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1. Introduction
The term “UserFriendlyEnglish” refers to both documents and a computer tool.

As its name implies, UserFriendlyEnglish refers to a document written in English which is accessible to the reader/listener. English may not be the reader/listener’s first language, or it may be that their reading/listening skills are limited.

It also refers to a Windows computer tool developed by MissionAssist to help authors write documents in UserFriendlyEnglish.

Guidelines must be followed to create such documents. The software tool has been developed to advise when and where such guidelines have been followed or broken.

More than fifteen years ago MissionAssist had a similar requirement and so developed its own system known as “EasyEnglish”. To date the whole of the Bible has been translated into EasyEnglish as well as a set of commentaries. UserFriendlyEnglish has evolved out of EasyEnglish and supports a wider range of reader abilities.

2. Quick start - dive straight in
If you have downloaded and installed the program and cannot wait to get started just:

- Either start typing your document in the top left pane or open / drag-and-drop a file into that pane
- Click on one of the big check buttons to perform a check. A report appears in the lower pane. Make any necessary changes in the top pane and perform another check
- Checks may be performed in any sequence and repeated as required.

Most checks are reasonably (and hopefully?) self-explanatory except for the vocabulary check – see section 10.5 for more detail on checking vocabulary.

3. Technical Introduction
The software is provided as Freeware i.e. the user may use and distribute copies of the software without charge. Users must also accept that it is provided “as is”.

The software runs on Windows. Part of the software makes use of Microsoft Word. To use the Word features a fully licensed version will be required on the user’s computer.

The wordlists are stored on the user’s computer. When the program starts it will check for an internet connection. If it finds a connection it will check for any new release notes and automatically

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1 MissionAssist was originally known as Wycliffe Associates (UK). The change of name was made because of a) some confusion in the services offered by Wycliffe Associate UK and Wycliffe Associates USA and b) a desire to serve other mission agencies in addition to Wycliffe Bible Translators. The links with Wycliffe Bible Translators are as strong as ever. Additional links are currently being developed and strengthened.

2 Documents which follow strict guidelines are, for obvious reasons, called “Controlled Languages”. (For a concise introduction to the concept see Wikipedia (Anon., n.d.))

3 https://easyenglish.bible

4 The standard conditions apply e.g. it is used at the user’s own risk and comes with no guarantees.
download any updated version of the word lists. It will confirm that the current version is being used.

4. Registration, Support and Suggestions for Development

Technically there is no need or facility for registering use of the product. However, it would be much appreciated if all users were to let the developer know that they are using the system. This will enable MissionAssist to evaluate how much time and effort should be put into further developing the system.

The software was written by Maurice Manktelow who welcomes all feedback, suggestions for improvement and bug fixes etc. Please email him at:

support@UserFriendlyEnglish.net

4.1. Updates

If the user is connected to the internet, when the program starts it will check to see if the dictionary / vocabulary is up-to-date. If it is not it will automatically download the latest version without the need for user intervention.

Updates to the actual program are not automatically downloaded – however notifications of such updates will be automatically provided next time the software is used.

5. Version of English

The software was developed using a British vocabulary and the International English Language Testing System (IELT)\(^5\).

Whilst the vocabulary has in excess of 9,000 words, experience has found that some common words are not included. If a user finds a word missing from the word list, please report the missing word(s) and the word lists will be updated to include that word and its derivations.

If Microsoft Word is used to check spellings, there is an option to use UK or USA spelling checker.

A future version will incorporate a feature to make the English vocabulary friendlier to American spellings.

6. File types

Documents may be written using the UserFriendlyEnglish tool. Existing documents can also be opened and saved in the program.

The program works with three file types:

- Plain text files (often, but not necessarily, using the file format *.txt)\(^6\)
- Rich text files\(^7\) (often, but not necessarily, using the file format *.rtf)

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\(^5\) https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/choose-ielts/what-ielts

\(^6\) Texts may contain SFMs (Standard Format Markers). These are used in documents such as scripture which are processed and Paratext. The program ignores such mark-up in the vocabulary checker, word cunt etc. If the reader does not know what this means just ignore it – it will not be of any relevance.

\(^7\) Documents created in Microsoft Word can save files in rtf format. Documents created using a Pages on a MacBook or iPad can also export documents in rtf
• Word files\(^8\) (files using the format .docx)

7. Guidelines for creating UserFriendlyEnglish documents
The following guidelines are presented in no particular order. They need all to be met to make the document accessible to readers with limited English ability.

• No long paragraphs
• No long sentences
• Vocabulary limited to that which the target reader can be expected to be familiar with
• Avoid gerunds and idioms\(^9\)

The program helps to identify most these problem issues.

7.1. Additional guidelines
The program does not check for the following – but they should be included as part of a manual check:

• Use active voice\(^{10}\)
• No similes or metaphors – they do not necessarily accurately translate across different cultures. (This can be a problematic area when working with scripture).
• No double negatives
• Remove ambiguity\(^{11}\)
• Avoid abstract nouns\(^{12}\)

7.2. An example
The favourite verse of John 3\(^{16}\) in the New King James version is:

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

In UserFriendlyEnglish this would become

“God loved the people in the world so much that he gave his one and only Son on their behalf. So, as a result, everyone who believes in the Son will not die. Instead, they will live always.”

(EasyEnglish, n.d.)

8. Guidelines for using the program
The various checks can be used in any sequence – and the checks can be repeated as often as is required.

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\(^8\) To open docx file types the computer must have Microsoft Word installed on it
\(^9\) “My shoes need cleaning” contains the gerund word cleaning. The sentence would be better written as “I need someone to clean my shoes”
\(^{10}\) “The flat tyre was changed by Sue.” This is an example of passive voice. This should be written using an active voice i.e. “Sue changed the flat tyre.”
\(^{11}\) “Mary talked to Jenny, and she then went back home”. Who went back home, Mary or Jenny. It is not clear who went back home.
A newspaper reported that “The passer-by helped dog bite victim!” Did the passer-by help the dog to bite someone? Or did the passer-by help someone who was bitten by a dog?” This is not clear.
\(^{12}\) “The disciples put their trust in Jesus” would be better written as “The disciples trusted Jesus”
The program is not a sophisticated word processing tool (that would require resources far, far beyond those available). One implication of this is that documents being checked need to be reasonably small. The longer/larger the document the more work the program has to do which means it takes longer to do that work. What this means in practice is something that will be discovered in using the program.

9. Explanation of the screen
The following image is what the user sees when using the programme.

9.1. The various text areas

This is what the user sees when starting the program.

The document the program works on is shown in the top left corner. The text may be:
- Entered directly here
- Obtained by opening a file using the file menu
- Drag and dropped into this area

There are two methods for checking the text i.e. those built into the program and those which utilise Microsoft Word

Any changes made to the text while using Word will change the text in the top left area. The checks run directly by the program do not actually make any changes to the document – these are considered advisory and therefore it is up to the user to decide whether or not to make any changes to the text. The bottom left area shows a copy of the original text annotated with feedback from the text.
The right-hand areas are used to supply information. The top area can be used to look up / check for words in the vocabulary. When a word is selected (either in the original text or in the vocabulary) its definition is shown in the bottom right hand area.

9.2. Resizing the screen / individual areas
The normal methods may be used to resize the screen e.g. by selecting with the mouse and moving the right-hand corner.

To resize the various areas place the mouse over the borders between two adjacent areas until the mouse changes from the normal arrow to the beam dividing mark. With the beam dividing mark still showing hold the left mouse button down and move to resize the areas.

9.3. Settings
It is possible to change a number of the default settings e.g. maximum number of words per sentence.

10. Checking a document
The program contains a number of checks which should be performed on a document.

From a technical perspective they can be performed in any order. However, it is advised to run them in the sequence provided until the user is happy with the results. This will probably require re-running some checks multiple times after changes to the text are made.

The following sections discuss the checks individually and provide some helpful background information.

10.1. Standardise spaces
The standard is a single space between all words and a double space between sentences. The feedback highlights where excess spaces have been used.

10.2. Check paragraph and sentence length
Short paragraphs and short sentences help users to understand what is written. A facility to identify long paragraphs and similarly long sentences is provided. The defaults are those which are generally accepted but the user can change these using the settings option.

Consider the following illustration:
The first sentence has been highlighted in yellow to indicate that it is just over the advisory maximum number of words per sentence. The second, longer sentence is over the mandatory maximum sentence length.

This illustrates that there are two limits i.e. an advisory and a maximum limit. On occasions it may be acceptable to go over the advisory limit, but the maximum limit should never be exceeded. Also, the colour coding indicates how close to the various limits the sentence is.

**Note:** This screen also illustrates the two text areas. The text in the bottom area is used to advise the user of any issues whereas the top area is where the user makes changes as appropriate.

10.3. **Check Punctuation**

In an ideal world UserFriendlyEnglish sentences would only contain a single thought / idea. This makes them easily understood by the reader. However, this is not possible because it interrupts the flow of the content and make it very staccato.

In practice the various thoughts / ideas in a sentence are separated by punctuation.

The program cannot check for the number of thoughts in a sentence, so it uses the proxy of analysing the punctuation within a sentence. Two thoughts in a sentence can often be acceptable but any more would be excessive. The program reports such excess.
10.4. Abbreviations and Contractions

These are normally considered a bad idea. The full word(s) should be used. Where such abbreviations are used, they are identified and reported on.

10.5. Check vocabulary

10.5.1. Description

The principle behind this check is that one part of learning any language is that of vocabulary development. Advanced users have a bigger vocabulary than beginners. The check enables the author to write documents at the required level of English (vocabulary) the reader must have to understand the text.

But this is complicated because a single word can have multiple meanings. Understanding the range of meanings is related to the user’s language proficiency. For example, consider the word “able”. This has several possible meanings / usages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning word “Able”</th>
<th>Level of understanding required</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Having the means”</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>“God is able to make us strong”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Can”</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>“Are you able to mend that bicycle?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Clever”</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>“She is an able administrator”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which meanings are therefore acceptable in a document is therefore related to the user’s English language proficiency.
But what do we mean by “language proficiency”? In this context it refers to the size of the vocabulary and the various meanings within that vocabulary. The Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR) is one such framework (which roughly relates to the IELT system) and is used by institutions for tasks such as determining whether or not a student has sufficient English language proficiency to study at a UK University. The following table gives some guidance on the various levels etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CEFR Level</th>
<th>IELT equivalent</th>
<th>Vocabulary size</th>
<th>Description / Reader Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;1,500</td>
<td>Very basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,501 - 2,500</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>2,501 - 3,250</td>
<td>Pre-Intermediate / Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>4.5 - 6.5</td>
<td>3,201 – 3,750</td>
<td>Upper intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>3,751 – 4,500</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>4,000 – 5,000</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** A fuller description can be found in the appendix.

In addition to the above, sometimes it is necessary to use “technical” words which are not part of a standard classification. Since the UserFriendlyEnglish tool has been primarily designed for use in a Christian context the names of the books in the Bible and the names of people mentioned in the Bible have also been included in the vocabulary.

10.5.2. Using the vocabulary check
Before making a check, it is necessary to select the relevant CEFR level to be used. For example, the next illustration uses level B1.

When a check is made a copy of the text is shown in the feedback area. Any words which have a meaning at a higher level are annotated.

It will then be necessary to make a value judgement on which words to keep and which to change.

10.5.3. Example
The following screen shot shows a vocabulary check at level B1 on a simple, very familiar piece of scripture.

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14 It is a “framework” and is therefore a guide only. It is not prescriptive.
15 This is incorporated in the IELT qualification, see https://www.ielts.org/
10.5.4. Interpretation of the feedback

The cursor can be seen to be in the word “only”. As a consequence that word can be seen in the bottom right hand corner together with its vocabulary listing. This is useful because it indicates when the word is not acceptable in the reading range B1 (i.e. when it is used as a conjunction). So, in the usage in this text, it is acceptable.

Similarly, the words ‘for’ and ‘life’ need checking that they are being used in the acceptable range i.e. in B1 or less.

The word ‘whoever’ is not in the scope of B1 and therefore needs replacing with a word which is in the scope of B1.

The words ‘begotten’ and ‘perish’ are not in the vocabulary and therefore should not be used.

10.5.5. Correcting the sentence

Not only does the sentence contain words not in the scope of B1, it is also too long (as would be revealed in the sentence length check).

This text could therefore be revised as follows:

“God loved the people in the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. So, as a result, everyone who believes in Him will not die. Instead, they will live always.”
This illustration has converted the one, long sentence into three sentences. It has also simplified the vocabulary.

Whilst the feedback indicates that some words (e.g. ‘will’) have meaning outside the scope of B1 the meaning in this context is within scope (note – the cursor is in the word ‘will’ and its vocabulary usage is shown in the bottom right hand corner. Clearly, in this case the word is being used as a modal verb A2 and is therefore acceptable because it is in scope.)

10.5.6. Note - Version of English
Currently the vocabulary is based upon UK English. A future release will better accommodate US English. For those wishing to work with US English this does not present any major problems – it is a small, temporary irritant. Improvements will be made in a future release of the program.

However, please note, that this does not affect the Microsoft Spell Check which works with whatever version of English is in use on the user’s computer.

10.6. Check for gerunds
User friendly documents avoid gerunds.

The programme attempts to identify gerunds – but this task is problematic. The check should be used but not be totally relied upon for identifying all possible gerunds.

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16 See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerund
17 “My shoes need cleaning” contains the gerund word cleaning. The sentence would be better written as “I need someone to clean my shoes”
10.7. Check for idioms

Idioms should not be used for the same reason as not using similes and metaphors\(^\text{18}\).

The program contains a crude check for idioms - so the guidance is to use this as a check for idioms but not rely on it. (If the program does not find any idioms, then that does not mean that there are none in the document. To illustrate, the check includes approx. 4,000 idioms whereas the Cambridge dictionary of idioms contains over 6,000).

10.8. Microsoft Word Spell check

To use this feature there must be a licenced copy of Microsoft Word on the computer.

The program will, in the background, open up a copy of Word and run its spell checker. Unlike other checks, if any changes are made, they will happen in the actual document text and not in the feedback area.

Obviously, Word has a much larger dictionary than that of UserFriendlyEnglish – so care must be used in changing any words or phrases to ensure that they remain within the required level. It is therefore recommended that after making any changes the vocabulary checker is re-run to ensure that the text is still within the required level.

10.9. Microsoft Word Grammar check\(^\text{19}\)

To use this feature there must be a licenced copy of Microsoft Word on the computer.

The program will, in the background, open up a copy of Word and run its grammar checker. Unlike other checks, if any changes are made they will happen in the actual document text and not in the feedback area.

To check for passive voice Microsoft Word grammar checking must have that option selected. A check is made when first using this feature to ensure that it is selected.

10.10. Readability statistics

Over time various attempts have been made to measure how readable a text is. Providing a simple measure has a lot of attraction in principle but it is thwart in technical difficulty. However, that has never stopped the attempt. UserFriendlyEnglish includes:

- Flesch reading ease
- Flesch-Kincaid grade level\(^\text{20}\)
- Coleman Liau Index Grade\(^\text{21}\)
- Automated readability index\(^\text{22}\)

NB The calculated value using UserFriendlyEnglish may differ to that obtained by Microsoft Word because the calculation includes the number of syllables in a word. How many syllables exist in a

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\(^\text{18}\) Instead of writing “The teacher was able to shed light on the problem.” It should be written as “The teacher was able to explain the problem.”

\(^\text{19}\) Word has an advanced grammar checker which is more than could be written for this application. No sense, to use an idiom (whoops) “reinventing the wheel”.

\(^\text{20}\) For a detailed discussion please see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flesch–Kincaid_readability_tests

\(^\text{21}\) For a detailed discussion please see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coleman–Liau_index

\(^\text{22}\) For a detailed discussion please see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Automated_readability_index
word is, on many occasions, debatable – hence the difference in the calculated value. However, the difference is normally insufficient to make any meaning difference in the measure’s interpretation.

One big weakness in these measures is that they do not make any attempt to relate to vocabulary used or to the readers knowledge / proficiency in the language.

When this check is used it provides the analysis on the reports tab.

10.11. Word frequency
The frequency in which a word is used might / can be a useful check on whether or not that word is user friendly. Less frequently used words are likely to be less friendly.

Users will develop their own idea of how useful this feature is and when / when not to use it.

11. Glossary
11.1. Purpose – two types of word
A glossary can contain two types of words. These may be:

• words which are outside the vocabulary being checked (e.g. a technical word) or
• words within the vocabulary but at a higher (CEFR/IETL) level than the document requirement.

11.1.2. Purpose – abbreviations
A glossary may also contain abbreviations which are used because a) they may be commonly known to the reader or b) to avoid unnecessary tedium of being often repeated. For example, the name of an organisation or country such as U.S.A.

The programme needs to identify such words/abbreviations and deal with them appropriately.

11.2. Variations per project
A further complication is that the words required in the glossary could be different between each project. UserFriendlyEnglish therefore provides a flexible system which is fully managed by the user.

Glossary words are stored in a text file which can be managed by the user. More than one glossary can exist – the program provides a feature to open a different glossary file for different projects.

11.3. Sharing files between team members
There is no problem in sharing files between team members.

When working in a network connected situation users can point the program to a single shared location.

When not working at a networked connection the glossary file(s) will have to be sent to each team member for storage on their own computers.

11.4. File content
A glossary entry should contain the word/abbreviation together with a description/definition of what it means.

The program has a menu option called “Glossary” which enable the user to:

• Use an existing glossary with the current program / document
• Create a new glossary for use with the current program / document
• Stop using a glossary with the current program / document
• Add words to a glossary
• Remove words from a glossary

Additionally, there is the facility with this menu option to show the glossary contents in two formats.

• Show glossary contents shows the contents in an ordered sequence
• Show glossary file contents shows the file contents as store in the file

11.5. File structure
The file stores each entry one-per-line. The actual entry starts on a new line, followed by a space and then followed by the definition / description of the item.

A line may start with an asterisk. Such lines are treated as comments and ignored by the program.

11.6. Backing up a glossary
The user is responsible for ensuring that all glossary files are fully backed.

12. Commonly confused words
This check does just what it says. Words may be commonly confused because they sound similar / the same – in which case it might be best to avoid them when writing scripts which the target user listens to.

13. Feedback / comments
The UserFriendlyEnglish tool is still in its infancy. Feedback from users is essential to help this program develop into a more effective tool. Please can you let us know how it can be developed / improved / bugs fixed etc?

Please email the developer at: support@UserFriendlyEnglish.net

Thank you

14. Additional reading
A wide-ranging list of links to more information on controlled languages is available - see "Controlled natural Languages"(http://sites.google.com/site/controllednaturallanguage/).

For an example of specific implementation see "Boeing Simplified English Checker" (Anon., n.d.)

For a history overview see “Controlled language: the next big thing in translation?” (Muegge, n.d.).

For a comparative analysis of different systems see “An Analysis of Several Controlled Language Rule Sets” (O’Brien, n.d.)

For a discussion of IBM’s EasyEnglish see “EasyEnglish: A Tool for Improving Document Quality” (Bernth, n.d.)
References
Available at: http://www.boeing.com/specialty/simplified-english-checker.page

Anon., n.d. WikiPedia - Controlled Natural Language. [Online]
Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Controlled_Natural_Language

Available at: http://dl.acm.org/ft_gateway.cfm?id=974581&ftid=527275&dwn=1&CFID=675443382&CFTOKEN=80288506

Available at: https://www.easyenglish.bible/english-learners-bible/john-taw.htm#c3v5

Available at: http://www.translationdirectory.com/articles/article1359.php

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CEFR Level</th>
<th>IELT equivalent</th>
<th>Vocabulary size</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>2.0 &lt;1,500</td>
<td>Starter / beginner - can understand only the most basic information - can understand names, words and simple sentences e.g. on posters or in catalogues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>3.0 1,501 - 2,500</td>
<td>Elementary - can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to immediately relevant areas - can communicate in simple and routine tasks, requiring a simple exchange of information on familiar and routine matters - can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters of personal interest - can use basic sentence patterns with memorized phrases - can use simple structures correctly, but makes systematic basic errors - can make themselves understood in short turns, despite long breaks or pauses - can respond to questions but is rarely able to keep conversation going by themselves - can link ideas together in a simple way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>4.0 - 4.5 2,501 - 3,250</td>
<td>Pre-Intermediate / Intermediate - can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters encountered at school, work, leisure, etc - can deal with most situations likely to arise while traveling - can produce simple connected texts on familiar topics - can describe experiences and events, plans, hopes and ambitions - can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans - has enough language to get by in everyday situations - can express themselves reasonably accurately - can initiate and deal with familiar everyday interactions - can link ideas into connected linear sequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>5.5 - 6.0 3,201 - 3,750</td>
<td>Upper Intermediate - can understand the main ideas of a complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their own field of specialization - can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes interaction with native speakers possible without strain for either party - can produce a clear detailed text on a wide range of subjects - can explain a viewpoint giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options - can give clear descriptions - can express viewpoints without conspicuous hesitation, sometimes using complex forms - does not make errors which cause misunderstanding and can correct most of their own errors - can speak reasonably fluently, with few noticeably long pauses - can initiate discourse, take turns - can help discussion, confirming comprehension, inviting contributions, etc. - can use a limited number of cohesive devices to give their spoken and written contributions coherence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>7.0 - 7.5 3,751 - 4,500</td>
<td>Advanced - can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning - can express themselves fluently and spontaneously with much obvious searching for expressions - can use language flexibly, for social, academic and professional purposes - can produce clear, well-structured, detailed texts, on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns and cohesive devices - has a good command of a broad range of language allowing themselves to express themselves clearly and appropriately - can consistently maintain a high level of grammatical accuracy - can interact skilfully by selecting a suitable phrase from a range of discourse in order to contribute appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C2</td>
<td>8.5 - 9.0 4,000 - 5,000</td>
<td>Mastery - can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read - can summarize information from different spoken or written sources; reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation; - can express themselves spontaneously, fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning, even in more complex situations - can show great flexibility in differing linguistic forms - has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms - can maintain constant grammatical control - can interact with ease and skill, with natural referencing, turn-taking, etc. - can use a full variety of organizational patterns and cohesive device</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2 Glossary File Format

The file is a standard text (*.txt) file.

Lines starting with an asterisk (*) are ignored and can therefore be used for comments

Blank lines are also ignored

Each line (apart from the two exceptions mentioned above must start with the word to be used in the glossary. The word must not be preceded by a space.

The word may be followed by a space and then a comment / definition of that word.

If the word starts with a capital letter then it is assumed that it must always started with a capital letter (otherwise it starts with a lowercase letter).

An example of a file follows:

*A glossary file contains a list of words which may or may not be in the vocabulary
* If they are in the vocabulary then they are not included at the appropriate level
* These are considered to either be known to the reader or
* their meaning will be communicated in a glossary to the text
*
* All lines starting with an asterisk are ignored and may be used to add comments to the file
* Each line should start with the word and may, optionally, be followed by a space and a definition / comment
* If the word starts with a capital letter then it must always start with a capital letter in the text. Otherwise this is optional
* The user is responsible for ensuring that this file is fully backed up
*
* Here are three few examples
*
UserFriendlyEnglish the name of this tool
Microsoft The company that provides the Windows operating system
* the following word was made famous by the film Mary Poppins
supercalifragilisticexpialidocious "something to say when you have nothing to say"
* Now add your own words below