

# Proposals for Upgrading the Lexicographical Treatment of Prepositions in Bilingual Dictionaries for Business Translation\*

SANDRO NIELSEN

*Centre for Lexicography ASB, University of Aarhus*

PEDRO A. FUERTES-OLIVERA

*University of Valladolid*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the advent of learner's dictionaries, lexicographers started to pay much more attention to the inclusion of grammatical data in dictionaries (Cowie 1999). However, they tended to overestimate the user's general linguistic knowledge and used very abstract metalanguages, usually in the form of codes, to represent grammatical data, which assumed that users have a level of general linguistic knowledge that the average user cannot be expected to have. For instance, Spanish translators only receive a glimpse of grammatical training during their school and college years.

Since the 1970s, feedback from actual use of dictionaries in the classroom has led to a gradual decline in both the use of code patterns and the influence of linguistic theories on the codification of grammar in dictionaries. Although this process has not been smooth (see Bogaards & van der Kloot 2001, for a review), recent research suggests that the evolution observed in, say, English learner's dictionaries towards the construction of dictionaries more adequate for their users and user needs has advanced considerably and seems unstoppable. To that development has contributed the wealth of research carried out in the last 20 years (Jackson 1985; Tono 1986; Cowie 1989; Herbst 1989, 1999; Rundell 1998; Dziemianko 2006; Tarp 2008). These scholars have discussed at length which grammatical data should be included and how this should be done in lexicographical terms. A recent empirical research by Dziemianko (2006) confirms previous research by Tono (1985), Cowie (1989), and Rundell (1998) and claims that code patterns are of little help for learners; she also shows experimentally that the Polish students taking part in her analysis tended to rely more on the examples provided than on the codes.

The situation is less promising in specialised lexicography, where only scant research on the inclusion of grammar in dictionaries can be spotted (Mugdan 1989; Bergenholtz and Pedersen 1994; Bargalló 2001)<sup>1</sup>. Regarding printed business bilingual dictionaries, we have not found any single work of research on the issue of grammar, although translators and researchers acknowledge that there is a pronounced need for more information in reference works (Corpas Pastor 2003; Faber and Jiménez Hurtado 2004; Fuertes Olivera 2007). In order to fill

\* The work reported in this paper was supported by grants FFI2008-01703 and VA039A09. The authors would like to thank Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación and Junta de Castilla y León for financial support.

See <http://www.accountingdictionary.dk/> for a user-friendly treatment of grammar in a specialised dictionary.

this gap, this paper approaches the question of grammar in printed business dictionaries for translation from the theoretical framework proposed in the functional theory of lexicography (Bergenholtz and Tarp, 2002, 2003, 2004; Fuertes Olivera and Tarp 2008; see Tarp 2008 for a review), which forces lexicographers to establish the lexicographic basis of the dictionary (section 2), determine its functions (section 3), and identify users needs (section 4). For the sake of simplicity, we have restricted our interest to the grammatical data found in the *Oxford Business Spanish Dictionary (OBSD)* a bilingual English-Spanish/Spanish-English dictionary published in 2002 (section 5), by commenting on some specific differences between Spanish and English prepositions that should be explained in any bilingual business dictionary for translation (section 6), and have therefore led us to present some specific proposals for upgrading their lexicographical treatment in this dictionary type (section 7). The paper finishes by summarizing its main contents and drawing some conclusions.

## 2. ESTABLISHING THE LEXICOGRAPHIC BASIS

The lexicographic basis is the foundation on which the entire dictionary project depends. Any dictionary project needs a solid foundation on which the dictionary can be developed into a fully-fledged tool which the intended users can use for the purpose of fulfilling certain needs in more or less well-defined situations of use. The foundation stone of a bilingual business dictionary is the theoretical and practical approach lexicographers take, and they may start by asking themselves the following question: What actually is a bilingual dictionary? Several answers can be found in the lexicographic literature, and the definition in example (1) is representative:

### **bilingual dictionary**

A type of **DICTIONARY** which relates the vocabularies of two languages together by means of translation **EQUIVALENTS**, in contrast to the **MONOLINGUAL DICTIONARY**, in which explanations are provided in one language.

*Example 1: Excerpt from Dictionary of Lexicography*

This is a traditional definition indirectly describing a bilingual business dictionary as one containing business-related L1 words and their L2 equivalents. However, a definition like this has a number of drawbacks. Firstly, it leads to a foundation that is based on linguistic categories and biased towards terms and inter-lingual semantics rather than user's needs. Furthermore, it gives lexicographers no guidelines on modes of operation. Finally, it takes no account of dictionary users and the types of use-situations in which they may consult dictionaries.

Nielsen (2003: 111-112) suggests an alternative approach to describing dictionaries, which can be extended to bilingual business dictionaries. Taking into account the proposition that it aims to help enterprises make their business information readily available in, say, English and/or Spanish, the dictionary may generally be described as a tool with three features:

1. The bilingual business dictionary has been designed to fulfil one or more functions.
2. The bilingual business dictionary contains data that have been selected because they help to fulfil its function(s).
3. The bilingual business dictionary contains lexicographic structures that marshal its data into the task of fulfilling its function(s).

A description like this is fundamentally different from that quoted in example (1). For one thing, it is not biased towards linguistics, linguistic categories and terms; it focuses on the functions that the dictionary may have when consulted by users. Moreover, it emphasizes that the data should be linked and presented in ways that directly support the functions of the dictionary. Thirdly, it takes users into account —albeit indirectly— in that the functions of the dictionary can only be determined by analysing the types of situations in which users consult dictionaries. Lastly, the definition provides guidance that enables lexicographers to make a utility product with a solid basis and use-specific data that have been selected to fulfil specific types of user needs.

### 3. DETERMINING THE FUNCTIONS OF BILINGUAL BUSINESS DICTIONARIES

Lexicographers should focus on the function(s) of their bilingual business dictionaries when designing new ones. The function of a dictionary is to help a particular user group with specific characteristics in order to meet the complex needs that arise in a particular type of use-situation. In order to do so it is necessary to study the extra-lexicographic environment concerned, e.g. what happens when users translate business texts into English, and relate these extra-lexicographic findings to the lexicographic environment represented by the dictionary itself and its theoretical basis. However, it should be noted that bilingual business dictionaries can have more than one function.

Most people think of bilingual business dictionaries as tools that help users solve problems encountered when translating business-related texts whether factual, cultural or linguistic. Another situation is where a learner is producing a text in a foreign language and wants to consult his dictionary in order to find data that help him complete the text. A dictionary user may also be editing a text written, alternatively translated, by himself or someone else and consult his dictionary to find help. Similarly, teachers of business topics, business language and business translation may need to check something in a dictionary, for instance when correcting essays or marking examination papers. Bilingual business dictionaries can be designed to help users in one or more of these situations, which may be called communication-oriented situations because they relate to ongoing communicative acts. By analogy, the relevant dictionary functions may be called communication-oriented functions.

Not all dictionary use-situations depend on ongoing communicative acts (Bergenholtz, Nielsen and Tarp 2009; Fuertes-Olivera 2010; Nielsen and Tarp 2009). Business executives, scholars and students may want to acquire knowledge about business matters broadly, such as general knowledge about business, or as a wish to broaden their knowledge bases and their skills in a foreign language. They may also want to acquire knowledge about a particular topic sporadically, for instance how to phrase claims for compensation for injuries suffered when on holiday abroad. Finally, they may want to learn something specific about business usage to prepare themselves for discussions with colleagues and foreign executives, the presentation of business plans etc. Bilingual business dictionaries may also meet the needs of users in these types of situations, which may be called cognitive situations; users want knowledge and lexicographers provide it at a cognitive level. By analogy, the relevant dictionary functions may be called cognitive functions. As argued by Wiegand (2000: 22-25) and Wiegand (2005: 216), it is important to appreciate that, strictly speaking, a dictionary does not contain information, but data that users can convert into information through a mental process and thereby satisfy their needs for knowledge in a given situation.

As these examples indicate, a bilingual business dictionary may be polyfunctional (Fuertes-Olivera and Arribas-Baño 2008). Even so, it seems unlikely that lexicographers will be able to design a dictionary that can help users in all communication-oriented and cognitive use-situations, as they cannot select all possible data and put them into their dictionary. Nevertheless, lexicographers have the option of designing a utility product that has several of the above functions; accordingly the dictionary will help its users in many of the identifiable types of use-situation related to translation.

Translation is a communication-oriented situation and the relevant bilingual business dictionary will contain data specifically selected for this lexicographic function. In the following section we will discuss translation-specific aspects that may also be relevant for other functions, so the lexicographers of bilingual business dictionaries should take those into consideration. We suggest that a dictionary designed to help learners and enterprises make business information readily available in, say, English may help non-native speakers of English in connection with the following functions:

1. Primary function:
  - 1.1 to help users solve problems related to the translation of texts into English
2. Secondary functions:
  - 2.1 to help users solve problems related to the production of English texts
  - 2.2 to help users solve problems related to the editing of English texts

#### 4. IDENTIFYING USER NEEDS

Linking dictionary functions to user needs involves the identification of user competences. Traditional bilingual dictionaries used for translation are characterised by containing business terms and their equivalents. However, Laurén (1993: 99-100) studies the occurrence of terms in a number of subject fields and shows that terms generally make up less than 20% of any LSP text so it is necessary to look closer at the translation process to try to identify the needs bilingual business dictionaries must fulfil to help users combine words so as to produce meaningful utterances. Nord (2005) clearly demonstrates that translation is an iterative process with several recursive steps or activities that go beyond the level of words and terms. Nord (2005: 177) initially describes this as follows:

In order to translate a complete text, the students require not only transfer competence, but also linguistic competence in SL and TL, cultural competence in SC and TC, as well as factual and research competence.

This can be transferred to bilingual business dictionaries. Not only do translators need general knowledge about the two cultures involved, but they also need specific knowledge about the domain. Furthermore, lexicographers should attempt to identify the relevant linguistic elements inherently found in translation, because it is not isolated words that are translated but texts. Bell (1991: 211) explicitly emphasizes this by describing syntactic, semantic and pragmatic knowledge as necessary elements in translating texts. Nord (2005: 175) recognises that translation problems occur at the sentence, clause and phrase levels and that this leads to practical problems for translators:

The structural differences between two languages, particularly in lexis and sentence structure, give rise to certain translation problems which occur in every translation involving this pair of languages, no matter which of the two serves as source and which serves as target language.

The next step is then to relate these micro-structural elements of translation theory and practice to the theory and practice of lexicography. For a bilingual business dictionary prepared for translation, this may seem a daunting task, but the lexicographic literature provides lexicographers with relevant guidelines for profiling users. The business competence in the English (and the user's own) culture, i.e. the factual competence, and the English (and non-English) specialised language skills, i.e. the linguistic competence, determine how users will use a dictionary in a specific type of situation. Bergenholtz and Kaufmann (1997: 98-99) propose a triadic user profile: experts, semi-experts and interested laypersons, which seems to be in line with the user groups listed in the preface of the *OBSD*: business professionals (experts), business studies students (semi-experts or laypersons), and «all who need to understand the language of business» (interested laypersons).

One way in which to discover the lexicographic needs of the intended user group is to identify the major characteristics of the users in terms of factual and linguistic competences. A typical business dictionary for L1-L2 translation may be said to have the following general user groups, which may be ranked equally or ranked in order of priority as suggested here:

1. The *primary user group*: translators and secretaries.
2. The *secondary user group*: business experts.
3. The *tertiary user group*: business students, language students and others interested in disseminating business-related information in L2.

Based on lexicographical theories and existing user research, it is reasonable to assume that the *primary user group* consists of persons with a considerable linguistic competence and a small to medium factual competence. These users are generally semi-experts in relation to linguistic and factual knowledge. The *secondary user group* is made up of persons with a considerable factual competence and a small to medium linguistic competence (in relation to their native and the foreign language). It should be pointed out that business experts are not experts in all fields within the business community; for instance business lawyers are experts in law and insurers are experts in insurance etc. Consequently, the dictionary must contain data about grammatical aspects relating to the foreign language in order to fulfil its functions as a translation dictionary as argued by Lindemann (2000: 195). These types of data are relevant to both the primary and the secondary user group. The primary user group will, however, need more factual data such as definitions of business terms than will the secondary user group. Both user groups will have the same need for factual and linguistic data specifying the difference between possible equivalents, depending on meaning and context, the difference between the collocational ranges in L1 and L2 as well as differences in linguistic structures in the languages involved. Failure to include such data will have a negative effect on the dictionary's potential for fulfilling user needs.

Business students, language students, communication experts and journalists may generally be regarded as laypersons in this context, because they possess little factual competence and some general language, not special language, competence in L1 and L2. It should be re-

cognised, however, that the factual and linguistic competences of students increase progressively during their studies.

Traditional bilingual business dictionaries focus exclusively on terms, but in any business text terms account for less than a fifth of the words; dictionaries like these do not help users put in the words between the terms to form meaningful utterances. Therefore, a different lexicographic approach is proposed for bilingual business dictionaries designed for translation into L2. Focus should be on the primary function and include data that support it when the dictionary is consulted by those in the three groups. Our analysis of the grammatical data present in the *OBSD* has shown that there is ample room for improving the inclusion of grammatical data and its access route.

## 5. GRAMMATICAL DATA IN THE OBSD

Specialised dictionaries have so far focused on including only strongly selected grammatical information and even that not consistently. This practice forces users to consult additional reference works, such as general-language dictionaries and general grammar books, and, on some occasions business grammars, available for English (Abell 2003), but not for other languages such as Spanish.

Our analysis of the grammatical data in the *OBSD* starts by examining the information given in its front matter. It includes a list of abbreviations which shows that this dictionary offers grammatical labelling for adjective (adj), adverb (adv), conjunction (conj), feminine (f), feminine plural (f pl), phrase (fra, phr), masculine (m), masculine or feminine (mf), masculine, feminine (m,f), masculine plural (m pl), noun (n), noun plural (n pl), prefix (pref), preposition (prep), intransitive verb (vi), pronominal verb (v pron), transitive verb (vt), and transitive and intransitive verb (vti). It also contains dialectal and social variants with labels for ‘formal’ (frml), ‘informal’ (infrml), ‘jargon’ (jarg), ‘American English’ (AmE), ‘British English’ (BrE), ‘Latin American Spanish’ (AmL), and ‘peninsular Spanish’ (Esp).

Then, a detailed analysis of the letter «A» (English-Spanish side) showed that the grammatical data included in its entries has improved in comparison with older bilingual business dictionaries, but it is still insufficient for translators. Table 1 summarises our findings.

	<i>OBSD</i>
<b>Phonetic, morphological, orthographic and syntactic information – direct:</b>	
Pronunciation	-
Word class	+
Noun countability	-
Verb complementation	+
Verb + preposition(s)	+
Irregular plural of nouns	-
Usually plural (for nouns)	-
Usually singular (for nouns)	-
Plural noun	+
Singular noun	+
Single/plural verb (with collective nouns)	-

Irregular verb forms	-
Consonant doubling	-
Predicative/attributive (for adjectives)	-
Comparative/superlative forms (for adjectives)	-
American/British spelling	+
<b>Syntactic information – indirect:</b>	
Collocations	+
Example sentences	-
<b>Semantic information:</b>	
Synonyms	+
Antonyms	-
Collocations	+
Semantically related words	+
Idiomatic expressions	+
<b>Stylistic information:</b>	
Style labels	+

Table 1. Grammatical data in the OBSD

Our next step was to conduct detailed spot tests to see whether the wealth of grammatical data offered was systematic and correct. For that, we selected six entries, each presenting a specific grammatical problem: an informal noun (*eager beaver*), an adjective present in many idiomatic uses (*easy*), an old fashioned Spanish preposition (*ante*) and its English equivalent *before*, and two verbs with both transitive and intransitive uses, and frequent in both general and specialised uses (*ease* and *bajar*):

**eager beaver** *n* (infrml) trabajador(a) *m, f* muy ambicioso(-a) y diligente *or* muy empeñoso(-a)  
AmL

Example 2: Informal noun in the OBSD

**easy** *adj* fácil; ~ **money** *n* dinero abundante *m*; ~ **option** *n* opción fácil *f*; ~ **payments** *n pl* facilidades de pago *f pl*; ~ **terms** *n pl* facilidades de pago *f pl*

Example 3: Adjective present in idiomatic expressions in the OBSD

**ante** *prep* before; (posibilidad, dificultad) faced with

Example 4: Old-fashioned Spanish preposition in the OBSD

**before** *prep* antes de; ~ **hours** antes de horas de oficina; ~ **maturity** antes del vencimiento

Example 5: Equivalent English preposition in the OBSD

**ease** **1** *vt* (*rules, restrictions*) relajar; (*tension*) hacer disminuir, aliviar; (*burden*) aligerar; (*transition*) facilitar; (*situation, economic policy*) suavizar

**2** *vi* (*interest rates, prices*) disminuir, bajar; (*restrictions*) relajarse; (*tension*) disminuir, decrecer;

**ease off** *vi* (*demand*) bajar gradualmente; (*tension*) disminuir, decrecer

Example 6: English verb in the OBSD

**bajar** **1** *vi* (*valor, acciones, ventas*) drop, fall; ~ **un 10%** fall by 10%; be down 10%; ~ **de precio**



come down in price; **el euro bajó frente al dólar** the euro fell against the dollar

**2. vt** (*precios*) lower, reduce, bring down; ~ **el promedio** average down; ~ **el tipo de interés** lower interest rates; ~ **a alguien de categoría** demote sb

*Example 7: Spanish verb in the OBSD*

Our analysis of the above entries showed mixed results. On the one hand, users are informed of word labelling, gender, number (sometimes), function words, transitive and intransitive uses of the verb, and geographical and social dialects. On the other hand, some crucial information is still missing and, what is more, some of the data given are unsystematic, which may lead to confusion.

As a positive indication of how grammar is treated we consider that the sociolinguistic labelling of *eager beaver* is adequate and useful, that the word class indication addressed to *easy* is of much help when there is a risk of confusing the word class of the lemma and its different expressions, and that the syntactic patterns of *ease* and *bajar* offer useful data. However, we also observe that the noun *eager beaver* is not identified as countable, that there is not agreement between the Spanish-English wordlist and the English-Spanish one regarding *ante* and *before*, that the transitive *bajar* may lead to confusion (for example, *bajar a alguien de categoría* has nothing to do with *precios*, and that there are no examples differentiating between the transitive and intransitive uses of the verb *ease* attached to the same semantic discriminators (*restrictions*, and *tension*).

Finally, we analysed the information given in its special sections in the middle of the dictionary. There, we found that this dictionary contains implicit grammatical information in relation to a very limited number of topics. In particular, the section on useful phrases shows some implicit syntactic differences between the way the two languages deal with business correspondence. English, for instance, tends to use certain *inserts* or *polite speech-act formulae* (Biber et al. 1999: 1093) such as *thank you for sending...* which have a stereotypical role in marking politeness, whereas Spanish prefers complex sentences (e.g. *le agradecería mucho si me pudiera mandar...*) (see Fuertes-Olivera and Nielsen 2008 for a review) for performing the same pragmatic function. Similarly, in its middle sections the dictionary presents different model letters in both languages without indicating explicitly different syntactic patterns which are used to perform the same semantic role. For example, in the letter for «requesting for information» English tends to use the progressive in order to make sure that the action is in progress. Spanish offers the same aspectual information differently by using the reflexive verb *prepararse*, which incorporates this aspectual information in its meaning structure (Fuertes-Olivera and Nielsen 2008).

In sum, the above analysis shows that recent printed business dictionaries for translation contain a wealth of grammatical data, some of which can be upgraded at no extra cost by being more systematic and paying more attention to the access route used. Below, we will present our proposals with reference to the lexicographical treatment of prepositions.

## 6. PREPOSITIONS IN THE OBSD

Prepositions are linking devices which connect a phrase, typically a noun phrase, with other structures. Any translator of Spanish texts into English or of English texts into Spanish should be aware that although they fulfil similar syntactic roles in both languages, they are



very different and need to be dealt with in order to help translators overcome the translation problems prepositions pose. Lexicographers are therefore expected to offer potential users both data concerned with their main differences and specific uses. For a business translation dictionary such as the *OBSD*, we claim that users must be informed of the following basic differences between Spanish and English prepositions:

First, the Spanish system consists of fewer prepositions than the English one (see Appendix). As a result, the Spanish prepositions are less precise in terms of meaning, are much more prone to be polysemous, and therefore need a specific lexicographical treatment with the aim of helping users through the process of finding the information required. For instance, the Spanish preposition *de* can be translated as «of», «'s», «from», «at», «as», «under», and «if». Our spot tests indicate that neither the Spanish *de* nor its English equivalents are in the wordlists. Only a special use of *at*, which is totally unconnected with the meaning of Spanish *de* (see Appendix), is in the dictionary.

Second, although both English and Spanish prepositions can be free or bound, the system is marginal in Spanish but central in English. Spanish *prepositional verbs* (e.g. *contar con*), and *phrasal-prepositional verbs* (e.g. *arreglárselas*) admit less syntactic variation than their English counterparts. In addition, in Spanish these expressions are not regularly formed and therefore English syntactic patterns such as NP + verb + NP + preposition + NP lend themselves more to pragmatic than to literal translations. For instance, the English expression «they accused these men of being bad managers» could be translated by «acusaron a estos hombres a los que consideraban malos gestores» or «acusaron a estos hombres de ser malos gestores». The second translation is typically scorned by prescriptive grammars which consider it an example of a syntactic Anglicism. Spot tests indicate that users are sometimes informed on the syntactic behaviour of these expressions. For example, in the entry for *agree*, the prepositional verbs *agree on* and *agree to* are recorded as transitive expressions, whereas *agree about* and *agree with*, also in the same article, appear without syntactic data. What is more, typical business expressions such as the *phrasal prepositional verb* *look forward to* are included without giving any information on its valency (followed by an *-ing form*) and its use in closures in business correspondence. Thus, the equivalent *tener ganas de*, given without any cross-reference to the section on business correspondence nor any explanation in the entry, may lead users to produce wrong translations as they are not informed that *look forward to* must never be translated by *tener ganas de* in a Spanish business letter.

Third, English admits postposition in some temporal expressions whereas Spanish does not. For instance, the Spanish expression «hace tres años» is translated as «three years ago» in English. Spot tests also show that the dictionary does not inform users of this syntactic difference. For instance, neither common expressions such as «A tres kilometros (de distancia)» nor its English equivalent «three kilometres away» are included.

Four, in both languages there are single and complex prepositions. The main distinction is that the English prepositional system is more open, as both compounding and zero derivation are more productive, and therefore admits more syntactic options. For example, the typical syntactic pattern of Spanish complex prepositions are «preposition + noun + preposition» (e.g. *por causa de*), «adjective + preposition» (*debido a*), and «adverb + preposition» (e.g. *antes de*). In English other frequent patterns are «preposition + preposition» (e.g. *but for*), «adjective + preposition» (e.g. *far from*), «preposition + adverb + preposition» (e.g. *as well as*), «preposition + article + noun + preposition» (e.g. *across the front of*), and even «preposition +

article + adjective + noun + preposition» (e.g. *on the far side of*) (Biber et al. 1999: 75-76). Spot tests indicate that users are not informed of this fact.

Five, some Spanish prepositions are semantically empty as they are required by syntactic rules and are therefore not translatable. In particular, the Spanish preposition *a* is never translated into English when it accompanies a transitive verb followed by a personal direct object (i.e., it is a functional marker) (e.g. «he visto a Juan» ® «I have seen John»). Spot tests show that this information is implicitly given in some examples.

Six, English prepositions may overlap with other word classes more frequently and thus it is not unusual to find them in the syntactic role of subordinator, adverb, adjective, and verb (e.g. «you can open the outside door»). For Spanish prepositions this overlapping is very unnatural and tends to be ignored in Spanish grammars. The dictionary does not address this and typical expressions such as *outside office hours* are found in the articles of the English-Spanish wordlist but not in the articles of the Spanish-English one.

In sum, our spot tests of *OBSD* have showed that there is still room for improving the lexicographical treatment of prepositions. In an ideal world, our proposals would be much more detailed. Below, however, we offer more modest proposals, based on the principle of upgrading the data currently found in the dictionary at no extra cost (Nielsen 2008).

#### 7. LEXICOGRAPHICAL TREATMENT FOR UPGRADING PREPOSITIONS IN BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES FOR BUSINESS TRANSLATION

The basic principle must be treating prepositions in a consistent and systematic way. This means adopting three specific lexicographical practices:

- (a) to include all the prepositions in the wordlist;
- (b) to upgrade the system of cross-references between both wordlists;
- (b) to include the word labelling *prep* after each preposition and indicate either explicitly or implicitly its main uses and possible differences between languages; this can be done by illustrating the different uses with examples in the entry and/or by commenting on them in a special section in the middle of the dictionary. Regarding English-Spanish, the section envisaged must include specific business uses and comment on the differences already explained in section 6.

The first of the proposals simply means adding the missing prepositions to the word list. In practical terms, this implies including 25 and 65 prepositions in the Spanish-English and English-Spanish word lists respectively. The Appendix shows that only around 38% of the total prepositions were included. It is surprising that prepositions such as *excepto* were not included in the Spanish-English wordlist considering its frequent use in business contracts and similar specialised texts, as shown in the English-Spanish wordlist where the prepositional phrase *except otherwise herein provided* is included. Similarly, it is surprising to find the inclusion of *ante* and the exclusion of *antes de*.

The second proposal refers to upgrading the system of cross-references between wordlists. This means that for each preposition in one wordlist we must have its equivalent in the other wordlist. For example, *antes de* is not included in the Spanish-English wordlist, something that cannot be explained lexicographically because this preposition is more relevant than

the idiomatic use of *ante* followed by ‘posibilidad’, or ‘dificultad’. Furthermore, this idiomatic use is not explained and may lead to confusion. Such an example is an ideal candidate for upgrading the lexicographical treatment. Our proposal is illustrated in Table 2: on the left side, we have the entries as they are in the dictionary; on the right side is our proposal: the dictionary should include *antes de* and explain the idiomatic use of *ante* (*faced with*) which is not a preposition in English:

<i>OBSD</i>		<i>Our Proposal</i>	
Spanish-English	English Spanish	Spanish-English	English Spanish
	English Spanish <b>ante</b> <i>prep</i> ante		
<b>ante</b> <i>prep</i> before (posibilidad,dificultad) faced with	<b>before</b> <i>prep</i> antes de; ~ <b>hours</b> antes de horas de oficina; ~ <b>maturity</b> antes del vencimiento	<b>ante</b> <i>prep</i> ante; faced with <i>see</i> <b>face</b> <sup>2</sup>	<b>ante</b> <i>prep</i> ante
	<b>face</b> <sup>2</sup> <i>vt</i> (criticism, attacks, future) afrontar, hacer frente a; (risks) afrontar; (charges, sentence, fine) enfrentarse a; ~ <b>the facts</b> afrontar los hechos; <b>be ~d with sth</b> estar <i>or</i> verse frente a <i>or</i> ante algo; <b>face up to</b> <i>vt</i> (problems, responsibilities) hacer frente a; (person) encarar a	<b>antes de</b> <i>prep</i> before; ~ <b>horas de oficina</b> before hours; ~ <b>antes del vencimiento</b> before maturity	<b>before</b> <i>prep</i> antes de; ~ <b>hours</b> antes de horas de oficina; ~ <b>maturity</b> antes del vencimiento
			<b>face</b> <sup>2</sup> <i>vt</i> (criticism, attacks, future) afrontar, hacer frente a; (risks) afrontar; (charges, sentence, fine) enfrentarse a; ~ <b>the facts</b> afrontar los hechos; <b>be ~d with sth</b> estar <i>or</i> verse frente a <i>or</i> ante algo; <b>face up to</b> <i>vt</i> (problems, responsibilities) hacer frente a; (person) encarar a <i>see</i> Prepositions

Table 2. Proposal for upgrading cross-referencing between the two wordlists

Our third proposal advocates the inclusion of the word-class labelling *prep* in the corresponding entries; also, if necessary, details of its characteristics and special uses must be offered by including adequate data and cross-referencing users to a middle text explaining the specific uses of the prepositions in business texts together with some of the main differences between them in the two languages. An ideal candidate is the preposition *con*, with general and specific meanings and uses. In the Spanish-English side the *OBSD* include both uses and makes a difference by including the meaning discriminator (‘Bolsa’), thus indicating that the equivalent *cum* is restricted to two expressions referring to the ‘stock exchange’. In the English-Spanish side, however, *cum* goes with more expressions, but without mentioning related entries (i.e., *with* and *ex*). Our proposal will be to offer the same expressions in the two sides, be more precise by differentiating between general and specific uses, and cross-refer users to related entries (for example to *ex*) (Table 3):

The above proposal goes in conjunction with including brief middle texts commenting on general similarities and differences between the two languages. Regarding the above entry,

<i>OBSD</i>		<i>Our Proposal</i>	
Spanish-English	English Spanish	Spanish-English	English Spanish
<p><b>con</b> <i>prep</i> with; (Bolsa) cum; ~ <b>dividendo</b> cum dividend; ~ <b>cupón</b> cum coupon</p>	<p><b>cum</b> <i>prep</i> con; ~ <b>coupon</b> con cupón; ~ <b>dividend</b> con dividendo; ~ <b>rights</b> con derechos; ~ <b>warrant</b> con garantía; ~ <b>and ex</b> con y sin; ~ <b>rights period</b> <i>n</i> periodo con derechos <i>m</i></p>	<p><b>con</b> <i>prep</i> 1. (general) with. Nunca ha trabajado <b>con</b> su padre. He has never worked with his father; 2. (finanzas) cum; <b>con derechos</b> cum rights; <b>con garantía</b> cum warrant; <b>con y sin</b> cum and ex <i>see ex</i>. El periodo <b>con</b> derechos está abierto. The cum rights period is still open <i>see</i> Prepositions</p>	<p><b>cum</b> <i>prep</i> con (finanzas); ~ <b>coupon</b> con cupón; ~ <b>dividend</b> con dividendo; ~ <b>rights</b> con derechos; ~ <b>warrant</b> con garantía; ~ <b>and ex</b> con y sin; ~ <b>rights period</b> <i>n</i> periodo con derechos <i>m</i> <i>see ex</i></p> <p><b>with</b> <i>prep</i> 1. con (general) <b>the shirt is black and white</b> la camisa es negra y blanca 2. en (member, employee, client, etc.) <b>I have been banking with them for two years</b> hace dos años que tengo cuenta en este banco <i>see</i> Prepositions</p>

Table 3. Proposal for an entry in bilingual (English-Spanish) dictionaries for business translation

this middle text component should indicate that as opposites, the English prepositions *cum* and *ex* are exclusively used in finance where they are used to show that the buyer of a share is getting the right (*cum*) or will not get the right (*ex*) to claim the thing mentioned. In Spanish finance discourse they may be translated by *con* and *sin* respectively or left untranslated thus acknowledging their Latin origin and their use in international business contexts.

In conclusion, business dictionaries for translation should be upgraded by offering a systematic treatment of the prepositions of both languages in the wordlist, and cross-reference users from the entries to the middle section where a contrastive analysis should be included, paying special attention to all the specific uses of prepositions in business discourse.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The above description and analysis showed that the functional approach to making bilingual business dictionaries for translation has theoretical and practical relevance. It encourages lexicographers to rethink their theoretical basis when planning and compiling dictionaries as well as when discussing and developing new lexicographic principles. One area in which

the impact is felt the most is the preparation of focussed dictionaries users can consult when translating business texts, for instance by giving increased consideration to the grammatical data needed by specific user groups, e.g. translators. This involves the identification of communication-oriented and cognitive functions, which helps draw the lexicographers' attention to the different types of use-situations in which dictionaries can help their users. Once the dictionary functions and the relevant user groups have been identified, lexicographers will have an excellent basis on which to select the data needed to fulfil the requirements of users.

By replacing the traditional definition of bilingual dictionaries by the three-tier description made up of functions, data and structures, lexicographers shift their focus. The analysis of the *OBSD* shows that it lacks grammatical data that can help users to translate prepositions found in business discourse, and that it treats those prepositions found in the wordlists in an inconsistent and insufficient way. In particular, the dictionary only includes around 38% of the prepositions used in both languages, and the use of cross-references leaves much to be desired. As pointed out by Nielsen (1999: 92) the cross-reference structure is important because cross-references mediate an otherwise non-existent relationship between dictionary data; if lexicographers do not explicitly show these relationships, users are unlikely to detect them. By including cross-references between entries in the same wordlist, between wordlists, or from entries to middle section, lexicographers may design crafted bilingual business dictionaries that users find valuable. One way of doing it has been showed in this article regarding English and Spanish prepositions in business dictionaries for translation.

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## APPENDIX

LIST OF USUAL SPANISH AND ENGLISH PREPOSITIONS AND THEIR TREATMENT IN THE *OXFORD BUSINESS SPANISH DICTIONARY*.

## SPANISH PREPOSITIONS

Spanish prepositions	Entry
<b>a</b>	not found
<b>ante</b>	<i>prep</i> before; (posibilidad, dificultad) faced with
<b>antes de</b>	not found
<b>bajo</b>	not found (included as <i>adj</i> )
<b>cabe</b>	not found
<b>causa</b>	<i>f</i> cause, reason; (Der) lawsuit, trial; <b>por ~ de</b> because of, on account of; (...)
<b>con</b>	with; (Bolsa) cum; ~ <b>dividendo</b> cum dividend; ~ <b>cupón</b> cum coupon
<b>contra (en ~ de)</b>	not found
<b>cuanto</b>	<b>en ~ a</b> <i>prep</i> as regards, with reference to
<b>de</b>	not found
<b>debajo</b>	<i>adv</i> underneath; ~ <b>de</b> under, below (...)
<b>debido</b>	<i>adj</i> due; ~ <b>a</b> due to, on account of; (...)
<b>delante de</b>	not found
<b>desde</b>	not found
<b>después de</b>	not found
<b>durante</b>	not found
<b>en</b>	not found
<b>entre</b>	not found
<b>excepto</b>	<i>prep</i> except, excluding
<b>favor</b>	<i>m</i> favour BrE, favor AmE; (...) <b>a ~ de</b> in favour BrE <i>o</i> favor AmE of (...)
<b>hacia</b>	not found
<b>hasta</b>	not found
<b>lugar</b>	<i>m</i> place (...) <b>en ~ de algo/alguien</b> instead of sth/sb (...)
<b>junto a / junto con</b>	not found
<b>más<sup>2</sup></b>	<i>prep</i> plus
<b>mediante</b>	not found
<b>menos<sup>2</sup></b>	<i>prep</i> (excepto) except, apart from; (en rentas) minus; ~ <b>un descuento del 10%</b> minus <i>o</i> less a 10% discount
<b>para</b>	not found
<b>prejuicio (sin ~ de)</b>	not found (included the expression <b>sin prejuicio</b> without prejudice)
<b>por</b>	not found
<b>respecto</b>	<i>m</i> <b>al ~</b> on the matter <i>o</i> subject; (...) <b>con ~ a</b> <i>or</i> <b>a ~ respecto de</b> with regard to, in connection with

<b>salvo</b> <sup>2</sup>	<i>prep</i> except (for); ~ <b>domingos y festivos</b> Sundays and holidays excepted; ~ <b>error u omisión</b> errors and omissions excepted; ~ <b>que se acuerde lo contrario</b> unless otherwise agreed
<b>según</b>	not found
<b>sin</b>	not found
<b>so</b>	not found
<b>sobre</b>	not found (included as noun)
<b>tras</b>	not found
<b>través</b>	<b>a ~ de</b> <i>prep</i> through; <b>a ~ del sistema</b> across the network
<b>versus</b>	<i>prep</i> versus

## ENGLISH PREPOSITIONS

English prepositions	Entry
<b>aboard</b> <sup>2</sup>	<i>prep</i> (ship, plane) a bordo de; (train, bus) en
<b>about</b>	not found
<b>above</b> <sup>1</sup>	<i>prep</i> (in rank, status) por encima de; <b>not be ~ the law</b> no estar por encima de la ley; ~ <b>average</b> <i>adj</i> por encima de la media; ~ <b>board</b> <i>adj</i> (action, deal) legítimo; (person) sincero; ~ <b>par</b> <i>adj</i> sobre la par <i>n</i> ; <b>in ~ with</b> de acuerdo con, en conformidad con (...)
<b>accordance</b>	
<b>according to</b>	<i>prep</i> (in agreement with) conforme a, de acuerdo con; (as stated by) según; ~ <b>to the norm</b> conforme a la norma; ~ <b>to plan</b> conforme al plan; ~ <b>to schedule</b> según lo previsto, de acuerdo al horario <i>or</i> al programa
<b>account</b>	<i>n</i> (...) <b>on ~ of</b> debido a, por causa de
<b>absent</b>	not found (included as <i>adj</i> )
<b>across</b>	not found
<b>addition</b>	<i>n</i> (...) <b>in ~ to</b> además de (...)
<b>after</b>	not found
<b>against</b>	<i>prep</i> contra; ~ <b>all risks</b> a <i>or</i> contra todo riesgo; ~ <b>documents</b> contra entrega de documentos; <b>insured ~ theft</b> asegurado contra robo; ~ <b>one's judgment</b> contra su propio parecer; ~ <b>the law</b> ilegal [sic], prohibido por (la) ley; ~ <b>payment</b> contra pago; ~ <b>polycy</b> en contra de costumbre; <b>the pound dropped to a new low ~ the dollar</b> la libra registró un nuevo mínimo frente al dólar; ~ <b>text</b> contra texto
<b>ahead</b>	<i>adv</i> (...) <b>she arrived a few minutes ~ of us</b> llegó unos minutos antes que nosotros (...)
<b>along(side)</b>	not found
<b>along with</b>	not found
<b>amid(st)</b>	not found
<b>among(st)</b>	not found
<b>ante</b>	<i>prep</i> ante
<b>around</b>	not found

<b>as (to)</b>	not found
<b>aside from</b>	not found
<b>aslant</b>	not found
<b>astride</b>	not found
<b>at</b>	<i>prep</i> (rate, price) a; <b>as</b> ~ a fecha; ~ <b>sign</b> <i>n</i> arroba <i>f</i>
<b>atop</b>	not found
<b>barring</b>	not found
<b>because of</b>	not found
<b>before</b>	<i>prep</i> antes de; ~ <b>hours</b> antes de horas de oficina; ~ <b>maturity</b> antes del vencimiento
<b>behalf</b>	<b>on</b> ~ <b>of</b> <i>prep</i> de parte de, en nombre de
<b>behind</b>	not found
<b>below<sup>1</sup></b>	<i>prep</i> debajo de; ~ <b>average</b> <i>adj</i> por debajo de la media; ~ <b>market-price</b> <i>adj</i> inferior al precio de mercado; ~ <b>par</b> <i>adj</i> bajo la par
<b>beneath</b>	not found
<b>beside(s)</b>	not found
<b>between</b>	not found
<b>beyond</b>	not found
<b>but</b>	not found
<b>by</b>	not found
<b>case</b>	<i>n</i> (...) <b>in</b> ~ <b>of</b> (sth) en caso de algo
<b>close<sup>1</sup></b>	<i>adj</i> (...) <b>pay</b> ~ <b>attention to sth</b> prestar mucha atención a (...)
<b>concerning</b>	<i>prep</i> sobre, acerca de, con respecto a
<b>cum</b>	<i>prep</i> con; ~ <b>coupon</b> con cupón; ~ <b>dividend</b> con dividendo; ~ <b>rights</b> con derechos; ~ <b>warrant</b> con garantía; ~ <b>and ex</b> con y sin; ~ <b>rights period</b> <i>n</i> periodo con derechos <i>m</i>
<b>despite</b>	<i>prep</i> a pesar de
<b>down</b>	not found
<b>due</b>	<i>adj</i> (...) ~ <b>to</b> (as a result of) por causa de, debido a (...)
<b>during</b>	not found
<b>ex<sup>2</sup></b>	<i>prep</i> sin; ~ <b>claim</b> por derecho; ~ <b>hypothesis</b> ex hipótesis
<b>except</b>	<i>prep</i> salvo; ~ <b>as otherwise provided</b> salvo disposición contraria; ~ <b>for</b> a reserva de; ~ <b>otherwise herein provided</b> salvo indicación de lo contrario
<b>excluding</b>	<i>prep</i> excepto
<b>failing</b>	not found
<b>far (as ~ as)</b>	not found
<b>far from</b>	not found
<b>following</b>	not found
<b>for</b>	not found
<b>from</b>	not found
<b>front (in ~ of)</b>	not found
<b>further to</b>	<i>prep</i> en respuesta a; ~ <b>to your letter</b> en respuesta a su carta; ~ <b>to your telephone call</b> en respuesta a su llamada telefónica
<b>in</b>	not found

<b>inside (of)</b>	not found (also included as adjective and noun)
<b>into</b>	not found
<b>less<sup>3</sup></b>	<i>prep</i> menos <b>his salary ~ tax</b> su salario menos impuestos
<b>like</b>	not found
<b>lieu</b>	<i>n</i> ; <b>in ~ of</b> en lugar de, en vez de; (...)
<b>means (by ~ of)</b>	not found
<b>mid</b>	not found
<b>minus<sup>2</sup></b>	<i>prep</i> menos
<b>near (to)</b>	not found (also included as adjective and verb)
<b>next (to)</b>	not found
<b>notwithstanding</b>	<i>prep</i> no obstante (frml); <b>~ any other provision</b> independientemente de cualquier otra disposición
<b>of</b>	not found
<b>off</b>	not found (also included as adj)
<b>on</b>	not found (also included as adj)
<b>onto</b>	not found
<b>opposite</b>	not found (included as adj)
<b>out of</b>	not found
<b>outside<sup>3</sup> (of)</b>	<i>prep</i> fuera de; <b>that's ~ our jurisdiction</b> eso queda fuera de nuestra jurisdicción; <b>~ office hours</b> fuera de las horas de oficina; <b>it's ~ my price range</b> está fuera de mi presupuesto; <b>~ the referente of sth</b> más allá de la referencia de algo
<b>over</b>	not found
<b>owing to</b>	<i>prep</i> debido a
<b>past</b>	not found (included as adj)
<b>pending<sup>2</sup></b>	<i>prep</i> en espera de
<b>per</b>	<i>prep</i> por; <b>as ~ según</b> ; <b>as ~ from</b> por indicación de; <b>~ annun</b> por año; <b>~ calendar month</b> por mes; <b>~ day</b> por día; <b>~ head</b> por cabeza; <b>~ month</b> por mes; <b>~ person</b> por persona; <b>~ share</b> por acción; <b>~ year</b> por año, <b>~ contract basis</b> <i>n</i> base según contrato <i>f</i> ; <b>~ diem allowance</b> <i>n</i> dieta <i>f</i> ; <b>~ kilometer rate</b> AmE, <b>~ kilometre rate</b> BrE <i>n</i> tarifa por kilómetro
<b>per pro</b>	<i>prep</i> , <b>per procurationen</b> <i>prep</i> por poder, por autorización, por orden
<b>pertaining to</b>	<i>prep</i> correspondiente a
<b>place (in ~ of)</b>	not found
<b>plus<sup>3</sup></b>	<i>prep</i> más; <b>2 ~ 5 equals 7</b> 2 más 5 son 7; <b>£50 per tour ~ expenses</b> cincuenta libras por hora más gastos; <b>~ the fact that ...</b> además de que ...
<b>prior</b>	<i>adj</i> (...) <b>~ to sth</b> previo a algo
<b>pursuant to</b>	<i>prep</i> de conformidad con, con arreglo a; <b>~ to article</b> de conformidad con el artículo
<b>referring to</b>	<i>n</i> (...) <b>in o with ~ to sth/sb</b> con respecto a algo/alguien
<b>regard<sup>1</sup></b>	<i>prep</i> referido a
<b>regarding</b>	<i>prep</i> acerca de, con referencia a, en cuanto a

<b>round</b>	not found (included as adj, n, and verb)
<b>save</b>	not found (included as verb)
<b>since</b>	not found
<b>spite (in ~ of)</b>	not found
<b>subsequent to</b>	not found
<b>than</b>	not found
<b>through(out)</b>	<i>prep</i> por; ~ <b>the agency of sb</b> a través de <i>or</i> por medio de alguien
<b>till</b>	not found (included as noun)
<b>times</b>	not found
<b>to</b>	not found (included as noun and verb)
<b>top (on ~ of)</b>	not found
<b>toward(s)</b>	not found
<b>under(neath)</b>	not found
<b>unlike</b>	not found
<b>until</b>	not found
<b>up</b>	not found (included as adv, adj, and vt)
<b>upon</b>	not found
<b>versus</b>	<i>prep</i> frente a, en oposición a; (Law) contra
<b>via</b>	<i>prep</i> (by way of) por; (by means of) por medio de
<b>vis-á-vis</b>	<i>prep</i> con respecto a
<b>well (as ~ as)</b>	not found
<b>with</b>	not found
<b>within</b>	<i>prep</i> dentro de; ~ <b>the allotted time frame</b> dentro del tiempo permitido; <b>keep ~ the law</b> mantenerse dentro la ley [sic], ~ <b>a period of</b> en un periodo de; ~ <b>prescribed limits</b> dentro del plazo fijado; ~ <b>sb's reach</b> al alcance de alguien; ~ <b>a week</b> dentro de una semana
<b>without</b>	<i>prep</i> sin; ~ <b>charge</b> gratis, sin cargo; ~ <b>engagement</b> sin compromiso; ~ <b>a hitch</b> sin ningún tropiezo; ~ <b>any liability on our part</b> sin ninguna responsabilidad por nuestra parte; ~ <b>obligation</b> sin obligación; ~ <b>prejudice</b> sin prejuicio; ~ <b>previous warning</b> sin advertencia previa; ~ <b>privileges</b> sin privilegios; ~ <b>respite</b> (from work) sin respiro; ~ <b>warning</b> sin aviso