

University of Mujahid Abdelhafid Boussouf – Mila

Faculty of Economics, Commercial & Management Sciences

Departement Of Tronc Commun

Lectures On : Academic English

Addressed To 1st Year Students – 1st Semester

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Basic Academic vocabulary

Introduction

Academic vocabulary refers to the specialized and formal language used in academic settings universities, research journals, lectures, and scholarly textbooks. Mastering this language is critical for reading research papers, writing essays, and communicating effectively in higher education.

1. Definition of Basic Academic Vocabulary

Basic academic vocabulary consists of words and expressions frequently used in educational and research settings, including university lectures, textbooks, essays, research papers, and scientific publications.

It enables students to comprehend academic materials, communicate their ideas clearly, construct logical arguments, and express themselves effectively in formal academic contexts.

Examples of basic academic vocabulary include analyze, define, identify, explain, evaluate, evidence, research, and significant.

2. Understanding Vocabulary Tiers

In English linguistics, vocabulary is categorized into three main levels:

- **Tier 1: Everyday Vocabulary - Basic**, high-frequency words used in daily conversation (e.g. talk, change, big, view).
- **Tier 2: General Academic Vocabulary - Formal**, cross-disciplinary words used across various academic subjects (e.g. discuss, modify, substantial, perspective).
- **Tier 3: Domain-Specific Vocabulary - Highly specific terms** unique to a single field or discipline (e.g. photosynthesis in biology, GDP in economics, tort in law).

3. Importance of Academic Vocabulary

Academic vocabulary is important because it enables students to:

- ✓ Understand academic texts and university lectures.
- ✓ Write essays and research papers.
- ✓ Express ideas in a formal and precise way.
- ✓ Analyze information and interpret research findings.
- ✓ Present arguments and support them with evidence.
- ✓ Participate effectively in academic discussions.

4. Types of Academic Vocabulary

- ✓ **Academic verbs**: analyze, examine, investigate, evaluate, demonstrate.
- ✓ **Academic nouns**: analysis, research, evidence, theory, findings.
- ✓ **Academic adjectives**: significant, relevant, effective, appropriate, consistent.
- ✓ **Academic connectors**: furthermore, however, therefore, consequently, moreover.

Example Application:

Verb: We need to **analyze** the results.

Noun: The statistical **analysis** confirmed our hypothesis.

Adjective: She adopted an **analytical** approach to the problem.

5. High-Frequency Academic Verbs & Their Meanings

These core verbs dictate tasks in research questions, exam prompts, and analytical essays:

➤ **Analyze:** Break a complex topic into smaller parts to examine its structure or meaning.

Example : The study analyzes economic growth.

➤ **Evaluate:** Assess the value, quality, or significance of an argument or theory based on criteria.

Example : The paper evaluates government policies.

➤ **Synthesize:** Combine information from multiple sources to create a unified argument or concept.

Example : The researcher synthesizes information from several academic studies to develop a comprehensive understanding of economic growth.

➤ **Substantiate:** Provide evidence, facts, or data to prove or support a claim.

Example : Economic data substantiate the claim that inflation reduces consumer's purchasing power.

➤ **Delineate:** Describe or portray something precisely (e.g. delineate the scope of research).

Example : The study delineates the main causes of unemployment in developing economies.

6. Replacing Common Words with Academic Equivalents

Academic writing demands precision, objectivity, and formality. Replacing informal words with precise scholarly alternatives immediately elevates your academic writing:

Informal / Common Word	Academic Equivalent	Example Sentence
Show	Demonstrate / Indicate	The empirical data demonstrates a strong correlation.
Change	Modify / Alter	The methodology was modified to improve accuracy.
Think / Believe	Posit / Assert	Scholars posit that social factors heavily influence behavior.
Get	Acquire / Obtain	Participants obtained access to the necessary resources.
Big / Huge	Substantial / Significant	The study revealed a significant increase in performance.
Mainly	Predominantly	The target group consisted predominantly of university students.

7. Academic Vocabulary in Economics

Students of economics should learn general academic vocabulary as well as specialized economic terms.

The following table shows some economic terms and their meanings:

Term	Definition
Scarcity	A situation in which resources are limited relative to human wants.
Allocation	The distribution of resources among competing uses.
Consumption	The use of goods and services.
Production	The creation of goods and services.
Inflation	A sustained increase in the general price level.
Unemployment	A situation in which people seeking work cannot find jobs.
Investment	Expenditure on assets or activities intended to generate future benefits.
Economic growth	An increase in the production of goods and services over time.
Demand	The quantity consumers are willing and able to purchase at different prices.
Supply	The quantity producers are willing and able to offer at different prices.

Conclusion

Basic academic vocabulary is essential for reading, writing, and understanding academic English. Students should learn these words in context and practice using them in sentences, paragraphs, and research assignments. Effective academic communication depends on choosing words that are precise, formal, and appropriate to the subject.

Practical Exercises

Exercise 1: Match each word with its definition.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 1. Analyze. | a. Results obtained from research. |
| 2. Evidence. | b. Examine something carefully. |
| 3. Evaluate. | c. Recognize or establish something. |
| 4. Findings. | d. Information that supports a claim. |
| 5. Identify. | e. Judge the value or effectiveness of something. |

Correction: Here are the correct matches for each word with its corresponding definition:

- Analyze → b. Examine something carefully.
- Evidence → d. Information that supports a claim.
- Evaluate → e. Judge the value or effectiveness of something.
- Findings → a. Results obtained from research.
- Identify → c. Recognize or establish something.

Exercise 2: Rewrite in academic English.

1. The study looks at unemployment.
2. Prices went up a lot.
3. The results show that education is good for the economy.

Correction: Here are academic rewrites for each sentence, along with the specific vocabulary changes made to elevate the tone:

1. The study **examines** (or **investigates** / **analyzes**) unemployment.
2. Prices **increased substantially** (or **rose significantly**).
3. The findings **indicate** that education has a **positive impact** on the economy.

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