Notas
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TEACHING DICTIONARY SKILLS THROUGH ONLINE BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES

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How to Cite this Document

Buitrago-García, H. C. (2022). *Teaching Dictionary Skills through Online Bilingual Dictionaries* (Generación de contenidos impresos N.° 4). Ediciones Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia. https://doi.org/10.16925/gcnc.23

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Abstract

This module, aimed at helping both English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and their students, is the result of a qualitative, applied, transversal and constructivist research conducted with Open Lingua teachers. One of the objectives of said research was to establish the factors that favored and hindered the curriculum integration of open access bilingual dictionaries in that specific EFL context in order to design and implement some pedagogical and didactic initiatives that would foster the effective use of those lexical tools. The present module was a fundamental element within the series of proposals that arose along the research. Its main objective was to provide the teachers with the necessary conceptual knowledge and didactic strategies and resources to teach their students how to use that kind of online dictionary with higher degrees of ease, enjoyment, and efficiency, and, thus, to reduce the frequency of look up errors. This module offers a variety of digital resources, handouts, and hands-on and assessment activities that can greatly facilitate their job when teaching dictionary skills to their students.

Keywords: Dictionary skills, lexical tools, online bilingual dictionaries, teaching English as a foreign language.

INTRODUCTION

During almost one year, a research work on the curricular integration of Open Access Online Bilingual Dictionaries (oaobd) in the English programs of the Open Lingua program was conducted. The following relevant conclusions that, clearly, concerned the entire Open Lingua teaching and student population of the program emerged.

All teachers have positive perceptions of the oaobd as lexical tools that are relevant and compatible with their work and use them widely for various pedagogical management activities, especially for the preparation of their lessons. Undoubtedly, the change in paradigms that the transition from a face-to-face teaching modality to a remote one assisted by information and communications technologies (ict), due to the covid-19 pandemic, has generated has increased the appreciation that teachers have for this type of digital resource.

On the other hand, the students have free and wide access to these lexical tools, thanks to the possibilities that cellphones offer in that sense, and, to a certain degree, they are aware of their existence. However, they are notoriously inclined to use online translators, such as Google Translate, which, although they offer results of questionable linguistic quality, also allow them to account for their assignments more quickly and with less consultation effort.

Teachers recognize that they require training to use the oaobd properly as foreign language teaching resources. The ict skills that they have achieved over time, as a result of exposure to and use of various types of technologies in the classroom, have allowed them, in a self-taught way, to learn to use them quite effectively as a resource for their own consultation. However, there is a gap in the intentionally didactic use of the oaobd.

The didactic use of the oaobd in the English classes implies for teachers an increase in their work in terms of class planning, design of activities and resources, and guidance of their students until they acquire the consulting skills necessary to use them with the expected autonomy and efficiency.

The initial investment of time and effort needed to teach the students about the structure and ways of using the oaobd to support their English learning process could, subsequently, result in lower levels of dependence on their teachers. It can also improve the students' skills, and, above all, their linguistic competences in their mother tongue and in the foreign language.

Since the students receive limited instruction and teacher support to use the oaobd systematically and correctly in the different oral and written tasks assigned, they tend to perceive the oaobd as difficult tools to explore and use on their own. As a result, both teachers and students overlook all the potential these lexical tools offer as a resource for consultation and learning at a grammatical and semantic level.

Regarding the instructional design of the courses and despite the suggestion of using one of the oaobd most widely used by teachers (WordReference), it is clear that it does not offer sufficient incentives or training to increase and improve the use of this type of lexical tools.

Since they do not know how to use the oaobd properly, the students need to use online translators, a tool that does not require further guidance or supervision in its use, to the detriment of the development of their comprehension and production skills in English. If the student writes a text in Spanish and then loads it into Google Translate to obtain its equivalent in English, he or she has not performed a writing activity in the foreign language. In the same line, if the students take a text in English and translate it with this tool to be able to read it in Spanish, they have not carried out a reading comprehension activity in English.

Considering the above and being aware that in the Saber Pro tests in English students require adequate reading comprehension skills at a textual and inferential level, it is important to discourage the use of online translators. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to provide the students properly designed and monitored instruction on the use of OAOBD, a tool that, among other advantages, allows them to increase their vocabulary and improve their knowledge of the grammatical functions of words.

Taking into consideration all these conclusions, and to take a first step in the training of Open Lingua teachers, which also results in the correct accompaniment of students, a short, self-management module has been designed. This module, lasting approximately fifteen hours, offers basic information on the structure, forms of use and selection criteria of the OAOBD, according to the proposed tasks. It also describes the type of grammatical and lexical information that these tools provide and explain why it is important that students seek to use more OAOBD and less online translators.

To reduce the additional workload that this type of learning activity would entail for the teachers, the module contains a variety of activities already designed so that they can immediately apply them in their classes. It also contains two models or templates that they can use to adapt them to specific usage situations in their classes.

Finally, the module includes a hands-on, application activity in which the teachers can put into practice what they have learned and, more importantly, they can do it with the evaluation activities included in the Open Lingua courses. The objective of this last activity is twofold: On the one hand, to generate a bank of activities and resources to which all teachers have access — this can reduce the amount of time and effort invested in this type of pedagogical activity. On the other hand, to increase the level of integration of the OAOBD within the curriculum of the program by using them in

a meaningful way in activities that directly concern teachers and their students.

The course is available in the following link, so that the teachers can use it online and download all the resources it includes:

https://teachingonlinedictionaryskills.000webhostapp.com/index.html

For some years now, both OAOBD and online translators have been making a presence in the English classes. It is important that the students stop undervaluing and underusing these lexical tools. To achieve this goal, the teachers need to teach the students the knowledge and skills necessary to use them effectively. Once this has been achieved, this kind of online bilingual dictionary will be used in a more systematic, natural, and pedagogical way.

OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To provide English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers with a series of conceptual, pedagogical, and didactic resources and strategies, in order to enable them to teach their students the necessary dictionary skills to efficiently use online bilingual dictionaries, especially WordReference.com, in their classes.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR TEACHERS

After studying this module, you should be able to:

- Identify some of the most important characteristics of open access online bilingual dictionaries.

- Make informed decisions when choosing the dictionary that best fits your students' needs.

- Identify the benefits of using online bilingual dictionaries and the drawbacks of

using online translators when teaching and learning a foreign language.

• Evaluate some of the practical teaching activities and materials provided in this module and design your own.

Source: https://bit.ly/2R1Ousd
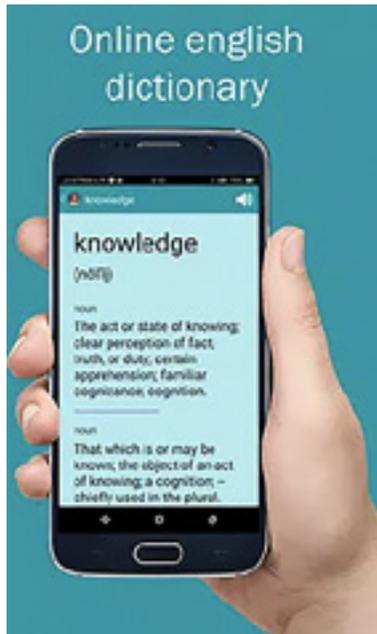
LAYOUT OF THE MODULE

WELCOME TO THIS MODULE

Source: https://bit.ly/31ER2i5

Dear teacher, this short, self-paced module will provide some background knowledge about open access online bilingual dictionaries and how they can support your English classes' activities.

This module lasts fifteen hours, distributed in three weeks, in which you will have the opportunity to read and watch different resources and browse ready-made worksheets before designing one of your own.

This is the expected pace of the module:

Week 1: Lessons 1, 2 and 3.

Week 2: Lessons 4 and 5.

Week 3: Lesson 6. Application activity.

CONTENT OF THE MODULE

Source: https://bit.ly/3fBEccI

1. What is an open access online bilingual dictionary?

2. What kind of information do these dictionaries provide?

3. What criteria should be considered when choosing an open access online bilingual dictionary in your classes?

4. Why your students should avoid online translators in their EFL activities.

5. How you can teach your students dictionary skills through open access online bilingual dictionaries.

6. Hands-on activities.

7. References.

LEXICAL TOOLS

First, it is important to establish that an online bilingual dictionary is a lexical tool and that there are other digital resources included in that category.

Sarah Pasfield-Neofitou (2009) has proposed the following classification of the three main kinds of lexical tools and their characteristics.

This distinction is fundamental because each tool can be used in different kinds of learning activities, according to the teacher and learners' specific needs.

Types of lexical tools

• Bilingual dictionaries

They allow to search for words and offer lists of possible translations. Some more advanced ones offer examples of the different meanings of words in context, their pronunciation and definition.

• Glossaries

They allow you to locate a word or text fragment in word catalogs within a specific category, with definitions, explanations or comments.

• Online translators

They allow you to enter a word in one language and provide its translation in another language.

DEFINITION OF ONLINE BILINGUAL DICTIONARY

There are many similar terms such as web dictionaries, cyber dictionary, Internet based dictionaries, Internet dictionaries or dictionaries on the Internet. For this module, the term online dictionary will be used. An online dictionary is one that can be consulted on the Internet and uses one or more Internet services. An open access online bilingual dictionary is one that offers free access to its functions. They do not require registration or payments (Schmied, 2009).

USING AN ONLINE BILINGUAL DICTIONARY

Source: https://bit.ly/3sOG99b

This type of dictionary allows its users to make queries and resolve doubts related to lexical elements of a foreign language and, on occasions, learn about its linguistic properties through the translation of their semantic-pragmatic equivalences represented by the lemmas.

In activities related to EFL teaching, the learning of the language can be promoted by designing tasks that involve the need for coding and decoding in oral and written format and that take advantage of its corpus as study material. In this type of situation, online bilingual dictionaries become very useful and versatile tools thanks to their computer support, organization, ease of access and great capacity to store information.

How students can use online bilingual dictionaries

Source: https://bit.ly/3sMQUsl

Based on the specific characteristics of each online bilingual dictionary, your students can use them to:

1. Improve their written and oral language skills.

2. Broaden their vocabulary.

3. Double-check how to spell a word.

4. Find the meaning of a word they don't know.

5. Find a synonym or an antonym to avoid repetition.

6. Check the pronunciation of new words.

7. See the conjugation of the verbs.

Advantages of using online bilingual dictionaries

Source: https://bit.ly/3rGOQTq

These are some of the advantages online bilingual dictionaries offer:

1. Time saving. Searches are faster because you can type the entries.

2. Space saving. No need to carry heavy and voluminous printed dictionaries. You can use your cell phone.

3. Variety of features. Online bilingual dictionaries usually offer instant updates, online forums, slang, and, in some cases, integrations with specialized dictionaries.

4. Current information. Words and phrases are constantly added and updated.

5. Language learning. Some of them offer explanations about specific ways to use the words according to their grammar function.

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Fill in the blanks

Read the paragraph, taken form the article "EFL Students' Yahoo! Online Bilingual Dictionary Use Behavior" by Fan-Ping Tseng (2009), and fill in the blanks.

_____ are considered good companions to _____ learners, especially to

second or _____ language learners, because dictionaries can provide a

_____ and direct access to the meaning of an _____ word. In _____ contexts, the

supporting role of dictionaries has been emphasized by both teachers and _____, and

the training of dictionary _____ is considered important and necessary because EFL

learners may not be able to make good use of dictionaries without explicit _____. Now-

adays, with the easy and widespread access to the _____, more and more EFL students

begin to use _____ dictionaries when they _____ unknown words in their

English learning _____. It is mainly because online dictionaries, like

_____ ones, can provide students with the information about the l _____ words with ease

and _____. Given the fact that EFL students may frequently

_____ online dictionaries, examining their online dictionary look-up _____ may reveal

how they _____ with the online dictionary and even how they _____ the

unknown words.

Source: https://teachingonlinedictionaryskills.000webhostapp.com/fiill_in_the_blanks_activity.html
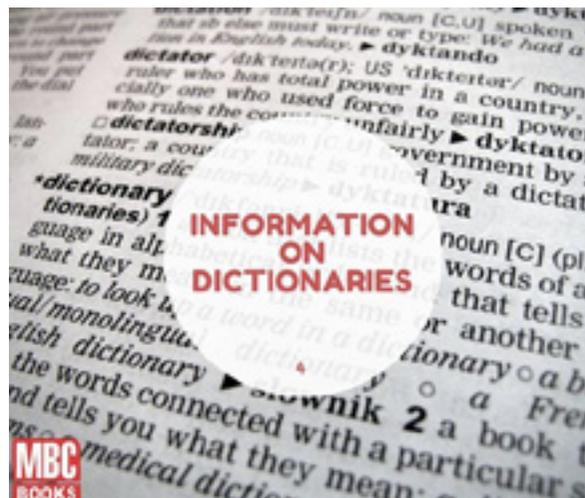
INFORMATION PROVIDED BY ONLINE BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES

Source: https://bit.ly/2PmaQEr

According to <u>The Bell Foundation (n. d.)</u>, online bilingual dictionaries are specialist dictionaries that can you can use to translate words or phrases from one language to another. The best <u>online bilingual dictionaries</u> provide examples of the word in context rather than just synonyms. Bilingual dictionaries can also be useful tools for teachers when used for short simple sentences, which are as unambiguous as possible. Software such as Google translate does not cope well with, for example, technical subject-specific language or literary texts.

Specific information provided

Source: https://bit.ly/3witBci

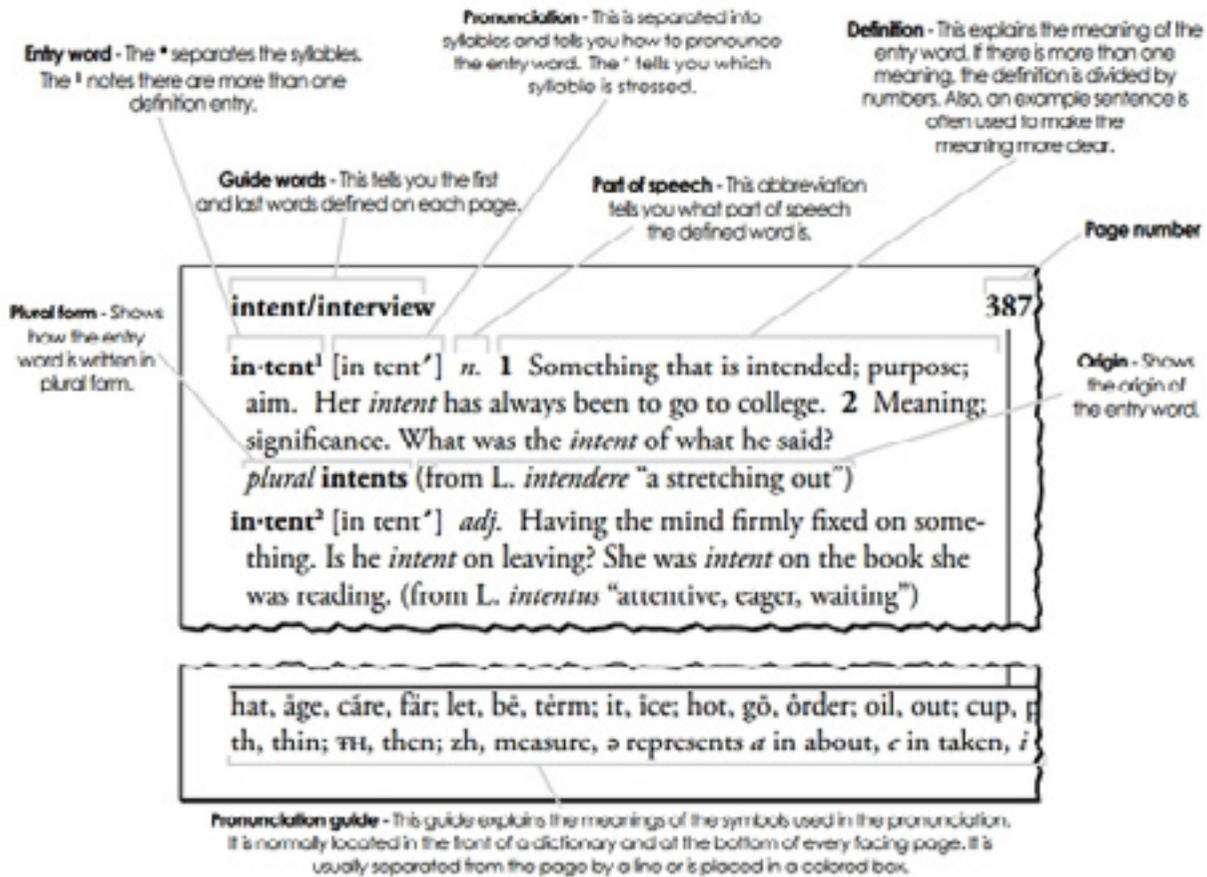### *Most online bilingual dictionaries offer the following information (Lew, 2015):*

1. Equivalent word(s) or meanings in the second language
2. Neologisms
3. Specialized information technology (IT) vocabulary
4. Multi-word expressions with frequent verbs
5. Kind of usage level (e.g. formal, informal, technical, literary, slang)
6. Regional variety (British/American)
7. Part of speech (noun, adjective, adverb, verb, preposition)
8. Sentences with examples of specific use
9. Synonyms and antonyms
10. Pronunciation transcription and/or audio
11. Collocations / Compound forms
12. Irregular forms of verbs and/or conjugator tool
13. Noun countability
14. Related words and phrases
15. Comparative and superlative forms of irregular adjectives
16. Usual spelling and spelling variations

PARTS OF A DICTIONARY

Entry word - The • separates the syllables. The ‖ notes there are more than one definition entry.

Guide words - This tells you the first and last words defined on each page.

Pronunciation - This is separated into syllables and tells you how to pronounce the entry word. The ′ tells you which syllable is stressed.

Part of speech - This abbreviation tells you what part of speech the defined word is.

Definition - This explains the meaning of the entry word. If there is more than one meaning, the definition is divided by numbers. Also, an example sentence is often used to make the meaning more clear.

Page number

Plural form - Shows how the entry word is written in plural form.

Origin - Shows the origin of the entry word.

intent/interview   387

in·tent¹ [in tent′]   *n.*   **1** Something that is intended; purpose; aim. Her *intent* has always been to go to college. **2** Meaning; significance. What was the *intent* of what he said?
plural **intents** (from L. *intendere* "a stretching out")

in·tent² [in tent′]   *adj.* Having the mind firmly fixed on something. Is he *intent* on leaving? She was *intent* on the book she was reading. (from L. *intentus* "attentive, eager, waiting")

hat, āge, cãre, fär; let, bē, tėrm; it, īce; hot, gō, ôrder; oil, out; cup, ╷ th, thin; ᴛʜ, then; zh, measure, ə represents *a* in about, *e* in taken, *i* ╷

Pronunciation guide - This guide explains the meanings of the symbols used in the pronunciation. It is normally located in the front of a dictionary and at the bottom of every facing page. It is usually separated from the page by a line or is placed in a colored box.

Source: https://www.superteacherworksheets.com/featured-items/pz-parts-of-a-dictionary.html

It is important to help your students understand the layout of a bilingual dictionary and how each piece of information is presented.

Dictionary selection criteria

The following chart summarizes the criteria compiled by Egido and Meliss (2017) from a variety of studies on online bilingual dictionaries. Every time you implement a language learning activity in your class that requires using an online bilingual dictionary, it's important to use these criteria to suggest your students the one that best fits their needs.

Selection criteria

- Information reliability
- Type of user and their needs
- Presentation of the information
- Type of access to information
- Information structure
- Multimedia resources offered
- Possibilities of interaction and collaborative participation
- Internal and external links

Source: Own elaboration.

To keep in mind when assigning oral production activities

Please keep in mind that not all the online bilingual dictionaries offer the pronunciation tool. Make sure you help your students choose one and explain to them that besides looking up their meaning and checking the spelling, they can also click on the sound icon and listen to the pronunciation.

These are online dictionaries you can use in those situations:

www.wordreference.com

https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/

https://www.collinsdictionary.com/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol

WHY YOUR STUDENTS SHOULD AVOID ONLINE TRANSLATORS

According to Mosalingua (n. d.):

> An online translator, as the name indicates, can translate a word, phrase, paragraph, or document. The result is a translation that can be literal (word-for-word, for the most basic ones), or much more sophisticated. However, some online translators like Google and DeepL (which we will talk about below) offer a variety of different meanings, so you can select the most appropriate translation.

Likewise, Mosalingua (n. d.) provides the following definition regarding dictionaries:

> A dictionary, on the other hand, doesn't let you translate an entire text, or even a sentence. You have access to the meaning of each word based on its context, common expressions, synonyms, and pronunciation, but you have to do the actual sentence building on your own. Some dictionaries also have information on conjugation, especially for irregular verbs, be it a paper or an online dictionary.

Please, always keep in mind that despite the many technological innovations there are nowadays, the **best translations** are still performed by professional human translators who have the necessary linguistic knowledge and expertise to detect and correct different kinds of grammar and spelling mistakes.

HOW YOU CAN TEACH YOUR STUDENTS DICTIONARY SKILLS THROUGH OPEN ACCESS ONLINE BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES

Information provided

This is where you must **begin the introduction to teaching dictionary skills**. Why? Because if you want your students to master each skill, you must help them to **analyze and understand the vocabulary involved**.

Yes, your students need to know not only the meaning of each vocabulary word, but also **the exact dictionary page where they can find that word**.

Tip: You can use this short video to start explaining how to use any online dictionary:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gifMqB47-6A

(Using an online dictionary)

Source: https://bit.ly/3wpe7TS

What is a definition?

Most probably, your students do not know well the kind of information they can find in an online bilingual dictionary. It is a good idea to explain this to them since the very beginning. Something they usually look up when using one of these tools is the definition of the word.

According to Unified Compliance Framework (n. d.), a definition is "a statement of the meaning of a word or word group or a sign or symbol". In other words, a definition explains through clarification and further explanation what we are trying to say with one or a few short words. A definition has two parts:

Category of concept + Differentiating characteristics

What is known as the category of the concept is presented first. After that, the differentiating characteristics are also presented. If your students use WordReference, tell them to click on the "definition" tab:

Source: WordReference.com

What is an entry word?

According to Collins English Dictionary (n. d.), an entry is the form of a word in a dictionary under which its meanings, spelling, grammar functions and usage are grouped. Lexico (n. d.) defines an entry word as a word, phrase, or name that is the subject of and heading for an entry in a dictionary, glossary, or encyclopedia, and which is usually set in boldface or another distinctive type — a headword or lemma. In other words, it is the specific word or phrase they are looking up.

Students who use online bilingual dictionaries do not need to master the alphabetical order, since they only need to type the word or phrase. Most dictionaries have a specific tab to type them.

Source: WordReference.com

TRANSLATION OR MEANING

This is the information your students usually require when they need to learn how to say or write something in the other language or when they are reading a text in another language and do not understand a word.

Lexico (n. d.) defines translation as the process of translating words or text from one language into another. For Collins English Dictionary (n. d.), it is a piece of writing or speech that has been translated from a different language.

In WordReference, the translations are classified into "principal translations" and additional translations".

Please explain to your students that the ones labeled as principal are the most common or frequent.

WordReference English-Spanish Dictionary © 2021:

Principal Translations

Inglés		Español
bank *n*	(financial institution)	banco *nm*
	Note: Banco se utiliza en general, sucursal bancaria va referido a una oficina de un banco en concreto, ej. Sucursal del Banco Hispano Americano.	
	I need to go to the bank to withdraw money today.	
	Necesito ir al banco hoy a sacar dinero.	
💬 **bank** *n*	(land at river's edge)	(río) orilla *nf*
	We took our lunch and sat down on the bank of the river.	
	Nos llevamos la comida y nos sentamos en la orilla del río.	
bank *n*	(hillside: slope)	(montaña) ladera *nf*
	The water flowed down the bank and into the stream.	
	El agua se deslizaba ladera abajo hacia el riachuelo.	
bank *n*	(ridge of snow)	banco *nm*
	The car skidded off the road and stopped in a snow bank.	
	El coche patinó en la carretera y paró al chocar con un banco de nieve.	
bank, cloud bank *n*	(mass of cloud)	banco *nm*
	Do you see that bank of clouds over there?	
	¿Ves el banco de nubes, allá a lo lejos?	
bank *n*	(panel)	panel *nm* (MX) tablero *nm*
	The bank of switches for controlling the lighting is over there.	

Source: WordReference.com

However, it is sometimes necessary to scroll down to find the additional ones to make sure they have found the correct equivalent.

Source: WordReference.com

HOW MANY PARTS OF THE SPEECH ARE THERE?

According to Butte College (2019):

There are eight parts of speech in the English language: noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, and interjection. The part of speech indicates how the word functions in meaning as well as grammatically within the sentence. An individual word can function as more than one part of speech when used in different circumstances. Understanding parts of speech is essential for determining the correct definition of a word when using the dictionary.

The following descriptions were adapted from this resource:

http://www.butte.edu/departments/cas/tipsheets/grammar/parts_of_speech.html#:~:text=There%20are%20eight%20parts%20of,as%20grammatically%20within%20the%20sentence.

1. NOUN

- A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

man... *Butte College... house... happiness*

Butte College (2019) provides the following definition of what a noun is:

A noun is a word for a person, place, thing, or idea. Nouns are often used with an article (*the*, *a*, *an*), but not always. Proper nouns always start with a capital letter; common nouns do not. Nouns can be singular or plural, concrete or abstract. Nouns show possession by adding's. Nouns can function in different roles within a sentence; for example, a noun can be a subject, direct object, indirect object, subject complement, or object of a preposition.

The y*oung **girl** brought me a very long **letter** from the **teacher**, and then she quickly disappeared.*

2. PRONOUN

• A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun.

She... *we... they... it*

For Butte College (2019):

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun. A pronoun is usually substituted for a specific noun, which is called its antecedent. In the sentence above, the antecedent for the pronoun *she* is the girl. Pronouns are further defined by type: personal pronouns refer to specific persons or things; possessive pronouns indicate ownership; reflexive pronouns are used to emphasize another noun or pronoun; relative pronouns introduce a subordinate clause; and demonstrative pronouns identify, point to, or refer to nouns.

The y*oung girl brought **me** a very long letter from the teacher, and then **she** quickly disappeared.*

3. VERB

• A verb expresses action or being.

jump... *is... write... become*

Butte College (2019) explains that:

The verb in a sentence expresses action or being. There is a main verb and sometimes one or more helping verbs. ("*She can sing." Sing* is the main verb; *can* is the helping verb.) A verb must agree with its subject in number (both are singular, or both are plural). Verbs also take different forms to express tense.

The *young girl **brought** me a very long letter from the teacher, and then she quickly **disappeared**.*

4. ADJECTIVE

• An adjective modifies or describes a noun or pronoun.

pretty... *old... blue... smart*

Butte College (2019) describes an adjective as a "word that is used to modify or describe either a noun or a pronoun. An adjective often answers one of these questions: Which one? What kind? Or how many? (The indefinite and definite articles [a, an, the] are usually classified as adjectives.)"

The ***young*** *girl brought me **a** very **long** letter from the teacher, and then she quickly disappeared.*

5. ADVERB

• An adverb modifies or describes a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

gently... *extremely... carefully... well*

Butte College (2019) states that an adverb is a "word used to describe or modify a verb, an adjective, or, even, another adverb. It never modifies a noun. An adverb usually answers one of the following questions: When? Where? How? Why? Under what conditions? Or to what degree? Most adverbs often end in the suffix-ly."

The *young girl brought me a **very** long letter from the teacher, and **then** she **quickly** disappeared.*

6. PREPOSITION

- A preposition is a word placed before a noun or pronoun to form a phrase that modifies another word in the sentence.

by… *with… about… until*

(by the tree, with our friends, about the book, until tomorrow)

According to Butte College (2019):

> A preposition is a word placed before a noun or pronoun to form a phrase modifying another word in the sentence. Therefore, a preposition is always part of a prepositional phrase. The prepositional phrase almost always functions as an adjective or as an adverb.

The *young girl brought me a very long letter* **from the teacher***, and then she quickly disappeared.*

7. CONJUNCTION

- A conjunction joins words, phrases, or clauses.

and… *but… or… while… because*

Butte College (2019) defines a conjunction as "a word that joins other words, phrases, or clauses". Conjunctions are used to indicate the relationship between the elements connected. In the case of coordinating conjunctions, they are used to connect grammatically equal elements. Some examples of those conjunctions are: and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet. On the other hand, subordinating conjunctions are words that connect clauses that are not equal. Some examples of those conjunctions are: because, although, while, and since.

The *young girl brought me a very long letter from the teacher,* **and** *then she quickly disappeared.*

8. INTERJECTION

- An interjection is a word used to express emotion.

Oh!… *Wow!… Oops!*

According to Butte College (2019), "an interjection is a word used to express emotion. It is often followed by an exclamation point".

The *young girl brought me a very long letter from the teacher, and then she quickly disappeared.* **Oh my***!*

SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Quizizz on the eight parts of the speech

Please, click on the following link, enter the code number and your name. Test your knowledge on the eight parts of the speech.

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Code: 66215570

PRONUNCIATION

Some online bilingual dictionaries provide either phonetic symbols or audio recordings to help the users learn how to pronounce an unknown word. Dictionary.com (n. d.) defines pronunciation as the act or the result of producing speech sounds. These sounds may include articulation, stress, and intonation. These sounds are often associated to some standard of correctness or acceptability. This dictionary also describes pronunciation as an accepted standard of the sound and stress patterns of a syllable, word, or phrase that deals with the conventional patterns of treatment of the sounds of a language.

POLYSEMIC OR MULTI-MEANING WORDS

What are **multiple meaning**s? Chapman (2020) explains that when an individual looks

a vocabulary word up in a dictionary, it is common to find multiple **different definitions**. In some cases, the definitions are similar. However, there are times when they differ considerably. The same lexical item can be used as a verb, a noun, an adjective, and an adverb. In such situations, the students need to use their **context clues skills** to determine which definition fits best for the word they are looking up. Learning the definitions about each one of the parts of the speech can greatly help your students in this kind of situation.

If you want to teach multiple meanings, you should **give your students a sentence with a specific underlined word.** Then, ask them to look the underlined word up in the dictionary, and **write the correct definition**.

Take into consideration that for your students it may be **challenging to know which entry is correct**, especially for definitions that are very similar. Thus, it is advisable to encourage them to **look at the part of speech** to find out which definition makes the most sense for the word in the sentence.

READY-MADE VIDEO TUTORIALS YOU CAN USE WITH YOUR STUDENTS

Internet provides a variety of videos.

You can use them to explain the use of specific online bilingual dictionaries such as WordReference, a teachers' favorite. You can use these short videos to explain the step-by-step process to use its different functions and choose the correct translations of the words they look up.

This is a very short video tutorial on how to use WordReference:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkgMyyXMD0s
(Tutorial: How to use WordReference.com)

Other video tutorials available on YouTube are:

How to use an online dictionary:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gifMqB47-6A&feature=youtu.be

How to use an online bilingual dictionary:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3GS2qX2HAY

The use of the bilingual dictionary:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-hZfh0GGEY

How to use an online dictionary:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQ7zmXxA0iM

How to use WordReference:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkgMyyXMD0s

How to use WordReference:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkyNJKuavRk

READY-MADE TUTORIALS

You can also use some of these step-by-step tutorials, full of useful tips, to explain to your students the process they must follow to look up a word in an online bilingual dictionary and to choose the correct meaning.

How to use WordReference to enhance your language learning:

https://medium.com/the-happy-linguist/how-to-use-wordreference-to-enhance-your-language-learning-37cdce782d08

How to use WordReference:

https://www.coursehero.com/file/82675941/How-to-use-Wordreferencedocx/

How to use the Spanish-English dictionary at YourDictionary:

https://spanish.yourdictionary.com/spanish-language/learning-spanish/how-to-use-the-spanish-english-dictionary-at-yourdictionary.html

Using a bilingual dictionary: Hints and tips:

https://freedomtoteach.collins.co.uk/using-bilingual-dictionary-hints-tips/

WORKSHEETS YOU CAN USE AND REUSE

Here you will find a variety of ready-made worksheets you can use right away with your students. You will also find a template to create one of your own according to your specific needs and those of your students. It is important to keep in mind that some of them were designed with printed bilingual dictionaries in mind. Therefore, all the activities referring to guide words should be omitted. Despite that, the resources provided in these websites can be useful.

Dictionary parts:

https://www.superteacherworksheets.com/dictionary-skills/dictionary-parts_PARTS.pdf

Synonyms:

https://www.superteacherworksheets.com/synonyms-antonyms/synonyms3_WDWTD.pdf

Dictionary abbreviations:

https://www.k12reader.com/worksheet/dictionary-abbreviations-do-you-know/view/

Find the definition:

https://www.k12reader.com/worksheet/find-the-definition/view/

Test dictionary skills:

https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/material-type/tests-and-testing/test-dictionary-skills/3044

Dictionary skills lesson plan with worksheets:

https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/material-type/fun-activities-and-games/dictionary-skills/16354

Deciphering specific Vocabulary:

https://www.mathworksheets4kids.com/language-arts/dictionary-skills/dictionary-quiz.pdf

WORKSHEETS TO PRACTICE USING WORDREFERENCE

Teaching tips

1. Use the first to help your students understand what each abbreviation means. This can greatly help them choose the correct translation of the words they look up. You can also use it to help them understand that they must always look for the infinitive form of the verbs, not the conjugated ones. Also, use it to lead them to explore the compound forms section of WordReference.

2. Use the second page to discourage the use of online translators and to direct them to the language forums they can find in WordReference.

3. Once your students have learned about the kind of information they can find in an online bilingual dictionary such as WordReference, let them use the third worksheet to practice.

Online bilingual dictionaries crossword puzzle

Let your students practice what they have learned so far about online bilingual dictionaries while having fun with the following crossword puzzle:

https://es.educaplay.com/recursos-educativos/8841558-online_bilingual_dictionaries.html

Source: Educaplay.

Template to create dictionary skills worksheets

Feel free to use this template to create your own dictionary skills worksheets.

https://teachingonlinedictionaryskills.000web-hostapp.com/worksheet_template.html

Power Point to teach how to use WordReference

You can use this PowerPoint presentation, or modify it, if necessary, to help your students explore the structure and kind of information provided by WordReference. This was adapted from this resource.

https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/how-to-use-word-reference-french-11708511
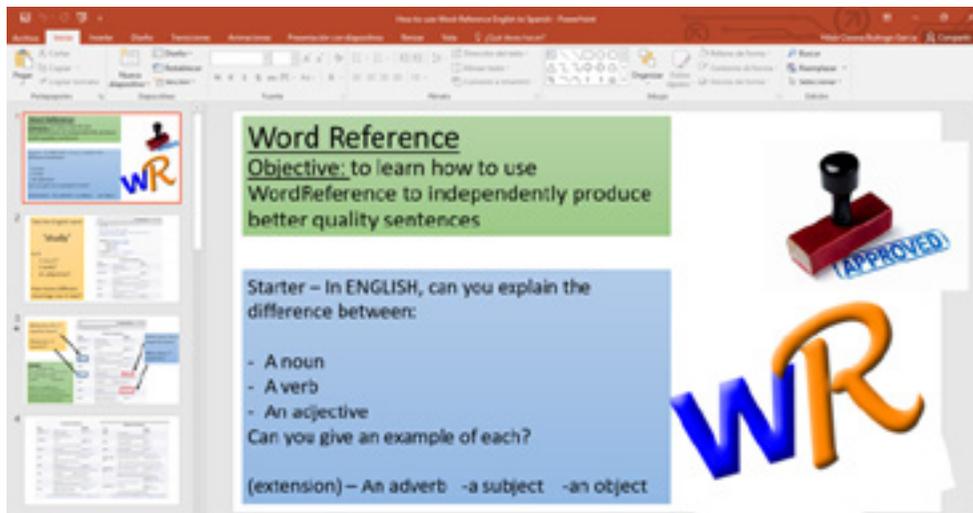
Source: https://teachingonlinedictionaryskills.000webhostapp.com/powerpoint_to_teach_how_to_use_wordreference.html

Hands-on application activity

TIME TO APPLY WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

After watching the variety of tutorials and worksheets available for you to teach and practice dictionary skills with your students, is time to integrate those skills into your regular lessons.

In pairs, choose one of the learning activities or communicative tasks from one of the levels you teach and create a worksheet with at least three different exercises that will allow your students to use an online bilingual dictionary more efficiently, while reinforcing the grammar and vocabulary content they need to comply with the assignment.

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Notas
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