

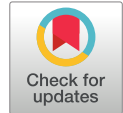
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Review Article

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A Critical Evaluation of the Turkish Language Association Dictionaries: <https://sozluk.tdk.gov.tr/>



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Abstract

Recent advances in computer and mobile technologies have manifested themselves in language education. One ramification has been the transition from printed to online dictionaries, expediting usage and consultation practices among language learners. The prominent position dictionaries hold in language education has been reciprocated in academia through lexicographic research. Despite numerous evaluation studies on dictionaries in other languages, none has critically evaluated the Turkish Language Association's dictionaries website (<https://sozluk.tdk.gov.tr/>). Employing Topal's (2022) adapted framework, the study found that the platform has straightforward usability, with accessibility through computers and mobile devices without ads., the absence of advanced filtering options hinders an efficient user experience. From a pedagogical perspective, content reliability and systematicity, enriched and authentic vocabulary material, and non-target learning prospects emerge as potential learning aids. Nevertheless, a lack of instructional interactions, customised learning tools, meagre contextual cues, and insufficient audio-visual means impede maximising the learning gains from this set of dictionaries. The findings necessitate validation through qualitative and quantitative studies involving diverse stakeholders, Turkish language learners to teachers and other dictionary users.

Keywords

Dictionary • Turkish • lexicography • online dictionary • reference tool



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Introduction

Dictionaries are indispensable reference tools for language learners and teachers in second or foreign language education. Historically evolving from a print to electronic format, dictionaries offer large amounts of information, including word definitions, spelling, pronunciation, example sentences, etymology, and collocations. Rapid developments in applied linguistics and technology have resulted in the emergence of lexicography as a separate field examining these reference tools theoretically and practically (Jackson, 2017), while such advancements have also led to content variety and easy accessibility, particularly thanks to the Internet (Levy & Steel, 2015). Substantial advancements in the domains of computer and mobile technologies have culminated in the provision of a multifaceted array of dictionaries to users, encompassing bilingual (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/>), collocation (<https://ozdic.com/>), learner's (<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>), monolingual (<https://www.ldoceonline.com/>), multilingual (<https://tureng.com/>), pronunciation (<https://howjsay.com/>), thesaurus (<https://www.thesaurus.com/>), and visual (<https://www.visualdictionaryonline.com/>) dictionaries. The transition from print to online dictionaries (ODs) is understandable, given the latter's benefits, such as quick access, a large variety, and extra features (Loucky, 2011). Using ODs in language education may be positioned at the application level of Levy's (2010) framework of technology use in classrooms. Earlier research has cited several benefits of ODs for language learning and teaching, including facilitation of vocabulary learning through contextual clues and thematic organisation (Summers, 1988), audio-visual support with instructive and competitive nature (Winkler, 2001), various usage purposes particularly in online supported classrooms (Jin & Deifell, 2013), improved test performance through mobile support (Rahimi & Miri, 2014), greater advantages (e.g., vocabulary learning and recall, higher student motivation, time-saving, and aural/visual stimuli) of ODs over print ones (Rezaei & Davoudi, 2016), considerable impact of previous dictionary training on writing performance (O'Neill, 2019), easy comprehension of content knowledge (Van der Merwe, 2020), preference of ODs over print ones among language learners (Trinh et al., 2021), fostering social success in intercultural activities (Çolak & Balaman, 2022), enhancing meaning comprehension through graphic illustrations (Dziemianko, 2022), and the expansion of lexical range in writing classrooms (Nguyen, 2025).

Despite the potential benefits ODs offer, dictionaries in general and ODs in particular also have several limitations. The utilisation of these reference tools may entail several potential disadvantages, including inadequate elaboration, internet disconnection, visual disturbances (Tulgar, 2017), the absence of dependable and precise data (Chotkarnchanawat et al., 2017; Tarp, 2012), inconsistent or debatable records resulting from editorial lapses (Mohamad et al., 2017), the requirement of a stable internet connection (Jian et al., 2009), irregular alterations to content without explicit notification (Ferrett & Dollinger, 2021), and technical issues such as website crashes and malfunctions (Topal, 2023a).

According to Nesi (2014), dictionary research has centred around five recurring themes: learner preferences and attitudes (e.g., Baxter, 1980; Kosem et al., 2019), text comprehension (e.g., Alharbi, 2016; Dilenschneider, 2018), text production (e.g., Frankenberg-Garcia, 2015; Prinsloo et al., 2017), language learning aid (e.g., Levy & Steel, 2015; Nesi, 2014), and consultation tendencies (e.g., Kim, 2018; Lew & De Schryver, 2014). In addition to these categories, dictionaries have been evaluated within technology/media reviews. However, these studies mostly tackled mainstream foreign languages, such as English (e.g., Topal, 2022, 2023a, 2024), German (Storonska et al., 2024), French (Tall & Hurman, 2000), and Spanish (Topal, 2023b). This has resulted in the disregard or little representation of other languages like Turkish in the international lexicographic literature.

As a matter of fact, Turkish is one of the most widely spoken languages (20th by 91.3 million speakers) (Eberhard et al., 2020). Although it is native to Türkiye, Turkish is also spoken by expats in Austria, Bulgaria,

Germany, Greece, North Macedonia, and the Balkan countries, spanning wide geographic boundaries. Linguistically, it shares similarities with the Turkic languages (e.g., Azerbaijani and Turkmen). Historically, it has come in contact with various languages (e.g., Arabic, French, Persian), resulting in vast amounts of loanwords (Johanson, 2010). Geopolitically, Türkiye is bridged by two continents, surrounded by three seas, and bordering several countries – a unique opportunity for intercultural interactions (Günçavdı Alabay et al., 2025). With such qualities, it is on the road to becoming a world or foreign language (Yıldız, 2013). Accordingly, any relevant research within this context is worthy of conducting, with large-scale implications.

Dictionary research on Turkish is miscellaneous in scope and context. For instance, Böler (2006) compared and evaluated the Turkish Dictionary and the Turkish Dictionary with examples from various perspectives, focusing on how the Turkish language is represented in dictionaries. In the same year, Usta (2006) examined methodological issues in the 2005 Turkish Dictionary and found a lack of clear principles, focusing on quantity over quality. Insufficient attention to lexicographic methods led to numerous definition and exemplification errors, reducing the dictionary's functionality.

Doğan (2015) evaluated how verb collocations are represented in the Turkish Dictionary and found that they are inconsistently described, often confused with idioms or compound verbs, indicating a lack of systematic lexicographic treatment. Baskin and Mumcu (2018) investigated Turkish EFL students' dictionary preferences, influencing factors, and prior experiences, while Gencer (2018) examined the use of the “old-fashioned” label in the TLA/TKD dictionary and found it is applied independently of word frequency. In the following year, Argunşah (2019) examined definition methods and exemplification practices in Turkish monolingual dictionaries, revealing inconsistencies, insufficient or erroneous definitions, a lack of a common system in meaning arrangement, and uncoordinated or limited use of example sentences.

In another study, Çelik (2020) investigated the theatre terms in the Turkish Dictionary and analysed their meanings, origins, and formation methods, including both Turkish and loanwords. The following year, Kaçalın (2021) identified words in Mehmed Âkif's *Safahât* whose meanings, as used in the poem, are not recorded in the Turkish Dictionary and highlighted how poet-specific uses contribute to understanding literary texts. Following that, Eraslan (2022) explored the vocabulary of Mehmet Akif Ersoy's *İstiklal Marşı* (National Anthem), identified words not recorded in the TLA/TKD dictionary, and addressed a gap in previous lexicographic research on this seminal literary work. Alkan et al. (2023) developed a domain-specific sentiment dictionary for Turkish, applied dictionary-based sentiment analysis using R, and addressed the scarcity of such research for Turkish and the limited focus on long-format literary texts.

In the same year, Yastı (2023) examined the vocabulary in Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's works, identified words and expressions not recorded in the Turkish Dictionary, and emphasized the author's word-formation methods. In the subsequent year, Delice (2024), compared the part-of-speech information for the word “güzel” in the TLA/TKD's *Güncel Türkçe Sözlük* (Modern Turkish Dictionary) and Kubbealtı Lugatı, found discrepancies with grammatical standards, and pointed out the need for more scientifically grounded lexicographic practices. In a more recent study, Yeni (2025) determined whether words listed in the meaning sections of the Turkish Dictionary should be added as independent entries, and it identified 52 such words or phrases between A–H, highlighting omissions, inconsistencies, and risks of vocabulary loss across editions.

Notwithstanding the abundance of studies on Turkish dictionary, the relevant literature has not produced a technology review evaluating the TLA/TKD's dictionaries. This study intends to bridge this gap by reviewing this reference tool using Topal's (2022) adapted framework (i.e., introduction, general description, technical features, pedagogical affordances, and conclusion). In doing so, the study aims to outline the technical and pedagogical features of TLA/TKD's dictionaries for Turkish language learners and teachers, along with researchers and lexicographers, for prospective use, design, and evaluation.

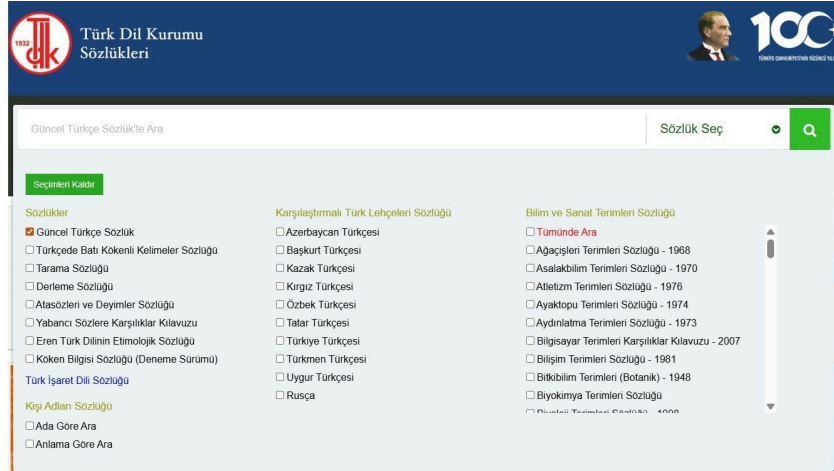
Against this backdrop, this technology review intends to evaluate the ODs by the Turkish Language Association (TLA/TKD) – www.sozluk.gov.tr –using Topal’s (2022) framework that combines the recommendations of Kohnke and Moorhouse (2022) and Hubbard (2011). Kohnke and Moorhouse’s framework includes introduction, utilising technology for language teaching, challenges in using the technology for language teaching, and conclusion, while Hubbard’s (2011) model comprises technical preview, operational description, learner/teacher fit, appropriateness judgments, and implementation schemes. On the other hand, Topal’s (2022) adapted framework consists of an introduction, general description, technical features, pedagogical features, and conclusion. According to the adapted framework, the introduction provides a background and justification for the study, citing previous relevant literature. The second part describes the general features of the analysed tool. The technical features, sometimes accompanied by suitable headings, include the technical features of the examined technology tool, while the pedagogical affordances (also accompanied by headings) present the potential pedagogical benefits the tool offers. These two sections do not comprise a mere appreciation of the tool but are supported by drawbacks. The conclusion summarises the study, recognises the limitation, and offers recommendations for future research.

General Description

TLA’s Dictionaries is an online dictionary platform available to users at (<https://www.sozluk.gov.tr>). The Turkish Language Association designed the website. The platform allows users to perform queries by choosing from several dictionaries (Figure 1).

Figure 1

A Snapshot of the Main Page



Source: This image shows a snapshot of the dictionaries available within the online TDK/TLA dictionaries.

The dictionaries are divided into five categories: *Sözlükler* (Dictionaries), *Türk İşaret Dili Sözlüğü* (The Turkish Sign Language Dictionary), *Kişi Adları Sözlüğü* (The Dictionary of Personal Names), *Karşılaştırmalı Türkçe Lehçeleri Sözlüğü* (the Comparative Dictionary of Turkish Dialects), and *Bilim ve Sanat Terimleri Sözlüğü* (the Dictionary of Science and Art Terms). The first category includes the following dictionaries:

- *Güncel Türkçe Sözlük* (Modern Turkish Dictionary)
- *Türkçede Batı Kökenli Kelimeler Sözlüğü* (Dictionary of Words of Western Origin in Turkish)
- *Tarama Sözlüğü* (A Dictionary of Scanning)
- *Derleme Sözlüğü* (Compilation Dictionary)
- *Atasözleri ve Deyimler Sözlüğü* (Dictionary of Proverbs and Idioms)
- *Yabancı Sözlere Karşılıklar Kılavuzu* (A Guide on Foreign Word Equivalents)

- *Eren Türk Dilinin Etimolojik Sözlüğü* (Etymological Dictionary of the Eren Turkish Language)
- *Köken Bilgisi Sözlüğü (Deneme Sürümü)* (Etymology Dictionary (Trial Version))

The utilisation of these reference tools may entail several potential disadvantages, including inadequate elaboration, internet disconnection, visual disturbances (Tulgar, 2017), the absence of dependable and precise data (Chotkarnchanawat et al., 2017; Tarp, 2012), inconsistent or debatable records resulting from editorial lapses (Mohamad et al., 2017), the requirement of a stable internet connection (Jian et al., 2009), irregular alterations to content without explicit notification (Ferrett & Dollinger, 2021), and technical issues such as website crashes and malfunctions (Topal, 2023a). Users can also share the results on social media platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook, and X) by clicking the share icon or copying the link and sharing it elsewhere.

Figure 2

An Example Search in the Modern Turkish Dictionary



Source: This image shows the results of dictionary consultation for a word (i.e., *yüzük* – ring in English) to visualise what lexicographic features are accompanied by the search.

Concerning the second category (*Turkish Sign Language Dictionary*), the Ministry of National Education prepared the Turkish Sign Language Dictionary to meet schools' need for Turkish Sign Language dictionaries. The dictionary contains 1,986 words and phrases and provides the sign language equivalents of concepts, not their meanings. It aims to facilitate sign language learning by explaining the shapes and direction of movements of the hands and fingers. A picture and a hand shape are also provided for each word (Figure 3). The dictionary includes the most frequently and commonly used words by sign language users daily. The work, hoping to address hard-of-hearing individuals' needs partially, is available for both print and online users.

Figure 3

A Snapshot of the Turkish Sign Language Dictionary

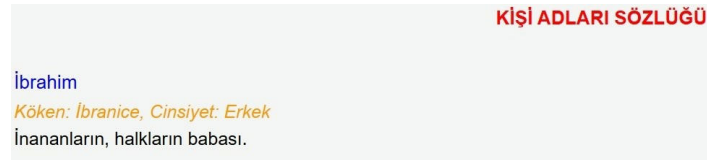


Source: The image demonstrates a synopsis of how searches appear in the Turkish Sign Language Dictionary.

As for the third category (the Dictionary of Personal Names), users can utilise this feature by filtering according to names and meanings among male, female, or male and female names (Figure 4). The results provide the etymology, gender, and meaning of the searched item.

Figure 4

A Snapshot of the Dictionary of Personal Names



Source: This image shows a search for the word İbrahim, made in the Dictionary of Personal Names.

Regarding the fourth category (Comparative Dictionary of Turkish Dialects), users are provided with ten options to search within: Azerbaijani Turkish, Bashkir Turkish, Kazakh Turkish, Kyrgyz Turkish, Uzbek Turkish, Tatar Turkish, Türkiye Turkish, Turkmen Turkish, Uyghur Turkish, and Russian. The entered search items yield the equivalents across the ten Turkish dialects. Figure 5 shows an example query item (i.e., *bala*) across the Turkish dialects.

Figure 5

A Example Search in The Comparative Dictionary of Turkish Dialects



Source: The image displays a search made in the Comparative Dictionary of Turkish Dialects for the word *bala* (kid/child in English)

The last category (the Dictionary of Science and Art Terms) includes 78 specialised dictionaries, shown in Table 1 below.

Figure 6 shows an example search item (*antrenör - coach*) in the dictionary of football terms, with the query performed across all dictionaries of science and art terms.

Figure 6

An Example Search in the Dictionary of Science and Arts Terms



Source: This image showcases a dictionary consultation made for a borrowed word, “antrenör” (coach in English), in the Dictionary of Science and Arts Terms.

When scrolling down the webpage, users are provided with extras, such as daily words, idiom-proverbs, and a video on how to use the online dictionary (Figure 7). When using the website, users are provided with different words, idioms, and/or proverbs. Plus, the five-minute video shows how to use the website.

Figure 7

Additional Features 1



Source: The image indicates the first part of the additional features (i.e., one word, one idiom-proverb, and how to use the online dictionary) available on TLA/TDK's online dictionaries.

Table 1*The Seventy-Eight Dictionaries of Science and Art Terms in TLA/TDK's Online Dictionaries*

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Woodworking Terms Dictionary (1968) | 44. Dictionary of Criminology Terms |
| 2. Parasitology Terms Dictionary (1970) | 45. Guide to Mining Terms (1979) |
| 3. Track and Field Terms Dictionary (1976) | 46. Dictionary of Logic Terms (1976) |
| 4. Football Terms Dictionary (1974) | 47. Dictionary of Mathematics Terms (1983) |
| 5. Lighting Terms Dictionary (1973) | 48. Dictionary of Civil Law Terms (Ottoman to Turkish - Turkish to Ottoman) (1966) |
| 6. A Guide on Computer Terms Equivalents (2007) | 49. Dictionary of Metallurgy Process Terms (1972) |
| 7. Dictionary of Informatics Terms (1981) | 50. Dictionary of Nuclear Energy Terms (1995) |
| 8. Dictionary of Botanical Terms (Botany) (1948) | 51. Guide to Secondary Education Terms (1963) |
| 9. Dictionary of Biochemistry Terms | 52. Dictionary of Automotive and Engine Science Terms (1980) |
| 10. Dictionary of Biology Terms (1998) | 53. Dictionary of Psychology Terms (1974) |
| 11. Dictionary of Ethnoscience Terms (1973) | 54. Dictionary of Basketball Terms (1969) |
| 12. Dictionary of Criminal Procedure Law Terms (1972) | 55. Dictionary of Cinema and Television Terms (1981) |
| 13. Dictionary of Gymnastics Terms (1969) | 56. Dictionary of Aquaculture Terms (2007) |
| 14. Dictionary of Geography Terms (1980) | 57. Agricultural Terms (1949) |
| 15. Dictionary of Cycling Terms (1970) | 58. Dictionary of Historical Terms (1974) |
| 16. Dictionary of Grammar Terms (1972) | 59. Dictionary of Terms for Trade, Finance, Accounting, and Insurance (1972) |
| 17. Dictionary of Linguistics Terms (1949) | 60. Technical Terms I (Machine Elements, Electrotechnics, Construction Machinery, Internal Combustion Engines, Presses, Technology, Strength, Fundamental Technique, Equipment) (1949) |
| 18. Molecular Biology Terms (1948) | 61. A Guide on Medical Terms (2010) |
| 19. Dictionary of Installation Terms (Water, Gas, Heating, Ventilation) (1969) | 62. Dictionary of Theatrical Terms (1966) |
| 20. Dictionary of Literary and Rhetorical Terms (1948) | 63. Dictionary of Sociology Terms (1975) |
| 21. Dictionary of Educational Terms (1974) | 64. Text Terms |
| 22. Dictionary of Equivalents of Econometrics Terms | 65. Guide to Grammar Terms of the Turkic World (1997) |
| 23. Dictionary of Philosophy Terms (1975) | 66. An Essay on Turkish Medical Terms (1944) |
| 24. Dictionary of Physics Terms (1983) | 67. Dictionary of Volleyball, Tennis, and Table Tennis Terms (1968) |
| 25. Dictionary of Physical Chemistry Terms (1978) | 68. Dictionary of International Metrology |
| 26. Geometry (2000) | 69. Dictionary of Technology Terms (1980) |
| 27. Dictionary of Astronomy Terms (1969) | 70. Dictionary of Veterinary Terms |
| 28. Dictionary of Performing Arts Terms (1983) | 71. Dictionary of Industrial Property Terms (1971) |
| 29. Dictionary of Grammar Terms (2003) | 72. Dictionary of Copyright Terms (1971) |
| 30. Dictionary of Customs Terms (1972) | 73. Dictionary of Literary Terms (1974) |
| 31. Dictionary of Wrestling Terms (1974) | 74. Dictionary of Geology Terms (1971) |
| 32. Dictionary of Fine Arts Terms (1968) | 75. Dictionary of Methodology Terms (1981) |
| 33. Dictionary of Folklore Terms (1978) | 76. Dictionary of Boxing Terms (1968) |
| 34. Dictionary of Nursing Terms | 77. Dictionary of Craft Terms (1976) |
| 35. Dictionary of Histology-Embryology Terms | 78. Dictionary of Zoology Terms (1963) |
| 36. Dictionary of Economics Terms (2004) | |
| 37. Dictionary of Medicine and Pharmacy Terms (2014) | |
| 38. Dictionary of Statistics Terms (1983) | |
| 39. Dictionary of Urban Science Terms (1980) | |
| 40. Dictionary of Swordplay Terms (1970) | |
| 41. Dictionary of Chemistry Terms (2007) | |
| 42. Dictionary of Chemistry Terms (1981) | |
| 43. Dictionary of Library Science Terms (1974) | |



Further below the webpage are four additional features: rules, frequently confused words, common mistakes, and suggestions for foreign words (Figure 8).

Figure 8

Additional Features 2



Source: The image shows the second part of additional features (i.e., one rule, frequently confused words, common errors, and suggestions for foreign words) on TLA/TDK's online dictionaries.

For instance, Figure 7 shows the rules for verb conjugations. When clicked, the icon directs users to the official TLA/TDK website (<https://tdk.gov.tr/>) for further explanations. Users are also provided with confusing words (e.g., *nazım* vs. *nâzım*), which refresh regularly on the webpage. Another feature is the presentation of commonly misspelt words (e.g., *barsak*-*bağırsak* and *espiri*-*espri*), accompanied by their accurate spelling. The last feature allows users to suggest alternatives to foreign words by clicking on the relevant icon, which directs them to a Google Forms document.

Hyperlinks to the official LSA website, further publications, and the e-store can be found at the foot of the website. Users can also access the official social media pages (Facebook, YouTube, and X). Further contact information is listed at the foot of the page. Additionally, users can access the Turkish Dictionary application prepared for portable devices (Android and iOS) from the store links.

Users are not required to register to use the dictionaries. Ownership of a computer or a mobile device with a stable internet connection is enough to access the webpage content.

Technical Features

User Interface and Navigation

The homepage guides users directly to the search box, which employs a minimalist design approach. The utilisation of the search bar, which allows for the swift retrieval of results by means of textual input, is a notable feature. The platform has been designed in accordance with accessibility standards. The incorporation of features such as screen reader support and keyboard navigation serves to ensure that users with disabilities are able to utilise the site with minimal discomfort.

Search and Filtering

Users are able to input a word into the search box in order to ascertain its meaning. The search results obtained from this process may include information pertaining to the word's meaning, its etymology, and usage examples. Additionally, they have the capacity to search for terms belonging to a specific group of words by utilising specialised dictionaries, such as the "Dictionary of Scientific and Artistic Terms." This facilitates the access of users to more specific information.

Database and Cross-Referencing

The TLA/TDK offers a variety of dictionaries in digital format, including the Modern Turkish Dictionary, the Dictionary of Proverbs and Idioms, and the Dictionary of Scientific and Artistic Terms. For example, the Dictionary of Scientific and Artistic Terms contains 185,332 terms. Each word is linked to other related words. For example, when providing the meaning of a word, related idioms or proverbs can also be presented. This allows users to grasp the richness of the language better.

Integration and Mobile Access

TLA/TDK offers mobile apps for Android and iOS platforms. These apps offer both online and offline use, so users can access the words even without an internet connection. TLA's database is available as open source for researchers and developers. For example, a dump of the TLA database is available on Kaggle (<https://www.kaggle.com/>).

Advanced Filtering Options

Despite the potential technical affordances, the TLA/TDK dictionaries lack advanced filtering features that could enhance user experience. For instance, Users cannot filter results by word form, such as verb tense or aspect (e.g., past vs. present), noun case or plurality, and derivational or inflectional patterns. This would help linguists, language learners, or NLP researchers examine patterns systematically. Similarly, there is no option to search or filter by semantic field (e.g., medicine, technology, law), connotation (formal/informal, archaic/modern), and usage register. In its current form, searches show every dictionary entry that includes the keyword, even if the context is irrelevant. However, choosing specific dictionaries helps reduce this problem.

In addition, the site does not provide frequency counts (how common a word is in contemporary usage) collocation data or common usage examples beyond a few static examples, and corpus-driven suggestions for synonyms or related expressions. Such features are available in corpus-based tools like TLA's own Turkish National Corpus, but not integrated into the dictionary interface. Furthermore, users cannot perform Boolean searches (AND, OR, NOT), wildcard searches (*, ?), or regex-style pattern matching, which would benefit power users doing linguistic research or text analysis. While entries show grammatical info, there is no filter panel to restrict search results by part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, etc.), etymology (loanwords vs. native words), or compound vs. simple words.

Despite the existence of some cross-referencing (e.g., related idioms, synonyms), there is an absence of interactive network views or hierarchical filtering of synonyms/antonyms, morphologically related words, or phraseological connections. In essence, it is not possible for users to save personal filter preferences or to create search profiles. It is also not possible for them to combine multiple filters dynamically (for example, the combination of "all nouns in medicine" and "modern usage").

It is evident that TLA/TDK undertakes systematic updates to its lexicons on a regular basis. For instance, the 12th edition of the Turkish Dictionary was published in 2023. The platform provides users with sections such as "One Word," "One Rule," and "Frequently Confused Words." These sections are designed to promote the correct use of language. TLA/TDK's online dictionary platform is a comprehensive resource that supports the proper and effective use of the Turkish language. The platform's user-friendly interface, extensive content, and mobile accessibility position it as a valuable resource for both language learners and professionals. The absence of advertisements is a notable advantage.

Pedagogical Features

Content Authority

One of the website's preliminary advantages is its authoritative and standardised content. The online dictionary provides definitions and usage examples based on the authoritative *Türkçe Sözlük* (Turkish Dictionary, 12th edition, 2023), ensuring consistency with the official language standards. However, one downside of this benefit is the omission of colloquial expressions, which are crucial for language learning (Levy & Steel, 2015).

Comprehensive Lexical Resources

Another, arguably more notable benefit of the website is its inclusion of various specialised lexicons, including the Modern Turkish Dictionary and the Dictionary of Proverbs and Idioms. These resources support learners in acquiring a diverse vocabulary, understanding cultural nuances, and improving pronunciation, all of which are vital components of language acquisition (Derwing & Munro, 2022; Kramsch, 2014; Richards, 2015). More specifically, the specialised dictionaries address the interdisciplinary needs of language learners majoring in various departments (Fuertes-Olivera, 2020). Similarly, exposure to idioms and proverbs enables learners to explore the target culture through multi-word combinations (Alarsan & Khan, 2025). Equally, the accompaniment of manual representation of words through the Turkish Sign Language can be considered to foster linguistic inclusivity (Kaur et al., 2024).

Pronunciation Support

The TLA/TDK dictionaries provide word pronunciations (by male and female articulations) through their online platform. It is well-established that pronunciation practice is essential in language learning as it helps learners develop accurate speaking skills and reduces misunderstandings in communication (Derwing & Munro, 2022). The inclusion of audio pronunciations of words might aid learners in precise pronunciation. However, word pronunciations may not alone suffice to grasp how words are articulated in connected speech (Alameen & Levis, 2015). Therefore, providing users with sentence articulations may foster a more contextual understanding of pronunciation.

Informal Learning Support

Regardless of the formal and extramural use of TLA's dictionaries, the additional features the website provides (e.g., one word, one rule, one proverb-idiom, frequently confused words, and commonly misspelt words) may assist learners in developing metalinguistic awareness and learning non-target language structures (vocabulary, grammar, or writing). In a previous study, language learners stated that they learned outside the context while using an online pronunciation dictionary (YouGlish) (Topal, 2023c), which supports our claim.

Potential Pitfalls

Notwithstanding the potential benefits, the website is encumbered by several drawbacks. Firstly, the dictionary is devoid of interactive elements such as quizzes or games that have the potential to enhance engagement and active learning. However, interactive features have been demonstrated to be beneficial to language learning, as they increase learner engagement and provide opportunities for active recall, enhancing retention (Geana et al., 2024; Sun & Hsieh, 2018). Second, no features like personalized word lists, spaced repetition, or progress tracking support individualized learning paths. In contrast, customized learning tools help cater to individual learner needs and pace and promote more effective and tailored

language acquisition (Xia et al., 2024). A further potential disadvantage is the limited number of usage examples, which may impede comprehension of words in a range of contexts. Previous research has indicated that contextual examples are essential in language learning as they demonstrate how words are used in real-life situations and aid in comprehension and application (Frankenberg-Garcia, 2014; Teng, 2023).

Additionally, the platform does not incorporate images, videos, or other multimedia elements (except for the audio pronunciations and sign language figures) that could aid in vocabulary retention and understanding. However, multimedia support caters to different learning styles and can enhance memory retention by providing visual and auditory cues (Liu, 2024).

Conclusion

Employing Topal's (2022) adapted framework, this study evaluated TLA/TDK's online dictionaries website (<https://www.sozluk.gov.tr>). The study indicated the reference tool's distinctive features. The website's functionality is enhanced by its user-friendly interface, its capacity to facilitate searches within specialised dictionaries, and its accessibility across both online and offline platforms on computers and mobile devices. However, the absence of sophisticated filtering options compromises the customised user experience. Pedagogically speaking, the website employs authoritative and standardised content, extensive lexical resources, audio pronunciation support, and informal learning opportunities. However, the website exhibits deficiencies in instructional interactivity, learner-centric tools, minimal contextual cues, and inadequate multimedia support.

ODs are common reference tools that language learners consult when learning a foreign language (Levy & Steel, 2015). Many language learners from diverse educational backgrounds prefer ODs during language learning (Jin & Deifell, 2013; Nesi, 2014). It is also well-established that language learners benefit considerably from dictionaries as a language learning aid (Bogaards, 1996; Boulton & De Cock, 2017). Accordingly, ODs must be equipped with ample language learning opportunities rather than merely serving as reference tools. In this context, the TLA website requires pedagogical adjustments and technical modifications for the purpose of enhancing the user/learner experience. Notwithstanding, it is the most comprehensive reference tool for the Turkish language in its current form.

As this study outlined the technical and pedagogical characteristics of the TLA's dictionaries, future research is needed to corroborate the results. Prospective researchers might explore user opinions about this online dictionary. They may also look into the website's impact on learning specific language skills, such as vocabulary and grammar. Future researchers might further investigate the consultation tendencies of Turkish language learners using the ODs. The effect of the ODs on the production of texts, such as writing, is another potential research topic awaiting inquiry.



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