

# An Analysis of ILC's 'Dictionary Analyses'

KYOHEI NAKAMOTO

## 1. Introduction

The present issue of the *Lexicon* is dedicated to Mr Yoshiro Kojima, Professor Emeritus of Linguistics at Waseda University and vice-chairman of the Iwasaki Linguistic Circle (ILC), celebrating his seventieth birthday. He is one of the pioneers who established a unique tradition of 'dictionary analyses'. The ILC has reviewed or 'analysed' some thirty monolingual English dictionaries since 1968, so that our circle also celebrates the thirtieth anniversary of its dictionary analyses this year.

The first of this series reviewed *The Penguin English Dictionary* (PED1), a dictionary now almost forgotten, and was published in a scholarly journal in 1968. Two more analyses followed it in 1969–71. In 1972 the ILC started its annual *Lexicon*, and since then the dictionary analyses have been published in it, except for the two that were contributed to the *International Journal of Lexicography*.

Now it's time to analyse these dictionary analyses. This article, which is also dedicated to Professor Kojima, tries to achieve this goal rather than looking back on the history of the ILC itself. For those who are interested in the latter topic the main articles published in our annual *Newsletter* are informative.

## 2. What dictionaries have been analysed?

Ideally, *every* dictionary should be reviewed, as Chapman (1977: 159) dreams. But this is obviously impossible, and we always have to choose a dictionary to review from a wide range of new dictionaries. The choice is therefore as important as the manner of review.

What are the criteria for deciding a dictionary to review? The present author is curious to know what kinds of dictionaries have most often interested dictionary critics:

It should reveal interesting facts if we classify the dictionaries that were reviewed according to dictionary type . . . intended users . . . size . . . and so on. (Nakamoto 1994: 42)

As mentioned in Section 1, the first dictionary reviewed by our circle (i.e. PED1) was a rather surprising choice, at least from the viewpoint of the lexicographical scene in late-90s. Since then twenty-eight more dictionaries, general-purpose or specialised, have been reviewed, not counting those reviewed in the present issue.

It should be noted, however, that most of ILC's analyses are 'comparative reviews' (Nakamoto 1994: 34). Thus, the number of the dictionaries actually reviewed is much larger. In Table 1 the dictionaries reviewed and those mainly compared are arranged in a chronological order of the analyses. The table also shows when these dictionaries and their analyses were published<sup>10</sup> (for the abbreviations used, see the end of this article):

Table 1

		Dictionaries reviewed	Dictionaries mainly compared
1968	PED1	(1965)	COD5 (1964), WCD7 (1963), RHD1 (1966), W3 (1961)
1969–70	NWD1	(1953)	ACD (1947), WCD6 (1949)
1971	NWD2	(1970)	NWD1 (1953), WCD7 (1963), RHCD1 (1968), AHD1 (1969)
1974	EWD + CTC	(1971) (1972)	COD5 (1964)
1975	OALD3	(1974)	ISED (1942), ALD2 (1963)
1977	COD6	(1976)	COD5 (1964)
1979–80	LDOCE1	(1978)	OALD3 (1974)
1981	CED1	(1979)	WCD8 (1973), RHCD2 (1975), NWD2 (1970), COD6 (1976)
1982	CULD	(1980)	LDOCE1 (1978), OALD3 (1974)
1985	WCD9	(1983)	WCD8 (1973), AHD2 (1982), RHCD2 (1975), CED1 (1979), NWD2 (1970)
1986	LDAE	(1983)	LDOCE1 (1978), LASDE1 (1983), OALD3 (1974),

	+ OSDAE	(1983)	OSDCE1 (1978)
1987	POD7	(1984)	POD6 (1978), COD7 (1982), CPED (1981), AHDP (1983)
1988	BBI	(1986)	LDOCE1 (1978), LDOCE2 (1987), and some other collocational dictionaries
1989	COB1	(1987)	LDOCE2 (1987), OALD3 (1980/1985)
1989–90	LDOCE2	(1987)	LDOCE1 (1978)
1990	NWD3	(1988)	NWD2 (1970), WCD9 (1983), RHCD2 (1975)
1990–91	OEDCD1	(1989)	OED1 (1884–1928)
1991	RHD2	(1987)	RHD1 (1966), NWD3 (1988), WCD9 (1983)
1992	OALD4	(1989)	OALD3 (1985), LDOCE2 (1987), COB1 (1987)
1992	COD8	(1990)	COD7 (1982), POD7 (1984)
1993–94	PESD	(1991)	OALD4 (1989), LDOCE2 (1987), PED2 (1969)
1994	LDEL2	(1991)	COD8 (1990), CED3 (1991)
1995	LLA	(1993)	LDOCE2 (1987), OALD4 (1989), COB1 (1987), LLCE (1981)
1996	CIDE	(1995)	LDOCE3 (1995), OALD5 (1995), COB2 (1995)
1996	OALD5	(1995)	OALD4 (1989)
1997	COB2	(1995)	COB1 (1987), OALD5 (1995)
1997–	NTCPV	(1993)	—

Table 1 does not exhaust the dictionaries mentioned in each review — other dictionaries are occasionally compared<sup>2)</sup> and specialised dictionaries like those of pronunciation and etymology are often consulted.

What do we learn from the table above? The fact that dictionary publishing never stops, and neither does our analysis! This is not the only finding, of course. The following more serious facts have been revealed:

(1) General-purpose adult dictionaries, whether they are those for native speakers or for foreign learners, have been by far the most frequently reviewed. In other words, specialised dictionaries and dictionaries for young users have been rather neglected.

(2) So-called 'EFL dictionaries' are more and more catching our attention. This is obviously because such dictionaries are now flourishing on the dictionary market, and probably because the ILC members, most of whom are English teachers as well as foreign learners of English themselves, are more interested in this genre.

(3) There are two types of comparative review: synchronic and diachronic (Nakamoto 1994: 35). In a synchronic review, the same or

similar types of dictionaries are compared with each other, while in a diachronic review, older editions are very often compared with their latest descendant. Thus, considering which dictionaries to compare is as important as considering which dictionaries to review. The comparison could be meaningless if we choose dictionaries to compare just at random. It can be claimed that the ILC's analysis series has been providing reliable dictionary reviews in this respect.

### 3. What features of the dictionary have been reviewed?

Lexicography is a rather strange subject. In it, theory can make hardly any sense unless it is applied to the actual product (i.e. the dictionary), and practice should be based on a sound theory of linguistics and lexicography (cf. Nakao 1972: 52). If this is true, it is also true that a highly theoretical metalexicographical essay, however impressive it may be, is not very useful for lexicographical practitioners, nor is an amateurish dictionary review, however interesting it may be (cf. Landau 1984: 305). This does not mean that dictionary reviews are metalexicographically worthless. On the contrary, "If the reviewer is given the opportunity to use enough space, the review may turn out to be an essay on lexicographical matters" (Steiner 1984: 167). Metalexicography is a rather strange subject, too, because making a clear-cut distinction between theoretical essays and practical articles is almost meaningless.

One of the distinctive features of ILC's dictionary analyses is their comprehensiveness. Table 2 is given to prove this, which shows what features of the dictionary macro- and micro-structures have been discussed in each analysis. Note that the table was compiled exclusively based on the heading of each section of each analysis, such as 'Entries', 'Pronunciations', 'Definitions', and so on. Some features are treated in passing without being given a separate section.<sup>3)</sup> Note also that the analyses of BBI, OEDCD1, LLA, and NTCPV are excluded from the table, for these dictionaries have quite different macro- and micro-structures and thus their reviews also have different structures themselves. This may remind us of the fact that presumably there exists no 'checklist' for reviewers who try to examine such specialised dictionaries.

Table 2<sup>a</sup>

	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
PED1	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓			
NWD1	✓	✓		✓	(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
NWD2	✓	✓		✓	(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
EWD + CTCD	✓	✓		✓								
OALD3	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓					
COD6	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			
LDOCE1	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
CED1	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓			
CULD	✓	✓		✓	✓	(✓)	✓					
WCD9	✓	✓		✓			✓			✓		
LDAE + OSDAE	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
POD7	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓			✓		
COB1	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓						
LDOCE2	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
NWD3	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
RHD2	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OALD4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
COD8	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
PESD	✓	✓		✓	✓	(✓)	✓					
LDEL2	✓	✓		✓								
CIDE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
OALD5	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
COB2	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					

① word coverage and entry structure ② pronunciations ③ syllabification  
 ④ definitions and arrangement of senses ⑤ verbal illustrations ⑥ grammatical information  
 ⑦ usage labels and/or usage notes ⑧ synonym essays  
 ⑨ treatment of set phrases ⑩ etymological information ⑪ pictorial illustrations ⑫ appendices

What do we learn from the table above? The fact that the features absent from the dictionary to be reviewed cannot be reviewed! For instance, neither COB1 nor COB2 has used pictorial illustrations, and therefore their analyses have not given separate sections to this feature. However, the reviewer could argue that the usefulness of these dictionaries should have been strengthened by pictorial illustrations.

Table 2 should also reveal the following facts:

(1) There are three areas that are always treated, namely, word coverage and entry structure, pronunciations, and definitions and arrangement of senses. Since meaning is the most frequently consulted information category (cf. Svensén 1993: 14) and thus semantic information cannot be dispensed with in any general-purpose dictionary, the most important part of a dictionary review should also be about semantic information.

(2) Compared to the generous treatment of meaning, verbal illustrations have not been given the same status as semantic descriptions. This is rather strange if we consider the importance of verbal illustrations, invented or quoted, in a general-purpose dictionary. The ILC's reviews did consider strong and weak points of illustrative examples particularly in the EFL dictionaries, but not necessarily in the dictionaries for native speakers. However, this failure should NOT be attributed to our circle's negligence — it only reveals another fact that traditionally dictionaries targeted at native speakers do not contain as many examples as in typical EFL dictionaries. Similarly, grammatical information is usually associated with the EFL type of dictionary.

(3) On the other hand, traditionally EFL dictionaries do not offer etymological information, nor do they have synonym essays per se, although semantically related words are very often discussed in their 'usage notes'.

(4) If ideally *every* dictionary should be reviewed (see 2), then *every* feature of each dictionary should be reviewed. However, excessively comprehensive reviews could run a risk of obscuring the important features of the dictionary reviewed. Deciding which features of the dictionary to examine is as important as deciding which dictionaries to review.

Where should the reviewer start reviewing? Firstly, s/he should look for distinctive features of the dictionary reviewed. The easiest way to find them is to read the compiler's introduction and/or the publisher's blurb, which is often given on the dictionary's back cover. If it is called a 'revolutionary' work, the first thing the critic must do is to consider why it is revolutionary. Both potential users and lexicographers are probably interested in the dictionary's brand-new feature(s). Satisfying their curiosity is an essential job of the critic.

Secondly, if the dictionary reviewed is a revised edition, a diachronic

approach is useful (see 2). In other words, the critic should ask how 'new' it is. S/he should keep in mind the weak features found in its previous edition. Incidentally, it would be interesting to chronologically review different editions of the same dictionary, focussing on a specific feature (e.g. collocational information). Such a review could reveal how not only the dictionary examined but also the lexicography itself has been developed. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, there is no clear-cut boundary indeed between dictionary reviews and (meta)lexicographical essays.

Note that a new edition may also be compared with its competitor(s).

#### 4. The future of ILC's dictionary analyses

The discussion in the former sections and the two tables may lead to the conclusion that the ILC has been supplying systematic and reliable dictionary reviews for such a long time.

However, there is much to be done. The present author would like to dedicate the rest of this article to our young members who are potential 'dictionary analysts' — in fact, some of them have already started their careers as dictionary critics.

(1) There are still a large number of dictionaries worth reviewing. If trying to review *every* (English) dictionary is too ideal and virtually impossible, we cannot escape from such criticisms as 'Why hasn't the Dictionary X been analysed when its competitor Y did catch the reviewers' attention?', 'Aren't new editions very interesting? Their ancestors were thoroughly analysed . . .', etc. *Harrap's* (now re-named *Chambers*) *Essential English Dictionary* (1995), COD9 (1995), and WCD10 (1993) are such dictionaries, to name but a few.<sup>5)</sup>

(2) There are also dictionary categories that have been almost totally neglected. Specialised dictionaries such as dictionaries of idioms, phrasal verbs, synonyms, slang terms, pronunciations, etymologies, and so on are probably worth reviewing, and so are dictionaries for young users, whether they are native speakers or foreign learners of the target language (see 2). Such analyses could provide useful 'checklists' for other reviewers of the dictionaries that belong to these categories.

In passing, we should pay more and more attention to electronic dictionaries.

(3) We could consider different 'perspectives' of the review (cf. Nakamoto 1994: 31–32). Traditionally, ILC's analyses have been made from the viewpoint of (Japanese) lexicographers (Nakao 1972: 52), and it makes our series distinctive. However, this is not the only way to look at the dictionary. A new type of dictionary analysis, say, from the viewpoint of the dictionary user, could be introduced (cf. Higashi 1996: 2). In fact, the importance of looking at existing dictionaries from the user's perspective has been repeatedly emphasised especially by European dictionary researchers. Hartmann (1989: 182) reminds us of the necessity of research of this sort:

What we need is not more dogma about what should be included in the dictionary, but more research on the real uses of dictionaries by real learners in real settings.

To relieve his frustration, one could evaluate a dictionary, analysing at the same time the results from a survey conducted to find out *real* (Japanese) learners' reactions to the dictionary reviewed.

It would also be interesting if two groups of analysts review the same dictionary from different perspectives at the same time, for example, one from the perspective of the lexicographer and the other from that of the language learner and dictionary user. The same (feature of the same) dictionary could be assessed quite differently.

(4) Rather surprisingly, English-Japanese dictionaries for Japanese learners of English (EJs) had never been analysed, even though they are the most familiar and the most important dictionaries for us, until a group of younger members of the ILC launched a new research project — they are analysing historic EJs one by one. This long-term ambitious study will surely give us a new insight into the complicated and rather mysterious history of EJs.

Is this all we have to do? Wait. There is one more mysterious area in the history of Japanese lexicography: Japanese-English dictionaries for Japanese learners of English (JEs). Their development had been much slower

than that of EJs. However, JEs are now in full bloom on the dictionary market in Japan. The seed that brought the blossom was Professor Kojima's *Kenkyusha Lighthouse Japanese-English Dictionary* (1984), which was acclaimed by many English teachers in Japan as his masterpiece. Both its third edition (1996) and its sister edition, the *Kenkyusha College Lighthouse Japanese-English Dictionary* (1995), continue to be essential works for healthy growth of that genre.

### NOTES

- 1) The analyses of PED1, NWD1, and NWD2 were published in the *Denkitushindai Gappo* (University of Electro-Communications), those of COD8 and LDEL2 in the *IJL*, and the others in the *Lexicon*. Eleven analyses were reprinted in *Eigojisho no Hikaku to Bunseki* [Comparative Analyses of English Dictionaries] published in 1981 (1st and 2nd volumes) and in 1989 (3rd and 4th volumes).
- 2) For instance, the *Longman Handy Learner's Dictionary* (1988) is mentioned in the analysis of OALD4.
- 3) For instance, strong and weak points of OALD4's pictorial illustrations are discussed in the definition section in the analysis of OALD4.
- 4) In Table 2 '✓' signifies that the feature concerned is discussed in the analysis. In some analyses grammatical descriptions of the dictionary are reviewed under the heading of 'Usage'. This is indicated by the symbol '(✓)'.
- 5) The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, Encyclopedic Edition (1992) and the *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture* (1992) are being reviewed.

### ABBREVIATIONS

ACD	<i>The American College Dictionary</i> . Random House. 1947.
AHD1	<i>The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language</i> . Heritage. 1969.
AHD2	<i>The American Heritage Dictionary</i> . 2nd College Ed. Houghton Mifflin. 1982.
AHDP	<i>The American Heritage Dictionary</i> . Based on the New 2nd College Ed. Dell. 1983.
ALD2	<i>The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English</i> . 2nd Ed. OUP. 1963.
BBI	<i>The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English: A Guide to Word Combinations</i> . John Benjamins. 1986.
CED1/3	<i>Collins Dictionary of the English Language</i> . Collins. 1979. 3rd Ed. 1991.

CIDE	<i>Cambridge International Dictionary of English</i> . CUP. 1995.
COB1	<i>Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary</i> . Collins. 1987.
COB2	<i>Collins COBUILD English Dictionary</i> . New Ed. HarperCollins. 1995.
COD5/6/7/8/9	<i>The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English</i> . Clarendon Press. 5th Ed. 1964. 6th Ed. 1976. 7th Ed. 1982. 8th Ed. 1990. 9th Ed. 1995.
CPED	<i>Collins Pocket Dictionary of the English Language</i> . Collins. 1981.
CTCD	<i>Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary</i> . Chambers. 1972.
CULD	<i>Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary</i> . Chambers. 1980.
EWD	<i>Encyclopedic World Dictionary</i> . Hamlyn. 1971.
ISED	<i>Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary</i> . Kaitakusha. 1942.
LASDE1	<i>Longman Active Study Dictionary of English</i> . Longman. 1983.
LDAE1	<i>Longman Dictionary of American English: A Dictionary for Learners of English</i> . Longman. 1983.
LDEL2	<i>Longman Dictionary of the English Language</i> . Longman. New Ed. 1991.
LDOCE1/2/3	<i>Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English</i> . 1978. New Ed. 1987. 3rd Ed. 1995.
LLA	<i>Longman Language Activator: The World's First Production Dictionary</i> . Longman. 1993.
LLCE	<i>Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English</i> . Longman. 1981.
NTCPV	<i>NTC's Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs and Other Idiomatic Verbal Phrases</i> . National Textbook Company. 1993.
NWD1/2	<i>Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language</i> . College Ed. World. 1953. 2nd College Ed. 1970.
NWD3	<i>Webster's New World Dictionary of American English</i> . 3rd College Ed. Simon & Schuster. 1988.
OALD3/4/5	<i>Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English</i> . OUP. 3rd Ed. 1974/1980/1985. 4th Ed. 1989. 5th Ed. 1995.
OED1	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i> . Clarendon Press. 1884–1928.
OEDCD1	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary on CD-ROM</i> . NEC PC-9800 Version. Kinokuniya-shoten. 1989.
OSDAE	<i>Oxford Student's Dictionary of American English</i> . OUP. 1983.
OSDCE1	<i>Oxford Student's Dictionary of Current English</i> . OUP. 1978.
PED1/2	<i>The Penguin English Dictionary</i> . Penguin. 1965. 2nd Ed. 1969.
PESD	<i>Penguin English Student's Dictionary</i> . Penguin. 1991.
POD6/7	<i>The Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Current English</i> . Clarendon Press. 6th Ed. 1978. 7th Ed. 1984.
RHCD1	<i>The Random House Dictionary of the English Language</i> . College Ed. Random House. 1968.
RHCD2	<i>The Random House College Dictionary</i> . Random House. 1975.
RHD1/2	<i>The Random House Dictionary of the English Language</i> . Random

- House. 1966. 2nd Ed. 1987.
- W3 *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language*. Merriam. 1961.
- WCD6 *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. 6th Ed. Merriam. 1949.
- WCD7 *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*. Merriam. 1963.
- WCD8 *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. 8th Ed. Merriam-Webster. 1973.
- WCD9 *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Merriam-Webster. 1983.
- WCD10 *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. 10th Ed. Merriam-Webster. 1993.

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## The Treatment of Vulgar Words in Major English Dictionaries (2)<sup>1)</sup>

HIROAKI UCHIDA

### 3. Dictionaries in the U.S.

Now let us examine Table 1 horizontally and see how each dictionary in the U.S. has treated these vulgar terms in its editorial history.

*ACD* is the second oldest dictionary of those listed in Table 1. It was first published by Random House in 1947, and has never really been fully revised up to the present. Therefore one may instantly doubt whether it can be called a *modern* dictionary. But although not fully revised, *ACD* had constantly been reprinted with minor revisions until the 1970s, and certainly had once been "the latest record of current usage made by any dictionary staff since World War II" as critics of that time had commented. At the time of its appearance, *W<sub>2</sub>* was already out of date for its prewar publication, and that *ACD* was born to be the first postwar *modern* dictionary was not an exaggeration. Telling the cruel fact that Random House has been "putting its lexicographical energies into" *RHD* and *RHC* since their publication and not into *ACD* anymore, and pointing to its weakened authority/out-of-date contents as compared to his theory "the estimated life of a college dictionary today is about ten or at most fifteen years", Kister also evaluates its semipermanent usefulness and informativeness which lead to its long-lasting popularity (Kister 1977: 63).

However, in respect to the treatment of vulgar words, *ACD* was not as innovative as it should have been. As is clear from Table 1, almost all of the vulgar words referring to sex and excretion are omitted. The prejudiced attitude toward them are most strikingly expressed in "Usage Levels and Dialect Distribution" written by Charles C. Fries in the explanatory pages of *ACD* as follows: