

# Reverso Define: An AI-Powered Contextual Dictionary for Professionals

Quentin Pleplé  
Reverso

Théo Hoffenberg  
Reverso

## Abstract

We present Reverso Define, an innovative English dictionary designed to support translation professionals with AI-powered, context-aware definitions. Built using a hybrid approach combining Large Language Models (LLMs) and expert linguists, it offers precise definitions with special attention to multi-word expressions and domain-specific terminology. The system provides comprehensive coverage of technical domains relevant to professional translators while maintaining daily updates to address emerging terminology needs. It also provides indicative translations in 26 languages. This paper provides insights into its design and creation process, illustrating various use cases and examples.

## 1 Introduction

Professional translators and post-editors working with machine translation (MT) systems or LLMs face significant challenges in determining precise contextual meanings, particularly for domain-specific terms and multiword expressions. Traditional dictionaries often fall short due to limited coverage, complex definitions, and poor handling of expressions that are typically buried within word entries. Domain-specific terminology frequently lacks clear field indicators in conventional resources, forcing professionals to consult multiple specialized sources, company-specific term databases, and ultimately rely on search engines without editorial guidance.

Reverso Define tackles these limitations through an AI-driven approach that reimagines dictionary organization. The system elevates multi-word expressions to standalone entries, provides clear, non-circular definitions optimized for non-native English speakers, and integrates domain indicators

© 2025 The authors. This article is licensed under a Creative Commons 4.0 licence, no derivative works, attribution, CC-BY-ND.

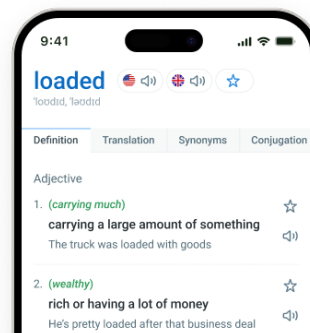


Figure 1: Reverso Define on the mobile app

for technical terminology. This design directly addresses the needs of translation professionals who require quick access to precise, contextual meanings to maintain efficient workflows.

## 2 System Description

### 2.1 Technical Architecture

The core of Reverso Define is built on a hybrid approach combining LLMs with expert linguistic curation. This methodology enables systematic application of editorial decisions across the entire dictionary while maintaining high-quality standards through human expertise. When we implement linguistic guidelines, the AI pipeline applies these constraints systematically rather than requiring manual revision of each entry.

The system employs a sophisticated pipeline where LLMs generate initial definitions and structure, followed by expert linguist review and refinement. This iterative process ensures consistency while allowing for nuanced handling of complex linguistic cases. The dictionary currently contains over 450,000 meanings across 250,000 unique words, expressions, and compounds, with continuous expansion.

Our technical implementation leverages Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) to ground

LLM outputs in authoritative sources, particularly crucial for domain-specific terminology. Automated quality checks verify aspects such as definition clarity and non-circularity, while linguistic experts provide final validation and refinement of entries.

## 2.2 Comparison with Traditional Resources

Reverso Define addresses several key limitations of traditional dictionaries that impact translation professionals. Unlike Oxford, Merriam-Webster, and Collins dictionaries, our system treats expressions as first-class entries rather than burying them within main entries. For example, "influence peddling" is directly accessible as its own entry, eliminating the need to search for both "influence" and "peddle."

Traditional dictionaries often use complex, circular definitions challenging for non-native speakers. Our system prioritizes clarity and simplicity, with concise definitions crafted specifically for professional use. Domain indicators in conventional resources tend to be limited and inconsistent, whereas Reverso Define implements comprehensive tagging across legal, medical, technical, and financial fields.

While specialized terminology resources exist, they typically lack integration with translation workflows. Reverso Define integrates directly into the post-editing process through extensions and applications, reducing context switching. Additionally, our system implements continuous updates rather than edition-based cycles, ensuring that new terminology is available without delay.

## 3 Use Cases and Evaluation

### 3.1 Post-Editing Support

In machine translation post-editing workflows, speed and accuracy in terminology verification are crucial. Preliminary feedback shows that Reverso Define's domain indicators and expression-level entries allow faster disambiguation of technical terms compared to traditional reference workflows. For instance, when encountering "consideration" in a legal text, a post-editor can immediately access its domain-specific definition ("something of value given in exchange for goods or services") rather than sifting through multiple general meanings.

The system's non-circular definitions prove particularly valuable when working with machine translation output in technical domains. By providing clear, concise explanations using simple terms,

it helps post-editors quickly verify whether the MT system has correctly handled specialized terminology.

### 3.2 Translation Workflow Integration

The desktop application and the browser extension integrate seamlessly into workflows, allowing immediate definition access through double-click functionality on any text. This integration maintains workflow momentum while providing precise terminology support. User feedback indicates that this integration reduces lookup time compared to traditional dictionary consultation.

## 4 Availability and Future Development

Reverso Define is available across web, mobile, and desktop platforms. The web version is free to use, while desktop and browser extensions follow a freemium model with basic features available at no cost and advanced features requiring subscription. Enterprise licensing options are available for CAT tool integration, with pricing based on user volume and integration requirements. A public API for direct CAT tool integration is currently in development.

The system provides definitions in English with indicative translations in 26 languages, including French (France/Canada), Spanish, Catalan, Italian, Portuguese (European/Brazilian), Romanian, German, Danish, Dutch, Swedish, Yiddish, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, Bengali, Persian, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Turkish, Vietnamese and Chinese.

Future development plans focus on an even larger coverage of specialty domains and less common idioms, more languages supported for definitions, and a constant review of accuracy of definitions, examples, and translations.

## 5 Conclusion

Reverso Define represents a significant advance in dictionary technology for translation professionals, combining AI capabilities with linguistic expertise to provide precise and contextual definitions. Its focus on expression-level entries and domain-specific terminology, coupled with seamless workflow integration, makes it a valuable companion tool for professional translation workflows. Continuous updates of the system ensure that it remains a current resource for the translation community. <https://dictionary.reverso.net>