

# Words In The News

## Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets  
with answers

EU telecoms –  
28 June 2006



**BBC WORLD SERVICE**  
LEARNING ENGLISH



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# BBC Learning English – Words in the News

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**Level:** Intermediate and above

**Topic:** European Union and telecoms industries

**Language:** Vocabulary of news report

**Aims:** Reading skills – Understanding a short news report  
Language skills – Practising the language of texting  
Writing skills – Practising writing fluency

**Materials:** Worksheet 1 – Comprehension questions  
Worksheet 2 – Vocabulary matching task  
Worksheet 3 – Grammar/language focus – Text messages  
News story – Available online at:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2006/06/060628\\_telecom.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2006/06/060628_telecom.shtml)

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### LESSON STAGES

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#### A Stimulate student interest in text

Generate interest about today's topic by asking pairs of students to write down as many ways to communicate as they can think of in two minutes. The winning team is the pair who come up with the longest list.

(possible answers):

letters
emails
phone calls
postcards
newspapers
shopping lists

#### B Pre-teach essential vocabulary

Elicit/present key vocabulary that students need either to understand the key points in the text or to understand and/or answer any questions that you'll set them later in the lesson. The vocabulary is from Words in the News (so you can elicit the vocabulary by using the explanations provided online or below).

You could either pre-teach the vocabulary at this stage of the lesson or you could use the vocabulary building activity from further down in this lesson plan. Have students working in small groups together and ask them to try to match the vocabulary with the definitions. Encourage them to work with the other groups to pool their knowledge.

When they have done as much as they can, if they have dictionaries, ask them to look up the words to check their answers and to find out the definitions of any words they were not sure of. If they don't have dictionaries, check their answers and give them help with any words they don't know.

Whichever method you use to elicit/present the vocabulary, you should then model it (say it clearly, highlighting the word stress) and get them to repeat the words after you.

#### **telecom**

short for telecommunication, i.e. communication over a distance by cable, telegraph, telephone or broadcasting

#### **liberalisation**

making more open and free

#### **dominance**

control, authority, being the most influential

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**monopolies**

people or companies that have total control of the trade in a commodity or service

**to promote**

to encourage and support

**in a haphazard fashion**

in an illogical or disorganised way, by chance

**to set up**

to establish, to create

**wireless**

radio, capable of transmitting data without being plugged in

**reluctant**

not willing, hesitant

**to surrender**

to hand over, get rid of, give into another's control

**C Written record of vocabulary**

Write the words on the board, eliciting spelling as you write. Elicit and show the word stress of each item and word class, if appropriate. Give students some time to copy your boardwork into their notebooks

Boardwork:

telecom (n, adj)

liberalisation (n)

dominance (n)

monopolies (n)

to promote

in a haphazard fashion

to set up

wireless (n, adj)

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reluctant (adj)

to surrender

#### **D Set a scanning question.**

Tell the students they are going to read a text about the communications industries in Europe. Give them a time limit (1 - 2 minutes) to read the text quickly to find the answer to the question on the board.

It's not important that the students understand every word of the text at this stage. The point of this task is to get them interested in the text and to read it quickly once.

#### Boardwork

Most European governments want the EU to be in charge of giving radio stations their frequencies. True or false?

#### **E Check answers**

Elicit students' answers and highlight the correct answer on the board. It's false. Paragraph 4 says 'analysts say national governments may prove highly reluctant to surrender control of their radio frequencies to Brussels.'

#### **F Set specific information questions**

Hand out Worksheet 1 or use the online quiz. Students complete the worksheet to help them understand the text in more detail. Give them a time limit (5 - 6 minutes) to read the text in more detail and to answer the questions.

#### **G Check answers**

Elicit True or False answers. Direct attention to a particular paragraph if an answer is wrong to try to elicit the correct answer (see worksheet 1 and answer key).

#### **H Vocabulary consolidation/building**

Before the lesson, make enough copies of worksheet 2 so that there is 1 worksheet for every 4 – 5 students. Cut up the vocabulary and explanations.

In class tell students to match the correct word with the right definition.

#### **I Check answers**

Elicit answers. If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit the correct answer.

#### **J Language focus**

Hand out Worksheet 3 which focuses on some of the abbreviations used in text messaging.

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#### **K Check answers**

If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit the correct answer (see worksheet 3 and answer key).

#### **L Follow-up activity: Writing**

Ask students to write their own text messages to other students in the class, using some of the abbreviations they learned in the previous task. Remind them that texting is quite a new phenomenon so there aren't many fixed rules about abbreviations. They can make up new abbreviations; the texts just have to be readable!

Give out small strips of paper and ask students to start 3 or 4 text conversations and then deliver them to the right students. (Be ready to write a few messages yourself in case some students don't get many messages). For 5 – 10 minutes let the students continue sending and receiving texts. They can also start new conversations if their original conversations run out of steam.

While they are writing, move around the room reading their work unobtrusively. Make notes of any errors you see.

Pin the descriptions on the wall and ask students in their pairs to walk round the room. Each pair should read as many of the descriptions as they can and write down which country they think they are reading about.

#### **M Feedback**

Give praise for content (for example, highlight some of the interesting abbreviations you saw and ask the class what they're short for).

Give praise for correct English you read. Give feedback on incorrect language you read. You could write some example phrases or sentences on the board and elicit from students which ones are correct and which ones are wrong and why.

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### **WORKSHEET 1**

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#### **COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

**Are the following sentences true or false?**

- |    |   |     |
|----|---|-----|
| 1. | In the last 20 years there have been a lot of changes in the communications and telephone industries in Europe.                           | T/F |
| 2. | Less openness in government has meant less openness in industry and commerce.   | T/F |
| 3. | The Commission says that regulations to help business become competitive are implemented in an organised, straightforward way.            | T/F |
| 4. | The Commission wants to establish a new group to help make the telecoms industry more competitive throughout the EU.                      | T/F |
| 5. | The Commission wants to establish a body for each EU country to tell radio stations what frequency they can broadcast on.                 | T/F |
| 6. | Radio frequencies can make companies a lot of money because one of the ways they can use them is to give customers mobile phone services. | T/F |

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### **WORKSHEET 2**

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#### **VOCABULARY MATCHING TASK**

**Match these words and phrases to their definitions**

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. telecom                | A. in an illogical or disorganised way, by chance   |
| 2. liberalisation         | B. not willing, hesitant  |
| 3. dominance              | C. short for telecommunication, i.e. communication over a distance by cable, telegraph, telephone or broadcasting |
| 4. monopolies             | D. people or companies that have total control of the trade in a commodity or service                             |
| 5. to promote             | E. radio, capable of transmitting data without being plugged in   |
| 6. in a haphazard fashion | F. making more open and free  |
| 7. to set up              | G. to hand over, get rid of, give into another's control  |
| 8. wireless               | H. to encourage and support   |
| 9. reluctant              | I. to establish, to create  |
| 10. to surrender          | J. control, authority, being the most influential   |



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#### WORKSHEET 3

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#### LANGUAGE FOCUS – Text messaging

Text message (sent from mobile phones) use a lot of abbreviations to save money. Numbers and letters are used instead of words (l8er = later, C = see), words are shortened (pix = pictures) and single letters are used in some common words (U = you, r = are).

Match the first five texts on the left with the correct full version on the right and for the final five texts, write out the full version

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1 c u l8er                 | A. (I'll) See you at home.                 |
| 2. c u @ hme               | B (I'll) Talk to you later tonight.        |
| 3 thx 4 gr8 prty           | C. (I) got your text. Where have you been? |
| 4 got ur txt. werev u bin? | D. See you later.                          |
| 5 tlk 2 u l8er 2nite       | E. Thanks for a great party.               |
| 6. cal me l8er             | F.   |
| 7. c u @ 7 @ hme           | G.   |
| 8. hv 2 rite SA 2nite      | H.   |
| 9. wud b nce 2 c u 2nite   | I.   |
| 10. cn u snd me hs nmbr?   | J  |

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#### ANSWER KEY

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#### WORKSHEET 1

1. True – Paragraph 1 says 'The past two decades have seen huge changes in the way the telecom sector in Europe operates.'
2. False – Paragraph 1 says 'Liberalisation has allowed large numbers of new operators into the market to challenge the dominance of former national monopolies.'
3. False – Paragraph 2 say 'But the Commission believes that rules designed to promote competition are applied in a haphazard fashion'.
4. True – Paragraph 2 says 'So it's proposing to create a new European regulator to coordinate the work of the national authorities.'
5. False – Paragraph 3 says 'It's also planning to set up a central agency to allocate radio spectrum frequencies.'
6. True – Paragraph 3 says 'Such frequencies can be extremely valuable to companies which provide wireless services such as mobile phone networks or satellite navigation systems.'

#### WORKSHEET 2

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. A  |
| 2. F | 7. I  |
| 3. J | 8. E  |
| 4. D | 9. B  |
| 5. H | 10. G |

#### WORKSHEET 3

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1. D | 6. Call me later.                         |
| 2. A | 7. See you at seven at home.              |
| 3. E | 8. (I) have to write an essay tonight.    |
| 4. C | 9. (It) would be nice to see you tonight. |
| 5. B | 10. Can you send me his number?           |