Victoria University of Wellington
PhD in Applied Linguistics, Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition

Program Instructors and Areas of Specialization
Emeritus Professor Laurie Bauer also supervised several vocabulary-based PhD students in the past. He is a world authority on morphology. Laurie is no longer taking on PhD candidates.

Associate Professor Frank Boers is best known for his research in the area of collocations, idioms, and formulaic language. He is the co-editor of the journal Language Teaching Research.

Dr. Averil Coxhead specializes in the areas of vocabulary and pedagogy, multi-word units, and English for Specific/Academic Purposes.

Dr. Irina Elgort researches lexical development in a second and foreign language, the bilingual mental lexicon, and reading.

Dr. Peter Gu is interested in vocabulary testing and vocabulary learning strategies.

Dr. Angela Joe is interested in second-language vocabulary acquisition, English for Specific Purposes, and Language in the Workplace.

Associate Professor John Macalister’s research interests include extensive reading and vocabulary.

Dr. Jonathan Newton’s work has focused on vocabulary learning through spoken interaction and teacher cognition in vocabulary.

Emeritus Professor Paul Nation is interested in a wide range of vocabulary research and is currently working on a picture-based vocabulary size test for young learners. Paul is no longer taking on PhD candidates.

Dr. Anna Siyanova-Chanturia researches the acquisition, processing, and use of multi-word expressions, such as collocations, idioms, multi-word verbs, in a first and second language.

Program Description
The PhD in Applied Linguistics program at Victoria University of Wellington is a research degree requiring the presentation of a thesis after an extended period of research. The PhD is typically done full-time. Candidates must be registered for a minimum of two years, and are expected to complete the degree in three years. The maximum time to complete the degree as a full-time candidate is four years. Candidates typically work on-campus with a maximum of 10 months allowed over the duration of the degree for off-campus data collection. Victoria University has a limited number of full scholarships that fund tuition and living expenses. At
present, approximately 20% of our students are fully funded through these scholarships. Funding is also available through faculty research grants to support data collection.

To enter the PhD program you need to have achieved very strong grades in an MA in TESOL or Applied Linguistics, have a good background in research in vocabulary, and provide a suitable topic that can be supervised within the School. We recommend contacting staff about potential topics and being flexible about the area of vocabulary research you want to investigate.

The environment for research at Victoria University of Wellington is highly supportive, with regular meetings of the vocabulary research group. There are currently 12 PhD candidates researching vocabulary with numbers varying between years. We hosted the first ever Vocab@Vic Conference in Wellington, December 18–20, 2013.

**Current PhD Students and Working Titles**

*Oliver Ballance:* Concordances and language learners: exploring textual and cognitive dimensions of concordancing in language learning; *TJ Boutorwick:* Productive vocabulary and extensive reading; *Thi Ngoc Yen Dang:* Developing and validating academic written and spoken word lists; *Khadij Gharibi:* Lexical Attrition in Iranian bilingual children in New Zealand; *Lin He:* Effects of explicit instruction about sentence structure on L2 sentence processing; *Myq Larson:* Thresholds, text coverage, vocabulary size, and reading comprehension in Applied Linguistics; *Chi Duc Nguyen:* Vocabulary uptake from listening to TED talks; *Betsy Quero:* The vocabulary load of academic texts; *Brian Strong:* Exploring phrasal verb acquisition difficulties; *Friederike Tegge:* Investigating song-based language teaching and its effect on lexical learning; *Haidee Thomson:* Learning and acquisition of formulaic language by foreign language learners, *Mark Toomer:* Retention of collocations: the effects of incidental and deliberate learning conditions on explicit and implicit knowledge of lexical and grammatical collocations.

**Recent and Notable Graduates**

2013: *Tatsuya Nakata,* Optimising second language vocabulary learning from flashcards; *Yosuke Sasao,* Diagnostic tests of English vocabulary learning proficiency: Guessing from context and knowledge of word parts.

2012: *Tatsuhiko Matsushita,* In what order should Japanese learners learn vocabulary? A corpus-based approach; *Mike Rodgers,* English language learning through viewing television: An investigation of comprehension, incidental vocabulary acquisition, lexical coverage, attitudes and captions; *Joseph Sorell,* Making a high-frequency word list; *Anna Piasecki,* The effects of proficiency on sub-lexical processing in bilingual visual word recognition.

2011: *Patrick Foss,* Vocabulary use and development in a corpus of Japanese learner blogs; *Zheng Wei,* Word roots in English: Learning English words through form and meaning similarity.
Averil Coxhead, Irina Elgort, Angela Joe, and Jonathan Newton are graduates who currently hold positions at Victoria University of Wellington. Anna C-S Chang, Hsing-Wu University, Taiwan; Teresa Mihwa Chung, Korea University, Korea; Tatsuhiko Matsushita, The University of Tokyo, Japan; Anna Piasecki, University of the West of England; Michael Rodgers, Nottingham University; Yosuke Sasao, Toyohashi University of Technology, Japan; Stuart Webb, Western University, Canada; Wei Zheng, Beijing Foreign Studies University, China.

Notable Published Papers


Nation, I. S. P. (2014). How much input do you need to learn the most frequent 9,000 words? *Reading in a Foreign Language, 26*(2), 1–16.


_Vocabulary Learning and Instruction, Advance online publication._


