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# Developing reading skills in English for agricultural purposes

A GUIDE FOR USING A DICATIONARY



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## Foreword

Learning vocabulary as the building blocks for communication plays an important role in foreign and second language learning as it is an essential component of becoming a fluent foreign language user. Very often vocabulary learning occurs as a product of reading. While reading, a sentence could be incomprehensible to the readers by the occurrence of a single unknown word and the learner can consult the dictionary to understand the text. Through regular reading the learner may remember and recognize some new words he/she came across in his/her reading. Of course, we all should be aware that no dictionary contains every word in the language. The sciences, medicine and technology generate a lot of words that never make it into a dictionary; numerous foreign words that appear in English-language contexts are left out. A great many words are invented all the time and then they simply vanish from the record.

This material has been prepared as a guide for using various types of dictionaries with the aim of increasing foreign/second learners' vocabulary in English as a foreign/second language. It is convenient for the learners of different levels of English language and appropriate to be used in different teaching/learning environments, both in face-to-face and e-learning.

*A guide for using a dictionary* is designed to be used by high school teachers in the field of agriculture and related fields, and agricultural advisors in Serbia. Also, it can be useful for the current and future students of both agriculture and other fields of science, and for professionals in other domains.

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Čačak, 2 February 2016  
The author

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## 1. What is a dictionary?

A dictionary is a "reference source in print or electronic form containing words usually alphabetically arranged along with information about their forms, pronunciation, functions, etymologies, meanings, and syntactical and idiomatic uses; a reference book listing alphabetically terms or names important to a particular subject or activity along with discussion of their meanings and applications or a reference book listing alphabetically the words of one language and showing their meanings or translations in another language" (Merriam-Webster English Online Dictionary).

One of the components of the above definition "arranged in some stated order..... alphabetical" has been extended to cover other reference books giving information of different types in alphabetical order and the term dictionary can "apply quite loosely to any reference work arranged by words or names". (Malkiel, 1967, p. 23). Thus we have dictionaries of national biography, dictionary of folklore, dictionary of place names, etc.

## 2. How to use a dictionary?

A dictionary is a useful tool in learning a new language. With a dictionary we can:

- look up the meaning of an English word we see/hear (both monolingual and bilingual),
- look up different meanings the word has,
- find the translation of a word in your language/foreign language,
- check spelling of the word and find how to pronounce it,
- find out whether or not the word is capitalized,
- find out whether or not the word is abbreviated,
- find out the history of the word,
- find out synonyms and antonyms of the word,
- find out the part of speech of the word,
- find out its plural form,
- check past tense of a verb,
- find other words derived from the main word,
- find out the meanings of important prefixes and suffixes,
- find other special uses of the word,
- find the register of the word (formal/informal/neutral),
- find the examples of the use of a word in natural language.

In some dictionaries there are sections telling us about *foreign words and phrases, abbreviations, the population of cities and countries.*

### **3. A good dictionary user**

To be a good dictionary user, we need to be able to find what we are looking for quickly. Also, we need to be sure that we have found what we were looking for. Finally, we need to know **when** to use your dictionary.

#### **Finding words quickly**

This is a skill you need to practice. Ask a colleague or friend to write down 5 words and see how long it takes you to find them.

Strategies which will save time when you use the dictionary:

- know/use proper alphabetic order perfectly, so practice this;
- use guide words at the top of each dictionary page to save the time; keep practicing until you can find any word within 10 seconds;
- also practice finding words in your own language in your bilingual dictionary;
- if you use an electronic dictionary, take some time at home to learn how it works and practice finding words quickly;
- check all the abbreviations and symbols in the special sections.

#### **Finding the right meaning of an English word**

When you look up a new English word in the dictionary, you very often find that it has more than one meaning. Sometimes you are not sure which meaning is correct.

First, check all the meanings and try to find the meaning that makes most sense in the context where the word is found.

Second, if you want to be sure, think what the word is in your own language. Then look it up in a bilingual dictionary. If one of the English translations is the original word you looked up, you found the right meaning.

Some dictionaries put the most common meaning first in the list of definitions.

**Do not try to learn every new word** – concentrate on the words or phrases you think you will need to know.

**Pictures of words**, or word groups, can help you to remember more easily.

### **Finding the right spelling**

Sometimes you want to check your spelling but you cannot find the word you are looking for.

If you are sure how the first few letters are spelled, look down the page until you find the right spelling. Of course, it is helpful to check the meaning is the one you expect.

If you are not sure how the first few letters are spelled, try some other possibilities. It is useful to know, for example, that some words that start with an *-n* sound have *k* as their first letter; e.g., *know*, *knife*, *knight*. If you cannot find the word under *N*, try looking in the *K* pages.

If you still cannot find the word, think what it is in your language and look it up in your bilingual dictionary.

### **Learn the phonetic alphabet**

At the beginning of most good English dictionaries, you will find the **phonetic table**. The **phonetic table** tells you how to pronounce the phonetic symbols given with each word. If you learn these symbols, you will find it much easier to pronounce new words.

### **Learn how to use the stress marks**

Most English dictionaries show where the stress of a word is by using the mark ' . This means that the following syllable is stressed:

'pho-to-graph

pho-'to-gra-pher

pho-to-'gra-phy

The best way to improve your pronunciation is with correct word stress. Making mistakes with stress causes more misunderstandings than mispronouncing the word.

### **Finding the right English translation of a word in your language**

Look up a word in your own language in a bilingual dictionary. You will probably find that there is more than one English translation. If you are not sure which to use, you could try a *back translation*. It means that you look up the English translations one by one in

a monolingual dictionary. If a word has a definition that matches the word in your language, you are safe to use it.

### **Knowing when to use the dictionary**

*If you look up every new word you see or hear, you will spend your whole day with the dictionary in your hand.* You should be clever and choose the right words to check and the right time to do it.

To become more efficient language learner, try to do the following:

- When you find a new word while reading, finish the sentence or the paragraph; if you have not guessed the meaning and it is still important for you, then you can look it up in the dictionary;
- If you do not want to interrupt your reading for too long, you should find its meaning in your own language using a bilingual dictionary;
- When you hear a new word in conversation or in class (or the teacher has written it on the board), wait and continue listening; what your collocutor or teacher says next may help you to understand the word. If you look in your dictionary, you will not hear what comes next; this will make understanding the lesson more and more difficult;
- If you think the word is very important, you could copy it from the board or write how you think it is spelled. Then later you could ask the teacher or another student/colleague/interlocutor what it means.

### **Knowing which dictionary to use**

To be a good dictionary user, you should also decide which the best dictionary is for any of the purposes listed above.

There are different types of dictionaries. Dictionaries can be classified into different types on the basis of several criteria, varying from the nature of the lexical entry to the prospective user of the dictionary.



## 4. Types of dictionaries

As we mentioned earlier, there are various types of dictionaries. There are different criteria according to which the dictionaries can be classified.

### **The criteria: the nature of entries**

According to the *nature of entries*, i.e., the degree of the inclusion of lexical and non-lexical information in the dictionary, there are **linguistic dictionaries** and **encyclopaedic dictionaries**.

The **linguistic dictionary** deals with only the lexical stock, i.e. words as speech material. It includes linguistic characteristics of the lexical unit viz., pronunciation, definition, etymology, grammatical category, etc.

The **encyclopaedic dictionary** is a combination of an encyclopaedia and a linguistic dictionary. It includes items that are generally characteristic of an encyclopaedia in addition to the items of a linguistic dictionary. The encyclopaedia is more concerned with the concepts and objects of extra linguistic. Their aim is to present information, as noted earlier, on all aspects of human knowledge. The items presented include names of plants, animals, diseases, names of persons, places, and literary works, historical events, biographical sketches of important personalities, etc.

Any dictionary combines the features of both linguistic and encyclopaedic dictionary. Even the abridged and concise dictionaries present encyclopaedic information. They include proper names and explanation of culture items although it has been contended if proper names (realia) could be included in the purely linguistic dictionaries because it may make the dictionary encyclopaedic; so, many dictionaries give them not in the main body of the dictionary but in appendices.

The bigger dictionaries like *The Century Dictionary*, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, etc., are encyclopaedic but all of them are linguistic dictionaries.

### **The criteria: the number of languages involved**

According to the number of languages involved, dictionaries may be *monolingual*, *bilingual*, *multilingual*, etc.

**Monolingual dictionaries** are those dictionaries in which both the word entries and their meanings are in given in the same language. For English language, relevant monolingual dictionaries are published by:

Oxford University Press – various forms Oxford Dictionary of English language,  
Cambridge University Press – various forms of Cambridge Dictionary of English language,  
Longman – various forms of Longman English dictionaries (e.g., Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Longman Active Study Dictionary),  
Merriam-Webster English language dictionary,  
Collins Cobuild English language dictionaries,  
Macmillan English language dictionaries.

**Bilingual dictionaries** are those dictionaries which are written or conducted in two languages, e.g., English-Serbian dictionary, or Serbian-English dictionary, English-French dictionary, etc.

Ristić, S., Simić, Ž., & Popović, V. (2005). *Enciklopediski englesko-srpski rečnik*, Vol. 1-2. Beograd: Prosveta.

**Multilingual dictionaries** are those dictionaries in which the word entries are presented in several languages. Multilingual dictionaries can be arranged alphabetically or words can be grouped by topic. When grouped by topic, it is common for a multilingual dictionary to be illustrated.

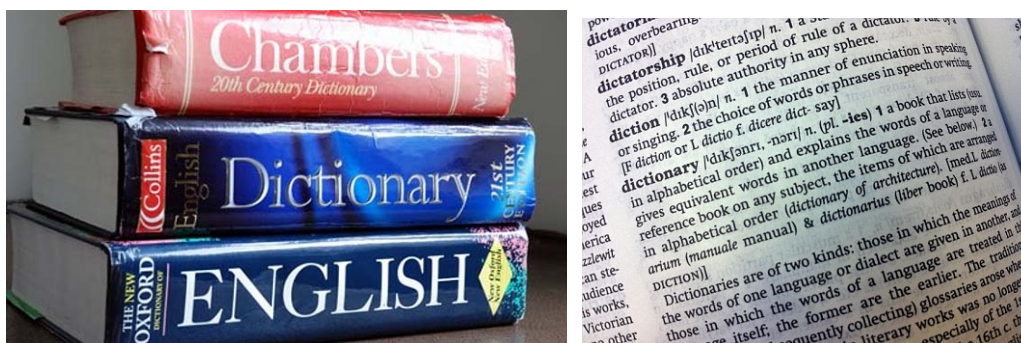
Examples are numerous English centered multilingual dictionaries as following:

JMDict – a Japanese multilingual dictionary having Japanese entries and its translations into English, French and German;  
FEM – French-English-Malay dictionary  
FET - French-English-Thai dictionary

### The criteria: the formats of dictionary

Dictionaries are available in a number of formats, and often include a grammar reference and usage examples.

- **Printed dictionaries** range from small pocket-sized editions to large, comprehensive multi-volume works;



Pictures 1 and 2. Printed dictionaries

- ✓ Longman – various forms of Longman English dictionaries (e.g., Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Longman Active Study Dictionary),
- ✓ CollinsCobuild English language dictionaries
- ✓ Merriam-Webster English language dictionary
- ✓ Macmillan English Dictionary (including interactive CD-ROM and online edition).

**Collocation**  
Adverbs frequently used with **comparable**  
■ broadly, directly, roughly  
*The Scottish figures are not directly comparable.*  
Adjectives frequently used with **similar**  
■ broadly, fairly, quite, remarkably, roughly, somewhat, strikingly  
*Remarkably similar results have been obtained by studies in the United Kingdom and other countries.*  
Adjectives frequently used with **same**  
■ essentially, exactly, much, precisely, quite, roughly  
*They both contain exactly the same information.*

**1.3. Using the verbs resemble and correspond**  
You can use the verbs **resemble** and **correspond** to show that two or more points, ideas, or situations are similar:  
*It is possible to suggest that the two poets resemble one another.*  
*Her views on capital punishment, immigration, and the trade unions resemble those of the right-wing tabloid press.*  
*The techniques used with normal subjects give estimates that closely correspond to those derived from the clinical literature.*  
*The political weakness of these states corresponded.*

**1.5. Using the preposition like, the conjunction as, and the expression as**  
You can also use the preposition **like**, the conjunction **as**, and the expression **as** + ADJECTIVE / ADVERB + to describe similarities.

**Academic writing**

Phrase	Frequency per million words
similarly	100
in the same way	20
likewise	10

**1.1 To answer someone**  
give an answer and in answer to: *I'll give you a definite answer tomorrow.* • *He said nothing in answer to her question, but continued staring out of the window.*  
**reply** to answer someone: *'I know,' he replied.* • *They got up and walked out before I had a chance to reply.* • *When asked where she was going, she replied that it was none of their business.* • *I asked him how he was, and he replied with a shrug.*  
**respond** to answer something that someone says, especially when they have challenged or criticized you: *'I'm telling you it's not true,' Martinez responded.* • *'Is there anything you would like to do today?' he asked, but she didn't respond.* • *How do you respond to the suggestion that this is all the government's fault?*  
**make a response or give a response** *I called out to him, but he made no response.* • *Being an astute politician, she gave a careful response that completely failed to answer the question.*  
**Note:** **Reply** and **respond** mean more or less the same as **answer**, but are a little more formal, and are used mainly in written English.  
**retort** to answer someone immediately in an angry or humorous way: *'Mind your own business!' she retorted.* • *Democrats retorted that the plan leaves millions of poor Americans out in the cold.*

**2.1 To argue with someone**  
**quarrel** to argue: *I hate quarrelling with you.* • *They're always quarrelling over money.*  
**have a quarrel** *We had the usual family quarrel about who should do the washing up.* • *He'd had another quarrel with Jamie.*  
**fight** to disagree in an angry way about something: *What are you two fighting about now?* • *I don't want to fight over such a trivial matter.*  
**have a fight** *All teenagers have fights with their parents.*  
**row** to have a short noisy argument: *My parents never row.* • *We rowed constantly about everything.* • *He has rowed with everyone in the group.*  
**have a row** *They had a row and he walked out.* • *Our parents were always having rows about money.*  
**Note:** **Row** is used mainly in British English.  
**bicker or squabble** to argue with someone about things that are not important: *The children bickered constantly with each other.* • *They have been bickering for months over the leadership.* • *A group of boys were squabbling over the ball.* • *The other parties are squabbling amongst themselves.*  
**fall out** to stop being friendly with someone because

The **Improve Your Writing Skills** section in the centre of the dictionary gives learners advice on writing in 18 areas that often cause difficulties. These pages deal with vocabulary and grammar problems, present graphs comparing the use of a particular word or phrase by native speakers and learners, and develop the skills they need to write effectively in different professional and academic contexts.

The **Expand Your Vocabulary** section in the centre of the dictionary – on the themes of movement, communication and emotions – helps learners to choose the right word at the right time, and to use it correctly and idiomatically.

Picture 3. Examples from Macmillan English Dictionary

Macmillan Dictionaries will no longer appear as physical books. The **final copies are rolling off the presses at this very moment**, and from next year, Macmillan Dictionary will be available only online. Since its launch in 2009, **Macmillan Dictionary Online** has seen explosive growth and will now fully replace the print version in a transition that, according to Editor-in-Chief **Michael Rundell**, can only be a positive one.

Oxford University Press, the biggest academic publisher in the world, announced in 2009 that the next complete edition of the OED - the third, known as OED3 - would not be published in book form, but only online. 'The print dictionary market is just disappearing - it is falling away by tens of per cent a year,' said Nigel Portwood, the chief executive of Oxford University Press, who was in charge of the 80 lexicographers who had been working on OED3 for 21 years.

- **Electronic dictionaries, also handheld electronic dictionaries or pocket electronic dictionaries (PEDs)** are small devices that receive input via a miniature keyboard, speech recognition or a scanning device that reads printed text, and outputs the translation on a small LCD screen or speaks the translation audibly;



Pictures 4 and 5. Electronic dictionaries

- **Online dictionaries** are dictionaries that are accessible via the Internet through a web browser. They can be made available in a number of ways: free, free with a paid subscription for extended or more professional content, or a paid-only service. Some online dictionaries are organized as lists of words, similar to a glossary, while others offer search features, reverse lookups, and additional language tools and content such as verb conjugations, grammar references, and discussion forums;

The following is a concise list of online English dictionaries whose definitions are based upon well-established content.

### Monolingual dictionaries

- **Collins English Dictionary Online**, *Collins Unabridged English Dictionary*; *Collins Unabridged Thesaurus*; *Collins Webster's American English Dictionary*, available at <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english>
- **Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary**, available at <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

- **Oxford Dictionaries Online**, *Oxford Dictionary of English; New Oxford American Dictionary; Oxford Thesaurus of English; Oxford American Writer's Thesaurus*, available at <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/>

*Advanced learner dictionaries*

- **Cambridge Dictionaries Online**, *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, available at <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>
- **Longman Dictionaries Online**, *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, available at <http://www.ldoceonline.com/>
- **Macmillan Dictionary Online**, also containing thesaurus, blog, e-resources, available at <http://www.macmillandictionaries.com/dictionary-online/>
- **Oxford Dictionaries Online, Oxford Learner's Dictionary**, available at <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/> and <http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>



Picture 6. An online monolingual dictionary – Macmillan dictionary online

### Bilingual dictionaries

**Logos Bilingual Dictionaries**, *English-German, English-Spanish, English-French, English-Italian, English-Portuguese*, and other combinations between these languages, available at [http://www.logos.it/index\\_bilingual.php](http://www.logos.it/index_bilingual.php)

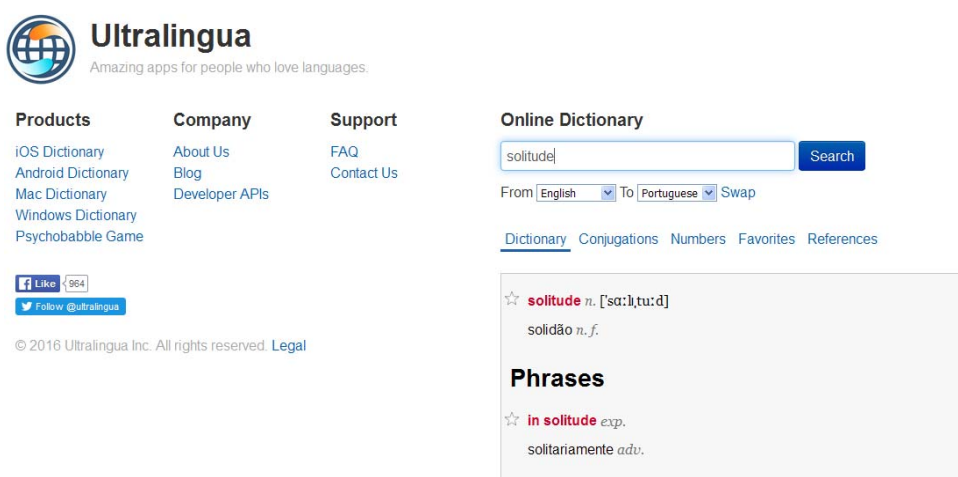
**Cambridge Dictionaries Online**, *English-Polish, English-Russian, English-German, English-French*, etc., available at <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>



Picture 7. Home page of Cambridge Dictionaries Online

### Multilingual dictionaries

- **dict.cc** is a free, multilingual online dictionary, available at <http://www.dict.cc/>
- **Ultralingua**, is a single-click and drag-and-drop multilingual translation dictionary, thesaurus, and language reference utility; the full suite of Ultralingua language tools is available free online without the need for download and installation, available at <http://www.ultralingua.com/>
- **WordNet**, a lexical database for English, available at <http://wordnet.princeton.edu/>



Picture 8. Home page of Ultralingua online dictionary

Most of online dictionaries are also available as mobile phone applications, for Android platform, iPhone, iPad, etc. Some of them are free, some of them are paid applications. Some of them are:

- e.g., DictionaryMerriam-Webster (free application)
- Oxford Dictionary of English (free application)
- The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (paid application)
- Dictionary – M-W Premium (paid application)

- **Visual dictionaries** are printed dictionaries that primarily use pictures to illustrate the meaning of the words; they are often organized by theme, instead of being an alphabetical list of words. For each theme, an image is labelled with the correct word to identify each component of the item in question. Visual dictionaries can be *monolingual* and *multilingual* (rather than bilingual—instead of containing translations between two languages they often cover four or more languages).

**Printed dictionaries:**

- Oxford Picture Dictionary (ISBN-13: 978-0194369763, ISBN-10: 0194369765), both monolingual (*Monolingual English edition*) and bilingual editions (*English-Spanish, English-Japanese, English-French, English-Russian, English-Brazilian Portuguese, English-Farsi, etc.*)
- Cambridge picture dictionary (authors: David Vale, Stephen Mullaney)
- Merriam-Webster Visual Dictionary (author, editor Jean Claude Corbeil)

**Online picture dictionaries:**

- Merriam-Webster Visual Dictionary Online, available at [http://visual.merriam-webster.com/about-visual\\_overview.php](http://visual.merriam-webster.com/about-visual_overview.php)



Picture 9. Home page of Merriam-Webster Visual Dictionary Online

- Oxford Learners' Dictionary Online, available at <http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/wordlist/english/pictures/>

### **The criteria: the prospective user**

All these types of dictionary can furthermore be divided into *general* or *specialized* dictionaries.

The **general dictionaries** deal with the more general side of one or several languages. A **specialized dictionary**, on the other hand, focuses on a more narrow and specialized part of a language, for example the words used in engineering, agriculture, medicine, aviation, experimental psychology, business, law, etc. The specialized dictionary is thus typically a subject-specific technical dictionary, but other types exist too, e.g. dictionaries of false friends, pictorial dictionaries, collocation dictionaries, idiom dictionaries, etc. They can be monolingual, bilingual or multilingual, printed or online.

#### **Some examples of the specialized dictionaries:**

Bawker, John (Ed.). (1997). *The Oxford Dictionary of World Regions*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-213965-7

Onion, C. T. (Ed.) *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*. Oxford University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0198611127, ISBN-10: 0198611129

Gorse, Christopher, Johnson, David, and Martin Pritchard (2012). *A Dictionary of Construction, Surveying and Civil Engineering*. Oxford University Press. Print ISBN-13: 9780199534463, Current Online Version: 2013 eISBN 9780191757624, DOI: 10.1093/acref/9780199534463.001.0001



## 5. Dictionaries in the field of agriculture

The dictionaries in the field of agriculture belong to the specialized dictionaries. They focus on the words used in agriculture and related fields. They can be printed or online, and monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual.

### Printed dictionaries:

*Monolingual* (some examples):

- Lapedes, Daniel, N. (Ed.) (1977). *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Food, Agriculture and Nutrition*. New York: McGraw-Hill. ISBN-10: 0070452636, ISBN-13: 978-0070452633;
- Wilburne, John, N. (Ed.) (1962). *A Dictionary of Agriculture and Allied Terminology*. Michigan State University Press. Available in digitalized form at <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924000003206;view=1up;seq=15>

*Bilingual and multilingual*:

- De Vries, Louis. (1978). *German-English science dictionary for students of chemistry, physics, biology, agriculture and related sciences*. Ed. 4. New York: McGraw Hill, 638p.
- Kolčar, V. (2002). *Englesko-srpski i srpsko-engleski poljoprivredni rečnik*, Beograd: Institut za kukuruz „Zemun Polje“.
- Veličkov, Lj. (2001). *Poljoprivredni rečnik: englesko-srpski, srpsko-engleski*. Beograd: Grmeč-Privredni pregled, str. 466.
- Tosheva, T. (Tania) (2000). *Elsevier's dictionary of agriculture in English, German, French, Russian and Latin*. Elsevier Science B. V., 777p. ISBN 9780444500052.

### Online dictionaries:

- [Agrovoc](http://aims.fao.org/aims/fao/standards/agrovoc/). Multilingual agricultural thesaurus. The FAO's Agricultural Thesaurus, in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Chinese. (multilingual) - available at <http://aims.fao.org/aims/fao/standards/agrovoc/> <http://aims.fao.org/standards/agrovoc/functionalities/search>;

AGROVOC is a controlled vocabulary covering all areas of interest of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, including food, nutrition, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, environment etc. It is published by FAO and edited by a community of experts. AGROVOC consists of over 32,000 concepts

available in 23 languages: Arabic, Chinese, Czech, English, French, German, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Lao, Malay, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Slovak, Spanish, Telugu, Thai, Turkish and Ukrainian.

You can use AGROVOC to look up the common name of a plant in a language that you do not master, or to find relations between a commodity and the crop from which it is produced. You can also use AGROVOC as a hub to access many other vocabularies available on the web. To date, AGROVOC is used by researchers, librarians and information managers for indexing, retrieving and organizing data in agricultural information systems and Web pages.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the AGROVOC Multilingual agricultural thesaurus. At the top, there is a navigation bar with language options: English, Français, Español, العربية, and Русский. Below this is a login section with fields for 'username' and 'password', a 'LOGIN' button, and social media links for Facebook and Twitter. The main header features the AIMS logo (Agricultural Information Management Standards) and icons for 'SEARCH', 'CONNECT', 'SIGN UP', and 'LOGIN'. A secondary navigation bar includes links for 'ABOUT', 'ACTIVITY', 'COMMUNITY', 'CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT', 'VEST DIRECTORY', and 'CONTACT US'. The main content area is titled 'AGROVOC Multilingual agricultural thesaurus' and includes a sub-navigation bar with links for 'ABOUT', 'SEARCH', 'ACCESS', 'COMMUNITY', 'USES', 'LINKED DATA', 'PUBLICATIONS', 'FAQ', and 'CONTACT US'. A news section highlights the 'Latest AGROVOC release : March 2015' and provides a brief description of the thesaurus as a controlled vocabulary covering all areas of interest of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). It also includes a contact email 'agrovoc@fao.org' and a registration prompt to receive e-mail updates.

Picture 10. Agrovoc Multilingual agricultural thesaurus

- USDA, the National Agricultural Library Thesaurus and Glossary – online vocabulary tools of agricultural terms in English and Spanish, available at <http://agclass.nal.usda.gov/agt.shtml>, <http://agclass.nal.usda.gov/glossary.shtml> (monolingual and bilingual dictionary).

They are produced by the National Agricultural Library, USDA, and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture as well as other Latin American agricultural institutions belonging to the Agriculture Information and Documentation Service of the Americas (SIDALC). It offers in depth coverage of agriculture, biology and related disciplines containing over 120,610 terms including 57,539 cross-references. It can be downloaded in XML, RDF-SKOS, PDF, MARC and DOC formats. It is accessible 24 hour 7 days per week since 2002 and browsable by 17

subject categories (in alphabetic order), e.g., Animal science and animal products, Biological sciences, Breeding and genetic improvement, Economics, business and industry, Farms and farming systems, Food and human nutrition, Forest science and forest products, Geographical locations, Government, law and regulations, Health and pathology, Insects and entomology, Natural resources, Earth and environment, Physical and chemical sciences, Plant science and plant products, Research, technology and engineering, Rural and agricultural sociology, and Taxonomic classification of organisms.

Both glossary files and thesaurus files can be downloaded. Also, a list of new descriptors is added in 2016 Edition.



Picture 11. Home page of USDA National Agricultural Library Thesaurus and Glossary

Several glossaries are available online:

- Agriculture network, Glossary for the whole series, available at <http://www.agriculturesnetwork.org/resources/learning/dictionary>
- Glossary of beekeeping terms, monolingual glossaries for different languages, e.g., English, Spanish, German, Russian, available at <http://www.bushfarms.com/beeterms.htm>

## 6. Dictionaries – entries

### How to find the words in the printed dictionary?

It is important to know the alphabet well. You will need to be able to judge quickly whether any word comes before or after another one, this is called alphabetical order. If the first letters of two words are the same, look at the next letters to decide the correct order. This principle works for monolingual, bilingual and multilingual dictionaries.

**Example:** *clod, cold, crop* – in the case of these three words *clod* comes first. The first letter is the same for all three words, so the correct alphabetical order is based on the second letter.

Words are printed in **large bold type** at the upper top left-hand and right-hand corner of any page to help you quickly find a word in the Dictionary. The first of these two words show you which is the first word on that page, the second shows you the last word to be found on that page.

**Example:** *You are looking for the word 'silage'.* You can find it on the page which has two words ...

Once you have found the word you are looking for you need to understand a few common conventions to make best use of your dictionary. Here is an example entry in a monolingual dictionary:

**soil** /sɔɪl/ *n.* the upper layer of earth in which plants grow, a black or dark brown material typically consisting of a mixture of organic remains, clay, and rock particles: *blueberries need very acid soil.* – **soily** *adv.*

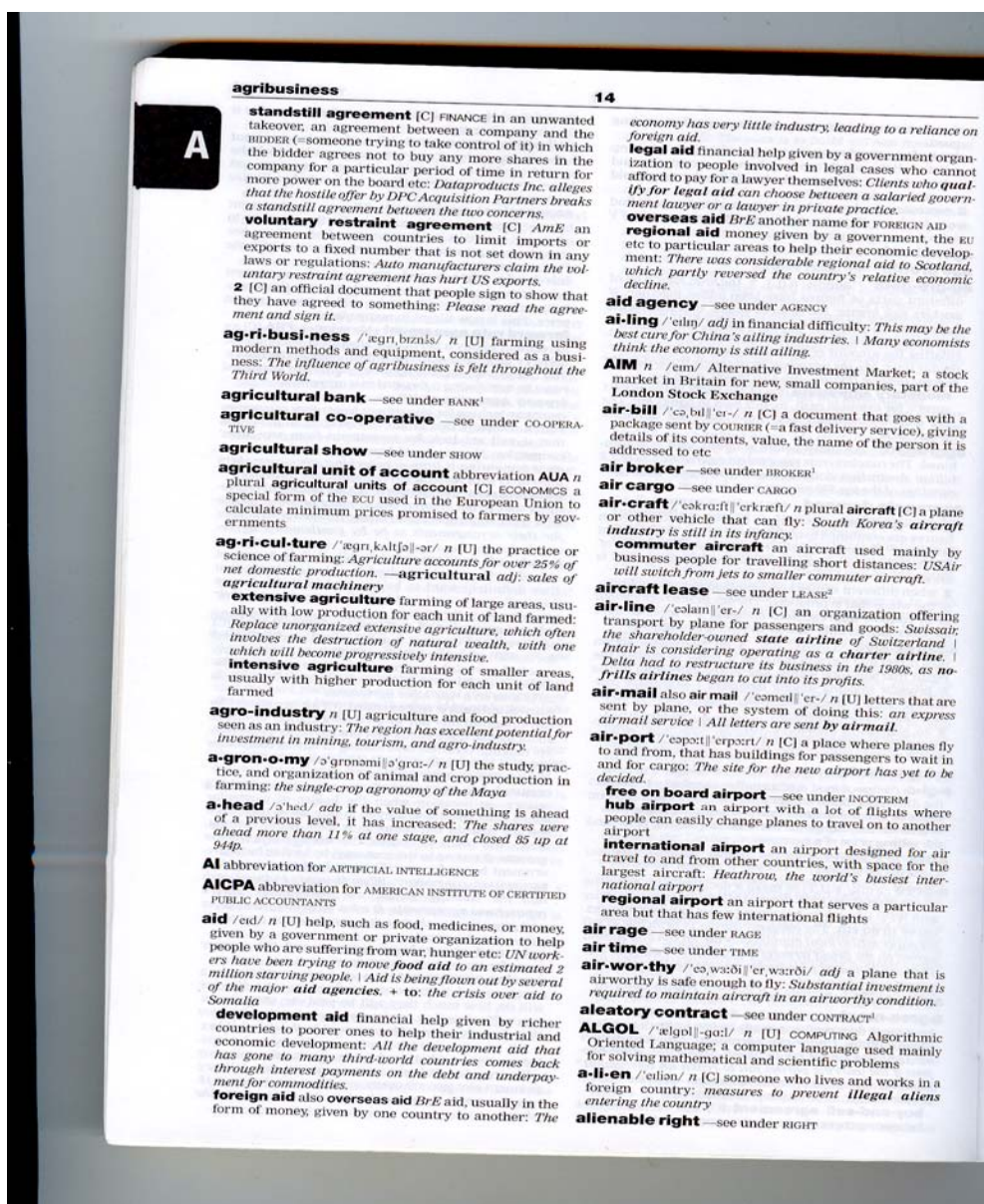
1. **soil** - the word which is defined;
2. /sɔɪl/ - phonological transcription of the word (the correct pronunciation), usually using the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet),

IPA - the most widely used system for representing the sounds of any language. A reproduction of the latest version of the International Phonetic Alphabet (2005) is available at the website of the International Phonetic Association, available at [https://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org/redirected\\_home](https://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org/redirected_home). Abbreviation: *IPA*.

The transcription of two and more syllable words are featured by stress marks like in

ˈ  
Primary stress  
ˌ  
Secondary stress  
ˌfaʊnəˈtɪʃən

3. *n.* - the part of speech, in this case 'n.' means noun (look for a list of abbreviations used in your Dictionary usually included on one of the first few pages);
4. the upper layer of earth in which plants grow, a black or dark brown material typically consisting of a mixture of organic remains, clay, and rock particles;  
This is the definition of the word. Different meanings of a word will be separated by numbers.
5. *blueberries need very acid soil* - an example sentence using the defined word;
6. *soily* – word which can be derived (and it is an adverb).



Picture 12. Entries in monolingual Longman Business English Dictionary



## How to use an online dictionary?

When you go to the dictionary home page, you will notice a box for searching the words.

Step 1. Just type your word into the search box and click OK or SEARCH.

Step 2. The definition will appear in the window.

Step 3. If you want to hear how the word is pronounced, click the speaker button (both British English and American English pronunciation).



The screenshot shows the Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the word "agriculture" entered. The search results for "agriculture" are displayed in the main content area. The word is shown in a large font with a speaker icon for pronunciation. Below the word, the part of speech "noun" and the phonetic transcription "ag-ri-cul-ture" and "\a-gri-'kæl-cher\u026a" are provided. The "Simple Definition of AGRICULTURE" is given as "the science or occupation of farming", with a note that it is "Popularity: Top 20% of words". The "Full Definition of AGRICULTURE" is "the science, art, or practice of cultivating the soil, producing crops, and raising livestock and in varying degrees the preparation and marketing of the resulting products". The word is also shown in a list form: "-ag-ri-cul-tur-ist" and "ag-ri-cul-tur-al-ist". On the right side, there is a "WORD OF THE DAY" section for "zeugma" dated "JANUARY 26, 2016", with the definition "the use of a word in more than one sense". Below this is a "Get Word of the Day daily email!" subscription form with a "SUBSCRIBE" button. At the bottom right, there is an advertisement for "LOCHAMP" featuring images of a tractor, a cow, and a pig, with "CE" and "ISO" logos.

Picture 14. Illustration of searching a word in Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online

## 7. GLOSSARY

**Abbreviation** – shortened form of a word or phrase; e.g., “*FAO is the abbreviation of Food and Agriculture Organization*”;

**Alphabetical order** - an arrangement of a series of items in an order corresponding to that of the alphabet;

**Antonym** - a word that means the opposite of another word (e.g., *bad* and *good*);

**Bilingual dictionary** - is a dictionary used to translate words or phrases from one language to another;

**Derivation** - the origin of something, such as a word, from which another form has developed, or the new form itself;

**Dictionary** - a book or electronic resource that lists the words of a language (typically in alphabetical order) and gives their meaning, or gives the equivalent words in a different language, often also providing information about pronunciation, origin, and usage;

**Electronic dictionary** - a machine-readable version of a standard dictionary; organized alphabetically; also known as handheld electronic dictionaries and pocket electronic dictionaries or PEDs;

**Entry** - a word (as the noun *book*), word element (as the affix *pro-*), abbreviation (as *agt*), verbalized symbol (as *Na*), or term (as *man in the street*) entered alphabetically in a dictionary for the purpose of definition or identification or expressly included as an inflected form (as the noun *mice*) or as a derived form (as the noun *godlessness*) or related phrase (as *one for the book*) run on at its base word and usually set in a type (as boldface) readily distinguishable from that of the lightface running text which defines, explains, or identifies the entry;

**IPA** – abbreviation of the term **International Phonetic Alphabet** - An internationally recognized set of phonetic symbols developed in the late 19th century, based on the principle of strict one-to-one correspondence between sounds and symbols;

**Monolingual dictionary** – is a dictionary which uses the same language for the words and their definitions;

**Multilingual dictionary** – is a dictionary in which words and phrases are presented with the translation in several languages; they can be arranged alphabetically or words can be grouped by topic (when grouped by topic, it is usual for multilingual dictionary to be illustrated);



**Online dictionary** - a reference source in electronic form or published as a digital product such as web site or application, containing words usually alphabetically arranged along with information about their forms; it may be monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual;

**Orthography** – the accepted way of spelling and writing words;

**Part of speech** - one of the main grammatical groups that a particular word belongs to according to the way it is used in a sentence (e.g., noun, pronoun, adjective, determiner, adverb, verb, preposition, conjunction, interjection);

**Phonetic alphabet** - a set of symbols (as the IPA) used for phonetic transcription;

**Picture dictionary** - a dictionary where the definition of a word is displayed in the form of a drawing or photograph; often organized by topic instead of being an alphabetic list of words, and almost always include only a small corpus of words;

**Prefix** – a letter or group of letters added to the beginning of a word to make a new word (e.g., in the word '*unimportant*', '*un-*' is a prefix);

**Register** - a variety of a language or a level of usage, as determined by degree of formality and choice of vocabulary, pronunciation, and syntax, according to the communicative purpose, social context, and standing of the user;

**Specialized dictionary** - a dictionary that covers a relatively restricted set of phenomena (e.g., dictionary of idioms, dictionary of slang, dictionary of synonyms, dictionary of agriculture, dictionary of law, etc.);

**Spelling** - the correct way of writing a word;

**Stress** - emphasis given to a particular syllable or word in speech, typically through a combination of relatively greater loudness, higher pitch, and longer duration;

**Suffix** - a letter or group of letters added at the end of a word to make a new word (e.g., the suffix '*-ness*' is added to '*great*' and '*happy*' to make '*greatness*' and '*happiness*');

**Synonym** - a word or phrase that has the same or nearly the same meaning as another word or phrase in the same language (e.g., *small* and *little*);

**Visual dictionary** - a dictionary that primarily uses pictures to illustrate the meaning of words and is often organized by themes, instead of being an alphabetical list of words.

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