

## SOME RESOURCES IN VOCABULARY ASSESSMENT

### PRE-WEBINAR VIEWING

To view a 16-minute video presentation by John Read on Vocabulary Assessment, go to the Language Testing Resources website:

[www.languagetesting.info/video/main.html#cinema](http://www.languagetesting.info/video/main.html#cinema)

Click on Video 10. Vocabulary to start the presentation.

### DEFINING A “WORD”

In vocabulary studies we need to be clear about what we mean by a word for the purposes of analysis. In the context of assessing learners’ vocabulary knowledge, it can make quite a difference to our estimates of how many words they know.

#### Word form

This is a neutral term to refer to different ways in which a word can be written (or spoken). Thus, wrong, *wrong*, WRONG, wrongs and wrongly are different forms of the word “wrong”

#### Lemma

A lemma is the base form of word, together with its inflected forms.

Noun: dog, dogs, dog’s, dogs’

Verb: walk, walks, walked, walking; swim, swims, swam, swum, swimming

Adjective: tall, taller, tallest

#### Word family

A headword, together with its inflected and derived forms which share the same core meaning

govern

governs, governing, governed; governor(s), government(s), governance, governmental, governable, ungovernable

bright

bright / brighter / brightest; brightly; brightness; brighten / brightens / brightened /brightening



Table 13.4 *Aspects of word knowledge for testing*

Form	spoken	R	Can the learner recognise the spoken form of the word?
		P	Can the learner pronounce the word correctly?
	written	R	Can the learner recognise the written form of the word?
Meaning	word parts	P	Can the learner spell and write the word?
		R	Can the learner recognise known parts in the word?
	P	Can the learner produce appropriate inflected and derived forms of the word?	
	form and meaning	R	Can the learner recall the appropriate meaning for this word form?
	concept and referents	P	Can the learner produce the appropriate word form to express this meaning?
		R	Can the learner understand a range of uses of the word and its central concept?
associations	P	Can the learner use the word to refer to a range of items?	
	R	Can the learner produce common associations for this word?	
Use	grammatical functions	P	Can the learner recall this word when presented with related ideas?
		R	Can the learner recognise correct uses of the word in context?
	collocations	P	Can the learner use this word in the correct grammatical patterns?
		R	Can the learner recognise appropriate collocations?
	constraints on use (register, frequency ...)	P	Can the learner produce the word with appropriate collocations?
		R	Can the learner tell if the word is a common, formal, or infrequent word etc.?
		P	Can the learner use the word at appropriate times?

Note: In Column 3, R = receptive knowledge, P = productive knowledge  
(Nation, 2013, p. 538)

## SELECTED REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

### Books and articles

- Milton, J. (2009). *Measuring second language vocabulary acquisition*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Nation, I.S.P. (2013). *Learning vocabulary in another language* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. (Especially Chapter 13).
- Read, J. (2000). *Assessing vocabulary*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Read, J. (2004). Plumbing the depths: How should the construct of vocabulary knowledge be defined? In P. Bogaards & B. Laufer (Eds.), *Vocabulary in a second language: Selection, acquisition and testing* (pp. 209-227). Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Read, J. (2007). Second language vocabulary assessment: Current practices and new directions. *International Journal of English Studies*, 7 (2), 105-125. Available at: <http://revistas.um.es/ijes/article/view/49021/46891>.
- Read, J. (2012). Assessing vocabulary. In C. Coombe, P. Davidson, B. O'Sullivan, & S. Stoyhoff (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to language assessment* (pp. 257-263). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching vocabulary: A vocabulary research manual*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. (Especially Chapter 5).
- Schmitt, N. & Schmitt, D. (forthcoming). A reassessment of frequency and vocabulary size in L2 vocabulary teaching. *Language Teaching*. [Available online at: <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayIssue?iid=534568>. Scroll down towards the bottom of the list]

## Websites

Tom Cobb's Compleat Lexical Tutor: [www.lextutor.ca](http://www.lextutor.ca) .

Paul Nation's home page: [www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation).

Norbert Schmitt's site: <http://www.norbertschmitt.co.uk/resources.html>

## Word Frequency Lists

### General vocabulary

[www.wordfrequency.info](http://www.wordfrequency.info) Lists based on Mark Davies' Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), plus lists for Spanish and Portuguese

[http://conc.lextutor.ca/list\\_learn/](http://conc.lextutor.ca/list_learn/) Word lists for English and French, including Paul Nation's 20,000 word families derived from the British National Corpus

[http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Wiktionary:Frequency\\_lists](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Wiktionary:Frequency_lists) Word lists for 44 languages from various sources, particularly frequency counts of texts on the web

### High-frequency vocabulary in English

General Service List: <http://jbauman.com/gsl.html> A version of the classic list, originally published in 1953

New General Service List: [www.newgeneralservicelist.org/](http://www.newgeneralservicelist.org/) A new list, based on the Cambridge English Corpus

### Academic vocabulary in English

Academic Word List: [www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/) Averil Coxhead's influential list, based on her own corpus of academic English

Academic Vocabulary List: <http://www.academicvocabulary.info/> Gardner and Davies' new list, derived from the Corpus of Contemporary American English

### Lists of multi-word lexical units (lexical phrases, formulaic expressions) in English

Academic Collocations List: <http://www.pearsonpte.com/research/Pages/CollocationList.aspx>  
Martinez, R., & Schmitt, N. (2012). A phrasal expressions list. *Applied Linguistics*, 33(3), 299-320. See also <http://www.norbertschmitt.co.uk/resources.html> .

Simpson-Vlach, R., & Ellis, N.C. (2010). An academic formulas list: New methods in phraseology research. *Applied Linguistics*, 31, 487-512.

## Online Vocabulary Tests

<http://www.lextutor.ca/tests/>

Here you can find versions of the Vocabulary Levels Test, the Vocabulary Size Test, Yes/No vocabulary tests for English and French, and a word associates test

Vocabulary Size Test: [www.vocabularysize.com](http://www.vocabularysize.com) One form of Paul Nation's test of vocabulary size

X\_Lex and Y\_Lex size tests: [www.lognostics.co.uk/tools](http://www.lognostics.co.uk/tools)

X\_Lex assesses words in the 1000-5000 word frequency range for English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Swedish. Y\_Lex covers the 6000-10,000 range for English only.

Guessing from Context Test and Word Part Levels Test: <http://ysasaojp.info/testen.html>

Developed by Yosuke Sasao at Victoria University of Wellington, NZ as a doctoral project

The Test of English Derivatives (TED):

[www.norbertschmitt.co.uk/uploads/test-of-english-derivatives.doc](http://www.norbertschmitt.co.uk/uploads/test-of-english-derivatives.doc)

Norbert Schmitt and Cheryl Boyd Zimmerman's test of knowledge of derived members of word families