

Chapter 9

Task 2: Lexical Resource

In this unit, you will:

- develop a better understanding of the various requirements related to the domain “Lexical Resource”,
- read and discuss writing exemplars using the assessment standards of “Lexical Resource”,
- evaluate and improve writing exemplars following the assessment standards of “Lexical Resource”.

NOTE: *Exemplars included in this chapter are written by university students and teachers. These exemplars are sometimes edited for the purpose of illustrating certain aspects of the IELTS writing assessment standards. Nevertheless, these exemplars are not edited to be error-free.*

Activity 1 Understanding the assessment standards of “Lexical Resource”

Since the assessment standards of this domain in Task 2 are identical to those in Task 1, refer to Activity 1 in Chapter 5 for definitions of keywords of the assessment standards.

The term “lexical resource” is used in the IELTS writing assessment standards to denote “vocabulary”. Three aspects of use of vocabulary are considered by IELTS writing examiners, which include: (1) variety of vocabulary, (2) difficulty of vocabulary, and (3) accuracy of vocabulary.

In the following exercise, the examples are taken from an exemplar (Exemplar 9.1) written by a student on the following question:

T2-01

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about the following topic:

Nowadays, having a higher degree is regarded as a prerequisite for getting a higher paid job. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples.

Aspect 1: Variety of vocabulary

Variety of vocabulary is achieved through word formation. There are four major types of word formation: **prefixes**, **suffixes**, **compounds**, and **conversion**.

Write down the type of word formation next to the corresponding definition and example.

Type of word formation	Definition	Example
	It connects two or more base words to form a new word.	workforce
	It is a group of letters that are placed before the root of a word. It usually changes the meaning of the word, but not the part of speech of the word.	im-possible
	It is the change of a word from one part of speech to another.	benefit (n.) □ benefit (v.)
	It is a group of letters that are placed at the end of the root of a word. It usually changes the part of speech of the word, but not the meaning of the word.	general-ly

Aspect 2: Difficulty of vocabulary

Writing in an academic context requires the use of a set of more sophisticated and formal words than we would normally use in our daily life. For examples of commonly used academic vocabulary, you can refer to Coxhead's (2000) Academic Word List¹.

Complete the following table.

Word in a less academic style	Word in a more academic style
As the society develops faster , ... there were changes in the nature of jobs.	As the society develops _____, there were changes in the nature of jobs.
So , tertiary sector has an escalating demand at present.	_____, tertiary sector has an escalating demand at present.
I agree that studying more is key to getting a better paid job nowadays.	Agree that _____ is key to getting a better paid job nowadays.
Holding a higher degree, a person can choose to work in other areas.	Holding a higher degree, _____ can choose to work in other areas.

¹ Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(2), 213-238.

Aspect 3: Accuracy of vocabulary

Three types of vocabulary accuracy are mentioned in the IELTS writing assessment standards, including (1) collocation, (2) spelling, and (3) part of speech.

Write down the type of vocabulary accuracy next to the corresponding definition and example.

Type of vocabulary accuracy	Definition	Example
	The accurate use of word forms in sentences e.g. noun, verb, adjective, adverb.	<p>() Being a clinical psychologist may need to possession at least a master while a customs officer may be required to only show his results of public examinations.</p> <p>(✓) Being a clinical psychologist may need to possess at least a master while a customs officer may be required to only show his results of public examinations.</p>
	The accurate alphabetical formation of words.	<p>() For example, only those who have a bachelor degree can have the opportunity to be promoted to the inspector grade in the Hong Kong Police Force.</p> <p>(✓) For example, only those who have a bachelor degree can have the opportunity to be promoted to the inspector grade in the Hong Kong Police Force.</p>
	The accurate combination of words.	<p>() Nowadays, employers reply heavily in whether their subordinates possess a degree when it comes to selecting employees for promotion.</p>

	(✓) Nowadays, employers reply heavily on whether their subordinates possess a degree when it comes to selecting employees for promotion.
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Activity 2 Using a variety of vocabulary

- Read the following question (T2-05) and read Exemplars 9.2 to 9.4.
- Evaluate how well the exemplars are written in terms of using a variety of vocabulary by referring to the definitions and examples of the related terms. If necessary, use the following guiding questions to help your evaluation:
 - Did the student form new words through the use of prefixes?
 - Did the student form new words through the use of suffixes?
 - Did the student form new words through the use of conversion?
 - Did the student form new words through the use of compounds?
- Try to reach a consensus regarding the performances of these two exemplars in relation to variety of vocabulary by rating them as low (Bands 4-5), average (Bands 6-7), and higher (Bands 7+).

T2-05

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about the following topic:

Distance education enables students to study at their own pace. Nevertheless, it also creates problems including high withdrawal rate and lack of interaction between teachers and students. Explain some possible reasons for these problems and suggest some solutions.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples.

Exemplar 9.2

First and foremost, inadequate monitor brings by distance education will cause high withdraw rate. By adopting distance education, teachers and student are no longer sitting in the same classroom in class - students are required to watch pre-recorded video lesson instead. In view of the phenomenon that most parents need to work in daytime, there will not be any authorities to supervise students in classes. As a result, this may contribute to a high withdrawal rate. Offering a tutor for every student is clearly unaffordable. Therefore, assigning after-lesson

quiz for students is a way to surmount the problem. If all students are required to take a test regarding teaching content after lesson, they will be more willing to attend online lesson with a view to get a **pass**. The pupils will attend and be concentrated in online class after **implementation** of live lessons.

Guiding question	Yes/No	Example/Suggestion
Did the student form new words through the use of prefixes?		
Did the student form new words through the use of suffixes?		
Did the student form new words through the use of conversion?		
Did the student form new words through the use of compounds?		

Rating: Low (Bands 4-5) / Average (Bands 6-7) / **High (Bands 7+)**

Exemplar 9.3

Communication between teachers and students **wastes much time** will led to lack of **interaction** between teachers and students. Students can not only raise their hands and ask questions **verbally** but also seek help from teachers hands down by **visiting** staff room after class in **traditional** schooling. In contrast, students can only **email** their teachers and probably wait for a couple hours for **reply** in distance schooling. The long waiting will **discourage** students to ask questions and interact with teachers in long term. The issue can be **addressed** by **launching** live lesson in distance **education**. **Unlike pre-recorded** videos, students can leave comments which will be seen by tutor **immediately** and discuss with the tutor in live lesson. As a result, **interactions** between teachers and students can be preserved in live teaching.

Guiding question	Yes/No	Example/Suggestion
Did the student form new words through the use of prefixes?		
Did the student form new words through the use of suffixes?		
Did the student form new words through the use		

of conversion?		
Did the student form new words through the use of compounding?		
Rating: Low (Bands 4-5) / Average (Bands 6-7) / High (Bands 7+)		

Exemplar 9.4

Distance **education** allows students to study in wherever they want. But, it also creates problems because many students give up and students and teachers cannot communicate. I reckon that teacher-student **miscommunication** is the cause of the above problems.

Guiding question	Yes/No	Example/Suggestion
Did the student form new words through the use of prefixes?		
Did the student form new words through the use of suffixes?		
Did the student form new words through the use of conversion?		
Did the student form new words through the use of compounding?		

Rating: Low (Bands 4-5) / Average (Bands 6-7) / High (Bands 7+)

Activity 3 Using academic vocabulary

- Read the following question (T2-06) and read Exemplars 9.5 and 9.7.
- Evaluate how well the exemplars are written in terms of using academic vocabulary by referring to the definitions and examples of the related terms. If necessary, use the following guiding questions to help your evaluation:
 - Did the student use a set of more sophisticated and formal words than we would normally use in our daily life?
- Try to reach a consensus regarding the performances of these two exemplars in relation to variety of vocabulary by rating them as low (Bands 4-5), average (Bands 6-7), and higher (Bands 7+).

T2-06

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about the following topic:

Family-friendly measures (e.g. flexible working hours) should be adopted by companies to ensure the work-life balance of their employees. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples.

Exemplar 9.5

First and foremost, flexible working hours should be implemented as it can benefit employee while not harming the interest of the company. Imagine that you are an office lady who to wake up at 7 am and return home at 7 pm on weekdays. How can you have adequate time to accompany your children who go to bed at 9 pm? When working hours become more flexible, workers can have discretion over their working hours. Then, more time can be reserved for their family.

Categorize the following words into “word/expression in a less academic style” and “word/expression in a more academic style” by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate boxes. Suggest a more formal and sophisticated word for the latter.

Word/expression	Word/expression in a less academic style	Word/expression in a more academic style	Suggestion (if any)
first and foremost			
implemented			
benefit			
adequate			
accompany			
have discretion over			
reserved			

Rating: Low (Bands 4-5) / Average (Bands 6-7) / High (Bands 7+)

Compare Exemplar 9.5 with Exemplar 9.5(a).

Exemplar 9.5(a) – words/expressions in a less academic style

There must be flexible working hours as it is good to employee while not harming the interest

of the company. Imagine that you are an office lady who to wake up at 7 am and return home at 7 pm on weekdays. How can you have enough time to be with your children who go to bed at 9 pm? When working hours become more flexible, workers can work earlier and finish their work earlier. Then, they can spend their evening with family.

Exemplar 9.6

Moreover, childcare **money** should be given for workers for promoting **working efficiency**. **For employers**, the money is worth-spending as employees **do not need to worry about** their children while working. Thus, they can **put more emphasis on work** and working efficiency can be promoted. Besides, parents can obtain more leisure time after launching the scheme. This **makes** working-parents receive other training or further their studies which can also raise their working efficiency.

Categorize the following words into “word/expression in a less academic style” and “word/expression in a more academic style” by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate boxes. Suggest a more formal and sophisticated word for the latter.

Word/expression	Word/expression in a less academic style	Word/expression in a more academic style	Suggestion (if any)
moreover			
money			
working efficiency			
for employers			
do not need to worry about			
put more emphasis on			
makes			

Rating: Low (Bands 4-5) / **Average (Bands 6-7)** / High (Bands 7+)

Compare Exemplar 9.6 with Exemplar 9.6(a).

Exemplar 9.6(a) – words/expressions in a more academic style

Moreover, childcare subsidy should be given for workers for promoting working efficiency. From the perspective of the employers, the money is worth-spending as employees can stop agonizing over their children while working. Thus, they can put more emphasis on work and working efficiency can be promoted. Besides, parents can obtain more leisure time after launching the scheme. This motivates working parents to receive other training or further their studies which can also raise their working efficiency.

Exemplar 9.7

Equal amount of time should be spent by employees on work and family. Working is important to them because they need the salary to support their family. Also, family is important because people need support from those who are close to them. So, it is important for the employers to give employees flexible working hours. It will make the company strong.

Categorize the following words into “word/expression in a less academic style” and “word/expression in a more academic style” by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate boxes. Suggest a more formal and sophisticated word for the latter.

Word/expression	Word/expression in a less academic style	Word/expression in a more academic style	Suggestion (if any)
equal amount of time should be spent			
working			
important			
need the salary			
also			
give			
make the company strong			

Rating: **Low (Bands 4-5)** / Average (Bands 6-7) / High (Bands 7+)

Compare Exemplar 9.7 with Exemplar 9.7(a).

Exemplar 9.7(a) – words/expressions in a more academic style

Employees should strike a balance between work and family. It is crucial to secure a stable job to them because it is their responsibility to provide financial support to their family. In

addition, family is indispensable because people need support from those who are close to them. So, it is of paramount importance for the employers to foster a flexible working environment. The adoption of such policy would empower and motivate the employees to contribute significantly to the company.

Activity 4 Using accurate vocabulary

- Read the following question (T2-07) and read Exemplars 9.8 to 9.10.
- Evaluate how well the exemplars are written in terms of using accurate vocabulary by referring to the definitions and examples of the related terms. If necessary, use the following guiding questions to help your evaluation:
 - Did the student use collocations accurately?
 - Did the student spell words accurately?
 - Did the student use part of speech accurately?
- Try to reach a consensus regarding the performances of these two exemplars in relation to variety of vocabulary by rating them as low (Bands 4-5), average (Bands 6-7), and higher (Bands 7+).

T2-07

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about the following topic:

It is not uncommon nowadays for people to work overseas. Working overseas allow people to experience different cultures and extend their social and professional connections. However, some find it hard to adapt due to nostalgia and acculturation.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples.

Correct the lexical errors you find in the following exemplars. Focus on collocation, spelling, and part of speech.

Exemplar 9.8

*First and foremost, working overseas enables us to experience different cultures and **extend** our social and professional circles. For instance, you will know more about Japanese cuisine and customs when you are working and living in Japan. In addition, your social and professional networks will be strength by making Japanese friends and acquiring knowledge in a new working environment. You can reap from working in other countries in different aspects.*

Type of error	Error	Correction
Collocation		
Spelling		
Part of speech		

Exemplar 9.9

In spite to these, some people found it difficult to fit in new environment and reluctant to leave their hometown because of *homesick* and acculturation. I understand that foreign workers may miss their family and do not want to follow foreign culture. I reckon that these *difficulties* can be *eased*. For curing homesickness, you can cook Chinese dishes by yourself, call your family when you miss them, even come back home in holidays. For acculturation, I prefer to adapt to local culture and do not *violent* local customs. If you could not, you should still treat local culture *in respect*.

Type of error	Error	Correction
Collocation		
Spelling		
Part of speech		

Exemplar 9.10

All and all, not only do we gain experiences when living in different cultures, but we also expand our social and professional circle. Though we will still face some challenges, it is believed that these challenges can be *overcomed* and we will be hugely benefited by working overseas.

Type of error	Error	Correction
Collocation		
Spelling		

Activity 5 Peer evaluation

Based on your understanding of the assessment standards of “Lexical Resource”, complete the evaluation form for Exemplar 9.11 written by a university student.

In the evaluation, identify problematic aspects of vocabulary use in relation to (1) **variety**, (2) **difficulty**, and (3) **accuracy** by responding to the guiding questions.

T2-08

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about the following topic:

The number of slash workers (people with multiple careers) is on the rise. It is less likely for young people these days to settle on one job for a long time. Why would young people want to be slash workers? What are the social consequences of having more slash workers?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

Exemplar 9.11 (paragraph 1)

*The number of slash workers is **rising** in recent years. Youngsters **would like to be** slash workers because they want to broaden their **horizon**. There are **bad impacts** brought by slash workers **such as** shortage of full-time workers and low salary tax revenue.*

Questions for paragraph 1:

Q1. What is a more formal and academic word to replace “rising”?

Q2. What is a more formal and academic expression to replace “would like to be”?

Q3. What is the spelling mistake of “horizon”?

Q4. What is a more formal and academic word to replace “bad impacts”?

Q5. What is a more formal and academic expression to replace “such as”?

Exemplar 9.11 (paragraph 2)

First and foremost, youngsters want to be slash workers because they would like to broaden their horizon. Take my friend Jack as an example, he works as an English tutor, a secretary and a photographer at the same time. Having several jobs allows him to experience both flexible and regular workplace cultures. Being slash workers can also enable Jack to broaden their horizons by offering him more opportunities to make new friends. He meets colleagues in each job and able to encounter people in different backgrounds.

Questions for paragraph 2:

Q1. The same expression “broaden one’s horizons” has been used in the first paragraph. Can you suggest another synonymous expression?

Q2. The collocation between “regular” and “workplace cultures” is wrong. Can you suggest an alternative to “regular”?

Q3. What is a more formal and academic word/expression to replace “also”?

Q4. The same expression “broaden one’s horizons” has been used in the first paragraph. Can you suggest another synonymous expression?

Q5. In the expression “in different backgrounds”, the collocation between the preposition “in” and the noun “backgrounds” is wrong. Can you suggest another preposition?

Exemplar 9.11 (paragraph 3)

The social consequences of having more slash workers are shortage in full-time workers and low salary tax revenue. When full-time jobs become less appealing for youngsters and the full-time places remain unchanged, a shortage in full-time workers may emerge in the labour market. Also, income received from some of the part-time jobs will not be reported to the

authorities. *As a results*, many slash workers can avoid salary tax and salary tax revenue may *become less* in the long run.

Questions for paragraph 3:

Q1. The collocation between “appealing” and “for” is wrong. Can you suggest another preposition?

Q2. What is a more formal and academic word to replace “places”?

Q3. What is a more formal and academic word to replace “also”?

Q4. What is the spelling mistake in the expression “as a results”?

Q5. What is a more formal and academic word to replace “become less”? -

Exemplar 9.11 (paragraph 4)

In conclusion, wanting to broaden their horizons would be a reason for young people to become slash workers. Disadvantages of the glowing number of slash workers may lead in full-time worker shortage and a drop in salary tax revenue.

Q1. What is a more formal and academic expression to replace “wanting”? -

Q2. The same expression “broaden one’s horizons” has been used multiple times. Can you suggest another synonymous expression?

Q3. What is a more formal and academic expression to replace “a reason”?

Q4. What is the spelling mistake of “glowing”?

Q5. The collocation between “lead” and “in” is wrong. Can you suggest another preposition?

Activity 5 Exercise

Based on your understanding of “lexical resource”, try to improve the lexical items underlined in the following paragraph of T2-30.

T2-30

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task. Write about the following topic:

Some people favor the use of private cars as they bring people much convenience. However, some people think that private cars create air pollution which is harmful to the environment. Do the advantages of using private cars outweigh the disadvantages?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

It cannot be denied that using private cars can save time when we go outside and easier to go to different destinations. However, the public transportation is also good, because it can help for well managing the time and it is cheap to go around different destinations. It has the similar functions as driving cars in person. Such as the underground train, it has routine schedule and there is no traffic jam, especially in the peak hours.

Answer:

It is undeniable that using private cars can be time-efficient when we go outside and it is more convenient to travel to different destinations. However, the public transportation, which has the similar functions as driving cars in person, has certain merits as well. To demonstrate, it can help commuters better manage their time and it is economical for them to travel to various locations. Taking the underground train as an example, it has routine schedule and can avoid the traffic congestion, especially in the peak hours.