

## **ENGE 2840 Lexical Studies in English**

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### **Course description**

This course introduces students to the study of English words and vocabulary acquisition. In the first part of the course, we will look at the evolution of the English vocabulary such as historical influences and semantic change. Then we will look at English morphology and word formation, which will be followed by topics on meaning relations and semantic fields. In the second part of the course, the focus will shift to the acquisition of vocabulary and we will start by discussing whether English has a core vocabulary and what it means to know a word. Then topics on semantic transfer, collocation, academic vocabulary and also practical techniques in vocabulary teaching will be covered.

### **Learning outcomes:**

After completing this course, students should:

- be familiar with the historical influences on the English vocabulary
- understand the morphological structure of English words
- understand the semantic relations among words in English
- understand the basic issues involved in the acquisition of vocabulary
- be familiar with some practical techniques in teaching vocabulary

### **Assessment:**

Attendance/participation	15%
Presentation	15%
Quiz	30%
Essay	40%

**Details of assessments:**

**Attendance/participation:** Students are expected to attend and participate in the learning activities conducted in both lectures and tutorials.

**Blackboard assignment:** Share with the class a new word and discuss how it is formed (3%).

**Teach a verb (in pairs):** 5-minute mini-lesson using the dictionary to teach a verb (5%).

**Group presentation (maximum 8 minutes):** In groups of four, you will give a short presentation in Week 8 in class. In the presentation, you should:

- 1) Select an English word with Latin or Greek roots and present its etymology (and also **examples** of other words that share this root)
- 2) Select an English word and analyze it morphologically
- 3) Select a loan word in English and tell us its source
- 4) **Create** a word in English and explain **how** and **why** you have made up this new word

**Quiz:** To be held in Week 15 in class. Details to be announced later.

**Essay (6-8 pages)** on a topic of your choice. Possible topics include:

- Exploring the influence of a particular historical period on the development of English
- Tracing the semantic change of a particular word in English, e.g. *naughty*, *nice*, *silly* or *weird*
- Analyzing a specific derivational rule in English, e.g. *-able*, *-er*, *-ee*
- Examining words in a specific semantic field, e.g. *mad*, *stupid*
- Differentiating near synonyms in English
- Investigating what it means to know a word
- Discussing vocabulary learning strategies
- Discussing the use of dictionaries in English language learning
- Identifying and explaining semantic mismatches between English and Chinese
- Discussing the role of collocations in second language learning
- Analyzing the relationship between vocabulary and reading
- Exploring the regional varieties of English (with a focus on vocabulary)

**Late submission of assignments will be penalized half a grade for each day late.**

## Tentative Schedule

Week	Topic	Readings
Week 1 (Jan 7)	<b>Part I: English Words</b> - What is lexicology? What is a word?	WMV 1-13; 56-64
Week 2 (Jan 14)	- The history of English words	WMV 24-55; Crystal (2012) 153-161; Crystal (2010) 84-91
Week 3 (Jan 21)	- How word meanings change	EW 168-181
Week 4 (Jan 28)	<i>Chinese New Year holiday – no class</i>	
Week 5 (Feb 4)	- English morphology	EW 63-82
Week 6 (Feb 11)	- Word formation	WMV 80-104
Week 7 (Feb 18)	- Meaning relations	WMV 65-79; 105-135
Week 8 (Feb 25)	**Group presentations**	
Week 9 (Mar 2)	<b>Part II: Vocabulary Acquisition</b> - Fundamental issues	Schmitt 116-141
Week 10 (Mar 11)	- Knowing a word - Is it worthwhile learning word parts? - How to evaluate dictionaries	Nation 44-91 Nation 389-413 Nation 414-436
Week 11 (Mar 18)	- Semantic transfer in second language learning; Collocation	Jiang Singleton 47-62
Week 12 (Mar 25)	- Teaching and learning verbs	Hinkel 177-208
Week 13 (April 1)	<i>Reading Week – no class</i>	
Week 14 (April 8)	- Vocabulary teaching in L2 classrooms	Nation 131-140
Week 15 (April 15)	*In-class quiz* **Essay due 5pm, 29 April (Thursday)**	

### Main texts:

#### ***Words, meaning and vocabulary [WMV]***

Jackson, H. & Amvela, E. Z. 2007. *Words, meaning and vocabulary: An introduction to English morphology (2e)*. London: Continuum.

#### ***English words: History and structure [EW]***

Minkiva, D. & Stockwell, R. 2009. *English words: History and structure (2e)*. Cambridge, CUP.

- Crystal, D.** 2010. *A Little Book of Language*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.
- Crystal, D.** 2012. *Spell it out: The singular story of English spelling*. London: Profile Books.
- Dixon, R. M. W.** 2014. *Making new words: Morphological derivation in English*. Oxford: OUP. [for reference only]
- Schmitt, N.** 2000. *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge; New York: CUP.
- Nation, I. S. P.** 2001, 2013. *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: CUP
- Jiang, N.** 2002. Form-meaning mapping in vocabulary acquisition in a second language. *SSLA*, 24, 617-637.
- Singleton, D.** 2000. *Language and the lexicon: An introduction*. London: Arnold.
- Hinkel, E.** 2004. *Teaching academic ESL writing: Practical techniques in vocabulary and grammar*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

**Feedback for evaluation:**

Students will be asked to complete Course Evaluations for both the lectures and tutorials of ENGE2840 at the end of the semester. Comments and suggestions about the course content, teaching method and learning tasks are most welcome at any time during the semester.

**Academic honesty:**

The University has implemented a zero tolerance policy against plagiarism and has required all written work to be submitted via VeriGuide at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/veriguide> .

To comply with University regulations, you are therefore asked to:

- 1) submit your written work via VeriGuide before due date and print the receipt issued by VeriGuide
- 2) submit a hard copy of the work, along with the receipt from VeriGuide and the declaration of honesty (which comes with the VeriGuide receipt but is also attached here for your use).

Assignments without the receipt from VeriGuide and the signed declaration of honesty will not be graded.