Conference on English Historical Linguistics. University of Glasgow.
Osawa, Fuyo. 2003[a]. "Syntactic Parallels between Ontogeny and Phylogeny." *Lingua*. 113.1, 3–47.
Osawa, Fuyo. 2003[b]. "The Rise of IPs in the History of English." *Historical Linguistics* 2001, ed by Blake, B. J. and K. Burridge, 319–335. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Osawa, Fuyo. 2003[c]. The Development of Complementation: from Nominalization to Embedding, Paper presented at The 16th International Conference on Historical Linguistics, University of Copenhagen, August 2003.
Radford, Andrew. 1990. *Syntactic Theory and the Acquisition of English Syntax*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Sweet, Henry. 1953. *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Primer*, revised throughout by Norman Davis. Oxford: Clarendon.
Thráinsson, Höskuldur. 1996. "On the (Non)-Universality of Functional Categories". *Minimal Ideas: Syntactic Studies in the Minimalist Framework* ed. by Abraham, W. et. al. 253–281. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Tsimpli, Ianthi-Maria. 1996. *The Prefunctional Stage of Language Acquisition*. New York: Garland.

# An Analysis of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Seventh Edition, with Special Reference to the CD-ROM

YURI KOMURO SATORU UCHIDA
YUKO SHITARA-MATSUO AKIHIKO KAWAMURA
YASUTAKE ISHII TAKASHI KANAZASHI

## 1. Introduction

This paper is a critical analysis of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, seventh edition (2005) (hereafter abbreviated as *OALD*7) with a primary focus on its CD-ROM. The dictionary is available either with or without a CD-ROM named the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Compass* (hereafter *OALD*7-CD). Among its innovations, *OALD*7 is the first in its 60-year tradition to mark important words with key symbols in larger type, and the defining vocabulary (hereafter DV) of about 3,000 words used in the sixth edition is now called the keywords of the Oxford 3000. *OALD*7 also features 2,000 new words and has built-in audio-recordings designed to assist users unable to read phonetic transcriptions. Altogether, *OALD*7-CD contains the whole of the seventh edition, the *Oxford Learner's Wordfinder Dictionary* and the *Oxford Guide to British and American Culture*, as well as information on 20,000 word origins, with search and audio facilities. Despite these advances, *OALD* has generally been left a little behind its rivals in the availability of its CD-ROM version. The fifth edition (hereafter *OALD*5), published in 1995, first became available in CD-ROM format with some additional features in 1997 as the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary CD-ROM Edition*, and the sixth edition published in 2000 was also made available on CD-ROM the following year as the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*

*CD-ROM New Edition* (hereafter *OALD*6-CD). However, only "a severely cutdown version" of this CD-ROM was bundled with the print dictionary (Jackson 2002: 141). The seventh edition is thus the first complete edition of the *OALD* with a CD-ROM comparable to those of its competitors, such as the *Macmillan English Dictionary* (2002) (hereafter *MED*), the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, fourth edition (2003) (hereafter *LDOCE*4), the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2003), and the *Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*, fourth edition (2003) (hereafter *COBUILD*4).

Our analysis will cover three main aspects: lexicographical observations, inspection of functions and searchability of the CD-ROM, and user study. As for the paper version, the main A-to-Z text has been increasing over the last revisions. The fourth edition has 1,392 pages, the fifth edition, 1,508 pages, and the present edition, 1,780 pages[1]. In the first place, we are interested to find out how the space increased by about 18% is used in *OALD*7. Our preliminary survey, a sampling of every 300 pages (300–301, 600–601, 900–901, 1200–1201, 1500–1501), identified few major changes between the previous and present editions, apart from newly introduced headwords. We will look at the *OALD*7 in terms of the wordlist, pronunciation, definitions, examples, and usage notes, with reference to the previous edition, *OALD*6, and/or to its competitors, where appropriate. Indeed, our main areas of interest are:

( 1 ) What kinds of words have been newly added?;
( 2 ) How are the recordings and transcriptions are actually arranged?;
( 3 ) How is the Oxford 3000 different from the previous DV?

In the second part of our analysis, we will investigate and assess the search functions of the *OALD*7-CD and their searchability to see whether it takes full advantage of CD-ROM medium. Finally, we will conclude our critique by evaluating the user-friendliness of both the paper and electronic versions of *OALD*7. Here, we will report on empirical research into Japanese learners' navigational skills as well as their conventional dictionary look-up skills with the *OALD*7.



## 2. Headwords

This section examines the headwords in *OALD*7. The results of our preliminary survey on the sample pages (300–301 (**comfortably** to **commentate**), 600–601 (**foldaway** to **fool**), 900–901 (**live**[2] to **loan translation**), 1200–1201 (**prithee** to **probity**) and 1500–1501 (**status bar** to **steaming**)) suggest that *OALD*7 has more headwords than *OALD*6. In fact, according to the blurb, it is claimed that 2000 new words have been added to the present edition. In the following subsections we will consider their coverages and treatments mainly by comparing the two editions. We will begin by considering the coverage of headwords, and then move on to the presentations of headwords, idioms and phrasal verbs. While *OALD*6-CD occasionally contains words not listed in the paper version (e.g. **birdseed** and **citizen's arrest**), as far as the sample pages are concerned, there are no differences between *OALD*7 and *OALD*7-CD. Accordingly, for the sake of convenience, the following discussions will be basically based on the printed editions.

### 2.1. Sampling

For the comparison between *OALD*6 and *OALD*7, all the headwords on the following 34 pages of *OALD*7 are compared with the corresponding headwords in *OALD*6: 100–101 (**badass** to **baguette**), 200–201 (**burner** to **bury**), 300–301 (**comfortably** to **commentate**), 400–401 (**defeat** to **defog**), 500–501 (**employee** to **encounter**), 600–601 (**foldaway** to **fool**), 700–701 (**halogen** to **hand**), 800–801 (**injured party** to **inrush**), 900–901 (**live**[2] to **loan translation**), 1,000–1,001 (**moviegoer** to **mudslide**), 1,100–1,101 (**parallel turn** to **park**), 1,200–1,201 (**prithee** to **probity**), 1,300–1,301 (**returnable** to **revert**), 1,400–1,401 (**shepherd** to **Shinto**), 1,500–1,501 (**status bar** to **steaming**), 1,600–1,601 (**threw** to **throw**) and 1,700–1,701(**vested interest** to **video card**). Other pages will also be examined whenever necessary.

### 2.2. Coverage of headwords

A survey was made on the sample pages to compare the coverage of the headwords in *OALD*6 with that of *OALD*7. The results are shown below

at Table 2.1; all the headwords which only appear in *OALD7* are marked as [+7, –6] and those appearing only in *OALD6* as [–7, +6].

The estimated number of total headwords, according to the figures below, will be 40,228 (22.6 (the average number of headwords per page) × 1780 (the total number of the text from A-to-Z). Run-ons are not included).

Table 2.1 A comparison of the coverages of the headwords between *OALD6* and *OALD7*

| pages | headwords | [+7, –6] | [–7, +6] | pages | headwords | [+7, –6] | [–7, +6] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 100–101 | 33 | 8 (1) | 0 | 1000–1001 | 55 | 18 | 0 |
| 200–201 | 25 | 9 (1) | 0 | 1100–1101 | 64 | 10 (1) | 0 |
| 300–301 | 41 | 10 | 0 | 1200–1201 | 47 | 4 | 0 |
| 400–401 | 40 | 4 (1) | 0 | 1300–1301 | 48 | 6 (1) | 0 |
| 500–501 | 61 | 7 | 0 | 1400–1401 | 45 | 10 | 0 |
| 600–601 | 48 | 7 (1) | 0 | 1500–1501 | 36 | 9 | 0 |
| 700–701 | 27 | 6 | 0 | 1600–1601 | 23 | 2 | 0 |
| 800–801 | 65 | 5 | 0 | 1700–1701 | 67 | 12 | 0 |
| 900–901 | 45 | 9 (1) | 0 | per page | 22.6 | 4 (0.2) | 0 |

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate run-ons.

### 2.2.1. Newly added items

The blurb in the back cover claims to have 2000 new words such as **bird flu**, **life coach**, and **offshoring**. However, Table 2.1 would suggest that *OALD7* has introduced more than 7000 new items, a figure which can be obtained from the multiplication 4 (the average additions per page) by 1780 (the total number of pages). Precisely, the estimated number of the newly entered items is 7120. The following are some random examples of the added items from the sample pages:

> **badass**, **burnous**, **bursa**, **bursitis**, **bursty**, **comfort station**, **comfrey**, **command language**, **commensal**, **defensive medicine**, **defibrillation**, **defining vocabulary**, **folk etymology**, **food science**, **food web**, **halloo**, **halwa**, **hammerhead**, **inkjet printer**, **in medias res**, **inquorate**, **loading**, **loan translation**, **mozzie**, **MP3**, **MP3 player**, **MPEG**, **Mr. Clean**, **MRSA**, **mucker**, **Paralympics**, **parastatal**, **parataxis**, **parishad**, **prithee**, **revanchism**, **reverb**, **Sherlock**, **sherwani**, **shifter**, **shiitake**, **shim**, **shindy**, **shiner**, **status bar**, **statutory holiday**, **steak tartare**, **stealth tax**, **steaming**, **thrift shop**, **throughway**, **vichyssoise**, **victualler**, **vide** and **video card**



A plausible explanation for the estrangement between the claim of the blurb and the survey on the sample pages seems to be that 'new words' used in the blurb refer only to the words which are newly entered in the English lexicon. On the other hand, the figure obtained from the survey shows the number of 'new headwords' in *OALD7* including 'new words.' This means that approximately 5000 items are newly introduced in *OLAD7* in addition to the 'new words.' Although it is difficult to distinguish these two categories, an examination of the occurrences of each new item in the BNC (the second edition of the British National Corpus) may be helpful to determine the difference between them. Twenty new words in *OALD7* were randomly taken out from the sample pages and examined in the BNC with the date restriction being before 1993. The three words (**bird flu**, **life coach** and **offshoring**) that are shown in the back cover as new words are also investigated for the purpose of comparison. The results are shown below:

Table 2.2 The occurrences of the words of the blurb in the BNC

| words | occurrences |
|---|---|
| bird flu | 1 |
| life coach | 0 |
| offshoring | 0 |

Table 2.3 The occurrences of the newly introduced items in the BNC

| words | occurrences | words | occurrences |
|---|---|---|---|
| bursty | 0 | defensive medicine | 6 |
| halwa | 0 | commensal | 10 |
| MP3 | 0 | Paralympics | 10 |
| status bar | 0 | food web(s) | 2 (10) |
| badass | 1 | food science(s) | 15 (2) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| burnous | 1 | command language | 18 |
| shiitake | 2 | inkjet printer(s) | 10 (12) |
| mozzie(s) | 1 (3) | comfrey(s) | 25 (1) |
| statutory holiday(s) | 3 (2) | video card(s) | 22 (4) |
| emulsifier(s) | 0 (6) | reverb(s) | 145 (5) |

Notes: (1) Numbers in parentheses indicate occurrences of plural forms; (2) The words are arranged in order of total occurrences.

Although it is hard to draw a precise line, it can be said at least that [+7, –6] items contain some frequently used words in the text before 1993, which implies *OALD*7 has introduced not only many new words but also many others that are not new as English words.

Regarding the words newly introduced in the seventh edition but 'not new' as English words, they can be roughly categorized into (1) the academic words such as **affricate**, **implicature** and **labiodental**, (2) cultural words such as **All Souls' Day**, **American cheese** and **banoffi pie**, (3) some advanced words such as **antipyretic**, **disaffiliate** and **extraterritorial** and (4) words of major varieties of English other than British English (see Section 2.2.2.).

As long as 'new words' are concerned, a classification is offered on the website: 'lifestyle' such as **Botox**, **futurology** and **speed dating**, 'fashion' such as **aloha shirt**, **fashionista** and **octopus trousers**, 'computing' such as **blog**, **emoticon** and **radio button**, 'home entertainment' such as **dramedy**, **video diary** and **widescreen**, 'telecoms' such as **landline**, **roaming** and **SMS**, 'the arts' such as **airport fiction**, **tribute band** and **trip hop**, 'science' such as **catastrophe theory**, **googol** and **terraform**, and finally, 'sport' such as **free climbing**, **fakie** and **golden goal**.

One point to be noted here is that the list of the new words includes not only newly added entries but also some words which are also listed in *OALD*6. The examples of such words are **chatline, fascia** and **worm** with sense extension, **docusoap** with hyphen deletion (see Section 2.3.1.) and **greening,** which was a run-on entry in *OALD*6 and has been just raised to a headword in *OALD*7, which, nevertheless, is an empty entry.



### 2.2.2. Varieties

It is not to be overlooked here that the majority of the new headwords are given labels specifying a region where a particular headword is mainly used: *NAmE* for **comfort station**; *AustralE* and *NZE* for **loading**; *CanE* for **statutory holiday** (see Section 4.4.2.). While Akasu *et al.* (2001) point out that it is one of the most remarkable features of *OALD*6 to treat American English far more extensively than the former edition, *OALD*7 seems to give more balanced treatment to other varieties of English. This might also be an attempt to help the user ready for a wider range of reading (see Section 4.1.).

### 2.2.3. Deleted items

So far as the 34 pages are concerned, no items have been removed from *OALD*6. However, there are occasionally items that appear in *OALD*6 but not in *OALD*7: **ambulance man**, **DfEE**, **DSS** and **ecu** are examples. As for **ambulance man**, it has been changed to **ambulance worker**, which is regarded as politically correct. In the case of **DfEE** and **DSS**, they have been deleted probably due to the fact that their referents, Department for Education and Employment, and Department of Social Security in the UK, were replaced with Department for Education and Skills, and Department for Work and Pensions in 1991 respectively.[1] The same goes for **ecu** (European Currency Unit), and **euro**.[2] Judging from this, the Oxford lexicographers have good reasons to delete the [–7, +6] entries and may have tried to reflect the status quo of English. However, the user could come across such deleted items in other texts, e.g. in books, magazines, newspapers, etc. It could be better to maintain such entries with notations and to have cross references as *OALD*6 does for **ecu**:

> the abbreviation for European Currency Unit, a unit of money of the European Union. In 1999 it was replaced by the euro.

Lack of space might have caused the deletion in the printed edition, but the CD-ROM could have contained such entries since space is not problematic in the digital medium.

## 2.3. The presentation of headwords

### 2.3.1. Compounds

Another examination was carried out in the pages from A to E focusing on the presentation of compounds, revealing that the presentations of compounds in terms of the use of hyphens and spaces have been occasionally changed. There are mainly four types: (1) hyphen deletion such as **ante-room** to **anteroom**, (2) replacement of hyphen with space such as **bell-push** to **bell push**, (3) space deletion such as **air bag** to **airbag** and (4) replacement of space with hyphen such as **bog standard** to **bog-standard**. Some random examples are shown below:

Table 2.4 The presentation of compounds in *OALD6* and *OALD7*

| Type | *OALD6* | *OALD7* | Type | *OALD6* | *OALD7* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | ante-room | anteroom | (3) | air bag | airbag |
| | back-up | backup | | air speed | airspeed |
| | blow-out | blowout | | back country | backcountry |
| | cock-eyed | cockeyed | | bake shop | bakeshop |
| | docu-soap | docusoap | | bar room | barroom |
| | e-mail | email | | corn cob | corncob |
| (2) | bell-push | bell push | | date line | dateline |
| | bin-liner | bin liner | | down time | downtime |
| | clothes-hanger | clothes hanger | (4) | bog standard | bog-standard |
| | cross-reference | cross reference | | do it yourself | do-it-yourself |
| | dolly-bird | dolly bird | | empire building | empire-building |

Note: As for **email**, the alternative form **e-mail** is also presented in parentheses in the seventh edition, and vice versa in the sixth edition.

A glance at the table will tell us that *OALD7*, in general, tends to avoid hyphens and spaces, or to replace the former with the latter. For the purpose of comparison, these words are also compared between *LDOCE3* (1995) and *LDOCE4* (2003), and *COBUILD3* (2001) and *COBUILD4* (2003) to see if there are any changes in other dictionaries as to the presentation of the compounds. The following results were obtained:



Table 2.5 The presentations of the compounds in other learner's dictionaries

| Type | *OALD7* | *LDOCE3* | *LDOCE4* | *COBUILD3* | *COBUILD4* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | anteroom | 7 | 7 | 7(6) | 7(6) |
| | backup | 7 | 7 | 7(6) | 7(6) |
| | blowout | 7 | 6(7) | 6(7) | 7(6) |
| | cockeyed | 6 | 6 | 7(6) | 7(6) |
| | docusoap | × | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | email | 6 | 7(6) | 6(7) | 6(7) |
| (2) | bell push | × | × | × | × |
| | bin liner | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | clothes hanger | 7 | 7 | × | × |
| | cross reference | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| | dolly bird | 7 | 7 | × | × |
| (3) | airbag | 7 | 7 | 7(6) | 7(6) |
| | airspeed | 7 | 7 | 7(6) | 7(6) |
| | backcountry | 6 | 6 | 6(7) | 6(7) |
| | bakeshop | × | × | × | × |
| | barroom | × | 7 | 7(H) | 7(H) |
| | corncob | 7 | 7 | 6(7) | 6(7) |
| | dateline | 7 | 7 | × | × |
| | downtime | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| (4) | bog-standard | 6 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | do-it-yourself | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | empire-building | × | 7 | × | × |

Notes: (1) 6 and 7 indicate that the presentation of the headword is the same as that of *OALD6* and *OALD7* respectively; (2) Numbers in parentheses indicate that the alternative form is presented within the entry; (3) H designates that the word is presented with a hyphen.

The examination revealed that there are few changes as to the presentations of compounds in the revisions from *LDOCE3* to *LDOCE4*, and from *COBUILD3* to *COBUILD4*. There is a possibility that *OALD7* pays more attention to the presentation of compounds than its competitors. Although we cannot be sure whether these changes made at this

revision are relevant, we can only assume that they may be the result of more extensive use of corpus data. It is, however, regrettable that the alternative forms are not maintained within the entries of *OALD*7 except **email**.

### 2.3.2. American and British spellings

The worldwide dominance of American English appears to affect the presentation of the headwords in *OALD*7. Some words are raised to headword status in the American spelling/wording, while British ones are shown in parentheses or become empty entries cross-referred to their American counterparts. The following are some random examples: **bargaining chip** (*BrE* also **bargaining counter**), **dialog box** (*BrE* also **dialogue box**) and **electrical storm** (*BrE* also **electric storm**). It is fair to say that the Oxford lexicographers pay attention to the balance between British English and American English (see Section 2.2.2.).

### 2.3.3. Word breaks

Word breaks were once discarded in the fifth edition and came back in *OALD*6. As Akasu *et al.* (2001) point out, the division of the word was inconsistent through the editions: take **economically** for example, it was **eco•nom•ic•ally** in the fourth edition, **econ•omi•cally** in the fifth edition, and **eco•nom•ic•al•ly** in *OALD*6 and *OALD*7. As long as the sample pages are concerned, there are no changes made in *OALD*7's and *OALD*6's treatment of word breaks. Unfortunately, *OALD*7 does not explain its policy on word breaks nor does *OALD*7-CD.

## 2.4. Idioms and phrasal verbs

Idioms and phrasal verbs marked with IDM and PHR-V were also counted to compare their coverages in *OALD*6 and *OALD*7. The results are as follows:



Table 2.6 Idioms in *OALD*6 and *OALD*7

| Page | headwords | [+7, –6] | [–7, +6] | Page | headwords | [+7, –6] | [–7, +6] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 100–101 | 25 | 1 | 1 | 1000–1001 | 37 | 0 | 0 |
| 200–201 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 1100–1101 | 54 | 0 | 0 |
| 300–301 | 31 | 1 | 0 | 1200–1201 | 43 | 0 | 0 |
| 400–401 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 1300–1301 | 42 | 0 | 0 |
| 500–501 | 54 | 1 | 1 | 1400–1401 | 35 | 0 | 0 |
| 600–601 | 41 | 2 | 0 | 1500–1501 | 27 | 0 | 0 |
| 700–701 | 21 | 1 | 0 | 1600–1601 | 21 | 0 | 0 |
| 800–801 | 60 | 0 | 0 | 1700–1701 | 55 | 0 | 0 |
| 900–901 | 36 | 0 | 0 | per page | 18.6 | 0.18 | 0.06 |

Note: The examinations are based on the headwords common to both editions.

Table 2.7 Phrasal verbs in *OALD*6 and *OALD*7

| Page | headwords | [+7, –6] | [–7, +6] | Page | headwords | [+7, –6] | [–7, +6] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 100–101 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 1000–1001 | 37 | 0 | 0 |
| 200–201 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 1100–1101 | 54 | 0 | 0 |
| 300–301 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 1200–1201 | 43 | 0 | 0 |
| 400–401 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 1300–1301 | 42 | 0 | 0 |
| 500–501 | 54 | 0 | 0 | 1400–1401 | 35 | 0 | 0 |
| 600–601 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 1500–1501 | 27 | 0 | 0 |
| 700–701 | 21 | 1 | 0 | 1600–1601 | 21 | 0 | 0 |
| 800–801 | 60 | 0 | 0 | 1700–1701 | 55 | 0 | 0 |
| 900–901 | 36 | 0 | 0 | per page | 18.6 | 0.03 | 0 |

Note: The examinations are based on the headwords common to both editions.

It is clear from the tables that there is no fundamental change as far as idioms and phrasal verbs are concerned. It should be noted that [–7, +6] in the Table 2.6 does not necessarily mean that they have been deleted: some common idioms are raised to the headword status. On the sample pages, we found two such examples: **badly off** and **the empty nest.** This can be seen as an editorial effort to help the user to find frequently used idioms more easily, but this decision might confuse the user on whether to look

them up as separate words or as a single phrase in the dictionary. It will be some time before we call this attempt a success or a failure.

(S. Uchida)

## 3. Pronunciation

### 3.1. Overview

Michael Ashby has been the phonetics editor for the *OALD* since the fifth edition was published in 1995. During the same period, he also acted as the phonetics consultant for related Oxford ELT dictionaries, which do not include the *Oxford Dictionary of Pronunciation for Current English* (*ODP*).

The pronunciation provided in the *OALD* may be considered to be slightly more prescriptive than that presented in the *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary*, Second Edition (*LPD*2), with words that are known to have more than one way of pronunciation. There are few differences between the *OALD*6, the paper version of the *OALD*7 and the written information provided in the *OALD*7-CD, and the phonetic transcripts in the *OALD*7-CD are the same as those provided in the paper version of the *OALD*7 except for the instances of the label *NAmE*. It appears that the pronunciation of each of the headwords in the *OALD*7 that were not in the *OALD*6 is transcribed under the same set of principles for the entire dictionary. The recordings provided in the *OALD*7-CD are a valuable source of information; however, the sound icons, particularly the icons for *NAmE* recordings, are sometimes positioned in such places that they could mislead the users.

### 3.2. Explanation for the pronunciation provided in the paper version and the Help section provided in the CD

'Pronunciation and phonetic symbols' is a two-page article in the reference section of the printed version of the dictionary, and it differs from that of the previous edition in only two aspects. At the beginning of the article, the label *NAmE* is introduced in place of *AmE* that was provided in the *OALD*6. It is unclear why the name was changed as the article states that the label *NAmE* stands for American pronunciation and not



North American pronunciation. The other change is with regard to the choice of example sentences that demonstrate the difference between weak and strong forms.

The tables of consonants and vowels, including the phonetic symbols and example words, presented in the article are identical in *OALD*7 and 6. However, the on-line Help section in the CD version does not include a list of the phonetic symbols provided in the dictionary. As a result of this, the written information in the phonetic area between / / might be beyond the understanding of the CD user who does not use the paper version and does not know the phonetic symbols well.

The Help page provided in the *OALD*7-CD addresses pronunciation issues on only two occasions. First, it discusses the process of copying phonetic symbols and pasting them onto a word processing application file. However, this process does not seem to work in reality. Nevertheless, it can be made useful with the help of a table that converts its end products A, D, I, J, N, O, Q, S, T, U, V, Z, %, & and 3 into /ɑ/, /ð/, /ɪ/, /ə/, /ŋ/, /ɔ/, /ɒ/, /ʃ/, /θ/, /ʊ/, /ʌ/, /ʒ/, /ˌ/, /æ/ and /ɜ/, respectively. Second, the word *phonetics* appears in the list of the searchable 'Subject Areas'. It is not possible to use phonetic symbols in the search function, which is a feature available on the *LDOCE*4-CD. If this search function is provided in future editions of the CD, it will be greatly appreciated by the users.

Akasu *et al.* (2001: 8) observed that the *OALD*6 provided the British pronunciation and the American pronunciation with different vowel symbols where necessary, transcribing the vowels in **go** and **hot** as /əʊ; *AmE* oʊ/ and /ɒ; *AmE* ɑː/, respectively. This practice is beneficial and is continued in the *OALD*7. Since the *OALD*7-CD provides each word with both British and American recordings, the *NAmE* pronunciation has become even more accessible to the user. The vowels in question are shown as /🔊 əʊ; *NAmE* 🔊 oʊ/ and /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɑː/ in the CD version. See Section 3.5.1. for the vowels in **gone** and **dog** that are represented in the *OALD*7-CD as /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɔː; ɑː/ and /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɔː/, respectively. The scope of the label *NAmE* is sometimes unclear, for instance, the word **schism** /🔊 ˈskɪzəm; *NAmE* 🔊; 🔊 ˈsɪzəm; *NAmE*/, where /🔊 ˈsɪzəm/ is a British combination of a recording and a script.

Since words like **vase** /🔊 vɑːz; *NAmE* 🔊 veɪs; veɪz/ do not finish the phonetic area with /. . .; *NAmE*/, the presence of the label at the end in the case of **schism** functions as a label that makes the preceding transcript British.

### 3.3. Recorded sounds and their presentation

One of the advantages of CD dictionaries is the availability of recorded sounds, i.e. you can hear a recording by clicking on the sound icon. According to Ashby (personal communication 2005), the recorded pronunciation that is provided in the *OALD* was first introduced in the 1997 CD-ROM version of the *OALD*5 in Britain. He supervised the original recording and all the speakers, who were "either phonetically-trained actors or professional voice performers". The typographical errors in the phonemic transcription found in the process of recording were rectified in the *OALD*6. However, the recordings did not influence his decisions with regard to the written entries of pronunciation: "The recordings were made to match the script — never the other way round" (Ashby personal communication 2005).

In addition to the original recordings, which usually remain as the first recorded variants of the headwords on the *OALD*7-CD, all the words in the *OALD*7-CD have now been recorded by *NAmE* speakers and many have additional British recordings as well. Moreover, there exist new headwords that were not included in the *OALD*6. These new recordings were not supervised by Ashby, and it is in the case of these words that there are mistakes in the positioning of the sound icons or discrepancies between the scripts and the recordings. Some of these are discussed below. For the sake of clarity, it might be desirable to undertake *NAmE* recordings in a more controlled manner and have phonetically-trained speakers record the words.

While some words in the previous CD versions of the *OALD* did not have *AmE* recordings, the *OALD*7-CD has at least one *NAmE* recording for each headword in the main body of the dictionary, although it appears that the latter provides additional recording(s) more readily in British English than in American English. At present, the first instance of the



label *NAmE* in the phonetic area is always followed by a sound icon. As a result, if a word has only one *NAmE* recording and two or more *NAmE* variants in phonetic transcription, it is not always clear to the users which script should be associated with the sound icon. For instance, with regard to the word **absorb** /🔊 əbˈsɔːb; 🔊 -ˈzɔːb; *NAmE* 🔊 -ˈsɔːrb; -ˈzɔːrb/, the *NAmE* sound is actually /əbˈzɔːrb/; therefore, it would be more helpful if the *NAmE* sound icon is placed next to the last transcript. With regard to the word **cloths** /🔊 klɒθs; *NAmE* 🔊 klɔːðz/, below the headword **cloth** where both the recordings end with /θs/, the notation should probably be /🔊 klɒθs; *NAmE* 🔊 klɔːθs; klɔːðz/. Similarly, in the case of the word **direction** /🔊 dəˈrekʃn; *NAmE* 🔊; 🔊 dɪ-; *NAmE*; 🔊 daɪ-; *NAmE*/, for which the only available American recording is heard as /daɪˈrekʃn/, the *NAmE* sound icon should probably be placed after the last instance of the label *NAmE*. The presentation of the *NAmE* recordings and the variants of cloth-words (Wells 1982: 136–37) can also be confusing; it is generally very unclear as to which written variant is the transcription of the recorded form. For a detailed discussion, see Section 3.5.1.

We may safely argue that the advantages of having recorded readings of the headwords on the CD-ROM are that (1) they can help the users who cannot read the phonetic symbols and (2) they can help in understanding the phonetic scripts sufficiently well for more accurate imitation. In order to ensure of the latter, the positioning of some sound icons should be improved. This is because occasionally, there are discrepancies between the recorded forms and the scripts that are closest to them. Each sound icon should introduce the sound in agreement with the script that is placed immediately after it, as the users would naturally associate the two. In case the common British and the common *NAmE* variants are placed far away from each other in order to save space, it is acceptable if the first *NAmE* written variant does not have a sound icon.

### 3.4. British variants

In case there is more than one pronunciation of a word, dictionaries generally list the most recommended variant first and then they may choose to list other forms subsequently. With regard to the words in the

British opinion poll that was conducted for the first edition of *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary* (*LPD*1), Akasu *et al.* (2001: 10) pointed out that the *OALD*6 reflected the reality of British pronunciation. In the case of the *LPD*2, Wells conducted another British opinion poll through post and e-mails and the Internet. This survey involved a larger panel of people and its results are summarized in Wells (1999). We looked up all the 99 words surveyed by Wells in the *OALD*7-CD in order to determine the popularity of the first variant in the *OALD*7's phonetic area. We found that for each of the following 25 words, the *OALD*7's first-choice variant is not the same as the most popular British form that was identified in the survey: **absorb,** with its first variant having /s/, **Asia** *(Minor)* /ʃ/, **associate** (verb) /ʃ/, **association** /ʃ/, **circumstance** (*circumstances,* in the survey) /ə/, **controversy** /ˈ----/, **delirious** /ɪr/, **direction** /ər/, **electronic** /ˌlek/, **ephemeral** /ɪ/, **equinox** /iː/, **halt** /ɔː/, **justifiable** /ˈ-----/, **kilometre** /ˈ----/, **lure** /lʊə(r)/ without /j/, **luxurious** /gʒ/, **necessary** /sər/, **perpetual** /ʧuəl/, **quagmire** /æ/, **really** /iːə/, **regulatory** /ˈ--lə--/, **scallop** /ɒ/, **situation** /ʧu/, **vacation** /ə/, **voluntarily** /ˈ-----/. Among these, seven first choices, i.e. **absorb** /s/, **circumstance** /ə/, **delirious** /ɪr/, **direction** /ər/, **necessary** /sər/, **vacation** /ə/, and **voluntarily** /ˈ-----/ were clearly the more traditional forms than the ones supported by a majority of the people on the panel. With regard to some of these words, the British recordings differ from the scripts and thus agree with the survey results: e.g. **association** is popularly pronounced with /s/. Another example is the pronunciation of the word **really** /🔊 ˈriːəli; *NAmE* 🔊; *BrE* also 🔊 ˈrɪəli; *NAmE*/. In this case, the first British recording appears to have /ɪə/. On the other hand, the second British recording sounds as if it has an /iːə/, while the American recording sounds as if it was being read with /ɪə/. Further, the first scripts of the following three words agree with the survey results; however, their recordings do not. **Caribbean**, a new headword in the *OALD*7 whose first script has the popular stress pattern /ˌ—ˈ--/, is recorded as having the stress pattern /-ˈ---/ in the first (British) recording, which is not as popular. Similarly, **length**, whose first script ends with the most popular ending /ŋθ/, is pronounced with /ŋkθ/, which is not as popular. In addition, the first British script for **longitude** has



/ŋg/; however, the recording that accompanies it is pronounced with /nʤ/, which is less popular and the more traditional pronunciation. Although this disagreement with regard to 25 out of the 99 words may not be a serious one, the *OALD*7 strikes us as being slightly more conservative than the current usage.

### 3.5. North American pronunciation

#### 3.5.1. American low back vowels

As discussed in Section 3.3., the positioning of American sound icons can often be unclear, i.e. when two or more American variants are transcribed and merely one American recording is provided. This occurs in the case of many of the cloth-words, words whose stressed vowel "belongs phonetically with /ɔ/ [*OALD*'s /*NAmE* ɔː/] of the word **thought** in General American but with /ɒ/ of **lot** in RP" (Wells 1982: 136). In the *OALD*7-CD, the vowel in the word **cloth** is represented as /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɔː/, whereas the words **thought** and **lot** are transcribed as /🔊 ɔː; *NAmE* 🔊/ and /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɑː/, respectively. The dictionary also treats the words **gone** and **orange** as cloth-words and represents the vowel as /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɔː; ɑː/. Further, the words **smog**, **wash** and **on** are also treated as possible cloth-words having /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɑː; ɔː/. With regard to the pronunciation of the cloth-words, the written information in the *OALD*7-CD is the same as that provided in the *OALD*6 and 7. Further, the American recordings of these words have already been provided in the previous CD edition of this dictionary. To the best of our knowledge, each of these words has only one American recording.

In Masuda *et al.* (2005: 202), one of the things suggested by the table titled 'How the "cloth-words" are transcribed in *MWCD*9, 10, 11, *AHCD*4, *LPD*2, and *EPD*16', where *AHCD*4 is the fourth edition of *American Heritage College Dictionary*, is that the *MWCD*11 recognizes clear cases of cloth-words, with the vowel transcribed as \ȯ\ or \ȯ, ä\, much more readily than the *LPD*2, not to mention the *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, sixteenth edition (*EPD*16). The *OALD* is similar to the *MWCD* in terms of its willingness to recognize the clear cases of cloth-words. Among the 61 words (one word less than the number of sample words in the above-

mentioned table, since the word **Ross** is not a headword in *OALD*6 or 7), (a) the following 24 words are transcribed as having /ɒ; *NAmE* ɔː/: **because**, **coffin**, **cough**, **loft**, **soft**, **cost**, **Boston** (in the reference page R85 of *OALD*7, sound unavailable), **cross**, **frost**, **loss**, **lost**, **moss**, **broth**, **cloth**, **froth**, **moth**, **boss**, **bog**, **dog**, **strong**, **long**, **song**, **thong** and **wrong**; (b) the following 27 words are transcribed as having /ɒ; *NAmE* ɔː; ɑː/: **cauliflower**, **gone**, **off**, **often**, **coffee**, **offer**, **office**, **gloss**, **scoff**, **log**, **fog**, **frog**, **hog**, **horrid**, **laurel**, **origin**, **warrant**, **warrior**, **warren**, **quarrel**, **quarry**, **orange**, **foreign**, **quarantine**, **throng**, **gong** and **prong**; (c) the following seven words have /ɒ; *NAmE* ɑː; ɔː/: **doff**, **smog**, **tog**, **tongs**, **tomorrow**, **sorrow** and **sorry**; and (d) the following three words are transcribed as ordinary lot-words with /ɒ; *NAmE* ɑː/: **clog**, **jog** and **wog**. It is noteworthy that although the previous CD version did not have *AmE* recordings for all the headwords, it had recordings for the three lot-words. According to the table mentioned above, the total number of words in each of the above-mentioned four groups, i.e. (a), (b), (c) and (d) (with the adjustment for the word **Ross**) is 24, 20, 17 and 0, respectively for the *MWCD*11 and 0, 44, 16 and 1, respectively for the *LPD*2. On the other hand, as mentioned above, the total number of words in each group for the *OALD* is 24, 27, 7 and 3. All the words belonging to group (a) in the *OALD* are transcribed by the *MWCD*11 with \ȯ\ except for **dog** (\ȯ, ä\), **boss** (\ä, ȯ\) and **bog** (\ä, ȯ\). All the words belonging to group (b) in the *OALD* are transcribed with \o, ä\ except for **off**, **often** and **throng** (\ȯ\) and **office**, **gloss**, **scoff**, **orange** and **gong** (\ä, ȯ\). All the ten words in groups (c) and (d) are transcribed with \ä, ȯ\ in the *MWCD*11. However, it is unclear which dictionary — *OALD* or *MWCD* — provides the pronunciation that is closer to the real usage.

Listening to the recorded American pronunciations of the cloth-words provided in the *OALD*7-CD can be extremely interesting. It is possible that the clear and not so clear cases of cloth-words might have been read by speakers whose vowels in **thought** and **lot** have merged, possibly rendering the difference in the notation irrelevant. However, it is impossible for the dictionary users to decipher this merger by merely listening to the recordings. If we wish to accurately transcribe them phonetically or



phonemically, it is probably necessary to compare the recordings of different words with low vowels read by each speaker. Nevertheless, many American recordings of the words with a *NAmE* script with /ɔː/ have the vowel quality almost as open as — or in some cases, clearly more open than — the British reading of /ɒ/ in the same words; however, they still sound as if they are rounded with slightly less lip-rounding than the British sound. Thus, the qualities of the British and American vowels with regard to the words **boss** /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɔː/ and **strong** /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɔː/ are nearly the same, whereas the American vowel in the word **orange** /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɔː; ɑː/ actually sounds higher than the British vowel, which agrees with the original quality of the symbols [ɒ] and [ɔ]. Moreover, The American vowels in **strong** /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɔː/, **sorry** /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɑː; ɔː/ and **jog** /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɑː/ actually sound extremely similar. This suggests that at least in the case of **jog,** the American transcript should probably be /*NAmE* 🔊 ɑː; ɔː/ or /*NAmE* 🔊 ɔː; ɑː/. By listening to the recordings of the words **sorrow** /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɑː; ɔː/ and **cauliflower** /🔊 ɒ; *NAmE* 🔊 ɔː; ɑː/, we can safely conclude that the American vowels in both the words correspond to the second scripts. In summary, in order to use the American sounds of cloth-words as a guide for understanding the phonetic transcription, it is important that the users have some background information on this complex reality.

The pronunciation of the word **water** is transcribed by the *OALD*7-CD as /🔊 'wɔːtə(r); *NAmE* 🔊; *NAmE* also 🔊 'wɑːt-; *NAmE*/. However, this is a rare case where the dictionary might be seen as acknowledging the merger of the vowel phonemes of **thought** and **lot**. Incidentally, the two American recordings are associated with the wrong scripts; thus, either the recordings or the transcripts should be repositioned accordingly. Other words with the vowel of **thought** have no American variants transcribed with the vowel of **lot**. The previous CD edition did not have *AmE* recordings for **water** and many other words with RP /ɔː/.

### 3.5.2. Yod-dropping

The words **tune**, **due** and **new** are transcribed similarly in the *OALD*6 and 7, i.e. as /tjuːn; *NAmE* tuːn/, /djuː; *NAmE* duː/ and /njuː; *NAmE*

nuː/, respectively. The two editions show that the yod-dropping also occurs in post-nuclear positions such as in the words **altitude**, **negritude**, **gratitude**, **latitude**, **magnitude** and **solitude**. With regard to the American recordings of the last four words as well as the words **new** and **news**, a slight trace of yod is heard, although it is not as clear as that in the British recordings. This reminds us of the fact that the real pronunciation is not as clear as in the dictionaries.

### 3.5.3. The post-nuclear full vowels

The treatment of the pronunciation of the suffixes -ary, -ery, -ory and -mony with regard to American pronunciation remains the same in the *OALD*7 and 6. For instance, all the penultimate syllables in **dictionary**, **stationary**, **dormitory** and **ceremony** have strong vowels in *NAmE*, whereas their vowels are weak in RP. Although there may be some scope for a debate on the phonemic statuses of the vowels before /r/ in -ary, -ery and -ory, the American recordings of this group of words have stronger stress as compared with the British readings.

### 3.5.4. Other words with British and American contrasts

With regard to the groups of words listed by Akasu *et al.* (2001: 9), British-American contrasts are evident, with the same information in *OALD*6 and 7, in the scripts for **asphalt**, **controversy**, **herb**, **ice cream**, **laboratory**, **leisure**, **lever**, **lieutenant**, **magazine**, **missile**, **privacy**, **route**, **schedule**, **squirrel**, **suggest**, **tomato**, **vase**, **curry**, **hurry**, **orange** and **version**, while British-American contrasts for **ballet** and words beginning with **anti-** and **semi-** are yet to be transcribed. Among the words with British-American contrasts, there exist certain cases in which the recording does not agree with the script — the American reading of the word **docile** /🔊 ˈdəʊsaɪl; *NAmE* 🔊 ˈdɑːsl/ is actually /ˈdɑːsaɪl/. In this case, the second syllable is slightly more weakened than that in the British reading. In the case of the word **route** /🔊 ruːt; *NAmE* 🔊; *NAmE* also 🔊 raʊt; *NAmE*/, where the last label is redundant, both the *NAmE* speakers read the word as /raʊt/. In the case of the word **vase** /🔊 vɑːz; *NAmE* 🔊 veɪs; veɪz/, the *NAmE* sound icon should be associated



with the second *NAmE* form. In the American recordings, unlike the scripts, the vowels in the second syllables of **anti-**, **antibiotic**, **anticlockwise**, **anti-Semitic**, **semi-** and **semicircular** are long i /aɪ/. In the case of the American recording for **ballet,** the primary stress is on the last syllable and the pronunciation is not recognized in writing. The American recording for the word **schismatic** /🔊 skɪzˈmætɪk; *NAmE* 🔊; 🔊 sɪzˈmætɪk; *NAmE*/ is actually /sɪzˈmætɪk/; therefore, the sound icon should be placed accordingly. There is no such incongruity with regard to the word **schism** /🔊 ˈskɪzəm; *NAmE* 🔊; 🔊 ˈsɪzəm; *NAmE*/. Further, the *OALD*6 and 7 do not recognize the structural change of the **marry-merry** merger.

## 3.6. Weak forms and contracted forms

The previous CD version of the *OALD* was rather interesting in that it recorded the pronunciation of many function words in their weak forms, not in citation forms. The weak forms are usually the most commonly heard forms and they are typically with a weak or monophthongized (smoothed) vowel. In the following discussion, we examine the words with weak form(s) and contracted forms presented in Collins and Mees (2003: 17–18).

If a word has both weak and strong forms, the *OALD*7-CD lists the weak form as the first variant in the phonetic entry and the information provided regarding the pronunciation of function words with weak forms appears to be the same as in the paper editions of the *OALD*7 and 6. However, at least one American recording for each of these function words is now available in the *OALD*7-CD and some of the words have additional British recordings in strong and weak forms as well.

Just as in the case of other groups of words, the positioning of the speaker icon in *NAmE* is sometimes inaccurate; consequently, the user tends to associate the sounds with wrong phonetic notations. With regard to the words **a**, **an**, **the**, **and**, **as**, **than**, **at**, **for**, **to**, **are**, **had**, **can**, **could**, **shall**, **should** and **must**, the only or the first American recording is for the strong form; however, its icon is placed in the area that is reserved for the weak forms. Similarly, the American reading of the word **our**, for

which the icon is placed in the weak form area, appears to actually be the non-smoothed strong form. Since the monophthongization of this word is a feature of British pronunciation, the icon for the American recording should be in the strong form area.

With regard to the word **has**, the recording next to the label 'strong form' is in fact the third possible weak form. The American reading of the short form **'d** for **would** is incorrectly recorded as /diː/. The American recording for the word **wasn't** /🔊 ˈwɒznt; *NAmE* 🔊; *NAmE* also ˈwʌznt; *NAmE*/ is actually the restressed form /ˈwʌznt/. Therefore, if the *NAmE* speaker does not make another recording of /ˈwɔːznt/ (if not /ˈwɑːznt/, the natural American counterpart of /ˈwɒznt/) to be incorporated into /🔊 ˈwɒznt; *NAmE* 🔊 ˈwɔːznt; *NAmE* also 🔊 ˈwʌznt/, the pronunciation entry should probably be changed to /🔊 ˈwɒznt; *NAmE* 🔊 ˈwʌznt/.

### 3.7. Stress

Possibly because there was a lenient approach towards the new recording made available for *OALD7*, some of the polysyllabic words have double-stressed readings. For instance, the American recordings for the words **magazine** /🔊 ˌmægəˈziːn; *NAmE* 🔊 ˈmægəziːn/ and **weekend** /🔊 ˌwiːkˈend; *NAmE* 🔊 ˈwiːkend/ actually display double-stressed readings by probably the same speaker, not committing himself to the exact location of the primary stress. With regard to the word **contribute** /🔊 kənˈtrɪbjuːt; *NAmE* 🔊; *BrE* also 🔊 ˈkɒntrɪbjuːt; *NAmE*/, the American recording of the word is vague and probably closer to /ˈkɑːntrɪbjuːt/ — the American counterpart of the second British script /ˈkɒntrɪbjuːt/, while the British recording demonstrates the two stress patterns clearly. In the American script for the word **antioxidant,** the primary stress is on the third syllable as in the British script. However, the American speaker reads the word in a misleading manner by pronouncing the first syllable with the secondary stress at a pitch that is higher than that used for the third syllable with the primary stress. Further, it is to the disadvantage of the user that most of the expressions with space/hyphen breaks such as **ice cream** and **drag-and-drop** do not have recorded sounds. Since some of these expressions have British-American contrasts and they can be confusing to the users, their future recordings would be greatly appreciated.



What we observed in the American recording of the word **antioxidant** applies to some British readings; the British readings that were recently recorded for the *OALD7*-CD fail to meet the standard set by the pronunciation editor Michael Ashby when the original recordings were made. With regard to a new headword **PDA** /🔊 ˌpiːdiːˈeɪ; *NAmE* 🔊/ in this edition, Ashby states that "the [RP] speaker uses a high pitch on the secondary stress. It would be better for learners if a low pitch were used. Otherwise, I think there's a danger that some might mishear the accent pattern" (personal communication 2005). Similarly, other new headwords such as **fashionista** /🔊 ˌfæʃnˈiːstə; *NAmE* 🔊/, **tankini** /🔊 tæŋˈkiːni; *NAmE* 🔊/ and **pashmina** /🔊 pæʃˈmiːnə; *NAmE* 🔊/ are read in such a manner that the peaks of pitch occur prior to the peaks of stress. None of the American recordings of these four headwords mentioned above have such a misleading pattern.

### 3.8. Pronunciation of the new headwords

The following are some of the new headwords provided in the *OALD7* — not provided in *OALD6* — that were found during the preparation for Section 2.3.1.: **A-list, bhangra, bird flu, bloatware, blog, Bollywood, brutalism, Cantopop, cybersquatting, drag-and-drop, fascia, fashionista, googol, greening, offshoring, pashmina, tankini** and **WAP**. A comparison of the British and American readings of **bhangra** /🔊 ˈbɑːŋgrə; *NAmE* 🔊/ reveals that the British sound is true to the script, whereas the American sound is actually /ˈbæŋgrə/, which results in the word being a member of the group of ask-words. When we listen to the American reading of the word **blog** /🔊 blɒg; *NAmE* 🔊 blɑːg/, the vowel sounds like [ɔː]; on the other hand, the phonetic information with regard to the word **log** is /🔊 lɒg; *NAmE* 🔊 lɔːg; lɑːg/, where the American recording appears to have [ɑː]. Although different speakers read the cloth-words differently, the word **blog** might as well have both the vowels transcribed just as they are in the case of the word **log**. The word **googol** /🔊 ˈguːgɒl; *NAmE* 🔊 -gɔːl/ is clearly a cloth-word both in script and recording. Further, although **fascia** /🔊 ˈfeɪʃə; *NAmE* 🔊/ is a *BrE* word

and not a *NAmE* one, the *NAmE* recording appears to have three syllables [ˈfeɪʃiə]. Moreover, although **WAP** is transcribed as /🔊 wæp; *NAmE* 🔊/, the actual American recording is /ˌdʌbljueɪˈpiː/. Finally, the word **offshoring** has no recordings, while the word **cybersquatting** does. Despite these minor instances noted here it appears that the new headwords in the *OALD*7 are transcribed just as the rest of the words in the dictionary.

(Y. Shitara-Matsuo)

## 4. Definition

Definitions from *OALD*6 and those from *OALD*7 are examined in this section. Our preliminary survey has revealed that there are few major changes made between the two editions, and this is also the case with their definitions. Accordingly, only those cases will be discussed where changes made seem worth mentioning.

Before discussing issues of definitions in *OALD*7 it may be worth pointing out that *OALD*7 has deleted from *OALD*6 an explanatory section titled 'Understanding Definitions'. Considering the fact that many learners come across some difficulty in understanding definitions in a monolingual dictionary, it is regrettable that *OALD*7 has deleted the section.

We will begin with some consideration of Oxford 3000, and then move on to sense description and short cuts, the coverage of sense and the labels. As *OALD*7 and *OALD*7-CD are basically the same dictionary in different formats, the following discussions are mainly based on *OALD*7 unless otherwise stated. Most of the examples we are citing are from the sample pages, and, whenever necessary, those from other pages are also given.

### 4.1. Oxford 3000

#### 4.1.1. Outline

*OALD* introduced DV for the first time in 1995, when *OALD*5 appeared. *OALD*6 followed the convention, and claimed to have reduced the number of words in *OALD*5's DV by five hundred. *OALD*7 also employs a DV or its equivalent Oxford 3000, which is not designed for the purpose of defining alone. It is offered as a collection of important words foreign



learners should learn. So far as definitions are concerned, this will be counted as one of the major changes made in this revision.

It has been often pointed out that DVs do not only consist of words easy for foreign learners to comprehend (Herbst 1986: 103). In fact, the majority of the items in a DV are chosen mainly according to their frequency (*LDOCE*1 viii-ix, *MED* 1677), and, in any language, words frequently used are very often polysemous and productive in a sense that they can quite freely combine with each other to form idioms. As a result, less common senses of DV items and idioms consisting of them are used as part of DV, which cannot be legitimated (Minamide 1995). To make matters worse, the idea of DV is sometimes closely connected with dictionary makers' commercialism, so that they tend to make their DV look smaller and well designed even by concealing exceptional uses of their DV (Kawamura 2000: 133). As long as dictionaries are basically commercial products, they are not to blame. The problem is that they sometimes seek to avoid the exceptions by including in their DVs such items useful for defining other words rather than those easy to understand (Ayto 1984: 53–4), which naturally makes rather arbitrary their criteria for selecting the DV items.

Considering the problems with DVs, Oxford 3000 appears completely different from traditional DVs. It is offered as useful vocabulary to learn, selected according to the following three criteria: (1) frequency in the BNC and the Oxford Corpus Collection; (2) whether each item is used in a variety of contexts, not restricted to a particular genre; and (3) their familiarity among native speakers (R99). It is also to be mentioned that items useful for defining other words are likely to help foreign learners to express their ideas more effectively, as the Oxford lexicographers also explain (*ibid.*). If a foreign learner learns such words from the definitions, it can help them to improve their encoding skills (cf. Iwasaki 2002: 138–42). Moreover, it seems that the Oxford lexicographers have taken a more flexible attitude towards Oxford 3000. They use eighty three words of 'Language Study Terms' (R99 and 113) together with Oxford 3000 as part of their DV. While too prescriptive an application of DVs can result in a very awkward definition, this new approach might help them avoid such

problematic definitions. There is also evidence to suggest that *OALD*7 has come to apply its DV to bracketed explanations in the definitions, though *OALD*6 does not (see 4.2; also Akasu *et al.* 2001: 15). In the following subsections we will examine items in Oxford 3000 and how it actually works in dictionary definitions.

### 4.1.2. Size of Oxford 3000

A comparison was made between *OALD*6's DV and Oxford 3000 concerning all the items beginning with the letters A, D, G, M, P or T. The results are shown below:

Table 4.1 The number of items in *OALD*6's DV and Oxford 3000

| | [+6, –7] | [–6, +7] |
|---|---|---|
| A | 12 (180) | 75 (261) |
| D | 10 (155) | 50 (178) |
| G | 11 (80) | 29 (100) |
| M | 11 (119) | 54 (161) |
| P | 25 (238) | 74 (283) |
| T | 16 (161) | 34 (182) |
| Total | 85 (933) | 316 (1165) |

Notes: (1) [+6, –7] and [–6, +7] signify those items which appear only in *OALD*6's DV and those only in Oxford 3000, respectively; (2) Numbers in parentheses indicate the total number of DV items listed under the letter concerned; (3) Sometimes the arrangement of the items in Oxford 3000 are misleading; for example, it indents **Miss** (title) and puts it under **miss** (verb). Although it seems that they are counted as one word, they should be dealt with as two distinct items. When showing the numbers of items, therefore, we count each indented item except abbreviations (e.g. **Apr.** for **April**).

Although both *OALD*6 and *OALD*7 claim to have the same number of words in their DVs: 3000, it is clear from the table that Oxford 3000 has introduced quite a few new items. Interestingly, there is also a wide gap between the total numbers of items in [+6, –7] and [–6, +7], a difference of 232. There is a possibility that Oxford 3000 is far larger than *OALD*6's DV despite the number it claims.



Let us then examine more closely [+6, –7] and [–6, +7] items under the letter A:

[+6, –7]
*abbreviation, adjective, administrative, adverb, advertising, air force, American football, amusement, ancestor, arch, architecture* and *ash*

[–6, +7]
*abandon, abandoned, abroad, absence, absent, absolute, absolutely, abuse, accent, access, accompany, acknowledge, acquire, actress, ad, additional, adequate, adequately, adopt, agency, agent, aid, alarm, alarming, alarmed, all right, ally, allied, alongside, alter, alternative, alternatively, altogether, a.m., amaze, amazing, amazed, ambition, ambulance, an, analysis, annoyed, annual, annually, anti-, anticipate, anyway, apologize, apparent, apparently, appeal, application, appoint, appointment, appreciate, approach, approximate, April, arise, arms, arrival, aside, aside from, assist, assistance, associate, assume, assure, attached, attempted, attorney, August, awful, awfully* and *awkwardly*

A glance will give us the impression that [–6, +7] items are as a whole common words, not containing terms rather technical like *adjective* or *adverb* in [+6, –7]. This is at least partly because Oxford 3000 is not only DV but is expected to act as a list of important vocabulary for foreign learners. This may be why *air force* and *American football* have been excluded. Culture-specific words like these are naturally not given priority for that purpose. Furthermore, dictionary definitions are basically universal, so any word specific to a particular culture should not be part of DV. Apart from items under the letter A, however, it is to be noted that some basic words like numbers and ordinal numbers (e.g. *ten, third, twelve* and *twenty*) have been also excluded, though *two* for instance is actually used in the definition of *bilingual*.

It is also interesting to find as many as three linguistic terms among only twelve [+6, –7] items: *abbreviation, adjective* and *adverb*. Still, this does not mean that they are not included in *OALD*7's DV because they are included in 'Language Study Terms', which are also used as part of the DV (R99). *OALD*7 uses a far larger DV than *OALD*6 does. Considering the fact that the linguistic terms will be worth learning if a learner receives

formal instruction in English, a question may naturally emerge: why have the Oxford lexicographers split their DV into Oxford 3000 and 'Language Study Terms'? It is also questionable why they insist that Oxford 3000 only contains 3000 items, even by employing a rather tricky way of arrangement (see Note (3) for Table 4.1). It may be fair to say that *OALD7* cannot escape from the commercialism; the smaller DV they claim to employ, the easier their definitions look, which will affect the sales of their dictionary (see Section 4.1.1.).

### 4.1.3. How Oxford 3000 is used in definitions

While definitions from *OALD6* and those from *OALD7* are usually identical, the introduction of Oxford 3000 sometimes affects their wordings. Take **cushion** and **parish clerk**, for example:

**cushion** *verb* **1**
*OALD6*: to soften the effect of a fall or hit
*OALD7*: to make the effect of a fall or hit less severe

**parish clerk**
*OALD6*: an official who does administrative work for a church in a particular area
*OALD7*: an official who organizes the affairs of a church in a particular area

As a result of excluding *soften* and *administrative* from Oxford 3000, they are rephrased accordingly. These changes will sometimes affect the readability of definitions, but we may assume that they have been made almost automatically with the replacement of *OALD6*'s DV with Oxford 3000, not reflecting the change in the lexicographers' defining policies.

More importantly, *OALD7* restricts senses of a DV item as well. *OALD7* identifies the sense in use if it uses the item in a less common sense:

**plane** *verb* **1**
*OALD6*: to make a piece of wood smoother or flatter with a plane
*OALD7*: to make a piece of wood smoother or flatter with a PLANE *n.* (4)



While *OALD6* use *plane* in ordinary type, *OALD7* puts it in small capitals and provides the user with its part of speech and the sense number in the work. In this case, the user does not have to look through the entry of the noun, so this will be a positive step forward. The same goes for words such as **assistant ship**, **brand** (*verb* sense 2), **spinner** (sense 1), **will** (*verb* sense 3), **wing nut** and **punchbowl** below:

**punchbowl**
*OALD6*: a bowl in which punch (= the drink) is served
*OALD7*: a bowl used for serving PUNCH *n.* (4)

As *punch* is not included in *OALD6*'s DV, it is in ordinary type, but is glossed. On the other hand, *OALD7* again cross-refers the user to its entry with the sense number, though the noun is included in Oxford 3000. *OALD7*'s attempt at controlling senses of a DV item should be welcome, but, in this particular case, it is not clear whether this cross-reference works better than *OALD6*'s gloss. Even if *punch* has its own entry close to the definition of **punchbowl**, the user does not have to bother to look for the definition with *OALD6*'s gloss.

It should be also mentioned that *OALD7*'s use of its DV and non-DV items is sometimes inconsistent; in the definitions of **chunking** and **trill** (*verb* sense 3), *chunk* and *trill* are used in roman type, though they are not part of Oxford 3000. There appears to be some room for improvement in *OALD7*'s use of its DV.

## 4.2. Sense description and short cuts

From our preliminary research we did not find any difference between sense arrangements and short cuts in *OALD6* and *OALD7*, and so comparisons were made between the entries of the following five basic verbs: **come**, **go**, **get**, **make** and **take**. Still, there are only two minor changes in sense 39 of **take**:

*OALD6*
IN FOOTBALL **39** (of a person playing football, etc.) to kick or throw the ball from a fixed or agreed position

*OALD7*
▶ IN SPORTS **39** (of a player in a sports game) to kick or throw the ball from a fixed or agreed position

FOOTBALL in the short cut in *OALD6* is replaced with SPORTS in *OALD7*, and *a person playing football, etc.* is also replaced with *a player in a sports game*. So long as this sense is not always restricted to football, these replacements may be welcome.

Apart from **take**, similar changes were made at this revision; for instance, in the entries for **back** (*noun* sense 8), **defend** (*verb* sense 3), **goal** (*noun* sense 1), *in football, hockey, etc.* is changed to *in sports*. On the other hand, when a particular sense of a headword is restricted to a particular sport game, say, football, they are still specified (e.g. **corner** (*noun* sense 8) and **kick** (*verb* sense 4)). Let us look at the entries for **corner** in *OALD6* and *OALD7*:

*OALD6*
(in sports such as football and hockey)

*OALD7*
(in sports such as football (SOCCER) and HOCKEY)

It is important to note here that *OALD7* puts a gloss (SOCCER) to *football* perhaps because with the worldwide dominance of American English; it can be sometimes confused with American football. Moreover, it should not be overlooked that *OALD7* prints *soccer* and *hockey* in small capitals. As they are not part of Oxford 3000, this might suggest that the Oxford lexicographers have come to apply their DV to such bracketed explanations in definitions as well. These changes made with short cuts and bracketed explanations in *OALD7* could be counted as improvements, however small.

### 4.3. Coverage of sense

On the sample pages there are 178 headwords common to both editions but there is only one difference concerning their coverage of senses; the sense below is not included in *OALD6*:



**live²**
*OALD7*: ▶ INTERNET **9** (of an electronic link) functioning correctly, so that it is connected to another document or page on the Internet

Considering the worldwide development in computer technology in recent times, we then looked up the following thirty items in *OALD6* and *OALD7* for their senses as used mainly in the field of computing:

Table 4.2 Computing words in *OALD6* and *OALD7*

| Headwords | *OALD6* | *OALD7* | headwords | *OALD6* | *OALD7* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| address (2) | × | ✓ | macro | ϕ | ✓ |
| ADSL | ϕ | ✓ | memory (5) | ✓ | ✓ |
| application (5) | ✓ | ✓ | menu (2) | ✓ | ✓ |
| attachment (6) | ✓ | ✓ | mouse (2) | ✓ | ✓ |
| bookmark (2) | ✓ | ✓ | MP3 | ϕ | ✓ |
| Broadband | ϕ | ✓ | open *v.* (14) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Browser (1) | ✓ | ✓ | packet (5) | ✓ | ✓ |
| buffer *n.* (3) | × | ✓ | paste *v.* (3) | ✓ | ✓ |
| chat *v.* (2) | × | ✓ | patch *n.* (9) | × | ✓ |
| cookie (3) | × | ✓ | scan *v.* (5) | × | ✓ |
| corrupt *v.* (3) | ✓ | ✓ | server (1) | ✓ | ✓ |
| crash *n.* (4) | ✓ | ✓ | site *n.* (3) | ✓ | ✓ |
| domain (3) | × | ✓ | spam (2) | ✓ | ✓ |
| export *v.* (3) | × | ✓ | visit *v.* (2) | × | ✓ |
| import *v.* (2) | × | ✓ | worm *n.* (4) | × | ✓ |

Notes: (1) ϕ = words not contained in the edition specified. × = those words which are contained in the edition specified, but that particular sense is not covered ✓ = words whose computing sense is contained; (2) The numbers in parentheses indicate the sense number in *OALD7*.

It is clear from the table that even if a headword is contained in both *OALD6* and *OALD7*, the latter covers a wider range of computing senses. The following sense of **domain**, for instance, is only covered in *OALD7*:

3 (*computing*) a set of websites on the Internet which end with the same group of letters, for example '.com', '.org'

Although *OALD*6 and *OALD*7 are quite similar in their coverages of the senses on the sample pages, the latter covers a wider range of senses at least concerning the field of computing. Apart from computing, we cannot find any remarkable changes between the two editions.

### 4.4. Labels

There are several changes in the lists of labels in *OALD*6 and *OALD*7; for instance, *NorthE* and ⚠ have changed to *NEngE* and *taboo* respectively. While these changes are only concerned with their notations, there are the following new labels: *CanE* (Canadian English), *EAfrE* (East African English), *IndE* (Indian English), *NAmE* (North American English), *NEngE* (English from Northern England), *SAfrE* (South African English), *SEAsianE* (South-East Asian English), *US* (English from the United States), *WAfrE* (West African English), *WelshE* (Welsh English).[1] On the other hand, *AmE*, *rare*, *spoken* and *written* seem to have been deleted in *OALD*7.

Concerning the arrangements of labels (inside the front covers) in *OALD*6 and *OALD*7, *OALD*6 lists labels and their abbreviations in alphabetical order; however, they are reorganized in *OALD*7, with regional labels separated from others, which makes it easier for the user to comprehend their relationships.

It is also to be mentioned that *OALD*7-CD lists labels more thoroughly than *OALD*7. While *OALD*7 only lists labels referring to varieties of English (e.g. *BrE*, *NZE*, *ScotE*) and register (e.g. *approving*, *formal*, *informal*), *OALD*7-CD lists those concerning etymology (e.g. *Japanese*, *Latin*, *Spanish*) and subject areas (e.g. *computing*, *economics*, *music*) as well.[2] Even considering the space limitation in the paper version, *OALD*7 should have listed them more exhaustively insofar as it also uses them in its text.

In the following subsections, we will consider in turn deleted labels, newly introduced labels and problems with *OALD*7's use of labels. As there are few changes made between *OALD*6 and *OALD*7 concerning their uses of labels as well, we will mainly discuss those cases where changes were made.



#### 4.4.1. Deleted labels

##### 4.4.1.1. *AmE changed into NAmE, US and CanE*

The following four labels have been deleted in *OALD*7: *AmE*, *rare*, *spoken* and *written*. In this revision, *AmE* seems to have been split into *NAmE* and *US*. On the sample pages, there are 14 *AmE* labels in *OALD*6; one of them (**food stamp**) has been changed to *US* and the rest have been changed to *NAmE*. Words mainly used in the United States are marked as *US* and those mainly used in Canada as *CanE*, one of the newly introduced labels in *OALD*7 (cf. the list of abbreviations inside the front cover). When a word or sense is used in both varieties, they are marked as *NAmE*. This may imply that the Oxford lexicographers have come to pay more attention to the varieties of English (see 4.4.2.).

##### 4.4.1.2. *Spoken* and *written*

*Spoken* and *written*, which were new to the sixth edition, seem to have been removed in this revision. Because we did not find enough examples on the sample pages, we looked for examples manually under the letter A, and picked up the first twenty word senses, words, or fixed phrases for each label: **abandon**, **abandoned**, **abandonment**, **abiding**, **ablaze**, **abound**, **above-mentioned**, **accost**, **ache**, **acid**, **acidly**, **additionally**, **adept**, **advent**, **adherent**, **adjoin**, **adroit**, **affection**, **afresh** and **agape** for *written*; and **absolutely**, **I'm afraid**, **again**, **aggro**, **what's . . . in aid of?**, **and all**, **allow me**, **it'll be all right on the night**, **or anything**, **I appreciate it**, **out of the ark**, **don't ask**, **don't ask me**, **I ask you**, **if you ask me**, **can I have your attention please**, **awful** (*adjective* 1 and 2), **backward** and **can't be bad** for *spoken*.

As for *written*, nine out of twenty (**abandoned**, **ablaze**, **abound**, **above-mentioned**, **acid**, **acidly**, **additionally**, **adept** and **advent**) have been deleted, and the rest of them (**abandon**, **abandonment**, **abiding**, **accost**, **ache**, **adherent**, **adjoin**, **adroit**, **affection**, **afresh** and **agape**) have been replaced with *formal*. With regard to *spoken*, thirteen (**absolutely**, **I'm afraid**, **again**, **aggro**, **what's . . . in aid of?**, **allow me**, **I appreciate it**, **it'll be all right on the night**, **don't ask**, **don't ask me**, **I ask you**, **if you ask me**, and **can I have your**

**attention please**) have been removed, and the rest (**and all**, **or anything**, **out of the ark**, **awful** (*adjective* 1 and 2), **backward** and **can't be bad**) have been changed to *informal*.[3)]

Although *written* and *spoken* are often replaced with *formal* and *informal* respectively, they are not just subclasses of *formal* or *informal* as can be seen from the following examples in *OALD6*[4)]:

> **love**
> **lots of love (from)** (*written, informal*) used at the end of a letter to a friend or to sb you love, followed by your name
>
> **son**
> 4 (**my son**) (*spoken, formal*) used by a priest to address a boy or man

We may say from the above examples that *formal* and *informal* cannot always be substitutes for what is covered by *spoken* or *written*. Deletions of them have therefore reduced the amount of information in *OALD7*.

It may be also worth mentioning that *spoken* is often attached to idiomatic expressions in *OALD6*. Since there are quite a few idioms not restricted to spoken English, their omissions may have also reduced the necessary information for a foreign learner.

#### 4.4.1.3. *Rare*

*OALD7* does not contain *rare* in its list of labels, and has deleted the label from the majority of headwords where *OALD6* uses it (e.g. **abusively**, **asperity**, **colloquy**)[5)]. Although rare words may not be very important for foreign learners, their failure to use the label has also reduced the amount of information in *OALD7*.

### 4.4.2. Newly introduced labels

*OALD7* has introduced the following nine labels: *CanE*, *EAfrE*, *IndE*, *NAmE*, *SAfrE*, *SEAsianE*, *US*, *WAfrE* and *WelshE*. What should be noted here is that all of them are those specifying a particular variety of English or dialect, and, in most cases, they are attached to words or senses *OALD7* has introduced in this revision. The following headwords and senses are only contained in *OALD7*:



> **abba**
> (*IndE*) (especially as a form of address) a father
>
> **mandazi**
> (*pl.* **mandazi**) (*EAfrE*) a small cake made of fried DOUGH
>
> **block** *noun*
> 6[C] (*AustralE*) an area of land for building a house on
>
> **college**
> 3[C, U] (*CanE*) a place where you can study for higher or more specialist qualifications after you finish high school

These facts, together with the fact that *OALD7* has split *AmE* into two in order to distinguish varieties in North America, would suggest that *OALD7* has come to pay more attention to varieties of English.

### 4.4.3. Problems with *OALD7*'s use of labels

#### 4.4.3.1. *Dialect*

Both *OALD6* and *OALD7* explain their uses of *dialect* as follows:

> **dialect** describes expressions that are mainly used in particular regions of the British Isles, not including Ireland, Scotland or Wales

One may well wonder why they do not mention dialects on the other side of the Atlantic. More importantly, *dialect* and *BrE* are sometimes used at the same time, which is contradictory to the above explanation. Although **beck** is listed as an example of a headword with *dialect* (inside the front covers), it is also assigned *BrE*. The same goes for *SoctE* at **bonny**:

> **bonny** (also **bonnie**) *adj.*
> (*dialect*, especially *ScotE*) very pretty; attractive

As long as they explicitly explain their criteria for their use of the label, they should be consistent to avoid the user's confusion.

#### 4.4.3.2. *Computing*

It should not be overlooked that *computing* is assigned rather inconsistently:

**buffer** *noun*
3 (*computing*) an area in a computer's memory where data can be stored for a short time

**operating system** *noun*
a set of programs that controls the way a computer works and runs other programs

The label is attached to **buffer** but not to **operating system.** Even if the definition of **operating system** can successfully carry the kinds of information which the label could provide, *OALD*7's inconsistency might reduce the value of the label.

#### 4.4.3.3. Etymological labels

As *OALD*6 does, *OALD*7 employs labels referring to a particular language from which a word or sense in English lexicon derives from, such as *French*, *Japanese*, *Latin* and *Spanish*, preceded by *from*, but one may well wonder why the following definitions are not labeled as such:

**flamenco**
1 [U, C] a fast exciting Spanish dance that is usually danced to music played on a GUITAR
2 [U] the GUITAR music that is played for this dance[6)]

**origami**
[U] the Japanese art of folding paper into attractive shapes

The same goes for **karate**, **shogun**, **sushi**, and **Zen**, to name but a few. Although there are also several cases where *OALD*7 has improved its application of the labels (e.g. **judo** and **kimono**), *OALD*7 should have used the labels in such a way as not to confuse the user (see Section 4.4.3.2.).

(S. Uchida & A. Kawamura)

## 5. Examples

During the last three revisions, the total number of illustrative examples seems to have been in decline. The numbers claimed on the back cover changed from 9,000 (*OALD*5) to 8,500 (*OALD*7). The detailed analysis of *OALD*6 by Akasu *et al.* (2001) reports that the number of phrase examples was cut down in order to create space for more sentence examples, but that there was little overall decline in the number of examples altogether. However, in *OALD*7, where the illustrative examples seem to have undergone no substantial revision, both the phase and sentence examples had to be sacrificed, presumably for the addition of headwords. Although the entry for **commemorate** in *OALD*6 has three sentence examples: *A series of movies will be shown to commemorate the 30th anniversary of his death*; *Many of the people and places in the book have been commemorated in the names of streets*; and *A plaque commemorates the battle.*, in *OALD*7 the second example has been deleted. Similarly, while in *OALD*6 the entry for **commemorative** has two phrase examples: *commemorative stamps/medals*, in *OALD*7 the second collocation has been deleted. Arguably, these deleted examples could have been retained in *OALD*7-CD as this would not have required so much memory. Most of the examples are the same, if not deleted or shortened, as the ones in the previous edition, but more collocations are typographically distinguished in the new edition. A case in point is the collocations for the adjective *commanding* (of sense 2): *a commanding figure/presence/tone/voice.* These are not typographically distinguished in *OALD*6, but they are all printed in bold, though *tone* has been deleted, in *OALD*7.

With the *OALD*7-CD, users can use a separate window called 'Example sentences' (see Figure 7.1) to refer not only to the examples provided under the entry being looked up, but also to all the other examples in the dictionary that contain the word being looked up. However, this feature does not work with run-ons, and users have to use 'Advanced Search' in order to see whether there are some (more) examples (see Section 7.3.). The advantage of 'Example Sentences' is that users may have a clearer idea of the usage of the headword by going through more examples, but this only works when the word being looked up appears somewhere else in the dictionary text. Moreover, the examples shown in 'Example Sentences' are not sorted according to word senses, so that it becomes quite time-consuming to go through them and find the ones that are relevant. Another weakness here is that there are too many examples to illustrate the same word sense(s), but too few to illustrate

other senses.

In our user research, 'Example Sentences' does not rank as one of the most highly evaluated features. The majority of the participants see the usefulness of having more examples, but at the same time quite a few of them regard it as time-consuming (see Section 8.10.).

There are also some other minor shortcomings. As the operation to collect examples seems to be merely automatic, homonyms are not distinguished. By looking up **bid**[1] ("to offer to pay a particular price for sth, especially at an AUCTION"), the first example you get in 'Example Sentences' is *I bid you adieu.*, which actually illustrates **bid**[2] ("to say 'good morning', etc. to sb"). Glosses to supplement illustrative examples do not get distinguished, either. 'Example Sentences' for the adjective *likely* begins with *an active volcano* (= likely to erupt), which is an example of the adjective *active*, and then lists '*I'm sure he'll help.*' '*Don't bank on it* (= it is not likely to happen).', which is an example of the verb *bank.*

In a printed dictionary, severe restrictions on space may force lexicographers to cut down the number of examples, if, for instance, they want to add more headwords. In a CD-ROM dictionary, such restrictions should be less of a problem; rather than showing the example sentences that include the headword being consulted from the whole text of the dictionary in a separate window, it would therefore be of greater help to have more examples in the main window. The noun *insignificance* in the derivative section of **insignificant** is illustrated by one example: *Her own problems paled into insignificance beside this terrible news.* By using 'Advanced Search', users can find one more example to illustrate the collocation *fade into insignificance*: *All other issues fade into insignificance compared with the struggle for survival.* With a little more careful design, this could simply have been incorporated into the main entry. (Y. Komuro)

## 6. Notes on Usage

*OALD*6 provides various types of usage notes to strengthen its encoding function as a learner's dictionary: 'Which Word?', 'Vocabulary Building', 'Grammar Point', 'British/American', and 'More About', all of which are retained in the seventh edition with some changes to the entries.



Also, 'Which Word?' notes in *OALD*6 are re-grouped into 'Which Word?' and 'Synonyms', which is a newly introduced category in *OALD*7. *OALD*7-CD shows these notes in the main text in the same way as in the paper edition. *OALD*6 and *OALD*7 also provide etymological information at some entries, and it features largely in the *OALD*7-CD as 'Word Origin'. We will begin with an analysis of 'Which Word?' and 'Synonyms' and move on to discuss 'Vocabulary Building'. As for the others, they will be examined only quantitatively since few changes are observed in quality. In the following sections, all the examples will be taken from *OALD*7-CD (The presentation is slightly different from that of the paper edition).

### 6.1. 'Which Word?' and 'Synonyms'

*OALD*6 provides 138 'Which Word?' notes and explains that the purpose is to "show the differences between pairs of words that are often confused or groups of words with similar meanings" (1528). In *OALD*7, confusing pairs of words and synonymous words are now treated under different headings: 'Which Word?' and 'Synonyms' (R93-R94). As a result, 25 'Which Word?' notes have been changed into 'Synonyms' with some modification. There are also some deleted notes such as 'allow/let/permit' at **allow**, 'British/English/Briton/Brit' at **British** and 'customer/client' at **customer**. *OALD*7 has a total of 71 'Which Word?' notes and 213 'Synonyms' notes.

Apparently, both notes are designed to help users to produce correct English, and typically, 'Which Word?' seems to be designed to help users to choose the right word among words they are likely to misuse by providing more detailed stylistic and semantic information, while 'Synonyms' seems to be designed to help users to choose the most appropriate word among synonymous words and use it correctly by providing patterns and collocations. Let us look at an example of 'Which Word?' at **borrow**:

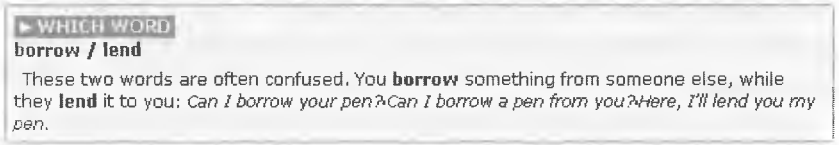


Figure 6.1 Which Word?: borrow/lend

SYNONYMS
**afraid**

**frightened ◆ scared ◆ alarmed ◆ paranoid ◆ apprehensive**

All these words describe feeling or showing fear.

**afraid** [not before noun] feeling fear; worried that sth bad might happen: *There's nothing to be afraid of.* • *Aren't you afraid (that) you'll fall?*

**frightened** feeling fear; worried that sth bad might happen: *a frightened child* • *She was frightened that the glass would break.*

**scared** (*rather informal*) feeling fear; worried that sth bad might happen: *The thieves got scared and ran away.*

**afraid, frightened or scared?**

**Scared** is more informal, more common in speech, and often describes small fears. **Afraid** cannot come before a noun. It can only take the preposition *of*, not *about*. If you are **afraid / frightened / scared of** sb/sth/doing sth or **afraid / frightened / scared to** do sth, you think you are in danger of being hurt or suffering in some way. If you are **frightened / scared about** sth/doing sth, it is less a fear for your personal safety and more a worry that sth unpleasant might happen.

**alarmed** [not before noun] afraid that sth dangerous or unpleasant might happen: *She was alarmed at the prospect of travelling alone.*

**paranoid** (*rather informal*) afraid or suspicious of other people and believing that they are trying to harm you, in a way that is not reasonable: *You're just being paranoid.*

**apprehensive** (*rather formal*) slightly afraid that sth bad might happen: *I was a little apprehensive about the effects of what I had said.*

**Don't be** afraid / frightened / scared / alarmed.

frightened / scared / paranoid / apprehensive **about** ...

afraid / frightened / scared / apprehensive **that** ...

afraid / frightened / scared **of** spiders, etc.

to **feel / look / sound** afraid / frightened / scared / alarmed / apprehensive

to **get** frightened / scared / paranoid

afraid / frightened / scared **to** open the door, etc.

Figure 6.2 Synonyms: afraid

The note explains the difference between *borrow* and *lend*, which are not similar in meaning, but are often confused by learners.

Regarding 'Synonyms', there are mainly two kinds of formats. One is to begin with a sentence like "these words all describe/mean ~", describe each word, and then offer patterns and collocations. In the paper edition, the heading 'Pattern and Collocation' is given to mark a series of frequently used collocations of the words, which *OALD*7-CD should have maintained.

Figure 6.2 above is the 'Synonyms' note of the first type given at **afraid**, comparing *afraid* with five synonymous adjectives: *frightened*,



*scared*, *alarmed*, *paranoid*, and *apprehensive*. Each of them is cross-referred to the note at its own entry. Although the definitions of *scared*, *paranoid* and *apprehensive* at their own entries do not give any style label, they are stylistically marked as "rather informal" in the note. This kind of distinctive feature may be of help to learners to make the best choice.

The second format is to start with collocations and then give the descriptions of the words. The following serves as an example:

SYNONYMS
**continuous / continual**

These adjectives are frequently used with the following nouns:

| **continuous** ~ | **continual** ~ |
|---|---|
| process | change |
| employment | problems |
| flow | updating |
| line | questions |
| speech | pain |
| supply | fear |

**Continuous** describes something that continues without stopping.

**Continual** usually describes an action that is repeated again and again.

The difference between these two words is now disappearing. In particular, **continual** can also mean the same as **continuous** and is used especially about undesirable things: *Life was a continual struggle for them.* However, **continuous** is much more frequent in this sense.

Figure 6.3 Synonyms: continuous/continual

This type of 'Synonyms' is also found at **become**, **classic**, **condition** and **naked**.

It should also be noted that there have been changes in where the notes are placed. For example, in *OALD*6 **comprise** has a 'Which Word?' note dealing with *comprise*, *compose*, *consist of*, *constitute*, *make up*, and *include*, but in *OALD*7, the note has been changed into a 'Synonyms' and moved to **consist**. This may have resulted from the consideration of frequency, as is stated in the explanation of 'Synonyms': "(t)he words in each group are given order of frequency (*sic*) — from the most common to the least common" (R94). This is a minor change, but can be considered as a positive step forward in terms of user-friendliness.

### 6.2. 'Vocabulary Building'

Whereas *OALD*6 has 26 'Vocabulary Building' notes, *OALD*7 contains 22[1]. The decrease in number can be explained by the fact that the 'Vocabulary Building' notes at **job**, **look**, **see** and **work** are changed into 'Synonyms' in the process of revision from *OALD*6 to *OALD*7. The aim of 'Vocabulary Building' is explained as follows: "(t)hese notes help you to choose more interesting and varied words to use and so increase your vocabulary" (R93). It can be said that 'Vocabulary Building' is a device designed to help users to produce *better* English, while 'Which Word?' and 'Synonyms' are meant to help them to produce correct English. Let us have a look at the note given at **good**:

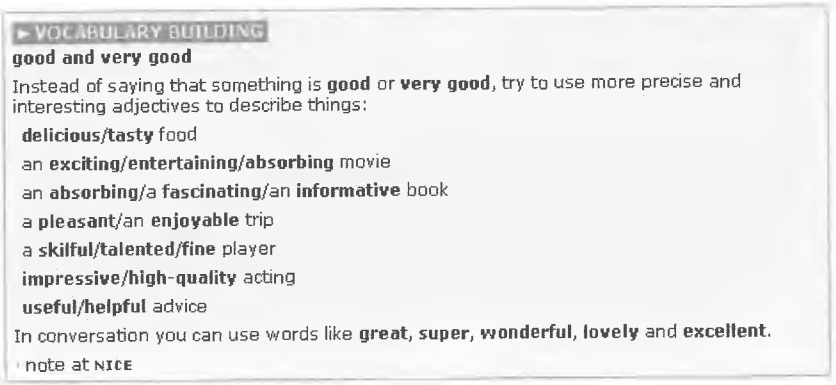
▶ VOCABULARY BUILDING
**good and very good**
Instead of saying that something is **good** or **very good**, try to use more precise and interesting adjectives to describe things:
**delicious/tasty** food
an **exciting/entertaining/absorbing** movie
an **absorbing**/a **fascinating**/an **informative** book
a **pleasant**/an **enjoyable** trip
a **skilful/talented/fine** player
**impressive/high-quality** acting
**useful/helpful** advice
In conversation you can use words like **great**, **super**, **wonderful**, **lovely** and **excellent**.
note at NICE

Figure 6.4 Vocabulary Building: good and very good

Here typical collocations are provided in order to encourage users to use a more appropriate word to describe their idea. Unfortunately, no semantic descriptions are given to words in bold, which are understood to be better alternatives to the adjective *good*, probably due to space restrictions. This problem can be solved on the CD-ROM as they can be hyperlinked to their own entries; however, some technical problem seems to prevent it in some cases (see Section 7.2.).

### 6.3. 'Grammar Point'

While the above-mentioned notes provide fuller information about the



lexical and semantic aspect of words, 'Grammar Point' notes explain grammatical differences between British and American English (e.g. 'likely' and 'staff') or help learners to produce grammatically correct sentences (e.g. 'can/could/be able to/manage'). As long as 'Grammar Point' notes are concerned, few changes are observed between the sixth and the seventh editions. In addition to 30 notes in *OALD*6, the following three are newly introduced: 'hard/hardly' at **hardly**, 'many/a lot of/lots of' at **many** and 'much/a lot of/lots of' at **much**.

At **avenge**, for instance, a 'Grammar Point' note is given to prevent learners from confusing the verb *avenge* and the noun *revenge*:

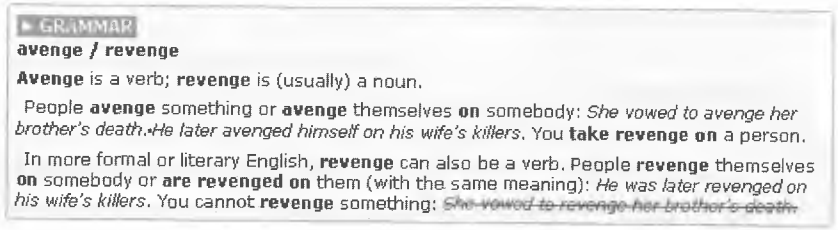
▶ GRAMMAR
**avenge / revenge**
**Avenge** is a verb; **revenge** is (usually) a noun.
People **avenge** something or **avenge** themselves **on** somebody: *She vowed to avenge her brother's death.•He later avenged himself on his wife's killers.* You **take revenge on** a person.
In more formal or literary English, **revenge** can also be a verb. People **revenge** themselves **on** somebody or **are revenged on** them (with the same meaning): *He was later revenged on his wife's killers.* You cannot **revenge** something: ~~*She vowed to revenge her brother's death.*~~

Figure 6.5 Grammar Point: avenge/revenge

A similar example is a set of *affect* and *effect*, which is treated at 'Which Word?' at **affect**.

One thing to be pointed out here is that although the printed and the electronic versions share the same contents, the title of the note of the electronic edition is different from that of the printed edition: the heading is *Grammar* in *OALD*7-CD. However small these differences may be, this will not be welcomed in terms of user-friendliness because the different titles might give an impression that the contents of the notes are different.

### 6.4. 'British/American'

British/American "explains differences between British and American usage" (R94). The notes not only explain grammatical differences between the two variants but also provide cultural information. At the entry for *underground*, for example, a note is given to explain the vocabulary difference:

▶ BRITISH / AMERICAN
**underground / subway / metro / tube**

A city's underground railway / railroad system is usually called the **underground** (often **the Underground**) in *BrE* and the **subway** in *NAmE*. Speakers of *BrE* also use **subway** for systems in American cities and **metro** for systems in other European countries. **The Metro** is the name for the systems in Paris and Washington, D.C. London's system is often called **the Tube**.

Figure 6.6 British/American: underground/subway/metro/tube

As for 'British/American' notes, there is a minor change made in *OALD*7: the note 'purse/handbag/wallet' is deleted. Instead, *OALD*7 explains the differences between *purse*, *wallet* and *handbag* with pictorial illustrations. This is a welcome change because the user can visually and instantly understand the differences between the items.

### 6.5. 'More About'

'More About' notes give the user more information about an aspect of life or language in Britain and America (R94). The contents vary from encyclopaedic information (e.g. 'roads' at **road**) to pragmatic information (e.g. 'of course' at **course**, and 'greetings' at **greeting**). 'More About' notes have increased from 7 in *OALD*6 to 13 in *OALD*7. No items have been deleted and new notes are found at **British**, **exams**, **lawyers**, **Scottish**, **student** and **want** in the present edition.

▶ MORE ABOUT
**greetings**

**Hello** is the most usual word and is used in all situations, including answering the telephone.

**Hi** is more informal and is now very common.

**How are you?** or **How are you doing?** (very informal) often follow **Hello** and **Hi**: *'Hello, Mark.' 'Oh, hi, Kathy! How are you?'*

**Good morning** is often used by members of a family or people who work together when they see each other for the first time in the day. It can also be used in formal situations and on the telephone. In informal speech, people may just say **Morning**.

**Good afternoon** and **Good evening** are much less common. **Good night** is not used to greet somebody, but only to say goodbye late in the evening or when you are going to bed.

If you are meeting someone for the first time, you can say **Pleased to meet you** or **Nice to meet you** (less formal). Some people use **How do you do?** in formal situations. The correct reply to this is **How do you do?**

Figure 6.7 More About: greetings



### 6.6. 'Word Origin'

Although etymological information is usually absent in a learner's dictionary, *OALD*6 and *OALD*7 contain some 'Word Origin' notes, for example, at **thumb** and **Thursday**. *OALD*7-CD features 'Word Origin' in a separate window (see Section 7.1.) and provides as many as 20,000 notes. According to the Oxford University Press Website[2)], the notes were "taken from the world-famous Oxford Dictionary of English".

Our user study (see Section 8.10.) shows that very few learners, regardless of their proficiency levels, seem to see the pedagogical relevance of the inclusion of such etymological information in a learner's dictionary.

(S. Uchida & Y. Komuro)

## 7. Functions and Searchability

This section deals with the functions and searchability of the CD-ROM edition (*OALD*7-CD) compared to the printed one (*OALD*7). We will see the differences between the printed and the CD-ROM editions of the dictionary and the advantages and disadvantages of *OALD*7-CD.

### 7.1. Contents of *OALD*7-CD and its interface

The application window (see Figure 7.1) mainly consists of four menu buttons at the top, the search area on the left, the entry window in the center, additional information windows on the right, and the four colored bars for special features in the bottom left-hand corner.

The four large menu buttons at the top allow us to choose between the following three reference works and a special reference tool (the Oxford Genie):

- Dictionary: almost the same reference work as the printed edition of *OALD*7
- Wordfinder (*Oxford Learner's Wordfinder Dictionary*): a dictionary of synonyms and related words
- Cultural Guide (*Oxford Guide to British and American Culture*, New Edition): an encyclopedic dictionary
- Oxford Genie: the pop-up version of *OALD*7

We are not concerned here with the contents of the Wordfinder and the

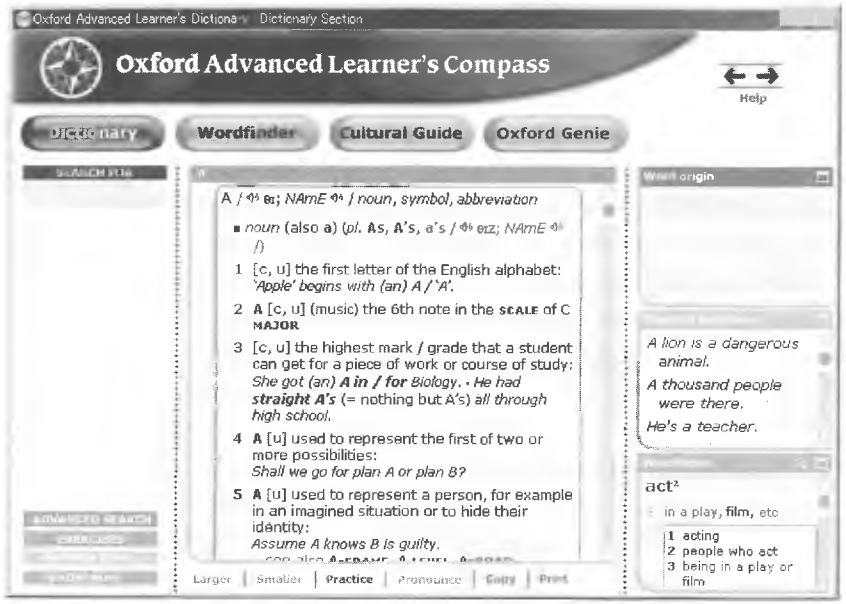


Figure 7.1 *OALD7*-CD

Cultural Guide but only with the Dictionary itself, except when we discuss the linking functionality between the contents. The Oxford Genie will not be dealt with either.

Among the four special features, we will look at the advanced search and 'Know-how' functions below; see the discussion in Section 4.1. for the Oxford 3000; we do not discuss the exercise function.

Entries in the entry window are displayed continuously in the alphabetical order with the active entry in a thin blue frame.

Additional windows on the right-hand side vary according to the reference work selected: 'Word Origin', 'Example Sentences', and 'Wordfinder' for *OALD7*; 'Dictionary' and 'Example Sentences' for the Wordfinder; 'Dictionary' for the Cultural Guide.

## 7.2. Basic search

Typing a word or phrase in the blue box underneath the words "SEARCH FOR" and pressing the "Enter" key yields a list of headwords, idioms,



phrasal verbs, and collocational phrases (called 'Structures') which include the search key. By selecting an item from the headwords in the result, its definition is shown in the entry window; clicking on an item from other categories makes the entry window jump to the selected material. This searchability in the CD-ROM edition is much higher than that in the printed one where only search by entry items is possible. The following are major characteristics of this function.

- All the entry items including the search key as a component word are listed under the heading of 'Headwords'. If "book" is searched for, for instance, the list contains not only **book** but also **address book**, **book club**, **coffee-table book**, and so on, some of which are impossible to find in the printed edition where all the entry items are alphabetically arranged. This list also includes such indexes as "cookery book, at cookbook" and "comic book, at comic"; the entry of **cookbook** has "BrE also cookery book", and the entry of **comic** has "NAmE also comic book" in its second sense. When we click on the latter index, the entry window jumps to the sense in question.
- The search result also contains idioms and phrasal verbs including the search key as their component parts. The 'Structures' section in the result lists all the collocations in boldface italics in examples and some collocations in boldface blue put before the definition other than idioms and phrasal verbs (such as "half the time, fun, trouble, etc." for the second sense of **half**).[1]
- When two or more letters are typed in the search box, one-word headwords beginning with those letters appear in the index list that will drop down with the nearest matching entry highlighted.[2] (This function is called "automatic suggestion" henceforth.)
- When the search key does not match any item, the spell check function works to list the candidates. Searching with inflected forms yields the correct result for the lemma. Hyphenated headwords can be searched either with the complete form or with compositional parts with hyphens altered by spaces.[3] Headwords with accented or umlauted characters can be searched either by typing the correct spelling or by altering accented or umlauted characters with simple alphabetic characters; searching with

"tete-a-tete", for example, yields the result of **tête-à-tête**.[4] Headwords with ligatures (**cri de cœur** and **trompe l'œil**), however, cannot be searched with "oe" instead of the ligature "œ".

- Multi-word compounds can be searched for by entering at least one component word.[5] However, they do not show up in the automatic suggestion list, which is inconvenient for users. Entering more than one word also yields the result consisting of the same four sections as in the case of searching for a word.
- Searching for an item which is available not in *OALD7* but in the Cultural Guide, such as **New York** and **London**, switches the application to the Cultural Guide mode. The automatic suggestion, however, does not work for the headwords included only in the Cultural Guide.

Some other potentially useful functions for searching and jumping available within the entries are as follows.

- Double-clicking on any word within an entry will execute a search in the small "look-up window"[6] (see Figure 7.2). Although this is essentially very useful, there are some problematic features. One example is that

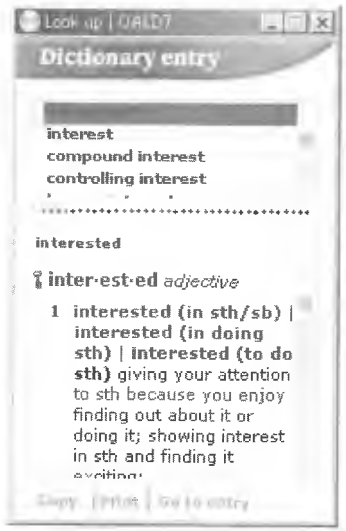


Figure 7.2 Look-up window



when one double-clicks on an item such as "exciting" in "an **exciting/entertaining/absorbing** movie" in the 'Vocabulary Building' note under **good**, "exciting/entertaining/absorbing" as a whole is selected and searched for in vain.[7] Another example is that the users cannot know whether pictorial illustrations are available or not for the entry in question before clicking the "Go to entry" button in the look-up window. This shortcoming is more serious when the text in an entry refers to a note in another entry; for example, the second sense of **disinterested** has "⇨ note at INTERESTED" with a cross-reference to **interested**. Clicking on it leads to the entry in the look-up window, where the information on the note is not displayed. Those users who use this cross-referencing function would clearly want to see the note, but they have to press the "Go to entry" button to access the note 'Which Word'.

- Some entries have a link saying "For more information see the Cultural Guide", and by clicking it, one can jump to the entry in the Cultural Guide.
- The additional windows for the dictionary proper consist of three parts.

1. Word Origin: Etymological information for some 20,000 headwords is available (back cover; see also Section 6.6.). This information can also be searched via the advanced search function (see Section 7.3. below). This window can be expanded in a separate window.
2. Example Sentences: This window contains examples in other entries and multi-word headwords (such as **big toe**) in *OALD7*. Clicking on an example displays the entry containing the example in the look-up window, but without jumping to the example in question, which is unfortunate for users. This window can be expanded in a separate window, too. See also Section 5 for more discussion on examples.
3. Wordfinder: The small Wordfinder window shows the entry where the search word occurs first in the Wordfinder. Searching for "stormy" in *OALD7*, for example, produces an additional Wordfinder window list including the entry of **rain** because we have **rain**, **storm**, and **wind** as the candidates for "stormy" in the Wordfinder. When the magnifying glass icon at the top of the small window is clicked, all the candidates are listed, and clicking one of

them shows the item in the same window. Since the desired item is not necessarily displayed all the time, the default display in this window should be the list of candidates, not the first candidate. Double-clicking on a normal word in this window shows its entry in *OALD*7 in the look-up window, and clicking on a cross-referenced word (in dark red small capitals) changes the application to the Wordfinder mode with the word searched for. Expanding this window also switches the application to the Wordfinder mode with the item in question searched for.

The on-line help accompanying the program gives little detailed explanation for ways of searching such as those described above except for simple ones. Our user research shows that many users have difficulty in using most of the basic search functions available (see Sections 8.9. and 8.10.).

### 7.3. Advanced search

The following are major characteristics of the advanced search function.

- The window consists of three parts; the search box at the top left-hand corner, the results box below that, and the main entry window on the right (see Figure 7.3).
- The advanced search function enables the users to perform searches for a search key in the definitions, examples, notes, and word origins, as well as those possible in the basic search function (searches against headwords, idioms, phrasal verbs, and other collocational phrases called 'Structures'). Spaces connecting more than one word are equivalent to "AND" described below.
- Wildcard (* and ?) searches can be performed[8], with the limitation that wildcards alone cannot be accepted as a word. More than one wildcard can be used, which is more useful than the CD-ROM edition of *LDOCE*4 (*LDOCE*4-CD henceforth), one of the competitors of *OALD*7, where only one wildcard can be used.
- Boolean searches using AND and OR are possible. The usability of "NOT" available in *LDOCE*4-CD would enhance the searchability when one wants to narrow down the search results.
- Searching with labels is possible by specifying the search key as in



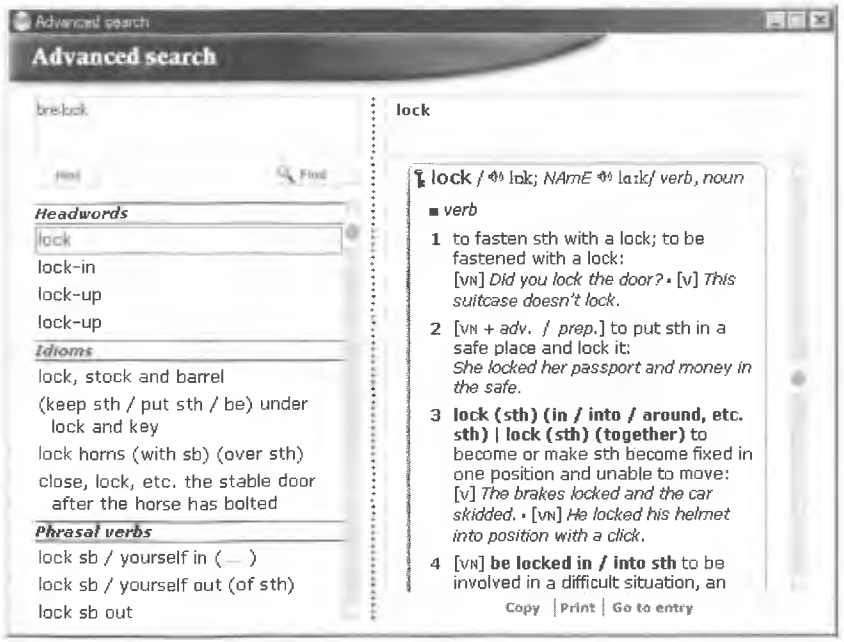


Figure 7.3 Advanced search

"label:word".[9] The labels available are those falling under the categories of 'Part of Speech', 'Languages' (regional varieties and original languages of loanwords), 'Register', 'Subject Areas', and 'Dictionary Structure' (phrases). Searching for a label alone, which is possible in *LDOCE*4-CD, cannot be performed; when we want to know all the words and usages in Irish English, for example, we have to do 26 searches from "irishe:a*" to "irishe:z*", which is effectively impossible. Specifying the part of speech of a word yields the result of all the entries containing the word used as the specified part of speech. However, the search result is not always correct.[10]

- Language labels are particularly problematic. When the search key is "bre:lock", for example, the result lists the following items:

  1. Headwords: **lock**, **lock-in**, **lock-up**, **lock-up** (run-on entry of the first **lock-up**), all of which have the label "BrE" somewhere in their

entry and include the component word "lock" in their headwords
2. Idioms: all the idioms under **lock** and those idioms containing "lock" under other entries where the label "BrE" is present
3. Phrasal Verbs, Structures, Definitions, Examples, and Word Origins: items retrieved on the same criterion as that for the idioms

Since the scope of a language label specified is the whole entry which has the word specified, we cannot conduct a search such as "searching for those senses, not headwords, whose definition has a particular word and which are at the same time labeled as British". Therefore, this search function is effective only when we want to search for all the words whose origin is a specific language ("word_origin:japanese" lists in the section "Definitions"[11] all the words whose origin is Japanese, for example), or when we want to look up a specific word or pattern with British (or Australian, etc.) usage(s), which is quite unthinkable. The on-line help says that "to find all of the phrasal verbs from American English containing the word *down* in the dictionary use the search *name:down AND phrasal_verb:down*" (italics added), which is incorrect. Following this direction only yields those items which (1) have the regional label "NAmE" in the entry, (2) have more than one phrasal verb whether or not they are labeled "NAmE", and (3) include the word "down" in the entry such as in the headwords, idioms, phrasal verbs, and examples. The result box obtained through the above search contains strange items; **clean** in the section 'Notes', and **dumbing down** in the section 'Headwords' are two typical examples. The former is listed here because it has the label "NAmE" in its entry, and has phrasal verbs containing "down" in the notes section of 'Synonyms'. The latter is a run-on noun of **dumb** which has a description "3 (informal, especially NAmE) stupid" in its third sense, and has "dumb down" as a phrasal verb. The section 'Headwords' lists not only headwords proper, but also run-on entries (such as the above) and alternative items given under a sense (such as "close down, at close[1]" the entry of which has a description "4 (also close down, close sth ↔ down)" but does not include the label "NAmE" there). These are just a few examples which are especially strange for the above search key. Our conclusion for this function is, therefore, that it is virtually exclusive for searching for etymological information.

- For the labels 'Register' and 'Subject Areas', the same kind of inappropriate functionality renders the search function almost useless. As for the former, when we want to know some alternative and synonymous expressions in a particular register, this function is of no value because we cannot do a search with a register label alone such as "approving", but have to specify a word as well as the register; it is the word in question that one would like to know. As for the latter, users would probably want to know all the words used in the field of music, for instance. The program, however, demands them to specify a word or pattern in addition to the label "music".
- It seems to be impossible to do a search with "label1:word1 AND label2:word2" where two different words are specified; the search key "definition:handle AND headword:throw", for example, does not match sense 14 of **throw**, which has a description "14 [vn] to move a switch, handle, etc. to operate sth".
- The advanced search takes much time, and the window cannot be resized, which lower the usability of the program.
- Since the number of labels is large and some of the regional labels are shortened (such as "CanE" for Canadian English and "US" for United States of American English), the program should have offered label choices to select.



### 7.4. Cultural Guide

The search function for the Cultural Guide is basically the same as the basic search function available in the Dictionary, but with a few differences; the result box has 'Headwords' and 'Vocabulary' as the categories, and the spell check function does not work in this mode. The only additional window available in the Cultural Guide is the Dictionary window. Although there is no cross-reference to the Dictionary, we can jump to the full entry in *OALD7* by expanding the Dictionary window (when it is available). By clicking on the magnifying glass icon at the top of the Dictionary window, all the candidates are listed, and clicking one of them will show the item in the same window.

### 7.5. Wordfinder

The search function for the Wordfinder is also essentially the same as

the basic search function available in the Dictionary with a few differences; the result box has 'Headwords', 'Themes', and 'Words to Use' as the categories, the automatic suggestion does not work, nor does the spell check function.. The Dictionary and Example Sentences windows are available as the additional windows in this mode. How the Dictionary window works is the same as that in the Cultural Guide (see Section 7.4.). The Example Sentences window contains examples and multi-word headwords in *OALD*7. Clicking on an example retrieves the entry containing the example from *OALD*7 and displays it in the look-up window, but without jumping to the example in question.

### 7.6. Know-how

This is one of the "four special features" placed at the left bottom part of the main window (see Figure 7.4).

After typing some (fragment of) text into the box and pausing or clicking on the search button, the program automatically lists the examples from *OALD*7 which are judged to be close to the text put into the box. The words in the examples that match the words in the text input are shown in red. The program looks at the several "important" words (except for

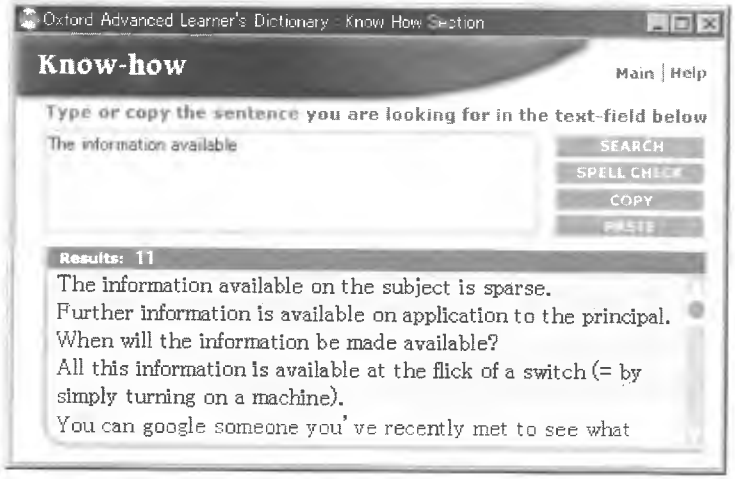


Figure 7.4 Know-how



prepositions and some very frequent words, according to the on-line help) at the final portion of the text. It uses an original database of words often confused by learners, ignores the differences among various inflectional forms of the words, and searches for the examples containing those important words. This program just lists the examples that seem to be close to the text the user has input. Since it is almost impossible that users can find the exact sentence they want, whether they can make the most of this function depends on their proficiency; only advanced users seem to be able to obtain valuable information through this function. There is no cross-reference to *OALD*7, which is unsatisfactory.

### 7.7. Overall evaluation of the functions and searchability of *OALD*7-CD

As for the interface of the program, the following two functions are useful; the main window where entries are displayed can be narrowed or widened by dragging the dotted lines between the sections, and the application window offers the two arrow icons for going back and proceeding again.

On the other hand, the program has many shortcomings.

- The search history is not available.
- The program works too slowly to prompt us to use it habitually, which is one of the most serious problems.
- The small look-up window cannot be resized.
- It is not possible to search for a word, phrase, or string with wildcards within an entry. This is serious when the entry is large and the amount of text is vast.
- It is not possible to open more than one entry or sense of an entry at one time in order to compare two or more items.
- Searches cannot be canceled during its operation even if it takes a long time.
- While derivatives or related words are put close to each other in the printed edition where headwords are alphabetically arranged, users of the CD-ROM edition have to scroll up and down the entry window in order to see the items around the item in question (see also the discussion

of the results of Question (10) in Section 8.9.).

- Search keys are not highlighted.
- Searching for a particular pronunciation cannot be performed.
- The users have to read the on-line help to know how to conduct complicated searches. The on-line help, however, gives explanations far from comprehensive. More detailed and full explanations (like the Guided Tour facility available in *LDOCE*4-CD) should have been offered, and moreover, since even the basic search functions are not put to sufficient use (see Sections 8.9. and 8.10.), a more intuitive interface should be offered.
- The program always displays the entry **A** when it is run. Some other CD-ROM dictionaries display different items every time it is run, which may be of some interest to the users.
- Tooltips (small windows (typically in light yellow) that pop up beside the mouse cursor to describe the functions of the items or other kinds of information on them) should have been offered to let the users know what the buttons do or to show an entry which any word cross-refers.

Other EFL dictionaries on CD-ROM, such as *LDOCE*4-CD and the CD-ROM edition of *MED*, do not have many of these problems, although no CD-ROM dictionary is free of all these deficits. With so many shortcomings, *OALD*7-CD is far from satisfactory, although it has the potential to be a useful student's companion since it has quality in terms of the contents.

(Y. Ishii)

## 8. User Research

### 8.1. Background of the user research

In order to obtain a clear picture of the actual use of *OALD*7-CD, *OALD*7-P (the printed edition of *OALD*7), and other monolingual English dictionaries for learners, we found it helpful to conduct user research on students at universities in Japan. We devised a questionnaire and four tasks.

Despite the growth of experimental tests concerning hand-held electronic dictionaries in Japan (cf. Osaki *et al.* 2003, Koyama & Takeuchi 2003, Koyama & Takeuchi 2004a, Koyama & Takeuchi 2004b, Koyama & Takeuchi 2005) and the fact that CD-ROM editions are included in many major monolingual English dictionaries for learners, user research on CD-ROM editions is still extremely rare. Thus, our research consists of tasks that not only investigate the use of the printed edition but also allow the participants to actually use the CD-ROM edition and judge its usability and the ease with which information can be accessed in it. For the purpose of partial replication of the previous studies, see Dohi *et al.* (2002: 61) and Ichikawa *et al.* (2005: 89–90).



### 8.2. Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a useful way of collecting data from a large sample, and this is why we began our user research with a questionnaire survey, similar to the three related studies (Kanazashi 2001, Dohi *et al.* 2002, Ichikawa *et al.* 2005). Five features of this questionnaire are virtually the same as those of the questionnaires used in the previous three studies, but some new features related to the CD-ROM edition have been added (Questions (4), (5), and (6)). The questionnaire was prepared in Japanese; here, it is translated into English in Appendix 1. The results of this questionnaire survey are reported and discussed in Section 8.8.

### 8.3. Task 1: searchability of information in *OALD*7-CD

While a questionnaire survey is useful for collecting data from a large number of participants in a relatively short period of time, it is merely an indirect method in the sense that the researcher can indirectly observe the participants' dictionary use, which should be supplemented by more direct methods. Thus, we devised four sets of tasks in order to obtain a clearer picture of how the participants actually use *OALD*7-CD and *OALD*7-P. In Task 1, the participants were asked to look up less common meaning of polysemous words, find phrasal verbs and idioms, and find separate compounds, using either of the editions specified by the researcher. The sentences containing the target words are reproduced in Appendix 2, and the results will be shown in the form of protocol lines in Section 8.9.

### 8.4. Task 2: usability of the various functions of *OALD7*-CD

Next, we asked the participants whether they found the following nine functions of *OALD7*-CD useful:

( 1 ) If you enter some words into the search box in 'Know-how,' you can see examples that include some of the words entered.
( 2 ) You can hear the recorded sounds of all the headwords in both their British and American pronunciations.
( 3 ) If you click on some pictorial illustrations, you can also see illustrations of other related terms in the enlarged illustration box.
( 4 ) The 'Example Sentences' box lists all the example phrases and sentences in the dictionary that contain the headword.
( 5 ) Another dictionary known as Wordfinder, which shows numerous related terms to some headwords of high frequency, is included in *OALD7*-CD.
( 6 ) Still another dictionary known as Cultural Guide, which contains encyclopedic terms, is included in *OALD7*-CD.
( 7 ) The wildcard (*) search is one of the features of 'Advanced Search' and the wildcard can be used at any position of a searched word.
( 8 ) In addition to normal search by headwords, it is also possible to search by examples or idioms, which is another feature of the 'Advanced Search' option.
( 9 ) If you double-click on any word, you can directly access to the entry for that word.

The participants reported the usability of these functions by choosing from the following: <A: It is useful and I will use it. B: It is useful but difficult to operate. C: It is useful but time-consuming. D: It is not useful and I will not use it. E: other comments>. They were also asked about the usability of the following three additional features:

(10) Etymological information is found in the 'Word Origin' box.
(11) Some words are highlighted in colors.
(12) Pictorial illustrations are colored.

We asked the participants to "vote" for a maximum of three features that they evaluate most highly among all the 12 features mentioned above. The results of Task 2 will be analyzed and discussed in Section 8.10.



### 8.5. Task 3: difference in the frequency of search between the two editions

In order to compare the difference in the frequency of search between *OALD7*-P and *OALD7*-CD, the researcher asked the participants to read a 250-word essay and look up unknown words in the edition specified by the researcher. If a participant used *OALD7*-CD for the first half of the essay, he or she used *OALD7*-P for the second half, and vice versa. The results of Task 3 will be shown in Section 8.12.

### 8.6. Task 4: comparing definitions in *OALD7*, *OALD6*, *LDOCE4*, and *COBUILD4*

The participants were finally presented with a comparison task, in which they read the target sentence, compared the definitions of the same word in two different dictionaries including *OALD7*, *OALD6*, *LDOCE4*, *COBUILD4* (*Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*, new edition) and an invented definition, judged which definition seemed helpful in understanding the word in the target sentence, and provided reasons for their judgment. The participants in Group N (see Section 8.7.) were also asked to translate the target sentences into Japanese.

This task served as a placement test and helped us judge the participants who had the ability to use *OALD7*-CD and *OALD*-P more effectively than the others; in other words, it helped us distinguish those who provided reliable answers, based on the number of target sentences that they had understood correctly. In the discussion of the results of Task 2 in Section 8.10. and Task 4 in Section 8.13., the answers provided by those who demonstrated an understanding of the definition and/or the target sentence are treated separately from the answers by those who could not. The target sentences and definitions in the dictionaries specified are also reported in Section 8.13.

### 8.7. Participants

A total of 352 people — 13 postgraduate students, 337 undergraduate

students, and 2 others — participated in this questionnaire survey. They were randomly divided into two groups, namely Group A and Group B, and were presented with different questions in Task 4. Alternatively, they were also divided into two groups in another way, Group M and Group N. 9 participants who major(ed) in English were classified into Group M, and all the others (343) were classified into Group N. The vast majority of the participants were Japanese, with the exception of 7 Chinese and 2 Koreans. This is an opportunity sampling.

## 8.8. Results of the questionnaire survey

The questionnaire was answered by 340 participants. The first question in the questionnaire — "How long have you studied English?" — was answered by 336 participants. The mean and mode of the answers to this question are 8.3 years and "6 and a half years," respectively. Most of those in Group N were first-year university students who had studied English for 6.5 or 7.5 years; the mean value for this group is 7.9 years. Most participants in Group M were postgraduate students and adults, one of whom had studied English for 50.5 years; this fact raised the group average to 19.6 years, and the group average would be 15.8 years without her.

Next, the participants named the English dictionary that they used most frequently. Of the 333 who answered the question "Is it an electronic or a printed dictionary?" 271 (81.4%) answered "electronic dictionaries," including those on the Web and those available on mobile phones.[1] The general tendency observed among each group is that the younger they are, the more inclined they are to prefer electronic dictionaries.

The results of the other items of the questionnaire are shown in Tables 8.1–8.8. For the next six items, the participants chose their answers from <almost every day, twice or three times a week, once a week, less frequently, never>, which were replaced by the graded frequencies 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0, respectively to calculate the means of their frequency of use.[2] From these tables, we gather that there is a wide gap between the participants' use of English-Japanese dictionaries and monolingual English dictionaries, and an even wider gap between their use of hand-held



Table 8.1 The use of an English-Japanese dictionary

| frequency | Group M (n = 9) | Group N (n = 328) | total (n = 337) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 (almost every day) | 7 | 42 | 49 |
| 3 (2 or 3 times a week) | 1 | 175 | 176 |
| 2 (once a week) | 1 | 67 | 68 |
| 1 (less frequently) | 0 | 38 | 38 |
| 0 (never) | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| means | 3.7 | 2.6 | 2.7 |

Table 8.2 The use of a Japanese-English dictionary

| frequency | Group M (n = 9) | Group N (n = 326) | total (n = 335) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 (almost every day) | 1 | 18 | 19 |
| 3 (2 or 3 times a week) | 4 | 121 | 125 |
| 2 (once a week) | 2 | 71 | 72 |
| 1 (less frequently) | 1 | 83 | 84 |
| 0 (never) | 1 | 33 | 34 |
| means | 2.3 | 2.0 | 2.0 |

Table 8.3 The use of a monolingual English dictionary

| frequency | Group M (n = 9) | Group N (n = 325) | total (n = 334) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 (almost every day) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3 (2 or 3 times a week) | 2 | 23 | 25 |
| 2 (once a week) | 0 | 52 | 51 |
| 1 (less frequently) | 6 | 95 | 101 |
| 0 (never) | 0 | 153 | 153 |
| means | 1.8 | 0.8 | 0.9 |

Table 8.4 The use of a hand-held electronic dictionary

| frequency | Group M (n = 9) | Group N (n = 328) | total (n = 337) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 (almost every day) | 7 | 88 | 95 |
| 3 (2 or 3 times a week) | 1 | 142 | 143 |
| 2 (once a week) | 0 | 35 | 35 |
| 1 (less frequently) | 1 | 53 | 54 |
| 0 (never) | 0 | 10 | 10 |
| means | 3.6 | 2.7 | 2.8 |

Table 8.5 The use of a personal computer

| frequency | Group M (n = 9) | Group N (n = 328) | total (n = 337) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 (almost every day) | 8 | 152 | 160 |
| 3 (2 or 3 times a week) | 1 | 97 | 98 |
| 2 (once a week) | 0 | 36 | 36 |
| 1 (less frequently) | 0 | 35 | 35 |
| 0 (never) | 0 | 8 | 8 |
| means | 3.9 | 3.1 | 3.1 |

Table 8.6 The use of a CD-ROM dictionary

| frequency | Group M (n = 9) | Group N (n = 328) | total (n = 337) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 (almost every day) | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 3 (2 or 3 times a week) | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| 2 (once a week) | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 (less frequently) | 1 | 45 | 46 |
| 0 (never) | 6 | 273 | 279 |
| means | 0.8 | 0.2 | 0.2 |

electronic dictionaries and CD-ROM dictionaries. However, we have found something that might help us fill in the second gap: the participants' frequent use of a personal computer.



The last two items of the questionnaire concern the occasions and purposes of the participants' dictionary use, and the results are presented in Tables 8.7 and 8.8. They had to choose from <very often, often, sometimes, not usually, never>, which were replaced by the graded frequencies 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0, respectively.[3)]

The results shown in Tables 8.7 and 8.8 are virtually the same as the data collected by Dohi *et al.* (2002: 69–73) and Ichikawa *et al.* (2005: 99–104). We will cross-refer to these results in the analysis and the discussion of the results of the following tasks.

Table 8.7 Occasions on which participants used a dictionary (n = 337)

| frequency | reading English | | translating E-J | | writing English | | translating J-E | | broadening vocabulary | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N |
| 4 (very often) | 4 | 113 | 2 | 164 | 4 | 82 | 2 | 87 | 0 | 18 |
| 3 (often) | 1 | 115 | 4 | 113 | 4 | 102 | 2 | 84 | 1 | 31 |
| 2 (sometimes) | 4 | 57 | 3 | 43 | 1 | 91 | 4 | 82 | 1 | 98 |
| 1 (not usually) | 0 | 36 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 45 | 1 | 60 | 6 | 120 |
| 0 (never) | 0 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 15 | 1 | 61 |
| means (each) | 3.0 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 1.2 | 1.5 |
| means (both) | 2.9 | | 3.3 | | 2.6 | | 2.5 | | 1.5 | |

Table 8.8 Purposes for which participants used a dictionary (n = 337)

| frequency | cultural information | | collocations | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Group M | Group N | Group M | Group N |
| 4 (very often) | 0 | 5 | 2 | 18 |
| 3 (often) | 4 | 14 | 4 | 69 |
| 2 (sometimes) | 3 | 52 | 3 | 122 |
| 1 (not usually) | 1 | 160 | 0 | 81 |
| 0 (never) | 1 | 97 | 0 | 38 |
| means (each group) | 2.1 | 1.0 | 2.9 | 1.8 |
| means (both groups) | 1.0 | | 1.9 | |

Table 8.8 (continued)

| frequency | spelling | | whether a word exists | | part of speech | | meanings | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N |
| 4 | 3 | 56 | 0 | 18 | 1 | 21 | 8 | 208 |
| 3 | 4 | 106 | 2 | 35 | 2 | 52 | 1 | 91 |
| 2 | 1 | 107 | 4 | 113 | 1 | 116 | 0 | 25 |
| 1 | 0 | 46 | 1 | 109 | 5 | 108 | 0 | 4 |
| 0 | 1 | 13 | 2 | 53 | 0 | 31 | 0 | 0 |
| means (each) | 2.9 | 2.4 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 3.9 | 3.5 |
| means (both) | 2.5 | | 1.6 | | 1.8 | | 3.5 | |

Table 8.8 (continued)

| frequency | synonyms/antonyms | | etymology | | pronunciation | | grammar | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N | G.M | G.N |
| 4 | 1 | 19 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 22 | 3 | 42 |
| 3 | 4 | 69 | 2 | 17 | 3 | 76 | 3 | 108 |
| 2 | 2 | 129 | 4 | 41 | 2 | 108 | 2 | 108 |
| 1 | 2 | 90 | 2 | 124 | 1 | 81 | 1 | 51 |
| 0 | 0 | 21 | 1 | 137 | 0 | 41 | 0 | 19 |
| means (each) | 2.4 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 0.9 | 2.9 | 1.9 | 2.9 | 2.3 |
| means (both) | 1.9 | | 0.9 | | 1.9 | | 2.3 | |

## 8.9. Results of Task 1

23 participants, including all the 9 participants in Group M and 14 in Group N, were interviewed in Task 1. We will provide the results in the following two formats: (a) the "protocol lines" that describe the procedure followed by the participants while answering the questions, and (b) the tables that describe the overall time (how much time it took them to answer the questions) and the search time (how much time they spent searching for the relevant information in either of the two editions of *OALD*7).



In the protocol lines, in which each uppercase letter represents a period of 0.1 minutes (6 seconds), the time spent by each subject thinking (looking only at the question sheet) after the researcher finishes reading the question aloud is designated as "T," operating the computer with a keyboard and a mouse searching for the entry as "C," turning the pages of the printed edition as "P," searching for relevant information as "S," reading a relevant section of the entry as "R," and reading an obviously irrelevant section as "I." The lowercase letters "f," "a," "w," "m," "q," and "r" represent the point or duration of time that the participant finds the entry/definition, provides a right answer, provides a wrong answer, makes a comment, asks a question, and that the point or duration of time that the researcher answers the question or provides a tip, respectively. However, the time spent on these activities is not taken into consideration. At the end of a string of these letters, the time spent on the entire procedure, and the time spent on searching for relevant information within an entry and understanding it are noted in this order in parentheses after a colon. Thus,

M1 TT PPP (f: **score**) II RRRR (a): (1.1, 0.6)

would be interpreted as follows: The participant designated as M1 thought without looking up anything in the dictionary for 0.2 minutes; turned the pages for 0.3 minutes before finding the entry for *score*; searched for information in an irrelevant section for 0.2 minutes; read a relevant section for 0.4 minutes; and provided a right answer. The overall time spent by M1 is 1.1 minutes, of which 0.6 minutes were spent searching within the entry.

We will now begin reporting the results of Task 1, question by question.

( 1 ) I didn't bring the score of what we are going to practice in our chorus.

The look-up procedures of the participants who used *OALD*7-CD are described as follows:

M8 TTC (f: **score**) R (a): (0.4, 0.1)

N1 TTTC (f) R SSSS (a): (0.9, 0.5)
N3 TTTCC (f) S (a): (0.6, 0.1)
N5 C (f) R (a): (0.2, 0.1)
N7 TC (f) RRR (a): (0.5, 0.3)
N9 C(f) Sx17 (a): (1.8, 1.7)
N14 (w: "points") C (f) R (a): (0.2, 0.1)

The following are the lookup procedures of those who used *OALD*7-P.

N2 TTTT PPP (f) SS RR (a): (1.1, 0.4)
N6 TT (m: *score* is polysemous) TTT PPPP (f) SSSSS RRR (a): (1.7, 0.8)
N11 T PP (f) R (a): (0.4, 0.1)

13 other participants understood the target sentence without referring to a dictionary.

The protocol lines mentioned above suggest that finding the musical sense of *score* in either of the two editions proves to be a fairly easy task for the participants, since no one provided a wrong answer after referring to the dictionary. The mean for the entire procedure is 0.8 minutes, and the mean for the time spent within the entry is 0.4 minutes. Only one participant spent more than a minute trying to find and understand the sense of the word in the entry. Presumably this is either because most participants had already suspected that the target sentence involved music, or because the sense in question is listed close to the beginning of the entry as the third sense of **score**.

( 2 ) I always feel scared when the teacher bears down on us in class.

From now on, we will only list the protocol lines of the participants who spent a short period of time and those who spent a long period of time, as well as the lines of particular interest.

All the participants referred to a dictionary. Some of the participants who used *OALD*7-CD spent less than half a minute on the entire procedure.

M2 TC (f: **bear**) CC (f: phr v) (a): (0.4, 0.2)
M5 CC (f: phr v) RR (a): (0.4, 0.2)



However, there was an unsuccessful search.

N2 TT CC (f: **bear**) Sx15 Ix7 (to other entries) S II (w: def.2): (2.9, 2.5 incomplete)

After spending 1.5 minutes trying to search for relevant information within the entry for **bear**, the participant N2 accidentally accessed other entries, and could not return to the searched word for 0.7 minutes. When she did return, she chose a wrong definition. Using *OALD*7-P, most searches were successful (as M7), but one chose a wrong definition (N3), and another misunderstood the definition of the phrasal verb (N12).

M7 P (f: bear) R (a): (0.2, 0.1)
N3 TTT PPPPPP (f: **bear**) SSSSSSS IIIIII (w: def.1): (2.2, 1.3 incomplete)
N12 TT (w: to scold) PP (f: **bear**) Sx9 (f: phr v) RR (w: to move sth) (a): (1.5, 1.1 with a mistake)

The participants were able to search for the phrasal verb easily and quickly when they realized that there was a list of items to be looked up on the left side of the main dictionary.

Of the 6 participants in Group N who used *OALD*7-CD to read Question (2), 3 searched for the phrasal verb in the column on the left, and their average search time for the phrasal verb within the entry is 0.3 minutes:

N6 CCC (f: **bear**) SSSS (f: phr v, column on the left) RR (w: to move sth) RR (a): (1.1, 0.8)
N8 TTT (w: animal) TTTC (f: **bear**) CC (f: phr v, column on the left) RRR (a): (1.2, 0.5)
N11 TC (f: **bear**) SC (f: phr v, column on the left) R (a): (0.5, 0.3)

However, those who did not notice the column read through the entry, and spent, on an average, slightly more time on the same procedure:

N2 (see above)
N4 TC (f: **bear**) SS CCCC (f: phr v) RRR (a): (1.1, 0.9)
N13 (f: **bear**) SSSS (f: phr v) (a): (0.4, 0.4)

Since some participants could not provide the correct answer, it is not

worth calculating the means of the search time for all the participants.

( 3 ) I suspect that this eighth note should be an A rather than a C.

7 participants understood this sentence without referring to a dictionary. Of the 11 who used *OALD*7-CD, 2 only looked up **note** and did not proceed to the entry for **eighth note**, 5 who were referred to the entry for **quaver** could not understand its definition, and 1 could not understand the definition or illustration of *quaver*. Only 3 of the 11 participants who used *OALD*7-CD understood the target sentence:

M7 T C (f: **eighth**) SS C (f: **quaver**) C (expand the illustration) SSS (a): (0.9, 0.7)
M9 TT CC (f: **note**) IIIIII R I RRR III RRR (a: def.7): (2.1, 1.7)[4]
N12 TT C (f: note) SS CCC (f: **eighth note**) S C (f: **quaver**) Sx8 (f: illustration) (a): (1.8, 1.5)

However, for those who are not particularly versed in music, the definition and illustration of *eighth note* or *quaver* seemed to be rather difficult to understand. N6 spent nearly 4 minutes on the search, only to fail:

N6 PP (f: **note**, m: what a lot of senses!) Sx14 PPPP (f: **eighth note**) R PP (f: **quaver**) II Rx12 → unable to understand, (r: picture at **music**) → unable to translate: (3.7, 3.5 incomplete)

Of the 5 who used *OALD*7-P, only 1 successfully found the illustration of a quaver under the entry for **music** and gave a right answer.

N4 TTT PPP (f: **eighth**) SS (f: **eighth note**) RR PPPP (f: **quaver**) S RRR PPP (f: **music**, illustration) R (a): (2.2, 1.6)

All the others could not understand the definition of *quaver*.

( 4 ) It takes a lot of courage to acknowledge our mistakes.

All the participants in Group M and 11 in Group N already knew that *take* in this sentence means "to need" (definition 30 in *OALD*7). For the 3 who did not know, finding the appropriate sense out of the 42 senses given was extremely difficult.



N9 (q: courage? acknowledge?) TT C (f: **take**) Sx6 (def.30 appeared on the screen) Sx9 (def.30 on the screen) Sx12 (def.30 on the screen) Sx8 (w: def.29)

2 other participants spent more than 2 minutes each searching for the meaning in *OALD*7-P, but the answers provided were incorrect. Although a guideword "NEED" is placed before definition 30, it is of little use to those who do not know that the word is used in this sense in the target sentence. We suspect that such users cannot be regarded as "advanced learners," the target users of the dictionary.

( 5 ) rush hour

In Questions (5) and (10), the participants were provided with the Japanese equivalent of the target compound and asked to imagine that they were composing an English sentence that included the compound. 5 participants did not need to refer to a dictionary to answer Question (5). 11 used *OALD*7-CD, 7 used *OALD*7-P; all of these participants successfully located the compound **rush hour**. A different format is used for tabulating and analyzing the results of the searches for these compounds and other multi-word items in Questions (5), (6), (8), and (10). First, the time spent on the entire search (from the time a participant began using a dictionary to the time when he or she located the compound) is noted in Table 8.9.

In order to analyze these results in greater detail, we use yet another format. The time spent by the participants after they found **rush** is noted in Table 8.10.[5]

Table 8.9 The entire search time for **rush hour**

| edition referred to | Group M (n = 7) | Group N (n = 11) |
|---|---|---|
| *OALD*7-CD (n = 11) | 0.1, 0.3, 0.5, 0.8 | 0.2, 0.3, 0.4, 0.5, 1.6, 2.2, 2.3 |
| *OALD*7-P (n = 7) | 0.2, 0.3, 0.3 | 0.2, 0.5, 0.7, 2.4 |

Table 8.10 The search time after locating **rush**

| edition referred to | Group M (n = 6) | Group N (n = 9) |
|---|---|---|
| *OALD*7-CD (n = 9) | 0.0, 0.2, 0.7 | 0.1, 0.2, 0.4, 1.5, 2.0, 2.2 |
| *OALD*7-P (n = 6) | 0.1, 0.1, 0.2 | 0.3, 0.3, 2.2 |

We could assist the users of *OALD7*-CD who took a long time to proceed from **rush** to **rush hour** simply by informing them about the list of "Headwords," or the entry items containing the searched word, on the left side of the main dictionary text.

( 6 ) Hey, look sharp! It's already 11:00.

2 participants understood the target sentences without referring to a dictionary. The time spent on the entire search is noted in Table 8.11.

The time spent by the participants after they found one of the components is noted in Table 8.12.

One participant who used *OALD7*-CD typed "look sharp" in the search box and found the idiom; however, for those who were unaware of such a function in the CD-ROM edition or those who did not know that *look sharp* is an idiom, the task of finding it became extensively time-consuming, particularly in the printed edition. All the 5 participants who made a

Table 8.11 The whole search time for **look sharp**[6)]

| edition referred to | Group M (n = 8) | Group N (n = 13) |
|---|---|---|
| *OALD7*-CD (n = 10) | 0.2, 0.5, 0.7, 1.9 | 0.3, 0.6, 0.8, 1.6, 2.2, (2.0 with 2 mistakes) |
| *OALD7*-P (n = 11) | 0.3, 0.7, 0.8, (2.7 incomplete) | 0.3, 2.3, 2.6, 2.8, (1.8 with 2 mistakes), (3.6 with a mistake), (3.4 incomplete) |

Table 8:12 The search time after locating **look** or **sharp**

| edition referred to | item searched first | Group M (n = 8) | Group N (n = 12) |
|---|---|---|---|
| *OALD7*-CD (n = 9) | **look** | 1.7 | 0.8, 1.5 |
| | **sharp** | 0.1, 0.3, 0.5 | 0.4, 2.0, (1.9 with 2 mistakes) |
| *OALD7*-P (n = 11) | **look** | — | — |
| | **sharp** | 0.0, 0.5, 0.5, (2.5 incomplete) | 0.1, 2.0, 2.5, 2.6, (1.5 with 2 mistakes), (3.3 with a mistake), (3.1 incomplete) |



mistake replied that *sharp* is used as an adjective, and not as a part of an idiom.

( 7 ) After he recovered from his illness, he was in circulation again.

All except one participant in Group M used either of the two editions of the dictionary. Given below are the quickest search and the longest search involving a mistake:

M3 T CC (f: **circulation**) (a): (0.3, 0.0)
N4 T PPPP (f) Rx27 (w: def. 2) RRRRR (a: def. 3): (3.7, 3.2 with a mistake)

These protocol lines show that M3 did not even take 6 seconds within the entry to find the appropriate sense (sense 3), but that N4 could not decide the sense in which *circulation* was used in the target sentence and provided a wrong answer. With this question, we find a considerable difference between Group M and Group N in terms of the rapidity and accuracy of understanding the definition. On the other hand, no particular difference with regard to searchability is found between the two editions.

( 8 ) Twenty years ago, my father was fit as a fiddle.

Only one participant understood this sentence without referring to a dictionary. Just as the case with (5) and (6), the entire search time is first tabulated in Table 8.13.

For a more detailed analysis, the table for the search time after locating one of the components of the idiom (**fit** or **fiddle**) is further divided according to the entry that was searched first, which is presented in Table 8.14. The result of the participant in Group N who typed "fit as a fiddle" in the search box is excluded from the table.

Table 8.13 The entire search time for **fit as a fiddle**

| edition referred to | Group M (n = 8) | Group N (n = 14) |
|---|---|---|
| *OALD7*-CD (n = 10) | 0.2, 0.2, 1.0, 1.7 | 0.3, 0.8, 2.1, (1.4, 1.8, 1.8 incomplete) |
| *OALD7*-P (n = 12) | 0.3. 0.5, 4.0, (3.7 incomplete) | 2.1, (0.8 with a mistake), (1.3, 1.3, 1.8, 2.2, 2.2, 5.1 incomplete) |

Table 8.14 The search time after locating **fit** or **fiddle**

| edition referred to | item searched first | Group M (n = 7) | Group N (n = 13) |
|---|---|---|---|
| *OALD7*-CD (n = 9) | **fit** | 0.1 | 0.7, 2.0, (1.6 incomplete) |
| | **fiddle** | 0.1, 0.9, 1.6 | (1.3, 1.7 incomplete) |
| *OALD7*-P (n = 10) | **fit** | 0.1, 0.4 | (1.7 incomplete) |
| | **fiddle** | 3.7, (3.5 incomplete) | 1.7, (0.6 with a mistake), (0.7, 1.2, 1.4, 1.9, 4.8 incomplete) |

The users of either edition tend to look up **fiddle** presumably because they suppose they know the meaning of *fit* or because they do not consider *fit as a fiddle* to be an idiom. The results, however, show that those who first searched for **fit** outperformed those who looked up **fiddle** first. To cope with this complexity, *OALD7*-CD should be devised such that it draws the users' attention to the left column that lists the idioms containing *fiddle*, and *OALD7*-P should explain the meaning of the idiom under the entry for **fiddle** rather than cross-refer the users to **fit**. Of the 9 who used *OALD7*-P and searched for **fiddle** first and then turned the pages to **fit**, 8 did not seem to do so because they saw and understood the cross-reference "more at FIT *adj.*"

(9) Fear dogs those who cannot find a place to live. (6 participants were presented with another sentence beginning with the words "Poverty dogs . . . .")

Of the 17 (including 7 in Group M) who were presented with the sentence that began with *Fear*, only 3 (2 in Group M) provided the right answer. Of the 6 (2 in Group M) whose target sentence began with *Poverty*, only 3 (1 in Group M) provided the right answer. All the others did not even find that *dog* can be used as a verb before providing a wrong answer or abandoning their search. This suggests that the entry for *dog* in both editions of *OALD7* should be so devised that the users are reminded of its verbal use (and less common uses of any word in general), if the publisher



and editors aim the dictionary at those who do not understand what the main verb is in *Poverty dogs those who cannot find a place to live.*

(10) safety net

In response to Question (10), 2 participants did not refer to a dictionary, 11 used *OALD7*-CD, 10 used *OALD7*-P, and 1 who used *OALD7*-CD abandoned her search for the English equivalent of the Japanese "安全ネット" (*safety net*).

For further analysis of the results of Question (10), the table for the search time after locating one of (part of) the components of the compound (**safety**, **safe** or **net**) is divided depending on the entry that was searched first, which is shown in Table 8.16.

5 participants who used *OALD7*-P did not seem to specify the item that they searched for but turned to the page that had **safe**, **safety**, and **safety net** printed on them. The possibility of such a "fuzzy" search seems to have reduced the entire search time for the participants who used the printed edition. For those who used *OALD7*-CD, the search was an easy

Table 8.15 The entire search time for **safety net**

| edition referred to | Group M (n = 7) | Group N (n = 14) |
|---|---|---|
| *OALD7*-CD (n = 11) | 0.1, 0.1, 0.4, 1.2 | 0.4, 0.5, 0.7, 0.7, 0.8, 2.6, (4.0 incomplete) |
| *OALD7*-P (n = 10) | 0.2, 0.3, 2.6 | 0.2, 0.4, 0.5, 0.5, 0.7, 0.9, 1.5 |

Table 8.16 The search time after locating **safety**, **safe**, or **net**

| edition referred to | item searched first | Group M (n = 7) | Group N (n = 14) |
|---|---|---|---|
| *OALD7*-CD (n = 11) | **safety** | 0.0, 1.1 | 0.3, 0.4, 0.5 |
| | **safe** | — | 0.6, 0.7, 2.5, (3.7 incomplete) |
| | **net** | 0.3 | — |
| | **safety net** | 0.0 | — |
| *OALD7*-P (n = 10) | **safety** | 0.1 | 1.2 |
| | **safe** | 2.2 | 0.5 |
| | **safety net** | — | 0.0 |

task if they first typed "safety" and/or if they were aware of the list of headwords provided on the left side of the main dictionary text (in the case where one participant entered "net"). However, if "safe" is the word that first comes to mind, or if one cannot decide whether the English phrase searched for begins with *safe* or *safety*, the users of *OALD*7-P have a clear advantage, thanks to the characteristic of the printed edition that allows them to glance at an entire page at one time.

## 8.10. The results of Task 2

210 people participated in Task 2, of whom 22 actually operated the computer under the researcher's instruction, to judge whether or not the nine features of *OALD*7-CD were useful for them; the others merely observed his demonstration. Their evaluation of each feature is reported in Tables 8.17 and 8.18. The former tabulates the evaluation by all the 210 participants, and the latter presents the data that are more reliable in some way: the evaluation by 22 participants with hands-on experience, and that by 41 participants who were judged as "good readers of definitions" from their performance in Task 4 (see Section 8.12.).

The recorded sound was evaluated by 21 participants as D (not useful and I will not use it). Of the 21 participants, 2 stated that they did not want to listen to the recorded sound since they understood the phonetic symbols perfectly. Apart from them, 1 answered in the questionnaire that they looked up dictionaries to check pronunciation "very often," 3 answered "often," 5 "sometimes," 5 "not usually," and 5 "never." Of the 144 participants who evaluated the recorded sound as A (useful and I will use it), however, 9 answered that they looked up dictionaries to check pronunciation "very often," 38 answered "often," 49 "sometimes," 35 "not usually," and 13 "never." From this, we gather that most users with some interest in checking pronunciation in a dictionary appreciated the recorded sound, with some complaining about the slow start of the function.

Of the 76 who evaluated the "Wordfinder" as A (useful and I will use it), many answered in the questionnaire that they used a dictionary while trying to broaden their vocabulary less frequently than on other occasions: 6 answered "very often," 3 answered "often," 25 "sometimes," 29 "not usually," and 13 "never." It is anticipated that their use of the "Wordfinder" in *OALD*7-CD will encourage them to use it for vocabulary acquisition.



Table 8.17 Participants' evaluation of the nine features

| | Group | A (useful) | B (useful but difficult) | C (useful but time-consuming) | D (not useful) | E (other comments) | no evaluation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Know-how | M | 4 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | N | 91 | 47 | 39 | 18 | 1 | 5 |
| recorded sound | M | 2 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| | N | 142 | 14 | 22 | 19 | 1 | 3 |
| illustrations of related words | M | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | N | 109 | 16 | 17 | 47 | 9 | 3 |
| Example Sentences | M | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | N | 86 | 36 | 52 | 23 | 2 | 2 |
| Word-finder | M | 2 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| | N | 74 | 45 | 52 | 26 | 0 | 4 |
| Cultural Guide | M | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | N | 105 | 27 | 30 | 29 | 6 | 4 |
| wildcard search | M | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | N | 111 | 44 | 28 | 11 | 2 | 5 |
| search by idioms, *etc.* | M | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | N | 75 | 77 | 30 | 10 | 2 | 7 |
| double-click to access directly | M | 8 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | N | 146 | 22 | 14 | 12 | 3 | 4 |

As regards the cultural and encyclopedic information, the participants in Group N are less interested in it than those in Group M, as Table 8.8 shows. However, there are 105 participants in Group N who evaluated the Cultural Guide as A, of whom 4 answered in the questionnaire that they looked up dictionaries to check cultural information "very often," another 4 answered "often," 13 "sometimes," 53 "not usually," and 30 "never." [7] This result readily suggests that those who do not usually use printed

Table 8.18 Evaluation by those with hands-on experience and "good readers of definitions"

| | group | A (useful) | B (useful but difficult) | C (useful but time-consuming) | D (not useful) | E (other comments) | no evaluation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Know-how | h.o. | 11 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 0 |
| | g.r. | 18 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| recorded sound | h.o. | 11 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| | g.r. | 20 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| illustrations of related words | h.o. | 18 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| | g.r. | 26 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| Example Sentences | h.o. | 15 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| | g.r. | 19 | 4 | 11 | 6 | 0 | 1 |
| Word-finder | h.o. | 11 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| | g.r. | 13 | 6 | 12 | 9 | 0 | 1 |
| Cultural Guide | h.o. | 16 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| | g.r. | 21 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 1 |
| wildcard search | h.o. | 17 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| | g.r. | 22 | 11 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| search by idioms, *etc.* | h.o. | 17 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | g.r. | 18 | 11 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| double-click to access directly | h.o. | 20 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | g.r. | 29 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

dictionaries for checking cultural information may make a habit of using dictionaries for that purpose if they are provided with *OALD*7-CD.

Next, the numbers of votes to the 12 features given by all the participants are shown in Table 8.19.

Tables 8.17–8.19 indicate that even though some features (Know-how, wildcard search, and search by idioms) seem difficult to use at first sight, they often turn out to be usable after hands-on experience under instruction. This leads naturally to the conclusion that deliberate teaching on the



Table 8.19 The number of votes given by the participants

| | Group M (n = 9) | Group N (n = 201) | hands-on experience (n = 22) | Good readers (n = 41) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Know-how | 3 | 45 | 8 | 13 |
| recorded sound | 3 | 82 | 9 | 14 |
| illustrations of related words | 1 | 31 | 1 | 7 |
| Example Sentences | 2 | 34 | 5 | 5 |
| Wordfinder | 1 | 31 | 2 | 5 |
| Cultural Guide | 3 | 59 | 7 | 12 |
| wildcard search | 4 | 66 | 9 | 13 |
| search by idioms, *etc.* | 2 | 39 | 5 | 9 |
| double-click to jump | 4 | 78 | 12 | 19 |
| Word Origin | 1 | 12 | 4 | 3 |
| colored letters | 3 | 28 | 3 | 5 |
| colored illustrations | 0 | 14 | 0 | 3 |

use of the CD-ROM edition helps users realize the usefulness of some features that are lacking in its printed edition. In contrast to these "difficult" features, the features that seemed time-consuming to read through (Example Sentences and Wordfinder) are not welcomed even after hands-on experience.

## 8.11. Participants' attitude toward the pictorial illustrations

In its blurb on the back cover, *OALD*7-P claims that users will find "2,000 words illustrated." We counted approximately 2,000 black-and-white pictorial illustrations in the main text. In addition, it has an 8-page "Maps" section and "Colour topic pages" that occupy 24 pages in the "Reference section," both printed in full color and placed close to the end of the volume. *OALD*7-CD has a greater number of colored illustrations in the "Dictionary" section than in the main text of the printed edition. It also has a special function with which if a user clicks on some pictorial illustrations, the illustrations of other related terms also appear in the enlarged illustration box. However, as shown in Tables 8.17–8.19, and by

the participants' comments, they did not evaluate the illustrations and the function peculiar to the CD-ROM edition very highly. The small number of participants who expressed misgivings ("difficult to use" and "time-consuming") indicates that they would not hesitate to refer to illustrations should they feel the need to do so. However, the lack of popularity presented in Table 8.19 has convinced us that even with this special function, the illustration cannot be regarded as one of the distinctive features that make *OALD*7-CD particularly attractive. One might anticipate that many of those who are interested in cultural and encyclopedic information are fascinated by colorful pictures and evaluate this function highly. However, the results of our questionnaire and Task 2 shows that of the 16 participants who "very often" or "often" use a dictionary for the purpose of "finding cultural information" and performed Task 2, only 3 voted for this function.

The following are the participants' comments on pictorial illustrations:

- Some pictures have been taken from extraordinarily good angles. For example, the picture of a **drum kit** is often taken from an angle in the direction of the auditorium, but the one in *OALD*7-CD (and also that in *OALD*7-P) has been taken from the opposite direction so that every instrument can be seen clearly.
- There should be more pictorial illustrations in the Cultural Guide.

We may add some comments on some particular illustrations:

- In the picture of the **woodwind**, the label "reed" is attached only to the clarinet, but the reeds of the oboe and bassoon are easier to recognize (to distinguish from the main body of the instrument); thus it is worth labeling them as such.
- In the "Maps" section of *OALD*7-P, the orbit of Pluto seems as though it could go in the vicinity of the orbit of Venus, which is clearly incorrect.
- On the pages for "Sports" in the "Reference section," only spectator sports and extreme sports are shown, or for what can be seen as a participation sport, only the picture of seemingly professional players is shown. Why are there no pictures in this section illustrating participation sports played by lay people?



### 8.12. Results of Task 3

13 participants looked up a total of 44 words in *OALD*7-CD and a total of 37 words in the printed edition. The numbers are 20 and 15 for 8 participants in Group M, and 24 and 22 for 5 others. In order to support the idea that the ease of search in the CD-ROM edition will encourage the participants to look up more words, more research is required. However, Koyama & Takeuchi (2004b) reports that the frequent lookup does not necessarily help users read better. Such being the case, we might as well shift our focus to other related issues, such as the possibility of the users' incidental vocabulary acquisition that may accompany their lookup.

### 8.13. Results of Task 4

Finally, the participants had to compare the definitions in two dictionaries. The following are the target sentences, the underlined target words, and the compared definitions.

( 1 ) **wiry** Those policemen are thin and wiry.
[*LDOCE*4] someone who is wiry is thin but has strong muscles
[*OALD*7] (of a person) thin but strong

( 2 ) **baleful** The man gave us a baleful look.
[*OALD*7] threatening to do sth evil or to hurt sb
[*OALD*6] threatening evil or harm

( 3 ) **chirp** Can you guess what is chirping in this box?
[an invented definition] When a small bird or an insect chirps, it makes short high sounds.
[*OALD*7] (of small birds and some insects) to make short high sounds

( 4 ) **labyrinth** I got lost in the labyrinth of streets.
[*OALD*7] a complicated series of paths, which it is difficult to find your way through
[*COBUILD*4] If you describe a place as a labyrinth, you mean that it is made up of a complicated series of paths or passages, through which it is difficult to find your way.

(5–A) **compete** Several companies are competing for the contract.

(5–B) **compete** Small independent shops cannot compete with large supermarkets.
[*COBUILD*4] When one firm or country competes with another,

it tries to get people to buy its own goods in preference to those of the other firm or country.

[*OALD7*] to try to be more successful or better than sb else who is trying to do the same as you

( 6 ) **unity** Unity is strength.

[*OALD7*] the state of being in agreement and working together; the state of being joined together to form one unit

[*LDOCE4*] when a group of people or countries agree or are joined together

(7–A) **backing** What qualities does a backing singer need?

[*OALD7*] (in pop songs) music that accompanies the main singer or tune

[*LDOCE4*] the music that is played at the same time as a singer's voice

(7–B) **backing** What qualities does a backing singer need?

[*OALD6*] (in pop songs) music that ACCOMPANIES (= is played with) the main singer or tune

[*LDOCE4*] the music that is played at the same time as a singer's voice

( 8 ) **relapse** My father has suffered a relapse of depression for a week.

[*LDOCE4*] when someone becomes ill again after having seemed to improve

[*OALD7*] the fact of becoming ill/sick again after making an improvement

In Question (5), the participants in Group A and Group B read different sentences, but both used the same dictionaries. For Question (7), the two groups were provided with different editions of *OALD* to compare with *LDOCE4*, although the target sentence was the same for both groups. This is because we had decided that it was not preferable to allow the participants to directly compare the definition in *OALD6* with that in *OALD7*, which would have led to excessive concentration on the presence or absence of the gloss for the word *accompany*. Rather, we allowed some of the participants to compare the definition in *OALD7* with that in *LDOCE4*, and the rest to compare the definition in *OALD6* with that in *LDOCE4*. This would allow us to indirectly compare their preference for the definitions in *OALD6* and *OALD7*.



Table 8.20 Evaluation of the definitions by all the participants

| | *OALD7* | *OALD6* | *LDOCE4* | *COBUILD4* | invented def. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) wiry (n = 193) | 107 (55%) | — | 86 | — | — |
| (2) baleful (n = 189) | 38 (20%) | 151 (80%) | — | — | — |
| (3) chirp (n = 181) | 98 (54%) | — | — | — | 83 |
| (4) labyrinth (n = 174) | 114 (66%) | — | — | 60 | — |
| (5–A) compete (n = 104) | 63 (61%) | — | — | 41 | — |
| (5–B) compete (n = 77) | 46 (60%) | — | — | 31 | — |
| (6) unity (n = 187) | 48 (26%) | — | 139 | — | — |
| (7–A) backing (n = 106) | 40 (38%) | — | 66 | — | — |
| (7–B) backing (n = 74) | — | 25 (34%) | 49 | — | — |
| (8) relapse (n = 170) | 76 (45%) | — | 94 | — | — |

201 participants performed this task. The number of participants who preferred the definition in each dictionary is listed in Tables 8.20–8.25. We will begin by showing in Table 8.20 the number of participants who preferred the definition in each dictionary.

From this table alone, we can gather the general tendency that long sentence definitions are not preferred, and that the "when" definition, often seen as a deviation from the norm, is not criticized by many. The latter has already been pointed out in Ichikawa *et al.* (2005: 28, 109). We will understand this in greater detail by selecting more reliable data from the overall results. Table 8.21 shows the evaluation by all the 9 participants in Group M.

The reason why the definition of **baleful** in *OALD7* was preferred by most of the participants in Group M but not by many of those in Group N is assumed to be that they want detailed information as long as they understand the definition that includes the dictionary convention such as *sth* and *sb* and the definition is not too long. The same tendency is observed in the popularity of the definition of **wiry** only among those in Group M and "good readers of definitions" (see below).

Next, in Table 8.22, the evaluation by only those who demonstrated an understanding of each target sentence, target word, or definition is taken into account.

Table 8.21 Evaluation by the participants in Group M

| | *OALD7* | *OALD6* | *LDOCE4* | *COBUILD4* | invented def. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) wiry (n = 9) | 3 | — | 6 | — | — |
| (2) baleful (n = 9) | 8 | 1 | — | — | — |
| (3) chirp (n = 9) | 6 | — | — | — | 3 |
| (4) labyrinth (n = 9) | 5 | — | — | 4 | — |
| (5–A) compete (n = 5) | 3 | — | — | 2 | — |
| (5–B) compete (n = 4) | 2 | — | — | 2 | — |
| (6) unity (n = 9) | 6 | — | 3 | — | — |
| (7–A) backing (n = 5) | 5 | — | 0 | — | — |
| (7–B) backing (n = 4) | — | 2 | 2 | — | — |
| (8) relapse (n = 6) | 3 | — | 3 | — | — |

Table 8.22 Evaluation by the participants who understood the meaning

| | *OALD7* | *OALD6* | *LDOCE4* | *COBUILD4* | invented def. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) wiry (n =168) | 97 (58%) | — | 71 | — | — |
| (2) baleful (n = 109) | 28 (26%) | 81(74%) | — | — | — |
| (3) chirp (n = 170) | 92 (54%) | — | — | — | 78 |
| (4) labyrinth (n = 151) | 103 (68%) | — | — | 48 | — |
| (5–A) compete (n = 90) | 60 (67%) | — | — | 30 | — |
| (5–B) compete (n = 64) | 40 (63%) | — | — | 24 | — |
| (6) unity (n = 163) | 41 (25%) | — | 122 | — | — |
| (7-A) backing (n = 62) | 24 (39%) | — | 38 | — | — |
| (7-B) backing (n = 50) | — | 20(40%) | 30 | — | — |
| (8) relapse (n = 88) | 32 (36%) | — | 56 | — | — |

Finally, the data of those who provided more than one incorrect answer in Task 4 are excluded from Table 8.23, leaving behind the data of 76 participants, who may well be regarded as "good readers of definitions."

Judging mainly from Table 8.23, with occasional reference to Tables 8.20–8.22, the participants displayed a tendency to dislike not only lengthy definitions (confirmed by (4), (5), and (6)) but also sentence definitions (confirmed by (3)). They also showed a tendency to be unfamiliar with the



Table 8.23 Evaluation by those who are regarded as "good readers of definitions"

| | *OALD7* | *OALD6* | *LDOCE4* | *COBUILD4* | invented def. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) wiry (n = 75) | 35 (47%) | — | 40 | — | — |
| (2) baleful (n = 76) | 22 (29%) | 54 (71%) | — | — | — |
| (3) chirp (n = 71) | 45 (63%) | — | — | — | 26 |
| (4) labyrinth (n = 71) | 48 (68%) | — | — | 23 | — |
| (5–A) compete (n = 38) | 24 (63%) | — | — | 14 | — |
| (5–B) compete (n = 37) | 22 (59%) | — | — | 15 | — |
| (6) unity (n = 71) | 27 (38%) | — | 48 | — | — |
| (7–A) backing (n = 37) | 11 (30%) | — | 26 | — | — |
| (7–B) backing (n = 36) | — | 13 (36%) | 23 | — | — |
| (8) relapse (n = 65) | 25 (38%) | — | 40 | — | — |

dictionary convention (by (2), in which most participants in Group M preferred the definition in *OALD7* with *sth* and *sb* while most participants in Group N preferred that in *OALD6* without them), and to not be troubled by the grammatical oddities of the "when" definitions (by (6) and (8)). If the definition "someone who is wiry is thin but has strong muscles" in *LDOCE4* is barely within the participants' permissible range concerning lengthiness at this stage, deliberate teaching that prompts users to read longer definitions is crucial.

The division of the participants into two groups in (5) and (7) did not reveal what we had aimed for in either case. In the case of (5), the effect of the similarity between the target sentence and the definition was not found; instead, the popularity of a compact definition was highlighted. In the case of (7), the presence or absence of the gloss for a difficult word did not greatly affect the result. What it revealed was the fact that the definition in *LDOCE4*, criticized as being inaccurate or insufficient by 3 participants in Group M, was preferred because of its plain wording.

In sum, *OALD7*'s phrase definition was generally preferred over *COBUILD4*'s sentence definition, largely because the latter is often too long and complicated. However, *LDOCE4*'s definition was more eagerly welcomed, particularly by the participants in Group M and good readers of definitions, even though in some cases it utilizes the "when" definition.

Two cases of the change of definition from *OALD*6 to *OALD*7 were surveyed, and one of them (**baleful** in (2)) was almost exclusively welcomed by the participants in Group M. Together with the result of (1), which was also welcomed by particular groups, the result of (2) has reconfirmed us in the view that dictionaries should be edited and revised bearing the target users in mind.

The order of popularity of these three dictionaries coincides with the smallness of the DV and the strictness with which the definitions are written within the DV: most headwords in *LDOCE*4 are defined within its carefully chosen 2,000-word DV (Ichikawa *et al.* 2005: 29–30); Oxford 3000 is not a DV in its traditional sense (see Section 4.1.); *COBUILD*4 does not adopt any DV. This fact helps to reconfirm us in the view that the DV is useful for defining, and that difficult words should be avoided in definitions.

### 8.14. Suggestions for further improvement

Given more time and human and financial resources, the present study could be, or should be, improved in the following ways. First, the number of English majors should be increased, and the number of participants who perform one-on-one interviews (Tasks 1 and 3) and those who can actually operate the computer in Task 2 should also be increased. This, however, is always difficult to achieve in practice. Second, one might have cast some doubt on the reliability of the results of Task 4. If a researcher were to check whether a participant had prior knowledge of the meaning of the target word or whether he or she understood the target sentence by reading the definition, it would have been possible to obtain more accurate results. The task could have been more realistic if the researcher presented the participants with a definition from only one dictionary at a time rather than two and had asked them to state their opinion regarding the definition presented. This task, however, would make them feel at a loss due to the lack of a basis for comparison. Third, the insider approach should be maintained so that the researcher can ask a participant about the answer in case it is obvious that he or she has made a common mistake. With all these practical limitations and reservations, however, we believe that our user research has shed light on some important aspects of the use of *OALD*7-CD and other dictionaries by students at universities in Japan.

(T. Kanazashi)



## 9. Conclusion

Now here is the summary of our critical review of *OALD*7. *OALD*7 has introduced a large number of headwords. In addition to some new words in the English lexicon many other words have been introduced from a wide range of varieties of English and from various technical fields. This will help the users with a wider range of reading, and can be therefore regarded as an improvement in this learner's dictionary. While the number of deleted items is small, we should nevertheless feel that, for the sake of learners, some headwords should not have been cut.

The pronunciation of *OALD* may be considered a little more prescriptive than that presented by *LPD*2, particularly for words which are known to have more than one way of pronunciation. There are not many differences between *OALD*6, the paper version of *OALD*7 and the written information on *OALD*7-CD, and the phonetic transcripts in *OALD*7-CD are the same as in the paper version of *OALD*7 except for instances of the label *NAmE*. It seems that the pronunciation of each of *OALD*7's headwords that were not in *OALD*6 has been transcribed according to the same set of principles for the entire dictionary. The recordings on *OALD*7-CD are a valuable source of information, but the sound icons are sometimes positioned in potentially misleading places, especially the icons for North American recordings.

In regards to definitions and labels, apart from the introduction of the Oxford 3000 and regional labels such as *CanE*, few major changes have been made. The Oxford 3000 is not only expected to play the role of DV, but also as a collection of important words that learners of English should acquire. This innovative approach to DV has opened up different possibilities for improving dictionary definitions for foreign learners. Moreover, there is also evidence to suggest that the Oxford lexicographers' use of their DV has got better, though there is still some room for improvement. As for the regional labels introduced in *OALD*7, it seems fair to say

that *OALD7* shows itself to be more attentive to the varieties of English. There are, however, several cases where labels, such as *dialect*, are used rather inconsistently. We hope that future editions of *OALD* will take steps to improve matters here even more.

In reverse proportion to the increase of headwords, the number of examples has dropped. This cannot be probably helped with the paper edition because of the space restrictions. In the electronic format, more examples have been made available in the separate window, 'Example Sentences'. However, what users find here are automatic search results presented in no discernible, logical or accessible order. The usefulness of this function, therefore, seems rather doubtful.

*OALD7* provides various usage notes, as the previous edition did, in order to enrich the learner's vocabulary. In addition to five kinds of notes (i.e. 'Which Word?', 'Vocabulary Building', 'Grammar Point', 'British/American', and 'More About') in *OALD6*, *OALD7* introduces the new category of 'Synonyms'. Here, the 'Which Word?' notes in *OALD6* have been reorganized into 'Synonyms' and 'Which Word?' in the seventh edition, and the total number of usage notes has substantially increased. The *OALD7*-CD also features the etymology of some words and expressions.

*OALD7*-CD has successfully incorporated the Cultural Guide and the Wordfinder and gives users much more information than the printed edition. It also offers simple basic search functions for headwords that a general user might wish to check. These points make this CD-ROM edition rather appealing in terms of content. However, the two finder functions are very slow, their search functionality lacks versatility, it takes a long time for some types of search and the program is far from easy to use in general. These shortcomings may prevent most users from daily use. So, we give a low score to the *OALD7*-CD as a reference work for easy consultation.

Finally, as part of our review, we conducted user research with over 350 participants. Among our main findings are (1) despite participants' frequent use of hand-held electronic dictionaries and personal computers, few of them had used CD-ROM dictionaries; (2) monolingual English dictionaries were less frequently used than English-Japanese or Japanese-English dictionaries; (3) once users realized that there is a list of items searched in the column on the left side of the computer screen (which the printed edition lacks), the search often became easy; (4) participants tended to recoil from using features of *OALD7*-CD that appeared difficult at first sight; and (5) they were often overwhelmed because they did not understand dictionary conventions. These insights suggest that explicit instruction about how to use the CD-ROM edition will be necessary with class groups.



## NOTES

**Section 1**

1) The number of lines in each column slightly differs from page to page in each edition, but the three editions have approximately the same number of lines.

**Section 2**

1) Their abbreviations, *DfES* and *DWP*, are entered instead in the present edition.
2) **Euro** is also included in *OALD6*.

Section 4

1) In *OALD7*-CD, the labels are presented in the same form as the printed edition. However, some labels such as *EAfrE* are arguably unintelligible, and space matters less in the electric version. It would be desirable to spell them out in full to help the user recognize them more easily (Akasu *et al.* 2005: 165).
2) The paper edition lists labels of varieties and register and only one subject area label *technical*. It should be also noted here that the list of the labels in *OALD7*-CD is not exhaustive; there are labels which are not listed but are actually employed such as *Russian* at **apparatchik**. In addition, the list in *OALD7*-CD fails to include the label *SEAsianE*, which is listed in the printed edition.
3) As for **it'll be all right on the night**, *spoken* has been replaced with *saying* in *OALD7*. **Don't ask, don't ask me, I ask you, if you ask me** and **agrro** are assigned both *spoken* and *informal* in *OALD6*, but *spoken* has been deleted in *OALD7*. These are counted as deleted.
4) In the seventh edition, only *informal* and *formal* are attached to **lots of love** (**from**) and **son** respectively.
5) However, we found *rare* label at **malefactor**.
6) *OALD6* does not put *guitar* in small capitals because it includes the item in its DV.

**Section 6**

1) It might be pointed out here that according to the inventory of 'Vocabulary Building' at R93, 'Ways of saying approximately' should be given at **about**, but it is actually found at

**approximately** in the paper edition. On the other hand, *OALD7*-CD does have the note at **about**. This inconsistency is likely to confuse the user; it should have been modified and synchronized through printed and electric versions.

2) http://www.oup.com/elt/local/global/promotion/compass?cc=gb 2005.1.15.

**Section 7**

1) Not all the items are given; for example, **halfway** has "halfway to/towards sth | halfway to/towards doing sth" in the second sense and "halfway decent" in the third sense, but only the latter is listed as a candidate for the Structures when "halfway" is searched for. What makes the difference is unknown.

2) This function does not always work correctly; for instance, putting "n-a-n(-o-m)" in the search box highlights **naïve** (an alternate of **naive**), while typing "n-a-n-o-m-e(-t)" results in the word **naïvely** (an alternate of **naively** which is a run-on of **naive**) highlighted in the candidates, and typing "n-a-n-o-m-e-t-e" finally highlights **nanometer**. Another example of incorrectness is the case of typing "m-a-n" into the box, which results in "maître" being highlighted. What is worse, "maître" is only a part of **maître d'**, which does not appear as a headword in the candidates because it is a compound. These must be due to errors in the program or the data.

3) There are cases where the automatic suggestion does not work for this case, too; one example is that it works for **on-air** while it does not for **hoo-ha**.

4) The automatic suggestion, however, does not work in this case.

5) Headwords including apostrophes or hyphens seem to be regarded as consisting of the parts split by apostrophes and hyphens; **state's attorney**, for example, consists of "state", "'s", and "attorney", and **trompe l'œil** consists of "trompe", "l'", and "œil". Searching with an apostrophe or a hyphen alone causes an error in the program.

6) Suggested candidates in the look-up window are basically the same as those items that are listed as Headwords when the word in question is searched for in the basic search. However, there are cases where (some of the relevant) phrasal verbs are also listed, the reason and criterion for which is unknown.

7) Problems of this kind are seen in the notes such as 'Synonyms' and 'Vocabulary Building'. Hyphenated words do not yield the right search results, either.

8) Although the on-line help says that "* means one or more characters", it also matches zero characters; searching for "color*", for instance, matches not only **colorant**, **coloration**, etc. but also **color** itself. The symbol "?" matches any one character as the on-line help describes.

9) Upper and lower cases are not differentiated.

10) Searching with "noun:lead", for example, gives "lead / form a government" in the section 'Structures', where *lead* is used as a verb. **Government** does not have any other uses of *lead*.

11) Etymological information seems to be regarded as a part of definitions.

**Section 8**

1) 140 named a dictionary produced by Casio Computing Co. Ltd., 52 named one produced by Sharp Corporation, and 24 named one produced by Seiko Instruments Inc. None of them contains *OALD* of any edition.



2) Note that the means indicated at the bottom of Tables 8.1–8.6 are merely arithmetic averages calculated from the graded frequencies. They are not means in the strict sense of the word because the differences between two consecutive numbers are not equal.

3) The means at the bottom of Tables 8.7 and 8.8 should be treated as mere arithmetic averages, as is the case with the means indicated in Tables 8.1–8.6.

4) The answers of M9 and some other participants are regarded as "partially" right, since they took eighth to be merely an ordinal number. Even this partially right answer was sufficient to show that the participant had understood the word note correctly.

5) Three participants did not search for **rush**. Of these, one entered "rushed" into the "Search for" box and found in 0.1 minutes that the entry immediately after **rushed** was **rush hour**. Another participant entered "rush hour" and found the entry, and still another stated that he decided to search for **rush hour** before turning the pages.

6) From this table onward, the searches that were not completed are noted as "incomplete," and those during which the participants provided a wrong answer and the researcher asked them to search again are noted as "with a mistake."

7) One participant who evaluated the Cultural Guide as A did not fill out the questionnaire.

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

(1) How long have you studied English?

(2) Please name the English dictionary you use most frequently. Is it an electronic or a printed dictionary?

(3) How often do you use an English-Japanese dictionary, a Japanese-English dictionary, and a monolingual English dictionary for your English studies? Please circle one of the following five choices that is the closest to the frequency of your dictionary use: <almost every day, twice or three times a week, once a week, less frequently, never>

(4) How often do you use a hand-held electronic dictionary? Please circle one of the following: <almost every day, twice or three times a week, once a week, less frequently, never >

(5) How often do you use a personal computer? Please circle one of the following: <almost every day, twice or three times a week, once a week, less frequently, never>

(6) How often do you use a CD-ROM edition of a dictionary? <almost every day, twice or three times a week, once a week, less frequently, never>

(7) On what occasions do you use an English dictionary of any kind? Please circle one of the following for each purpose: <very often, often, sometimes, not usually, never>
— while reading English
— while translating English into Japanese
— while writing English
— while translating Japanese into English
— while trying to broaden your vocabulary

(8) For what purposes do you use an English dictionary of any kind? Please circle one of the following for each purpose: <very often, often, sometimes, not usually, never>
— finding cultural information

— finding collocations
— checking spelling
— checking whether a word exists
— checking part of speech
— looking up meanings
— finding synonyms or antonyms
— finding etymology
— checking pronunciation
— checking grammar (verb pattern, countability of a noun, *etc.*)

Appendix 2 Task 1

The target words and phrases are underlined in Questions (1)–(4) and (6)–(9). In Questions (5) and (10), the participants were provided with the Japanese equivalent of the target compound and asked to imagine that they were composing an English sentence that include the compound. In the other questions, the participants were not informed about the target words or phrases.

(1) I didn't bring the score of what we are going to practice in our chorus.
(2) I always feel scared when the teacher bears down on us in class.
(3) I suspect that this eighth note should be an A rather than a C.
(4) It takes a lot of courage to acknowledge our mistakes.
(5) rush hour (the Japanese equivalent: ラッシュアワー)
(6) Hey, look sharp! It's already 11:00.
(7) After he recovered from his illness, he was in circulation again.
(8) Twenty years ago, my father was fit as a fiddle.
(9) Fear dogs those who cannot find a place to live. (6 participants faced another sentence starting with "Poverty dogs . . . .")
(10) safety net (the Japanese equivalent: 安全ネット)

## DICTIONARIES


*COBUILD3* *Collins COBUILD English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, Third Edition. Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2001.

*COBUILD4* *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*, New Edition. Glasgow: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003.

*EPD16* *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, Sixteenth Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

*LDOCE1* *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, First Edition. Harlow: Longman, 1978.

*LDOCE3* *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, Third Edition. Harlow: Longman, 1995.

*LDOCE4* *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, Fourth Edition. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2003.

*LPD1* *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary*. Harlow: Addison Wesley Longman, 1990.

*LPD2* *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary*, Second Edition. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2000.





*MED* *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*. Oxford: Macmillan Education, 2002.

*MWCD11* *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition. Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 2003.

*OALD4* *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, Fourth edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

*OALD5* *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Fifth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

*OALD6* *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Sixth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

*OALD7* *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Seventh Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

*ODP* *Oxford Dictionary of Pronunciation for Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.


## REFERENCES


Akasu, Kaoru, *et al.* 2001. "An analysis of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, sixth edition." *Lexicon* 31: 1–51.

Akasu, Kaoru, *et al.* 2005. "An analysis of *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*." *Lexicon* 35: 127–84.

Ayto, John. 1984. "The vocabulary of definition." In D. Götz *et al.* (eds.) *Theoreische und Praktische Probleme der Lexikographie*. München: Hueber, 50–62

Collins, Beverley, and Inger M. Mees. 2003. *Practical Phonetics and Phonology: A Resource Book for Students*. London: Routledge.

Dohi, Kazuo, *et al.* 2002. "An analysis of *Longman Advanced American Dictionary*." *Lexicon* 32: 1–96.

Fox, Gwyneth. 1989. "A vocabulary for writing dictionaries." In M. L. Tickoo (ed.) *Learner's Dictionaries. State of the Art*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, 153–71.

Herbst, Thomas. 1986. "Defining with a controlled defining vocabulary in a foreign learners' dictionaries." *Lexicographica* 2: 101–19.

Ichikawa, Yasuo, *et al.* 2005. "An analysis of *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, fourth edition." *Lexicon* 35: 1–126.

Iwasaki, Hirosada. 2002. *Eigo Jishoryoku wo Kitaeru — Anatano Eigo wo Kaeru Kaiteki Jisho Katsuyo Jutsu* [Strategies for Using English Dictionaries]. Tokyo: DHC.

Jackson, Howard. 2002. *Lexicography: An Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge.

Kanazashi, Takashi. 2001. "User's guides in English-Japanese dictionaries for learners, with particular reference to grammatical information." Exeter University unpublished PhD thesis.

Kawamura, Akihiko. 2000. "Controlled defining vocabulary reconsidered — with special reference to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, sixth edition —" *Random* 25: 127–34.

Koyama, Toshiko and Osamu Takeuchi. 2003. "Printed dictionaries vs. electronic dictio-

naries: A pilot study on how Japanese EFL learners differ in using dictionaries." *Language Education & Technology* 40: 61–79.

Koyama, Toshiko and Osamu Takeuchi. 2004a. "Comparing electronic and printed dictionaries: How the difference affected EFL learning." *JACET Bulletin* 38: 33–46.

Koyama, Toshiko and Osamu Takeuchi. 2004b. "How look-up frequency affects EFL learning?: An empirical study on the use of handheld-electronic dictionaries." *Proceedings of CLaSIC 2004*, 1018–24.

Koyama, Toshiko and Osamu Takeuchi. 2005. "Does an assigned task result in better retention of words?: Two empirical studies on hand-held electronic dictionaries." *Language Education & Technology* 42: 119–32.

Masuda, Hideo, *et al.* 2005. "An analysis of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, eleventh edition." *Lexicon* 35: 185–253.

Minamide, Kosei. 1995. "Seigengoi ni yoru teigi to sono mondaiten [Definitions written with a defining vocabulary and their problems]." *The English Teachers' Magazine* 44/3: 78–9.

Osaki, Satsuki, *et al.* 2003. "Electronic dictionary vs. paper dictionary: Accessing the appropriate meaning, reading comprehension and retention". In Minoru Murata, Shigeru Yamada & Yukio Tono (eds.) *Dictionaries and Language Learning: How can Dictionaries Help Human & Machine Learning?* (Papers Submitted to the Third ASIALEX Biennial International Conference). Urayasu: Meikai University, 205–12.

Wells, John C. 1999. "*LPD* pronunciation preference survey 1998: Concise findings, listed alphabetically." http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/concise-results.pdf 2005. 12. 30.

Winkler, Brigit. 2001. "Students working with an English learners' dictionary on CD-ROM" Papers from the ITMELT 2001 Conference. http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/conference/papers2001/winkler.htm 2005. 12. 30.

# 私の郷里，私の英語学習

東　信行

郷里は紀伊半島東南部にある．名古屋を列車で出て，伊勢平野を南へ向かう．松坂辺りを過ぎるころから山の風景が続く．山間を走り，伊勢と紀州を隔てるいくつものトンネルを次々に下ってスピードが落ち始めると，初めて海が左側の車窓に飛び込んでくる．停車駅は紀伊長島．特急で約2時間．町名は紀北町であるが，これは近年の市町村合併が私の古里にも及んだ結果の改称で，昨秋(2005)のことである．

私は伊勢路といわれる熊野古道沿いの山を背にした家に昭和10年に生まれた．それは「荷坂峠」を越えて紀国に入る移動手段に代わるものとして，トンネルを掘りぬいて紀勢東線が開通したのが昭和5年のことであるから，地域の人々が名古屋・東京との距離の短縮を実体験したころであろうか．この熊野古道は，江戸期には紀州藩が参勤交代に使った道と聞く．さらに古く平安の時代から和歌山側の紀伊路と並ぶ熊野詣のためのルートでもあった．一昨年(2004)のことになるが，こうした参詣道が紀伊山地の霊場とともに世界遺産に登録された．道としては，スペインのサンチャゴへの道に続く2例目とのことである．長い間教育長として活躍し，熊野古道の書き物をいろいろと届けてくれる高校時代の友人がいるが，最近は古道を歩く人も多くなっているそうで，私も誘われている．彼の著した本からの一節を引く．「現在でも、良く晴れた日、[荷阪峠]コース途中の沖見平からの眺めは眼下に群青の熊野灘と入り組んだ大小の入り江、そして、点在する島々の織り成す光景が江戸時代の道中紀の挿絵さながらに展開しているのを見ることができる。」

私が生まれてしばらくすると，家族で大阪の郊外に移り住むことになった．日本が太平洋戦争に突入して間もないころ入学した小学校は，龍華国民学校と呼ばれていた．おぼろげな記憶になるが，通学には3, 40分はかかっていたであろう．学校の近くには聖徳太子の古戦場があった．やがて戦況が厳しくなってくる．我が家も古里へ引き揚げる．昭和19年の春のことで，小学3年から