The vocabulary challenge: bilingual or monolingual?

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Business Spotlight

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Spotlight Verlag

- Munich-based publishing house founded in 1981
- Six successful print products for language-learning
- Each magazine: audio products, e-paper, website
- Video-learning platform: “dalango”
- Language-learning apps
Overview

- Is vocabulary the answer?
- Guessing games
- Monolingual approach
- Bilingual approach
- Our blend
- Our support
- Your feedback
“[....] there are hundreds of thousands of chunks in English; learning enough of these to have an appropriate chunk to hand in a given situation is not a quick or trivial job. With much less time and effort, learners can acquire grammar for putting together comprehensible phrases and sentences that can serve them on the long journey towards more native-like proficiency.”

“This does not mean that grammar is the most important thing to teach: the title probably goes to vocabulary.”

Dr Catherine Walter
Lecturer in applied linguistics at the University of Oxford
Co-author with Michael Swan of the Oxford English Grammar Course
Guardian Weekly
18 September, 2012
Is vocabulary the answer?

“Poor sentence structure can hinder comprehension, but poor vocabulary can stop comprehension immediately.”

Keith S. Folse
TESOL Professor
University of Florida (2012)

“Grammar is important, but more learners need to focus much more on vocabulary.”

Keith S. Folse
*Business Spotlight 5/2012*
## What do learners want most?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extend my vocabulary</td>
<td>92 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be proficient in English</td>
<td>84 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn specialist terms/vocabulary</td>
<td>82 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn grammar</td>
<td>55 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test my English</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve intercultural communication</td>
<td>43 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attain soft skills</td>
<td>40 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Star power

“I was living in a shelter home in New York when somebody asked me if I cooked. I said yes. That person told me ‘we have a party of 200 people and you have to make one appetizer’, and I made dhokla.” A party guest recommended Khanna for a job at a restaurant called Salaam Bombay. This led to his current position as executive chef at Junoon. “Although it’s a high-end restaurant, I have always tried to keep simple food in it,” he says. Khanna, who is single, says his mother wants him to marry an Indian girl. “All I want is that she be as proud an Indian as I am,” he says. Khanna adds that he’s not looking for a woman who can cook well. “I don’t want the competition,” he laughs.

Extract from “Star power”, Business Spotlight International, 2/2012, p. 6
“In reality, unknown words within texts are very often not deducible from contextual clues.”

Della Summers, lexicologist, study for Longman Dictionaries, 1980
Guessing games

- Guessing words from context is an excellent reading strategy: it’s not a learning strategy.
- Research suggests that 95 per cent of the words in a text need to be known in order to understand it (Liu Na and I.S.P. Nation, 1985).
- Guessing a word does not mean that the students have learned the word.
- Students often guess words incorrectly.
How can we help learners to understand unfamiliar words?

- disposable
- appeal
- bill
- cap
- means
- benefits
- malign
- modest
- Lords

Guessing is not enough — give concrete help in context
“Knowing” a word

What does it mean to know a word?

We know a word or expression when we know its…

- spoken and written form
- lexical class
- use
- collocations
- appropriacy
- level of formality
- synonyms and antonyms
- word family
- meaning/definition
- L1 translation
Translations can cause problems:

“Mapping second-language vocabulary onto the mother tongue is a basic and indispensable learning strategy, but also inevitably leads to error.”

Michael Swan, linguist and author

_The influence of the mother tongue on second language vocabulary acquisition, 1997_
Define!

- Students may gain only superficial knowledge of the new words if they learn the meaning only as a translation.
- True meaning may be lost in translation.
- Definitions work best if they are context-related, clear, brief and as unambiguous as possible.
- Definitions make the student think about the word in relation to the text and to its meaning.
- Definitions also draw the learners attentions to synonyms or antonyms and so help them to remember.
- “Students learn to make use of general words and to develop the skill of talking around a word” (Brown 1979).
Why provide translations?

Translations help:

“First language translations are probably the simplest kind of definition in that they are short and draw directly on familiar experience.”

I.S.P. Nation, Professor of applied linguistics, Victoria University of Wellington, 2001
In monolingual classes, I’m more likely to use my students’ first language to translate difficult vocabulary items.

Source: Business Spotlight Teacher’s Survey 2011, 289 respondents
Selected research results:

- 37% allow monolingual dictionaries
- 32% favour context clues
- 5% allow bilingual dictionaries
- 8% allow different dictionary type depending on learners' level
- 7% allow students to choose the dictionary
- 11% ban dictionaries

K. Folse, 2004
Why provide translations?

“There is absolutely no research showing that translations are bad.”

Keith S. Folse (2012)
“Getting to know you”, Business Spotlight 5/2012
Translations can provide confirmation of correct meaning
Translations can provide a quick answer
Students will translate the words anyway (if not out loud then definitely in their heads) so why try to forbid it?
Related languages often share a great deal of cognate vocabulary
Languages may have exact translation equivalents
Studies have shown that less proficient students were able to learn more vocabulary items when they had learned the words via translation and not in context (Prince, 1995)
Bilingual dictionaries are more generally employed in the initial stages of learning a language (Ronald Carter & Michael McCarthy, 1988)
Tricky translations

- **appreciate**: an Wert gewinnen, schätzen, zu schätzen wissen, dankbar sein für, verstehen, begreifen, sich (dessen) bewusst sein

- **spike**: Gleisnagel, Belegnagel, plötzlicher Anstieg, stark anziehen, jemand Drogen ins Getränk tun, (einen Bericht) stoppen/verhindern/einstampfen/zurückziehen

- **equity**: Eigenkapital, (equities) Aktien, Aktienkapital, Kapital, Kapitalbeteiligung, Neutralität, Unbefangenheit

- **drive**: Spritztour, Einfahrt, Antrieb, Vorderradantrieb, fahren, von etw. angetrieben werden, Biss, Aktion, Kampagne, Festplatte, Laufwerk, Datenträger
**TRICKY TRANSLATIONS**

How do you say “appreciate” in German?

In financial English, to “appreciate” is to become more valuable: “I expect this building to appreciate over the next ten years.” This is best translated as *im Wert steigen* or *an Wert gewinnen: Ich erwarte, dass der Wert dieses Gebäudes in den nächsten zehn Jahren steigt.*

The word is also used to signal that you recognize how good or useful someone or something is: “My boss just doesn’t appreciate my skills.” This is translated as *schätzen* or *zu schätzen wissen: Mein Chef weiß meine Fähigkeiten einfach nicht zu schätzen.*

We also use it to express thanks for something someone has done for us: “I really appreciate your help.” This can be translated as *(zu) schätzen (wissen) or dankbar sein für: Ich bin sehr dankbar für Ihre Hilfe.*

To “appreciate” something is also to understand it fully and know what it means: “I don’t think he appreciates the seriousness of our situation.” This is often translated as *verstehen, begreifen or sich (dessen) bewusst sein: Ich glaube nicht, dass er sich bewusst ist, wie ernst unsere Lage ist.*

**EXERCISE 1** Translate the following sentence.

*I appreciate how difficult this must be for him.*

---

**How do you say *bestehen* in English?**

In the context of testing, *bestehen* means to sit an examination or test successfully: *Ich habe gerade die TOEFL-Prüfung bestanden.* This is translated as *pass: “I’ve just passed the TOEFL test.”* *Bestehen* can also be used in the sense of continuing despite problems: *Wir müssen am Markt bestehen.* This is translated as *succeed, prevail or endure: “We must prevail in the marketplace.”*

*Bestehen* can also be used to refer to the existence of something. *Diese Tradition besteht seit Jahrhunderten; Wie lange besteht das Unternehmen schon?* This is translated as *exist, be in force (said about laws) or be in business (said about companies): “This tradition has existed for hundreds of years”; “How long has the company been in business?”* Informally, one can also say *be around: “The tradition/firm/theory has been around for a long time.”*

Followed by the preposition *auf, bestehen* means something very different: *Ich bestehe darauf, zu bezahlen. This* is best translated as *insist on: “I insist on paying.”*

Followed by the preposition *aus, bestehen* describes the components of something: *Die Prüfung besteht aus zwei Teilen.* This is translated as *consist of or comprise: “The exam consists of two parts.”*

**EXERCISE 2** Translate the following sentence.

*I hoffe, ich habe diesmal bestanden.*

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The Business Spotlight product range

- Business Skills
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- The role of social media

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- Conferences
- Your special 2-page language guide

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- London
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- BUSINESS SKILLS
- How to postpone business appointments

- CULTURE CORNER
- Singapore: people, places and language

- PLUS
- Adjectives and prepositions, learn in vocabulary, group dynamics and a progress test
Sixty-five per cent of our readers favour definitions in English, in addition to the translations

Business Words

fringe benefits
(noun)

extra payment, or other benefits, on top of one's normal salary

"You can expect to receive all kinds of fringe benefits working here — including cheaper flights."

executive toy

fringe benefits

half-baked idea
Customized solutions

- Content syndication
- Customized print publication
- Customized e-paper
- Web-based solutions for companies
- Special subscription offers
Content syndication

- Licence edition (Czech Republic)
- Single articles for interested clients or publications
- Longer term newsletter content agreement
Customized print publications
Web-based solutions

- Intranet for companies: e.g. Siemens website exercises, podcasts, business words

- Customized online content for companies/publishers: Spiegel Online Manager Magazin Postbank Handelsblatt
What to learn/teach?

Which words and expressions might learners have problems with and why?

www.wordle.net
Skill Up! Vocabulary guide

International conferences

In focus: getting organized | Small talk: Great to see you!
Brainstorm some methods (there's one!)

- Mind maps/brainstorming
- Vocabulary in context
- Feeding in lexis during task-based activities
- Grouping/sorting words
- Semantic sets/fields/groups
- Synonyms, antonyms, homophones
- Pictures/photos/realia
- Explanations
- Examples: why would you swerve in a car?
- Labelling
- Completing diagrams and charts/describing processes
- Scales, e.g. always-------------never
- Wordlists
Methods for consolidating vocabulary

Review, repeat, remember

Self-study tips
- Create memory aids and associations
- Practise visualization
- Draw mind maps
- Use wordlists

Classwork
- Group writing activities
- Gap-fill exercises
- Games
- Dictations/dictogloss activities
- Jumbled letters or sentences
- Use wordlists
“Lists are clear. Lists are concrete.”

Keith Folse, 2004
**Vocabulary list and MP3 audio**

**IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS ENGLISH**

Use this page to practice the vocabulary from the current issue of Business Spotlight. Connect the links to create your own vocabulary learning system.

**Pronunciation**

The full pronunciation guide to British English. This differs, however, from the audio files included.

**Nouns and uses phrases**

- management (noun) Management
- arrangement (noun) Arrangement
- small size (noun) Small size
- successful (adjective) Successful
- big business (noun) Big business
- demand (noun) Demand
- small business (noun) Small business

**Verbs**

- organize (verb) Organize
- develop (verb) Develop
- monitor (verb) Monitor
- operate (verb) Operate
- conquer (verb) Conquer

**Adjectives and adverbs**

- successful (adjective) Successful
- difficult (adjective) Difficult

- improve (verb) Improve
- achieve (verb) Achieve
- develop (verb) Develop
- understand (verb) Understand
- improve (verb) Improve

**Idioms and collocations**

- in your own words
- in your own way
- in their own right
- in their own way
- in their own right
- in their own right
- in their own right
- in their own right

**Download more vocabulary online!**

As a subscriber to Business Spotlight, you can download all of our MP3 files of these words on our website. At this point, we have over 5,000 vocabulary lists from the magazine, and over 700 of these have been translated into business English.
A BANKING UNION

The role of the new European Banking Union is to create a safer and more stable banking sector.

A common recapitalization and resolution framework

The aim of this framework is to create a level playing field for banks across the eurozone.

A common backstop deposit insurance scheme

This scheme would provide a safety net for banks in the event of a crisis.

Privacy Law

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guarantees the right to privacy for individuals.

EXERCISE: Yes or No?

Choose the words that best complete the text.

D e s p a i t h e prix on an essay titled "A Banking Union," presented at the 10th European Conference on Business Law.

1. Central government cannot support the stability of the eurozone.
2. The ECB is responsible for setting interest rates.

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ESP – Technical language focus

EXERCISES

1. Handle with care

Complete these sentences using the correct words from the box.

- certified - environment - procedures - regulations
- necessary - hazardous - material - materials
- Many items marked ________ for disposal with hazardous materials.
- It is essential to follow safety ________.
- Our staff are all ________ to handle hazardous materials.
- A ___________ is produced ________ waste.
- Hazardous materials may threaten the ________.

2. Describing danger

Match the words to their descriptions.

- a) biological
- b) challenging
- c) dangerous
- d) explosive
- e) flammable
- f) harmful
- g) toxic

- 1. poisonous
- 2. easily catches fire
- 3. gets wrong and won’t
- 4. removing hazards immediately
- 5. relating to dangerous things
- 6. having the potential to explode
- 7. causing damage to ________

3. Focusing on safety

Choose a word from each column to create three-word combinations found in the box.

- central - protection - equipment - zone
- a) safety - b) recent - c) perfect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>central</td>
<td>of primary importance or central to something; a main or core part of something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protection</td>
<td>the act of protecting something or the state of being protected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipment</td>
<td>any device or tool needed for a particular purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zone</td>
<td>an area that is set aside for a particular use or purpose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information

- Range for Conversion: E.H. (Friedrichshaven, 1998), see page 99
- For related exercises, see Business Spotlight Plus

Eva Krenk studied as a technical engineer for 11 years before (1993), she was an area engineer and consultant within害怕en for English-Specific Publications. Contact: eva.krenk@t-online.de
Reading is not enough — learners have to practise the vocabulary
## Classroom focus

### Business Spotlight in the classroom

Ideen für Ihr Business-Englisch-Training

**Spending your time wisely**

**Graziella Maggiolo**

If your students complain that they have too little time to learn, you can tell them that the following methods for learning new words and expressions can be used in practice.

With the Head of a Guide to Success (or the text under this section), your students are invited to put their ideas into practice. We also take a look at how you can help your students to improve their progress, achieve particular goals and keep up-to-date with current technologies via Twitter. The best tips are available on the Business Spotlight and Business Spotlight International websites.

**Helen Strong**

helen.strong@business-spotlight.com.de

**Twitter**

@BusinessSpotlight

**Business Spotlight in the classroom**

Business Spotlight is an international business training and consulting company with a strong presence in Europe, the United States, Australia and other countries around the world.

Business Spotlight offers a variety of training programs for all levels of learners, from beginners to advanced English speakers. The company's mission is to help businesses and individuals develop their language skills and improve their overall business performance.

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**SINGAPORE SLING**

Activity cards based on "The quiet ones" (Business Spotlight 5/2012, pp. 28-33)

**Instructions:** Copy and cut up the cards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economy</th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Levels of education</td>
<td>Small talk before meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude to foreigners</td>
<td>Work ethic</td>
<td>Family and societal values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of industries</td>
<td>Rules and regulations</td>
<td>Levels of employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company hierarchies</td>
<td>Saying yes and no</td>
<td>History and independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management styles</td>
<td>Negotiating with Singaporeans</td>
<td>Business relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DEEP FILE**

**Business Spotlight**

Contact Information

Email: info@business-spotlight.com

**Website**

www.business-spotlight.com
It's easy to get confused when dialing up your telephone number in English. And it's even more confusing when calling toll-free numbers: Let's talk about how to do it in both.

1. Say each numeric, separately. For example, the number 573-8412 is usually said as “five, seven, three, eight, four, one, two.” Don’t say “five-hundred-and-seventy-three, eighty-four, one, two.” This is done with telephone numbers in English and is of course not required in passports.

2. Use the letter “O” for “zero.” For example, 604 877 6099 is “six, zero, four, eight, seventy-seven, six, zero, nine, nine.”

3. If a figure occurs twice in a row, you have two choices. The number 894 44-23-10 can be said: “eight, nine-four, four, four, twenty-three, ten” or “eight-ninety-four, four, four, twenty-three, ten.” It’s easier to say “Double eight, twenty-three, ten.”

4. Hundreds with several zeros at the end are often said in “human” terms. For example, 9,990 is said as “nine thousand, nine hundred.”

5. Country codes can be said in two ways. For example, 0049 is “zero-four-nine” for “Germany,” or “zero-zero-four-nine” for Germany.

Here’s a short test. Say the following numbers aloud: 153 620 = 6 0044 444 = 015 515 9999. Now, how do you make sure that you have understood it correctly? First, make sure you always get the complete telephone number, including country and area codes. Here are some useful expressions: “May I have your country and area code?” or “What is your country and area code for Germany?”

You also need to know that you have a calling card and can give the country code and area code for the receiver. Don’t forget to give the complete phone number, including area codes. Don’t forget to give the country and area code for the receiver. This allows you to check that you have understood it correctly. If you have understood part of the number, repair the number in the following lines and this is the number. For example, 44 is “4, four for Britain, 88, eighty-eight, 41, forty-one. Can you recite the number? Your telephone partner will then dial the number for you. You need to be sure when giving and asking for telephone numbers — one word another can mean everything. So be careful, be patient and be correct.

DATES AND TIMES

There are a number of ways of saying calendar dates and clock times in English. British and American English can be different. To avoid making mistakes, choose one way and try to keep to it.

**Business Spotlight**

Antifinger and softTouchq freight transport GmbH have just been commissioned to transport the world’s first commercial, solar-powered train. The train will be transported from the factory, where it was produced, to its final destination.

The train is powered by a 300-kilowatt solar array, which is capable of generating 30,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year. The array is located on the roof of the factory and is connected to the train through a series of cables.

The train itself is a 50-tonne, two-carriage vehicle. It is designed to carry up to 100 passengers and is equipped with solar-powered lighting and heating systems.

The train will be transported on a special trailer, which is capable of carrying 100 tonnes of weight. The trailer will be driven by a team of 10 skilled drivers, who will be responsible for guiding the trailer along the road.

The train is expected to arrive at its final destination in 10 days. During this time, the solar array will be used to power the train’s lighting and heating systems. The array will also be used to charge a battery, which will be used to power the train’s engines when it arrives at its final destination.

The project is expected to be completed in four months. During this time, the team of engineers and technicians will be responsible for assembling and testing the train.

The team is working closely with the government and local authorities to ensure that the project is carried out in an environmentally friendly manner.

**Prepositions**

The train is powered by a 300-kilowatt solar array, which is capable of generating 30,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year. The array is located on the roof of the factory and is connected to the train through a series of cables.

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POSTPONING ARRANGEMENTS

Dear Mr. Brown,

I understand the business trip to Johannesburg may be postponed due to the recent developments in the region. Allow me to share some thoughts on this matter.

Firstly, the decision to delay the trip is understandable given the current circumstances. It is crucial to consider the safety and well-being of all involved. Postponing the trip allows us to reassess the situation and adjust our plans accordingly.

Secondly, the delay provides an opportunity for further preparation and coordination. It is essential to ensure that all necessary arrangements are in place before the trip takes place. This includes logistical, financial, and other aspects related to the trip.

Thirdly, the postponed trip can be rescheduled to a more convenient time when the conditions are more favorable. It is important to keep the lines of communication open and to remain flexible in our planning.

In conclusion, postponing the trip is a wise decision given the current situation. It allows us to approach the matter with caution and to ensure that all aspects of the trip are handled thoughtfully and responsibly.

Thank you for considering my suggestions. I look forward to discussing this further.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

---

Tips:

- If there are any changes, make sure to let the person you are meeting with know in advance.
- If travel plans are changed, inform the person you are meeting with accordingly.
- If there are any delays, communicate the new schedule to the person you are meeting with.

---

[Image]
WORKING TOGETHER


1. Was ist eine Gruppe?


2. Success factors

A number of factors can influence the behavior and success of a group.

a) Leadership: In any group, leadership is key to successful outcomes. A strong leader can provide direction, set clear goals, and motivate team members. Effective leaders inspire and motivate their team members, creating a positive work environment.

b) Communication: Efficient communication is essential for the success of any group. Clear and open communication helps to ensure that everyone is on the same page, and that everyone understands their role and responsibilities.

3. Establishing positive group dynamics

Developing a sense of unity:

- A strong leader can provide direction, set clear goals, and motivate team members. Effective leaders inspire and motivate their team members, creating a positive work environment.

- Clear and open communication helps to ensure that everyone is on the same page, and that everyone understands their role and responsibilities.

- A shared sense of purpose: Understanding the importance of the task at hand helps to build a strong team dynamic.

- Recognition of individual contributions: Acknowledging the efforts of each member of the team helps to build a sense of camaraderie and recognition.

- Conflict resolution: Effective conflict resolution strategies can help to prevent conflicts from escalating and ensure that team members feel heard and valued.

- Positive reinforcement: Celebrating successes and recognizing the efforts of team members can help to build a positive team dynamic.

- Facilitating growth: Encouraging personal and professional development can help to build a strong team dynamic.

In summary, successful group dynamics require strong leadership, clear communication, a shared sense of purpose, recognition of individual contributions, effective conflict resolution, positive reinforcement, and facilitating growth.

Business Skills
“The characteristic sound of a new breakthrough in language teaching theory is a scream, a splash, and a strangled cry, as once again the baby is thrown out with the bathwater.”

Michael Swan, 1985
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