



A Review on the Oxford Advanced Dictionary Online Intended for Learners of English

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Abstract: Nowadays, the use of online dictionaries is a great help to helping learners of English to enhance their English rules. The present study aimed to achieve its objectives through an initial exposition of the comprehensive attributes of the Oxford Advanced Dictionary online, recognized as a valuable educational resource, followed by a review of its merits and demerits in terms of content and presentation for its intended user demographic. The method used in this study was the library research approach as a means of gathering pertinent data from the online dictionary, which entailed the need for contextual references to comprehend the usefulness of the dictionary. It was found that the dictionary provided a piece of comprehensive information and an in-depth understanding of the various aspects of the English language essential for enhancing learners' mastery of English and authentic usage of words through citations and corpora. On the contrary, the one notable drawback of this dictionary pertains to its dependency on internet connectivity. Due to its online nature, English learners may encounter challenges accessing the dictionary in offline settings or regions with limited internet availability and confining their opportunities for learning. A conclusion was also drawn that this online dictionary facilitates learners' ability to articulate words clearly, drawing from the extensive resources provided within the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary online.

Key Words: oxford dictionary, online dictionary, advanced dictionary

Abstrak: Saat ini, penggunaan kamus online sangat membantu pelajar bahasa Inggris untuk meningkatkan pemahaman tata bahasa Inggris mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mencapai sasaran melalui penjelasan awal tentang ciri komprehensif Oxford Advanced Dictionary online, yang diakui sebagai sumber pendidikan yang berharga, diikuti dengan tinjauan kelebihan dan kekurangannya dalam hal konten dan presentasi untuk demografis pengguna yang dituju. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan library research sebagai sarana pengumpulan data terkait dari kamus online, yang mensyaratkan perlunya referensi kontekstual untuk memahami kegunaan kamus tersebut. Ditemukan bahwa kamus memberikan informasi yang komprehensif dan pemahaman mendalam tentang berbagai aspek bahasa Inggris yang penting untuk meningkatkan penguasaan bahasa Inggris dan penggunaan kata-kata otentik oleh pembelajar melalui kutipan dan kumpulan teks. Sebaliknya, satu kelemahan penting dari kamus ini berkaitan dengan ketergantungannya pada konektivitas internet. Karena sifat daringnya, pelajar bahasa Inggris mungkin menghadapi tantangan dalam mengakses kamus di wilayah dengan ketersediaan internet terbatas dan membatasi kesempatan mereka untuk belajar. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa kamus online ini memfasilitasi kemampuan pembelajar untuk mengartikulasikan kata-kata dengan jelas, mengambil dari sumber daya ekstensif yang disediakan dalam Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary online.

Kata Kunci: kamus oxford, kamus online, kamus level mahir

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INTRODUCTION

Of the aspects that a lexicographer needs to be concerned with, the dictionary user plays a central role in the planning process of a dictionary creation, where decisions on the microstructure of a dictionary—the organization of the entry components or the content of a dictionary—are very much influenced by the needs and skills of the dictionary's typical user (Atkins & Rundell, 2008, p. 17). Therefore, it is accurate when Atkins and Rundell mention that a good dictionary reflects the type of people who will be using it and what they will be using it for (p. 176). A physician who is trying to broaden his knowledge by reading English texts on medicine, for example, is not supposed to use a dictionary for English learners, which will, of course, be less helpful in solving problems related to specific terminology in medicine studies. Rather, he/she may use an English dictionary for medicine. In the same way, on the contrary, a student learning English finds English dictionaries for medicine unhelpful to meet his/her needs. Rather, in this case, it will be of much help to use a learner's dictionary of English. Even so, not all learner's dictionaries are reliable and suitable for the purpose of English learning. Every dictionary—including learner's dictionary—has its own target users, that is, whether it is for high school students, college students, graduate students, or other types of students.

Online dictionaries have become essential tools for language learners due to their convenience, accessibility, and wealth of information. Learners can easily look up word meanings, synonyms, and antonyms, which facilitate vocabulary acquisition. These dictionaries often provide a variety of definitions and examples, allowing learners to understand the proper usage of words in different contexts. The audio of pronunciations helps them improve their listening and speaking skills. Hearing the correct pronunciation can aid learners in identifying the speech patterns of the sounds. Online dictionaries often include spelling suggestions and grammar tips. Correcting spelling errors and understanding proper grammatical structures can significantly enhance writing skills. Learners also can access online dictionaries anytime and anywhere, providing immediate answers to language queries. This quick access fosters a self-directed learning approach and encourages continuous language exploration. Learners can also understand how words are commonly used together in phrases and sentences provided in online dictionaries. These many advantages make the learning process more engaging and enjoyable. It is essential to note that the impact of online dictionaries on language learning may vary depending on learners' individual preferences, language proficiency levels, and the quality of the dictionary itself. Research studies on this topic can provide more in-depth insights into the specific effects of online dictionaries on English language learning.

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD) is the world's bestselling advanced-level dictionary for learners of English. It was first published in 1948. The OALD is created especially for learners of English, with clear and simple definitions, synonyms, real voice audio, and example sentences showing language in use. The A-Z is integrated with the new Oxford 3000 and Oxford 5000-word lists, which provide core vocabulary that every student needs to learn. The complete A-Z is available for free online; you can read meanings, examples, and usage notes; listen to British and American English pronunciations; expand images to view related vocabulary. There are also extra resources and practice available including the iSpeaker and iWrite. This dictionary is a comprehensive and reliable resource for English learners, providing a wealth of information about the English language. Developed by Oxford University Press, it offers a user-friendly platform that allows learners to access definitions, pronunciations, and examples of words in context. The dictionary covers a vast range of vocabulary, including words from various English-speaking regions and dialects. It also offers detailed

explanations of word meanings, usage, and grammatical structures, making it an invaluable tool for learners striving to improve their language skills. The Oxford Online Dictionary also includes audio pronunciations for many words, helping learners grasp the correct pronunciation and enhance their spoken language abilities. Additionally, it provides synonyms and antonyms to facilitate the development of a broader vocabulary and promote more precise expression. With its constantly updated content, this dictionary stays relevant and reflective of the evolving English language, ensuring that learners receive accurate and up-to-date information. Whether you are a beginner or an advanced English learner, the Oxford Online Dictionary serves as a reliable companion in your language learning journey.

This study aims to review one of the online dictionaries intended for English learners—the 9th edition of Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD online). It seeks to accomplish this by initially providing a general overview of its features and subsequently evaluating the dictionary's content and presentation merits and demerits based on the perspectives outlined by Atkins and Rundell (2008). Finally, this study draws a conclusion about the dictionary's suitability for its intended user group. The utilization of this dictionary is identified as a valuable learning tool to aid English learners in enhancing their proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It achieves this by facilitating the acquisition of new words and further understanding of the words already acquired within their lexical set in the lexicon. Therefore, this present study endeavors to address the following research questions:

1. What features does the OALD offer to effectively support advanced English learners in their language development?
2. What are the merits and demerits of the OALD that help learners' proficiency enhance their natural usage of English to provide a deeper understanding of English words?

METHOD

The research method of this research is descriptive qualitative with a little quantification to determine the average of the score. Such procedure is taken to collect the data, which is Observation.

According to Nawawi and Martini (1992: 74) (Anggraeni & Pentury, 2018), "Observation is systematic observation and recording of elements which are appear in a symptom or symptoms on the object of study". In this observation, the researcher is involved with the daily activities of the person being observed or used as a source of research data. In this research, the writer uses the observation method named Complete Participation. The complete participation of the researcher has fully involved what the data sources do. In other words, this observation requires a natural place so that researcher is not seen doing a research.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary Online (OALD)

Online dictionaries play a significant role in vocabulary expansion for language learners. They offer a wide array of features and resources that aid in discovering and understanding new words. The Oxford Online Advanced Learner's Dictionary is an extensively regarded lexical resource designed to cater to the needs of English language learners at an advanced level. Published by Oxford University Press, the dictionary's online version is a comprehensive language tool that offers valuable insights into contemporary English vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and nuances of word usage. This resource has

gained prominence in the field of language education and research due to its reliability, accessibility, and up-to-date content.

The OALD is based on a corpus-driven approach, utilizing large collections of authentic written and spoken language data to inform its lexical entries. By drawing upon a vast range of sources, such as books, articles, websites, and transcripts, the dictionary ensures that its definitions and examples reflect current language usage accurately. The incorporation of authentic language data allows learners to comprehend how words are employed in context, aiding in the acquisition of natural language skills. Furthermore, the OALD's focus on collocations and usage patterns provides learners with valuable information about how words typically combine with other words in different contexts. This aspect proves particularly advantageous for learners seeking to attain a deeper understanding of English word usage and develop more native-like language proficiency. In addition, the dictionary's user-friendly interface and advanced search functionalities facilitate seamless navigation and efficient access to relevant information. Learners of English can explore phonetic transcriptions, audio pronunciations, and various usage notes to enhance their listening, speaking, and comprehension abilities. The inclusion of interactive features, such as word lists and bookmarking options, empowers learners to customize their learning experience and track their progress systematically.

In academia, the Oxford Online Advanced Learner's Dictionary has been widely utilized in language teaching and learning contexts. Educators frequently recommend the resource to their students, recognizing its credibility and pedagogical value. Researchers have also incorporated the OALD in empirical studies to investigate language acquisition, vocabulary learning strategies, and corpus-based language analysis (Thomson & Derbyshire, 2016; Mitchell, 2018). Online dictionaries provide thorough and accurate definitions of words, helping learners comprehend the meaning and usage of unfamiliar terms, and the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) is widely recognized for its extensive and detailed word definitions, offering historical context and usage examples. Audio pronunciations provided by OALD help learners improve their pronunciation skills. Listening to native speakers pronounce words accurately enhances learners' ability to speak naturally and this dictionary is the largest and most trusted free online dictionary for English learners with definitions, pictures, example sentences, synonyms, and more as well as continues to be the ultimate speaking and writing tool for developing the skills needed for passing exams and communicating in English (Oxford English Dictionary, n.d.). In addition to the online version, there are also mobile apps available for both Android and iOS devices. These applications provide convenient access to the dictionary's content on the go. The online home of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary is www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com.

Empirical Studies on Oxford Online Advanced English Dictionary

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary furnishes a comprehensive explication of "research" elucidating its purpose as a meticulous examination of a subject, particularly to unveil novel facts or information concerning it. Accessible through online platforms and mobile applications on handheld devices, the dictionary application has gained widespread availability. Lew (2010) highlights that online dictionaries proffer interactive means of word definition exploration, distinguishing them from their printed counterparts. Through the online interface, users can instantaneously retrieve word meanings with a simple click of the mouse and navigate through the digital pages effortlessly. The selection of dictionaries assumes importance, given that certain sources present definitions riddled with unfamiliar words and intricate sentence structures, consequently impeding comprehension.

In language learning, dictionaries play a pivotal role in aiding learners, underscoring the significance of selecting an appropriate dictionary for their needs. Lou and Li (2012) conducted a study examining learners' preferences for employing printed and online dictionaries, revealing a correlation between learners' maturation and their inclination toward online resources. While the use of printed dictionaries predominated during learners' schooling years, the preference shifted toward online dictionaries as their language proficiency matured as learners' language skills developed further.

The findings from the research project of the empirical study from Carolin Muller-Spitzer, Alexander Koplenig, and Antje Topel in 2012 about Online Dictionary Use: Key Findings from an Empirical Research Project contributed valuable insights into the broader lexicographical domain, particularly for the enhancement of user-adaptive interfaces and the harnessing of the online medium's advantages to render online dictionaries more user-friendly and innovative. This research project utilizing well-established methods of empirical social research has yielded several significant discoveries concerning the utilization of online dictionaries as the objective of this project was to elucidate fundamental inquiries related to the use of online dictionaries and to discern various user requirements concerning their usage. The project utilized two extensive online surveys conducted in 2010, involving over 1,000 participants. It focused on four practical aspects relevant to electronic lexicography: (1) the devices used to access online dictionaries, (2) the preferred format for presenting word entries, (3) user ratings of different dictionary characteristics, and (4) users' evaluative judgments of innovative features like multimedia elements and user-adaptive access.

Results and Discussion

This part of the writing tries to describe the features of the dictionary and overview some of the merits and demerits of it that dictionary users need to know in order that they can appropriately make their decision on whether or not the dictionary is suitable for their needs and use.

Features of OALD Online in General

The online version of the Oxford Dictionary, which is known as OALD online, is available at www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com and is freely accessible for its certain features. It offers several features designed to support advanced English learners in their language development. Firstly, it provides comprehensive and authoritative definitions of words, including their meanings, usage examples, and pronunciation guides (Oxford University Press, n.d.). This feature aids learners in understanding word usage in context and refining their vocabulary. Some other features can only be accessed in the premium type which cost users a certain amount of money. The free access covers features as follows:

1. Search the A-Z and Topic dictionaries which provide more than 185,000 words, phrases, and meanings plus 700 more new words and meanings.
2. Hear real-voice British and American English audio.
3. View pictures, word origins, and usage notes.
4. Access the Oxford 3000 and Academic Word lists—the most important words to know in English that mostly covers academic lexicons.
5. Check texts with Oxford Text Checker.

Secondly, the dictionary offers detailed information on word collocations and idiomatic expressions, helping learners grasp the nuances of word combinations and idioms commonly used in English (Oxford University Press, n.d.). By providing such information,

learners can enhance their language proficiency and develop a more natural usage of English. Moreover, the premium type offers more features as follows:

1. iSpeaker, which helps users to develop their pronunciation and speaking skills.
2. iWriter, which shows users how to plan, write and review their written work.
3. My Wordlists, which enables to create lists of the words, users want to learn.
4. Teacher resources, which provide downloadable videos, lesson plans, and activities for use in class.

Most of the features above are typical of OALD in its all formats: online, print, CD-ROM, and App. However, the online provides some more that are very beneficial for English learners, but not accessible in the print version.

Thirdly, the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary Online offers audio pronunciations for words, allowing learners to hear how words are correctly pronounced (Oxford University Press, n.d.). This auditory support aids learners in improving their pronunciation and spoken language skills. Additionally, the dictionary provides tools like the Oxford Speaking Tutor, iSpeaker, Oxford Writing Tutor, and online iWriter to enhance English skills. The dictionary offers audio pronunciations in both British and American English accents for headwords, variants, and verb forms. These features contribute to the comprehensive language development support provided by the Online Advanced Learner's Dictionary. Furthermore, the dictionary's language-learning resources include grammar and usage notes, which offer guidance on proper grammatical structures and usage conventions (Oxford University Press, n.d.). These notes assist learners in honing their language accuracy and fluency.

The merits and demerits of OALD online

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary online has both merits and demerits that influence learners' enhancement of natural English usage and deeper understanding of English words. It offers its users a lot of benefits and eases. One of its merits is its user-friendly interface, enabling easy access to word definitions, examples, and pronunciation (Sahragard & Kiany, 2020). This accessibility fosters quick and convenient language exploration, supporting learners in gaining a deeper understanding of English words and their contextual usage. Another merit lies in the dictionary's provision of synonyms and antonyms for words, helping learners expand their vocabulary and choose appropriate words in different contexts (Sahragard & Kiany, 2020). By employing synonyms and antonyms, learners can develop a richer linguistic repertoire and express themselves more precisely. The most salient benefit of OALD online is that users can search for the word they need at their ease. They simply need to type the word in the search box and click or press the key enter, and they will get to the word they want. This is not the case, of course, with the print version where users have to turn over pages to find the word they want, which takes a little time. Another salient benefit is the phonological information of the word users wish to learn. Instead of IPA phonetical symbol only, which not many learners are familiar with, OALD online also provides British and American English audio, so learners can hear how the word is exactly pronounced in the two most worldwide dialects.

From the practical perspective, OALD online is quite space-safe as well as time-safe because users can access it from anywhere at any time as long as there is an internet connection—through their smartphone, which they can put only in their pocket. Users of this dictionary, thus, don't have to worry about carrying it, nor do they have to risk breaking the pages and losing some part of it due to tearing off.

From the perspective of content, what users may benefit from this dictionary is the amount of information on the meaning definitions of the headword and the examples provided for the headword which are based on the lexicographic evidence—that is to say that the examples are adopted from citations and corpora. This means that the users, who are English learners, can really learn how the words they are learning are used authentically, how they are structured, how they combine with other words, and what words usually combine with them. In so doing, learners are less likely to produce sentences or utterances that are not commonly spoken or produced by native speakers. Thus, learners can as well learn English collocations unconsciously and eventually gain the competence to express themselves in English. This seems that OALD online is more encoding than decoding, that is, it is targeted for the learners to translate into, or express themselves in a foreign language—English.

The screenshot displays four dictionary entries from the Oxford Advanced Dictionary Online. Each entry is presented in a structured format with a star icon, a speaker icon for audio pronunciation, a definition, a synonym, and example sentences.

- annoy** *verb*: Definition: to make somebody slightly angry. Synonym: *irritate*. Examples: "His constant joking was beginning to annoy her." "I'm sure she does it just to annoy me." "I only stay out late to annoy my parents."
- annoyed** *adjective*: Definition: (not usually before noun) slightly angry. Synonym: *irritated*. Examples: "I was annoyed about the whole thing." "I was a little annoyed about the whole thing." "I was a bit annoyed with him."
- annoying** *adjective*: Definition: making somebody feel slightly angry. Synonym: *irritating*. Examples: "This interruption is very annoying." "Her most annoying habit was eating with her mouth open." "It's incredibly annoying, but that's life."
- annoyingly** *adverb*: Definition: in a way that makes you feel slightly angry. Examples: "Graham can be annoyingly childish at times." "Annoyingly, my phone had run out of charge."

In terms of the presentation, OALD online meets what Atkins and Rundell (2008) mention "The most user-friendly way of setting out word meanings in a dictionary is to make every searchable word a headword: that way, your user is less likely to overlook it." (p. 39). With respect to this, OALD online treats the word family as headwords (see the inserted picture). In addition, the way the words are divided into senses is both user-friendly and clear in their meanings because each sense is accompanied by a synonym (when there is) and a simple, clear, understandable definition that is supported with examples that allow users to see the distinctions between its senses 1, 2, etc. and thus can get to a more precise meaning.

The OALD online is almost a perfect type of dictionary for its target users—advanced English learners—in terms of what the dictionary offers to meet what learners really need to know to develop their competency in the English language. Therefore, it is hard to find any flaw that might lessen its usefulness and benefits for learners. One seems to be the weakness of this dictionary does not deal with its content nor its presentation but with the technical use of the dictionary—the display of the searched word.

When users type a word in the search box and press enter, the display will directly show the word being searched. In fact, this is the only page that users can explore, for they cannot scroll up or down to see other headwords that come before and after the searched word. The search result does not enable users to discover other entries. This might discourage the users' interest to go over the surrounding headwords which may be something important for them to know and learn. This is quite different from the print

format where learners have a better overview of all the entries on the page of the searched word, which often attracts them to explore more and eventually spend more time with the dictionary.

On the other hand, a notable demerit of this dictionary is its reliance on internet connectivity. Being an online resource, learners may encounter difficulties accessing the dictionary in offline environments or areas with limited internet connectivity (Sahragard & Kiany, 2020). This limitation may hinder learners' continuous language development and learning opportunities. Moreover, the dictionary's vast amount of information can be overwhelming for some learners, leading to information overload and possible confusion (Sahragard & Kiany, 2020). Learners may struggle to prioritize and assimilate the provided information effectively, potentially hindering their ability to enhance natural usage and deeper understanding of English words.

Conclusion

OALD online offers so many benefits to advanced learners of English. Not only does it provide clear information on and broad knowledge of the aspects of the English language necessary for improving learners' command of English, but it also presents the actual, authentic use of the words by native speakers from the citations and corpora, so learners may produce sentences or utterances that are less likely to deviate from those produced by the pronunciation from the audio of the dictionary. By doing this, learners of English can enunciate clearly the words that they gain inside the Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary online.

Recommendation

This recommendation is based on the review as described above, and it is best addressed to both the users and the publisher of OALD online. To the users, we recommend that this dictionary be a must to use as there is so much information about English that learners can access and learn for a better command of English. Nonetheless, we also recommend that the technical use of this dictionary be improved to enable learners to scroll up and down to overview other headwords and entries that come before and after the searched word. This is essential as the surrounding headwords and entries may be useful for learners and may be related to their search needs. Thus, learners may explore and spend more time with the dictionary.

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