

Grande Dicionário Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa

Mauro de Salles Villar

In the 1980s, Brazilian diplomat and linguist Antônio Houaiss, and a small group that I was part of, started to put together a project for a general-purpose dictionary that would differ from all others available in Portuguese.

Four fundamentals were established for the task to be undertaken:

1. The screening, by using various gathering techniques (from text corpora, to literature, to reading scientific books, to dictionary research, etc.), of the most comprehensive nomenclature consistent with the scope of a general-purpose dictionary that would also incorporate Portuguese linguistic performances outside the Portugal/Brazil axis.
2. A thorough inventory and analysis of Portuguese morphemes as a base for establishing large families of words with common ancient etymons.
3. A full-fledged effort to date lexical units to act as illustrative quotations, and to convey reliability in terms of the way that senses appear arranged within the entries.
4. An in-depth etymological study of each unit to anchor the entries' definitions.

The first edition of *Dicionário Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa*, now called *Grande Dicionário Houaiss*, resulted from an endeavor that started in February 1986 and ended in December 2000, and which involved the work of 35 lexicographers and 43 specialized external collaborators, as well as contributions from Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique.

The outcome was a dictionary with approximately 228,500 lexical units. The work is not a synchronic view of any given chronological or geographical segment of the language. Rather, from a historical perspective, it focuses on phenomena that mostly concern modern-day usage of the language in Brazil and Portugal. But it also contains a selection of words from both old and archaic Portuguese whose inclusion is warranted, for instance, by their rate of occurrence in the literary history.

Dicionário Houaiss was published in 2001, fifteen years after it was begun in 1986. It was first issued in print, later becoming available both on CD-ROM and online. A European version complying with the orthography and the linguistic norm

then officially adopted in Portugal came out in 2002.

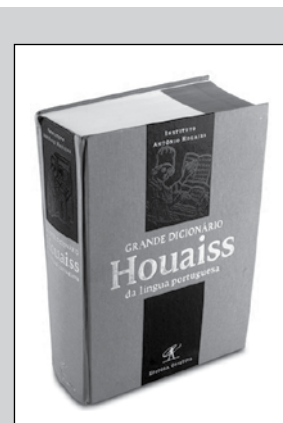
The second edition has just been completed. It is the outcome of another 10 years of revising and adding new materials to the first set. As compared to the first edition, hundreds of thousands of amendments were incorporated into every feature of the work — from definitions to phonetic notations, from dating references to the list of sources, from revised etymologies to the inclusion of morpheme-headwords. In addition, the lexicon was also revised, as were the specific descriptions concerning scientific and technical subjects such as biology, ecology, physics, astronomy, computer science, zoology, botany, and so forth.

This second edition features over 234,000 entries, of which 194,936 are words, word combinations, or morphemes; 29,393 are nestings; 4,861 are plurals carrying their own distinct meanings; 210 are phrases subsumed into the entries' microstructures; and 4,889 are words used on maps.

The first edition of our dictionary enjoyed an excellent response among common readers and specialized critics alike. This time, we are set on providing an even more rigorous, pondered, updated, and improved version of what had previously been accomplished.

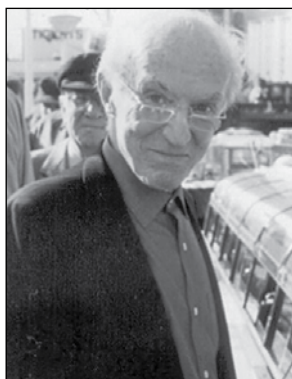
Instituto Antônio Houaiss and K Dictionaries have launched the new joint brand name HOUAISS KERNERMAN for Portuguese bilingual dictionaries.

Mauro de Salles Villar was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1939 and is a lexicographer, encyclopedist and lawyer. He is the Chief Editor of *Grande Dicionário Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa*, co-director of Instituto Antônio Houaiss of lexicography, and member of the Brazilian Academy of Philology. maurovillar@iah.com.br



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Antônio Houaiss and Mauro de Salles Villar 2001. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Objetiva
Hardcover, lxxxiii + 2,925 pages, 305 x 230 mm
ISBN 85-7302-383-X
www.objetiva.com.br



Antônio Houaiss, 1915-1999, was a Brazilian lexicographer, writer and translator, who served as the Minister of Culture, and was a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. He was the son of Lebanese immigrants, and was born and died in Rio de Janeiro. He is best known for his translation of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and for supervising the compilation of the *Dicionário Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa*.