

Introduction to Lexicographical Research: General Procedures and Monolingual Resources in English

Introduction

The resources which can help language professionals expand their communicative and subject-specific competence can be largely categorised by medium: printed resources, local digital resources (principally CD-ROMs or DVDs), including those on remote servers, and Internet-based digital resources. These are, of course, supplemented by face-to-face interactions and enquiries by phone, mail and email.

The value of such resources depends both on their reliability and their usability. Translators in particular stand at the end of the document workflow and have to work efficiently above all else; they must produce quality at great speed; they have to work their way rapidly into a variety of subject-areas. This they can only do by knowing the right resources to use and the right way to use them.

This unit looks at monolingual English lexicographical resources in paper and digital form. It begins with a brief look at where these resources can best be accessed, considers how they should be used and then proceeds to consider some representative examples. In addition, students will be provided with an annotated bibliography of the most useful printed and digital reference works. Although the main focus will be on local resources, this unit will also refer to certain major resources which can be accessed online via the ZHAW's library page.

Preliminary Remarks

The difference between printed and digital resources is one of medium rather than content. A dictionary on CD-ROM, DVD or the Web is essentially the same as its equivalent printed edition (if one exists); but the way that digital data is stored, and the opportunity for multimedia presentation of that data, means that the material can be viewed and retrieved in ways that printed books do not allow. This increased flexibility is of great benefit to the user. On the other hand, many digital resources are relatively intransparent – it is often hard to find out how extensive an Internet dictionary is (whereas the size of a printed one is immediately obvious), or what paper edition it is based on. Moreover, the usefulness of multimedia features depends very much on the target audience: language professionals, who work largely with text, will find them of limited use unless they are trying to acquire or widen background and/or subject-specific knowledge.

Despite the rapid expansion of digital media and the Internet, printed reference works can be a handy source for language professionals in their work. This may seem surprising, above all given the comparatively long time-to-market of printed resources. Yet language does not change so fast as to make dictionaries wholly unusable after a few months, and printed references do have the odd advantage over digital media.

In the first place, they are at times more flexible than their digital counterparts. Books are generally portable and can be read almost anywhere, with no Internet connection or drive required for their use. It is still sometimes quicker to consult a collection of printed dictionaries spread out on a desk than use several CD-ROMs and DVDs (which take time to swap) or Internet-based resources (which can take time to load). It is hardly worth starting up a computer to quickly look up a couple of words: a dictionary is more efficient. Secondly, many highly specialised printed resources may never be published in digital form because sales or subscriptions could not justify development costs. So it would be premature to regard printed resources as wholly obsolete.

Accessing Resources

As a student language professional, you will have to conduct a considerable amount of research in libraries and archives. The first stop for all students is the ZHAW library (<https://intra.zhaw.ch/Katalogrecherche.56.0.html>). The linguistics branch holds a number of fine dictionaries, reference works and practical guides for language professionals, as well as a wide range of books and periodicals in the field of communication and translation studies. You can use the main page to search the NEBIS catalogue, which covers the holdings of a network of important libraries in Switzerland (including ZHAW's), other major catalogues, and a number of news, periodical and terminology databases.

A number of the ZHAW's reference works contained in the NEBIS catalogue are available in electronic form. They can be accessed directly from the NEBIS entry on the ZHAW intranet. Just click on the icon next to "ZHAW Zugriff über" in the NEBIS "Vollanzeige" of the work.



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Ergebnisliste | Suchverlauf | Liste | Korb

Suche | **Erweiterte Suche** | **Expertensuche** | **Blättern** > **Zeitschriften** > **Signaturen** > **Sachbegriffe** > **ISBN**

In den Korb | Versenden/Speichern | Permanenter Link (NEBIS 005141971)

Vollanzeige des Titels

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Anzeigeformat: [Standardformat](#) [Katalogkarte](#) [Zitierformat](#) [MARC](#)

Titel	Collins Cobuild advanced learner's English dictionary
Ausgabe	5th ed.
Impressum	Glasgow : HarperCollins, 2006
Umfang	1712 S. : Ill. + 1 CD-ROM
ISBN	978-0-00-721012-1 (pbk.) 0-00-721012-4 (pbk.) 978-0-00-721013-8 (hbk.) 0-00-721013-2 (hbk.)
Online	 ZHAW Zugriff über: http://biblioapp/ica/Collins_Cobuild.ica  ZHAW Zugriffsberechtigung: http://www.zhaw.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/zhaw/bibliothek/nutzung_intra.html

General Procedures for Resource Use

Proper use of reference works is an essential component of information literacy skills and instrumental competence. The fundamental principles do not vary much according to medium and apply equally to printed works, CD-ROMs, DVDs and Internet-based resources.

The first step is to know your reference works, especially those you regularly use: you should familiarise yourselves first with the way entries are assembled, with what the abbreviations mean, with any additional information in margins and so on. Dictionaries in particular may – and should – provide information not only on the meaning of words but also on pragmatic factors of usage, such as where, when and how they are used, and who uses them.

The second step is to establish sound look-up and checking procedures. This is particularly important in the translation process, where monolingual source-language works should first be consulted to resolve ambiguities and comprehension problems related to the source text. Dictionaries containing definitions, collocational dictionaries, encyclopedic and subject-specific works can all help the translator to establish the intended meaning of a source text reference. Translators and other language professionals should then use bilingual dictionaries to effect a linguistic transfer into the target language. Most obviously, this should be done where you do not know the target-language equivalents; but it is also good practice

to check up on any term or formulation you are even slightly doubtful about.*

Bilingual dictionaries, by their very nature, limit their scope primarily to equivalence or near-equivalence between language pairs; only rarely do they provide adequate definitions of terms or copious collocational or contextual examples. They often give too little guidance about which of a number of listed terms can be used in a particular context, and sometimes will not even contain the word you are looking for. The only option then is to look further afield and consult monolingual dictionaries and encyclopedic or subject-specific reference works in the target language.

The work you consult will depend on what you are looking for: **monolingual definition dictionaries** which concentrate on supplying definitions of words will help you to understand the various entries in bilingual dictionaries; **collocational dictionaries** will also show you in what lexical environments and grammatical structures the words are commonly used (which is especially useful for translation work into a foreign language). If you are looking for related expressions, for instance in order to vary the vocabulary you use in texts, then you should consult **thesauruses** and other dictionaries containing synonyms.

Explanatory entries in **encyclopædias** as well as other general and subject-specific reference works will often provide the benefits of both definition and collocation dictionaries. They also have the added bonus of presenting a wealth of related terms, themselves in collocationally and grammatically rich environments. The disadvantage of using many such sources, however, is the time it can take to read the articles and conduct the research, so in the case of digital media use index and full-text searches wherever possible. The printed editions of encyclopædias and other reference works do not permit quick word searches in the text itself beyond alphabetical headwords, and these are few compared to the total number of words that the encyclopædias contain. Many works do offer an index, though, while a restricted number of specialist printed reference sources (such as Michael Brett's *How to Read the Financial Pages*) print key words in the text in bold and cross-reference these in a copious index that contains definitions as well. To a certain extent, such publications can be seen as the printed equivalent of search engines on digital media.

For specific information concerning the events, facts or statistics of a particular year, together with related terminology, consult the many **almanacs** and **factbooks** which exist. Almanacs are yearly calendars giving statistical information and collected facts on events and phenomena, and can be either global or restricted to a country or geographic area, general or specific to certain subjects and activities (e.g. politics).

Two other useful sources of printed reference are the **parallel text** and the **model text**. **Parallel texts** are texts containing exactly the same messages and serving exactly the same purposes in at least two different languages. Multinational corporate or governmental documentation, product information leaflets, instruction booklets and so on are often produced in (or translated into) a number of languages. This is very valuable for the language professional, who can use parallel versions of these texts as a terminological and collocational resource. Technical translators will find product catalogues particularly useful, especially when illustrations are provided for close comparison.

One disadvantage of parallel texts is the time it takes to search for words and expressions in two printed documents, so fully searchable digital versions are preferable. Another potential problem lies in the quality of the documentation itself: the resource can itself frequently be a

* **A note on German:** the German language's ability to create compound nouns poses certain additional problems for the dictionary user, as lexicographers cannot cover all possible permutations in their dictionaries. Wherever users cannot find corresponding dictionary entries for the entire word, they are advised to look up the major components of the compound, beginning with the most important.

translation, so it is important to use parallel texts from truly multilingual organisations with a proven reputation (such as UBS). Thirdly, you must beware of jargon specific to a given company or organisation which may not be understood by, or acceptable to, your readers.

A **model text** is a target-culture text that is of the same type or form and written on a similar theme or subject to that of your source text. An example is the use of target-language annual reports issued by banks to serve as models for another bank's annual report. Yet here, too, the language professional must invest a large amount of time reading the report or its relevant sections before or during the translation process. Incidentally, many annual reports and other corporate publications have the very practical addition of a **glossary** of terms, so consult these first.

Monolingual Resources: An Overview

The monolingual resources most useful to language professionals can be broadly divided up into:

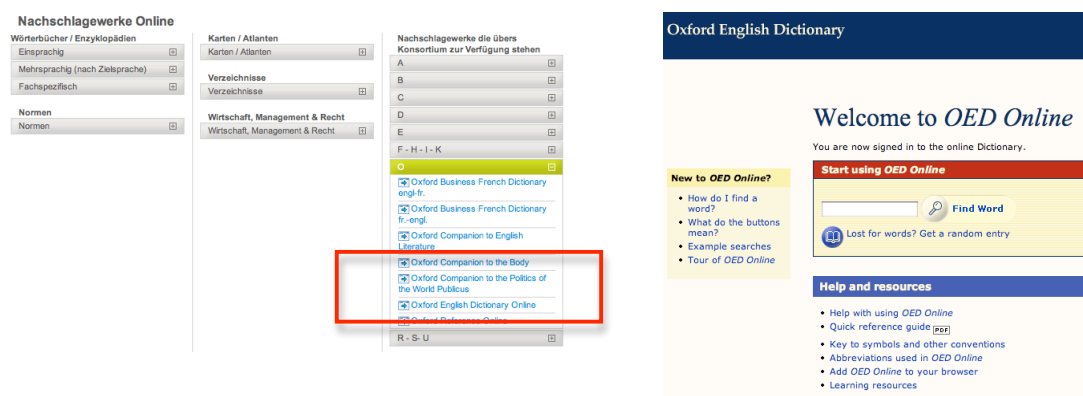
- General and specialised dictionaries for lexicographical research in the source and target languages
- Encyclopædias and other general or subject-specific reference works for research in a particular field or area of knowledge
- Model texts and their glossaries

Although the last two will provide language professionals with considerable linguistic input as well, especially with regard to terminology, register and collocation, it is dictionaries that are their major linguistic resource.

Monolingual dictionaries come in many shapes and sizes. **Definition dictionaries** concentrate on defining or explaining terms and concepts, but contain only limited examples of usage. **Collocational dictionaries** focus on collocation – the way words are habitually combined in a language – but will be weaker at defining or explaining terms. Depending on their purpose and target, dictionaries may include additional information on grammar, spelling variants, plural forms, inflections, etymologies (i.e. tracing the history of a word back from the present to when it was first used, which can be helpful in establishing historical usage), present-day usage (i.e. whether words are considered archaic, formal or informal, slang or obsolete, vulgar or jocular), pronunciation and so on.

This often appears in abbreviated or symbolic form, so it is important for you to familiarise yourself with the conventions of a dictionary by reading the **introductory notes** and **user guide**. A good dictionary contains much more than the average user realises: knowing its major features can save a lot of time.

The authoritative definition dictionary is the multi-volume *Oxford English Dictionary*. The full printed version comprises 20 volumes. ZHAW has full access to the online version, the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. It can be accessed via the "Nachschlagewerke Online" link on the main ZHAW library page (<https://intra.zhaw.ch/Nachschlagewerke-Online.52.0.html>) by selecting "O" in the column "Nachschlagewerke die übers Konsortium zur Verfügung stehen".



As the screenshot above shows, the site has excellent Help files for new and inexperienced users. The *Oxford English Dictionary Online* supports basic and advanced searches using Boolean and proximity operators as well as wildcards (see the section "Searching Digital Media: Operators and Wildcards" below).

A more manageable printed edition of the Oxford dictionary series is the practical *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (<http://www.oup.com/uk/catalogue/?ci=9780199206872>) which will suffice for most needs.

Another leading single-volume English definition dictionary is the *Collins English Dictionary*. All Collins dictionaries are based on the linguistic evidence provided by the Bank of English (<http://www.titania.bham.ac.uk/docs/>), the largest computer-based collection of English in existence today. It contains a vast collection of spoken and written English, and is continuously updated by Collins Dictionaries and the University of Birmingham. Text from current newspapers, magazines and books is fed in, and using these authentic examples, Collins Dictionaries create some of the most up-to-date and accurate reference books available today.

flat² (flæt) *n* 1 a set of rooms comprising a residence entirely on one floor of a building. Usual U.S. and Canadian name: **apartment**. 2 *Brit. and N.Z.* a portion of a house used as separate living quarters. 3 *N.Z.* a house shared with people who are not members of one's own family. ♦ *vb (intr)* 4 *Austral. informal, and N.Z.* to live in a flat (with someone). [Old English *flett* floor, hall, house; related to **FLAT**¹]

Source: *Collins English Dictionary*. 4th ed. London: HarperCollins, 1998.



The abbreviations are explained in the **appendix** under "**Collins Abbreviations**". As you can see, the entries not only define various meanings of the two words "flat", but also inform the user of meanings and variants throughout the English-speaking world. Parts of speech and usage are also indicated: we are told, for instance, that "flat" can also be used informally as an intransitive verb in Australia and New Zealand to signify living in a flat with someone. The "flat" entry also contains a brief etymology of the word. Finally, phonetic symbols in brackets after the headword indicate how the words are pronounced. A great deal of information has been presented in a relatively small space.

Collins also publishes a fine collocational dictionary, the *COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*. It is primarily a dictionary for advanced learners of English, but its many examples and large amount of pragmatic information on usage make it invaluable for native and non-native speakers alike. The major difference between the entries in the *COBUILD* and those normally seen in a definition dictionary lies in the collocational examples. The range of information is more limited, with few indicators of dialect variation and no etymology;

but in the margin the user is given not only basic grammatical information about the word but also about the existence of synonyms, etc. A very important part of entries are the frequency bands, indicated by the three diamonds (five in the 2nd edition of 1995 and on the CD-ROM version) in the right-hand margin, or "Extra Column". These do just what one would imagine and inform users about how often a word occurs in natural English.

The *COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* also comes on a CD-ROM, available via the NEBIS catalogue or "Nachschlagewerke Online" on the ZHAW intranet library page. It is an extremely useful and quick look-up tool. The screenshot below shows the result for the search term "flat":

flat ◆◆◆◆◇

1 flat  flats 

A **flat** is a set of rooms for living in, usually on one floor and part of a larger building. A flat usually includes a kitchen and bathroom. (mainly BRIT; in AM usually use **apartment**)

*Sara lives with her husband and children in a flat in central London.
It started a fire in a block of flats.
Later on, Victor from flat 10 called.*

N-COUNT: also N num
= apartment

The major difference between this entry and those normally seen in a definition dictionary lies in the collocational examples (*italicised* in the term field). The range of information is more limited, with no etymology; but the user is given not only basic grammatical information about the word (**N-COUNT**: "flat" is a countable noun; **N num**: it can be followed by a numeral, e.g. "flat 7") but also about the existence of a synonym ("apartment") and the fact that this is more usual in American English (see the blue and light blue entry text). The frequency band, indicated by the five diamonds next to the headword, shows that the term is very common. Users can also listen to the pronunciation of the word and its plural.

Collocation is a major aspect of natural English usage, and the usefulness of collocational dictionaries cannot be stressed often enough, especially for non-native speakers of English. Perhaps that is why there are a comparatively large number of such dictionaries on the market. Three more which may be recommended are the *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English* (sample pages can be seen in the separate document **Oxford Collocations**), the *BBI Dictionary of English Word Combinations*:

flat II n. ["deflated tire"] (esp. AE; BE prefers *flat tyre* or *puncture*) 1. to get; have a ~ 2. to change; fix a ~ ["apartment"] (esp. BE) 3. to rent a ~ from 4. to let a ~ to 5. to furnish; redecorate; renovate a ~ 6. a council; furnished; garden; high-rise; service; studio; unfurnished ~ (AE has *apartment*) 7. converted; purpose-built ~s 8. a block of ~s (AE has *apartment building/apartment house*)

and the *LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations*:

FLAT

V: decorate, furnish, lease, move into/out of, renovate, rent ~

A: comfortable, cosy, cramped, dingy, enormous, (first-)floor, hideous, luxurious, one-/two-bedroomed, poky, roomy, shabby, smart, spacious, spotless, (un)tidy, tiny, well-kept ~

Consisting simply of lists of verbs, nouns and/or adjectives which habitually collocate with headwords, the *LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations* is especially good for quick reference and to jog a user's memory.

The collocational dictionaries mentioned above are essentially targeted at learners of English. Other major learner resources are the:

- *Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English*, a corpus-based grammar containing thousands of examples of real English in use and very useful information on language variation (registers, dialects etc.), on preference and frequency of use, and on the combination of grammar and vocabulary in lexico-grammatical patterns.
- *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English*, which works in much the same way as the *Collins Cobuild*.

The *Collins Dictionary & Thesaurus*, available in print and on CD-ROM, is a combination of dictionary and thesaurus which clearly has the advantage of showing not only words and their definitions but also synonyms and other related terms. It provides clear, concise definitions using up-to-date data from the Bank of English language database. Word histories are included for many entries along with pronunciations. The comprehensive dictionary text is complemented by matching same-page thesaurus entries, while an Internet-linked supplement supports online research. The CD-ROM version provides access to over 200,000 definitions and 340,000 synonyms and antonyms. It has a fast and simple user interface, allows full text searches and provides cross-referencing between the dictionary and thesaurus.

But what is a **thesaurus**? Thesauruses (or thesauri) contain neither definitions nor collocational examples, instead listing synonyms, supernyms, hyponyms, antonyms and other words related to a particular term. This is a useful tool for text production, enabling you to find more precise or more general terms, or simply vary your vocabulary, when necessary. Original versions of *Roget's Thesaurus* require you first to look up your term in the index and then to move back to the relevant section in the main part of the thesaurus. However, more recent editions tend to be organised alphabetically to make it easier to look up words and phrases. One fine example is the *Oxford Thesaurus of English* (sample pages can be found in the separate document **Oxford Thesaurus**).

Many **other types of dictionary** are devoted to specific areas of knowledge (business, economics, science, technology, law, medicine, IT) and particular aspects of language use (proverbs, idioms, everyday expressions and so on). Clearly, these can be of immense help in source- and target-language research. This is also true of the many **dictionaries of quotations** on the market, which can be used to trace "official" target-language equivalents of famous source-language quotations or, in cases where a source text contains the *translation* of a quotation, to find the correct original wording in the target language.

There are innumerable such specialised publications in dictionary form. Penguin Books and Oxford University Press, for example, publish excellent series of reference dictionaries in a broad range of specialist fields. The entire Oxford Reference series is available on the Internet as *Oxford Reference Online*, and can be accessed via "Nachschlagewerke Online" on the ZHAW intranet library page (<https://intra.zhaw.ch/Nachschlagewerke-Online.52.0.html>) by selecting "O" in the column "Nachschlagewerke die übers Konsortium zur Verfügung stehen". The following screenshot shows the sheer breadth and depth of this excellent resource, which contains English language dictionaries, thesauruses and reference works, encyclopedic and subject reference works in a wide range of fields, dictionaries of quotations and bilingual dictionaries.

OXFORD Reference ONLINE PREMIUM

HOME | ADVANCED SEARCH | SUBJECTS & BOOKS | TIMELINES | BROWSE | LINKS | LOG OUT | HELP

Welcome | Find out more | What's new | New user? | Subscriber services | Credits | Contact us

Quick search

Advanced search GO HELP



Subjects & books

What's new

Find out about new subject Collections and a range of new features, including full colour maps and illustration, timelines, and much more >>

New user?

Useful search tips and hints to help you find the answers you need with speed and ease >>

Log out

English Dictionaries & Reference

- English Dictionaries & Thesauruses
- English Language Reference

Bilingual Dictionaries >>

Quotations >>

Maps & Illustrations >>

Timelines >>

Encyclopedia >>

Subject Reference

- Art & Architecture
- Biological Sciences
- Classics
- Computing
- Earth & Environmental Sciences
- Economics & Business
- Food & Drink
- History
- Law
- Literature
- Medicine
- Military History
- Mythology & Folklore
- Names & Places
- Performing Arts
- Physical Sciences & Mathematics
- Politics & Social Sciences
- Religion & Philosophy
- Science

Whilst dictionaries allow you to search for specific terms and their meanings, **encyclopaedias** provide in-depth knowledge in broader fields of knowledge. The leading printed resource in the English-speaking world is the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The printed version consists of two cross-referenced parts. But it is the online version of *Britannica* that is most valuable because of its search facilities. Again, the ZHAW library "Nachschlagewerke Online" page gives full access (<https://intra.zhaw.ch/Nachschlagewerke-Online.52.0.html>) – select "B" in the column "Nachschlagewerke die übers Konsortium zur Verfügung stehen".

ENCYCLOPEDIA Britannica Online ACADEMIC EDITION

HOME | WORKSPACE | GUIDED TOUR | HELP

SEARCH: Brecht GO Advanced Search Not sure of spelling

Choose a content source:

- Encyclopædia Britannica 131
- Concise Encyclopedia 14
- Compton's By Britannica 22
- Britannica Elementary 4
- Media 2
- Web Sites 2

Journals & Magazines:

- From ProQuest
- From EBSCO

From Merriam-Webster: Dictionary Thesaurus Quotations

SEARCH RESULTS: "Brecht"
 Results 1-20 of 131

- Brecht, Bertolt** → German poet, playwright, and theatrical reformer whose epic theatre departed from the conventions of theatrical illusion and developed the drama as a social and ideological forum for leftist causes.
- Brecht, Arnold** → exiled German public servant, who became a prominent political scientist and made major contributions in the area of clarifying scientific theory.
- Epic theatre of Brecht** → from the theatre, Western article
 Although Bertolt Brecht's first plays were written in Germany during the 1920s, he was not widely known until much later. Eventually his theories of stage presentation exerted more influence on the ...
- The influence of Brecht** → from the theatre article
 By 1936 a wide range of experimentation and innovation had established the parameters of the contemporary theatre. The training of actors in the Western theatre has since become more organized to ...
- Lehrstück** → a form of drama that is specifically didactic in purpose and that is meant to be performed outside the orthodox theatre. Such plays were associated particularly with the epic theatre of the German ...
- Deesau, Paul** → German composer and conductor best known for his operas and other vocal works written in collaboration with Bertolt Brecht. Deesau's conducting

MEDIA
 Results 1-2 of 2

Brecht, Bertolt →

Brecht, Bertolt →

To obtain precise information on how to conduct searches and make use of the tools and features on this and other digital encyclopedic resources, you should consult the relevant Help files.

For detailed research that requires greater depth of knowledge in a particular field, language professionals have to turn to specialised, **subject-specific publications** and **model texts**. But in view of the time constraints imposed on all language workers, it is unrealistic to expect them to be able to steep themselves in specialist literature before or during an assignment. The best measure of a useful specialised printed source is therefore a comprehensive index of terms, and some printed publications are truly excellent in this regard. A case in point is Michael Brett's *How to Read the Financial Pages*, which combines a glossary with a copious index, highlighting in bold type all indexed terms in the main body of the book. Nevertheless, research of this sort is clearly best done on digital media with good index and full-text search functions.

Searching Digital Media: Operators and Wildcards

Boolean operators and **wildcards** maximise the potential of the powerful search facilities available on digital media.

The **operators AND, NOT & OR** (or their German equivalents **UND, OHNE & ODER**) are very useful for combining, excluding and expanding search terms.

Placing a string of words in quotation marks " " will restrict the search to all the words entered in the order in which they stand.

A number of search engines also allow *nesting* – that is, the use of parentheses (or brackets) to pair terms with a specific operator in a longer search string. Thus:

- "canals AND (France OR Belgium)" finds all occurrences of "canal" together with "France" and/or "Belgium"
- "Russian AND (alphabet NOT language)" finds all occurrences of "Russian" together with "alphabet" excluding the word "language"

This enables very precise searches to be performed. The only problem with using these operators is that they do not restrict searches to a certain part of a text, meaning that you cannot specifically target phrases or collocations with them. To make this possible, certain search engines allow other operators to be used. These operators, which are sometimes called **proximity operators**, include **ADJ**, to find terms which occur next to each other (though not necessarily in any order), and **NEAR** or **NEAR BY**, which find terms within a few words of each other. Thus:

- "red ADJ deer" finds occurrences of "red deer" (and sometimes also "deer red", depending on the software used)
- "Napoleon ADJ Bonaparte" finds occurrences of "Napoleon Bonaparte" (and sometimes also "Bonaparte Napoleon")
- "(America* OR U.S.) AND (abstract ADJ expressionis*)" finds occurrences of "abstract expressionist", "abstract expressionists" and "abstract expressionism" (and sometimes also "expressionist abstract", etc.) together with "America", "American" and "U.S."
- "German NEAR linguistic*" finds occurrences of "German" within a certain number of words, usually 8-10, of "linguistic", "linguistical", "linguistics", etc. Sometimes the number of words between occurrences can be set by the user.

Wildcards are commonly used to perform searches where the full form of a term or expression is not known. They take two forms: **?** or *****. Depending on the search engine, one, the other or both wildcards can be used. Generally speaking, the asterisk ***** is the most widespread among search engines on CD-ROMs, DVDs and the Internet (in Google, for instance). Wildcards can generally be combined with Boolean and proximity operators.

The question mark **?** represents any occurrence of a character or word; the asterisk ***** represents any or no occurrence of a character or word. Both sorts of wildcard are used to

replace characters at the start, end and/or in the middle of a word in order to widen a search; and wildcards can be combined with one another to perform searches. Thus:

- "*ation" searches for all words ending in "-ation"
- "bear*" will find all words beginning with "bear-"
- "*spect*" matches "aspect", "introspection", "spectre", etc.
- "medi*eval" matches "mediaeval" and "medieval"
- "b?t" finds "bat", "but", "bit", etc.
- "d?sfunction*" finds "disfunction", "dysfunction", "dysfunctionally", etc.
- "the cat * on the mat" finds a string with any word or words between "cat" and "on", a very useful function if you are looking for set expressions.

Summary

The purpose of this unit has been to heighten your awareness of selected monolingual printed and digital resources in English available to language professionals, and to inform you of how to access them. You have also been given guidance on certain look-up techniques and fundamental research strategies. In particular, you have gained

- an overview of the major types of monolingual resource for language professionals
- awareness of how to use these resources effectively in conjunction with one another
- insights into the strengths and weaknesses of various printed and digital reference works
- an overview of search techniques on digital media involving wildcards and Boolean operators

This unit has not been designed to provide an exhaustive run-down of printed and digital reference works: given the wide and fast-growing range of products on the market, it would be impossible to present a detailed analysis of even a small fraction of them. Instead, it has focused on a few representative examples in order to indicate the major features of such resources, and to encourage you to explore them further in the course of your own research.

A select, annotated bibliography of monolingual English resources can be found in the **appendix** under "**English Monolingual Bibliography**".

List of Abbreviations

abbrev.	abbreviation	N	north(ern)
adj	adjective	n	noun
adv	adverb(ial)	NE	northeast(ern)
approx.	approximate(ly)	no.	number
Austral.	Australian	NW	northwest(ern)
Brit.	British	N.Z.	New Zealand
C	century (e.g. C14 = 14th century)	p.	page
°C	degrees Celsius	pl	plural
cap(s).	capital initial(s)	Pop.	population
cf.	compare	pp.	pages
conj	conjunction	prep	preposition(al)
E	east(ern)	pron	pronoun
e.g.	for example	pt.	point
esp.	especially	RP	Received Pronunciation
est.	estimate	S	south(ern)
etc.	et cetera	S. African	South African
fem	feminine	Scot.	Scottish, Scots
fol.	followed	SE	Southeast(ern)
ft.	foot <i>or</i> feet	sing	singular
i.e.	that is	sq.	square
in.	inch(es)	SW	southwest(ern)
interj	interjection	tr	transitive
intr	intransitive	U.S.	United States
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet	vb	verb
km	kilometres	vol.	volume
m	metre(s)	W	west(ern)
masc	masculine	wt.	weight

A N ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BASIC PRINTED AND DIGITAL REFERENCE WORKS FOR ENGLISH

This bibliography is designed to list some basic English resources in print and on digital media – principally CD-ROM and DVD – which students who are commencing their studies on the ZHAW's Bachelor Programme in Language and Communication will find useful. The intention is not to compile an exhaustive bibliography listing all possible resources but to provide an introductory selection of works.

While every effort has been made to keep this bibliography up to date, certain titles may have been withdrawn from publication or newer editions released without the knowledge of the author. Students should always consult the latest edition available unless they have good reason to use an earlier one (e.g. for historical terminology and outdated references).

MONOLINGUAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TITLES

DICTIONARIES & THESAURUSES

BRITISH & GENERAL ENGLISH

Collins English Dictionary. 8th ed. London: HarperCollins, 2006.

The entries cover the major variations of English spoken in the world, from British English to Australian English, from historical to modern, from formal to slang, from aeronautics to zoology. All this is presented clearly, in explanatory entries that are easy to find and well laid out. In addition there are notes to help users deal with difficult or disputed points in written English, pronunciation guides for spoken English, and etymologies that trace the roots of modern English.

Collins Dictionary & Thesaurus. 4th ed. London: HarperCollins, 2006.

A combination of dictionary and thesaurus which clearly has the advantage of showing not only words and their definitions but also synonyms and other related terms. *Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus* provides clear, concise definitions using the most up-to-date data from the Bank of English, a 2.5-billion-word language database. Word histories are included for many entries, along with pronunciations. The comprehensive dictionary text is complemented by matching same-page thesaurus entries, while the Internet-linked supplement adds another dimension to help support online research.

Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus on CD-Rom. 3rd ed. London: HarperCollins, 2003. Access to over 200,000 definitions and 340,000 synonyms and antonyms. Fast and simple user interface; full-text searches; history list for reviewing entries; easy cross-referencing between the dictionary and thesaurus.

Collins Thesaurus. 2nd ed. London: HarperCollins, 2002. An up-to-date thesaurus, including many useful examples drawn from the Bank of English. Includes quotations and proverbs, and unlike the less user-friendly *Roget's Thesaurus* (see below), is organised as an A-Z work.

The New Oxford Dictionary of English – Dictionary and CD-ROM Bundle. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. The highly acclaimed *New Oxford Dictionary of English* is the foremost single-volume authority on current English, while the CD-ROM offers superb searching facilities, enabling you to explore the dictionary in ways not possible with the printed book.

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary. 5th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Shorter edition of the standard reference work for British English, the *Oxford English Dictionary*. This is the successor of the *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*.

The Oxford English Dictionary. 20 vols. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989. The standard reference work for British and general English, in twenty volumes. Also available on CD-ROM and online. The online version can be accessed via the ZHAW library page.

The Oxford Thesaurus of English. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. A very good, wholly up-to-date A-Z thesaurus that is much easier to use than the original *Roget's Thesaurus* (see below).

Roget's Thesaurus of English Words & Phrases. Ed. George Davidson. London: Penguin Books, 2004. A thesaurus, in effect a dictionary of synonyms and word fields, should be on every language professional's bookshelf. The organisation of *Roget's Thesaurus* takes some getting used to, however. A number of editions, paperback and hardback, are available for both UK and US English, many now organised as A-Z reference works, which are much more easy to use.

The excellent *Oxford Reference Online*, which can be accessed via the ZHAW library page, has a large number of English language dictionaries, thesauruses and reference works for online use.

AMERICAN ENGLISH

American English is long overdue for some truly comprehensive dictionary along the lines of the *Oxford English Dictionary* for British English. In its absence, the following general American English dictionaries are recommended:

Webster's Third New International Dictionary. Springfield MA: Merriam Webster, 1993. This, the largest and most comprehensive American English dictionary available, is traditionally seen as the leading American-English authority. Though dated, it is still good to have around. Also available in an edition that combines the print version with one on CD-ROM, and in an online version for subscribers.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000.

Much handier and more up-to-date than the illustrious *Random House Dictionary*. Also available on CD-ROM, and in a combined print and CD-ROM edition. Entries are not exclusively linguistic but also contain some encyclopedic information. Highly recommended.

Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. 11th ed. Springfield MA: Merriam Webster, 2003.

The standard one-volume reference work for US English. Also available in an edition that combines the print version with one on CD-ROM and an online subscription. Recommended.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms. Springfield MA: Merriam-Webster, 1992.

The title is self-explanatory: this dictionary combines the advantages of a thesaurus with the user-friendliness of a conventional dictionary.

Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary. 2nd ed. New York: Random House, 2005.

Another classic American English dictionary in a single volume with over 315,000 terms. Also available on CD-ROM.

COLLOCATION, IDIOM, STYLE, PRESENTATION, GRAMMAR

Most work in English requires what is known as good idiomatic English. There are general rules for what is considered good writing style and good usage. There are also general rules for the correction, layout and presentation of proofs, manuscripts and translations.

BRITISH & GENERAL ENGLISH

BBI Dictionary of English Word Combinations. Ed. Morton Benson, et al. Rev. ed. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamin's Publishing Company, 1997.

Intended for non-native speakers, this dictionary is a vital addition to any library. As the title suggests, it lays emphasis on collocation and word combination. A host of lucid examples and explanations are provided. Inexpensive and available in paperback. (ISBN 90 272 2167 7).

Butcher, Judith. *Copy Editing: The Cambridge Handbook for Editors, Authors and Publishers*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

A standard work for British editors and publishers.

Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary. 5th ed. London: Collins COBUILD, 2006.

A very good one-volume English dictionary that not only non-native speakers will find particularly useful for the large number of contextual examples contained in the entries. Includes a CD-ROM. Also available in paperback. It is very good value – especially since a CD is included in one bundle – and highly recommended. A version is available on the ZHAW intranet, which can be accessed via NEBIS.

Economist, The. *Style Guide: The Bestselling Guide to English Usage*. 9th ed. London: Profile Books, 2005.

A very useful guide for journalists on the famous British journal *The Economist*. A cut-down version can be accessed online at <http://www.economist.com/research/StyleGuide/index.cfm>

Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English. Longman: Harlow, 2002.

a corpus-based grammar containing thousands of examples of real English in use and very useful information on language variation (registers, dialects etc.), on preference and frequency of use, and on the combination of grammar and vocabulary in lexico-grammatical patterns. Recommended.

LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations. Hove: LTP, 1997.

A radically new dictionary based on collocation (the way words combine with other words in predictable ways). Very useful indeed for quick reference.

The Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

A quality edition from an excellent publishing house.

AMERICAN ENGLISH

The Chicago Manual of Style. 15th ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Very popular with writers and editors in the United States.

Garner, Bryan A. *A Dictionary of Modern American Usage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

An authoritative guide to standard American English usage.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. New York: The Modern Languages Association of America, 2003.

The essential handbook for the mechanics of written American English

NTC's Dictionary of American English Phrases. Lincolnwood IL: NTC, 1997.

An American dictionary which focuses on collocation. Recommended.

NTC's Dictionary of Everyday American English Expressions: Presented According to Topic & Situation. Lincolnwood IL: NTC, 1995.

An American dictionary which focuses on collocation and situation-based expressions. Recommended.

Strunk, W. & White, E.B. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York: Allyn & Bacon, 2000.

Many editions of this classic work exist, which is considered the major source for style questions in American English.

GENERAL REFERENCE

This type of reference work is hard to recommend because the field is so vast. Here are some useful resources:

ALMANACS

There are many different kinds of almanac, covering all fields of knowledge and areas of interest. The best known general almanac is *The World Almanac and Book of Facts*.

ATLASES

There are too many atlases to enumerate, but one of the best is the *Times Atlas of the World*.

ENCYCLOPAEDIAS

These come in different sizes, and are an invaluable resource of knowledge and language. Because of the vast amount of information they contain, the print edition - where available - stretches over many volumes. It is therefore more practical to use the CD-ROM, DVD or Internet versions. Leading publications include:

The Encyclopædia Britannica. Print, CD-ROM and DVD

The flagship of all English-language encyclopædias is available both in print and on CD-ROM or DVD. The full Britannica encyclopædia is also available online to subscribers, of which ZHAW is one. It can be accessed via the ZHAW library page.

Microsoft Encarta. CD-ROM and DVD

An entire multi-volume encyclopædia on CD-ROM. Recommended for quick, easy reference, word searches, collocation searches, etc.

QUOTATIONS

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. 4th ed. Ed. Elizabeth Knowles. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

A dictionary of quotations is invaluable to any language professional needing to trace references to what (famous) people have said, either for checking the accuracy and origin of source-text quotations or for finding the correct wording in the target language. There are hundreds of dictionaries and thesauruses of quotations published for speakers of British and North American English. These dictionaries can be general in scope or concentrate on more specific areas (e.g. 20th-century quotations, or humorous quotations). The *Concise Oxford* is just one example of a good, easy-to-use, inexpensive book of general quotations. It is based on:

The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. 5th ed. Ed. Elizabeth Knowles. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Rubinstein, Mary. *21st Century American English Compendium*. 2nd ed. Rockville MD: Schreiber Publishing, 2000.

It covers proverbs, expressions, U.S. slang. U.S. vs. American English, foreign words in American English, acronyms and abbreviations, and other 'odds and ends.'

Oxford Reference Online, which can be accessed via the ZHAW library page, contains a number of dictionaries of quotations.

SUBJECT REFERENCE

You will find a great deal of what you need in the handy paperback series of reference dictionaries published by the Oxford University Press and Penguin Books, some of which are listed below as examples. The entire Oxford Reference series is available on the Internet as *Oxford Reference Online*, and can be accessed via the ZHAW library page. This excellent resource contains, in addition to a number of English language dictionaries, thesauruses and dictionaries of quotations, encyclopedic and subject reference works in a wide range of fields.

BUSINESS, ECONOMICS & RELATED FIELDS

Bannock, Graham, R.E. Baxter and Evan Davies. *The Penguin Dictionary of Economics*. 7th ed. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 2003.

This is just one of a number of Penguin dictionaries specialised in economic and business terminology as well as politics. All are highly recommended.

Davis, Evan, et al. *The New Penguin Dictionary of Business*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 2003.

Bannock, Graham, and William Manser. *The Penguin International Dictionary of Finance*. 2nd ed. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1999.

Brett, Michael. *How to Read the Financial Pages*. 5th ed. London: Random House Business Books, 2003.

An excellent reference work containing a wealth of current financial terms integrated into an explanatory text. Terminology is highlighted in bold and indexed.

Downes, J. *Dictionary of Finance & Investment Terms*. 6th ed. New York: Barron's, 2002.

Fitch, T. *Dictionary of Banking Terms*. 4th ed. New York: Barron's, 2000.

Friedman, J. *Dictionary of Business Terms*. 3rd ed. New York: Barron's, 2000.

Friedman, J. *Dictionary of Real Estate Terms*. 6th ed. New York: Barron's, 2004.

McKenzie, Wendy. *The Financial Times Guide to Using and Interpreting Company Accounts*. 3rd ed. London: Pitman Publishing, 2003.

Rosenberg, Jerry M. *Dictionary of Banking & Financial Services*. 2nd ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1986.

An excellent reference work.

Rubin, H. *Dictionary of Insurance Terms*. 4th ed. New York: Barron's 2000.

Rutherford, Donald. *Routledge Dictionary of Economics*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2002.
A good, up-to-date reference work.

Taylor, Shirley & Gartside, Leonard. *Gartside's Model Business Letters, E-Mails & Other Business Documents*. 6th ed. Edinburgh: Pearson Education, 2003.

An invaluable source for all sorts of model business documents.

CHEMISTRY, LIFE SCIENCES, THE ENVIRONMENT

You will find a great deal of what you need in the handy paperback series of reference dictionaries published by the Oxford University Press and Penguin Books, some of which are listed below as simple examples.

Allaby, Michael. *A Dictionary of Plant Sciences*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Allaby, Michael. *A Dictionary of Ecology*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
A good, up-to-date reference work covering an increasingly important area of work for language professionals. Inexpensive, and highly recommended.

Bailey, Jill, ed. *The Penguin Dictionary of Plant Sciences*. 2nd ed. London: Penguin Books, 1999.

Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary. 14th ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2001.

Sharp, D. W. A. *The Penguin Dictionary of Chemistry*. 3rd ed. London: Penguin Books, 2003.
Use the newest edition, which will be published in 2003.

Thain, M., & Hickman, M. *The Penguin Dictionary of Biology*. 11th ed. London : Penguin Books, 2005.

As your questions become more and more specific, you will need more targeted reference material, which are often published by government, public and private organisations, such as the World Health Organisation and pharmaceutical companies. Needless to say, parallel texts from such sources are a great help to language professionals.

COMPUTERS, THE INTERNET & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Here the field changes almost daily, so it is best to use Internet-based dictionaries and glossaries. However, for some quick, handy sources of basic computer terminology, you might try:

Downing, D., & Covington, M. *Dictionary of Computer & Internet Terms*. 8th ed. New York: Barron's, 2003.

Clark, Duncan, and Peter Buckley. *The Rough Guide to the Internet: 2006 Edition*. London: Rough Guides, 2005.

An excellent and inexpensive pocket guide to the Internet, with a wealth of information and a good glossary. A new edition is published each year.

Microsoft Computer Dictionary. 5th ed. Microsoft Press International, 2002.
Terminology from the world's leading software producer.

Microsoft Internet & Networking Dictionary. Microsoft Press, 2002.
Terminology from the world's leading software producer.

Newton, H. *Newton's Telecom Dictionary*. 21st ed. CMP Books, 2005.
A standard work in the telecommunications field.

ELECTRICAL & ELECTRONICS

Jay, F. *Standard Dictionary of Electrical & Electronic Terms*. 6th ed. New York: Institute of Electric & Electronic Engineers, 1997.

Sclater, N. *McGraw-Hill Electronics Dictionary*. 6th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997

ENGINEERING

Parker, S. *McGraw-Hill Concise Encyclopedia of Engineering*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005.

GENERAL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Considine, Glenn D., ed. *Van Nostrand Scientific Encyclopedia*. 9th ed. New York: Wiley-Interscience, 2002.

An authoritative but very expensive work; also available on CD-ROM.

Parker, Sybil, ed. *McGraw-Hill Dictionary of Scientific & Technical Terms*. 6th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002 .

One of the finest one-volume references covering all areas of science and technology. A must for any technical writer.

Clugston, M. J., ed. *The New Penguin Dictionary of Science*. 2nd ed. London: Penguin Books, 2004.

A good paperback dictionary of general science which covers a good deal of basic scientific terminology. More detailed references can be found in the Penguin dictionaries devoted to specialised areas of science and technology. Indeed, the entire range of Penguin dictionaries is very reliable and good value for money. Highly recommended.

LAW

Garner, Bryan A., ed. *Black's Law Dictionary*. 8th ed. St. Paul MN: West Publishing, 2004.
The standard book in its field.

Chartrand, Marcella et al. *English for Contract and Company Law*. London: Sweet & Maxwell, 1997.

Although this book is primarily designed as a coursebook in legal English for non-native speakers, it contains valuable sections on the structure and standard wordings of various UK and international contracts.

Garner, Bryan A. *A Dictionary of Modern Legal Usage*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

An acclaimed and authoritative reference work and guide used by lawyers throughout the English-speaking world.

Garner, Bryan A. *The Elements of Legal Style*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
A book written for lawyers on the style they should adopt when writing. A very good source for translators of legal texts into English.

Keenan, Denis and Sarah Riches. *Business Law*. 6th ed. London: Longman, 2004.
Designed to teach law, but includes example documents and definition of terminology.

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law. Springfield MA: Merriam-Webster, 1996.
A comprehensive guide to American law including new terms, usage examples, and an appendix with an explanation of the American court system. Inexpensive.

MEDICINE

Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary. 29th ed. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 2000.
An excellent reference source: one of the standard medical dictionaries. Get the latest edition.

Dorland's Pocket Medical Dictionary with CD-ROM. 27th ed. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 2004.

The 'little brother' of the *Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary*; very good value and highly recommended. The latest edition comes with a CD-ROM.

Heister, Rolf. *Dictionary of Abbreviations in Medical Sciences*. Berlin: Springer, 1989.

Hole, John W. *Essentials of Human Anatomy and Physiology*. 9th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002.

Aimed at the American college student, this is a well-illustrated guide to anatomy and physiology.

Rothenberg, M. *Dictionary of Medical Terms*. 4th ed. New York: Barron's, 2000.

Stedman's Medical Dictionary. 27^t ed. Baltimore: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins, 2000.
Highly recommended. Get the latest edition.

Williams, Peter, ed. *Gray's Anatomy: The Anatomical Basis of Medicine and Surgery*. 38th ed. Churchill Livingstone, 1995.

This standard work for medical practitioners is published in American and British editions. The volume above is the British edition.

SWITZERLAND

The Swiss Confederation: A Brief Guide 2008. Berne: Swiss Federal Chancellery, 2008.

Although this is not, strictly speaking, a dictionary or reference work, it is an excellent source for the official translations of Swiss political terminology. The work appears every year. The above is the English translation of the German-language publication *Der Bund kurz erklärt*. Use the two publications as parallel texts. Both are available as PDF downloads free of charge from the following sites:

<http://www.bk.admin.ch/dokumentation/02070/index.html?lang=en> (English)

<http://www.bk.admin.ch/dokumentation/02070/index.html?lang=de> (German)