A University Word List

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English vocabulary can be divided into two groups—a small group of two to three thousand very frequent, wide range words, and an enormous group of several thousand less frequent, narrow range words. These two groups are very different in nature, and consequently require different teaching strategies (Nation 1983). The high frequency words deserve individual attention. The best approach to dealing with the low frequency words is to teach ways of dealing with them in context rather than "teaching" the words themselves.

Although this division into two groups provides useful guidelines for teaching, it is an artificial division. A teacher needs to make an arbitrary decision about where to draw the line between high and low frequency words. Some words are not frequent, but they are not infrequent either, and in specialized fields may be quite common. By defining an area of language use and by studying vocabulary relevant to that area, it is possible to add to the number of high frequency words that a teacher can usefully deal with. This paper examines one such group of words—the vocabulary of university study.

The sources of the list

Our word list is mainly derived from two word lists. The list we drew on most heavily was that of Campion and Elley (1971), published by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. This list was developed for the vocabulary subset of a university entrance English language test—the Language Achievement Test of Overseas Students (LATOS), and represents vocabulary that students are likely to encounter in their university studies. Items were selected by analyzing 301,800 words from lectures published in journals, and a cross-section of examination papers. Altogether, 301,800 words were inspected in textbooks and lectures that covered the nineteen academic disciplines with the largest enrolments in New Zealand universities. The second source of our list was the American University Word List (Praninskas, 1972). This list was compiled for non-native speaker students studying English, from ten basic

Campion and Elley		Praninskas	
Accountancy	History	Mathematics	
Anthropology	Law	Physics	
Biology	Mathematics	Chemistry	
Chemistry	Mechanics	Biology	
Economics	Philosophy	Psychology	
Education	Physics	Sociology	
English	Psychology	Philosophy	
French	Political Science	History	
Geography	Sociology	Literature	
		Rhetoric	

university-level textbooks in from first year courses. Praninskas' corpus included 272,466 words. The nineteen disciplines covered by Campion and Elley, and the ten covered by Praninskas are listed on page 215.

The basic vocabulary found in any standard word count was excluded in the counts of university texts. Since the students for whom the lists were being prepared had studied English for several years at school, it could be assumed that the basic vocabulary should be familiar to most students entering universities. Campion and Elley excluded the words found in the first five thousand words in Thorndike and Lorge's *Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words* (1944). In the Praninskas list, words appearing in West's *General Service List of English Words* (1953) were excluded. The two lists were combined so that the *General Service List of English Words* became the prerequisite for a combined list that included only base forms. *Analyze* for example, includes *analysis, analyst, analytic, analytically,* and *analyze*. After the two lists were combined, they were checked against two other lists which had been compiled using a different set of principles. The Lynn (1973) and Ghadessy (1979) word lists were drawn up by counting the words that foreign students wrote annotations above (usually by mother-tongue translations) in their university textbooks, and were lists of words that learners had found difficult during their reading. About 70% of the words in each of the Lynn and Ghadessy lists overlapped with the combined list. The high frequency non-overlapping words in these two lists were added to the combined list. Table 1 shows how the final combined university word list was made up.

Table 1. Sources of the University Word List

Entries from different lists	Words included in the combined list
500 most common words in the Campion and Elley list	323
The Praninskas list	291
The 3,200 word list in Campion and Elley	64
The Lynn list	54
The Ghadessy list	5
Total words	737

The appendix contains only the 737 base words of the combined university word list, even though derivative forms are sometimes more frequent than the base forms. In most cases learning the derived form requires very little extra work once the base form is known. The words were later divided into sublists to give an indication of their

relative usefulness, and to provide manageable groups of words for teaching and learning. Sublist 1 contains the most useful words, which had to satisfy at least one of the following criteria: (1) a range of 10 in Praninskas' list; (2) in the range of 8-12 in Campion and Elley's list; (3) a frequency of 10 in Praninskas' list; (4) a frequency of 21 of 22 in Lynn's list. Table 2 shows how each sublist was made.

Table 2. Sources and Size of the Sublist

Sublists	Number of words	From the Praninskas list		From the Campion & Elley list		From the Lynn list		From the Ghadessy list	
		range of words	number of words	range of words	number of words	frequency of words	number of words	frequency of words	number of words
1	75	10	35	8-12	37	21-22	2	13	1
2	88	9	39	6-7	44	19	3	12	2
3	76	8	44	5	26	17-18	4	11	2
4	70	7	49	4	16	16	5		
5	70	6	47	4	19	15	4		
6	79	5	55	3	20	14	4		
7	79	4	49	3	23	13	7		
8	74	3	44	3	25	12	5		
9	59	2	26	3	27	11	6		
10	64	1	5	3	41	10	18		

Using the list

Barnard's *Advanced English Vocabulary* (1971), a complete set of course books, covers a large number of words in *The University Word List*. The following suggestions are based on the principle that the more attention a word receives, the more likely it is to be learned. When these exercises are undertaken, it is recommended that only one sublist be given attention at a time.

Suggestions and classroom activities:
1. Ask the learners to look through the sublist and ask them to check off the words they think they know. Check with individual students by asking them:
   (i) to spell the word without looking at the printed form;
   (ii) to give a rough definition or translation of the printed form;
   (iii) to say what other words it goes with.
   Do not expect the learners to have a detailed knowledge of each word; if they have good reasons to say that it is in some way familiar to them, then that is enough. You are likely to find that the learners' indication of words they know and do not know is quite reliable.

2. When the learners have isolated the words that they do not know, the following activities may be helpful:

(i) Break the words into parts and show how the meanings of the words are related to the meanings of the parts.

(ii) Do work on the collocations of some of the words. Get the learners to work in small groups and, with the aid of a dictionary and shared knowledge, list collocates of the words. When the groups have their lists they come together as a class and the teacher puts a list on the blackboard and classifies the collocates into groups.

(iii) Tell the learners to learn the words in lists using an English-mother tongue dictionary to get the meaning. Nation (1982) provides justification and guidelines for this kind of learning.

(iv) Tell the learners to take note of any examples of the words in the list that they meet in their reading. Share the examples with the rest of the class.

(v) Draw attention to the words when they are met in class texts.

(vi) Give periodic tests to encourage the learners to study the words. The most suitable tests include (a) breaking the words into parts and giving the meanings of the parts; (b) giving the learners a word stem, for example *efficient*, and asking them to write as many derivatives as they can; (c) giving a collocation test; (d) giving a word and definition matching test; (e) giving a list of sentences each containing a blank and a list of words. Each blank can be suitably filled by one of the listed words. There should be three more listed words than blanks; (f) giving a translation test.

(vii) Get the learners to read and listen to a large quantity of material in which the words naturally occur.

Further information on these procedures can be found in Nation's *Teaching and Learning Vocabulary (1983)*.

Conclusion

The scope of The University Word List is currently being extended in three ways. First, a collection of the sublists with the derivations of each of the base words has been made available. Second, a vocabulary test based on the sublists is being developed. Third, a list of typical collocations, based on the Brown corpus (Francis and Kucera, 1979) is being prepared for the benefit of both teachers and students. It is hoped that this word list, and the description of how it was compiled, will be of assistance to other university language programs both in the U.S.A. and overseas.

(The word List and sublists appear on pages 220-228.)

References

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The word list and sublists appear on pages 220-228.

Appendix I: The University Word List

A

abandon, abnormal, absorb, abstract, academic, accelerate, access, accompany, accomplish, accumulate, accurate, achieve, acid, acquire, adapt, adequate, adhere, adjacent, adjective, adjust, administer, adolescent, advocate, adult, aesthetic, affect, affiliate, affluence, aggregate, aggression, agitate, aid, alcohol, align, allege, allocate, allude, ally, alter, alternative, ambiguity, amorphous, analogy, analyze, angular, annual, anomaly, anonymous, anthropology, apparatus, appeal, append, appendix, appraise, appreciate, approach, appropriate, approximate, arbitrary, area, aristocrat, arithmetic, arouse, ascribe, aspect, aspiration, assemble, assent, assert, assess, asset, assign, assimilate, assist, assume, assure, astronomy, atmosphere, atom, attach, attain, attitude, attribute, auspices, authorize, automatic, avail, averse, aware, awe, axis

B

battery, benefit, biology, bishop, bomb, bore, bread, bubble, bulk, bureaucracy

C

calendar, cancel, capable, capillary, capture, carbon, career, catalogue, category, cater, cease, cell, challenge, channel, chapter, charter, chemical, circuit, circulate, circumstance, civic, clarify, classic, client, clinic, code, coefficient, cogent, coincide, collapse, collide, colloquial, column, comment, commit, commodity, communicate, commune, compel, compensate, competence, complement, complex, comply, component, compound, comprehend, comprise, compulsion, compute, conceive, concentrate, concentric, concept, conclude, condense, conduct, confer, configuration, confine, conflict, conform, confront, congress, conjunction, consent, consequent, conserve, consist, console, constant, constitute, construct, construe, consult, consume, contact, contaminate, contemplate, contend, context, contingent, continent, contract, contradict, contrary, contrast, contribute, controversy, convene, convention, converge, converse, crisis, criterion, critic, crucial, crystal, culture, cumbersome, currency, cycle, cylinder

D

data, debate, decade, decimal, dedicate, defect, defer, deficient, define, definite, deflect, degenerate, degrade, deliberate, democracy, demonstrate, denominator, denote, dense, deny, depress, deprive, derive, design, detect, detriment, deviate, devise, devote, diagram, diameter, dictate, diffuse, digest, dimension, discern, discourse, discrete, dispense, disperse, displace, dispose, dispute, dissipate, dissolve, distinct, distort, distribute, district, diverge, diverse, divine, doctrine, domestic, dominate, drain, drama, drastic, drug, duke, duration, dynamic

E

economy, edit, efficient, elaborate, electron, element, elevate, elicit, eliminate, eloquent, emancipate, embody, embrace, emerge, emotion, emphasize, empirical, enable, energy, enhance, enlighten, enrich, ensure, entity, enumerate, environment, episode, equate, equidistant, equilibrium, equipment, equivalent, err, establish, estate, estimate, ethics, evaluate, evaporate, evident, eventual, evoke, evolve, exclude, execute, exert, exhaust, expand, expel, expert, explicit, exploit, exponent, export, expose, external, extract

F

facilitate, faction, factor, fallacy, fare, fate, feasible, feature, federal, fertile, final, finance, finite, fleet, fluctuate, fluent, fluid, focus, foetus, forego, formulate, fort, fossil, found, fraction, fragment, fraternal, fraud, friction, frontier, frustrate, fuel, fulfil, function, fundamental, fund, fuse

G

generate, genuine, geography, geometry, gem, goal, grant, graph, gravity, gratuity, guarantee

H

harbour, hero, hemisphere, heredity, hierarchy, homogeneous, horror, hostile, huge, hypothesis

I

identical, identify, ignore, illuminate, illustrate, image, impact, imperial, implement, implicit, imply, import, impose, impress, impulse, incentive, incessant, incident, incline, income, incompatible, inconsistent, incorporate, index, indicate, indigenous, individual

induce
infer
inferior
inflation
ingenious
inherent
inhibit
initial
injure
innate
innovation
insist
inspect
instance
instinct
institute
instruct
integer
integrate
intelligent
intense
interact
interlock
interlude
intermediate
internal
interpret
interrelate
intersect
interval
interview
intervene
intimacy
intrinsic
intuitive
invade
inverse
invest
investigate
invoke
involve
irrigate
isolate
issue
item

J
job
journal
judicial
justify

K
kindred
knight

L
label

laboratory
labour
launch
layer
lecture
league
legal
legislate
legitimate
leisure
lens
liable
liberate
linguistic
litigate
locate
locomotion
logic
lustre
luxury

M
magic
magnetic
magnitude
major
maintain
manifest
manipulate
margin
material
maternal
mathematics
matrix
mature
maximum
median
mental
metabolism
metaphor
method
microscope
migrate
military
minimum
minor
miracle
mistress
mobile
modify
moist
molecule
momentum
monarch
morale
morphology

motive
muscle
myth

N
navy
negative
negotiate
nerve
network
neutral
niche
norm
notate
notion
novel
nuclear
null
nutrient

O
objective
oblige
obsolescent
obtain
obvious
occupy
occur
odd
odour
option
orbit
orientate
oscillate
outcome
overlap
oxygen

P
parenthesis
parliament
participate
partisan
passive
peasant
penal
pendulum
period
perpendicular
perpetrate
perpetual
persist
perspective
pertinent
pervade
pest
phase
phenomena

philosophy
physical
pine
planet
plead
plot
pole
policy
pollution
pope
pore
portion
positive
postulate
potential
pragmatic
precede
precipitate
precise
predict
preliminary
premise
preposition
presume
prestige
presume
prevail
previous
prime
prince
principle
priority
proceed
process
proclaim
procure
prohibit
project
propagate
propensity
proportion
proprietor
prosper
protest
province
provoke
prudence
psychology
publish
pursue

Q
quote

R
radical
radius
random

---

range
ratio
rational
react
rebel
rectangle
recur
reform
refute
region
reign
reinforce
reject
release
relevance
reluctant
rely
remove
render
repress
reproduce
repudiate
require
research
reservoir
resident
residue
resource
respective
respond
restore
restrict
retain
retard
reveal
reverberate
reverse
revise
revive
revolt
revolve
rhythm
rigid
rigour
role
rotate
route
rudimentary
rural

S
saint
sanction
satellite
saturate
scalar

schedule
scheme
score
secrete
section
secure
segment
select
sequence
series
sex
shift
shrink
sibling
sift
signify
site
similar
simultaneous
skeleton
sketch
sociology
solar
sophisticated
source
spatial
species
specify
spectrum
speculate
sphere
spontaneous
stable
starve
stationary
statistic
status
stereotype
stimulate
stipulate
strata
stress
structure
style
subdivide
subjective
subordinate
subsequent
subside
subsidize
subtle
suffice
sum
summary

superficial
superimpose
superior
supplement
suppress
supreme
surplus
survey
suspend
sustain
switch
symbol
symptom
synthetic

T
tangent
tangible
tape
task
team
technique
technology
telescope
temporary
tense
tentative
terminology
territory
terror
testify
text
texture
theft
theism
theorem
theory
thermal
tiny
tissue
tolerate
tone
topic
torture
trace
tractor
tradition
traffic
trait
transact
transfer
transform
transit
transmit
transparent
transport

treaty
trend
triangle
trivial
troop
tropical
tyre

U
ultimate
undergo
underlie
undertake
unduly
uniform
upsurge
urban
usage
utilize
utter

V
vague
valid
vary
vast
vein
velocity
verbal
verify
version
vertical
vibrate
violate
virtual
visible
visual
vital
vocabulary
volt
volume
voluntary

W
withdraw

X
x-ray

Appendix II: Sublists

Sublist 1

formula, guarantee, hypothesis, identify, ignore, illustrate, impact, imply, indicate, initial, interpret, involve, magnitude, method, minimum, modify, negative, obvious, potential, presume, prime, proceed, publish, pursue, random, range, region, require, restrict, role, similar, specify, status, subsequent, suffice, summary, technique, tense, ultimate, usage, valid, vary, vertical, definite, demonstrate, design, devote, distort, emphasize, empirical, ensure, entity, equilibrium, expand, expose, external, feasible, fluctuate, focus, function, generate, individual, infer, inhibit, innovate, intense, intuit, isolate, magnetic, major, manipulate, mathematics, maturity, notion, obtain, occur, passive, period, perspective, pertinent, phase, phenomena, portion, precede, precise, predict, principle, react, respective, section, segment, select, sequence, series, shift, signify, simultaneous, sophisticated, species, stable, statistic, structure, technology, theory, trace, tradition, transmit, undergo, verb, verify

Sublist 2

accelerate, achieve, adjacent, affect, approximate, assert, authorize, automatic, aware, capillary, chapter, complicate, comprehend, conceive, concentrate, consequent, contrast, contribute, convert, create, crucial, decade

(Sublist 1 continues into columns with: suffice, summary, technique, tense, ultimate, usage, valid, vary, vertical)

Sublist 3

abandon, accomplish, adapt, adequate, adjust, appreciate, appropriate, area, attitude, chemical, circumstance, classic, commune, conduct, conflict, consume, contact, contaminate, convention, coordinate, correspond, credible, critic, deficient, deviate, discrete, disperse, dispose, drama, dynamic, economy, estimate, exclude, exert, explicit, exploit, factor, feature, final, geography, image, incompatible, intelligent, issue, labor, maintain, manifest, maximum, motive, network, norm, notate, occupy, orientate, physical, plot, pole, positive, preposition, prestige, previous, proprietor, rational, relevance, rely, reveal, rotate, satellite, scheme, seek, source, superficial, task, transit, underlie, vision

Sublist 4

acquire, administer, aesthetic, allege, alter, analogy, appraise, assemble, atmosphere, atom, attribute, avail, axis, bomb, capable, cease, constitute, contradict, convene, culture, dedicate, denominator, dense, diagram, discourse, distribute, diverse, elaborate, eliminate, embody, emotion, energy, eventual, forego

Sublist 5

fragment, goal, heredity, impress, incident, induce, integrate, intervene, investigate, judicial, justify, litigate, logic, military, mobile, perpendicular, persist, philosophy, project, proportion, psychology, reject, release, reservoir, revolt, speculate, sphere, spontaneous, stipulate, subside, superimpose, symbol, tentative, text, theorem, upsurge, absorb, abstract, accurate, advocate, aid, biology, category, client, code, compound, confront, contract, contrary, crisis, deny, dictate, diffuse, dispute, duration, edit, electron, enlighten, err, execute, expel, fraud

grant
graph
gravity
homogeneous
implement
injure
incorporate
insist
institute
instruct
intersect
interval
job
kindred
label
legitimate
objective
overlap
parenthesis
perpetrate
preliminary
radius
respond
restore
retain
retard
rudimentary
secure
stimulate
stress
style
subtle
superior
supplement
symptom
synthetic
tiny
trait
transfer
transform
trivial
vast
version

Sublist 6

abnormal
academic
accompany
adjective
adult
agitate
appeal
arouse
aspect
assist
assure
attain
awe
benefit
civic
clarify
collide
comment
commit
compute
conform
conjunction
conserve
console
contemplate
contend
contingent
continent
controversy
converse
cooperate
corporate
creditor
crystal
cumbersome
cycle
decline
defer
degenerate
degrade
democracy
depress
dissolve
divine
doctrine
domestic
ethics
extract
fertile
finance
found
fraction
friction
fuse
geometry
hemisphere
hierarchy
identical
incline
income
instinct
interact
interlock
interlude
legal
locate
median
medium
metabolism
microscope
minor
nerve
niche
oblige
participate
planet
propagate
propensity
prosper
protest
radical
reign
reinforce
revise
sanction
scalar
strata
subjective
sustain
tangent
tangible
terminology
tone
topic
uniform
urban
virtual
volume

Sublist 7

adolescent
affiliate
affluence
alcohol
aristocrat
astronomy
cell
collapse
colloquial
commodity
competence
concentric
confer
configuration
congress
horror
incentive
incessant
intermediate
invade
inverse
invoke
migrate
morphology
muscle
navy
negotiate
neutral
nutrient
obsolete
odor
parliament

peasant
plead
policy
pragmatic
precipitate
prevail
prudence
rectangle
reform
refute
repudiate
revive
rhythm
saint
schedule
score
sibling
sketch
sociology
spectrum
stereotype
terror
texture
theism
thermal
tissue
transact
x-ray
allude
ally
bishop
bore
bureaucracy
cater
charter
circulate
coincide
consent
correlate
currency
deprive
detect
detriment
discern
dissipate
drug
estate
evolve
fallacy
finite
fleet
fraternal
frustrate
imperial
incorporate
index
invest
knight
launch
league
legislate
lens
liable
linguistic
litigate
locomotion
magic
metaphor
monarch
nuclear
oscillate
postulate
premise
proclaim
provoke
rebel
reluctant
reproduce
rigid
secrete
sex
solar
spatial
subordinate
supreme
territory
testify
treaty
trend
triangle
troop
utilize
utter

Sublist 8

adhere
aggregate
aggression
align
allocate

Sublist 9

acid
ambiguity
amorphous
asset
averse
carbon
complement
condense
confine
construe
cord
displace
diverge
drastic
duke
efficient
enumerate
evaporate
evoke
exhaust
faction
federal
fort
frontier
fund
illuminate
indigenous
innate
integer
intrinsic
liberate
luster
margin
material
matrix
miracle
mistress
molecule
momentum
morale
odd
orbit
penal
pine
pope
prince
residue
reverberate
rural
stationary
subdivide
suspend
torture
unduly
velocity
vibrate
violate
vocabulary
voluntary

Sublist 10

access
angular
anomaly
anonymous
anthropology
append
appendix
ascribe
aspiration

assent	dispense	exponent	myth	remove
assimilate	elevate	fluent	null	render
auspices	elicit	foetus	option	repress
clinic	eloquent	fossil	outcome	rigor
coefficient	amanciate	gratuity	perpetual	saturate
cogent	embrace	inconsistent	procure	sift
comprise	emerge	inflation	prohibit	skeleton
compulsion	enhance	ingenious	province	subsidize
converge	enrich	interrelate	purport	surplus
deflect	episode	interview	quote	tolerate
deliberate	equidistant	intimacy	recur	vague

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Abstract/摘要

大学英语词表

本词表是根据 Campion & Elley (1971), Praninskas (1972), Lynn (1973)
和 Ghadessy (1979) 等以大学多项专业教材词汇统计为基础而编制的四种词表
汇编而成。全表按照词的基本形式——共收集词条 737 条，其中并不包括词根和
派入大学前学生能够学握的普通常用词。本词表义按词义的常用率和使
用范围的广度细分为十个小分表。各表按照其常见性依次排列。

甲，让学生把分表若干一按照十个小表来分批学习。
乙，对不认识的生词，可以通过下列的活动来学习。

1. 把生词的组成像你逐一解释以见其整体本义。
2. 一个词可以跟什么词来搭配，在教学中十分重要。通过小组学
习以及翻查字典，要求学生把带处的搭配词一起列出，随后再
由老师把各小组所得一并在黑板上，电新编排分类。
3. 要求学生使用英——英字典，找出生词的意义。
4. 要求学生把在读物中见过出现的生词和例句一并记下学习，并
且跟其他同学交流心得。
5. 生词在课本中出现的，老师再次提及，以加深同学的印象。

6. 经常举行测试，致闻学生多学生间 测试形式可以包括:
   (a) 分析生词的组成成份，并且送一解释代总义
   (b) 给学生"词干"，然后要求他们把前生词写出来
   (c) 配词测验
   (d) 要求学生把一堆生词及一堆释义语气的配合起来
   (e) 把生词代入句子空白中。
   (f) 翻译测验

丁，大量阅读、聆听，可以感受到这些词如何在实况环境中使用。

结论，《大学英语词汇表》目前正在三个方面上扩充。(一)把有关的词
列入分表，(二) 一套词汇测试正在设计中，(三) 为方便老师和学生，正在
根据 Brown 大学的词库 (Francis & Kucera, 1979) 编制一个典型搭配词组的
用表。编者希望，本词表及以上所述的应用简介将有助于美国或海外各大学
的语言学习课程。