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An Analysis of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition

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1. Introduction

This is a critical analysis of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition (abbreviated to *MWCD11*). Four people have contributed to this study of entries, pronunciations, definitions and verbal illustrations, usages, and synonyms.

The first *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* was published in 1898 "based on the 1890 edition of the Merriam-Webster Unabridged and it aimed to present the most essential parts of Webster's International Dictionary, in a compact and convenient form, suited to the general reader and especially to the college student." (Preface to the Tenth Edition: 6a)

The title of the dictionary was altered from *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* to *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* in the tenth edition (*MWCD10*).¹ Collegiate dictionaries have been regularly published at ten-year intervals. The seventh edition was published in 1963, the eighth

edition (1973), the ninth edition (1983), the tenth edition (1993), and the eleventh edition (2003).

Frederick C. Mish, Editor in Chief explains the aim of the latest revision as follows (Preface: 6a):

Over the time between these editions, the world has made its way through two global wars and many others of a more limited kind; wide-ranging social, political, and economic changes (not to say, revolution); and successive waves of technological changes that have transformed communication, transportation, information storage and retrieval, and great numbers of other human activities

. . . it has been the job of a good general dictionary to record these changes. The present book is the latest effort by the editorial team of Merriam-Webster to meet that responsibility.

The direct parent dictionary of the present dictionary is *Webster's Third New International Dictionary (WNID3)* published in 1961. *MWCD11* has inherited many features from *WNID3*. One of the traditions is that editors and lexicographers take a descriptive attitude when they present pronunciations, definitions, etc. using a large collection of citations. According to Kojima (1999: 517–518), about 4,500,000 citations had been collected for *WNID3* in addition to 1,650,000 million citations used for *WNID2* and other citations from various sources. Therefore, the editors of *WNID3* were able to use about 10,000,000 citations. Today, the company maintains 15,700,000 citations in its offices, plus “a machine-readable corpus of over 76,000,000 words of text drawn from the wide and constantly changing range of publications that supply the paper slips in the citation files.” (Preface: 6a) Another feature that *MWCD11* has inherited from *WNID3* is its precise and sharp defining as cited in Jackson (2002: 65). Still another feature lies in the treatment of entries. Kojima (1999: 519) says phrasal verbs are listed as main entries in *WNID3* for the first time in a dictionary of this type. *MWCD11* has retained that feature, in marked contrast to other American college dictionaries. The macrostructure of the collegiate dictionary, however, is slightly different from that of *WNID3*. While the collegiate dictionary lists encyclopedic information such as biographical and geographical names in the back matter, “*W3* has no appendices, all

entries are contained within the main alphabetical sequence.” (Jackson: 65)

Our study is based on Nakao et al. (1985: 52–166) who analyzed *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (WNCD9)* from five different perspectives: entries, pronunciations, etymologies, definitions, and usages. It also gives an overall explanation of the history of Merriam-Webster's dictionaries and their long tradition, the tradition inherited from N. Webster's *A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language* in 1806 and *An American Dictionary of the English Language* in 1828.

We know that a well-established dictionary with a long tradition does not, and should not change its dictionary structures without good reasons. It is continued efforts to revise and improve that are more important for dictionaries, the same efforts that brought victory over Worcester's dictionary in the dictionary war. Although there may be no drastic changes in *MWCD11*, we have identified steady improvements and innovations to update the dictionary.

The number of book pages has increased from 1559 in the tenth edition to 1623 in the eleventh. According to the dust jacket, there are ten thousand new words and senses.

One of the major changes in this edition is the renewal of pictorial illustrations and the incorporation of abbreviations and symbols into the main part of the dictionary. Curtailing of the pronunciation variants peculiar to the dialects on the East Coast is another major change.

Minor but steady improvements and changes have been made to facilitate and clarify the definitions. There seems to be little change in usages. The changes also seem small in synonym paragraphs.

To avoid duplications, we have focused our attention mainly on the changes and new additions by comparing *MWCD10* and *MWCD11*. We have also compared *MWCD11* with other major American college dictionaries and studied areas which Nakao et al. has not dealt with in detail.

2. Entries

2.1. Overview

In this chapter, we will compare entries in *MWCD10* and *MWCD11* to

examine the major changes in the new edition. The dust jacket of the 11th edition says the dictionary has 165,000 entries and 225,000 definitions with 10,000 new words and senses. According to Nakao et al. (1984: 54), the total number of entries has been steadily growing, from 97,000 in the third edition to 160,000 in the ninth edition. We don't know how many entries have been incorporated in *MWCD10* because it makes no reference to the entry size. We estimate that there are about 161,000 in the tenth edition.

Our primary focus, therefore, is on the new entries in this edition. We have conducted a survey to examine how the citation-collecting effort has impacted on the new edition. For this purpose, we compared all the main entries, defined run-ons, and undefined run-ons in the L sections of the 11th and the 10th editions.

We have also compared *MWCD11* with two other American college dictionaries: *Webster's New World College Dictionary*, Fourth Edition (abbreviated to *WNWD4*), and *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, Fourth Edition (*AHCD4*).

Nakao et al. made an overall analysis of *WNCD9* and compared headwords in the dictionary and foreign words and phrases, biographical and geographical names, abbreviations, and symbols in the back matter. Since the general macrostructure of the dictionary is unchanged except that abbreviations and symbols have been transferred to the main dictionary body, we have concentrated our comparison on the entry structures: what kind of lexical items are listed as main entries and run-on entries, and how homographs are treated. Our attention is focused mainly on the treatment of phrasal verbs.

2.2. Entries in *MWCD11* and *MWCD10*

In the L section of *MWCD11*, there are 3,066 main entries (variants and inflections are not counted) compared with 2,852 main entries in the *MWCD10*. A dozen main entries in the 10th edition have been deleted in the new edition.¹⁾ Simple subtraction gives about 200 new main entries, but in fact, the actual number of additions is much smaller than this figure because abbreviations and symbols that were previously listed in the back

matter have been shifted to the main dictionary body. A few abbreviations and symbols are added, and several old ones are deleted. The increase, leaving abbreviations and symbols aside, is about 95 main entries. Since there are 50 pages in the L section, every page has an average of about two new main entries. The estimated number of new main entries in A-Z sections is, therefore, 2772.

Other entries (defined run-ons and undefined run-ons) in the L section have increased in a small way. Undefined run-on entries number 694 in the 11th edition, an increase of 31 entries. Defined run-ons have increased by 5.

Of 10,000 new words and senses, estimated 3,820 entries are new words and phrases in the 11th edition.

2.2.1. New main entries

Main entries that have been added in this edition come from various fields of science as well as other social sectors. Inclusion of "extensive scientific and technological information" has been a salient feature of American college dictionaries (Jackson 2002: 67). A great number of new words have indeed been created in the new frontier of science and technology. Also, there are many words that have been used for centuries but had not been listed in the previous editions. They may have come to be used more frequently these days than in the past, or the updated computer corpus may have proved that they deserve dictionary entries.

Terms from animals/plants: **lady apple** (1850), **lady's mantle** (1548), **langostino** (1915), **leaf-cutter** (1870), **least tern** (1860), **leopard cat** (1866), **lesser panda** (1943), **limber pine** (1897), **liriope** (1946), **loggerhead shrike** (1811), **London plane** (1897), **lone star tick** (1896), **long-tailed duck** (1766), **lowland gorilla** (1942)

Terms from anatomy, (bio)chemistry, medicine: **lactate dehydrogenase** (1966), **laminin** (1979), **Langerhans cell** (1890), **latissimus dorsi** (1684), **lectin** (1954), **left brain** (1976), **leptin** (1955), **levamisole** (1969), **levonorgestrel** (1977), **light therapy** (1936), **lignan** (1944), **long-term potentiator** (1984), **lorazepam** (1969), **L-type-tophan** (1949), **lude** (1973),

lumbar puncture (1895), **lymphatic system** (1839), **lymphedema** (1889), **lymphocytic leukemia** (1959)

Terms from other science fields: **lake effect** (1951), **linear interpolation** (1965), **linear regression** (1958), **logocentrism** (1968)

Terms from technology: **laptop** (n 1984), **LASIK** (laser-assisted in situ keratomilensis) (1994), **legacy** (adj 1990), **Listserv** (trademark), **logic bomb** (1978)

Words from commerce, economics, etc: **limited liability partnership** (1980), **limited partnership**, **living trust** (1873)

Miscellany: **lacto-ovo vegetarian** (1952), **lacto-vegetarian** (1971), **lap dancing**, **latte** (1991), **law-and-order** (1844), **layin** (1951), **leaderboard** (1963), **leading light** (1655), **leatherwork** (1855), **lemon curd** (1895), **lemon thyme** (1629), **lifestyle** (adj 1976), **lifeworld** (1940), **line dance** (1948), **line-item veto** (1979), **linguica** (1953), **linksland** (1926), **linzer torte** (1906), **lion's den** (1680), **live-action** (1945), **long ball** (1938), **longneck** (1978), **longship** (1568), **losing** (adj 1519), **lovefest** (1972), **love nest** (1919), **lowrider** (1972), etc.

2.2.2. New abbreviations and symbols

As we have mentioned above, abbreviations and chemical symbols that were previously listed as an appendix have come back as headwords in the main body of the dictionary.

In the previous editions, one abbreviation often stands for many entries. When it stands for two or more entries in this edition, they are numerically discriminated. Also, one abbreviation stands both for a chemical symbol and a lexical entry in the 10th edition. In the 11th edition, they have independent status: **1La** *abbr* Louisiana, **2La** *symbol* lanthanum.

There are some new additional abbreviations and many more deleted ones.²⁾ There are also new entries that have been incorporated into the existing ones.

Additions: **LAT**, **ld**, **lic**, **LLC**, **LLD**, **loq**, **LSO**, **LTP**

Incorporations: **LD** (laser disc), **LDC** (least developed country)

2.2.3. New defined and undefined run-ons

New run-on entries have increased slightly. Some main entries in the 10th edition have lost their status and are listed as run-on entries.³⁾ Some run-ons in the tenth edition have been listed as main entries,⁴⁾ and some are included because their headwords are new entries.⁵⁾

Defined run-ons: **lay an egg**, **lay eyes on**, **lay into**; **lick one's chops**; **lose it**; **all over the lot**; **lower the boom**

Undefined run-ons: **lap dance**, **lap dancer**; **leading-edge** (adj); **left-brained**; **letterboxing**; **line dancer**, **line dancing**; **lip-syncher** or **lip-syncer**; **lone-wolf**; **lovemaker**;

As we have seen, the new entries have come from a wide range of fields. It's an interesting fact that new entries related to computer technologies are not as numerous as one might have thought. This may reflect the fact that the rapid pace of innovations in this field has slowed. Instead, there are numerous new entries from the flora and fauna. New entries are also noticeable in the field of medicine and (bio)chemistry. We know people have grown more concerned about the global warming and the environmental problems as they have grown more conscious of their health and what they eat.

2.3. Comparisons of entries in *MWCD11*, *AHCD4* and *WNWD4*

Dictionaries often compete with each other as to the richness of their entries. "The term entry" as *MWCD11* says "includes all vocabulary entries as well as all boldface entries in the separate sections of the back matter headed" Foreign Words, and Phrases, "Biographical Names," and "Geographical Names."

Main entries include abbreviations and symbols, as well as spelling variants that are ordered according to their frequency, defined run-ons (phrasal verbs and idioms), undefined run-ons, etc.

MWCD11, *AHCD4*, and *WNWD4* are comparable in terms of dictionary size and their macrostructures. As we have already mentioned above *MWCD11* has 165,000 entries. *WNWD4* says it has 163,000 entries, with

7,500 new entries. Like *MWCD11*, main entries include spelling variants, abbreviations and symbols, but unlike *MWCD11*, they also include biographical names and geographical names often with photographs. *AHCD4* is similar in this respect. In fact, biographical and geographical names come with more detailed information and many more photos and pictures. They are one of the main features of *AHCD*. It doesn't specify the number of the entries, but we suppose it has a similar vocabulary size.⁶⁾

Dictionary houses utilize computers for collecting language data and for compiling dictionaries. We have already mentioned that Merriam uses machine-readable corpora. *AHCD4* says "We use computers to search and analyze large files of data, looking for evidence of new words and new uses of existing words. We use the Internet to gather additional information about words and to check their usage." (Preface: iv) *WNWD4* says that "Linguistic evidence is collected on a daily basis in the form of citations of words and expressions used in print and speech; the program collects several thousand new citations every month . . . As are all Webster's New World dictionaries, the College Dictionary is stored in a relational database operated on a mainframe computer." (Foreword: ix-x)

Since editors and lexicographers have powerful tools to collect language data, they can decide at least partly which new words should be added to the dictionary statistically and there can be no accidental omission of new entries. The remaining differences with respect to entries, therefore, stem mainly from their policy of dictionary making and how to present information, i.e. whether etymologically related homographs with different grammatical functions are nested in the same main entries, or are listed independently; whether phrasal verbs are explained within the main entry verbs, or they are separately listed on their own, etc. We will examine these differences shortly.

2.3.1. Treatment of Biographical and Geographical entries

We don't know the exact reason, but as we have mentioned in 2.1, abbreviations and symbols have been revived in *MWCD11* as main entries in the A to Z section of the dictionary. Biographical and geographical names remain in the appendix. They could have all been incorporated in

the main dictionary body as has been done in *AHCD* and *NWCD*. As Jackson (2002: 67) says, "American dictionaries have tended to be more 'encyclopedic' in their scope" compared with their British counterparts. Among three American college dictionaries, *MWCD11* is rather reserved in this respect. Landau (1984: 167-169) has argued for the inclusion of biographical and geographical names especially when they can serve as the etymology of the lexicalized entries, on which readers would like to be better informed. In his argument he takes up biographical names like Kafka.

In *MWCD11*, Kafkaesque is listed as a headword and is defined as "of, relating to, or suggestive of Franz Kafka or his writings; especially: having a nightmarishly complex, bizarre, or illogical quality <Kafkaesque bureaucratic delays>". But since Kafka itself is not a headword, interested readers must refer to the appendix for more information. Likewise, mocha is defined as "1 a (1): a superior Arabian coffee consisting of small green or yellowish beans (2): a coffee of superior quality b: a flavoring made of a strong coffee infusion or of a mixture of cocoa or chocolate with coffee." To know why the Arabian coffee is called mocha, readers must look for the entry in the appendix.

We believe all entries, whether they are lexical or encyclopedic, should be listed in the main dictionary body if they deserve an entry in the back matter. That is what has been done in the CD-ROM version of *MWCD11*.

2.3.2. Treatment of homographs

More important differences between dictionaries lie in the treatment of the etymologically related homographs.

While *MWCD11* lists words like **labor** in three main entries, *AHCD4* and *WNWD4* give one main entry. Instead, they nest all the grammatical functions within a single headword. We are not sure which method of representation is preferred by readers.

There have been two contrastive entry formats for this matter in British learners' dictionaries. *LDCE* has adopted a small entry format. It used to list phrasal verbs as well as homographs as independent entries. It retains the system of the small entry format, but abandoned the phrasal-verb

headwords in later editions. *COBUILD* has tried to give a single headword and explained all its grammatical functions, and even etymologically unrelated homographs such as **seal** (closing, and animal) under the same headword. It retains the system of the large entry format, but homographs with unrelated etymologies are listed as separated headwords in the later editions.

2.3.3. Treatment of phrasal verbs

MWCD11 incorporates idioms and some phrasal verbs within the main entries as defined run-ons. On the other hand, many other phrasal verbs are listed as independent main entries. *AHCD4* and *WNWD4* nest both of them in the main entry verbs, but treat them differently. *AHCD4* explains phrasal verbs in one group and the idioms in another. *WNWD4* does this indiscriminately. The following shows how they are presented in three dictionaries (their compound nouns are also listed).

MWCD11

(main entries) (nested run-on entries)

¹lay vt (bef. 12c) . . . — lay an egg; — lay eyes on; — lay into; — lay on the table

layaway n (1944)

lay away vt (ca.1928)

lay-by n (1919)

lay by vt (15c)

lay down vt (13c)

layin n (1951)

lay in vt (1579)

layoff n (1889)

lay off vt (1748)

lay on vt (1600)

layout n (1852)

lay out vt (15c)

layover n (1873)

lay over vt (1838)

lay to vt (1796)

layup (1925)

lay up (14c)

AHCD4

lay¹ v. tr. — *phrasal verbs*: lay about; lay aside; lay away; lay by; lay down; lay for; lay in; lay into; lay off; lay on; lay out; lay over; lay up.

— *idioms*: lay it on thick; lay of the land; lay waste

layabout n.

layaway n.

layoff n.

layout n.

layover n.

layup n.

WNWD4

lay¹ vt. — lay about one; — lay a course; — lay aside; — lay away; — lay by; — lay down; lay for; — lay in; — lay into; — lay it on (thick); — lay off; — lay on; — lay oneself open; — lay open; lay out; — lay over; — lay something on someone; — lay to; — lay to rest; — lay up

layabout n.

layaway n.

layby n.

layoff n.

layout n.

layover n.

layup n.

Similarly, *MWCD11* lists **live in** as an independent headword, and (**live it up**), **live up to** and **live with** as defined run-ons of **live**. In *AHCD4*, **live down**, **live in**, **live out**, **live with** are grouped as phrasal verbs and **live it up**, **live up to** are given as idioms of the headword **live**¹.

WNWD4 enters (**live and let live**), **live down**, (**live high**), **live in**, (**live it up**), **live out**, **live up to**, (**live well**), **live with**, and (**where one lives**) as run-ons (parentheses are added to show they are idioms).

Compared with British learners' dictionaries, entries of phrasal verbs in American college dictionaries are considerably fewer as the table shows.⁷⁾ Of course, EFL dictionaries need to incorporate a wider range of phrasal verbs than college dictionaries. It seems that phrasal verbs whose meaning can be easily guessed are not entered in American college dictionaries. However, they could list more of them for native learners as well as for foreign learners in the United States and abroad.

	MWCD11	AHCD4	WNWD4	OALD7	LDCE4
live down	○	○	○	○	○
live for				○	○
live in	○	○	○	○	○
live off				○	○
live on				○	○
live out		○	○	○	○
live through				○	○
live together				○	○
live up to	○	○	○	○	○
live with	○	○	○	○	○

MWCD11's treatment of phrasal verbs appears to be lexicographically inconsistent. We believe *MWCD11* should list all of them as independent entries for the sake of consistency. Although it's hard to say which formats are preferred by dictionary readers, we believe independent phrasal-verb entries are friendlier to users than nested entries.

There are two reasons for this. For one thing, many phrasal verbs are converted into compound nouns. As illustrated above, *MWCD11*, *AHCD4*, *WNWD4*, and other dictionaries list those converted compound nouns as independent headwords because they are lexical units. Phrasal verbs should also be so listed and they deserve main entry status. Phrasal verbs

also serve as the background of converted compounds.

Another reason has to do with practical considerations. Words that produce a great number of phrasal verbs also have many senses and subsenses. Sometimes finding the wanted phrasal verbs among them can be a far from easy task especially for readers searching them on the CD-ROM, and for readers who use electronic dictionaries. (Masuda)

3. Pronunciation

3.1. Overview

In the "Guide to Pronunciation" (henceforth referred to as "the Guide"), it is stated that the pronunciations in this dictionary "can be documented as falling within the range of generally acceptable variation, unless they are accompanied by a restricting usage note or symbol or a regional label" (33a). The description is chiefly based on the Merriam-Webster pronunciation file taken "from live speech and from radio, television, and short-wave broadcasts since the 1930s" (33a). Readers who need detailed information are advised to refer to its unabridged edition, *WNID3*.

Basically the same statements can be found in the Guide in the 9th and the 10th editions, and at first sight, the current edition seems to have just followed the tradition of the predecessors without any major changes.

A close investigation of the current edition, however, reveals a number of modifications, some quite drastic, compared to the two previous editions. The most noticeable of which is curtailing the pronunciation variants peculiar to the dialects on the East Coast. Simplification in the current edition's notations is mainly systematic, such as the disuse of [ə] and transcribing **hoarse** and **horse** identically. Not only systematic changes but some update of individual entries and usage notes has taken place in the 11th edition.

These changes may be due to the policies of the newly recruited associate editor for the present edition, Joshua S. Guenter.

3.2. Vowel and Consonant Symbols

Table 3.1 shows the list of pronunciation symbols used in the three editions, along with key words.¹⁾

Table 3.1 Vowels and consonants in *MWCD9-11*.

	9,10	11	9-11	
VOWELS			CONSONANTS	
mat	a	a	baby	b
date	ā	ā	chin	ch
cot, father	ā	ā	did	d
father	ā	—	fifty	f
car	—	är	go	g
now	au	au	hat	h
bed	e	e	whale	hw
beat	ē	ē	job	j
bare	—	er	kin	k
tip	i	i	lily	l
site	ī	ī	murmur	m
near	—	ir	no	n
bone	ō	ō	sing	ŋ
saw	ó	ó	pepper	p
coin	ói	ói	red	r
port	—	ör	source	s
rule	ü	ü	shy	sh
pull	ú	ú	tie	t
tour	—	úr	thin	th
abut	ə	ə	then	<u>th</u>
bird	ər	ər	vivid	v
hurry	ər-, ə-r	ər-, ə-r	we	w
easy	ē	ē	yard	y
collide	ə	ə	zone	z
			vision	zh

The inventory of the consonants has remained the same since the 9th edition. As for the vowels, *r*-colored diphthongs, i.e., |är|, |er|, |ir|, |ör|, |ür|, have been introduced in the 11th edition as sound units. On the other hand, |ā|, which was a symbol to transcribe New England dialects, has been deleted, which will be discussed in the next subsection (3.3).

3.2.1. *r*-colored Diphthongs as Sound Units

Up to the 10th edition, an *r*-sound followed by a vowel was treated as an allophone of |r|, and just a few lines were spared in the explanation of |r|

in the Guide: "After a vowel in the same syllable |r| is most often a semivowel characterized by retroflexion of the tongue tip. The sequences |ar|, |är|, |er|, |ir|, |ör|, |ür|, and |ər| may then be considered diphthongs" (10th: 34a). This is then followed by how the "*r*" is realized phonetically in various dialects, and the "*r*-dropping" phenomenon is only succinctly mentioned.

In contrast, treating the *r*-colored diphthongs as new sound units in the latest edition is highly evaluated for being user-friendly, since the difference between postvocalic and prevocalic "*r*" is clear by putting each of them in two distinct categories, vowel and consonant. This will possibly make it easier for the users to understand the possible *r*-dropping in the former position, but not in the latter. Additionally, the understanding will be further supplemented by the Guide, which mentions the dropping of "*r*" before a consonant or a pause, and the insertion of "*r*" when followed by a vowel for each of |är|, |er|, |ir|, |ör|, |ür|, as well as the *r*-colored long vowel |ər|. ²⁾

AHCD4 also includes some diphthongs as vowel sound units, but they are limited to |är| as in **care** and |îr| as in **pier**, which may be considered a systematic drawback.

3.3. Diminishing influence of the dialects on the East Coast

Merriam-Webster's dictionaries have traditionally included the varieties on the East Coast in its scope of description, and this has been no exception with *MWCD*. In this respect, simplification of transcription made by *MWCD11* is quite noteworthy.

3.3.1. hoarse = horse

Because "the number of speakers that make such a distinction is currently very small" (the Guide: 36a), *MWCD11* has abolished the **hoarse-horse** distinction. The two vowels have undergone a merger in most parts of the United States.

In contrast, *AHCD4* has maintained the transcription of the words in question in the traditional way.

	<i>WNID3</i> , <i>WNCD9</i>	<i>MWCD10</i>	<i>MWCD11</i>	<i>AHCD4</i>
hoarse, mourning	o(ə)r, ó(ə)r	ōr, ór	ór	ôr, òr
horse, morning	o(ə)r	ór	ór	ôr

3.3.2. marry vs. merry

Another well-known trend, the widespread use of the identical vowel in **marry** and **merry**, as well as **Mary** (Wells 1982: 479–485), is also taken into account in the current edition. Although the pattern and extent of merger vary from word to word, from region to region, and this seems to be reflected in the description as such, overall, this contrast is moving in the direction of being lost.³⁾

Here again, the obsolescent three-way opposition is maintained in *AHCD4*. It uniformly assigns (ā) to **marry**, **narrow**, and so forth; (ē) to **merry**, **very**; and (â) to **Mary**.

	<i>WNCD9</i>	<i>MWCD10</i>	<i>MWCD11</i>	<i>AHCD4</i>
marry	ar <i>also</i> er	ar <i>also</i> er	er, a-r	ǎr
merry	er	er	er, e-r	ĕr
Mary	e(ə)r, a(ə)r, ā-r	er, ar, ā-r	er, a-r, ā-r	âr
vary	e(ə)r, a(ə)r	er, ar	er	âr, ǎr
fairy	e(ə)r, a(ə)r	er, ar	er	âr
barrel, narrow	ar	ar	er, a-r	ǎr
carry	ar	ar, er	a-r, er	ǎr

3.3.3. Abolition of |ǎ|

The distribution of low vowels is complicated and often raises questions on dialectal variations. In this subsection and 3.4 below, Table 3.2, which roughly shows symbols and notational distribution of some low vowels, will be made use of for the sake of convenience in discussion.

The vowels for (E) **cot** and (D) **father**, which belong to two separate units in British English, are often considered identical by the majority of Americans, and are pronounced long with little lip-rounding. The systematic presentation of the American English vowels is often an area of discrepancy among dictionaries and *AHCD4* assigns two separate symbols (ā) and (ō) respectively based on different principles from those in *MWCD9*–

Table 3.2 Distribution and symbols of low vowels: Comparison of five dictionaries.

	<i>MWCD</i> ^{9,10}	<i>MWCD</i> ¹¹	<i>AHCD</i> ⁴	<i>EPD</i> ¹⁶ (<i>Am</i>)	<i>EPD</i> ¹⁶ (<i>Br</i>)
(A) <i>mass, sand</i>	a		ǎ	æ	æ
(B) <i>after, craft</i>					ɑ:
(C) ⁴⁾ <i>bath, calf</i>	a, ǎ	a, ǎ	ǎ, ǎ		(<i>ask</i> -words)
(D) <i>father, balm</i>	ā, ǎ	ǎ	ǎ	ɑ:	ɑ:
(E) <i>cot, bother</i>	ǎ		ō		ɒ
(F) <i>coffee, offer</i>	(cloth-words)		ô; ô, ô; ô;	ɑ:; ɑ:, ɔ:;	
(G) <i>lawn, water</i>	ô; ô, ǎ; ǎ, ô		ô, ô; ô	ɔ:, ɑ:, ɔ:	ɔ:

11, which in contrast assign an identical symbol |ǎ|. This is reasonable and acceptable in terms of phonetic quality of the sound.

What was peculiar to *MWCD9*, 10, however, was setting a category |ǎ| for (D) **father** words (other examples include **balm**, **becalm**, **calm**, **palm**, **psalm**, **garage**) in Eastern New England variety for its different phonetic quality and New York City dialect for its length difference from |ǎ|.

Employment of this symbol even extended to (C) **bath** words, the Eastern New England version of “*ask*-words” (Kenyon 1951: 179–184), which resulted in a complicatedly scattered distribution of an unfamiliar |ǎ| for average users. The latest edition has abolished the use of |ǎ|, and as is clear in the table above ((C)–(E)), the current system has just two symbols with the notation of either |a, ǎ| or |ǎ|. It is simpler and more accessible than the triad distribution |a, ǎ|, |ǎ, ǎ| and |ǎ| as in the older editions, and is a great improvement beneficial to the general users.

3.4. Distribution of |ô| and |ǎ|

Another issue that surrounds the low vowels in American English is the treatment of the vowel in a set of words labeled “*cloth*-words” (Wells 1982: 136–137), and vowels that are in the process of “THOUGHT-LOT merger” (Wells 1982: 473–475). They are grouped into (F) and (G) respectively in the table above, and the former is realized as a short rounded vowel |ɒ| and the latter a long rounded vowel |ɔ:| in British English.

3.4.1. cloth-words

A sample of 62 words (see Table 3.3) in the three editions of *MWCD* whose notations were compared, revealed no change but one: **dog**, to which $\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$ was assigned in the 9th edition, is assigned $\backslash\acute{o}, \grave{a}\backslash$ in the 10th and 11th editions.

It is observed that the choice of the four labels, $\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$, $\backslash\acute{o}, \grave{a}\backslash$, $\backslash\grave{a}, \acute{o}\backslash$, $\backslash\grave{a}\backslash$ is influenced by the phonological environment, and in the environment where the vowel in question is followed by $\backslash g\backslash$ (as in **log, jog**) or $\backslash r\backslash$ + a syllable with weak stress (as in **foreign, tomorrow**), $\backslash\acute{o}, \grave{a}\backslash$ or $\backslash\grave{a}, \acute{o}\backslash$ are more likely to be chosen, whereas where either $\backslash s\backslash$ or $\backslash th\backslash$ follows the vowel in question (as in **cost, loss; broth, froth**), the label $\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$ predominates (also see Kenyon 1951: 186–187).

Table 3.3 How the “cloth-words” are transcribed in *MWCD*9, 10, 11, *AHCD*4, *LPD*2, and *EPD*16.

Data based on a sample of 62 words: **because; coffin, cough, loft, off, often, soft; strong, long, song, thong, throng, wrong; cost, Boston, cross, frost, loss, lost, moss, Ross; broth, cloth, froth, and moth**, transcribed as $\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$ in all three editions of *MWCD*; **dog**, transcribed as $\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$ in *WNCD*9, but $\backslash\acute{o}, \grave{a}\backslash$ in *MWCD*10, 11; **cauliflower, gone, coffee, offer, log, fog, frog, hog, prong, foreign, horrid, laurel, origin, warrant, warrior, warren, quarrel, quarry, and quarantine**, transcribed as $\backslash\acute{o}, \grave{a}\backslash$ in all three editions; and **doff, office, scoff, bog, clog, smog, tog, jog, wog, gong, tongs, tomorrow, orange, sorrow, sorry, boss, and gloss**, transcribed as $\backslash\grave{a}, \acute{o}\backslash$ in all three editions.

	<i>WNCD</i> ⁹	<i>MWCD</i> ¹⁰	<i>MWCD</i> ¹¹		<i>AHCD</i> ⁴		<i>LPD</i> ²	<i>EPD</i> ¹⁶
$\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$	26	25	25	(\acute{o})	3	/ɔ:/	0	4
$\backslash\acute{o}, \grave{a}\backslash$	19	20	20	(\acute{o}, \acute{o})	52	/ɔ:, ɑ:/	45	8
$\backslash\grave{a}, \acute{o}\backslash$	17	17	17	(\acute{o}, \acute{o})	5	/ɑ:, ɔ:/	16	24
$\backslash\grave{a}\backslash$	0	0	0	(\acute{o})	2	/ɑ:/	1	26

3.4.2. THOUGHT-LOT merger

MWCD does not appear to be interested in incorporating the ongoing merger in the notation. It is not that the phenomenon is totally ignored. It has been acknowledged in the Guide throughout the three editions:

Some U.S. speakers (a perhaps growing minority) do not distinguish

between *cot-caught*, *cod-cawed*, and *collar-caller*, usually because they lack or have less lip rounding in the words transcribed with $\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$. Though the symbols $\backslash\grave{a}\backslash$ and $\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$ are used throughout this book to distinguish the members of the above pairs and similar words, the speakers who rhyme these pairs will automatically reproduce a sound that is consistent with their own speech. (*MWCD*11: 35a)

Table 3.4 shows how 48 words that contain the vowel as in **caught** are transcribed in *MWCD*9–11, *AHCD*4, *LPD*2, and *EPD*16, and we can see that *MWCD* is less reluctant to describe the trend compared to *AHCD*4, but not as much when compared to *LPD*2 and *EPD*16. The map in Hartman (1985: lxi) suggests a wide prevalence of the trend, and there is at least one dictionary, *CIDE*, which radically responded by even employing an identical symbol for **thought** and **cot** (Akasu et al. 1996: 24–25). Although the solution by *CIDE* may be rather extreme, it might suggest that *MWCD*11's description, not to mention that of *AHCD*4, does not rightly reflect the trend.

Takahashi (2003), in his comparison of the two pronouncing dictionaries *EPD*15 (not the 16th edition) and *LPD*2 to *MWCD*10, attributes the difference in the description of THOUGHT-LOT words to how the dictionary

Table 3.4 How the words with the vowel in **caught** are transcribed in *MWCD*9, 10, 11, *AHCD*4, *LPD*2, and *EPD*16.

Data based on a sample of 48 words: **abroad, all, almost, always, autumn, awe, bought, broad, brought, cause, chalk, exhaust, law, ought, pause, raw, sauce, saw, talk, taught, thaw, thought, walk**, transcribed as $\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$ in all three editions of *MWCD*; **aught, daunt, dawn, fawn, gaudy, gauntlet, haughty, haunt, jaundice, jaunty, launder, laundry, lawn, naught, naughty, nautical, nautilus, pawn, prawn, saunter, staunch, vaunt, water**, transcribed as $\backslash\acute{o}, \grave{a}\backslash$ in all three editions of *MWCD*; and **caught, drawn**, transcribed as $\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$ in *WNCD*9 but $\backslash\acute{o}, \grave{a}\backslash$ in *MWCD*10,11.

	<i>WNCD</i> ⁹	<i>MWCD</i> ¹⁰	<i>MWCD</i> ¹¹		<i>AHCD</i> ⁴		<i>LPD</i> ²	<i>EPD</i> ¹⁶
$\backslash\acute{o}\backslash$	25	23	23	(\acute{o})	38	/ɔ:/	0	0
$\backslash\acute{o}, \grave{a}\backslash$	23	25	25	(\acute{o}, \grave{a})/(\acute{o}, \acute{o})	10	/ɔ:, ɑ:/	9	6
$\backslash\grave{a}, \acute{o}\backslash$	0	0	0	(\grave{a}, \acute{o})/(\acute{o}, \acute{o})	0	/ɑ:, ɔ:/	0	42
$\backslash\grave{a}\backslash$	0	0	0	(\acute{o})	0	/ɑ:/	39	0

makers view the merger. He claims that *EPD15* and *LPD2* consider the merger to have been more or less completed and to be prevalent in the whole system, while *MWCD10* regards the process as a still on-going one, and that, for this reason, has limited the description to a certain lexical set. Takahashi highly appreciates the descriptive attitude taken by *MWCD10*.

If this is indeed the case, it is speculated that for the dictionary makers of *MWCD11*, the merger is not predominant enough in their collection of Merriam-Webster pronunciation file to fall “within the range of generally acceptable variation” (see 3.1. above), and a brief note in the Guide (as the one above) suffices.

On the other hand, it is rather odd that almost no addition has been made since the 9th edition, supposing it is an on-going process that is spreading over more lexical items. Further survey on this phenomenon is expected in preparing the next edition.

3.5. Syllabication

In the 9th edition, a checked vowel always constituted a closed syllable with a consonant finishing the syllable. The rules of syllable division, however, have been simplified since the 10th edition: Regardless of the vowel type, the syllabication is made in such a way that an open syllable is constituted whenever possible. Thus, **batter**, which used to be syllabified as 'bat-ər in the 9th edition, is divided as 'ba-tər in the 10th and 11th editions. Likewise **medal** 'med-əl → 'me-dəl; **media** 'mēd-ē-ə → 'mē-dē-ə; and **supper** 'səp-ər → 'sə-pər.

Policies on syllabication can vary from dictionary to dictionary, even among specialized pronouncing dictionaries such as *LPD2* and *EPD15* (Takebayashi 1998: 132). In *LPD2*, “consonants are syllabified with whichever of the two adjacent vowels is more strongly stressed” (xx), while *EPD15* puts its basis of syllabication on “Maximal Onsets Principle,” on which as many consonants as possible are assigned to the beginning of the syllable. The principles taken by *MWCD10*, 11 are closer to the latter, and this leads to discrepancy between orthographic syllabication used for dividing the entry words, and phonetic syllabication for describing the pronunciations (Takebayashi 2003): e.g. **med·al** \ 'me-dəl \. Syllabication

is a controversial topic that leaves much room for improvement, an area to be pursued further by phoneticians.

3.6. Variants and Labels

3.6.1. Much space is spared in *MWCD* to show variant pronunciations for its size, and a variety of labels are adopted in order to efficiently provide as much information as possible in limited space. It is explained that when more than one pronunciation is listed, the order has nothing to do with the frequency heard, but that when frequency matters, labels such as *also* and *sometimes* are used. Regional labels, such as *Southern also*, *chiefly Midland*, are used, and a new label *dial*, has been introduced in the 10th edition. The symbol † is used with “a pronunciation variant that occurs in educated speech but that is considered by some to be questionable or unacceptable” (the Guide: 34a).

3.6.2. In general, *MWCD11* gives more detailed information of each entry compared with *AHCD4*, with a combination of labels that address frequency and regional variations as well as acceptability, as is shown in the following examples:

garage:	<i>MWCD11</i>	gə-'rāzh, -'rāj; <i>Canad also</i> -'razh, -'raj; <i>Britain usually</i> 'ga-(,)rāzh, -(,)rāj, -rij
	<i>AHCD4</i>	(gə-'rāzh', -'rāj')
idea:	<i>MWCD11</i>	ī-'dē-ə, -'dēə <i>also</i> 'ī-(,)dē-ə or 'ī-dē
	<i>AHCD4</i>	(ī-'dē'ə)
ask:	<i>MWCD11</i>	'ask, 'äsk; <i>dialect</i> 'aks
	<i>AHCD4</i>	(äsk)

3.6.3. Exhaustive description by *MWCD11* stands out. Take 84 words, for example, on which opinion polls were conducted by Shitara (1993) for having “uncertain pronunciation” in American English (cf. *LPD2*: xii), and **justifiable** was the only word for which only one of the several possible pronunciations was provided; whereas as many as 12 words, i.e., **citizen**, **create**, **deprivation**, **hero**, **idea**, **incomparable**, **insurance**, **marry**, **measure**, **mischievous**, **palm**, and **umbrella**, have only one of

the variants recorded in *AHCD4*.

3.6.4. Careful consideration seems to be made for variants with ÷ every time the dictionary is revised. The following is the list of words that had the symbol with them:

- WNCD9*: **February, incomparable, kilometer, genuine, get, library, nuclear**
MWCD10: **February, incomparable, kilometer, mischievous, often, foliage, genuine, get, library, nuclear, height**
MWCD11: **mischievous, often, foliage, genuine, get, library, nuclear, barbiturate, height**

The effort to update the sound change and its acceptability is appreciable. An example is **mischievous** which, up to the 9th edition, had only the traditional variant with the first syllable strongly accented. However, the other variant that was reported in Shitara's survey to be prevalent among younger speakers, has been adopted with a ÷ in the 10th edition.

In general, the latest edition seems to be more tolerant with some words that were judged unacceptable by the previous edition. For example, **incomparable**, which had ÷ in its second variant \(\,in-kəm-'pɑr-ə-bəl\) in the 10th edition, is shown without ÷ in the 11th edition. This corresponds to the data of Shitara's survey, in which the second variant was found to be the predominant pronunciation among the younger generation.

3.7. Usage notes

3.7.1. For a number of controversial pronunciations, usage notes are provided, giving the historical background of the sound along with its acceptability. In the 9th edition, **February, genuine, get, -ing, kilometer, library, and nuclear**, were the only entries; in the 10th edition, notes on **envelope, foliage, forte, mischievous, and hone in**, were added; and **effect** was the only entry with a note on pronunciation added in the 11th edition. Discussion on each entry tends to center on whether a specific pronunciation is considered standard or not and the history that resulted in obtaining this specific nonstandard pronunciation, as is shown for the entry **nuclear**:

usage Though disapproved of by many, pronunciations ending in \-kyə-lər\ have been found in widespread use among educated speakers including scientists, lawyers, professors, congressmen, United States cabinet members, and at least two United States presidents and one vice president. While most common in the U.S., these pronunciations have also been heard from British and Canadian speakers.

3.7.2. *AHCD4* also has Notes that are equivalent to the ones in *MWCD11*, and when the two dictionaries are compared, although this may sound somewhat subjective, those in *AHCD4* tend to be more enlightening.

The "Notes" in *AHCD4* consist of four subsections, "Usage Notes," "Word Histories," "Our Living Language," and "Regional Notes." More entries are accompanied by one of these Notes. Moreover, for a number of entries, acceptability judgment made by a usage panel is included. The following is the list of words that has Usage Notes. Those with an * indicate words that have information on preference by the panelists:⁵⁾

!Kung, a <indefinite article>, aberrant*, accessory*, acumen*, archetype*, banal*, barbiturate*, controller*, dour*, envelope*, err*, **February**, formidable*, forte*, harass*, hegemony*, height*, **herb**, kilometer*, **kudos, nuclear, often**, process*, schism*, short-lived*, sonorous*, status*, **strength, victual, Xmas, ye**, zoology*

Compared to *MWCD11* with prescriptive orientation, *AHCD4*'s explanation appears to be more descriptive and informative to the users; quantitative data collected also add to the understanding of the word's acceptability, as the following two citations from *AHCD4*'s Usage Notes suggest:

nuclear

Usage Note: The pronunciation (nō'kyə-lər), which is generally considered incorrect, is an example of how a familiar phonological pattern can influence an unfamiliar one. The usual pronunciation of the final two syllables of this word is (-klē-ər), but this sequence of sounds is rare in English. Much more common is the similar sequence (-kyə-lər), which occurs in words like particular, circular, spectacular, and in many scientific words like molecular, ocular, and vascular.

kilometer

Usage Note: Although the pronunciation of kilometer with stress on the second syllable, (kī-lōm'ī-tər), is often censured because it does not conform to the stress pattern in millimeter and centimeter (it originally came about by false analogy with barometer and thermometer), it continues to thrive in American English. In a recent survey, 69 percent of the Usage Panel preferred this pronunciation, while 29 percent preferred the pronunciation (kīl'ə-mē'tər).

3.8. CD-ROM

Any major dictionaries that come with a CD-ROM these days have a function to demonstrate the sounds of the entries (e.g. *AHCD4*, *MED*), and it is regrettable that this is not the case with *MWCD11*. However, it may be worth pointing out that *MWCD11* enables the users to search homophones and rhymes, a function not available in *AHCD4*. (Uchida)

4. Definitions and Verbal Illustrations

In this chapter we shall look at the definitions and verbal illustrations (i.e. illustrative phrases and/or sentences) in the 9th, the 10th and the 11th editions of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, and see what changes and additions are made through the revisions over the two decades on the description and presentation in these information categories. In 4.3, we shall focus especially on the treatment of computer- and web-related terms in the latest edition of *MWCD*, and briefly review how the dictionary keeps up with the recent changes in the digital world.

In order to study the descriptions in the three editions of *MWCD*, we chose three sample pages in the 11th edition, i.e. pages 51 (*anodize* — *antagonize*), 751 (*make-believe* — *Malayalam*) and 1451 (*yard sale* — *yell*), and compared all the definitions and verbal illustrations in the three pages with the corresponding entries in the previous two editions. The sample portion represents approximately 0.21 percent of the A-Z section of the latest edition of *MWCD*, including abbreviations, which had been presented separately in the 9th and 10th editions. Only the relevant information in the entries (e.g. sense numbers, definitions and verbal illustrations) is shown in this paper to highlight the points of discussion.

4.1. Definitions

There is no major change in the style and format of presentation of definitions in the three editions of *MWCD*. Looking into the details of descriptions in the sample pages, we found 32 changes altogether (including 22 alterations, 6 additions and 4 deletions) in the definitions owing to the revision from *MWCD10* to *MWCD11*, as opposed to 46 changes (20 alterations, 18 additions and 8 deletions) made in the revision from the 9th to the 10th. The following examples are notable modifications through the two revisions found in our sample survey. ('9e', '10e' and '11e' designate the 9th, 10th and 11th editions of *MWCD* respectively. 9 → 10(1), 10 → 11(3), for instance, indicates that one instance was identified in the revision from the 9th to the 10th, while 3 instances were found in the 10th to the 11th revision in the sample portion.) Sometimes one definition undergoes changes that may be classified in more than one category, and such changes are counted separately. The categorization is not exhaustive.

(1) Somewhat plainer or more common words and/or expressions come to be used in the definition. This type of modifications are especially noticeable in the revision from 10e to 11e. (9 → 10(1), 10 → 11(8))

- (10e) serving to assuage pain → (11e) serving to alleviate pain (**'anodyne adj 1**)
 (10e) an insecticide . . . with a lower mammalian toxicity than parathion
 → (11e) an . . . insecticide . . . that is considerably less toxic to mammals than parathion (**malathion**)

The definitions including the pronoun 'one', which denotes a person or a thing, are rephrased into more 'everyday' expressions:

- (10e) one who is anonymous → (11e) an anonymous person (**anonym**)
 (10e) one that causes boredom → (11e) something that causes boredom (**yawner**)

Latin names for forms of life were secularized in most cases:

- (10e) . . . of the family *Iguanidae* . . . → (11e) . . . of the iguana fam-

ily . . . (**anole**)

Chemical formulae are omitted in many instances in 10e (9 → 10(2))

(9e) a mineral $\text{Cu}_2\text{CO}_3(\text{OH})_2$ that is a green basic carbonate of copper . . .

→ (10e) a mineral that is a green basic carbonate of copper . . .
(**malachite**)

(2) Some definitions are made more technically precise, more relevant or less ambiguous. (9 → 10(8), 10 → 11(2))

(9e) a native or inhabitant of Madagascar or of the Malagasy Republic
→ (10e) a member of a people of Indonesian and African origin who inhabit Madagascar (**Malagasy** *n* 1)

(10e) a pretending to believe → (11e) a pretending that what is not real is real (**make-believe** *also* **make-belief**)

(3) Grammatically more adequate definition is given (10 → 11(1))

(10e) to reply in rebuttal, justification, or explanation →
(11e) to reply to in rebuttal, justification, or explanation
(**answer** *vt* 2)

(4) Additional or further information is presented (9 → 10(6), 10 → 11(6))

(10e) either of two mackerel sharks . . . that are notable sport fish . . .
(11e) either of two relatively slender mackerel sharks . . . that are dark blue above and white below with long pointed snouts and that are notable sport fish . . . (**mako shark**)

(5) The scope of the matters denoted by the definition is made more comprehensive or less categorical by the use of 'as . . .', 'esp(ecially)', 'usu (ally)' etc. ((9 → 10(4), 10 → 11(1))

(9e) a similar strand of metal, glass, asbestos, paper or plastic →
(10e) a similar strand of another material (as metal, glass, or plastic)
(**yarn**)

(6) Senses are subdivided to provide more adequate or specific definitions (in such cases, verbal illustrations to support clarification of differ-

ences of meaning are often added (see 4.2)). (9 → 10(2), 10 → 11(3))

(10e) **3**: to make good (a deficiency) →

(11e) **3a**: to compensate for (as a deficiency or omission) <make up the difference in lost pay> **b**: to do or take in order to correct an omission <make up a history exam> (**make up** *vt*)

(7) Run-on entries are promoted to independent entries and definitions are provided for them (especially in the revision from the 9th to the 10th: 9 → 10(2))

(9e) **make over** **1**: to transfer the title of (property) **2**: REMAKE, REMODEL (*made* the whole house *over*) — **makeover** *n*

→ (10e) **makeover**: an act or instance of making over; *esp*: a changing of a person's appearance (as by the use of cosmetics or a different hairdo)

Such promotion is especially effective when the specific use or meaning is clarified by the newly-added definition as in the case of the example above.

(8) As words come to be used in a new sense and if a dictionary such as *MWCD* decides that that sense has already established itself in the English language well enough to deserve description in the dictionary, it adds a new definition for that sense to the existing entry. We found three instances (9 → 10(3)) of that kind in the sample pages.

(10e) **4**: REPLACEMENT; specifically: material added (as in a manufacturing process) to replace material that has been used up <~ water> (**makeup**: sense 4 is not given in 9e)

See also the example of *firewall* cited in 4.3 (216). Additions of new senses are especially numerous regarding the field of computer and communication technology.

(9) Several changes are made to systematize or streamline the format of presentation, probably with a view to saving space to make room for new information or entries. Such consideration include spelled-out numerals that have come to be presented in figures:

- (10e) **6**: a period of time (as the usu. nine-month period in which a school is in session) other than a calendar year
 → (11e) **6**: a period of time (as the usu. 9-month period in which a school is in session) other than a calendar year (**year**)

However, this alteration does not reduce the number of lines in the 11th edition.

Also, cross-references are more systematically applied:

- (9e) **2b**: of a ship: easily handled, MANEUVERABLE (**ya**re)
1c: of a ship: easily handled (**handy**)
 → (10e) **2b**: HANDY **1c**, MANEUVERABLE (**ya**re)
1c: of a ship: easily handled (**handy**)

Streamlining as in this case may certainly reduce the redundancy when viewed throughout the whole volume of the dictionary, but it may also reduce the facility or user-friendliness for those who look for information in the entry of *ya*re and eventually are obliged to refer to the entry of *handy*, which may make the dictionary less 'handy' or 'maneuverable'. In this case too, no lines are gained in the entry of *ya*re. It may not always be preferable for a dictionary to be too systematic in its presentation of information. Sometimes a repetition or redundancy is beneficial to the user.

(10) The order of sense presentation within an entry in *MWCD* is strictly historical, as expounded in the front matter (20a) of *MWCD*11. Changes in the order of presentation of senses are made when the evidence of recorded date of one or more of the senses presented after the first sense is antedated back beyond the first sense. We found three instances (9 → 10(1, **answerable**), 10 → 11(2, **Antae**an and **Malachi**)) in our study of the sample three pages. The dictionary constantly reflects the new (in this case, etymological) discoveries, which makes the dictionary even more reliable and therefore is very welcome.

We found eight deletions in our sample portion through the revision from the 9th to the 10th and four omissions through the 10th to the 11th. They include quite technical information such as chemical formulae and Latin nomenclature, as well as one of the synonyms among those pre-

sented and one of the senses that is used exclusively in a very limited field. (We found the case of a meaning used in a card game of bridge (sense **d**, s.v. **maker**), which was omitted in 9 → 10 revision.) Also, description using a grammatical term, which many average users may not be familiar with ('(used) as a function word' (s.v. **ya**e)) was omitted in 10 → 11 revision.

Two interesting deletions are a description in the definition of **mako shark**, ('... and are considered dangerous to humans') which may involve negative value judgement, and one in the definition of **yataghan**, ((a long knife or short saber) 'common among Muslims', (crossed out in 9 → 10 revision) which may refer to too specific a group of people. Overall, the number of deletions are very small compared to the modified or augmented information through the two revisions.

4.2. Verbal illustrations in *MWCD*

MWCD gives verbal illustrations basically in the form of short phrases between angle brackets. *MWCD* being a monolingual dictionary whose main target is a native speaker of English, they are presumed to serve primarily to help the user of the dictionary grasp and identify the meaning of different senses presented. The following is the definitions and verbal illustrations given in the entry **answer** *v* of *MWCD*10.

- (10e) *vi* **1**: to speak or write in reply **2a**: to be or make oneself responsible or accountable **2b**: to make amends: ATONE **3**: to be in conformity or correspondence <~*ed* to the description> **4**: to act in response to an action performed elsewhere or by another **5**: to be adequate: SERVE *vt* **1a**: to speak or write in response to **1b**: to say or write by way of reply **2**: to reply in rebuttal, justification, or explanation **3**: to correspond to <~*s* the description> **4**: to be adequate or usable for: FULFILL **5**: to act in response to <~*ed* the call to arms> **6**: to offer a solution for; *esp*: SOLVE

Exemplary phrases are given to the third sense of the intransitive use of the verb, as well as the third and the fifth sense of the transitive uses of the word. Now, to our surprise, in the latest edition *MWCD*11, no less than eight verbal illustrations are added to make the description in the corre-

sponding entry as follows:

(11e) *vi* **1**: to speak or write in reply **2a**: to be or make oneself responsible or accountable (<~ for a debt> **2b**: to make amends: ATONE **3**: to be in conformity or correspondence (<~*ed* to the description> **4**: to act in response to an action performed elsewhere or by another <the home team scored first but the visitors ~*ed* quickly> **5**: to be adequate: SERVE <an old bucket ~*ed* for a sink> *vt* **1a**: to speak or write in response to (<~ a question> **1b**: to say or write *by* way of reply (<~ yes or no> **2**: to reply to in rebuttal, justification, or explanation (<~ an accusation> **3**: to correspond to (<~*s* the description> **4**: to be adequate or usable for: FULFILL (<~ a need> **5**: to act in response to (<~*ed* the call to arms> **6**: to offer a solution for; *esp*: SOLVE (<~ a riddle>

Additions of verbal illustrations can be seen in the revision from the 9th to the 10th editions of *MWCD*, but the increase is much more extensive in the following revision into the 11th. In the sample pages, we found only three additions of example phrases in the 9th-to-10th revision, while 28 additions were identified in the 10th-to-11th updating. The 9th and the 10th editions respectively have 1384 and 1389 pages of A to Z dictionary text plus the section of 'Abbreviations,' which was incorporated into the A-Z text in the 11th. So the numbers of pages are nearly the same in the last two editions, while the latest edition, the 11th, is comprised of 1459 pages of A-Z text including abbreviations, which amounts to about 70 pages or a five percent increase from the preceding version of the dictionary. We can see from our survey of fairly limited scope that much of the expansion is devoted to the addition of helpful illustrative phrases.

It may be for such basic lexical items with multiple senses as the verb *answer* that verbal illustrations for distinction and identification of different meanings are helpful, as they support the understanding of definitions and help clarify the meaning and use of the word in question in each sense. In this sense, the apparent increase of verbal illustrations in the *MWCD11*, especially those applied to such words of everyday use, is quite welcome.

In some cases verbal illustrations are modified or revised in the course of dictionary updating. We identified three changes in our sample pages.

(10e) **1c**: the time in which a planet completes a revolution about the sun <a year of Jupiter>

(11e) **1c**: the time in which a planet completes a revolution about the sun <two Mercury years> (**year**)

In this case, an example phrase, which was ambiguous and may well have been the one for other senses was rewritten to become more specific and relevant.

(10e) **5b pl**: AGE <a man in ~s but a child in understanding>

(11e) **5b pl**: AGE <wise beyond her ~s> (**year**)

The illustrative phrase presented in the 10th had somewhat negative connotation. The renewed example in the 11th is a positive one, which has been changed presumably in consideration of political correctness.

The other modification of illustrative phrase is merely an updating of the year presented, from <the year of grace 1962> in the 9th to <the year of grace 1993> (**year of grace**), the latter date being the publication of the 10th edition of *MWCD*.

4.3. Treatment of computer- and web-related terms

Over the last decade, quite a few lexical items associated with the computer and the Internet made their way into our daily lives. Also, some existing words have come to be used in new senses in the digital context. They reflect a very rapid change and advancement in those fields, as well as people's familiarity with personal computers and network communication as everyday tools. Let us now see briefly how *MWCD11* incorporated these new senses and expressions in the dictionary.

Nowadays many of us cannot pass a day without clicking on the icon of an e-mail software, the use of which may have been limited to a relatively few people in the early 90s and earlier. *WNCD9*, which was published in 1983, does not enter *e-mail* or *E-mail*. It only has an entry **electronic mail** and defines it as 'messages sent and received electronically (as between terminals linked by telephone lines or microwave relays)'. *MWCD10* has the same entry and the same definition, but its date of the earliest recorded use in English is antedated from 1979 to 1977. The 10th

edition enters **E-mail** (not *e-mail* with *e* in the lower case), with the earliest witnessed date of 1982, but it is not defined but only provided with a cross-reference to ELECTRONIC MAIL.

The current edition, *MWCD11*, treats *e-mail* (not *E-mail*) and *electronic mail* as follows,

e-mail *n* 1: a means or system for transmitting messages electronically (as between computers on a network) <communication by ~>
2a: messages sent and received electronically through an e-mail system <receives a lot of ~> **2b**: an e-mail message <sent him an ~>
 — **e-mail** *vb* — **e-mailer** *n*

electronic mail *n*: E-MAIL

The term is now defined under the headword *e-mail*, and the *electronic mail* is demoted to an empty headword with a cross-reference to *e-mail*. Also, the latest version suggests that the word can be used as a verb, as is now done on a daily basis probably by millions of people around the world who would say, write or type into the keyboard, 'e-mail me'.

Incidentally, the entries of *e-mail* and *electronic mail* in the *Microsoft Encarta College Dictionary (MECD, 2001)*, which features comprehensive coverage of web- and PC-related items, are presented as follows.

e-mail 1 **COMPUTER-TO-COMPUTER COMMUNICATION SYSTEM** a system for transmitting messages and data from one computer to another, using a telephone connection and modems. Full form **electronic mail** 2 **E-MAIL MESSAGE** a communication sent by e-mail ■ *vt* **COMMUNICATE SOMETHING BY E-MAIL** to send a message to somebody by e-mail.

electronic mail *n* full form of **e-mail**

Even compared with the definition in the dictionary produced in collaboration with the IT giant, *Microsoft Corporation*, the definition in *MWCD11* is in a sense more relevant. E-mails are not exchanged only between commonly recognized 'computers'. They may also be sent from and received with a variety of other electronic devices, including mobile phones, handheld digital equipment called PDAs and even video game machines. Also, the use of telephone connection and modems is now not

very popular in many countries due to the communication speed, thus making the definition in *MECD* a little outmoded in only a few years. *MWCD11*, however, should also have mentioned data transmission (e.g. sending an attachment to an e-mail) in addition to sending messages (i.e. plain texts) as *MECD* did so pertinently.

The entry of *fire wall* (not *firewall*) in *WNCD9* and *MWCD10* is given as follows:

fire wall *n* (1759): a wall constructed to prevent the spread of fire

In the 11th edition, the entry was presented with an additional meaning of firewall as a network security term, as follows:

fire wall *n* (1759) 1: a wall constructed to prevent the spread of fire
2 usu firewall: computer hardware or software that prevents unauthorized access to private data (as on a company's local area network or intranet) by outside computer users (as of the Internet)

Other items that had only traditional sense(s) in *WNCD9* and *MWCD10* but are presented in *MWCD11* with new contemporary meanings associated with PC- or web-related context include: *clipboard*, *link*, *page* and the word *web* itself.

Also, the following lemmata are not found in the previous editions of *MWCD* but newly entered with adequate definitions in the 11th: *browser*, *emoticon*, *hyperlink*, *MP3*, *snail mail*, *World Wide Web*, *www*, and of course, the *Internet*. Considering the fact that the digital audio format MP3 became so popular fairly recently, *MWCD's* approach is very prompt and well-timed.

However, the dictionary is not always open-handed in the decision to include new terms from the cyberworld but sometimes shows a very conservative attitude. *Web log* and its informal contraction *blog* denote a certain type of a diary-based homepage format, usually with automated linking system called trackback. The format now is enjoyed by millions of users in the U.S., and has become widespread in Japan as well, especially since 2004. The items are defined already in 2001 in *MECD* as follows:

blog *n* a Web log (*slang*) ■ *vi* to create or run a Web log (*slang*)

Web log *n* a frequently updated personal journal chronicling links to a Web site, intended for public viewing

However, they have not made their way into the *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate*. Apparently the dictionary is waiting for such lexical items to establish themselves in the vocabulary of the English language, which seems to be the dictionary's basic attitude towards new items generally. In other words, the dictionary may have judged such items as *MP3* have enough reasons to persist in the language for the life of the present edition. Words related to computer and information technology may come and go very quickly, and they may call for the lexicographer's delicate decision as to whether *s/he* should include them in the dictionary and how to describe them if they are entered at all. But in the days when the use of computers, e-mail and the Internet are the order of the day, it is the meaning of items related to those areas that people may want to know most keenly. In that sense, lexicographers may need to be daring and positive rather than careful and deliberate in presenting such items. They may preferably start choosing and describing them as late as possible in the process of compiling or revising a dictionary, so that they may be still reasonably up-to-date and helpful to the users when the dictionary goes on the market.

(Kokawa)

5. Usages

There appears to be little change in *MWCD11* with regard to Usages and Synonyms. Therefore, the aim of the following two sections is to discern the trend of the editorial policy by comparing *MWCD11* with *WNCD9* and *MWCD10*.

5.1. Usage labels

According to the explanatory notes of *MWCD11*, four types of status labels are used: temporal, regional, stylistic, and subject. The temporal type consists of *obs* and *archaic*. The former indicates that "there is no evidence of use since 1755," and the latter implies that "a word or sense

once in common use is found today only sporadically or in special contexts."

The regional status label includes seven labels that indicate specific regions in the U.S. and several labels that indicate specific countries of the English-speaking world. In addition to these labels, *chiefly* and *dial* are used in order to provide more detailed information. As compared with *AHCD4*, which uses more specific dialect labels (for example, *New Orleans*), the labels used in *MWCD11* are rather small in number.

The stylistic type includes six labels. *Slang* is used with words or senses "that are especially appropriate in contexts of extreme informality." *Nonstand* is used "for a few words or senses that are disapproved by many but that have some currency in reputable contexts." The stylistic labels *disparaging*, *offensive*, *obscene*, and *vulgar* are used for those words or senses "that in common use are intended to hurt or shock or that are likely to give offense even when they are used without such an intent."

Although subject orientation is usually included in the definition, subject labels such as *mining*, *physiology*, etc., are used occasionally.

No change was made with regard to these labels in *MWCD10* and *MWCD11*, with the exception of one of the stylistic labels, *substand*, that came into disuse in *MWCD10*. This can be regarded as another example of the avoidance of classism or a normative attitude, which has been one of the main editorial policies. The explanatory notes of *WNCD9* define the label *substand* as follows:

The stylistic label *substand* for "substandard" is used for those words or senses that conform to a widespread pattern of usage that differs in choice of word or form from that of the prestige group of the community.

The word "prestige" is certainly a problematic expression for such a policy. *MWCD10* and *MWCD11* appear to refrain from using the words "prestige" and "educated" or other words that are related to classism or a normative attitude in the definition of the stylistic labels. The definition of the label *nonstand*, which has not been changed since *WNCD9*, is shown below:

The stylistic label *nonstand* for “nonstandard” is used for a few words or senses that are disapproved by many but that have some currency in reputable contexts.¹⁾

On the other hand, although most of the stylistic labels used in *AHCD4* are the same as those in *MWCD10(11)*, *AHCD4* defines the label *non-standard* in the Guide to the Dictionary using the word “educated”:

This, the most restrictive label in the Dictionary, is applied to forms and usages that educated speakers and writers consider unacceptable.

With regard to the editorial policy followed by *AHCD4* for the description of the usage, refer to Geoffrey Nunberg’s article on pages xi-xiii. The article shows that *AHCD4* adopts expressions like “educated speakers” with due consideration to the controversy between the “prescriptivists” and the “descriptivists.” Since this aspect is relevant to the descriptions of the usage paragraphs, it will be fully discussed in 5.3.2.

5.2. Illustrations of usage and usage notes

Verbal illustrations of headwords are provided within angle brackets. This has not been altered since the publication of *WNCD9*. Abundance of verbal illustrations and the use of angle brackets make *MWCD11* more useful for nonnative learners of English. This is evident when we compare *MWCD11* with *AHCD4*, which contains far fewer verbal illustrations and presents them in italics.

Supplementary information regarding idiom, syntax, semantic relationship, status, etc. is provided in usage notes that are introduced by a lightface dash. Since usage notes can contain various kinds of information, it appears to be difficult for the editors to decide where certain information should be placed — some should be placed in the definition, and others should be placed in the usage note. The explanatory notes admit that “sometimes a usage note is used in place of a definition,” particularly in the definitions of function words, interjections, oaths, honorific titles, etc., which “have little or no semantic content” and “are more amenable to comment than to definition.” For example:

and . . . conj . . . 1 — used as a function word to indicate connection or addition esp. of items within the same class or type; used to join sentence elements of the same grammatical rank or function

¹of . . . prep . . . 1 — used as a function word to indicate a point of reckoning < north ~ of the lake >

¹oyez . . . vb imper . . . — used by a court or public crier to gain attention before a proclamation

This is another aspect in which *AHCD4* strikingly differs from *MWCD11*. *AHCD4* provides analytic or substitute definitions for function words, and occasionally, they are followed by usage notes without special marks. Although interjections are provided with functional definitions, they are not differentiated from the definitions of the “normal” type. A comparison of the abovementioned examples with those of *AHCD4* reveals the following:

and . . . conj. 1 Together with; in addition to; as well as. Used to connect words, phrases, or clauses with the same grammatical function.

of . . . prep . . . 3 Away from; at a distance from: a mile east of here.

oyez . . . interj. Used three times in succession to introduce the opening of a court of law.

MWCD11 is more consistent in its manner of defining a word than *AHCD4*. However, there might be considerable disagreement regarding which type of definition will be more useful to the user.

5.3. Usage paragraphs

As mentioned below, *MWCD11* contains 129 usage paragraphs. The explanatory notes state that the aims of these paragraphs are: (1) to summarize the historical background of the headword and the authoritative opinions about it; (2) to compare these opinions with the evidence of current usage; and (3) to offer appropriate suggestions to the dictionary user. The following two sections will survey the descriptions of the usage

paragraphs along with their history and compare them with those of *AHCD4*.

5.3.1. The history of the usage paragraphs

According to Nakao et al. (1985), the usage paragraph is one of the novel features of *WNCD9*. Its first eight editions contain usage notes or usage labels, and these are continued in the 9th edition as usage paragraphs. However, half of the usage paragraphs in *WNCD9* have been newly introduced. Some of the contents, though, have already been treated in the 2nd or 3rd editions of Webster or other college dictionaries such as *AHCD*, *CED*, and *RHCD*. Therefore, Nakao et al. conclude that they cannot be regarded as completely original.

With regard to the content of the usage paragraphs, Nakao et al. argue that most of the usage paragraphs pertain to nonstandard expressions in terms of morphology, phonetics, and semantics. The actual number of these paragraphs, however, has not been provided in their analysis. Hence, a recount of the number of the usage paragraphs in *WNCD9*, *MWCD10*, and *MWCD11* was undertaken, and these usage paragraphs were categorized into seven classes. Refer to the table below:²⁾

The class “morphological” contains paragraphs such as “miniscule,” “run,” and “phenomena.” Consider the paragraph “phenomena” as one example:³⁾

Table 1 Number of usage paragraphs

	9 th	10 th	11 th
Morphological	22	24	27
Syntactic	19	20	22
Semantic	23	28	28
Pragmatic	2	3	4
Phraseological	10	10	10
Choice of words	23	27	27
Phonetic	7	11	11
Total	106	123	129

phenomena

usage *Phenomena* has been in occasional use as a singular for more than 400 years and its plural *phenomenas* for more than 350. Our evidence shows that it is primarily a speech form used by poets, critics, and professors, among others, but one that sometimes turns up in edited prose (the Borgia were, in modern terms, a media *phenomena* — *Economist*). It is etymologically no more irregular than *stamina*, *agenda*, and *candelabra*, but it has nowhere near the frequency of use that they have, and while they are standard, *phenomena* is still rather borderline.

The “syntactic” class concerns syntactical problems such as number, constructions, and parts of speech. The paragraph “neither” can be cited as a typical example of this class.

neither

usage Some commentators insist that *neither* must be used with a singular verb. It generally is, but especially when a prepositional phrase intervenes between it and the verb, a plural verb is quite common (neither of those ideal solutions are in sight — C. P. Snow).

In this case, the word “semantic” means that the relevant paragraphs deal with problems of whether a meaning of the headword is appropriate. Consider the example below:

literally

usage Since some people take sense 2 [“in effect”] to be the opposite of sense 1 [“in a literal sense or manner”], it has been frequently criticized as a misuse. Instead, the use is pure hyperbole intended to gain emphasis, but it often appears in contexts where no additional emphasis is necessary.

“Pragmatic” paragraphs explain the connotations or the implications, rather than the meanings, of the headwords or the contexts in which the headwords occur. The paragraph “mighty” is a typical example.

mighty

usage *Mighty* used as an intensive usually conveys a folksy down-home feeling (plain and simple fare . . . but *mighty* filling and *mighty* satisfying — *Asheville (N.C.) Citizen-Times*). It is used especially to

create a chatty style <turnip greens, corn bread and biscuits. That sounds *mighty* good to me — Julia Child> or to stress a rural atmosphere <a man must be *mighty* serious about his squirrel hunting — Stuart Williams, *Field & Stream*>. In a more formal context, *mighty* is used to create emphasis by drawing attention to itself <the chairman made sure that there were *mighty* few of them — Mollie Panter-Downes>.

The paragraphs pertaining to “phraseological” issues are those that deal with the usage of a word in the strict sense, such as the choice of a preposition after a certain verb, adjective, or noun. Consider the example below:

different

usage Numerous commentators have condemned *different than* in spite of its use since the 17th century by many of the best-known names in English literature. It is nevertheless standard and is even recommended in many handbooks when followed by a clause, because insisting on *from* in such instances often produces clumsy or wordy formulations. *Different from*, the generally safe choice, is more common especially when it is followed by a noun or pronoun.

The category “choice of words” includes those paragraphs that suggest which word should be used in a certain context.⁴⁾ The paragraph at *each other* is a typical example.

each other

usage Some handbooks and textbooks recommend that *each other* be restricted to reference to two and *one another* to reference to three or more. The distinction, while neat, is not observed in actual language. *Each other* and *one another* are used interchangeably by good writers and have been since at least 16th century.

The category “phonetic” is self-explanatory. Further, the “phonetic” paragraphs have been explained in detail in section 3.7, and hence, they have not been discussed here.

The number of usage paragraphs has increased by 13% in the 10th edition and by 5% in the 11th edition. The rate of increase differs in each category. The number of “phraseological” paragraphs has remained con-

stant. The paragraphs of the “morphological,” “syntactic,” and “pragmatic” categories have gradually increased in number. Furthermore, the number of paragraphs of the “semantic,” “choice of words,” and “phonetic” categories has increased in the 10th, but not in the 11th edition.

It can be said that (for the purpose of convenience, the modifications made to most of the paragraphs have been temporarily ignored) each rate of increase shows: (1) the category in which the language has changed most and (2) the category in which lexicographers are most interested. Hence, we can say that “morphological,” “syntactic,” and “pragmatic” issues have always been important in the last two decades, and “semantic” issues, problems pertaining to the “choice of words,” and “phonetic” issues attracted the interests of the lexicographers (and the speakers of the language) in the 1990s.

An observation of the modifications made to the usage paragraphs reveals that *MWCD11* has made far less modifications than *MWCD10*. In the 10th edition, 66 out of a total of 123 paragraphs are modified. In the 11th edition, however, the number goes down to 19 paragraphs out of 129. This fact, as well as the change in the number of the paragraphs, indicates that *MWCD11* made only minor revisions as compared with *MWCD10*. The number of modifications made in each category is shown in Table 2.

In both *MWCD10* and *MWCD11*, most of the modifications are made in order to increase the clarity and conciseness of the descriptions. Occa-

Table 2 Number of modifications

	9 > 10	9 > 10 > 11	10 > 11
Morphological	9	6	2
Syntactic	13	1	0
Semantic	12	2	0
Pragmatic	1	0	1
Phraseological	6	0	1
Choice of words	10	2	3
Phonetic	4	0	1
Total	55	11	8

sionally, highly detailed descriptions are shortened. A typical example is shown below:

alright

9th edition

usage In now obsolete senses *all right* or *alright* was formed in Old English as *ealriht*. Variation in early scribal and printing practices and in spoken stress patterns has given us this and similar pairs in *all ready*, *already* and *all together*, *altogether*. Since the 19th century some have insisted that *alright* is wrong, but, though it is less frequent than *all right*, it remains in common use and appears in the work of reputable writers <the first two years of medical school were *alright* — Gertrude Stein> <it is doing a bit of *alright* — P. H. Dougherty (*N. Y. Times*) >.

10th and 11th edition

usage The one-word spelling *alright* appeared some 75 years after *all right* itself had reappeared from a 400-year-long absence. Since the early 20th century, some critics have insisted *alright* is wrong, but it has its defenders and its users. It is less frequent than *all right* but remains in common use, especially in journalistic and business publications. It is quite common in fictional dialogue, and is used occas. in other writing <the first two years of medical school were *alright* — Gertrude Stein>.

Frequent modifications are made in order to cope with the changes in the language and the lapse in time. Consider the following example:

criterion

9th edition

usage The plural *criteria* has often been mistaken for a singular <let me now return to the third *criteria* — R. M. Nixon> <that really is the *criteria* — Burt Lance> Many of our examples, like the two foregoing, are taken from speech. We note, however, that use as a singular appears to be increasing in edited prose, and it may be that in time *criteria* will establish itself as a singular as *agenda* and *candelabra* have.

10th edition

usage The plural *criteria* has been used as a singular for nearly half

a century <let me now return to the third *criteria* — R. M. Nixon> <that really is the *criteria* — Burt Lance>. Many of our examples, like the two foregoing, are taken from speech. But singular *criteria* is not uncommon in edited prose, and its use both in speech and writing seems to be increasing. Only time will tell whether it will reach the unquestioned acceptability of *agenda*.

11th edition

usage The plural *criteria* has been used as a singular for over half a century <let me now return to the third *criteria* — R. M. Nixon> <that really is the *criteria* — Burt Lance>. Many of our examples, like the two foregoing, are taken from speech. But singular *criteria* is not uncommon in edited prose, and its use both in speech and writing seems to be increasing. Only time will tell whether it will reach the unquestioned acceptability of *agenda*.

Let us now focus on the issues pertaining to the style of the explanation. According to Nakao et al., more than half of the usage paragraphs contain historical explanations of the words or idioms. In addition, there are frequent references to the usage by authoritative writers. This reliance on the history or the authoritative personalities is a distinctive feature of the 9th edition. This policy appears to be still followed in most of the paragraphs in *MWCD10* and *MWCD11*. Some paragraphs, however, include judgments based on the frequency of relevant usage, rather than the judgments of the authorities.

According to Nakao et al., another conspicuous feature of the 9th edition is that it avoids expressions such as “informal” or “colloquial,” and uses expressions such as “not used in more formal writing” or “not used in formal prose.” They conclude that this may be due to the consideration for the social class that uses “informal” expressions (cf. Landau (1984)). This remains unchanged in the later editions.

Nakao et al. also observe that the 9th edition adopts the descriptive statements of the former editions and changes the normative statements to the descriptive ones, or at least, modifies the statements to make them sound less normative. Therefore, they argue that the nonstandard expressions that are not accepted in the former editions are accepted in the 9th edition. They also state that the fact that the 9th edition avoids adopting a

normative attitude is evident from the choice of roundabout expressions such as “you will still run the risk of giving offense if you use it” or “will still incur the wrath of some.” According to Nakao et al., this tendency is interesting within itself because, occasionally, these expressions are used humorously or sarcastically. However, whether these comments are useful for the learners of English is questionable.

MWCD10 and *MWCD11* appear to have a similar tendency towards descriptive statements. However, another aspect should be noticed in this case. In order to avoid normative expressions, judgment on the usage is occasionally left to the users. Consider the following examples:

than

9th edition

... *than me* is more common than *than* with a third-person objective pronoun, and that both of these last are more common in speech than in edited prose. Some handbooks go into considerable detail discussing more complicated constructions and their possible ambiguities; our evidence indicates that these are relatively uncommon in edited prose.

10th and 11th edition

... *than* followed by a third-person objective pronoun (*her, him, them*) is usually frowned upon... You have the same choice Shakespeare had: you can use *than* either as a conjunction or as a preposition.

split infinitive

9th edition

... Modern commentators do not consider the split infinitive a vice, merely advising writers to avoid trying to crowd too long an adverbial phrase between *to* and the infinitive.

10th and 11th edition

... Modern commentators know the split infinitive is not a vice, but they are loath to drop such a popular subject. They usually say it's all right to split an infinitive in the interest of clarity. Since clarity is the usual reason for splitting, this advice means merely that you can split them whenever you need to.

wait on

10th and 11th edition

... *Wait on* is less common than *wait for*, but if it seems natural, there is no reason to avoid it.

Although *MWCD* is a dictionary for the native speakers and its responsibility for the explanations is fairly lesser than that of the EFL dictionaries, the utility of such an explanation for the users is questionable. At this point, a comparison between *MWCD11* and *AHCD4* should be undertaken.

5.3.2. The comparison between *MWCD11* and *AHCD4*

The usage paragraphs in *AHCD4*, which are referred to as usage notes, are supposed to “present important information and guidance on matters of grammar, diction, pronunciation, and registers and nuances of usage” (xix). In contrast to *MWCD11*, which clearly acknowledges the importance of the historical information, *AHCD4* does not consider it as indispensable to the explanation. *AHCD4* attempts to obtain objectivity in the explanation not on the basis of historical evidence, but on the basis of the statistics collected from the opinions of the “Usage Panel.” For example, see the following explanation provided at *prioritize*:

It can be argued that *prioritize* serves a useful function in providing a single word to mean “arrange according to priority,” but it is often regarded as corporate or bureaucratic jargon. Resistance to *prioritize*, however, has fallen dramatically in recent decades. In 1976, 97 percent of the Usage Panel rejected its use in the phrase *a first attempt to prioritize the tasks facing the new administration*. By 1997, however, 53 percent of the Panel approved the use of *prioritize* in the sentence *Overwhelmed with work, the lawyer was forced to prioritize his caseload*. This suggests that, like *finalize*, *prioritize* is rapidly securing a place in our everyday vocabulary.

The Usage Panel consists of “some 200 well-known writers, critics, and scholars (a list of Panel members can be found on pages viii-x)” (xii). This appears to be a near equivalent of the “authoritative opinions” in *MWCD11*; however, the attempt to show what kind of people constitute the “author-

ity" can be appreciated.

The application of the Usage Panel is concerned with another issue, that is, the advantages and disadvantages of the prescriptive attitude. Merriam-Webster's descriptions are based on "Merriam-Webster files," which contain 15,700,000 citations; thus, they are thoroughly objective from the beginning. Moreover, as is evident from the above discussions, after every revision, Merriam-Webster's dictionary tends to become increasingly descriptive and less assertive. *AHCD4*, on the other hand, appears to skillfully avoid the prescriptivism by presenting only the statistics taken from the Usage Panel and by implicitly allowing the users to make the decision (this policy is briefly referred to in the front matter, see xii). However, the opinions of the Usage Panel themselves are inherently subjective. Compare the paragraph at prioritize (shown above) with some paragraphs of *MWCD11*. Some paragraphs of *MWCD11* explicitly leave the judgments to the users. However, this is done without any statistics or other information, and hence, they may be considered less objective.

Another difference between *MWCD11* and *AHCD4* lies in the consistency in their styles of explanations. (The same issue appears in the discussion of the synonym paragraphs. See 6.2 below.) *MWCD11* adopts the same style (a usage paragraph consists of historical explanation, verbal illustrations, evidence of the current usage, and some comments) in all the usage paragraphs. On the other hand, *AHCD4* adopts two styles: some paragraphs "contain opinions of the Usage Panel," while others "are more explanatory in nature and do not refer to Panel opinions" (xix). An example of the latter type is given below:

criterion

USAGE NOTE Like the analogous etymological plurals *agenda* and *data*, *criteria* is widely used as a singular form. Unlike them, however, it is not yet acceptable in that use.

Compare this with the paragraph on the same word in *MWCD11*:

criterion

usage The plural *criteria* has been used as a singular for over half a century <— let me now return to the third *criteria* . . . R. M. Nixon >

<— that really is the *criteria* . . . Bert Lance >. Many of our examples, like the two foregoing, are taken from speech. But singular *criteria* is not uncommon in edited prose, and its use both in speech and writing seems to be increasing. Only time will tell whether it will reach the unquestioned acceptability of *agenda*.

Although the explanation of *MWCD11* may occasionally appear to be lengthy, the consistency in the style may be evaluated by some critics.

(Ryu)

6. Synonym paragraphs

The synonym paragraph is another marked feature of dictionaries that are published in the U.S.¹⁾ In the following sections, we will first survey the synonym paragraphs in the previous editions and in *MWCD11*. Following this, we will attempt a comparison between *MWCD11* and *AHCD4*.

6.1. The comparison between the previous editions and *MWCD11*

6.1.1. Number of synonym paragraphs

Nakao et al. (1985) counted the number of synonym paragraphs that occur in the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th editions under the entries B, G, N, and U. They concluded that the number of synonym paragraphs remained unchanged between the 6th and the 7th editions; however, it slightly increased in the 8th edition, and then suddenly decreased in the 9th edition. In *WNCD9*, the number decreased to 50 as against 75 in the 8th edition. According to them, such a marked decrease cannot be caused without clear editorial intention. According to Nakao et al. (1985), even the synonym paragraphs of the words with high importance were deleted.

However, the tendency to decrease the number of the synonym paragraphs is not quite noticeable in *MWCD10* and *MWCD11*. Refer to the table below:

Table 1 Number of synonym paragraphs under the entries B, G, N, and U

Edition	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th
B	35	32	32	23	24	23
G	16	16	17	12	10	10
N	10	10	12	7	7	7
U	11	12	14	8	7	7
Total	72	70	75	50	48	47

The following are the synonym paragraphs that have been deleted in *MWCD10*:

bad, evil, ill, wicked, naughty
blemish, defect, flaw
brief, short
gaze, gape, stare, glare, peer
govern, rule
universal, general, generic

On the other hand, the following are the synonym paragraphs that have been added in *MWCD10*:

background, setting, environment, milieu, mise-en-scène
bait, badger, heckle, hector, chivy, hound
bloody, sanguinary, gory
brutal, brutish, bestial, feral

After examining the list of deleted and added paragraphs, we may conclude that some relation exists between the deletion and the addition of the synonym paragraphs and the frequency (rather than the importance) of the synonyms. Particularly, synonym paragraphs that discriminate the meanings of words of high frequency tend to be deleted.

The only synonym paragraph that is deleted in *MWCD11* explicates the difference between *bearing, deportment, demeanor, mien, manner,* and *carriage*. Since it is the only example found in this investigation, we cannot be certain of the factor for the selection.

6.1.2. The style of the descriptions

Nakao et al. (1985: 165) observed that "the synonym paragraphs for the 8th edition were the worst of the series in that they were no synonym paragraphs in any sense but just short word finding lists except for some lengthy columns." They concluded that this was partly because a full-scale synonym dictionary was published by Merriam-Webster,²⁾ and the users were expected to consult it. In *WNCD9*, however, "Most of the synonym paragraphs are completely revised and the resulting paragraphs are successful in rearran[g]ing and combining the relevant synonym articles of the former editions (ibid.)." This was, according to Nakao et al., a sincere response to the demands of the users. In addition, the antonym paragraphs that existed up to the 8th edition are deleted in *WNCD9*. Although antonym paragraphs are useful for building the vocabulary of the nonnative users, they do not necessarily contain meaningful information for the native speakers. Thus, the deletion of antonym paragraphs may be another sincere response to the demands of the users (or, it might be due to the space constraints).

The most noticeable change in *MWCD10* was with regard to the verbal illustrations. According to the explanatory notes in *WNCD9*, "The discriminations themselves are frequently amplified with verbal illustrations and illustrative quotations." *MWCD10*, on the other hand, provides verbal illustrations for all the synonymous words in the synonym paragraphs. Therefore, the number of lines has doubled in most paragraphs.

Another noticeable change was made similar to the one mentioned above: the verbal illustrations are occasionally shortened or modified for the shorter ones. Compare the synonym paragraphs of *WNCD9* and *MWCD10*, which are attached to *grant*:

9th edition

syn. GRANT, CONCEDE, VOUCHSAFE, ACCORD, AWARD mean to give as a favor or a right. GRANT implies giving to a claimant or petitioner something that could be withheld < according to her pleas, he *granted* her another period of six months in which to make good — *Current Biog.* > CONCEDE implies yielding something reluctantly in response to a rightful or compelling claim < even his

harshes critics *concede* him a rocklike integrity — *Time* > VOUCHSAFE implies granting something as a courtesy or an act of gracious condescension <occasionally a true poet is *vouchsafed* to the world — Rumer Godden > ACCORD implies giving to another what is due or proper <children easily appreciate justice, and will readily *accord* to others what others *accord* to them — Bertrand Russell > AWARD implies giving what is deserved or merited usu. after a careful weighing of pertinent factors <he was practising law, having been *awarded* his LLB degree with distinction — *Current Biog.* >

10th edition

syn. GRANT, CONCEDE, VOUCHSAFE, ACCORD, AWARD mean to give as a favor or a right. GRANT implies giving to a claimant or petitioner something that could be withheld <*granted* them a new hearing >. CONCEDE implies yielding something reluctantly in response to a rightful or compelling claim <even her critics *concede* she can be charming >. VOUCHSAFE implies granting something as a courtesy or an act of gracious condescension <*vouchsafed* the secret to only a few chosen disciples >. ACCORD implies giving to another what is due or proper <*accorded* all the honors befitting a head of state >. AWARD implies giving what is deserved or merited usu. after a careful weighing of pertinent factors <*awarded* the company a huge defense contract >.

Although they are fairly lengthy, it is evident that the verbal illustrations in *WNCD9* are far more useful for understanding the differences in meaning. We believe that a verbal illustration of a word should at least include the essential component of the sentence in which the relevant word appears, as the information regarding what type of thing can be the subject, object, or modifier is indispensable to the illustration of the word.

On the other hand, some paragraphs were entirely rewritten, thus conveying the meaning successfully. Compare the paragraphs below:

9th edition

syn. UNDERSTAND, COMPREHEND, APPRECIATE mean to have a clear or complete idea of. UNDERSTAND may differ from COMPREHEND in implying a result whereas COMPREHEND stresses the mental process of arriving at a result <*understood* the instructions without *comprehending* their purpose > APPRECI-

ATE implies a just estimation of a thing's value <failed to *appreciate* the risks involved >

10th edition

syn. UNDERSTAND, COMPREHEND, APPRECIATE mean to have a clear or complete idea of. UNDERSTAND and COMPREHEND are very often interchangeable. UNDERSTAND may, however, stress the fact of having attained a firm mental grasp of something <orders that were fully understood and promptly obeyed >. COMPREHEND may stress the process of coming to grips with something intellectually <I have trouble *comprehending* your reasons for doing this >. APPRECIATE implies a just evaluation or judgment of a thing's value or nature <failed to *appreciate* the risks involved >.

A fairly abstract term "result" is changed to a metaphorical expression in the explanation of the words "understand" and "comprehend." Although it results in an increase in the number of lines, this kind of expression is highly desirable for the users.

Whether the information should be conveyed by the explanation or the verbal illustration is a major problem. Probably, the editors will continue to adjust the balance between them.

In *MWCD11*, only 6 of the 47 paragraphs surveyed are modified, and the modifications are rather minor. However, at this point, it should be noted that some modifications are deliberately made in order to eliminate gender discrimination. This is done in both the explanation and the verbal illustration. Consider the following examples:

10th edition

syn. BRUTAL, BRUTISH, BESTIAL, FERAL mean characteristic of an animal in nature, action, or instinct . . . BESTIAL suggests a state of degradation unworthy of man and . . .

11th edition

syn. BRUTAL, BRUTISH, BESTIAL, FERAL . . . BESTIAL suggests a state of degradation unworthy of humans and . . .

10th edition

syn. NEGLIGENT, NEGLECTFUL, LAX, SLACK, REMISS mean culpably careless or indicative of such carelessness . . . REMISS implies blamable carelessness shown in slackness, forgetful-

ness, or neglect <had been *remiss* in her duties>.

11th edition

syn. NEGLIGENT, NEGLECTFUL, LAX, SLACK, REMISS
 . . . REMISS implies blameworthy carelessness shown in slackness, forgetfulness, or neglect <had been *remiss* in their familial duties>.

6.2. Comparison between *MWCD11* and *AHCD4*

The most obvious difference between the synonym paragraphs in *MWCD11* and *AHCD4* is with regard to style. According to the front matter of *AHCD4*, it has two kinds of synonym paragraphs.

The first consists of a group of undiscriminated, alphabetically ordered words sharing a single, irreducible meaning. These synonyms are presented in illustrative examples following a core definition Antonyms, if applicable, appear at the end of the paragraph.

The second kind of paragraph consists of fully discriminated synonyms ordered in a way that reflects their interrelationships. A brief sentence explaining the initial point of comparison of the words is given, followed by explanations of their connotations and varying shades of meaning, along with illustrative examples (xix).

MWCD11, on the other hand, contains only one type of synonym paragraph, as is the case with the usage paragraphs (cf. 5.3.2). Every synonym paragraph consists of a list of synonymous words, core meanings of the synonyms, explanation for each word, and verbal illustrations. In this case again, the editors appear to achieve consistency in style at the cost of space.

Determining which style is better is difficult. The effort to show every difference between the synonymous words is indeed praiseworthy and certainly useful for the users. However, a considerable number of cases exist where the difference between the synonyms is minute to an extent that a sufficient explanation cannot be provided. It may be more beneficial to eliminate explanations and use verbal illustrations (leaving the discrimination to the users) than to explain in an uncertain manner.

This problem becomes more complicated when we consider which sets

of synonyms should be explained in synonym paragraphs. As we have seen in 6.1.1, *MWCD10* tends to delete the synonym paragraphs that discriminate the meanings of words of high frequency. *AHCD4*, on the other hand, contains synonym paragraphs that explain the meanings of words of high frequency. Synonyms of high frequency tend to be treated with brief explanations and synonyms of low frequency tend to be provided with detailed explanations in *AHCD4*. Some of the well-known synonyms, however, are treated elaborately, probably due to their importance and the difficulty in discrimination. Hence, most of the synonym paragraphs with brief explanations are the word lists of basic and simple synonyms. They might not be extremely useful for the native users. Consider an example from *AHCD4*:

SYNONYM *pull, drag, draw, haul, tow, tug* These verbs mean to cause something to move toward the source of an applied force: *pull a sled; drag furniture; draw up a chair; hauls wood; a car that tows a trailer; tugged at the oars.* **ANTONYM** *push*

We may conclude, from what we have seen above, that *MWCD11* will benefit from the brief style of *AHCD4* in some paragraphs if *MWCD11* carefully selects sets of synonyms that need to be presented together, but cannot be discriminated satisfactorily. (Ryu)

7. Concluding Remarks

Chapter 1

MWCD 10 has been appraised as one of the most reliable American college dictionaries in our country. It has been especially appreciated for the descriptive, sharp, and brief but exact definitions that have been the hallmark of the Merriam-Webster's dictionaries. This good tradition has been inherited not only in the definitions but also in other dictionary components. The changes and improvements made in *MWCD11* are not salient but steady ones. The following is the result of our studies.

Chapter 2

The Preface to the *MWCD11* states that "Words and senses are born at

a far greater rate than that at which they die out." Hence if editors tried to record as many as they could while retaining obsolescent words and senses, the dictionary would grow to an unmanageable size. Editors have to delete less frequently used words from the dictionary. This kind of work does not attract people's attention. New additions of words and senses attract most people. We know it's more difficult to delete entries than to add. We appreciate *MWCD11* for its continued efforts to check the word list and delete fair numbers of entries as well as add new ones.

New words come from various fields of science and other human activities. There seems no special source of areas from which new words are added in great numbers.

Since a conspicuous number of abbreviations and symbols are in daily use especially in newspapers, magazines, etc. their revival in the main part of the dictionary is welcome. By the same token, we believe that biographical and geographical names should be incorporated in the A to Z section rather than listing them as appendices in the back matter. We hear and read a great number of unfamiliar names of people and places as we live in a global village.

There should be no inconsistency in the treatment of entries. We believe phrasal verbs are lexical units that deserve listing as main entries. It's lexicographically inconsistent to list many of them as main entries while leaving the rest as run-ons.

Chapter 3

The most notable feature of the pronunciation in *MWCD11* is the deletion of several phonological contrasts characteristic to the dialects on the East Coast. The new simplified sound system offered by the latest edition is most likely to make the pronunciations more accessible to the general users. Setting the new sound units of *r*-colored diphthongs contributes to clearly distinguishing the prevocalic "*r*" and postvocalic "*r*," making it easier for the users to understand the possible "*r*-dropping" that can take place only for the latter.

Compared to other dictionaries of the similar size, detailed description of variants stands out, and it is noticeable that much effort has been made

to update the description of words that contain controversial pronunciations. On the other hand, not enough attention seems to have been paid to the on-going sound change (THOUGHT-LOT merger), and an extensive survey is expected in the next edition.

Chapter 4

We can see from our limited survey that *MWCD* has seen very constant and substantial changes (we may say most of them are improvements) through each of the two recent revisions (*WNCD9* to *MWCD10* and *MWCD10* to *MWCD11*). Even the very basic entry of the verb *be* has undergone one addition of usage description (sense **1e**: to come or go <has already *been* and gone> <has never *been* to the circus>) and one modification of an illustrative sentence (from <he was to become famous> to <she was to become famous> to make a positive and ambitious statement with a female subject, again presumably for the sake of political correctness). The changes are not radical ones overall but an accumulation of small but careful modifications of thousands of specific descriptions. That, however, is exactly what is most needed from the revision of an acknowledged lexicographical work such as Merriam-Webster's Collegiate. We expect reasonably up-to-date information presented in an established form, which gives us the feeling that it is still "good old reliable (Merriam-)Webster but incorporating knowledge of state-of-the-art technology," which is exactly what *MWCD11* may be able to offer when we look it up.

The dictionary deals with computer- or web-related items sometimes very carefully, but overall very reasonably. It keeps up with developments in the IT world fairly well and incorporates essential everyday digital terms and senses in a quite sensible way.

The addition of a large number of verbal illustrations especially in the revision from the 10th to the 11th is really welcome. *MWCD*'s illustrative phrases and sentences are concise but quite to the point and helpful especially in grasping and identifying the senses of polysemous entries.

The latest edition is accompanied by a CD-ROM with its whole printed content including pictures. Making the most of its electronic format, it provides the user with a variety of searching facilities, including entry

search, 'key word in the defining text' search, finding the words that rhyme with a certain keyword, combined search using and/or operators etc. It can be run on PCs, which allow the user to utilize the dictionary content by copying text from an entry they look up into various materials that they are working on (e.g. a word processor document).

Now the dictionary is accessible both in the traditional and electronic formats. But the CD-ROM content itself is based on the format of the book-form dictionary, which we are not specifically unhappy about at the moment. Will the next edition come equipped with a CD-ROM (or a content on any other electronic format) developed specifically with electronic advantages (such as concept searching) in mind, or will it just remain an alternative to the book version of the dictionary with only smart searching functions added? We will wait for a decade with high expectations, making the most of the latest version of this reliable updated dictionary.

Chapter 5

Based on the comparison between the latest three editions of *MWCD* and that between *MWCD* and *AHCD*, the following three conclusions may be arrived at. First, the usage paragraphs as against the 10th edition in which they are considerably revised, are fairly unchanged in the 11th edition. Second, the attempts to avoid discrimination are evident from the usage labels (the disuse of the label "substand" in the 10th edition) and the usage paragraphs (the avoidance of expressions such as "informal" and "colloquial" in all three editions). Third, the tendency towards more descriptive statements has had a significant influence on the conciseness of the usage paragraphs of the 10th and the 11th editions.

Chapter 6

The marked decrease in synonym paragraphs in the 9th edition is not observed in the 10th and the 11th editions. However, the 10th edition tends to delete the synonym paragraphs that discriminate the meanings of words of high frequency. From the 10th edition onwards, every synonym must always be followed by a verbal illustration, so that all the synonym

paragraphs consist of a list of synonymous words, core meanings of the synonyms, explanations for each word, and verbal illustrations. Although the 11th edition is a minor revision, some attempts to eliminate gender discrimination can be observed. As compared with *AHCD4*, *MWCD11* uses a consistent style (as is the case with the usage paragraphs). However, *MWCD11* would benefit from the short style of *AHCD4* in some synonym paragraphs.

Appendix 1 Usage paragraphs in *WNCD9*, *MWCD10*, and *MWCD11*

	9th	10th	11th	Type
a indefinite article		Unchanged	Part of the description is deleted.	Morphological
above		Unchanged	Unchanged	Syntactic
aggravate		Examples are changed.	Unchanged	Semantic
ain't		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Morphological
alright		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Morphological
amount		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
anymore		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Morphological
as far as		Totally deleted	***	Syntactic
assimilate	***		Unchanged	Phraseological
awful		The description of the source of an example is changed.	Unchanged	Semantic
awhile		Some description is added.	Unchanged	Syntactic
bacteria	***		Part of the description is changed.	Morphological
behalf	***		Unchanged	Phraseological
between		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Selection of a word
bi- prefix	***		Unchanged	Semantic
blame		Unchanged	Unchanged	Semantic
can		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Semantic
candelabra		Totally deleted	***	Morphological

center vt.	Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Phraseological
completed adj.	Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Selection of a word
comprise	Unchanged	Unchanged	Semantic
consensus	Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Phraseological
contact	Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
couple adj.	The description becomes more detailed.	Unchanged	Phraseological
couple n.	Totally deleted	* * *	Phraseological
criterion	Part of the description is changed.	Part of the description is changed.	Morphological
data	The description becomes more detailed.	Unchanged	Morphological
different	Unchanged	Part of the description is changed.	Phraseological
dilemma	***	Unchanged	Semantic
disinterested	Unchanged	Unchanged	Semantic
dive	Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Morphological
don't	The description becomes more detailed.	Unchanged	Morphological
due to	Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
dumb	Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Pragmatic
each other	Unchanged	Part of the description is changed.	Selection of a word
early on adv.	Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Selection of a word
effect	Unchanged	Part of the description is changed. (Historical evidence is deleted.)	Selection of a word
enormity	The description is totally changed. (Historical evidence is deleted.)	Unchanged	Semantic
enthuse	Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Morphological

envelope	***	Unchanged	Phonetic
farther		Unchanged	Morphological
February		Part of the description is changed.	Phonetic
finalize		Part of the description is changed.	Part of the description is changed. Morphological
flaunt		Part of the description is changed	Semantic
foliage	***	Unchanged	Phonetic
forte	***	Unchanged	Phonetic
fortuitous	***	Unchanged	Semantic
fulsome		The description is totally changed.	Semantic
genuine		Unchanged	Phonetic
get		Part of the description is changed.	Phonetic
good adj.	***	Part of the description is changed.	Selection of a word
good adv.		The description is totally changed.	Selection of a word
graduate		Part of the description is changed.	Part of the description is changed. Syntactic
graffiti		Part of the description is changed.	Part of the description is changed. Morphological
hang		Unchanged	Morphological
hardly		The description is totally changed.	Semantic
hone	***	Unchanged	Selection of a word
hoof		Totally deleted	* * * Morphological
hopefully		The description is totally changed.	Part of the description is changed. Semantic
importantly	***	Unchanged	Semantic
incredulous	***	Unchanged	Semantic
infer		The description becomes more detailed.	Semantic
-ing		Part of the description is deleted.	Phonetic

irregardless	***		Unchanged	Selection of a word
-ize		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Morphological
kilometer		Unchanged	Unchanged	Phonetic
kudo		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Morphological
lay	***		Unchanged	Syntactic
learn	***		Unchanged	Semantic
leave		The description is totally changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
less		Unchanged	Unchanged	Selection of a word
liable		Unchanged	Unchanged	Selection of a word
library		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Phonetic
like conj.		The description is totally changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
literally		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Semantic
loan		The description becomes more detailed.	Unchanged	Selection of a word
masterful		Unchanged	Unchanged	Semantic
me		Unchanged	Unchanged	Syntactic
media		The description of the date is changed. One example is added.	The description of the date is changed.	Morphological
memorandum		Unchanged	Unchanged	Morphological
mighty		Unchanged	Part of the description is changed. (Redundant statements are deleted.)	Pragmatic
miniscule	***	* * *		Morphological
mischievous	***		Unchanged	Phonetic
mitigate		The description becomes more detailed. An example is added.	Unchanged	Syntactic

most		Unchanged	Unchanged	Selection of a word
myriad	***	* * *		Syntactic
myself		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
nauseous		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Semantic
neither conj.		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Phraseological
neither pron.		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
nigger	***		Unchanged	Pragmatic
nuclear		Unchanged	Part of the description is changed.	Phonetic
off of prep.		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Phraseological
one pron.		Part of the description is changed.	Part of the description is changed.	Selection of a word
only		Some description is added.	Unchanged	Syntactic
people		Totally deleted	* * *	Selection of word
per prep.		Unchanged	Unchanged	Selection of word
phenomena	***		Unchanged	Morphological
phenomenon		Totally deleted	* * *	Morphological
plenty adj.		Unchanged	Unchanged	Semantic
plenty adv.		Unchanged	Unchanged	Selection of a word
plus conj.		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
presently		Unchanged	Unchanged	Semantic
pretty		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Selection of word
principle		Unchanged	Unchanged	Selection of a word
prior to prep.		Some description is added.	The part of the description that is added in the 10th edition is deleted.	Selection of a word

prove		The description of the date is changed.	The description of the date is changed.	Morphological
providing conj.		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Selection of word
queer	***	* * *		Pragmatic
real		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Selection of a word
right		Totally deleted	* * *	Semantic
rob		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Semantic
run	***		Unchanged	Morphological
shall		Unchanged	Unchanged	Selection of a word
slow		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Selection of a word
sneak	***		Unchanged	Morphological
so adv.		Part of the description is changed.	Part of the description is changed.	Semantic
so conj.		Unchanged	Unchanged	Syntactic
some		Unchanged	Unchanged	Phraseological
split infinitive		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
stratum		The description is totally changed.	Part of the description is changed.	Morphological
such pron.		Unchanged	Unchanged	Syntactic
sulfur	***		Unchanged	Morphological
supercede	***	* * *		Morphological
sure adv.		Unchanged	Unchanged	Selection of a word
than prep.		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Syntactic
that pron.	***		Unchanged	Selection of a word
that pron.	***		Unchanged	Selection of a word
they pron.		Unchanged	Unchanged	Semantic
they pron.	***		Unchanged	Syntactic
tho	***	* * *		Morphological
transpire		Unchanged	Unchanged	Semantic

type		Totally deleted	* * *	Phraseological
unique		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Semantic
unlike conj.	***	* * *		Syntactic
wait on		The description is totally changed.	Unchanged	Phraseological
whom pron.		Part of the description is changed.	Unchanged	Selection of a word

Appendix 2 Synonym paragraphs in *WNCD9*, *MWCD10* and *MWCD11*

9th	9th > 10th	10th > 11th
* * *	background, setting, environment, milieu mise-en-scène <Newly introduced>	Unchanged
bad, evil, ill, wicked, naughty	<Entirely deleted>	Unchanged
* * *	bait, badger, heckle, hector, chivy, hound <Newly introduced>	Unchanged
banish, exile, deport, transport	Examples are added.	Unchanged
bare, naked, nude, bald, barren	Examples are added, and part of the explanation is changed.	Unchanged
base, low, vile	One example is changed for a shorter one. Another example is deleted.	Unchanged
bear, suffer, endure, abide, tolerate, stand	Examples are added.	Unchanged
bearing, deportment, demeanor, mien, manner, carriage	Examples are added.	< Entirely deleted >
beautiful, lovely, handsome, comely, fair	Examples are added. The headword "pretty" is added (correction). There is some minor change in the explanation of "pretty".	Unchanged
beg, entreat, beseech, implore, supplicate, adjure, importune	Examples are added.	Unchanged
begin, commence, start, initiate, inaugurate	The headword "usher in" is added, and the entire description is changed.	Unchanged
behave, conduct, deport comport, acquit	Examples are added.	Unchanged
belief, faith, credence, credit	Examples are added, and the structure of the description is changed.	Unchanged

belligerent, bellicose, pugnacious, quarrelsome, contentious	Examples are added.	One example is changed.
blameworthy, blamable, guilty, culpable	Examples are added.	Unchanged
blemish, defect, flaw	<Entirely deleted>	<Entirely deleted>
* * *	bloody, sanguinary, gory <Newly introduced>	Unchanged
bluff, blunt, brusque, curt, crusty, gruff	Examples are added.	Unchanged
boast, brag, vaunt, crow	All of the examples are changed.	Unchanged
boorish, churlish, loutish, clownish	Examples are added.	Unchanged
brief, short	<Entirely deleted>	<Entirely deleted>
bright, brilliant, radiant, luminous, lustrous	Unchanged	Unchanged
broad, wide, deep	Unchanged	Unchanged
* * *	brutal, brutish, bestial, feral <Newly introduced>	The generic word "man" is changed to "humans".
bulk, mass, volume	Examples are added.	Unchanged
business, commerce, trade, industry, traffic	Unchanged	Unchanged
busy, industrious, diligent, assiduous, sedulous	Examples are added.	Unchanged
gather, collect, assemble, congregate	Examples are added.	Unchanged
gaudy, tawdry, garish, flashy, meretricious	All of the examples are changed for shorter ones.	Unchanged
gaze, gape, stare, glare, peer	<Entirely deleted>	<Entirely deleted>
ghastly, grisly, gruesome, macabre, lurid	Examples are added.	Unchanged
gift, faculty, aptitude, bent, talent, genius, knack	Examples are added.	Unchanged
give, present, donate, bestow, confer, afford	Some examples are deleted or changed for shorter ones.	Unchanged

govern, rule	<Entirely deleted>	<Entirely deleted>
gracious, cordial, affable, genial, sociable	Examples are added.	Unchanged
grand, magnificent, imposing, stately, majestic, grandiose	Examples are added.	Unchanged
grant, concede, vouchsafe, accord, award	All the examples are changed for shorter ones.	Unchanged
graphic, vivid, picturesque, pictorial	The headword "pictorial" is deleted, and examples are added.	Unchanged
guide, lead, steer, pilot, engineer	Examples are added, and part of the explanation is changed.	Part of the explanation is changed.
native, indigenous, endemic, aboriginal	Unchanged	Unchanged
natural, ingenuous, naive, unsophisticated, artless	Examples are added.	Unchanged
neglect, omit, disregard, ignore, overlook, slight, forget	Examples are added.	Part of the explanation is changed.
negligent, neglectful, lax, slack, remiss	Examples are added, and part of the explanation is changed.	Part of the explanation is changed, and a phrase of the examples is changed.
new, novel, modern, original, fresh	The headword "modern" is deleted. One example is deleted and another example is changed.	Unchanged
noticeable, remarkable, prominent, outstanding, conspicuous, salient, striking	Examples are added.	Unchanged
nullify, negate, annul, abrogate, invalidate	Examples are added.	Part of the explanation is changed.
uncertainty, doubt, dubiety, skepticism, suspicion, mistrust	Examples are added, and part of the explanation is changed.	Unchanged
understand, comprehend, appreciate	Some of the examples are changed, and the structure of the description is changed.	Unchanged

universal, general, generic	<Entirely deleted>	<Entirely deleted>
unnerve, enervate, unman, emasculate	Examples are added.	Unchanged
unruly, ungovernable, intractable, refractory, recalcitrant, willful, headstrong	One example is changed for a shorter one.	Unchanged
upright, honest, just, conscientious, scrupulous, honorable	Examples are added.	Unchanged
use, employ, utilize	Examples are added.	Unchanged
usual, customary, habitual, wonted, accustomed	Examples are added.	Unchanged

NOTES

Chapter 1

1) For convenience's sake, we will use *MWCD* as the abbreviation for the 9th edition when we refer to the three latest editions of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* collectively.

Chapter 2

1) Deleted entries are: **lamellicorn**, **lamelliform**, **Last Things**, **lathyritic**, **leptosome**, **letter missive**, **levier**, **Libera**, **Liederkranz**, **longhead**, **long play**, and **lyphobic**. **Loafer** (*trademark*) is deleted as a main entry with a capital letter, but the sense is incorporated in **loafer**.

2) Deleted abbreviations are: **lam** (laminated), **Lat** (Latin, Latvia), **LCT** (local civil time), **lect** (lecture, lecturer), **Leit** (Leitrim), **li** (link), **Lim** (Limerick), **long** (Longford), **Loth** (Lothian), **Lou** (Louth), **LSAT** (Law School Admission Test), **Lub** (lubricant, lubricating), and **Luth** (Lutheran). Partly deleted abbreviations are **LF** (ledger folio), **LH** (lower half), **lib** (librarian, library), **lit** (literary, literature), **LM** (long meter), and **LR** (log run)

3) Run-on entries that have been degraded from main entries in the tenth edition are: **learning disabled** (in **learning disability**), **light-adapted** (in **light adaptation**), and **loneliness** (in **lonely**).

4) Main entries that have been upgraded from run-on entries in the tenth edition are: **laptop**, **learning disability**, and **limited partnership**.

5) New run-on entries in new main entries are: **lap dance**, **lap dancer**, **left-brained**, **letterboxing**, **line dancer**, and **line dancing**.

6) We estimate there are about 164,000 entries, but the entry count is difficult because of differences in microstructure among dictionaries.

7) The double circle indicates the headword, and the blank stands for no entry.

Chapter 3

1) General information such as pronunciation keys, syllabication, recording of variants, along with *MWCD11*'s attitudes and policies is available in the "pronunciation" section of the Explanatory Notes and the Guide. From the 10th edition an IPA equivalent is available in the Guide, where the characters used in the dictionary are explained one by one. The section titled "English Spelling and Sound Correspondences" in the 9th edition, has been deleted since the 10th edition.

2) A short line regarding \ər\ in the Guide is also worth commenting: "Actually, this is usually a single sound, not a sequence of \ə\ followed by \r\" (34a). This is especially beneficial to nonnative users, since it will prevent them from mistakenly producing the sound as a diphthong (Takebayashi 1998: 127).

3) The latest edition supports this change in policy by reasoning that the sequence \ar\ is not allowed, and is replaced by \er\ in many varieties of English (the Guide: 34a).

4) Words grouped into (C) in *MWCD11* do not always correspond to those in *AHCD4*: **behalf**, **calf**, **bath**, **path**, and **aunt**, had the two variants \a, ä\ ((ä, ä) in *AHCD4*) in both dictionaries, but this is only so in *MWCD11* for words such as **ask**, **draft**, **basket**, **caste**, **flask**, **glass**, and **can't**.

5) Regrettably, information on preference for some of the words in the list is available only in the CD-ROM version.

Chapter 5

1) The definition of *nonstand* in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language* clearly states the difference between *substand* and *nonstand*: "The stylistic label *nonstand* for "non-standard" is used for a very small number of words that can hardly stand without some status label but are too widely current in reputable context to be labeled *substand*."

2) Appendix 1 shows all the entries in the 9th, 10th, and 11th editions.

3) Examples are cited from the 11th edition.

4) The paragraph "hone in" is classified into the "phonetic" paragraph in section 3.7. However, it can also be considered to deal with the choice of words; it is a matter of classification. In this case, it is counted among the "choice of words" paragraphs.

Chapter 6

1) See the Introductory Matter in *Webster's Dictionary of English Synonyms* for the history of synonym paragraphs and synonym dictionaries.

2) *Webster's Dictionary of English Synonyms*.

DICTIONARIES

AHCD4: *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, Fourth Edition. Boston; New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.

CIDE: *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

EPD15: *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, Fifteenth Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

- EPD16: *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, Sixteenth Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- LDCE4: *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, New Edition. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2003.
- LPD2: *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary*, New Edition. Harlow: Longman, 2000.
- MECD: *Microsoft Encarta College Dictionary*. New York: St Martin's Press, 2001.
- MED: *Macmillan English Dictionary*. Oxford: Macmillan Publishers, 2002.
- MWCD10: *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Tenth Edition. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 1993.
- MWCD11: *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 2003.
- OAD7: *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Seventh Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- WDES: *Webster's Dictionary of English Synonyms*. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 1973.
- WDEU: *Webster's Dictionary of English Usage*. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 1989.
- WNCD9: *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 1983.
- WNID3: *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language*. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 1961.
- WNWD4: *Webster's New World College Dictionary*, Fourth Edition. Cleveland, Ohio: Wiley Publishing, 2002.

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