

What should be new in bilingual dictionaries?

Janet DeCesaris

Institut Universitari de Lingüística Aplicada
Pompeu Fabra University

Work supported by grant FFI2012-38847



Tradition in bilingual lexicography

- 4 dictionaries in 1
- Lists of equivalents with little-to-no information provided on how to differentiate among the equivalents: are they supposed synonyms?
- Much repetition of the same equivalent
- Goal of providing an adequate translation equivalent that will work in any given text
 - (Mary Haas, 1962 article on bilingual lexicography)

Some factors that could be more prominent

- Not all language combinations are alike
 - “Big” languages vs. “small” languages
 - Example: differences between dictionaries for
 - Spanish / English
 - Catalan /English
- Some languages have more than one sociogeographic center
 - Not necessarily well reflected in dictionaries available
- Translating is not the same as foreign language learning

Partial entry for **field**_{noun} in the Simon & Schuster Spanish-English/English-Spanish Dictionary

1. **campo**, campiña, sembrado, campo cultivado.
2. campaña; **campo** (de hielo, nieve, etc.) extensión (del mar, del cielo).
3. (min., geol.) yacimiento(s) (de petróleo, carbón, etc.).
4. (fig.) **campo**, esfera (de alguna actividad), campo, ramo (de ciencia, erudición etc.).
5. (fig.) curso, ej., *the whole f. of history*, todo el curso de la historia.
6. franja (de bandera).
7. (fís.) **campo** (magnético o eléctrico)

Partial entry for *field*_{noun} in the Collins Spanish Dict.

1. a. **(agriculture)** **campo** *masculine*
 (= meadow) **prado** *masculine*
 b. **(geology)** **yacimiento** *masculine*
2. **(sport)** **campo** *masculine*, **terreno** *masculine* de juego, **cancha** *feminine* (Latin American)
 (= participants) **participantes** *masculine plural*
 (for post) **opositores** *masculine plural*, **candidatos** *masculine plural*
3. (= sphere of activity) **campo** *masculine*, **esfera** *feminine*
4. (= real environment) ⇒ a year's trial in the field **un año de prueba en el mercado**
 ⇒ to study sth in the field **estudiar algo sobre el terreno**
5. **(computing)** **campo** *masculine*
6. **(military)** **campo** *masculine* ⇒ field of battle **campo** *masculine* de batalla ⇒ to die in the field **morir en combate**
7. **(electricity and electronics, etc.)** **campo** *masculine* ⇒ field of vision **campo** *masculine* visual

Partial entry for *field*_{noun} in the Oxford Spanish Dictionary

- A.** *(Agriculture) (for crops) campo* (m); *(for grazing) campo* (m), **prado** (m), **potrero** (m) *(Latin America)*
- B.** *(Sport)*
- 1.** *(area of play) campo* (m), **cancha** (f) *(Latin America)*
 - 2.** *(competitors) (+ sing o pl vb)* See examples
- C.** *(Military)* also See examples
- D.** *(of study, work) campo* (m); *(of activities) esfera* (f)
- E.** *(of practical operations) campo* (m)

Partial entry for **field**_{noun} in the Oxford Spanish Dictionary

D.

(of study, work) campo (m); *(of activities)* esfera (f)

she's an expert in her field = es una experta en su campo

my field is 20th century poetry = mi especialidad es la poesía del siglo XX

what field is he in? = ¿cuál es su campo or especialidad?

to be first in the field (*Business*) = *ser** el líder del mercado

What should be new in organization and order of senses?

- Bilingual dictionaries need to be more systematic in sense discrimination
- If senses are differentiated on the basis of the source language, then the dictionary should provide further meaning indicators in the entry (like in the case of both the Collins and the Oxford dictionaries)
- Be more systematic in the type of labelling

Phraseology

- Why is it important in a bilingual dictionary?
- Where can phraseological information be included?
- How should we determine what phraseological information to include?

Information about **forge** / *forjar*

Collins Spanish Dictionary:

transitive verb

1. (*literal, figurative*) *fraguar, forjar*
2. (= *falsify*)

[+ *document, painting etc*] *falsificar*

⇒ **she forged his signature** falsificó su firma ⇒ **forged money** moneda *feminine falsa*

intransitive verb

⇒ **to forge ahead** avanzar a grandes pasos ⇒ **to forge ahead of sb** adelantarse a algn

Information about *forge* / *forjar*

Collins Spanish Dictionary:

1. [+ **hierro**] to forge, shape
2. (= crear)
 1. (gen) to forge, shape
 1. [+ **sueños, ilusiones**] to build up
 - forjar **un plan** to hammer out a plan
 - tratamos de forjar un estado moderno **we are trying to build a modern state**

Information about **forge** / **forjar**

Oxford Spanish Dictionary

A.

1. (*Metallurgy*) **forjar**
2. (*create*) [*bond/alliance*] **forjar**; [*plan*] **fraguar***

B.

(*counterfeit*) [*banknote/signature/painting*] **falsificar***

[the entry continues on with several examples with intransitive uses]

Information about *forge* / *forjar*

Oxford Spanish Dictionary

1. [**utensilio/pieza**] **to forge**
2. [**porvenir**] **to shape, forge**; [**plan**] **to make**; [**ilusiones/esperanzas**] **to build up**
3. [**nación/bases**] **to create**; [**amistad/alianza**]

Corpus information about what you can “forjar” in Spanish (Sketch Engine, using Spanish web corpus)

1. alianza (*alliance*)
2. personalidad (*personality*)
3. identidad (*identity*)
4. lazo (*tie*)
5. leyenda (*legend*)
6. partido (*political party*)
7. amistad (*friendship*)
8. vínculo (*tie*)

Absent: *sueños, esperanzas, ilusiones*

What should be new in terms of the presentation of phraseology

- Make it more important
- Rely on corpus data
- In some cases, for electronic dictionaries, identify geographical range of expression

What should be done about idioms?

- Inclusion of canonical form of the idiom is often warranted because of its cultural salience, but is often not warranted because of low frequency of occurrence