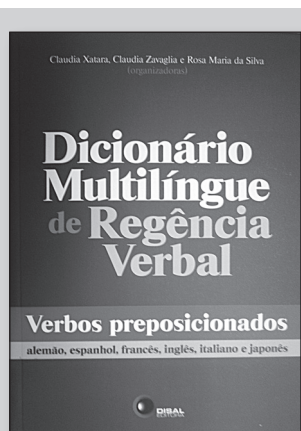


Claudia Xatara, Claudia Zavaglia, Rosa Maria da Silva (dirs.). *Dicionário Multilíngue de Regência Verbal – Verbos preposicionados*



Dicionário Multilíngue de Regência Verbal

Verbos preposicionados

Claudia Xatara, Claudia Zavaglia, Rosa Maria da Silva (dirs.)

Portuguese - Claudia Xatara | Claudia Zavaglia | Rosa Maria da Silva

English - Peter James Harris

French - Claudia Xatara

German - João Moraes Pinto Junior

Italian - Claudia Zavaglia | Fábio Bertanha | Vivian Orsi

Japanese - Eliza Atsuko Tashito

Spanish - Rosa Maria da Silva
São Paulo: Disal Editora
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It is a well-known fact that collocations and prepositional regency are the hardest part of learning a foreign language, since the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign also affects the combinability of the signs; besides, theoretical phraseology expanded a long time ago its object of study beyond set phrases and proverbs, extending its interest to light verb constructions, routine formulae, interjections, insults, curses, etc. The compilation of dictionaries has not always duly accompanied this progress, and, in many languages, good dictionaries of collocations are still missing, or, when available, appear much later, in comparison to other types of dictionaries. The fact that the boundaries between what belongs to phraseology and what belongs to syntax are not unanimously accepted is perhaps one of the reasons why, in many languages, not enough attention has been granted until recently to the production of dictionaries of propositional schemes or verbal valences.

Although verbal valency is a syntactic phenomenon, it depends largely on the meaning of each verb, since it cannot be predicted only from formal rules. Such rules may explain the mechanics of “arguments” like subject and object for transitive verbs, but when prepositional complements appear the casuistry explodes. A verb may have figurative meanings that alter completely the valency, e.g. Portuguese *dar* (to give), which is trivalent *par excellence*, loses its arguments in some sequences that are neither ditransitive nor idiomatic set phrases. In Spanish, *la terraza da al mar* (*the terrace gives to the sea *the terrace overlooks the sea*) has no direct object; or *dio con la cabeza contra el muro* (*he gave with the head against the wall *he beat his head against the wall*) has neither indirect nor direct object. These examples are not necessarily set-phrases, although they may undergo a metaphor that integrates them into an idiom, like in Spanish *dar en el clavo* (*to give in the nail *to hit the nail*). Therefore, the figurative meanings are linked to a prepositional regency as variable and as whimsical as English phrasal verbs, with a certain degree of phraseological fixation that affects not only the seemingly arbitrary union between a given verb and a given preposition, but also the verbal valences, which are no longer the same as in the “literal” verb.

The team led by Brazilian phraseologists

Claudia Xatara, Claudia Zavaglia and Rosa Maria da Silva made this *Dicionário Multilíngue de Regência Verbal – Verbos preposicionados* facing the difficult task of making an inventory of these events, ordering and describing them, comparing each construction in seven languages (Portuguese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish), ordering them alphabetically from the Portuguese version. Starting from 6,000 verbs taken from Borba’s grammatical dictionary (Francisco Da Silva Borba, *Dicionário gramatical de verbos do português contemporâneo*. São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 1991), and taking information from large general dictionaries, like *Aurélio* (Aurélio Buarque de Holanda Ferreira, *Dicionário Aurélio da Língua Portuguesa*. Curitiba: Editora Positivo, 1975, 1999, 2010) or *Houaiss* (*Grande Dicionário Houaiss da Língua Portuguesa*. Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Antônio Houaiss, 2001, 2003), data were checked and compared with the *Corpus Textual Eletrônico do Laboratório de Lexicografia* of UNESP (São Paulo State University), gathering 1,200 Brazilian Portuguese words, clarifying and describing their construction regency. The authors’ starting assumption is that prepositional complements are also mandatory arguments of the verb in certain constructions (e.g. *simpatizar com* *sympathize with, *rezar por* *pray for), which are called in Portuguese *verbos preposicionados* (*prepositional verbs). An explanatory paraphrase and a Portuguese definition of each entry are provided, with examples of real usage, as well as equivalents in the six other languages (with the good idea of adding the transliteration into Latin alphabet for Japanese hiragana and katakana characters).

One of the most representative entries is *dar* (give), which has 35 sub-entries, where the regular valences of the literal meanings of the verb inevitably meet together with the not so literal ones, and with several more or less idiomatic combinations, such as *dar com alguém* (*give with someone *to meet someone*), equivalent to Spanish and German reflexive constructions requiring another verb (*encontrarse con alguien*; *mit sich jemandem treffen* *to find oneself with someone), and to a completely different metaphor in Italian (*imbattersi in qualcuno* *bump into someone).

Since a foreign language learner cannot know beforehand the boundaries between

categories which are still controversial even for specialists, it is clear that a prototypical user of a bilingual dictionary needs a reference work where all this kind of information is available simultaneously, without knowing in advance whether the searched sequences are syntactic, lexical or phraseological. Since most of the valences involve prepositional complements, and we cannot expect the learner to distinguish *a priori* between verbal valency and prepositional regency, the dictionary must enable the user to access both phenomena as they occur naturally in speech: “mixed together”.

The Spanish verb *consentir* (*to allow) is trivalent (A *consiente* B a C) (*someone consents something to someone), but it is also possible to have (A *consiente* en B), with no addressee, a construction that is possible also in French but without changing the preposition (*consentir à qqch.*) while, in Italian, the ellipsis of the addressee requires to change the verb and the preposition at the same time (*acconsentire a: permettere a qualcuno di*).

In this sense, verbal valences also belong to the field of lexical combinations, and need a detailed lexicographical treatment, including the lexical and prepositional environment of each verb, not only for their literal meaning, but also for their figurative and idiomatic values. The cross-linguistic dimension means the predictable valency in one language may have, in another language, an equivalent whose argument is a prepositional complement instead of a direct object. Besides, each preposition can govern another morpho-syntactic case, thus the possibilities are multiplied.

For example, let's have a look at DREAM + NAME OF ACTION: in Italian the dreamed action is represented by a direct object (*sogna viaggiare* *he dreams travelling), whereas in Spanish and Portuguese it is a prepositional complement of company (*soñar con viajar / sonhar com viajar* *to dream with travelling) and in French and German there is a genitive construction (*rêver de... Traumen von* *to dream of).

Another clear example of this apparent arbitrariness is “FALLING IN LOVE”, which in Spanish requires *de* (genitive construction: *enamorarse de*), while English requires *with* (committative construction: *to fall in love with*), German requires *in* (locative construction: *sich verlieben in*), and Portuguese requires *por* (ablative construction: *se apaixonar por*). In this sense, Spanish *andar detrás de N* (*to walk after N *to be looking for (something)*) allows us to suspect that the difference between collocations, idioms and phrasal verbs is not as clear and objective as is

often thought.

The entries are presented as follows:

DAR (31) POR algo/alguém (*perceber a ausência de*)

→ *quando derem por mim será tarde demais*

A: *jemandem etwas vermissen* **Ø**

E: ***echar en falta algo/alguien***

F: ***remarquer l'absence de***

In: ***note the absence of***

It.: ***accorgersi di***

J: ***ga iru (inai) no ni ki ga tsuku***

DAR (34) algo POR algo (*desfazer-se; vender*)

→ *só darei o meu Picasso por uma fortuna equivalente à sua beleza*

A: *etwas für etwas verkaufen*

E: ***vender por***

F: ***donner contre; donner pour***

In: ***to give up for***

It.: ***dare per; vendere per***

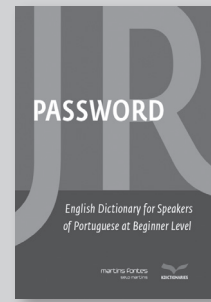
J: ***wo to korihiki suru***

The applications to natural language processing and/or machine translation are also important. For example, the Google Translate tool (<http://translate.google.com/>, accessed May 2014), though based on translation memory and statistics, shows a dramatically wrong result for *dar por alguém* (**by giving someone*) or for Spanish *echar en falta a* (**hacks to take*) instead of *to notice the absence of*. Results are no better with the *Word Reference* tool (<http://wordreference.com/>, accessed May 2014). The same can be said about the great majority of such constructions, except when, incidentally, English coincides literally with the Portuguese (or Spanish, etc) form.

This dictionary is, thus, an excellent tool, not only for foreign learners (and teachers) of the Portuguese language, but also for research purposes in contrastive linguistics in a field that has been a kind of ‘no man’s land’ for too many years: the borderline between syntax, idioms and lexicology.

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**PASSWORD JR
English Dictionary for
Speakers of Portuguese at
Beginner Level**

Martins Editora Livraria
São Paulo, Brazil
June 2014

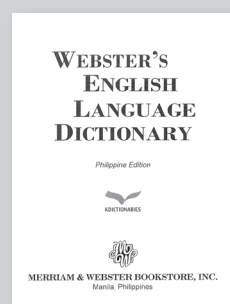
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Philippine Edition**

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Manila, Philippines

June 2014

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Cambridge Dictionaries Online

PASSWORD semi-bilingual English learners' dictionaries on CDO:

French - <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-french/>

German - <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-german/>

Spanish - <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-spanish/>

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