Software Evaluation: *Easy Language: Essential Vocabulary*

**Publisher:** IMSI  
**Content Area:** Vocabulary in 17 different languages  
**Level(s):** Beginners of a foreign language, international businessmen and travelers.  
**Hardware Required:**  
MPC 486SX or higher, Windows 3.1 or higher, 8 MB of RAM, minimum of 5 MB of Hard Disk Space, double speed CD-Rom drive  
**Cost Information and Pricing Options Available:**  
Not on software cover, approximately $10 on www.amazon.com  
**Software Functions:** Foreign language learning aid.  
**Objectives:** Helps build the learners’ vocabulary.  

**Appropriateness of Content for Audience**  
5/5  
--**Richness of Content/Skills Trained**  
*Easy Language* software comes in two sets: vocabulary and conversation. The vocabulary set of the software has two discs, claiming to cover essential vocabulary in 17 languages, including British English\(^1\), Danish, Dutch, Korean, Hebrew, etc.  
The software primarily functions as a multi-lingual dictionary. After choosing a first language and the target language, the user can access to vocabulary items spelled in both his native language and the target language. Each vocabulary item has a picture to facilitate the learner’s comprehension, and the target language pronunciation will be activated once the learner clicks the mouse.  
The “Learning” menu also offers a simple test for each target language.  
Apart from the “language learning” function, the main menu also links to “facts”, “history”, “geography”, “slide shows”, etc. Mostly, however, these links lead the users to scene pictures taken in those target language countries. Sometimes a brief description or explanation is offered. Those functions are only remotely related to language acquisition purposes but could be useful for international travelers.  

--**Difficulty Level**  
The software claims to have 1000-2000 words and phrases for each language. However, not all those vocabulary items appear with illustrations. Most of them come in a simple dictionary form. The vocabulary items are suitable for survival level learners.  

--**Other Features**  
The software offers convenient printing functions and can always be easily exited.

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\(^{1}\) The software considers U.S. English and British English as two languages. However, the dictionary and the built-in pronunciation in the software do not distinguish them clearly.
Presentation; Appeal  2/5
Apart from a few scenery pictures, this software does have a particularly attractive presentation.

Feedback/Interaction  3/5
Lack of interaction is a great shortage for this software. Only the “test” function offers some interaction. The feedback for right and wrong answers are not easily distinguishable.

User friendliness  5/5
The software is easy to install and to use. Brochures and the User’s Manual are also helpful.

Recommended Use
It is hard to imagine any learner would attempt to learn 17 languages all at the same time, from the beginner level. But the software may be particularly useful for international travelers who need help on basic vocabulary on a variety of languages.

(Evaluated by Yi Xu, 2005.)