

den; (9) spearhead — specification; (10) tracing — trade<sup>1</sup>. Some examples introduced in this section are quoted from the other parts in the *MED*.

2) Cowie (1995) divided examples into four types — words, phrases, clauses, and sentences — and compared the examples between *ALD*<sup>1</sup> (1948) and *OALD*<sup>2</sup> (1989). Here the first three types are included in the 'phrase' type.

3) In her lecture given in Tokyo on 13 December 2002, G. Fox, *MED*'s Associate Editor, said that the two editions were edited at the same time and that the two teams of lexicographers divided up the dictionary-making and modified the examples for each dictionary.

4) The three examples given only in *MED(UK)* are the following: *Most European countries have signed up to the Geneva Convention.; a policy favouring the convergence of tax rates within Europe; the endowment of a Professorship at Oxford; the attitude of the West towards Islam.*

5) In the entry 'bother', 5 examples are given only in *MED(UK)*: *I didn't want the bother of carrying a camera around.; I'll get a taxi and save you the bother of taking me.; I hope George wasn't too much of a bother.; She'll get another job, no bother.; He's in a spot of bother with the police.*

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## Usage Notes of *Macmillan English Dictionary*

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### 1. Introduction

The *Macmillan English Dictionary* (hereafter abbreviated as *MED*), which was published in 2002, shows originality in its intensive use of usage notes. This paper defines all the columns in red boxes as usage notes, and discusses how these usage notes are organized in this dictionary.

In *MED*, there are thirteen kinds of usage notes, according to the titles used in the CD-ROM (presented here in alphabetical order):

- academic writing:** given to the words concerning academic writing, such as *topic*, *example*, or *summary*, and shows some typical expressions.
- avoiding offense:** comments on politeness in order to avoid the problems of race, gender, age, and so on.
- better words:** advising on use of more minor words instead of common words like *bad* or *nice*, according to the situation.
- collocation:** the words which are often used with common words are given; the connection here is looser than in idioms.
- cultural note:** comments on cultures in America and Britain.
- etymology:** the origin and derivations of words are explained.
- false friends Am/Br:** the difference between AmE and BrE is shown.
- functional note:** given to the words relating to attitudes such as *agree* or *suggest*, and listing some expressions used to show those attitudes.
- learner errors:** comments on the points that learners have to keep in mind such as the subtle difference between synonyms.
- metaphors:** indicating the metaphors behind common words to help learners grasp the concepts of those words; example sentences

are also given.

**semantic set:** given to the words concerning daily life, such as *newspaper*, and listing the words related to them.

**synonyms:** nearly interchangeable words are shown with their nuances and example expressions.

**usage note:** mainly given to functional words and explaining how to use them.

The titles used in the CD-ROM are adopted in this analysis, as mentioned above, because of two reasons: some columns have no titles in the paper dictionary, and the titles in the CD-ROM are more compact. The corresponding titles in the CD-ROM and paper version are as follows:

academic writing: academic writing

avoiding offense: words that avoid giving offense

better words: words you can use instead of . . .

collocation: words often used with . . .

cultural note: (no title)

etymology: (no title)

false friends Am/Br: differences between American and British English

functional note: ways of . . .

learner errors: (no title)

metaphors: metaphors

semantic set: talking or writing about . . .

synonyms: other ways of saying . . .

usage note: (no title)

The boxes without titles seem to contain basic information about words, and they may be expected to be read as part of definitions; in fact, they are very short. In comparison, the boxes which have titles seem to give additional information to readers; these titles allow them to decide whether or not to read the contents of the box. Thus, it seems that the system of titles in the paper version has its own order.

However, it should be pointed out that there is an inconsistency here: the distinction between “semantic set” and “synonyms” is unclear. For example, while *advertising* has the column titled “synonyms” in the

CD-ROM, the same column is given the title “talking or writing about advertising” in the paper version, which usually corresponds to “semantic set” in the CD-ROM.<sup>1)</sup>

## 2. Comparison between *MED-A* and *MED-B*

Attention was attracted when the American version of *MED* (*Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners of American English*, hereafter *MED-A*) and the British version of *MED* (*Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, hereafter *MED-B*) were published at the same time. It is, thus, worthy to compare the two versions here, though there seems to be no great difference between them concerning usage notes, setting aside a few conventional differences.<sup>2)</sup> In both dictionaries, the number of columns is almost equal, as table 1 shows:

Table 1

	A	B
academic writing	15	15
avoiding offense	14	14
better words	8	8
collocation	447	449
cultural note	35	28
etymology	166	175
false friends Am/Br	28	28
functional note	12	12
learner errors	40	40
metaphors	40	40
semantic set	7	7
synonyms	41	41
usage note	38	42
total	891	899

Two differences are noted, though they are linguistically not so significant. First, while most columns are common to both dictionaries, some col-

umns are given only to one dictionary as in the next table<sup>3</sup>:

Table 2

	A&B	only A	only B
collocation	451	2	4
cultural note	41	13	6
etymology	151	15	24
usage note	38	0	4

Quite naturally, there is a tendency for the *MED-A* to contain more information about American culture and typical American usage of words, and vice versa for the *MED-B* to contain British ones.

Second, different content is found in some of the columns which are common to both dictionaries. In the column "collocation" of *accident*, for example, while the *MED-A* contains five adjectives ("bad, fatal, minor, serious, tragic"), the *MED-B* has seven ("bad, fatal, horrific, minor, nasty, serious, tragic"). This kind of distinction may be based on corpus research, and a survey of this topic can be developed into another study.

### 3. Comparison with Other Dictionaries

Most dictionaries contain boxes of their own design. In Dohi et al. (p. 41), Isozaki provides a table concerning the columns in four dictionaries as follows:

Table 3

	LAAD	LDCE	OALD	COBUILD
synonym	190	129	162	—
grammar	83	70	32	—
formality/politeness	16	18	—	—
spelling	8	19	—	—
AmE/BrE	—	7	20	—
others	6	10	5	—
no title	3	—	1	122
cross-reference	○	○	○	×
the number of boxed panels	272	188	223	122

Since *MED* has nearly nine hundred columns, it is obvious that *MED* consciously uses many boxes, compared with other dictionaries. Following the division in the table above, most of the *MED* columns are classified as "others": "academic writing", "better words", "collocation", "cultural note", "etymology", "functional note", "metaphors", and "semantic set". Although some of them can be included in the definitions of words, as pointed out above, for example, "cultural note" and "etymology", which are given no titles in the paper version, others are quite unique to *MED*. These unique columns are discussed individually in the next section.

### 4. Unique Usage Notes

The columns "academic writing", "better words", "collocation", "functional note", "metaphors", and "semantic set" can be divided into two groups for the analysis here. The first group contains "academic writing", "better words", "collocation", and "functional note", which show how to express concepts. "Functional note" is a general category, and gives a list of expressions for some universal concepts. "Better words" and "academic writing" similarly show the way to express some concepts, but they are limited to certain circumstances: the former gives a series of interchangeable words containing almost the same concepts, with situations for which each word will fit, and the latter shows how to express some concepts under specific circumstances of academic writing. "Collocation" shows the way to modify some concepts, listing the words which often occur with some common words. Although this kind of information could be given by example sentences, the way of word-listing is economical: it can save space and give the information in a comprehensive way. The notion "collocation" used here does not mean idioms or set phrases, and so advanced learners can easily understand the usage even without example sentences.

The second group contains "metaphors" and "semantic set", which are more culture-specific. "Semantic set" gives the information that is essential to everyday life, using some common words, such as *newspaper*, as a core word. It will be useful for learners to have such information. "Meta-

phors”, which is one of the most unique columns in this dictionary, also aims to make learners familiar with the culture of English-speaking society. It is explained that the inspiration for this column was born from the book *Metaphors We Live By*; in it, Lakoff and Johnson emphasize that every culture has its own system of comprehending the world and that metaphor plays the central role in this system. Metaphor to them is “a means of structuring our conceptual system and the kinds of everyday activities we perform” (p. 145). Lakoff and Johnson also observe that “students of meaning and dictionary makers have not found it important to try to give a general account of how people understand normal concepts in terms of systematic metaphors” (p. 115). It is *MED* that has adopted this suggestion for the first time. The columns of “metaphors” display the culture of English language by showing how English-speaking people grasp the world through the use of metaphors. The “metaphors” column is expected to be effective in helping learners’ usage of creative expressions.

It is stated at the beginning of the dictionary that *MED* has made an effort to help advanced learners develop a “productive vocabulary”. The columns discussed here reflect their invention, one which is held in high regard.

## 5. CD-ROM

Lastly, the features of the CD-ROM concerning usage notes are briefly described here. In the CD-ROM, usage notes are displayed separately in a small space at the right side of the window with compact titles. In comparison with the paper dictionary, usage notes are given a more independent position. Thus, although there is a risk that the basic information such as “cultural note” or “etymology” could be overlooked, a neater system is accomplished independently in the CD-ROM format.

## 6. Summary

In *MED*, usage notes are given important roles, since more information is distributed to columns than in other dictionaries, and new kinds of columns are invented such as “metaphors”. It is a promising challenge to

include more of the cultural information behind languages in order to promote learners’ productive and creative expressions. *MED* shows the possibility that each dictionary can exhibit great originality in some field.

## NOTES

1) The content of the column does not relate well to the title. In fact, some columns of “synonyms” do not seem to contain pure synonyms, which causes problems. For example, *book* has the column “synonyms”, which contains “novel, textbook, manual, cookbook, guidebook, biography, etc.”, and is given the title “talking or writing about book” in the paper version, which is usually given to “semantic set”.

2) A few rules are observed throughout the dictionary: to use their own nation’s spelling (e.g. -er (AmE) vs. -re (BrE)), and to write about their own nation’s convention first (e.g. in “false friends Am/Br”).

3) In some cases, the entries of words themselves appear only in one dictionary, and in other cases, the columns are added only in one dictionary even though both dictionaries have the entries.

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