Productive depth of vocabulary knowledge (PDVK) is usually associated with writing and speaking skills (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004). These skills are essential for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students, who have difficulties with expressing themselves in oral presentations or written assignments (Evans & Green, 2007). As a result, diagnostic measurement of PDVK is of vital importance, especially when the first most frequent 1,000 word families are concerned because these word families cover 81% of written text and 85% of spoken text (Nation, 2006). Consequently, this study aims to measure EAP students’ productive vocabulary knowledge of the most frequent 1,000 word families. To date, no study has tackled this issue. Five tests designed to measure four different aspects of productive knowledge were created for the study: form-meaning connection, collocation, semantic associations (2 tests), and word parts. The tests were first piloted with 10 English as a first language speakers to ensure internal validity. For the main study, 70 EAP students will first sit the NVLT (Webb, Sasao, & Ballance, 2015) and PLT (Laufer & Nation, 1999) to determine the participants’ knowledge of the form and meaning of high frequency words. Then, the participants will take the aforementioned tests of vocabulary knowledge. Findings will indicate to what extent learners who are preparing to study in English-medium universities have productive depth of vocabulary knowledge of the most frequent words. This will assist in diagnosing areas of weakness and the degree to which instructional emphasis on high frequency words could improve the speaking and writing skills of EAP students.

Keywords: vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary assessment, English for Academic Purposes, the most frequent words.