

BILINGUAL ENGLISH/SPANISH DICTIONARIES

The Oxford Spanish Dictionary (2003)

Third Edition, Galimberti Jarman, B. and Russell, R. chief editors.

Oxford University Press .

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Introduction

The purpose of this research paper is to assess whether the Oxford Spanish Dictionary, Third Edition should be considered a complete and/or valuable tool for Spanish translators. The assessment was done through the use of a list of 589 problematic words and phrases that were looked up in the Oxford Spanish Dictionary to see if the equivalent in the target language text is found as a word and in the context that it appears in the source language text.

Findings

After looking for the equivalents in the target language (Spanish) of the 589 words in the problematic list in the Oxford Spanish Dictionary, Third Edition, the results were the following:

Out of the 589 words, 502 (85.22%) of the problematic words and phrases were covered and a Spanish equivalents were found which fitted the context it which they appeared and 86 (14.6%) did not have an equivalent in the target language (O). Out of the 502 words that did have an equivalent in the target language 52 (8.6%) were compound words or phrases that had to be looked up separately. After looking for each word in the phrase individually they were put together to form the equivalent phrase in the target text.

What comes out of the data presented in the section above can be interpreted as follows: The Oxford Spanish Dictionary -when it comes to general/non technical words – has a coverage of approximately 85% of the full list of problematic words. This coverage can be considered quite high taking into account that the texts used to create the problematic lists were texts that could be located on the boarder line of technical or specialized in a particular topic. So for a general bilingual dictionary it is a very good coverage percentage and it may be considered a very good tool for student translators.

Because of the relatively small list of words used in the study, this assessment should be considered as a starting point towards an in depth review rather, than a fully reliable statement about the Oxford Spanish Dictionary.

