



Seminar contents: 1a) learning and memorising new vocabulary in general

1b ) how to work with dictionaries

2) formal English vs. informal and neutral English

3) academic English

Students will be given **handouts** from (MCCARTHY, Michael a Felicity O'DELL. *Academic vocabulary in use*).

### 1a) Learning and memorising new vocabulary in general

- **video:** What are the best ways to memorise/learn new vocabulary (2:44) Cambridge University Press author Michael McCarthy  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evTXudMf2M4>

**Task 1:** *Take notes and exchange information with a partner.*

- **mini game:** *Mini dialogues – Students will be given cards (Vocabulary Games and Activities for teachers, Peter Watcyn- Jones) and asked to match simple conversational phrases.*

- **Word formation**

One advantage of English vocabulary is that many words are formed from the same root.

As a result, if you know the word *friend*, it is easy to understand other words from the same root such as *friendly*, *friendship*, *unfriendly* and *befriend*. When you meet a new word, it is a good idea to write it down with other words using the same root + different prefixes and suffixes.

*(Adapted from: Academic Vocabulary in Use, p.128)*

*Task 2: Complete the table with suffixes.*

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Noun</b>	<b>Adjective</b>	<b>Adverb</b>
doubt	doubt		doubtfully
conserve		conserved, -ing	-
destroy	destruction		destructively
	empowerment	empowered, -ing	-
consume		consumable, -ed,	consumingly
force	force	forcible, forcing, forced	
subsidise	subsidy		-
develop		developed, -ing	-
benefit	benefit		beneficially

**Task 3:** Complete the table with prefixes.

in-	dis-	experienced	valuable
im-	mis-	perfect	mature
ir-	sub-	conscious	rational
il-	under-	judged	loaded
un-	over-	valued	honest
ab-	self-	normal	legible
re-	de-	stable	spoilt
		aware	
		compatible	

Many combinations are possible, though not all are commonly used. List the combinations that you know and compare your list with the rest of the class. Use these lists to expand your vocabulary.

**video:** *Vocabulary differences between British and American English*

**Task 4:** Listen to the talk show excerpt in *Americans Don't Understand English* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wSw3IWRJa0> (stop at 2:33) and answer the following questions:

1. What is the main point the speaker is making?
2. Which nationality uses more specific language?
3. Why did the Americans change to using the word “sidewalk”?
4. What other 4 examples does the comedian describe?
5. Can you think of any other examples from your experience?

## 2) formal English vs. informal and neutral English

- **text:** Language Register : Formal, Informal, and Neutral

<http://www.really-learn-english.com/language-register.html>

**Task 5:** Watch and listen to the **video** “BBC Masterclass:

Formal and Informal English” **and take notes.**[\(4:07\)](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdKY18Tg\\_FQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdKY18Tg_FQ)

**Task 6:** Choose which phrases below are very formal (VF), formal (F), informal (I) and very informal (VI) in opening and closing letter salutations.

### Opening Salutation

A) a) Dear Mr Cottrell b) Hi Mark c) Dear Professor Cottrell d) Hello Mark  
e) Hey there f) Dear Sir/Madam g) Dear Mark h) Hello all i) Dear Mark (if I may) j) Mark, k) Hey Mark l) To Whom It May Concern

### Closing Salutation

B) a) Kind regards b) C ya c) Yours sincerely d) All the best e) Love f) Best wishes g) Cheers h) See you i) Regards j) Bye for now k) Best regards  
l) All the very best m) Looking forward to hearing from you n) LOL o) Yours p) Best to the family

(ŠTĚPÁNEK, Libor a Janice de HAAFF. *Academic English: Akademická angličtina*, pp. 187-190)

**video: Formal x informal writing: (2:52) - revision**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdDBY2-Wmis>

**video: How to write a formal email: (15 minutes, good to use it from the 11th minute)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIp4eOuV848>

**Task 7:**

**The following sentences express similar meanings. Which is most formal? Which is least formal? Would all examples be appropriate in an academic presentation?**

- a) Lots of people don't have enough money to get food.
- b) Many people don't have enough money to buy food.
- c) Poverty and hunger are widespread
- d) Many people do not have sufficient money to purchase food.

**Sentence A** is the most informal. It is conversational in style, with a short verb form and basic vocabulary. It is **NOT** appropriate for an academic presentation, but it might be acceptable in a following informal discussion.

**Sentence B** is more formal, but still in a simple speaking style, with the shortened verb form. The vocabulary is simple but precise. It would be appropriate for an academic presentation.

**Sentence C** is more formal than **B**. It is typical of academic speaking and writing, short and clear, with abstract nouns. It is appropriate for a presentation.

**Sentence D** is also more formal than **B**. the vocabulary is more elaborate. If the entire presentation were in the style of sentence **D**, it would sound pompous.

A presentation composed entirely of long heavy sentences would be monotonous. Therefore, in practice, most effective speakers mix styles **B**, **C**, and **D**. For example, a short plain sentence after longer sentences can sound dramatic and catch attention.



**Task 8: Replace the phrasal verbs in the sentences with a verb from the box:**

postponed cancelled severely criticized installed reprimanded  
confess  
assaulted exhausted

- a) Unfortunately, the meeting will have to be **put off** until next week.
- b) Haven't you heard? The football match has been **called off** because of bad weather.
- c) She was really hurt and upset when the critics **pulled apart** her latest novel.
- d) We've had a second bathroom **put in** for our guests to use.
- e) In my school days, I was always being **told off** by the teachers for being naughty.
- f) You should **own up** to having broken the window before someone else gets into trouble.
- g) He was badly **beaten up** by the gang of youths on his way home from work.
- h) Although I like going to the gym it leaves me feeling **tired out**.

**3) Academic English** – Students will receive handouts from  
(MCCARTHY, Michael a Felicity O'DELL. *Academic vocabulary in use*)

**Task 9: Study the following paragraphs, one, identify examples of poor style and try to rewrite it in an academic style.**

These days a lot of kids are starting school early. Years ago, they began at 5, but now it's normal to start at 4 or younger. Why is this? One thing is that mums need to get back to work. Is it good for the kids? Jenkins has studied this and says that early schooling causes social problems like stealing, drug taking etc. I think he's right and we should pay mums to stay at home.

How to make people work harder is a topic that lots of people have written about in the last few years. There are lots of different theories etc and I think some of them are ok. When we think about this we should remember the old Chinese proverb, that you can lead a horse to water but can't make it drink. So how do we increase production? It's quite a complex subject but I'll just talk about a couple of ideas.