

GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON LINGUISTICS & FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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A Corpus Based Study of General and Academic Vocabulary in Psychology Research Articles

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Abstract

A Corpus Based Study of General and Academic Vocabulary in Psychology Research Articles
Department of Translation and Interpretation (English), Faculty of Humanities, Cappadocia University, Cappadocia, Turkey, 50420. E-mail: mrvalizadeh2015@gmail.com Abstract English language vocabulary has been classified generally into four major categories including general service, academic, technical, and low frequency words. General service words are those frequently used function and content words that constitute the majority of running words (around 90%) in spoken and written discourse. Knowledge of this vocabulary is essential for understanding various text types. Academic vocabulary refers to those words that are used more frequently in academic texts such as research articles. It has been argued that in language learning courses, general vocabulary should be prioritized, and then the focus on instruction should be directed to academic words. Recent developments in corpus-based study of language provided more efficient ways to identify vocabulary items relevant to specific subject areas and the number of field-specific vocabulary lists are growing. Within this line of research, the current study investigated the lexical profile of psychology research articles based on New General Service List (NGSL) (Browne et al., 2013a), and the New Academic Word List (NAWL) (Browne et al., 2013b). The findings revealed that 1,682 general service and 361 academic words occurred frequently in the corpus of psychology research articles. These words accounted for 84.20% of the corpus, and the list developed based on them might be employed in instructional programmes for setting vocabulary learning goals for psychology students. Given that vocabulary is an essential component writing proficiency for university students, the findings of the study can also inform materials development in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses.

Keywords: vocabulary, academic vocabulary, corpus linguistics, research articles, EAP

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