

Using Dictionaries

Task 1: Answer the following questions.

- a- What strategies do you use when you encounter new words in English?

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- b- How often do you use dictionaries? What type of dictionaries do you use?

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A **dictionary** is an alphabetical list of words containing information about these words (definition, meaning, pronunciation, etymology, grammar ...)

Types of dictionaries

1- Types of dictionaries according to the number of languages.

- a- **Monolingual:** It uses only one language. A monolingual dictionary put the emphasis on providing deep explanations based on vocabulary function in context i.e. it gives definitions which are commonly used in conversation
- b- **Bilingual** this kind of dictionary has two different languages and it follows the alphabetical order of word presentation. It focuses on providing the words and their equivalents in another language. A bilingual dictionary can be monodirectional, where it only translates from one source language into the target language, or bidirectional, which translates from 'language A' into 'language B' and from 'language B' into 'language A.' It can have some disadvantages to learners. They are likely to rely on translation rather than relying on the definitions of words and understanding them in the target language. Sometimes, a bilingual dictionary may mislead learners when it provides one to one correspondence or match between L1 and L2.
- c- **Bilingualized** / semi-bilingual dictionaries, start as a monolingual dictionary, and then have translations added. They have the definition of the headword in the same language as the headword, and a translation in the target language. Some bilingualized dictionaries translate the headword, some translate the definition, and some do both in different entries.

2- Types of dictionaries according to their format.

- a- **Printed (paper) dictionary:** They vary in size from tiny pocket-sized versions which are not heavy to carry to big and heavy ones.

b- **Handheld electronic dictionary**

Electronic dictionary are small devices that works by pressing on a little keyboard, voice recognition or a scanning device that reads printed text and shows the meaning and the translation on a small screen or speaks the translation by voice telling the accurate pronunciation.

c- **Dictionary programs**

These refer to computer software that allocates words or phrases to be entered and translated on a computer monitor.

d- **Online**

Online or web-based dictionary are similar to dictionary programs, fast and easy to be used, when there is net. Theses are often uncomplicated to search.

e- **Visual**

A visual dictionary is a printed dictionary that depends mainly on illustrations (images) to show the users how to identify the correct meaning.

Types of data in dictionaries

- Pronunciation rules: this means how a word sounds correctly in speaking.
- Division of words into syllables: how many syllables there are in a word including the stress.
- The correct spelling: language users can check the correct written by from using dictionary.
- The grammatical class of a word: learners can determine the function of a word in particular sentence .i.e. is it a noun, a verb, an adverb...etc.
- Synonyms and antonyms: dictionaries may present the words that have close or the same or the opposite meaning.
- The etymology of a word: this includes the origin of that word including its changes throughout the history. The etymology may also contain the derived words.
- The meaning of idiomatic expressions: dictionaries present the implied meaning of phrases and expressions that is not clear for beginners.
- The different registers of a word: such as formal, informal, slang...etc.
- The multiple forms of a word: this includes mentioning the past tense of a word, the past participle, the plural...etc.
- Helpful information about people and places: usually at the back of a dictionary, we find helpful instructions about, for example, the nationalities of different countries and flags.
- Pictures, maps and tables: a dictionary can carry many helpful images that are used as an aid to help learners with understanding new words.
- Abbreviations: learners can find the common abbreviations of a certain language. For example in an English pocket dictionary we can find the explanation of SOS.
- Rules for spelling, punctuation and capitalization.

Task 2: Answer the following questions.

What other types of dictionaries do you know?

What type of data do you think is the most useful for you?


If you want to get a good dictionary, how are you going to select one?

Definition of *language* in English:

headword **language** 

★ Top 1000 frequently used words



pronunciation Pronunciation: /ˈlæŋɡwɪdʒ/ 

part of speech **NOUN**

1 [MASS NOUN]

definition The principal method of human communication, consisting of words used in a structured and conventional way and conveyed by speech, writing, or gesture:

examples 'a study of the way children learn language'

[AS MODIFIER]: 'language development'

[+ More example sentences](#)

1.1 A non-verbal method of expression or communication:

'body language'

[+ More example sentences](#)

[- Synonyms](#)

synonyms **speech**, writing, communication, verbal expression, verbalization, vocalization, conversation, speaking, talking, words, utterance, vocabulary, articulation, enunciation, pronunciation, talk, discourse, interchange, intercourse, interaction

archaic converse

[View synonyms](#)

sense 2 A system of communication used by a particular country or community:

'the book was translated into twenty-five languages'

[+ More example sentences](#)

[+ Synonyms](#)

label (domain) 2.1 **Computing**

A system of symbols and rules for writing programs or algorithms:

'the systems were developed using languages such as Fortran and Basic'

[+ More example sentences](#)

phrases **Phrases**

speak the same language

Understand one another as a result of shared opinions or values:

'when it comes to business, we both speak the same language'

[+ More example sentences](#)

etymology **Origin**

Middle English: from Old French *langage*, based on Latin *lingua* 'tongue'.

[+ More](#)

HOME > ENGLISH-SPANISH > LANGUAGE

language



American English: /ˈlæŋɡwɪdʒ/

British English: /ˈlɑːŋɡwɪdʒ/

Translation of *language* in Spanish:

noun

¹ COUNTABLE AND UNCOUNTABLE

indicator (speech, means of communication)

translation lenguaje (masculine) SP. LAT. AM. SP.

example *the language of gesture*

with translation el lenguaje gestual *or* de los gestos SP. LAT. AM. SP.

(before noun) language acquisition

adquisición (feminine) del lenguaje SP. LAT. AM. SP.

idioms **Idioms**

watch your language!, mind your language!

¡no digas palabrotas! SP. LAT. AM. SP.
