

Dictionary of Information Technology (Third edition)

Peter Collin Publishing, 2002
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Dictionary of Multimedia (Third edition)

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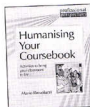
Here are two new dictionaries from Peter Collin Publishing which, according to its website (<http://www.petercollin.com>) is 'one of the leading independent reference publishers'. The larger *Dictionary of Information Technology* defines over 13,000 terms (many of which are acronyms) and would be of interest to ESP students working in this field. However, even for the non-

specialist browser such as myself, there was much of interest: terms I have seen but have not really understood, such as JPEG (Joint Photographic Expert Group). If this does not make you any the wiser, there is a comment box, which explains exactly what it is. It was one of many scattered throughout the dictionary. As a native-speaker non-specialist I found these clear and helpful.

If you were wondering how the publisher could find 13,000 terms for information technology, the answer is that as well as the multitude of mysterious (to me, at least) acronyms like MNP, JANET, IGP, FTP, FIF, EEMS, EDL, DBA, ECL and ODI, more familiar terms are also included, such as 'journalist' ('a person who writes for a newspaper') and ILL ('inter-library loan'). It is good to see a few familiar words among the multitude of new terms that IT has brought us. It may come as a surprise to some that IT does not just mean computers; also covered are terms from television, photography, filming and lighting, print media and video recording as well as specialist computing subjects. One further point is the citations: short fragments taken from IT magazines, which help illustrate the meaning and show how the terms are used in 'real life'. Although there are far fewer of these than the 13,000 definitions, they add another dimension and give clues to the usage of terms, which must give it credibility in these days of natural language-based dictionaries.

The second *Dictionary* is the much shorter 3000-term *Dictionary of Multimedia*, which does not have citations or comment boxes. Inevitably, there is a fair amount of overlap between the two, so you may want to think twice about purchasing both. Again, this book would be suitable for ESP students studying in this area, but there is no mention of the word 'English learning' on either of these dictionaries, suggesting they are intended for the competent user of English market. However, both would seem to be valuable addition to the range of specialist dictionaries from this publisher.

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Humanising your coursebook: activities to bring your coursebook to life

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If you are intrigued by the title of this book, and expect great things from a well-known ELT author, you will not be disappointed. The introduction claims it will be useful for a wide range of teachers but adds that not everything will be appropriate for your own 'gender, age, style, energy or your own idea of who you want to be as a teacher.' The author succinctly states his own philosophy, belief in neuro-linguistic programming and multiple-intelligence theory. The natural corollary of learner-centredness is genuinely reflected throughout. In some tasks learners often have the chance to write their own test questions and are given the opportunity to air feelings about what they are learning. Real attention is paid to the needs of kinesthetic learners, those much neglected by diffident, chaos-fearing teachers.

Divided into eight sections, each with its own rationale and guide to sub-sections, this title covers discrete areas such as all four skills, vocabulary and grammar. The contents page, a map of the book's gems, is admirably clear and advises on suitability of tasks for the learners' level of competence. Sections seem to vary in strength, though: ideas for speaking look less than inspiring but others, for example, on listening and vocabulary, are both varied and extensive, and for once the claim 'they can be used with any coursebook' seems realistic. Given the author's view of warm-up activities I'd have liked to see more of them included, although those present look effective. One I particularly enjoyed is 'Filling a foot'. The students take off their shoes and draw round their partner's foot (or hand if you prefer). They then fill in the foot with information about that person but withholding the name. The 'feet' are then collected and redistributed for the class participants to guess whose foot they have.

Rinvoluceri is scrupulous in both acknowledging colleague's ideas and, in referring the reader to other resources, providing opportunities for the pursuit of chosen themes. The final section, by showing how to look forwards as well as backwards, includes activities for building exam confidence. As with all such resource material, no teacher will wish to use all the contents of this title, but its excellent organisation and quality ideas will make it a valuable addition to any teachers' room.

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