Self-Study Suggestions

GRAMMAR
For studying grammar I suggest beginning with a quick overview: Englische Grammatik, kurz und schmerzlos (AZ HA).

Once you have finished that turn to English Grammar in Use (AM B 3)* pp. 301-309, or 326-35 where you will find a grammar exam called “Study Guide”. Take the exam and check your answers. This should give you some idea where you still need to invest some time in improving your grammar skills. The exam will tell you what chapters in the book you can turn to for further explanation and quizzes. Each unit is merely two pages long: one page is explanation, the other page is quiz. I suggest that you take the quiz first, however do not check your answers yet. Rather turn to the explanation page and read it now (with much greater interest than otherwise would have been the case). Now wait two days before taking the quiz again. Check the answers now. Your before-and-after quiz results should demonstrate that you have made progress.

VOCABULARY
My top recommendation for quickly and effectively building up your vocabulary is Words in Context (A M), which consists of 30 units of 3-5 pages each about all aspects of American and British life: government, politics, social problems, sports, art, theater, etc. On the page to your left you will see the text with underlined vocabulary and on the page to your right these words/phrases are translated into German, sometimes with pronunciation information. I suggest you read the text once through without looking at the translation information. This forces you to try to comprehend the text on your own. Then read it a second time, this time with the vocabulary assistance on the page to your right. There will certainly be numerous terms worthy of learning that you should include in your vocabulary lists or card system.

If you find these texts too challenging (Oberstufe) there is a simpler version called Key Words in Context (A MA - Mittelstufe).

What is missing in these two excellent books is that there is no accompanying spoken version. Therefore, as an alternative I suggest two magazines that similarly supply not only vocabulary assistance with three levels of texts but also a CD that includes many of these texts: Spotlight (26.6.67 - monthly) and Business Spotlight (26.6.66 - quarterly). Although these texts do not systematically cover the broad spectrum of topics that the “Context” books do, they are nevertheless interesting and timeless about famous people, places, events or business practices. The magazines also include brief sections on grammar and vocabulary learning.

A nice book for reviewing vocabulary/grammar that usually are the source of mistaken usage by many German speakers is Schluß mit den typischen Englisch.Fehler (A ME). Examples of items under review are aufstehen (get up or stand up), bemerken (notice or remark), bequem (comfortable, convenient, easy or lazy), besondere (special or particular), and Boden (ground or floor). There is also an accompanying cassette with exercises.
CD-ROMs
There are various CD-ROM programs also available in the TFH library for learning vocabulary, grammar and fluency. They have the advantage that you can easily imagine the contexts in which the learning situations take place. Moreover, the CD-ROMs provide feedback on your responses in the exercises and pronunciation practice.

Business English 1 & 2 (26.1,1.20)
Englische Geschäftsbriefe (26.7.1.23)

English-intensivkurs: Sprachkurs 1 (26 1,1.23) und 2 (26 1,1.22) plus –
Vokabeltrainer – Grammatik Trainer – Komunikationstrainer (26 1,1.24) [Digital Publishing] mit Spracherkennung, "voice pilot" und authentische Lernsituationen

TOEFL – The Heinemann TOEFL: Preparation Course (26.6.78) / Practice Tests (26.6.77)
6000 Vokabeln (in combination with Key Words in Context by Klett Verlag) (26 1,1.20)

We also have eight interactive CD-ROMs from four TV series called Movie Talk through which you can improve listening comprehension and pronunciation, and learn vocabulary while watching. It is lots of fun.

Movie Talk two episodes each from four different TV series in the original (~hundreds of still pictures with/without balloons [Sprechblasen], for interactive learning).
-Murder She Wrote [Mord ist Ihr Hobby] (26.6.69/70)   -Star Trek (26.6.72/73)
-Beverly Hills 90210 (Everybody’s favorite!) (26.6.68/75)  -Colombo (26.6.71/74)

Monolingual Dictionary
My top recommendation for an English(-English) dictionary is the Longman (Langensheidt) Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1995 (26.1,1.18-3), + CD ~ € 30. It is worth its weight in gold if you learn how to work with it properly, i.e. you need to work through the Explanatory Chart and Guide at the beginning of the dictionary. DCE not only provides explanations of vocabulary in simple language but also pronunciation and grammar information for British and American versions of English, prepositions and lots of example sentences. If you are serious about learning English, this is a great tool.

Applications in English
If you should ever need to make an application in English for another university or for a position in an international company, I can recommend Bewerben auf Englisch: Tipps, Vorlagen, Übungen + CD-ROM. Pocklington/Schulz/Zettl. 2004 (AD MA 16).

* This information is the library reference number.

For further information contact Prof. Pocklington in B 252 or write to pock@tfh-berlin.de: subject line “Self-study materials”.
