

## REFERENCE

- Nesselhauf, Nadja. 2005. "Review of *A Valency Dictionary of English: A Corpus-Based Analysis of the Complementation Patterns of English Verbs, Nouns and Adjectives*." *English Language and Linguistics* 9.2: 391–399.

## An Analysis of Two Business English Dictionaries for Learners

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### 1. Introduction

This paper is a comparative critical review of two business English dictionaries (henceforth BEDs) for learners, namely, the *Longman Business English Dictionary* (2000, henceforth *LBED*), and the *Oxford Business English Dictionary for Learners of English* (2005, henceforth *OBED*). It is intended to be a comparative review wherein these dictionaries are compared not only with each other, but also with general-purpose EFL dictionaries such as *LDOCE4* and *OALD7*, and competing specialized dictionaries for English speakers (*ODAc3*, *ODBM4*, and *ODEcon2*). In order to highlight and discuss the peculiarities of the dictionaries of this specific genre, I will mainly focus on the headwords (Section 2), the subject labels (Section 3), definitions, examples and collocations (Section 4), and special features such as notes and columns in relation to a user study (Section 5). Section 6 presents the overall conclusion. Pronunciation, illustration, and middle and back matters are not mainly dealt with here, as they are not central issues of the BEDs.

For a quick survey of headwords, subject labels, definitions, and examples, I have designated the following as samples: (1) pages from the beginning of the A section to the end of the words beginning with *ac-*, (2) pages in the F section up till the end of the words beginning with *fe-*, (3) pages in the P section after the words beginning with *ps-*, and (4) from the page having the words beginning with *wi-* to the end of the dictionary text are designated as the sample, although other pages are referred to where appropriate. These four parts comprise roughly 5% of each dictionary text.

Thus, in the tables below, by multiplying the number corresponding to the samples by 20, one can approximate the number in the entire dictionary. More accurately, one needs to multiply by 20.2, 20.7, 19.8, 16.4, 18.8, and 28.9 for *LBED*, *OBED*, *OALD7*, *ODAc3*, *ODBM4*, and *ODEcon2*, respectively, as the sample pages take up 4.94%, 4.83%, 5.09%, 6.09%, 5.31%, and 3.46%, respectively.<sup>1)</sup>

## 2. Headwords

### 2.1. Headwords included in the BEDs

*LBED* claims, on the back cover, that it has 'over 20,000 words and phrases', and *OBED* says that '[i]t explains more than 30,000 words, phrases and meanings'. However, these figures were arrived at by using what Landau (1989: 84) refers to as 'the American system of entry counting, which includes not just headwords but many other entries as well'. In what follows, main entry items, run-on idioms, phrasal verbs, derivatives, and compounds (including the compounds referred to as 'different types of headwords' in *LBED*) are all that are counted as entries. The numbers of words in the sample from each BED and those in the sample from *OALD7*, *ODAc3*, *ODBM4*, and *ODEcon2* for comparison are tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1 Entry items

	noun	c.n.	v.	adj.	adv.	abbr.	others	idiom	phr.v.	deriv.	total
<i>LBED</i>	415	276	51	37	7	39	2	0	40	25	566
<i>OBED</i>	411	244	64	82	20	44	4	67	98	55	748
<i>OALD7</i>	1,451	411	267	453	132	50	80	533	270	241	3,022
<i>OBED</i> only	173	154	4	29	8	19	1	16	4	21	253
<i>ODAc3</i>	170	149	1	6	3	25	1	0	1	0	205
<i>ODBM4</i>	303	236	1	6	1	42	1	0	1	0	354
<i>ODEcon2</i>	128	97	0	1	0	9	0	0	1	0	139

In Table 1, 'c.n.' refers to compound nouns (except solid compounds) and noun phrases including proper nouns, and the number in the 'noun'

column includes the number of them. The proportion of such compounds and phrases are the highest in the specialized dictionaries for English speakers, and the lowest in a general-purpose EFL dictionary. '*OBED* only' refers to the entries contained in *OBED* but not in *OALD7* even as an example or a collocation. They are typically compound nouns such as **purchase invoice**, **pure profit**, and **year to date**; compound adjectives such as **family-friendly**, **without-profit**, and **worst-performing**; abbreviations such as **WIP** and **wk**; and idioms such as **tighten/loosen the purse strings**.

Many of the items counted here are main entry items and others are run-on words and phrases. None of the run-on derivatives in the three dictionaries for learners is provided with any definition; however, all the derivatives in the BEDs have the indication of part of speech, and most of them include at least one example.

From this table, we can surmise that (1) the BEDs are abundant with nouns, (2) both BEDs contain hardly any function words, (3) *OBED* treats idioms and phrasal verbs more generously than *LBED*, and (4) the vast majority of entries in the three business-related dictionaries for English speakers are nouns and abbreviations.

In addition to the 406 nouns, *LBED* contains more noun entries, but they comprise 211 compounds without any information except the sign 'see . . .' or 'see under . ..'. For this emptiness, they are excluded from Table 1. A full description of such compounds in *LBED* appears under 'different types of a particular entry'. If such entries are not counted, the total number of entry items in each dictionary can be obtained by adding the number of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, abbreviations, and other words — i.e. the words that do not belong to any of the parts of speech previously mentioned,<sup>1)</sup> — and subtracting the number of derivatives (since derivatives are already counted as one of the parts of speech), and taking into consideration the headwords that list more than one part of speech. From the total number of entries, we gather that both BEDs are much smaller in size than *OALD7*.

In *LBED*, entries for many adjective-noun compounds merely provide cross-references to the entry under which they are fully treated. Take the

entry for **seed money** for example:

**seed money** — see under MONEY [*LBED*]

This compound is defined and exemplified as one of the 28 ‘different types of the entry’ for **money**. The ‘different types’ are classified depending on which of the seven senses of **money** they are used in, and under each sense the compounds are listed alphabetically. Thus, **conduct money**, **danger money**, **easy money**, **fall money**, **funny money**, **hush money**, **paper money**, **plastic money**, and **spending money** are all listed under Sense 1 of **money** ‘coins, banknotes and bank deposits . . .’. Further, **fresh money**, **hot money**, **idle money**, and **seed money** are listed under Sense 3 ‘money used for investment; capital’. There are 190 such ‘different types’ in the sample, whose part of speech is a noun in all cases. These instances account for the larger number of the nouns in *LBED*. In *OBED*, the same compounds appear in an example (*idle money*), in the list of collocations (*seed money*), or as an entry item (*hush money*).

However, the total number of such business-specific nouns and compounds in either of the BEDs is not extensively larger than any other dictionaries listed above, and such words are not as fully or technically explained as in *ODAc3*, *ODBM4*, or *ODEcon2*. If there is anything that compensates for the smallness and makes the BEDs more useful for foreign learners, it is their easy-to-understand and learner-friendly EFL-style definitions. Abbreviations, proper nouns, and trademark nouns should be more rigorously contained in the BEDs for foreign learners than in the above-mentioned dictionaries for English speakers that explain smaller number of items more technically.

## 2.2. Words not included in the BEDs

The specialized character of the BEDs only allows business-related terms to be the headwords. Even content words with high frequency are not contained as headwords in the BEDs. Hardly any function words are included except words such as **worth**<sup>2</sup> *prep.* (in *LBED*), and **yours** *pronoun* (in both BEDs), the latter being frequently used in the phrase

‘Yours sincerely’ etc. at the closing of business letters.

There are words and phrases that are part of the ‘Oxford 3000’ list of important words (cf. *OALD7* pages R99–R113; see also Komuro et al. 2006: 78–83) but not treated as entries or sub-entries in *OBED*. Such words include not only function words, but also the following content words in the first part of the sample: **abandoned** *adj.*, **able** *adj.*, **abroad** *adj.*, **absolute** *adj.*, *n.*, **absolutely** *adv.*, **abuse** *n.*, *v.*, **academic** *adj.*, *n.*, **accent** *n.*, *v.*, **acceptable** *adj.*, **accident** *n.*, **accidental** *adj.*, **accompany** *v.*, **accurate** *adj.*, **acid** *n.*, *adj.*, **across** *adv.*, *prep.*, **actor** *n.*, **actress** *n.*, and **actually** *adv.* These are words of daily use, both spoken and written, but their non-inclusion in *OBED* suggests that they are not particularly frequent in the corpora that include business communication.

A comparison of *OBED* with the list entitled ‘Business and finance words’ in *OALD7* reveals some inconsistency within the publisher, Oxford University Press. The list is printed on pages R116–R117, where it is described as ‘the 250 most common words (apart from the Oxford 3000) in writing that deals with business and finance’. Thus, one might expect to find all of these words (276 items including abbreviations, derivatives, idioms, and a phrasal verb) in *OBED*. Of these, 185 items are star-rated (regarded as important) in *OBED* (e.g. *fiscal*, *stock exchange*, and *workforce*); 51 items are also treated as headwords in *OBED*; and 17 items appear either as derivatives, idioms, a phrasal verb, or under other entries. However, the other 23 items are not included in *OBED* as entry items: *accordance*, *in accordance with*, *announcement*, *assumption*, *consistent*, *consistently*, *constraint*, *cooperation*, *correspond*, *creation*, *dependent*, *differ*, *exclusively*, *framework*, *monthly*, *perceive*, *principally*, *probability*, *subsequent*, *subsequently*, *uncertainty*, *underlie*, and *voluntary*. *OALD7* acknowledges on its back cover what corpora it is based on, and *OBED* states on its back cover that it contains ‘[r]eal examples from a new corpus that includes newspapers, journals and textbooks’. This inconsistency might lead us to wonder if these two dictionaries are based on different corpora, or if they define ‘business English’ differently. It is indeed difficult to define ‘business English’, as Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998: 54) have put it. Whatever the reason for the above-mentioned inconsistency, the non-

inclusion of these 23 items and the selection of headwords in *OBED* seem to be more justifiable than the selection of words in the list in *OALD7*. Many of the words in the list, particularly *assumption*, *differ*, and *uncertainty*, do not appear to pertain mainly to business or finance.

### 3. Subject labels

#### 3.1. Subject labels in the BEDs

Svensén (1993: 183) generalizes the function of subject labels as follows: 'they can relate to both the content aspect and the expressional aspect. They can specify the subject field to which the concept belongs; they can also indicate the register of the word in the technical language . . .'.

As a starting point of his comparative research into the labelling systems of four monolingual learner's dictionaries (MLDs), Kokawa (1989: 17) states that 'the essential function of labels is to designate various restrictions upon the usage of an item in a dictionary'. Particularly concerning the labels of technicality and subjects in comparison with the labels of formality, regionality, attitude, etc., he reports 'a considerable difference in the application of technicality and subject-field designation' (Kokawa 1989: 105) among the four dictionaries.

BEDs, as any other specialized dictionaries would be, are highly subject-oriented in many respects. Because of this characteristic, a more detailed classification on the business-related subject fields has been done in the BEDs than in the MLDs that are meant to be general-purpose dictionaries. There are 13 types in *LBED*, and 17 in *OBED*, in contrast to 2 (*law* and *technical*) in *LDOCE4* and 1 (*technical*) in *OALD7*. The number of the headwords and the senses of words with each label in the sample are presented in Table 2.

Some senses are provided with two subject labels:

**act of God** *n.* LAW, INSURANCE [*LBED*]

**without-profit** *adj.* (*Finance; Insurance*) [*OBED*]

In addition, there are some entries under which different subject labels are attached to different senses (see the entry for **principal** *n.*, reproduced in section 4.1).

Table 2 Subject labels in the BEDs<sup>1)</sup>

subject labels in <i>LBED</i>	headwords	senses	subject labels in <i>OBED</i>	headwords	senses
ACCOUNTING	29	31	( <i>Accounting</i> )	51	56
BANKING	20	21	( <i>Commerce</i> )	16	16
COMPUTING	5	5	( <i>E-commerce</i> )	0	0
ECONOMICS	10	11	( <i>Economics</i> )	17	17
FINANCE	32	33	( <i>Finance</i> )	28	31
HUMAN RESOURCES	6	6	( <i>HR</i> )	31	31
INSURANCE	8	8	( <i>Insurance</i> )	9	9
LAW	15	15	( <i>IT</i> )	23	24
MANUFACTURING	4	5	( <i>Law</i> )	19	20
MARKETING	6	6	( <i>Manufacturing</i> )	6	6
PROPERTY	1	1	( <i>Marketing</i> )	19	19
TAX	1	1	( <i>Production</i> )	10	10
STATISTICS	3	3	( <i>Property</i> )	0	0
			( <i>Stock Exchange</i> )	5	5
total	140	146	( <i>Technical</i> )	2	2
			( <i>Trade</i> )	2	2
			( <i>Transport</i> )	1	1
			total	239	249

#### 3.2. Problems concerning subject labels

Ideally, the subject label attached to a term should be the same even in different dictionaries. This is the case with many labelled headwords, where the labels seem to be rightly attached to the headwords/senses specifically used in the field. However, neither of the BEDs gives a clear explanation as to what policy has been adopted in attaching labels to particular headwords/senses. If they lack a prudent policy regarding the use of the subject labels, it will lead to inconsistencies. More problematic than this is the lack of a uniform system of labelling business terms. For example, **withdraw** *v.*, in the sense 'to stop giving or offering sth to sb' [*OBED*], is labelled as MARKETING in *LBED*, but as (*Commerce*) in *OBED*.

The following items have a label in *OBED* but not in *LBED*:

**agricultural bank** *n.* (*Finance*)

**waiver** *n.* (*Law*)

On the other hand, the following headwords have a label only in *LBED*:

**acquire** *v.* 'to buy a company' FINANCE

**weight** *v.* 'to allow for differences' STATISTICS

The lack of the subject label (*Technical*) under **weight** *v.* reveals an inconsistency not only between the dictionaries, but also within *OBED*, because its Sense 1 corresponds to Sense 2 of **weighting** *n.* that does have the label (*Technical*), which in *OBED* is attached to 'scientific, mathematical and statistical terms' (inside back cover).<sup>2)</sup> This inconsistency should not be treated on the same plane as the cases where any sense of a polysemous headword is not labelled whereas a highly subject-specific (often compound) noun having the polysemous word as one of its components is labelled. There is a good reason for both of the two senses of **wage scale** to be labelled as (*HR*) but not for any of the senses of **scale** *n.* Another case in point is that the word **escape** *n.*, whose only sense given in *OBED* is 'escape key', is labelled as (*IT*), but Sense 2 of **key** is not labelled.<sup>3)</sup>

The label (*IT*) in *OBED* often corresponds to *COMPUTING* in *LBED*, as with **bookmark** *n.*, **data warehouse** *n.*, **WAN** *n.*, and **WYSIWYG**; but to **web page** *n.*, **website** *n.*, and other *web*-words, the label is employed in *OBED* only. Since *OBED* was published some five years after *LBED*, we would naturally estimate that the technicality of these computing terms to have decreased so that such words with the label *COMPUTING* in *LBED* would have ceased to be labelled in *OBED*, but the evidence seems to suggest otherwise.

All these complexities are due to the difference in the labelling practices between the dictionaries. Just as Kokawa (1989: 147–151) has proposed a practicable system of all types of usage labels in general MLDs, a uniform system of labelling subject-specific terms in ESP dictionaries is called for. This is especially so, as he has found, through his comparison of labels of

different types across four dictionaries, that the labels of technicality, field and subject represent 'one of the areas where the dictionaries show the greatest divergence from each other: hardly more than two dictionaries agree on their designations of technicality, field and subject' (Kokawa 1989: 114).

#### 4. The definition, examples, and collocations

##### 4.1. Senses and their arrangement

We have seen in Section 2 that words that have little to do with business are not included in the BEDs, however frequent they may be in general spoken or written English. Likewise, the BEDs only include business-related senses as follows:

**fence** *v.* to buy and sell stolen goods [*LBED*]

**lean** *adj.* 1 used to describe a method of production that aims to cut costs while keeping quality high . . . 2 (about costs, quantities, etc.) very low; . . . 3 (about organizations etc.) strong and efficient, especially because the number of employees has been reduced 4 used to describe a difficult period of time that does not produce much money [*OBED*]

**park** *n.* an area of land used for a particular purpose, especially for small businesses, office buildings, small factories, etc. [*OBED*]

**shut** *v.* 1 when a shop/store, restaurant, etc. **shuts** or when sb **shuts** it, it stops being open for business and you cannot go into it 2 when a business **shuts** or when sb **shuts** it, it stops operating as a business

*adj.* not open for business [*OBED*]

*LBED* does not mention nominal senses of *fence*, and the above-mentioned are the only definitions provided for **lean**, **park** *n.*, and **shut** in *OBED*.

The senses are arranged so that the more business-specific sense appears first, particularly in *OBED*, but not necessarily in *LBED*.

**principal** *n.* 1 (*Finance*) an amount of money that is lent or invested to earn interest 2 (*Law*) a person who is actually making a business deal or taking part in a legal case, . . . 3 an important manager or other person in an organization, . . . [*OBED*]

**subsidiary** *adj.* **1** (about a company) owned or controlled by another company **2** connected with sth but less important than it [*OBED*]  
**year end** *n.* **1** the end of the FINANCIAL YEAR **2** the end of December [*OBED*]

The defining vocabulary and the defining styles are essentially similar to those in *LDOCE4* and *OALD7* (see Ichikawa et al. 2005: 20–30 and Komuro et al. 2006: 78–83 for details). In addition to the traditional analytical definitions, some full-sentence definitions can be found in both BEDs. The single-clause *when*-definitions, many of which have been found in *LDOCE4* and other EFL dictionaries, are also found in both BEDs, particularly in *LBED*. Some theoretical problems in this defining style are pointed out by Higashi and Urata (2005: 8–9) and Heuberger (2000: 17–18),<sup>1)</sup> but in practice, hardly any Japanese participants in the user study concerning *LDOCE4* (Ichikawa et al. 2005: 111) or English-speaking participants in the present user study concerning the BEDs (see Section 5) appear to have been concerned about the problems. *LBED* adopts a *when*-definition under **fall**<sup>2</sup> *n.* (*when a person or organization loses their position of power or becomes unsuccessful*) but not under **rise**<sup>2</sup> *n.* This fact indeed constitutes an inconsistency within a dictionary, but the chances will be very slim that an average user reads both definitions and compares their styles.

## 4.2. Examples

Similar to headwords and senses, each of the examples in the BEDs is related to one of the areas of business. They are so devised that users consider the examples in the context of business; and some of the examples help users learn more about the field, occasionally using more than one sentence:

**market failure** when a market does not work efficiently, . . . : *Firms refuse to take on more labour because the effective demand for their goods is too low. The government can correct for this type of market failure by increasing demand.* [*LBED*, a different type of entry under **failure**]

**Fedex** *v.* *While Americans often speak of 'Fedexing' an important*

*document, in London, Paris or Berlin people 'DHL' it, referring to the major competitor.* [*LBED*, a run-on derivative, hence no definition]  
**put sth down** **3** to write sth; . . . : *The meeting's on the 22nd. Put it down in your diary.* [*OBED*]

There is one mysterious fact about the number of examples: the senses with a subject label are less likely to have an example. It is such senses specifically used in business that separates BEDs from general-purpose EFL dictionaries. It is difficult to imagine how the smaller percentage of having an example could be justified.

## 4.3. Collocations

Collocations are presented systematically in *OBED*, but rather sporadically in *LBED*. In *OBED*, collocations are provided after the mark ⊕, following definitions and examples.

**choice** *n.* . . . ⊕ *an extensive | a good/great/huge/large/wide choice* ◆ *a limited/restricted choice* [*OBED*]

A shortcoming of the lists of collocations seems to be that under some entries collocates are arranged alphabetically and not semantically. The list of collocations at the end of the entry for **workmanship** *n.* reads '⊕ *bad/faulty/good/poor/shoddy workmanship*', with the only collocate with a favourable sense 'good' placed among its antonyms.

## 5. Notes and columns in *OBED*

This section deals with five features of *OBED* that helps users learn more about business English, in addition to definitions, examples and collocations. For a comparison, see Komuro et al. (2006: 92–98) for details of such notes in *OALD7*.

### 5.1. NOTE

The list of symbols given on the inside front cover of *OBED* states that **NOTE** introduces 'extra information about the word', generally the information about the origin or formation of the headword:

**kaizen** *n.* . . . **NOTE** **Kaizen** comes from the Japanese words for 'improvement'.

**guesstimate** *v.* . . . **NOTE** **Guesstimate** is formed from the words 'guess' and 'estimate'.

Occasionally the same symbol is used for different purposes.

**red ink** *n.* . . . **NOTE** In the past, red ink was used to show losses in financial records.

**keep** *v.* . . . **NOTE** Idioms containing **keep** are at the entries for the nouns or adjectives in the idioms, for example **keep your head above water** is at **head**.

**grey market** *n.* . . . **NOTE** The **grey market** is legal but secret; the **black market** is illegal.

## 5.2. HELP and GRAMMAR POINT

'Help' and 'Grammar Point' both introduce information on the usage and grammar of headwords. The difference seems to be that 'Help' is a short note that comprises only a few lines, whereas the 'Grammar Point' is a column presented in a separate box that looks similar to *LDOCE4*'s 'Word Choice' box or *OALD7*'s 'Synonyms' box. Some notes in the 'Grammar Point' box provide information on ways of distinguishing between synonyms, and thus can be dealt with in the 'Which Word' note. Some of them are not easy to access. For example, 'Uncountable nouns' is provided at **information**, without an index or any cross-reference from another entry.

## 5.3. WHICH WORD?

The 'Which Word' note of *OBED* has the same function as *LDOCE4*'s 'Word Choice' note and *OALD7*'s 'Synonyms' note. They tell the users which of the synonyms to choose on a particular occasion. Such notes are provided, to name a few, between **economic** and **economical** to distinguish the two, at **average** to distinguish *mean*, *median*, and *mode*, and at **price** to distinguish *price*, *charge*, *commission*, *cost*, *fee*, and *rate*. As with the 'Grammar Point' notes, the problem is that there is no index to the notes or cross-reference from another entry except 'See note at CORPORA-

TION' at the end of the 'Company abbreviations' box near **Ltd**. This, in turn, might cause unnecessary confusion, since the word 'note' in this box refers to the 'Which Word' note rather than **NOTE**.

## 5.4. MORE ABOUT

If a user wants to learn more about a headword, they are referred to the 'More About' note. Some are notes on usage, but the note at **emission unit** provides encyclopaedic information on what has been decided under the Kyoto Protocol. There are only seven such boxes in the entire volume of *OBED*, two of which are not easily accessible: **MORE ABOUT Forms of businesses** is placed under **company**, not **business**; **MORE ABOUT Referring to men and women in job titles** under **chairman**, and **MORE ABOUT Company abbreviations** near **Ltd** without any cross-reference from other entries. **MORE ABOUT Takeovers and mergers** is provided near the entry for **takeover**, but the distinction of *takeover* and *merger* may well be dealt with in the 'Which Word' note.

## 5.5. Vocabulary Building

*OBED* adopts yet another type of box named 'Vocabulary Building' to list synonyms and related words. This is a topic-based column in which words are arranged and exemplified differently from those in other types of boxes. While the 'Which Word' notes provide genuinely linguistic information and the 'More About' notes provide practical or encyclopaedic information, the 'Vocabulary Building' notes list synonyms and related words in a way that it helps users use those words for encoding.

## 5.6. Summary of notes and columns and users' opinions

The five features of *OBED* will no doubt help users with their learning of business English, particularly its vocabulary and grammar. Unfortunately, however, the boundaries between them are not necessarily clearly defined, and the 'More About' notes are too small in number. Moreover, some of the notes are of limited accessibility. The information could be

better presented if *OBED* stopped classifying different types of information into one category.

In order to support the previous arguments, a user study is being conducted as part of this review.<sup>1)</sup> Of the five parts of the user study, Parts 3–5 (evaluation tasks) are closely related to the discussion in this section. In Part 3, participants were asked to consider seven suggestions concerning what is missing from the BEDs. In Part 4, they evaluated ten features of *OBED* (the five features mentioned earlier in this section, the list of collocations, pictorial illustrations, and three types of labels, i.e. style, geographical, and subject field labels). They further answered in Part 5 five miscellaneous questions concerning the BEDs.

The main findings from the results of Parts 3–5 were:

- (1) The participants wanted more entries for proper nouns, as many of them are used in the examples, particularly in *LBED*.
- (2) Not only business-related senses, but also the basic sense of a headword should be provided to help users memorize business terms.
- (3) Of the five features of *OBED* mentioned in this section, the ‘Which Word’ notes proved to be the most popular among the participants. The popularity of the ‘Which Word’ notes equals that of the list of collocations.
- (4) Not many participants appreciated the labels vigorously, and some evaluated the subject labels the least highly of the ten features. The subject labels ranked sixth in popularity, not as highly as the style labels ranking fourth.
- (5) Two least popular features were ‘Notes’ and ‘More About’ notes.
- (6) The suggestion that even specialized dictionaries like BEDs provide phonetic symbols and stress marks for more entry items was not welcomed by as many participants as the suggestions that the BEDs be improved in terms of cross-references, difficult words in examples, and the definition of abbreviations.

## 6. Conclusion

Thus far, we have seen some interesting aspects and problems concerning the two business English dictionaries. As they are smaller in size than

*OALD7*, and do not have a clear advantage over competing specialized dictionaries in terms of the coverage of technical terms, they have to carry out more improvements in the coverage, subject labels, definitions, and notes and columns. If these BEDs were provided on a CD-ROM, it would also enhance the usability of these dictionaries.

It seems that the BED is a hybrid between a general-purpose EFL dictionary and a specialized dictionary for English speakers, between a linguistic dictionary and an encyclopaedia, also between a dictionary and a glossary of technical terms. It is essential that the BEDs establish their identity by having unique features; otherwise users would turn to other types of dictionaries. One of Hartmann’s (2005: 204) questions ‘Is the multi-purpose dictionary an incomplete hybrid rather than a “general dictionary”?’ applies to this genre, and his open question remains open here.

Since business English, just as business itself, is a fast-growing area, new features will be found in large quantities. For example, Gimenez (2000: 249) has produced some evidence that ‘the spoken nature of e-mails has started to affect the discursive practices’ in business written communication. Such new findings should be reflected in the revised editions of the BEDs.

## NOTES

### Section 1

1) Roughly speaking, the four sample parts of a dictionary text are (1) one percent of the dictionary text at the beginning; (2) one percent of it at the end of the first one-third; (3) one percent of it at the beginning of the last one-third; and (4) two percent of it at the end. These percentages have been calculated in terms of the number of pages covered. This is not a random sampling in that words beginning with *wh-* are deliberately excluded so as not to let the question words, not covered in the BEDs, affect the overall results too extensively.

### Section 2

1) Such entry items include **words and figures differ** (phrase) and **zero** (number) in *OBED*, and **yours** (pronoun) in both BEDs.

### Section 3

1) No word in the sample from *OBED* has the label (*E-commerce*) or (*Property*); however, the former is attached to **affiliate marketing**, and the latter to **agency broker** in addition to another label (*Stock Exchange*).

2) Sense 1 and its example of **weight** *v.* in *OBED* read 'to give different values to things to show how important you think each of them is compared with the others: *The results of the survey were weighted to allow for variations in the sample*'. Sense 2 and its example of **weighting** *n.* read '(*Technical*) a value that you give to each of a number of things to show how important it is compared with the others: *Each of the factors is given a weighting on a scale of 1 to 10*'.

3) The entry for **escape** only has a noun sense: '(*IT*) a button on a computer keyboard that you press to stop a particular operation or leave a program: *Press escape to get back to the menu*'. Sense 2 and its example of **key** *n.* read 'any of the buttons that you press to operate a computer: *Press the escape key to quit the program*'.

#### Section 4

1) The theoretical problems of the single-clause when definition are summarized in Ichikawa et al. (2005: 28) as follows: 'Higashi and Urata (2005: 8–9) . . . highlight issues such as the lack of consistency within a dictionary as regards whether or not to adopt this method of definition, its syntactic [instability] as a definition, and the scarcity of dictionaries that explains this usage of when, least of all as an introducer of a definition. Heuberger (2000: 17–18) [insists] on the importance of substitutable definitions'.

#### Section 5

1) This is an interim report, as the user study is still an on-going project. What can be reported here are merely the results of the first stage of the study conducted in England among English speakers and international students living in England. A full account of the results will be presented elsewhere, together with the results of the next stage being conducted among Japanese students of English or commerce living in Japan.

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- OBED:** *Oxford Business English Dictionary for Learners of English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- ODAc3:** *Oxford Dictionary of Accounting*, 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
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