELAX	SITE	TERMINATE	
MAJOR	ODD	PRESUME	RELEASE	SO-CALLED	TEXT	
MANIPULATE	OFFSET	PREVIOUS	RELEVANT	SOLE	THEME	
MANUAL	ONGOING	PRIMARY	RELIABILITY	SOMEWHAT	THEORY	
MARGIN	OPTION	PRIME	RELUCTANCE	SOURCE	THEREBY	
MATURE	ORGANISM	PRINCIPAL	REMOVE	SPECIFIC	THESIS	
MAXIMISE	ORIENTATION	PRINCIPLE	REQUIRE	SPECIFY	TOPIC	
MECHANISM	OUTCOME	PRIOR	RESEARCH	SPHERE	TRACE	
MEDIA	OUTPUT	PRIORITIES	RESIDE	STABLE	TRADITION	
MEDIATE	OVERALL	PROCEDURAL	RESOLVE	STATISTIC	TRANSFER	
MEDICAL	OVERLAP	PROCESS	RESOURCE	STATUS	TRANSFORM	
MEDIUM	OVERSEAS	PROFESSIONAL	RESPOND	STRAIGHTFORWARD	TRANSIT	
MENTAL	PANEL	PROHIBIT	RESTORATION	STRATEGY	TRANSMISSION	
METHOD	PARADIGM	PROJECT	RESTRAIN	STRESS	TRANSPORT	
MIGRATION	PARAGRAPH	PROMOTE	RESTRICT	STRUCTURE	TREND	
MILITARY	PARALLEL	PROPORTION	RETAIN	STYLE	TRIGGER	
MINIMAL	PARAMETER	PROSPECT	REVEAL	SUBMISSION	TUTOR	
MINIMISE	PARTICIPATE	PROTOCOL	REVENUE	SUBORDINATE	ULTIMATE	
MINIMUM	PARTNERSHIP	PSYCHOLOGY	REVERSAL	SUBSEQUENT	UNDERGO	
MINISTRY	PASSIVE	PUBLICATION	REVISED	SUBSIDIARY	UNDERLYING	
MINOR	PERCEIVE	PUBLISH	REVOLUTION	SUBSTITUTE	UNDERTAKE	
MODE	PERCENT	PURCHASE	RIGID	SUCCESSOR	UNIFORM	
MODIFY	PERIOD	PURSUE	ROLE	SUFFICIENCY	UNIFYING	
MONITOR	PERSIST	QUALITATIVE	ROUTE	SUM	UNIQUE	
MOTIVATE	PERSPECTIVE	QUOTATION	SCENARIO	SUMMARY	UTILITY	
MUTUAL	PHASE	RACIAL	SCHEDULE	SUPPLEMENT	VALID	

UNIT  
3.1

# Approaches to Vocabulary

International students may be understandably concerned by the quantity and complexity of vocabulary required for reading academic texts in their subject area. But developing vocabulary involves more than learning lists of words. Part 3 provides a variety of approaches to improving students' understanding in this area.

## 1 Introduction

- This paragraph illustrates some of the vocabulary difficulties facing students when reading and writing academic texts. Read it carefully, paying particular attention to words in bold.

### Going to Extremes?

Muller (2012) **maintains** that the increased frequency of extreme weather events is linked to global warming, **in particular** to rising sea temperatures. **However**, McKenzie (2013) **insists** Muller has **a bee in his bonnet** on this topic, caused by using a **dysfunctional** model, and that there is no real evidence that **phenomena** such as flooding and hurricanes are becoming more common. He considers that the **key** issue is the growing population in areas vulnerable to events such as floods. Muller's **principal** concern is a rise in the temperature of the north Pacific Ocean of **0.5° C** since 1968, which McKenzie regards as being within the normal range of historical fluctuation. But Javez (2009) and Simmonds (2011), *inter alia*, have argued for an international research programme under the auspices of **UNESCO** to monitor these events, given the **threefold** rise in the cost of insurance claims since 2000.

- Study the table below, which shows where this type of vocabulary is dealt with more fully.

Line	Item	Vocabulary issue	Unit
1 3	maintains insists	referring verbs for summarising ideas	3.4
2	in particular however	conjunctions	3.5
3	a bee in his bonnet	idiom	3.1
4	dysfunctional	can be understood by the prefix	3.7
4	phenomena	approximate synonym for events	3.10
5	key	metaphor	3.1
7	principal	often confused with 'principle'	3.1
7 11	0.5° C threefold	numerical information	3.6
9	inter alia	phrase from another language	3.1
10	UNESCO	abbreviation	3.2

## 2 Discussing language

The following words (all nouns) are used to describe common features of language.

- Discuss the words in the list with a partner. Try to think of an example of each.

<b>Ambiguity</b>	Where more than one meaning is possible; lack of clarity
<b>Anecdote</b>	A story told to illustrate a situation or idea
<b>Cliché</b>	An overused idea or phrase; lacking in freshness
<b>Euphemism</b>	Word or phrase used to avoid the embarrassment of naming something directly
<b>Exaggeration</b>	Making something better or worse than reality
<b>Idiom</b>	Common phrase used in colloquial speech; meaning of which is not obvious
<b>Metaphor</b>	A word used to describe something different from the original meaning
<b>Paradox</b>	An idea that seems wrong but yet may be true
<b>Proverb</b>	A traditional statement or rhyme containing advice or a moral

<b>Saying</b>	An often-repeated comment that seems to contain some truth
<b>Simile</b>	A comparison of two things, using 'like' or 'as'
<b>Slogan</b>	A frequently repeated phrase used in advertising or politics
<b>Statement</b>	A rather formal comment on a situation
<b>Synopsis</b>	A summary of something
<b>Understatement</b>	Saying less than you feel; the opposite of exaggeration

## 3 Practice

- Study the following sentences and decide which of the features listed above is illustrated by each one.

- He argued that allowing students to smoke on campus would destroy the college's reputation. ( exaggeration )
- The President said she regretted the loss of life in the typhoon and sympathised with the survivors. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- At the beginning of the lecture Professor Chang told them about an accident she had seen that morning. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- There's no such thing as a free lunch, he warned them. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- The author of the report passed away on November 21st. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- He told the class that their law course was a voyage over an uncharted ocean. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- After his laptop was stolen, with the only copy of his dissertation on it, he said he felt rather annoyed. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- She said that the older she got, the less she seemed to know. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- After the price rise, sales fell like a stone. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- It is said that the early bird catches the worm. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- Their teacher explained that the novel consisted of two parts; the first historical, the second contemporary. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- He was over the moon when he won the scholarship. ( idiom )
- 'Finger lickin' good' has sold millions of chicken meals. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- His feelings towards his old school were a mixture of love and hate. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- Paris is the capital of romance; the city for lovers. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

## 4 Confusing pairs

Certain common words cause confusion because they have similar but distinct spellings and meanings:

*The drought affected the wheat harvest in Australia*

*An immediate effect of the price rise was a fall in demand*

'Affect' and 'effect' are two different words. 'Affect' is a verb, while 'effect' is commonly used as a noun.

- Study the differences between other similar confusing pairs (most common use in brackets).

### accept (verb)/except (prep)

It is difficult to **accept** their findings

The report is finished **except** for the conclusion

### compliment (noun/verb)/complement (verb)

Her colleagues **complimented** her on her presentation

His latest book **complements** his previous research on African politics

### economic (adj)/economical (adj)

Inflation was one economic **result** of the war

Sharing a car to go to work was an **economical** move

### its (pronoun)/it's (pronoun + verb)

The car's advanced design was **its** most distinct feature

**It's** widely agreed that carbon emissions are rising

### lose (verb)/loose (adj)

No general ever plans to **lose** a battle

He stressed the **loose** connection between religion and psychology

### principal (adj/noun)/principle (noun)

Zurich is the **principal** city of Switzerland

All economists recognise the **principle** of supply and demand

### rise (verb – past tense rose)/raise (verb – past tense raised)

The population of Sydney **rose** by 35 per cent in the century

The university **raised** its fees by 10 per cent last year

### site (noun)/sight (noun)

The **site** of the battle is now covered by an airport

His **sight** began to weaken when he was in his eighties

### tend to (verb)/trend (noun)

Young children **tend to** enjoy making a noise

In many countries there is a **trend** towards smaller families

- Choose the correct word in each sentence.

- The company was founded on the principals/principles of quality and value.
- Millions of people are attempting to lose/loose weight.
- Sunspots have been known to affect/effect radio communication.
- Professor Poledna received their compliments/complements politely.
- The ancient symbol depicted a snake eating it's/its tail.
- Both social and economical/economic criteria need to be examined.
- It took many years for some of Einstein's theories to be accepted/excepted.

## 5 Words and phrases from other languages

When reading academic texts, you may meet words and phrases from other languages, usually Latin, German or French. They are generally used because there is no exact English equivalent, and they are often printed in italics:

While the basic tripartite division of the theory into *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello* and *jus post-bellum*, and the criteria related to each . . .

(meaning: reasons for going to war, laws of warfare and rules for post-war)

You are not expected to use these phrases in your own writing, but it is useful to understand them when you read. They can be found in a dictionary, but some of the more common are listed below:

Latin

<i>ad hoc</i>	unplanned
<i>de facto</i>	as it really is
<i>de jure</i>	according to law
<i>inter alia</i>	among others
<i>in vitro</i>	studies conducted on isolated organs (in Biology)
<i>pro rata</i>	proportional



UNIT  
3.4

# Academic Vocabulary

## Verbs and Adverbs

When reading a text, it is useful to identify and understand the main verb: this is often the key to understanding the whole sentence. This unit looks at the more formal verbs used in academic writing, the verbs of reference used to introduce summaries, and outlines the use of adverbs.

### 1 Understanding main verbs

- Study the following sentence and underline the main verbs:

The author concludes that no reasonable alternative is currently available to replace constitutional democracy, even though he does not completely reject the possibility of creating a better political system in the future.

To follow the writer's meaning, the reader needs to be clear that 'conclude' and 'reject' are the main verbs in the two parts of the sentence.

Academic writing tends to use rather formal verbs to express the writer's meaning accurately:

*In the last decade the pace of change **accelerated**.*

*Could Darwin have **envisaged** the controversy his work has caused?*

In spoken English, we are more likely to use 'speed up' and 'imagined'.

- Study the list below and find a synonym in each case.

(Some of these verbs (e.g. 'hold') are used in academic writing with a special meaning.)

Verb	Example of use	Synonym
to adapt	the health system has been <b>adapted</b> from France	<i>modify</i>
to arise	a similar situation <b>arises</b> when we look at younger children	
to conduct	the largest study was <b>conducted</b> in Finland	
to characterise	developing countries are <b>characterised</b> by ...	
to clarify	the project was designed to <b>clarify</b> these contradictions	
to concentrate on	that study <b>concentrated on</b> older children	
to be concerned with	the programme is <b>concerned</b> primarily <b>with</b> ...	
to demonstrate	further research has <b>demonstrated</b> that few factors ...	
to determine	the water content was experimentally <b>determined</b>	
to discriminate	a failure to <b>discriminate</b> between the two species	
to establish	the northern boundary was <b>established</b> first	
to exhibit	half of the patients <b>exhibited</b> signs of improvement	
to focus on	her work <b>focused on</b> female managers	
to generate	a question that has <b>generated</b> a range of responses	
to hold	Newton's second Law, $F = ma$ , <b>holds</b> everywhere	
to identify	three main areas have been <b>identified</b>	
to imply	his absence <b>implies</b> a lack of interest	
to interact	understand how the two systems <b>interact</b>	
to interpret	the result can be <b>interpreted</b> as a limited success	
to manifest	as <b>manifested</b> in antisocial behaviour	

Verb	Example of use	Synonym
to overcome	both difficulties were <b>overcome</b> in the first week	
to propose	they <b>propose</b> that social class is the main factor	
to prove	the use of solar power is <b>proving</b> successful	
to recognise	he is now <b>recognised</b> as a leading expert	
to relate to	the pattern was <b>related to</b> both social and physical factors	
to supplement	the diet was <b>supplemented</b> with calcium and iodine	
to undergo	the system <b>underwent</b> major changes in the 1980s	
to yield	both surveys <b>yielded</b> mixed results	

2 Using verbs of reference

Referring verbs are used to summarise another writer’s ideas:

*Previn argued that global warming was mainly caused by the solar cycle.*  
*Bakewell (1992) found that most managers tended to use traditional terms . . .*

They may also be used to introduce a quotation:

*. . . as Scott observed: ‘Comment is free but facts are sacred.’*

Most of these verbs are followed by a noun clause beginning with ‘that’.

(a) The following mean that the writer is presenting a case:

argue claim consider hypothesise suggest believe think state  
*Melville (2007) suggested that eating raw eggs could be harmful.*

(b) A second group describe a reaction to a previously stated position:

accept admit agree with deny doubt  
*Handlesmith doubts Melville’s suggestion that eating raw eggs . . .*

(c) Others include:

assume conclude discover explain imply indicate maintain presume  
reveal show  
*Patel (2003) assumes that inflation will remain low.*

3 Practice A

■ Write a sentence referring to what the following writers said (more than one verb may be suitable). Use the past tense.

Example:  
Z: ‘My research shows that biofuels are environmentally neutral.’  
Z **claimed/argued** that biofuels were environmentally neutral.

- (a) A: ‘I may have made a mistake in my calculations on energy loss.’
- (b) B: ‘I did not say that women make better doctors than men.’
- (c) C: ‘Small firms are more dynamic than large ones.’
- (d) D: ‘I support C’s views on small firms.’
- (e) E: ‘I’m not sure, but most people probably work to earn money.’
- (f) F: ‘After much research, I’ve found that allergies are becoming more common.’
- (g) G: ‘I think it unlikely that electric cars will replace conventional ones.’
- (h) H: ‘There may be a link between crime and sunspot activity.’

4 Further referring verbs

A small group of verbs is followed by the pattern (somebody/thing + for + noun/gerund):

blame censure commend condemn criticise  
*Lee (1998) blamed the media for creating uncertainty.*

NB: All except ‘commend’ have a negative meaning.

Another group is followed by (somebody/thing + as + noun/gerund):

assess characterise classify define describe evaluate identify  
interpret portray present  
*Terry interprets rising oil prices as a result of the Asian recovery.*

## 5 Practice B

- Rewrite the following statements using verbs from the lists in (4) on p. 175.

Example:

K: 'Guttman's work is responsible for many of the current social problems'.

K **blamed** Guttman's work for many of the current social problems.

- (a) L: 'She was very careless about her research methods.'
- (b) M: 'There are four main types of children in care.'
- (c) N: 'That company has an excellent record for workplace safety.'
- (d) O: 'The noises whales make must be expressions of happiness.'
- (e) P: 'Wind power and biomass will be the leading green energy sources.'
- (f) Q: 'Darwin was the most influential naturalist of the nineteenth century.'

## 6 Using adverbs

In the sentence given here, adverbs are used to give information about time (currently) and degree (completely):

*The author concludes that no reasonable alternative is **currently** available to replace constitutional democracy, even though he does not **completely** reject the possibility of creating a better political system in the future.*

- (1) Adverbs are used in academic writing in a variety of ways. Among the most important are:

- (a) to provide more detail, with verbs and adjectives:

*Reasonably good data are available for only . . .*

*. . . decomposition **eventually** ceases in modern landfills . . .*

- (b) individually, often at the beginning of sentences, to introduce new points or link sentences together:

***Currently**, the Earth's atmosphere appears to be warming up.*

***Alternatively**, the use of non-conventional renewable energies . . .*

NB: Adverbs used individually need to be employed with care. It is dangerous to overuse them, since they are often like the author's 'voice', commenting on the topic. As the academic writer aims to be objective, adverbs such as 'fortunately' or 'remarkably' may be unsuitable.

- (2) Adverbs linked to verbs and adjectives usually fall into three groups:

- (a) time (when?)

*previously published*

*retrospectively examined*

- (b) degree (how much?)

*declined considerably*

*contribute substantially*

- (c) manner (in what way?)

*medically complicated*

*remotely located*

Further common examples include:

<i>Time</i>	<i>Degree</i>	<i>Manner</i>
recently	clearly	(un)surprisingly
increasingly	particularly	factually
originally	broadly	politically
presently	highly	locally
currently	wholly	alternatively
traditionally	crucially	similarly
continuously	emphatically	psychologically

## 7 Practice C

- Insert a suitable adverb from the lists above into the gaps in the sentences.

- (a) Most houses do not have electricity. \_\_\_\_\_, then, there is little chance of improving living standards.
- (b) \_\_\_\_\_, the Internet was mainly used for academic purposes.
- (c) Some courses are assessed purely by exams. \_\_\_\_\_, coursework may be employed.
- (d) \_\_\_\_\_, there has been growing concern about financing the health service.
- (e) Many birds use bright colours to attract a mate. \_\_\_\_\_, flowers advertise their position to fertilising insects.
- (f) \_\_\_\_\_, the development should be acceptable environmentally.

## 6 Practice

■ Explain the abbreviations in the following sentences.

- (a) The failure rate among ICT projects in HE reaches 40 per cent (Smith *et al.*, 2008).
- (b) GM technology is leading to advances in many fields (e.g. forestry).
- (c) The world's most populous country (i.e. China) joined the WTO in 2001.
- (d) NB. CVs must be submitted to HR by 30 June.
- (e) The city seems to have been destroyed c.2,500 BCE.
- (f) The EU hopes to achieve a standard rate of VAT.
- (g) Her PhD examined the threat of TB in SE Asia.
- (h) Fig. 4 Trade patterns on the www (2003–2008).
- (i) The VC is meeting the PGCE students.
- (j) Director of PR required – salary approx. \$75K.
- (k) Re: the AGM next month: the report is needed asap.
- (l) Prof. Wren claimed that the quality of MSc and MA research was falling.

## UNIT 3.3

# Academic Vocabulary

## Nouns and Adjectives

To read and write academic papers effectively, students need to be familiar with the rather formal vocabulary widely used in this area. This unit focuses on nouns and adjectives, while Unit 3.4 looks at verbs and adverbs.

### 1 Introduction

The quantity and complexity of vocabulary needed to read academic texts often concerns international students. But it is worth remembering that much of that vocabulary is specific to your subject area, for example in the sentence:

*The effectiveness of this malaria vaccine has been a subject of controversy.*

'Malaria vaccine' will be understood by medical students, while 'effectiveness' and 'controversy' are general academic vocabulary that all students need to understand. The focus of this course is on the general vocabulary common to most disciplines.

### 2 Nouns

- Study the following list of common nouns with examples of use. With a partner, discuss the meaning of each noun.

accuracy

Repeating the experiment will improve the **accuracy** of the results.

analysis	His <b>analysis</b> of the alloy showed a high percentage of copper.
approach	Professor Han has brought a new <b>approach</b> to the study of genetics.
assessment	She failed the first module <b>assessment</b> but passed the final one.
assumption	He made the <b>assumption</b> that all the students spoke French.
authority	Dr James is our leading <b>authority</b> on maritime law.
category	Her work established two <b>categories</b> of local governance.
claim	Their <b>claim</b> that the island was first inhabited in 550 BCE is false.
controversy	Climate change is an issue that has caused much <b>controversy</b> .
correlation	They found a <b>correlation</b> between height and health.
deterrent	The harsh climate of the desert acted as a <b>deterrent</b> to exploration.
emphasis	Their teacher put the <b>emphasis</b> on practical research.
evidence	The X-ray provided <b>evidence</b> of his lung infection.
exception	The Tesla is an <b>exception</b> to the idea of slow, small electric cars.
extract	He read a short <b>extract</b> from his paper on Hegel to the class.
ideology	Military power was at the heart of Roman <b>ideology</b> .
implication	The <b>implication</b> of the report is that we need to do more research.
innovation	Steam power was a significant <b>innovation</b> in the eighteenth century.
intuition	<b>Intuition</b> has been described as 'a gut feeling'.
motivation	Money is often claimed to be the <b>motivation</b> for most workers.
perspective	Sigmund Freud's work opened a new <b>perspective</b> on human behaviour.
phenomenon	Earthquakes are an unusual <b>phenomenon</b> in Britain.
policy	The university has a zero-tolerance <b>policy</b> on plagiarism.
preference	Her <b>preference</b> was criminal law, but other fields were more profitable.
process	The drug trials involved a three-stage <b>process</b> that took two years.
proposal	The Professor's <b>proposal</b> for more seminars was rejected.
provision	The library has increased its <b>provision</b> of computer terminals by 100 per cent.

sequence	Writing is a <b>sequence</b> of reading, note-taking, planning and drafting.
strategy	Swimming every day was part of his <b>strategy</b> for getting fit.
substitute	To what extent can natural gas be a <b>substitute</b> for oil?
technique	She developed a new <b>technique</b> for collecting the beetles.
validity	Events confirmed the <b>validity</b> of his prediction.

■ Complete each sentence with a suitable noun.

- The excavation found no \_\_\_\_\_ of human settlement before 1250 BCE.
- The tutor asked the class for their \_\_\_\_\_ for next semester's topics.
- Many great discoveries were based on \_\_\_\_\_ rather than logic.
- Due to the rising birth rate \_\_\_\_\_ was made for more school places.
- Few believed Galileo's \_\_\_\_\_ that the earth went round the sun.

### 3 Using nouns and adjectives

It is easy to confuse the noun and adjective form of words such as 'possible' and 'possibility'.

■ Compare these sentences:

*The efficiency of the machine depends on the precision of its construction.*

*Precise construction results in an efficient machine.*

The first sentence uses the nouns 'efficiency' and 'precision'. The second uses adjectives: 'precise' and 'efficient'. Although the meaning is similar, the first sentence is more formal. Effective academic writing requires accurate use of both nouns and adjectives.

■ Complete the gaps in the table below.

Noun	Adjective	Noun	Adjective
<i>approximation</i>	approximate		particular
superiority		reason	
	strategic		synthetic
politics		economics/economy*	
	industrial		cultural
exterior		average	

Noun	Adjective	Noun	Adjective
	high		reliable
heat		strength	
	confident		true
width		probability	
	necessary		long
danger		relevance	

\* Compare the three nouns:

**Economics** is a demanding undergraduate degree course (academic subject)

The Greek **economy** is heavily in debt (national economy, countable)

**Economy** is needed to reduce the deficit (saving money, uncountable)

#### 4 Practice A

■ Insert a suitable noun or adjective from the table in each sentence.

- The students were \_\_\_\_\_ their project would be successful.
- One of Tokyo's \_\_\_\_\_ is its excellent transport system.
- There is a strong \_\_\_\_\_ that fees will rise next year.
- The students complained that the lecture was not \_\_\_\_\_ to their course.
- The results are so surprising it will be \_\_\_\_\_ to repeat the experiment.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ household size in Turkey is 4.1.
- Regularly backing up computer files reduces the \_\_\_\_\_ of losing vital work.
- Revising for exams is a tedious \_\_\_\_\_.
- These data appear to be \_\_\_\_\_ and should not be trusted.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ date of the founding of Rome is 750 BCE.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ consequences of the war were inflation and unemployment.
- They attempted to make a \_\_\_\_\_ of all the different proposals.

#### 5 Academic adjectives

The following adjectives are best understood and learnt as opposites:

absolute	relative
abstract	concrete
accurate	inaccurate
ambiguous	unambiguous
analytic	synthetic
effective	ineffective
exclusive	inclusive
logical	illogical
metaphorical	literal
precise	vague or approximate or rough
rational	irrational
reliable	unreliable
relevant	irrelevant
specific	non-specific
subjective	objective
theoretical	practical or empirical or pragmatic

Examples:

*Inflation is an **abstract** concept.*

*The **metaphorical** use of the word 'key' is probably more common than its **literal** one.*

*The study of engineering is very **relevant** to architecture.*

*Her study of women in education was criticised for being too **subjective**.*

*In Europe, **empirical** research began in the sixteenth century.*

## 6 Practice B

- Complete each sentence with a suitable adjective from the list in (5) on p. 169.

- (a) The teacher complained that the quotes were \_\_\_\_\_ to the title.
- (b) His \_\_\_\_\_ approach led him to ignore some inconvenient facts.
- (c) \_\_\_\_\_ examples are needed to make the argument clear.
- (d) It is sufficient to give \_\_\_\_\_ figures for national populations.
- (e) Poverty is usually regarded as a \_\_\_\_\_ concept.
- (f) They approached the task in a \_\_\_\_\_ way by first analysing the title.
- (g) The students preferred examining case studies to \_\_\_\_\_ discussion.
- (h) The results were \_\_\_\_\_: the victims had definitely been poisoned.

## 7 Practice C

- Underline the adjective in each sentence and write the related noun in brackets.

*Example:*

Several steel producers are likely to shut down next year. ( likelihood )

- (a) The HR team have just completed a strategic review of pay. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- (b) Dr Lee adopted an analytical approach to the inquiry. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- (c) Nylon was one of the earliest synthetic fibres. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- (d) Her major contribution to the research was her study of ante-natal care.  
( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- (e) All advertising must respect cultural differences. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- (f) Some progress was made in the theoretical area. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- (g) A frequent complaint is that too much reading is expected. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- (h) We took a more critical approach to marketing theory. ( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- (i) The Department of Social Policy is offering three courses this year.  
( \_\_\_\_\_ )
- (j) Finally, the practical implications of my findings will be examined.  
( \_\_\_\_\_ )

Students wishing to develop their academic vocabulary should study the Academic Word List (AWL). This is a list of 570 items commonly found in academic texts across various disciplines, created by Averil Coxhead.

See Sandra Haywood's website for information about the AWL, with further practice exercises: [www.nottingham.ac.uk/~alzsh3/acvocab/](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/~alzsh3/acvocab/)

# UNIT 3.5

# Conjunctions

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Conjunctions are words or phrases that join parts of a sentence together, or link a sentence to the next one. Effective reading and writing requires clarity about their meaning. This unit describes the different functions of conjunctions and practises their use. Other ways of linking sections of text are explained in Unit 2.3 Cohesion.

## 1 Types of conjunctions

Note the way conjunctions work in the following sentences:

*Demand for food is increasing because the population is growing.*

*Mechanisation has increased crop yields, yet production is still inadequate.*

In the first sentence, 'because' introduces a reason; in the second, 'yet' indicates opposition.

■ Underline the conjunctions in the following sentences.

- A few inventions, for instance television, have had a major impact on everyday life.
- Furthermore, many patients were treated in clinics and surgeries.
- The definition of 'special needs' is important since it is the cause of some disagreement.
- The technology allows consumers a choice, thus increasing their sense of satisfaction.
- Four hundred people were interviewed for the survey, then the results were analysed.
- However, another body of opinion associates globalisation with unfavourable outcomes.

■ There are six main types of conjunction. Match each of the types below to one of the sentences above.

- Addition ( 6 )
- Result (     )
- Reason (     )
- Opposition (     )
- Example (     )
- Time (     )

## 2 Practice A

When reading a text, conjunctions are like signposts to help the reader follow the ideas.

■ Read the paragraph below and underline the conjunctions, then decide what their functions are (i.e. types i-vi above).

### BIOFUELS

Newly published research examines some important questions about the growing use of biofuels, such as ethanol made from maize. The production of these has increased sharply recently, but the replacement of food crops with fuel crops has been heavily criticised. Although initially seen as a more environmentally friendly type of fuel, the research shows that producing some biofuels, for instance biodiesel palm oil, is more polluting than using conventional oil. The ethanol produced from sugar cane, however, can have negative emissions, in other words taking carbon dioxide from the atmosphere instead of adding it. Consequently, it can be seen that the situation is rather confused, and that biofuels are neither a magic solution to the energy problem, nor are they the environmental disaster sometimes suggested.

Conjunction	Type	Conjunction	Type
(a) <i>such as</i>	<i>example</i>	(f)	
(b)		(g)	
(c)		(h)	
(d)		(i)	
(e)		(j)	



3 Common conjunctions

■ Working with a partner, complete the table with as many examples of conjunctions as possible.

Addition	Result	Reason	Opposition	Example	Time

4 Practice B

■ Insert a suitable conjunction into each gap.

- (a) \_\_\_\_\_ checking the equipment, the experiment was repeated.
- (b) \_\_\_\_\_ most people use the train, a minority walk or cycle.
- (c) Brick is a thermally efficient building material. It is, \_\_\_\_\_, cheap.
- (d) Demand has increased for summer courses, \_\_\_\_\_ extra ones are offered this year.
- (e) Many writers, \_\_\_\_\_ Chekhov, have been doctors.
- (f) \_\_\_\_\_ the increase in residence fees, more students are moving out.
- (g) \_\_\_\_\_ Mustafa was in the lecture, his car was being repaired.
- (h) \_\_\_\_\_ he was studying Italian, he spent a semester in Bologna.

5 Practice C

■ Insert a suitable conjunction into each gap.

Geoengineering

Geoengineers believe that it may be possible to counteract the effects of global warming by large scale engineering projects, (a) \_\_\_\_\_ the 'solar umbrella' designed to reflect sunlight back into space. (b) \_\_\_\_\_ no major

schemes have yet been attempted, there is already controversy about the risks involved.

Two different approaches are suggested: (c) \_\_\_\_\_ to block incoming sunlight, (d) \_\_\_\_\_ alternatively to take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. One proposal, (e) \_\_\_\_\_, consists of putting iron into the sea in order to encourage the growth of the tiny sea creatures which absorb carbon dioxide. (f) \_\_\_\_\_ this second approach is unlikely to create major problems, blocking sunlight is potentially dangerous, (g) \_\_\_\_\_ the risk of affecting rainfall patterns (h) \_\_\_\_\_ even ocean currents. (i) \_\_\_\_\_ bioengineers are anxious to establish clear guidelines before any large-scale experiments are carried out.

6 Conjunctions of opposition

In some ways, these are the most important type of conjunction, and can be the most difficult to use accurately. Note the position of the conjunctions in the following examples:

*The economy is strong, but/yet there are frequent strikes.*  
*Although/while there are frequent strikes, the economy is strong.*  
*In spite of/despite the frequent strikes, the economy is strong.*  
*There are frequent strikes. However/nevertheless, the economy is strong.*

■ Write two sentences in each case.

*Example: The equipment was expensive/unreliable.*  
*The equipment was expensive but unreliable.*  
*Although the equipment was expensive it was unreliable.*

- (a) The government claimed that inflation was falling. The opposition said it was rising.
  - (i) \_\_\_\_\_
  - (ii) \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) This department must reduce expenditure. It needs to install new computers.
  - (i) \_\_\_\_\_
  - (ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(c) Sales of the new car were poor. It was heavily advertised.

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

## 7 Practice D

■ Finish the sentences in a suitable way.

- (a) In contrast to America, where gun ownership is common, ...
- (b) Despite leaving school at the age of 14, ...
- (c) The majority displayed a positive attitude to the proposal, but ...
- (d) While the tutor insisted that the essay was easy, ...
- (e) Although the spring was cold and dry, ...

## UNIT 3.6

# Numbers

Many students are required to write about statistical data clearly and accurately. This unit explains and practises the basic language of numbers and percentages, while presenting data in charts and tables is dealt with in Unit 2.14 Visual Information.

## 1 The language of numbers

In introductions, numbers are often used to give an accurate account of a situation:

*Approximately 1,800 children between the ages of 5 and 12 years were randomly selected.*

*The earth's atmosphere appears to be gaining 3.3 billion metric tons of carbon annually.*

*... but five winters in the twentieth century were more than 2.4° C colder than average.*

Figures and numbers are both used to talk about statistical data in a general sense:

*The figures/numbers in the report need to be read critically.*

But **number** is used more widely:

*13 is an unlucky number in some cultures.*

*She forgot her mobile phone number.*

**Digits** are individual numbers:

4,539 – a four-digit number

Both **fractions** ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) and **decimals** (0.975) may be used.