



## The true false friends: highly polysemous verbs

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**Abstract:** One of the difficulties faced by Brazilian learners in writing activities in foreign languages is related to highly polysemous verbs in Portuguese. These verbs are part of the basic vocabulary and learners usually know the equivalent in foreign language for their more general meaning. For this reason, Brazilian learners have a false sense of confidence regarding these verbs and are taken by surprise when they are unable to find an equivalent in a foreign language to convey an idea expressed by one of them in Portuguese. For example, besides the more usual meaning of give something to somebody, the Portuguese verb *dar* may be used as a support verb (*dar palestra* = give a lecture), as an aspectual verb (*dar+infinitive* as *dar de fazer* = start to do) and as pronominal verb (*isso se deu séculos atrás* = this happened centuries ago) and integrates several complex predicates (like *dar de ombros* = to ignore and *dar conta* = to be able to). Hence Brazilian Portuguese-foreign languages dictionaries for production purposes should be designed from Brazilian point of view, exploring, for example, all the meanings of Portuguese highly polysemous verbs. However, this has not been throughout observed in Brazilian bilingual lexicography and learners are frequently disappointed with their dictionaries. This paper reports the strategies adopted to generate a verbal lexicon in Portuguese, with distinctions in meanings of highly polysemous verbs, aimed to be used as a starting point in bilingual dictionaries for production purposes.

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