

## ***Academic Writing: Word, Prefix & Suffix***

### **Word frequency:**

At university you will encounter new words and come to recognize their frequency in texts and other forms, especially when becoming more encapsulated in texts and specialize in a subject.

The general and academic vocabulary used in writing at university accounts for approximately 90% of the vocabulary; however, the remaining 10%, which is built on discipline specific vocabulary and less frequent vocabulary, is of primary importance when writing at university.

Averil Coxhead (2000) has produced a list of the most frequently used general academic words in English. ( you will see this in Academic Vocabulary Course next year inshalah) Her study showed that by becoming familiar with these high frequency word lists, comprehension is significantly boosted. Consequently, so is the vocabulary used in academic writing.

## Word formation and building

The English language forms words by using *prefixes* and *suffixes*. These are Latin words meaning *fix* or *attach* one thing to another.

**For example:**

**Pre+fix** = to attach before the base word

**Suf + fix** = to attach after the base word

Base word	Prefix	Suffix	Both
<i>agree</i>	<i>disagree</i>	<i>agreement</i>	<i>disagreement</i>

By understanding how words are formed and becoming familiar with the meaning of the prefixes and suffixes used in English, vocabulary knowledge tends to develop.

The following tables provide a list of prefixes and suffixes, their meanings and a vocabulary example, please read them often and use them in sentences in order to retain them.

## Prefixes

<b>Prefix</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>a-, ab-</b>	<b>away, from</b>	<b>absent</b>
<b>ad-</b>	<b>to, towards, in addition</b>	<b>advantage</b>
<b>anti-</b>	<b>against</b>	<b>anticlimax</b>
<b>auto-</b>	<b>by oneself</b>	<b>autobiography</b>
<b>bi-</b>	<b>two</b>	<b>bilingual</b>
<b>bio-</b>	<b>life</b>	<b>biography</b>
<b>circum-</b>	<b>around</b>	<b>circumnavigate</b>
<b>com-, con-, cor- , col-, co-</b>	<b>with, together (also used as an intensive meaning completely, very, greatly, deeply, forcibly)</b>	<b>co-owner</b>
<b>contra-, counter-</b>	<b>against, opposite</b>	<b>counter-argument</b>
<b>de-</b>	<b>down, away, away from, aside, out, off (also used as an intensive meaning utterly, completely)</b>	<b>desegregate</b>
<b>dis-, dif-, di-</b>	<b>apart, in different directions, away, not</b>	<b>dissimilar</b>
<b>e-, ex-, ef-</b>	<b>from out, forth (also used as an intensive meaning exceedingly, up)</b>	<b>ex-chairman</b>
<b>equi-</b>	<b>equally</b>	
<b>extro-, extra-</b>	<b>outside</b>	<b>extraordinary</b>
<b>in-</b>	<b>inside</b>	<b>internal</b>
<b>in-, im-, il-, ir-, un-</b>	<b>not</b>	<b>incompatible</b>

<b>inter-</b>	<b>between, among</b>	<b>interaction</b>
<b>intro-</b>	<b>within in</b>	<b>introvert</b>
<b>kilo-</b>	<b>thousand</b>	<b>kilobyte</b>
<b>mal-</b>	<b>bad</b>	<b>malfunction</b>
<b>mega-</b>	<b>million</b>	<b>megabyte</b>
<b>mis -</b>	<b>wrong</b>	<b>mismanagement</b>
<b>mini-</b>	<b>small</b>	<b>miniskirt</b>
<b>mono-</b>	<b>one</b>	<b>monolingual</b>
<b>photo-</b>	<b>light</b>	<b>photography</b>
<b>poly-</b>	<b>many</b>	<b>polysyllable</b>
<b>post -</b>	<b>after</b>	<b>post-mortem</b>
<b>pre-</b>	<b>before, in front, forth (also used as an intensive meaning very)</b>	<b>prenatal</b>
<b>pro-, pur-</b>	<b>before, in front, forward, forth, out, away, instead of, for</b>	<b>pronoun</b>
<b>re-, red-</b>	<b>back, again</b>	<b>Re-organise</b>
<b>sub-</b>	<b>below</b>	<b>subdivision</b>
<b>semi-</b>	<b>half</b>	<b>semicircle</b>
<b>super-, sur-</b>	<b>over, above</b>	<b>superpowers</b>
<b>trans-, tra -</b>	<b>across, over</b>	<b>transport</b>
<b>tri-</b>	<b>three</b>	<b>triathlon</b>
<b>under-</b>	<b>below, too little</b>	<b>underpayment</b>

## Suffixes

<b>Suffix</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>- able</b>	<b>able</b>	<b>countable</b>
<b>- al</b>	<b>action/result of the verb</b>	<b>proposal</b>
<b>- ant/-ent</b>	<b>person who + verb</b>	<b>assistant</b>
<b>-ance/ -ence</b>	<b>action/result of the verb</b>	<b>attendance</b>
<b>- age</b>	<b>collection of a noun</b>	<b>luggage</b>
<b>-ate/-ise/ -fy/-en</b>	<b>cause to be</b>	<b>fabricate; stabilise; classify; shorten</b>
<b>-er/-or</b>	<b>one who does a thing - condition</b>	<b>employer</b>
<b>-ery/-er</b>	<b>action/instance/place of a verb+ing</b>	<b>bribery</b>
<b>-ism</b>	<b>doctrine of a noun</b>	<b>Idealism</b>
<b>-ity</b>	<b>state of quality of being</b>	<b>ability</b>
<b>-tion/-sion</b>	<b>the act or process</b>	<b>demonstration</b>
<b>-ise</b>	<b>verbal</b>	<b>socialise</b>
<b>-ist</b>	<b>practising in</b>	<b>Philologist</b>
<b>- ology</b>	<b>study of</b>	<b>Geology</b>
<b>-ous</b>	<b>possessing; full of</b>	<b>dangerous</b>
<b>-ness</b>	<b>state of being</b>	<b>consciousness</b>
<b>-phile</b>	<b>fond of</b>	<b>bibliophile</b>
<b>-phobia</b>	<b>abnormal fear of</b>	<b>claustrophobia</b>
<b>-ship</b>	<b>state of being</b>	<b>citizenship</b>

***Final Advice:***

It is not uncommon for an individual to feel that the level of vocabulary knowledge is insufficient to cope with academic texts. If this is how you feel, extend your reading habits by reading as much as you can and as many varieties of texts types as you can. If you are a person who only likes to read the newspaper, read more newspapers more often in English. Choosing reading material that is enjoyable and dedicating more time to reading will increase your vocabulary knowledge and give you a better feel for the language.