

VOCABULARY BUILDER · IELTS

Language & Communication

23 high-band words to read, understand,
and actually use — from B2 to C2.

B2

C1

C2

How to use this pack

A word you can only recognise is not yet a word you own. This pack is built to move each term from “I’ve seen it” to “I can use it under exam pressure.” Work through it in order.

1 Test yourself first

Go straight to the **Before** page and write what you think each word means. Don’t look ahead — this is your baseline.

2 Study the word bank

Read each entry: the definition, the example sentence, the collocations and the word family. The example is the most important part — it shows the word alive in context.

3 Do the tasks

Gap-fill, matching, word formation, a full IELTS-style reading, and speaking & writing practice. Use a pencil so you can redo them.

4 Test yourself again

Return to the **After** page and write the meanings from memory. Compare with your baseline — that gap is your progress.

HOW TO READ AN ENTRY

noun / verb / adjective

part of speech

B2 · C1 · C2

CEFR difficulty level

/ˈsɪmbəl/

pronunciation (IPA)

e.g.

example sentence in context

↔

opposite / contrast

What do you already know?

BEFORE

Before you read a single definition, write what you think each word means — even a rough guess or a synonym. Tick how sure you are. This is your honest starting point; you'll come back at the end to measure how far you've moved.

#	WORD	SURE? know · unsure · new	WHAT I THINK IT MEANS
1	bilingual	☐ ☐ ☐	
2	fluency	☐ ☐ ☐	
3	dialect	☐ ☐ ☐	
4	linguistic	☐ ☐ ☐	
5	mother tongue	☐ ☐ ☐	
6	articulate	☐ ☐ ☐	
7	proficiency	☐ ☐ ☐	
8	accent	☐ ☐ ☐	
9	endangered	☐ ☐ ☐	
10	lingua franca	☐ ☐ ☐	
11	dominant	☐ ☐ ☐	
12	convey	☐ ☐ ☐	
13	nuance	☐ ☐ ☐	
14	gesture	☐ ☐ ☐	
15	nonverbal	☐ ☐ ☐	
16	eloquent	☐ ☐ ☐	
17	translation	☐ ☐ ☐	
18	colloquial	☐ ☐ ☐	
19	jargon	☐ ☐ ☐	
20	ambiguity	☐ ☐ ☐	
21	terminology	☐ ☐ ☐	
22	grasp	☐ ☐ ☐	
23	multilingual	☐ ☐ ☐	

The word bank

Twenty-three words, chosen for how often they earn marks in IELTS Writing Task 2 and Speaking Part 3.
Read the example sentence aloud – that is where the meaning sticks.

1 bilingual /baɪˈlɪŋɡwəl/

adjective

B2

Able to speak two languages equally well.

e.g. Children raised in **bilingual** homes often switch effortlessly between languages.

COLLOCATIONS

fully bilingual • a bilingual education

WORD FAMILY

bilingualism (n) • cf. monolingual, multilingual

2 fluency /ˈfluːənsi/

noun

B2

The ability to speak or write a language easily, smoothly and accurately.

e.g. Regular practice is the fastest route to **fluency**.

COLLOCATIONS

achieve / develop fluency • fluency in (a language)

WORD FAMILY

fluent (adj), fluently (adv)

3 dialect /ˈdaɪəlekt/

noun

C1

A form of a language spoken in a particular region or by a particular group.

e.g. Dozens of local **dialects** are spoken across the country.

COLLOCATIONS

a regional / local dialect

WORD FAMILY

—

4 **linguistic** /lɪŋ'ɡwɪstɪk/

adjective

C1

Relating to language or the study of language.

e.g. The country is famous for its rich **linguistic** diversity.

COLLOCATIONS

linguistic diversity / ability / skills

WORD FAMILY

linguistics (n), linguist (n)

5 **mother tongue** /ˌmʌðə 'tʌŋ/

noun

B2

The first language that a person learns as a child.

e.g. She speaks four languages, but Arabic is her **mother tongue**.

COLLOCATIONS

(sb's) mother tongue

WORD FAMILY

— · cf. native language

6 **articulate** /ɑː'tɪkjʊlət/

adjective

C1

Able to express thoughts and feelings clearly and effectively.

e.g. A good leader must be **articulate** and persuasive.

COLLOCATIONS

an articulate speaker

WORD FAMILY

articulate (v, /-leɪt/), articulation (n)

IELTS Note the verb (to articulate an idea) is stressed differently from the adjective.

7 proficiency /prəˈfɪʃnsi/

noun

C1

A high level of skill or ability in something, especially a language.

e.g. Employers increasingly require **proficiency** in at least one foreign language.

COLLOCATIONS

language proficiency • a proficiency test

WORD FAMILY

proficient (adj)

8 accent /ˈæksent/

noun

B2

The particular way in which people from a region or country pronounce words.

e.g. Even after years abroad, he never lost his regional **accent**.

COLLOCATIONS

a strong / foreign accent

WORD FAMILY

—

9 endangered /ɪnˈdeɪndʒəd/

adjective

C1

(of a language, species or custom) at serious risk of disappearing.

e.g. Around the world, an **endangered** language dies out every few weeks.

COLLOCATIONS

an endangered language / species

WORD FAMILY

endanger (v)

IELTS “Endangered languages” is a common essay topic – pair it with “preserve”.

10 lingua franca /ˌlɪŋɡwə ˈfræŋkə/

noun

C2

A language used for communication between people who speak different first languages.

e.g. English has become the **lingua franca** of science and business.

COLLOCATIONS

serve as a lingua franca

WORD FAMILY

—

IELTS A sophisticated term for “common language” — ideal for “global English” essays.

11 dominant /ˈdɒmɪnənt/

adjective

B2

Most important, powerful or noticeable.

e.g. English is the **dominant** language of the internet.

COLLOCATIONS

a dominant language / position / role

WORD FAMILY

dominate (v), dominance (n)

12 convey /kənˈveɪ/

verb

C1

To communicate an idea, feeling or piece of information to someone.

e.g. A skilful translator must **convey** not just the words but the meaning.

COLLOCATIONS

convey a message / meaning / emotion

WORD FAMILY

—

IELTS A precise, high-band verb for “express” or “get across”.

13 nuance /'nju:ɑ:ns/

noun

C2

A very slight difference in meaning, feeling or tone.

e.g. Some **nuances** are almost impossible to translate exactly.

COLLOCATIONS

a subtle nuance • capture the nuances

WORD FAMILY

nuanced (adj)

14 gesture /'dʒestʃə/

noun

B2

A movement of the hands, head or body to express an idea or feeling.

e.g. A simple **gesture**, such as a nod, can mean different things in different cultures.

COLLOCATIONS

a hand gesture • make a gesture

WORD FAMILY

gesture (v), gesticulate (v)

15 nonverbal /,nɒn'vɜ:bl/

adjective

C1

Relating to communication without words, such as body language and facial expressions.

e.g. Much of human communication is **nonverbal**.

COLLOCATIONS

nonverbal communication / cues

WORD FAMILY

— • cf. verbal

16 eloquent /'eləkwənt/

adjective

C2

Able to express ideas fluently and persuasively, especially in speech.

e.g. Her **eloquent** speech moved the entire audience.

COLLOCATIONS

an eloquent speaker / appeal

WORD FAMILY

eloquence (n), eloquently (adv)

17 translation /træns'leɪʃn/

noun

B2

The process of changing words from one language into another; the result of this.

e.g. Something is often lost in **translation** between very different languages.

COLLOCATIONS

a literal / rough translation • translation software

WORD FAMILY

translate (v), translator (n)

18 colloquial /kə'ləʃkwɪəl/

adjective

C1

(of language) informal and used in ordinary conversation rather than formal writing.

e.g. Textbooks rarely teach the **colloquial** expressions that native speakers actually use.

COLLOCATIONS

colloquial language / speech

WORD FAMILY

colloquialism (n) • opp. formal

19 jargon /ˈdʒɑːɡən/

noun

C1

Special words used by a particular profession or group that others find hard to understand.

e.g. Legal documents are often full of confusing **jargon**.

COLLOCATIONS

technical / medical jargon

WORD FAMILY

—

20 ambiguity /ˌæmbɪˈɡjuːəti/

noun

C1

The state of having more than one possible meaning.

e.g. Careful wording removes any **ambiguity** from a contract.

COLLOCATIONS

avoid / remove ambiguity

WORD FAMILY

ambiguous (adj) · opp. clarity

21 terminology /ˌtɜːmɪˈnɒlədʒi/

noun

C1

The set of special words and expressions used in a particular subject or field.

e.g. Each science has its own **terminology** that beginners must learn.

COLLOCATIONS

technical / scientific terminology

WORD FAMILY

—

22 **grasp** /grɑːsp/

verb

C1

To understand something, especially something difficult or complex.

e.g. It can take years to fully **grasp** the grammar of a new language.

COLLOCATIONS

grasp a concept / an idea / the meaning

WORD FAMILY

grasp (n) · e.g. a firm grasp of

23 **multilingual** /ˌmʌltiˈlɪŋɡwəl/

adjective

C1

Able to speak several languages; involving several languages.

e.g. In many African cities, being **multilingual** is completely normal.

COLLOCATIONS

a multilingual society / population

WORD FAMILY

— · cf. bilingual, monolingual

Task 1 · Gap-fill

Complete each sentence with a word from the bank. You may need to change the form (tense, ending). Each word is used once.

accent

ambiguity

bilingual

colloquial

convey

dominant

endangered

fluency

grasp

jargon

proficiency

translation

1. Years of practice gave her near-native _____ in Spanish.
2. Linguists are racing to record _____ languages before they vanish.
3. A good poem can _____ complex emotions in just a few words.
4. The report was so full of technical _____ that few could follow it.
5. English has become the _____ language of international trade.
6. You can often guess where someone grew up from their _____.
7. Growing up _____, she never had to think about which language to use.
8. The careless wording of the law created unfortunate _____.
9. It took him a while to fully _____ the rules of the game.
10. Some jokes simply do not survive _____.
11. Most universities require a certain level of English _____.
12. Films are a great way to pick up _____ speech.

Task 2 · Match the meaning

Write the letter of the correct definition next to each word.

1	dialect	☐	a	a common language between different speakers
2	linguistic	☐	b	relating to language
3	mother tongue	☐	c	communication without words
4	articulate	☐	d	a regional form of a language
5	lingua franca	☐	e	the special words used in a field
6	nuance	☐	f	a person's first language
7	gesture	☐	g	a movement of the body to express something
8	nonverbal	☐	h	able to express ideas clearly
9	eloquent	☐	i	expressing ideas fluently and persuasively
10	terminology	☐	j	a very slight difference in meaning

Task 3 · Word formation

Change the word in **CAPITALS** into the correct form to complete each sentence.

1. **FLUENT** She speaks all three languages with complete _____.
2. **LINGUISTICS** The region has enormous _____ diversity.
3. **AMBIGUOUS** The instructions were confusing and full of _____.
4. **TRANSLATE** She works as a professional _____ at international conferences.
5. **PROFICIENT** Language _____ is essential for the role.
6. **ELOQUENT** He spoke with great _____ about the cause.
7. **DOMINANT** English continues to _____ international business.
8. **ARTICULATE** She expressed her argument clearly and _____.

Task 4 · Reading in context

Read the passage, then answer the questions. This mirrors an IELTS reading set – notice how many of your new words appear naturally.

One World, One Language?

Never before has a single language been so widely used across the globe. English has become the lingua franca of science, business, aviation and the internet, spoken by billions of people, most of whom learned it as a second language. For a student in almost any country, a good level of proficiency in English can open doors to education and employment.

The advantages of a shared language are clear. It allows people from different backgrounds to communicate, trade and cooperate, and it makes it far easier to convey ideas across borders. A scientist in one country can read the research of another; a traveller can find their way almost anywhere.

Yet the rise of one dominant language worries many people. As English spreads, smaller languages come under pressure, and every year more of them become endangered. When a language disappears, so too does a unique way of seeing the world, along with the stories, humour and nuance it carries. Something is always lost in translation.

The challenge, then, is to enjoy the benefits of a global language without allowing the world's rich linguistic diversity to fade. Many experts argue that the ideal is not one language but many: a world in which people are comfortably bilingual, or even multilingual, able to join the global conversation while keeping their mother tongue alive.

Questions 1–5 · True / False / Not Given

TRUE = the passage says so. **FALSE** = the passage says the opposite. **NOT GIVEN** = the passage doesn't say.

- | | | |
|----------|--|-------------------|
| 1 | English is now used as a common language in international business. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 2 | The passage says most English speakers learned it as their first language. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 3 | A shared language makes cooperation between countries easier. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 4 | The passage states exactly how many languages disappear each year. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 5 | The writer believes the whole world should speak only English. | T / F / NG |

Questions 6–9 · Vocabulary in context

- | | | |
|----------|---|-------|
| 6 | Find a word/phrase meaning: a common language used between different speakers | <hr/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| 7 | Find a word/phrase meaning: to communicate an idea or feeling | <hr/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| 8 | Find a word/phrase meaning: at serious risk of disappearing | <hr/> |
| <hr/> | | |
| 9 | Find a word/phrase meaning: a person's first language | <hr/> |

Task 5 · Use it yourself

Recognising a word is easy; producing it is what raises your band. Answer out loud, then in writing.

SPEAK Speaking — Part 3 style

Answer each question in 3–4 sentences. Try to use the words in **bold** accurately.

1. What is the best way to achieve **fluency** in a foreign language?
2. Is it important to preserve **endangered** languages?
3. Do you think everyone should learn English as a **lingua franca**?
4. How much of everyday communication do you think is **nonverbal**?

WRITE Writing — Task 2 mini

Write an introduction and one body paragraph (about 80–100 words) for this prompt. Use **at least four** words from this pack.

As one or two languages come to dominate the world, many smaller languages are becoming **endangered**. Why is this happening, and what could be done to protect **linguistic** diversity?

Now, from memory

AFTER

Cover the word bank. Write each meaning from memory and tick the box only if you could also use the word in your own sentence. Compare this page with your **Before** page – every word you can now explain is a mark you've earned.

#	WORD	MEANING (FROM MEMORY)	CAN USE IT
1	bilingual		☐
2	fluency		☐
3	dialect		☐
4	linguistic		☐
5	mother tongue		☐
6	articulate		☐
7	proficiency		☐
8	accent		☐
9	endangered		☐
10	lingua franca		☐
11	dominant		☐
12	convey		☐
13	nuance		☐
14	gesture		☐
15	nonverbal		☐
16	eloquent		☐
17	translation		☐
18	colloquial		☐
19	jargon		☐
20	ambiguity		☐
21	terminology		☐
22	grasp		☐
23	multilingual		☐

Answer key

TASK 1 · GAP-FILL

1 fluency 2 endangered 3 convey 4 jargon 5 dominant 6 accent 7 bilingual 8 ambiguity 9 grasp 10 translation
11 proficiency 12 colloquial

TASK 2 · MATCHING

1 d 2 b 3 f 4 h 5 a 6 j 7 g 8 c 9 i 10 e

TASK 3 · WORD FORMATION

1 fluency 2 linguistic 3 ambiguity 4 translator 5 proficiency 6 eloquence 7 dominate 8 articulately

TASK 4 · TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

1 TRUE 2 FALSE 3 TRUE 4 NOT GIVEN 5 FALSE

TASK 4 · VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

6 lingua franca 7 convey 8 endangered 9 mother tongue

 **Nicely done.** Revisit this pack in a week and again in a month — spaced review is what turns a recognised word into an automatic one. More themed packs at prepex.ai.