



Reference Books

This is a list of reference books, all available in the library, which can definitely help you with your English.

In my Semesterapparat there is a small collection of the most important and most frequently needed. I try to make sure that there is a copy of the most recent, revised, edition. This means that the books on reserve in the Semesterapparat are constantly updated even if this handout is not!

Of some books there are multiple copies for loan, under *fse*, *eng*, *lbs* etc.

This handout is divided into:

- (1) English-English dictionaries
- (2) Translation dictionaries
- (3) Special area (translation) dictionaries
- (4) Other useful reference books
- (5) Grammar books

(1) English-English Dictionaries

There are many good dictionaries from different publishers available on the market and in the library. Those below are my special choice.

For all learners:

Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary, 5th edition, Glasgow, 2006

The name of this dictionary has changed slightly with each new edition, but the "Collins Cobuild" is always there. This is the dictionary which students of English have to use in their final exams, both for essay writing and translating. I recommend it for all learners, and work with it in many of my classes. That means students use it for their homework, but also, literally, **in class**.

For advanced learners and native speakers:

Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus, 1993

This dictionary has more words than the Collins Cobuild, but less information on use. The *Thesaurus* means that at the bottom of every page you will find a

separate entry for some of the words on that page, with synonyms. For example, on the page where you find “increase” you will find at the bottom the word “increase” again, but this time with a list of words which have a similar meaning e.g. add to, amplify, build up, boost.

Collins Electronic English Dictionary and Thesaurus CD-ROM, 1996

Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, 2002
This is a dictionary based on American English.

Oxford Advanced Learners Encyclopedic Dictionary. The ideal study dictionary for language and culture, 1995

Duden-Oxford-Bildwörterbuch Deutsch und Englisch, 1994

This is brilliant as it has illustrations of well nigh everything and gives the English words and the German.

If you are puzzled by the division of English-English dictionaries into “for all learners” and “for advanced learners and native speakers”, this is something I talk about in class. In general, the latter have more words, but less of the information on use that the non-native speaker needs. So, briefly, you need the “for learners” dictionary for writing; you might need a dictionary from the other category for reading advanced level, specialised texts. For that reason it is good to know that you can find them on reserve, in the Semesterapparat.

(2) Translation Dictionaries

There are many good translation dictionaries in the library. Whatever you use, just make sure it is up-to-date. Sometimes the date looks nice and recent but the book turns out to be just a re-print of an old edition, and not a new, revised edition.

It is easy to get totally confused when you are looking for a dictionary. Many dictionaries have parallel titles, and with the Collins translation dictionaries there is an extra problem since Klettverlag publishes them in Germany, with a different title.

If you want to buy one, you could go to the Semesterapparat first, try using one or two and then decide which you want to buy.

Collins German-English, English-German Dictionary (Pons Grosswörterbuch Deutsch-Englisch, Englisch-Deutsch) 1997 (1 volume)
(Writers, see the centre pages!)

As above, with CD-ROM, 2001

Pons Collins Grosswörterbuch für Experten und Universität Deutsch-Englisch, Englisch-Deutsch, 1997

Pons Collins Handwörterbuch. 2. überarbeitete Auflage, 1995

Langenscheidts Grosswörterbuch Der kleine Murat Sanders (1985) 3. Auflage 1988 (2 volumes)

(*Langenscheidts Enzyklopädisches Wörterbuch*, (1974), 4th edition 1987.

There are four volumes. fse 364/s67-2

English-German first published in 1962, 8th edition in 1986 – but NOT revised;

German-English first published in 1975, reprinted 1987 – but NOT revised.

This kind of complication is typical of dictionary publication!

Nobody would expect you to buy this, but it is good to have in the library.)

See also *Duden-Oxford-Bildwörterbuch* above.

Online translation dictionaries:

Of course, if you are working at the computer you can use an online dictionary to help you find a translation of a word.

Dict.leo.org (“Ein online-service der Informatik der TU München”) is a good example.

But careful: you will probably still need an English-English dictionary to find out if this really is the word you need and how you use the word properly.

(3) Special Area Dictionaries

Der Grosse Eichborn, Wirtschaft, Recht, Verwaltung, Verkehr, 1981-82

Der Kleine Eichborn. Wirtschaft und Wirtschaftsrecht, 1997

The Compact Dictionary of Exact Science and Technology.

Volume 1 English-German, 1989; Volume 2 German-English, 1982

There are several other special area dictionaries, both English-English and translation dictionaries, available in my Semesterapparat: Science, Business, Marketing, Literary terms and text interpretation etc.

(4) Others

Students of English, have a look sometime, see what they have to offer you. They are all on the shelf in the Semesterapparat. Don't be put off by the age of some of the books as they still have useful things to say.

Longman Language Activator. The World's First Production Dictionary, 1993

Adverbien und Partikeln. Ein Deutsch-Englisches Wörterbuch, 1990

Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English, 1981

Practical English Usage (a practical reference book on grammar/lexis), 1984

Longman Synonym Dictionary, 1990

Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, 1983

Longman Guide to English Usage, 1988

BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English, 1986

Pons English Idioms Dictionary, 1993

Pons American Idioms Dictionary, 1993

Oxford Dictionary of New Words. A popular guide to words in the news, 1991

Collins Cobuild Key Words in the Media / in Science and Technology / in Business. (1997) (series of 3 books).

(5) Grammar

English Grammar in Use, 1995

This is a really useful intermediate level grammar, with exercises and a key.

A Communicative Grammar of English, 1994

An advanced level grammar, with clear explanations. It has a part which deals with concepts such as frequency, duration, and how these are expressed in English, and a part which deals with grammar categories like adjectives, pronouns, questions.

Englische Grammatik von A-Z, 1997

Grammatik des heutigen Englisch. 1984

Meaning and the English Verb, 1987

This focuses, obviously, on the verb, which means tense, aspect and modality.

Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English, 1999

Semantik und Syntax des englischen Verbs, Teil 1, Teil 2. 1986

The next two grammars are definitely large, comprehensive and written by the same team:

A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language, 1992

A University Grammar of English, 1987

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