

# An Analysis of the *Merriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*, Second Edition

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## 1. Introduction

The year 2016 saw the publication of the revised Second Edition of the *Merriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* (henceforth *MWALED2*), after the eight year interval since the first edition was put on the market in 2008. We would like to discuss in this paper how it has, or has not changed through nearly a decade of updating between the two publications.

In fact, when we saw the striking indigo color on the new edition's front and back covers, which happens to be prevalent among many EFL dictionaries on the market nowadays, yet totally different from the emerald green appearance of the previous edition, *MWALED1*, we anticipated rather extensive renovations in terms of lexicographic features, ways of presentation and the descriptions themselves, as well as the extensiveness of information presented in *MWALED2*.

However, when we compare the facts and figures presented in the blurbs of both editions, we find little difference between the two versions—'more than 160,000 example sentences,' '100,000 words and phrases with definitions that are easy to understand,' '3,000 core vocabulary words,' '32,000 IPA pronunciations,' 'More than 22,000 idioms, verbal collocations, and commonly used phrases from American and British English,' 'More than 12,000 usage labels, notes, and paragraphs' and 'Original drawings and full-color art aid understanding [sic]' are the common claims by the two editions. The only new

claims made by the second edition in the blurb are regarding the newly included words—‘New words added include *hashtag*, *selfie*, and *fracking*’—and the fact that the example sentences are highlighted (=printed) in blue for easy reading—which had already been realized in the first edition of *MWALED*<sup>1</sup>).

One editorial feature that we must mention is that *MWALED* makes it a strict rule to keep the revising and updating work within each dictionary page. Thus, as we will discuss below in 2.1, if the dictionary editor wishes to add a new entry, a sense, or whatever, s/he must delete the same number of lines on the same page to create the space for new information. This policy may be a common practice in recent lexicography, as discussed in Kokawa et al. (2015: 80–81) with regard to the revision from the 7th to the 8th edition of the *Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary of English*, but we wonder again if it is truly a user-friendly approach. It may reduce unexpected errors by limiting the effect of changes to that page alone, but the lexicographer must look for candidate lines to delete within a page, when less important and more deletable information for users may be found in the neighboring pages. In the days of movable types, the practice may have been very significant, but this is an age of electronic publishing and dictionary searching, and we doubt that this practice is still truly effective or necessary.

In the following sections, we will mainly discuss the revisions made to the *Merriam-Webster’s Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, category by category, but we will also compare *MWALED2* with the *Collins COBUILD Advanced American English Dictionary* (henceforth *COBAm2*), a comparable EFL dictionary featuring American English published one year before *MWALED2*, as well as with other major EFL dictionaries when appropriate.

We will also look briefly at the available digital versions of the Merriam-Webster’s learner’s dictionary (which is in fact based on the *MWALED1* and/or the *MWALED2*) and see what kind of information is given in the paper and electronic versions in Chapter 7.

## 2. Headwords

In this section we examine what is new and what remains unchanged about the new edition's headwords, as well as how the dictionary treats what it calls "core vocabulary words," which essentially correspond to those words other learner's dictionaries identify as common or frequently used words learners need to learn.

### 2.1. Additions and deletion(s)

For a dictionary that came out in a new edition eight years after the previous one was published, *MWALED2* may disappoint users, who most likely expect it to have reflected social changes that have happened over the intervening years. There is room to argue that there are not many headwords added partly because of the dictionary's editorial policy to try to keep the original page organization as intact as possible<sup>1</sup>.

By our count, 17 headwords were added to the dictionary<sup>2</sup> and many are the Net- or social media-related words:

**baby powder**, **baccalaureate**, **blog** (verb) (included as a run-on under the noun **blog**), **blogosphere**, **earbud** (noun), **fracking**, **ginormous**, **Google/google**, **hashtag**, **meme**, **millennial** (noun), **podcast** (noun), **podcast** (verb), **selfie**, **smartphone**, **social media**, and **social networking**<sup>3</sup>.

By far the most conspicuous in its absence is **Wi-Fi**. The latest versions of almost all other English dictionaries carry the word. Longman dictionaries, among others, highlight the headword in red and give the frequency mark ●●○, treating it as among the next common 3000 words after the top 3000. Considering that in the previous edition of *LDAE*, published in 2008, the same year *MWALED1* came out, the word was already there (though outside of the common 9000 words range), we can say this is not a new word but has become a more important word. This implies that this kind of list of frequently used words may need to be revised occasionally.

Some words saw changes in their headword status. **Millennial** (adj) was promoted to a stand-alone headword from the run-on position of

**millennium**, coinciding with the introduction of the nominal use of the word<sup>4)</sup>. As far as we can tell, **selfhood** appears to be the only headword deleted<sup>5)</sup>. No other learner's dictionaries besides *MWALED1* and *OAAD* appear to carry the headword. Its deletion may be a good decision, even if it was deleted to create room for the description of the new word **selfie** on the same page while trying to keep page organization as intact as possible.

## 2.2. Core vocabulary words

### 2.2.1. How core vocabulary words are shown

Learner's dictionaries typically identify commonly used words, and the method of presenting them to users varies from dictionary to dictionary. The following table outlines how each dictionary presents basic English vocabulary according to how each dictionary describes their method of presentation.

Table 2.1 How dictionaries present core vocabulary words

Dictionary	How core vocabulary is presented	Availability of wordlists
<i>MWALED2</i>	Headwords are underlined to show the words which constitute <u>3,000</u> core vocabulary words.	No list is provided.
<i>COBAm2</i>	Like <i>LAAD3</i> , frequency information is given by a three-band system. The most frequent words have three diamonds, the next most frequent two, and the least frequent ones have one diamond.	The list of the <u>3,000</u> most frequent words in the Collins Corpus <sup>6)</sup> is given at the back part of the book. The words are listed without their part-of-speech information.
<i>LAAD3</i>	The most important words are highlighted in red. Frequency information is given by a three-band system. The top <u>3,000</u> words are marked with three red circles.	Lists of those words are retrievable online using the advanced search function on the dictionary website. The lists include part-of-speech information.
<i>OAAD</i>	Words printed in orange type and a key symbol are used to designate the Oxford <u>3000</u> list of important words <sup>7)</sup> .	The list is available on the CD-ROM or online at the <i>OALD</i> website. The list includes part-of-speech information for each word.

### 2.2.2. Numerical comparison

As Table 2.1 above shows, among major learner's dictionaries, 3,000 seems to be a key number, and this may give users the impression that all those lists include somewhere around, if not exactly, 3000 words. Now we examine whether this is the case.

First, take a look at the number of words each dictionary identifies as the most frequently used 3,000 words.

<i>MWALED2</i> :	3,688
<i>COBAm2</i> :	3,196
<i>LAAD3</i> :	3,035
<i>OAAD</i> :	3,504

From these figures, we cannot say that these vocabulary lists contain 3000 words, and we may as well regard the number 3,000 as a symbolic one.

We cannot begin to compare the four dictionaries based on these numbers because the words are presented differently from dictionary to dictionary.

- (1) *MWALED2*: The number of underlined headwords is 3,688. For example, <sup>1</sup>**abuse** (verb) and <sup>2</sup>**abuse** (noun) are listed as two different headwords and thus counted as two words.
- (2) *COBAm2*: This dictionary provides the most simply presented list. It ignores parts of speech, and homonyms and homographs are counted as one word.
- (3) *LAAD3*: If a word is used both as a verb and as a noun, they are as a rule listed under two different headwords. The list usually counts them as two words.
- (4) *OAAD*: The list gives part-of-speech information for each word, but, unlike *LAAD3*, the dictionary treats words with more than one part of speech as one word. Moreover, the dictionary includes phrases and phrasal verbs in their list of common words.

To simplify our comparison, we decided to standardize the lists by making them conform to the selection rule adopted by *COBAm2*,

ignoring parts of speech, homonyms, and homographs and excluding phrases and verbal phrases from the list<sup>8)</sup>. After this normalization, we have modified numbers for each dictionary as follows:

<i>MWALED2</i> :	2,920 (←3,688)
<i>COBAm2</i> :	3,196
<i>LAAD3</i> :	2,569 (←3,035)
<i>OAAD</i> :	3,413 (←3,504)

Based on the numbers of words thus obtained, we made a two-dictionary comparison, giving the number of words shared by a given pair of dictionaries.

<i>MWALED2</i> + <i>OAAD</i> :	2,663
<i>COBAm2</i> + <i>OAAD</i> :	2,632
<i>MWALED2</i> + <i>COBAm2</i> :	2,313
<i>LAAD3</i> + <i>OAAD</i> :	2,179
<i>COBAm2</i> + <i>LAAD3</i> :	2,003
<i>MWALED2</i> + <i>LAAD3</i> :	2,001

We next determined the number of words exclusively listed by each of the dictionaries.

<i>MWALED2</i> :	143 ( 5% of 2,920)
<i>COBAm2</i> :	415 (13% of 3,196)
<i>LAAD3</i> :	270 (11% of 2,569)
<i>OAAD</i> :	333 (10% of 3,413)

If we normalize these unique words to percentages (number of unique words out of number of total words) as shown in parentheses above, we can see 95% of *MWALD2*'s core vocabulary words are shared by one or more of the other three. This is the highest coverage among the four dictionaries.

Now, how many words are shared by all the four dictionaries? The answer is 1,778. The list of these 1,778 words thus obtained can safely be said to constitute a reasonably selected vocabulary list of the most important words. The following are the percentages of the 1,778 words

out of the total word count from the list of core vocabulary words identified by each dictionary<sup>9</sup>):

<i>LAAD3</i> :	69% (1,778/2,569)
<i>MWALED2</i> :	61% (1,778/2,920)
<i>COBAm2</i>	56% (1,778/3,196)
<i>OAAD</i> :	52% (1,778/3,413)

The size of the original list affects the percentage, but we may conclude that *MWALED2* does comparatively well in selecting its core vocabulary words.

Lastly in this discussion, we would like to modify the list thus obtained, which fails to cover a number of very basic words because they are not always shared by all the four dictionaries. Intentionally, or editorially, *MWALED2* excludes numbers, days of the week, and months of the year; *OAAD* omits numbers. Adding these basic words to the list should make more sense as a more complete set of common words. With these missing words added, the list comes to contain 1851 words<sup>10</sup>.

### 2.2.3. Some errors to be corrected

There are cases in which headwords are mistakenly underlined even when they seem to represent non-core vocabulary words. For instance, **scale** is identified as one of commonly used words by all of these dictionaries, but in *MWALED2*, <sup>1</sup>**scale** “a measuring device” alone is underlined, leaving the other four entries for **scales**, especially <sup>4</sup>**scale** which has the sense “the size or level,” unmarked. Likewise, underlining <sup>2</sup>**wolf** (verb) instead of <sup>1</sup>**wolf** (noun) seems to be counterintuitive and can be regarded as a case of misassignment<sup>11</sup>. Other such cases include <sup>2</sup>**divide** (noun) and <sup>3</sup>**open** (“a competition”). It is reasonable to identify **cheap** as a core vocabulary word but counting the adverbial use of the word in, as *MWALED2* does, may be unacceptable.

We noticed a case of incoherence: <sup>1</sup>**found** seems to be the only underlined past tense/past participle form, with no other verbs receiving such treatment in the dictionary. The fact that such errors and cases of incoherency remain in a new edition may point to the lack of edito-

rial commitment to the job of revising a major learner's dictionary. We know that no dictionaries are perfect. Still, it is not too much for the user to expect dictionary makers to do a good job when they have a chance to revise their dictionary.

(Section 2 by Asada)

### 3. Pronunciation

This section describes the phonetic transcription of *MWALED2* by comparing it with its first edition and *COBAm2* published in 2016. The eighteenth edition of the *Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary* (2011) (*EPD18*) will be consulted whenever necessary. Since the current analysis found the transcriptions in the first and second editions of *MWALED* to be the same, this section employs the abbreviation *MWALED* when referring to both editions collectively. After reviewing the characteristics of the phonetic transcription of *MWALED*, the latter half of this section describes the scope of British pronunciation that it covers that was not thoroughly explored in the analysis of the first edition.

#### 3.1. Overview of the phonetic transcription

The phonetic transcription policies of *MWALED2* remain the same as in the first edition. *MWALED2* explains its pronunciation model as “standard American pronunciations” that are assumed to be General American (GA) spoken “in many parts of the United States” (Using the Dictionary, p. 12a). For most words, only one “most commonly used pronunciation” is provided and “additional pronunciations are shown when the word can be pronounced in different ways that are equally common” (Using the Dictionary, p. 11a). The transcription system has also not altered since the first edition. One notable characteristic of *MWALED* is that it adopts IPA symbols despite being a Webster dictionary that is traditionally known to employ a diacritical system.

Table 3.1 compares the vowel symbols used in *MWALED* and *COBAm2*. Despite the fact that both *MWALED* and *COBAm2* employ IPA, the choice of symbols reflects each dictionary's characteristics.

Table 3.1 Comparison of vowel symbols

	Standard Lexical Sets	<i>MWALED</i>	<i>COBAm2</i>
Short Vowels	TRAP	æ	æ
	LOT	ɑ:	ɒ
	DRESS	ɛ	e
	KIT	ɪ	ɪ
	FOOT	ʊ	ʊ
	STRUT	ʌ	ʌ
	comma	ə	ə
Long Vowels	FLEECE	i:/i:ɹ	i
	GOOSE	u:/u:w	u
	THOUGHT	ɑ:	ɔ
	PALM	ɑ:	ɑ
	NURSE	ɚ	ɜr
Diphthongs	FACE	eɪ/eɹ	eɪ
	PRICE	aɪ/aɹ	aɪ
	MOUTH	aʊ/aw	aʊ
	CHOICE	ɔɪ/oɹ	ɔɪ
	GOAT	oʊ/ow	oʊ
	START	ɑɚ/ar	ɑr
	SQUARE	eɚ/er	er
	NEAR	iə/ir	ɪr
	FORCE/NORTH	oɚ/or	ɔr
	CURE	uə/ur	ʊr

One noticeable difference is that *MWALED* employs length marks for long vowels, whereas *COBAm2* does not. When transcribing GA, length marks are often omitted (introduced as the “Kenyonian system” by Takebayashi 1996: 171), since English vowels tend to vary in its length depending on the phonetic context and length alone does not distinguish vowels. Nevertheless, *MWALED* adopts length marks and displays both qualitative and quantitative differences between so-called short and long vowels. Although length marks may seem redundant, they are helpful for English learners who have a mother tongue wherein length plays a significant role, such as Japanese. Other differences between vowel symbols include the use of hooked schwa symbols for the NURSE vowel and other rhotic vowels in *MWALED*. A comparison between the two dictionaries also indicates that the number of vowel

symbols is considerably reduced in *MWALED* (e.g., not using /ɔ/ and /ɒ/). This will be further explained in the following section.

The consonant symbols in *MWALED* and *COBAm2* are predominantly the same, with the only exception being using /y/ for /j/ in *COBAm2*. As for stress symbols, *MWALED* follows IPA by placing a vertical symbol ' before a stressed syllable, whereas *COBAm2* underlines a stressed syllable. For more details on the notational characteristics of *MWALED*, see Section 3 of Kokawa et al. (2010).

### 3.2. Description of American pronunciations in *MWALED*

This section reviews how faithfully *MWALED* describes current GA characteristics. As a consequence of reflecting the vowel mergers that have occurred in GA, *MWALED* chooses to employ fewer vowel symbols. The first case introduced in Table 3.2 is the use of a single vowel symbol /ɑ:/ for four lexical groups. This reflects both the LOT-PALM merger (i.e., unrounding and lengthening of the LOT vowel) and the LOT-THOUGHT merger in GA (cf. Trudgill and Hannah 2017; Wells 1982 etc.). The second case is the transcription of three vowel groups when followed by /rV/. In GA, the vowel contrast is lost in this position (cf. Collins and Mees 2013; Wells 1982). In both cases, the transcription is not only faithful to current GA pronunciation but also significantly simplified.

The occurrence of weak vowels also varies between American and British accents. Following the analysis of the first edition (Kokawa et al. 2010), the weak vowel transcription of the 14 suffixes that are described as having /ə/ in GA is confirmed: **-ace**, **-ate**, **-et**, **-ice**, **-id**, **-ily**, **-in**, **-ine**, **-is**, **-it**, **-ed**, **-es**, **-est**, and **-ist**. The transcription of 47 example words listed in Takebayashi (1996: 276–278) indicates the preference of /ə/ in *MWALED*, whereas *COBAm2* employs /ɪ/. The exceptions are **-ed**, **-es**, and **-est** for which *MWALED* provides both /ə, ɪ/, and **-ist** for which even *MWALED* uses /ɪ/. The American pronunciation provided in *EPD18* predominantly coincides with *COBAm2*, but employs /ə/ in words such as **palace**, **pirate**, **private**, and **carpet**.

Yod-dropping also indicates variation between American and British

Table 3.2 Vowel transcriptions in *MWALED* and *COBAm2*

	Standard Lexical Sets (examples)	<i>MWALED</i>	<i>COBAm2</i>
(i)	PALM (e.g., <b>father</b> , <b>calm</b> )	ɑ:	ɑ
	LOT (e.g., <b>hot</b> , <b>stop</b> )		ɒ
	CLOTH (e.g., <b>loss</b> , <b>song</b> )		ɔ
	THOUGHT (e.g., <b>bought</b> , <b>talk</b> )		
(ii)	DRESS + /rV/ (e.g., <b>merry</b> , <b>very</b> )	er	ɛr
	SQUARE + /rV/ (e.g., <b>Mary</b> , <b>vary</b> )		ɛər
	TRAP + /rV/ (e.g., <b>marry</b> , <b>narrow</b> )		ær

accents—“In General American /j/ is regularly absent following /t, d, θ, ð, n/ in accented syllables” (Cruttenden 2014: 227). In syllables carrying primary stress, *MWALED* seems to consistently indicate yod-dropping following dentals and alveolars. Even in weaker syllables, where yod-dropping continues to be less widespread (Wells 1982: 247), *MWALED* tends to indicate it, as in the following three examples.

	<i>MWALED</i>	<i>COBAm2</i>	<i>EPD18</i> (GA)
<b>residue</b>	-du:	-du, -dyu	-du:, -dju:
<b>avenue</b>	-nu:	-nyu, -nu	-nu:, -nju:
<b>curlew</b>	-lu:	-lyu	-lu:, -lju:

However, *MWALED* tends to retain yod in its transcription when following /n/ in weaker syllables (e.g., **insinuate**, **continue**, **revenue**, **venue**, and **menu**). As GA pronunciation, *EPD18* also only provides the variant with yod for **insinuate**, **continue**, **venue**, and **menu**, but transcribes /-nu:, -nju:/ for **revenue**.

The transcription of vowel mergers, weak vowels, and yod-dropping in *MWALED* reflects the current GA pronunciation, although other GA characteristics such as t-tapping are not transcribed in *MWALED*.

### 3.3. Coverage of British pronunciation in *MWALED*

This section attempts to investigate the scope of British pronunciation transcribed in *MWALED*. *MWALED2* explains that it “provides

coverage of both American and British English” (Preface, p. 7a), and “British pronunciations are shown when the most common British pronunciation is very different from the American pronunciation” (Using the Dictionary, p. 12a). When describing British pronunciation, Received Pronunciation (RP) is assumed to be the point of reference.

### 3.3.1. Distributional and lexical variation

The most conspicuous and well-known American and British pronunciation difference may be a distributional variation of /r/, that is, rhoticity. Only rhotic pronunciation of GA is provided and non-rhotic pronunciation of RP is only found when words that include post-vocalic /r/ happen to have British pronunciation. This is understandable since there are numerous words whose pronunciation differs in terms of rhoticity. Moreover, when not to pronounce post-vocalic /r/ in a non-rhotic accent can be easily inferred once learners understand the distributional rule.

With regard to lexical variation, American and British pronunciation are provided separately for BATH words (e.g. **bath** /'bæθ, *Brit* 'bɑ:θ/, **ask**, **example**, **last**, **after**). Conversely, for CLOTH words, only American pronunciation is provided. An investigation of 82 CLOTH words listed in Wells (1982: 136–137) found that the only word that *MWALED* provides British pronunciation for is **oratory** /'orə,tori, *Brit* 'ɒrətri/; however, the intention here is to demonstrate a GA and RP pronunciation difference regarding **-ory** ending rather than the CLOTH vowel (see 3.3.2.).

With regard to yod-dropping that is said to be more prevalent in American than in British pronunciation (cf. Cruttenden 2014: 227), *MWALED* transcribes the difference between American and British pronunciation fairly thoroughly. When following /t, d, n, z, θ/, *MWALED* presents the pronunciation without yod for GA but with yod for RP. In strong syllables, when following /l/, only the pronunciation without yod is provided (e.g., **lute** /'lut/, **allude**, **solution**), indicating that yod is dropped in RP, too. However, variation is observed in RP after /s/: retaining yod in some (e.g., **sue** /'su:, *Brit*

'sju:/, **pursue**, **assume**) but dropping yod in others (e.g., **suite** /'su:t/, **supermarket**).

### 3.3.2. Individual words

To investigate the scope of British pronunciation further, sample words that have American and British differences are listed from five sources: 168 from Davies (2007), 61 from Trudgill and Hannah (2017), 78 from Takebayashi (1996), 52 from Collins and Mees (2013), and 45 from Svartvik and Leech (2016). After excluding 126 overlaps and 16 words with no phonetic transcription in *MWALED*, a list of 262 sample words are analyzed. Results reveal that both the first and second editions of *MWALED* provide American and British pronunciations separately for 144 words (around 55%). Two variants without specifying the accent are provided for 32 words, and one variant alone for 86 words.

Furthermore, the sub-list of 52 words recognized as possessing American and British differences is created from three sources: 27 words introduced by Svartvik and Leech (2016: 170) as “individual words,” 12 words introduced by Trudgill and Hannah (2017: 56) as “individual words which differ in no particularly predictable way” between GA and RP, and 39 words listed by Collins and Mees (2013: 161–162) as “frequent individual words.” (Twenty-four overlaps and two words with no phonetic transcription in *MWALED* are excluded.) Of the 52 words, 33 words (around 63%) are provided with British pronunciation, 11 with two variants, and eight with only one variant. Here again, *MWALED* transcribes important American and British pronunciation differences.

Words of French origin are pronounced differently in American and British accents, with a primary stress on the final syllable in GA but not in RP (Trudgill and Hannah 2017: 57). Essentially, pronunciation of these words is more anglicized in RP than in GA (Takebayashi 1996: 380). Of the 18 words that are explicitly specified as being of French origin among the sample words, 11 are provided with British pronunciation (e.g., **café** /kə'feɪ, *Brit* 'kæ'feɪ/, **attaché**, **baton**, **debris**),

three with two variants (e.g., **ballet** /bæ'leɪ, 'bæ,leɪ/), and four with only one variant (e.g., **beret** /bə'reɪ/).

Thirty-one words with **-ary**, **-ery**, or **-ory** endings are included in the list of 262 sample words: -ary = 18; -ery = 6; -ory = 7. In the penultimate syllables of these words, GA tends to place a secondary stress, whereas RP tends to have a reduced vowel. Twenty-seven of the 31 words have British pronunciation (e.g., **ordinary** /'oʊdə,neri, Brit 'o:dənri/; **stationery** /'steɪʃə,neri, Brit 'steɪʃənri/; **inventory** /'ɪnvən,tori, Brit 'ɪnvəntri/), and four words (e.g., **temporary**, **salivary**, **millinery**, **military**) have one variant only.

Among other types of word endings, words with **-ization** in *MWALED* are consistently provided British pronunciation (e.g., **civilization** /,sɪvələ'zeɪʃən, Brit ,sɪvɪ,lai'zeɪʃən/). However, a British variant is not always provided for **-ile**, **-ate**, **-ar/or+ily** endings. In the sample words, four out of nine words with **-ile** (e.g., **docile** /'dɔ:səl, Brit 'dɔs,səl/), four out of eight words with **-ate** (e.g., **rotate** /'rəʊ,tet, Brit rəʊ'tet/), and four out of six words with **-ar/or+ily** (e.g., **customarily** /,kʌstə'merəli, Brit 'kʌstəmərəli/) have British pronunciation. Furthermore, *MWALED* does not transcribe a British variant separately for words with **-ative**, **-mony**, **-ture** endings. Among the 14 sample words in this group, only **antimony** /'æntə,məʊni, Brit æn'tɪməni/ and **premature** /,pri:mə'tuə, ,pri:mətʃuə, Brit 'premətʃə/ have British pronunciation.

### 3.4. Conclusion

This analysis indicates that the phonetic transcription of *MWALED2* has not been updated since its previous edition; at most, it has been kept to a minimum for instance providing pronunciation for newly added words. This implies that *MWALED2* has inherited both the advantages of the first edition and its problems that need to be resolved. One of the advantages is that *MWALED* faithfully depicts current American pronunciation, and therefore has succeeded in reducing the number of symbols and simplifying the notations. The phonetic transcription in *MWALED* can be described as strongly

“monolectal” in nature (cf. Takebayashi 1996: 167), and this is advantageous for learners who wish to acquire American pronunciation. Although *MWALED* does include important American and British pronunciation differences, its “bilectal” nature is not as strong as other learner’s dictionaries. However, *MWALED* displays pedagogical considerations such as employing IPA and incorporating length marks for long vowels. The phonetic transcription characteristics in *MWALED* can be summarized as being both monolectal and pedagogical.

(Section 3 by Sugimoto)

#### 4. Definitions

In this section, we review some definitions from *MWALED2* and examine the updates made for the new edition. We also discuss the use of full-sentence definitions in *MWALED2*.

##### 4.1. Changes from the previous edition

In order to examine the differences from the previous edition, we prepared a sample by collecting two pages from every 50 pages of *MWALED2*. This sample consists of 78 pages total, which represents approximately 4% of the 1926-page A-Z part of the dictionary.

Using our sample, we compared the definitions from *MWALED1* and *MWALED2* entry-by-entry. The result of this comparison revealed that *MWALED2* contains only minor updates and that there are no significant differences between *MWALED1* and *MWALED2*. This can be observed in the fact there were no newly-added or deleted entries in our entire sample, neither in main or run-on definitions<sup>1)</sup>.

The minor updates include the addition of two senses, one for **<sup>1</sup>cloud** and one for **hot spot** (sense 3), quoted below.

##### **<sup>1</sup>cloud**

4 : the large computers (called servers) that you can connect to on the Internet and use for storing data

##### **hot spot**

3 : a place (such as an area in a restaurant or hotel) where it is possible to make a wireless connection to the Internet

These new senses are also incorporated in the App and the Web versions of *MWALED2*.<sup>2)</sup> The addition of sense 4 for **1cloud** may have led to the shortening of some example sentences on the same page<sup>3)</sup> and the modification of the description of certain senses of **out of whole cloth** (under **cloth**) and **1cloud** (sense 2b). As is shown below, the underlined portions of the definitions from *MWALED1* are omitted in the corresponding *MWALED2* definitions, and in the case of **1cloud**, “a large number of things” becomes “a large group of things” to compensate for the deletion of the word “group” in *MWALED2*.

**out of whole cloth** (under **cloth**)

*MWALED1* If something is created out of whole cloth, it is invented in order to trick someone into believing something.

*MWALED2* If something is created out of whole cloth, it is invented to trick someone into believing something.

**1cloud** (sense 2b)

*MWALED1* a large number of things (such as insects) that move together through the air in a group

*MWALED2* a large group of things (such as insects) that move together through the air

Another way that certain definitions are modified, which is more about the sense itself rather than about saving and producing space to conserve the page-layout, is applied to two cases from our sample material: **go off with (someone)** (under **go**) and **transgender**.

**go off with (someone)** (sense 7a of the phrasal verb **go off** under **go**)

*MWALED1* to leave (a spouse, partner, etc.) for someone else

*MWALED2* to leave a spouse, partner, etc., in order to live with and have a sexual relationship with (someone)

The parentheses around “a spouse, partner, etc.” are eliminated in *MWALED2*, probably because they might lead users to misunderstand

that this part corresponds to the parenthesized “someone” in the headword. In addition, the content of the description becomes more specific by incorporating the latter half, “in order to live with and have a sexual relationship with (someone).” This modification seems rather reasonable when we examine definitions of the headword in other learner’s American English dictionaries, all of which mention a certain kind of “relationship” implied by the phrase in question.

- COBAm2* If someone **goes off with** another person, they leave their husband, wife, or lover and have a relationship with that person.
- LAAD3* to leave your husband, wife, partner, etc. in order to have a relationship with someone else
- OAAD* to leave your husband, wife, partner, etc. in order to have a relationship with somebody else

The change to the definition of **transgender** is made to more adequately reflect the notion represented by the word, as seen below.

### **transgender**

- MWALED1* of or relating to people who have a sexual identity that is not clearly male or clearly female
- MWALED2* of or relating to people who feel that their true nature does not match their sex at birth

It is interesting to note that *COBAm2* also modifies the definition of **transgender**, but avoids any evaluation of what is common or general by eliminating the word “straightforward” in its description.

- COBAm1* **Transgender** or **transgendered** people, such as transsexuals, do not have straightforward gender identity.
- COBAm2* Someone who is **transgender** has a gender identity which does not fully correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth.

Within the scope of our sample, we located one instance in which the register label “informal” was added.

### hot spot

1 *informal*: a very popular or active place

Note that this follows the register labeling of the phrase in *OAAD* and *COBAm2*.<sup>4)</sup>

## 4.2. Sentence definitions

The characteristics of the three types of definitions employed in *MWALED1* have already been reviewed by Kokawa et al. (2010)<sup>5)</sup>. In this section, however, we would like to further discuss the *MWALED2*'s use of star symbols (☆), in order to supplement the remarks of Kokawa et al. (2010).

We examined all *MWALED2* entries with headwords starting with the letter “s” and collected all information that began with the star symbol. The total number of pages surveyed amounted to 237, which represents approximately 12.3% of the dictionary A-Z part, and in these we found 91 cases of star symbols—48 used as sentence definitions and 43 used as notes.

Out of the 48 cases of sentence definitions, 40 are the definitions of idioms or phrasal verbs in run-on entries, and 6 are those of common phrases, which are not headwords themselves but embedded within entries in bold-italicized letters. We only located 2 instances in the definitions of main headwords. When we consider the total number of senses described in the entire S section, it is plausible to claim that the use of sentence definitions is highly restricted.

However, some definitions accompanied by star symbols do not take full advantage of their status as sentence definitions, and the distinction between what Kokawa et al. (2010) terms “dash type” definitions and sentence definitions is not clear. For example, the definition of **out of sight, out of mind**, which is presented as a common phrase in the entry headed by **sight**, provides no more information on the syntactic behavior of the phrase than the definitions in *LAAD3* and *OAAD*,

which are similar to the “dash type” definitions in *MWALED2* that begin with “used.” This can be seen below.

**out of sight, out of mind**

*MWALED2* ✧ The phrase **out of sight, out of mind** means that you stop thinking about something or someone if you do not see that thing or person for a period of time.

*LAAD3* used to say that if you cannot see someone or something, you stop thinking about them/it and forget about them/it

*OAAD* used to say someone will quickly be forgotten when they are no longer with you

Sometimes the star symbols are used for definitions that are nothing more than a full-sentence version of these “dash type” definitions. This is seen in the following run-on entry under **<sup>1</sup>best**, though it is not from the S section.

**best of all** ✧ The phrase *best of all* is often used to refer to the most important or appealing part of something that has many good parts.

We see no reason why *MWALED2* provides a sentence definition for the entry, since no information would be missing if it were presented in the form of “dash type” definition.

**best of all** — often used to refer to the most important or appealing part of something that has many good parts

In its “Using the Dictionary” section, *MWALED2* explains that the star symbols are used to lead not only definitions but also notes to “explain the **origins** of a word or provide other kinds of information” (*MWALED2*: 20a), but as Kokawa et al. (2010) observes, the application of the same symbol to mark different types of information seems unsystematic. Connected to the relationship between definitions and notes, Kokawa et al. (2010: 51) also points out that the following sentence definition of **a hostage to fortune** “should not be welcomed

because the user may need to read the whole entry to understand the meaning of the phrase,” and that the second sentence should be separated from the first.

*a hostage to fortune* ✧ In British English, *a hostage to fortune* is something (such as a promise or an action) that someone has made or done that may cause problems in the future. In U.S. English, this phrase is much less common and is usually understood to mean a person whose future success or failure is controlled by luck or fortune.

It is interesting to note here that, while there are such cases in which *MWALED1* and *MWALED2* provide rather long definitions from which the non-definition part should be trimmed, in other cases they divide the sense information into a definition and an accompanying note, which is something that other EFL dictionaries do not bother to do. Consider the definitions of **satellite** below, taken from *MWALED2*, *COBAm2*, *LAAD3*, and *OAAD*.

- MWALED2* a machine that is sent into space and that moves around the earth, moon, sun, or a planet ✧ Satellites are used for radio, television, and other types of communication and for studying the objects they move around.
- COBAm2* A **satellite** is an object which has been sent into space in order to collect information or to be part of a communications system. Satellites move continually round the Earth or around another planet.
- LAAD3* a machine that has been sent into space and goes around the Earth, Moon etc., used for radio, television, and other electronic communication
- OAAD* an electronic device that is sent into space and moves around the earth or another planet. It is used for communicating by radio, television, etc. and for providing information.

In this case, *MWALED2* follows a strict notion of definition and puts the additional information regarding the practical applications of satel-

lites into the post-definitional note that begins with the star symbol. On the other hand, *COBAm2*, *LAAD3*, and *OAAD* incorporate the practical applications of satellites into the definition. *MWALED2* treats the entries for **screw**, **sea level**, **seesaw**, **stencil**, and **sturgeon** in a similar manner, keeping the definitions of these words separate from their practical applications.

(Section 4 by Osada)

## 5. Illustrative Examples

In this section, we review examples in *MWALED2*. Our discussion includes the main characteristics of examples (5.1), how the examples of *MWALED2* have changed from *MWALED1* (5.2), the comparison among the numbers of examples of EFL dictionaries (5.3), and some other information about illustrative examples of *MWALED2* (5.4).

### 5.1. Characteristics of examples

*MWALED2* retains seven ways of presenting its illustrative examples which *MWALED1* adopted:

- (1) Examples are printed in blue.
- (2) Some examples have explanations given in square brackets.
- (3) Some examples show different ways of saying the same thing using an equal sign (=).
- (4) Many common phrases are highlighted in examples using a Gothic font and are followed by explanations.
- (5) Examples showing collocations and other common word groups are introduced by a brief note, such as “—usually+*in*” or “—often used as (*be*) *instructed*.”
- (6) Words shown in parentheses in an example can be included or omitted without changing the basic meaning of the example.
- (7) A slash (/) is used between words in an example when either of the words can be used in the same place in that example. Words separated by slashes in examples do not always have the same meaning.

There seems to be more area for the examples in the blue text than for the other elements in the black text within the main body of *MWALED2*. So it can be said that “the blue text not only highlights the examples, it also makes it much easier to identify the other elements of an entry—the definitions, usage notes, and so on—and to navigate through long entries to find the particular information you need.” (p. 8a)

The Preface says, “Many examples include synonymous words or phrases shown within brackets, thus allowing the reader either to learn a new word or to have the connection between the meanings of words reinforced.” (p. 8a) For example:

**access** *noun* 1 · All public buildings should provide wheelchair *access*. [=a way for people in wheelchairs to enter] · The cup holders are placed for easy *access*. [=so that they can be easily reached]

**predecessor** *noun* 1 · The company’s new president has changed many of the policies that were introduced by his *predecessor*. [=by the previous president]

Using an equal sign (=), some examples show different ways of saying the same thing. This method can be applied to show different sentence patterns:

**perceive** *verb* 2 · She *perceived* herself as an independent woman.  
=She *perceived* herself to be an independent woman.

This method doesn’t seem to be adopted by *COBAm2*, *LDOCE6*, or *OALD9*. *Lighthouse6* adopts this method, as follows:

**perceive** [*verb*] 1 When I read her letter, I *perceived* her *as* reliable. =When I read her letter, I *perceived* her *to* be reliable. =When I read her letter, I *perceived* *that* she was reliable.

Highlighting common phrases in examples, shown in a Gothic italic font, attaching their explanations followed is an effective way to spare

space:

**feather** *noun* · Her suitcase felt **as light as a feather**. [=extremely light] · When I found out I had won, **you could have knocked me over with a feather**. [=I was extremely surprised or astonished]

*LDOCE6* also adopts this method:

**light** *adj* 4 *She was as light as a feather* (=very light) *to carry*.

*OALD9* doesn't always have an explanation after the common phrase in a Gothic italic font:

**light** *adj*. 3 ◇ *The little girl was as light as a feather*.

**knock** *verb* **IDM** **you could have knocked me down with a feather** (*informal*) used to express surprise

Collocations and other common word groups in some examples of *MWALED2* are shown together with a brief note before them and also italicized words in them:

**access** *noun* 1 —often + *to* · The town wants to increase public *access to* beaches. · A dirt road provides *access to* the home.

*LDOCE6* has a similar note before some examples but no mark in the examples:

**access** *n* 1 [+to] *Access to the papers is restricted to senior management.* | *Cats should always have access to fresh, clean water.*

*OALD9* also has the same kind of note before examples but no mark in the examples, either:

**access** *noun* 1 ◇ ~to sth *The only access to the farmhouse is across the fields.* ◇ *Disabled visitors are welcome; there is good wheelchair access to most facilities.*

*COBAm2* doesn't show such collocations and other common word groups in the examples. They are shown in the definitions:

**access** ① N-COUNT If you have **access to** a building or other places, you are able or allowed to go into it. □ *The facilities have been adapted to give access to wheelchair users.* □ *For logistical and political reasons, scientists have only recently been able to gain access to the area.*

## 5.2. Comparison of *MWALED1* and *MWALED2*

Comparing the illustrative examples of *MWALED2* with those of *MWALED1*, we find a number of examples have been added, or changed. Nine new headwords accompanied by one or two examples have been found in *MWALED2*. In some cases, new meanings or parts of speech have been added, accompanied by one or two illustrative sentences or phrases. In other cases, illustrative sentences including common phrases have been added in *MWALED2*.

In some cases of headwords, one illustrative example has been deleted in *MWALED2*. It is because there has been a need to secure space for the new headwords or the new definitions. Many illustrative examples in *MWALED1* have been changed in *MWALED2*; in most cases they have been shortened. Some illustrative sentences have been changed into phrases; some complex sentences or compound sentences have been changed into simple sentences. In other cases, some illustrative examples in *MWALED1* have been lengthened by adding some words or phrases. In any case, all the illustrative examples have been improved and have become easier to understand. There are still other cases where the explanations in square brackets have been shortened, deleted, or improved by being lengthened.

As for *MWALED2\_App*, most of the examples of the new headwords and definitions have been added, but most of the examples have remained the same even when the examples of *MWALED1* were deleted, or shortened. This is probably because there is no need to secure space in the *MWALED2\_App*. There are still some cases where there is no change in the *MWALED2\_App* even when new headwords

or definitions with examples were added to *MWALED1*, or examples of *MWALED1* were changed.

### 5.2.1. Illustrative examples added

The following new headwords accompanied by one or two examples have been found in *MWALED2*:

**app** *noun* · He installed several new *apps* on his smartphone. · a popular *app*

**blogosphere** *noun* · The government's policies have been getting a lot of criticism in the *blogosphere*. [=many people have written blogs criticizing the government's policies]

**ginormous** *adj* · They live in a *ginormous* house.

**Google, google** *verb* · She *Googled* the name of the restaurant to find out its address. · You can find out almost anything by *Googling*.

**meme** *noun* 2 · a funny picture of a cat that quickly became an Internet *meme*

**millennial** *noun* · a type of music that is popular among *millennials*

**podcast** *verb* · a show that is *podcast* every week

**selfie** *noun* · He took a *selfie* in front of the Eiffel Tower.

**smartphone** *noun* · She never goes anywhere without her *smartphone*. · I loaded some new apps on my *smartphone*.

In the following ten headwords of *MWALED2*, new meanings or parts of speech have been added, accompanied by one or two illustrative sentences or phrases. A couple of common phrases are included in them and shown in a Gothic italic font.

**blog** *noun* · She writes a *blog* about travel. · I enjoy reading her *blog*.

**blog** *verb* · She *blogs* about travel.

**cloud** *noun* 4 · The app allows you to store your music and photographs *in the cloud*. [=on the Internet] · *cloud computing* [=the use of Internet servers for storing data]

**dairy** *noun* 4 · Her diet doesn't include much *dairy*.

**title** *noun* 4 b · a *title* of nobility

**tweet** *verb* 2 · a celebrity who *tweets* frequently [=who frequently writes messages on Twitter] · She *tweeted* a message to her fans.

**tweet** *noun* 2 · She posted a *tweet* thanking her fans for their support.

**tweeter** *noun* 1 · a celebrity who has become a popular *tweeter*

**viral** *adj* 2 · a *viral* video · The story quickly *went viral*. [=became very popular by being spread through the Internet]

**viscosity** *noun* [*noncount*] · studying how temperature affects *viscosity*

In the following three cases, illustrative sentences have been added in *MWALED2*. Common phrases are included in them.

**all** *adv* **all over** 1 b · People came *from all over*. [=from many places]

**everywhere** *adv* · People came *from everywhere*. [=from many places]

**yourselves** *pronoun* 1 a · Behave *yourselves*.

“Behave *yourselves*.” could be treated as a common phrase in Gothic italic fonts as in the case of the illustrative sentence under the headword of “behave”, “If you can’t *behave yourself* in the store we’ll have to leave.” In addition, the illustrative sentence under the headword of “yourself”, “You’ve got to behave *yourself*,” could be changed to “You’ve got to *behave yourself*.”

### 5.2.2. Illustrative examples deleted

In each of the following cases, one illustrative example has been deleted in *MWALED2*. It is because there has been a need to secure space for the new headwords and the new definitions.

**a posteriori** *adv* · You can’t justify what you did *a posteriori*.

**back** *noun* **back to back** 2 · He’s had two victories *back to back*.

**block** *verb* 1 b · The police *blocked off* the crime scene with yellow tape.

**blocker** *noun* · He’s one of the league’s best *blockers*.

- blocky** *adj* · a baseball player with a *blocky* [(more commonly) *stocky*] body/built
- blood** *noun* *make someone's blood curdle* · The mere sight of a cockroach *makes my blood curdle*.
- bloodless** *adj* 1 · He fought his *bloodless* battles in the courtroom.
- dally** *verb* · Please don't *dally*. We need you here right away.
- each** *pronoun* · He took shot after shot, *each* missing by inches.
- eco-** *combining form* · *eco-friendly* technologies [=technologies that do not harm the environment]
- girlishness** *noun* · the *girlishness* of her voice/figure
- goof** *noun* 2 · I'll admit it's my *goof*.
- goose egg** *noun* · They put another *goose egg* up on the scoreboard.
- melodramatic** *adj* · a *melodramatic* music
- melting pot** *noun* · the American *melting pot*
- melting pot** *noun* *in the melting pot* · It looked like our team was winning, but then everything went back *in the melting pot*. [=the outcome became uncertain again]
- mimic** *verb* 1 · She has a talent for *mimicking* famous actresses.
- prize** *adj* 1 b · the *prize* pig
- smart-aleck** *noun* · Don't be such a *smart-aleck*.
- smarty-pants** *noun* · Go ahead, *smarty-pants*, tell us about your grade point average.
- soaked** *adj* · an oil-*soaked* rag
- soar** *verb* 1 · The nation's divorce rate has *soared*.
- soaring** *adj* · She is enjoying her *soaring* popularity.
- soft** *adj* 2 · The rabbit's fur is *soft*.
- titled** *adj* · a member of the *titled* ranks
- tweedy** *adj* 2 · The new laws banning fox hunting caused outrage in *tweedy* circles.
- twelfth** *adv* · the *twelfth* best-selling book
- twenty** *pronoun* · Only *twenty* showed up for the review session.
- twenty-four seven, 24-7, 24/7** *adv* · She worries about you *24/7*.
- twilight zone** *noun* 1 · a *twilight zone* between war and peace
- Virgo** *noun* 2 · Are you a *Virgo* or *Libra*?

The following two illustrative examples have been deleted from *MWALED1* together with definition 1 of the headword “spoken.” This must be a mistake, because this deletion happened at the end of the page. Definition 1 doesn’t exist in *MWALED2*. However, *MWALED2\_* App retains definition 1 and its examples.

<*MWALED1*>

**spoken** *adj*

1 : using speech and not writing · a *spoken* statement · the *spoken* word/language

2 : speaking in a specified manner—used in combination · She is *soft-spoken*. · a *plainspoken* man [=a man who speaks plainly]

<*MWALED2*>

**spoken** *adj*

2 : speaking in a specified manner—used in combination · She is *soft-spoken*. · a *plainspoken* man [=a man who speaks plainly]

### 5.2.3. Changes in illustrative examples

Many illustrative examples in *MWALED1* have been changed in *MWALED2*; in most cases they have been shortened. Some illustrative sentences have been changed into phrases; some complex sentences or compound sentences have been changed into simple sentences; some explanations in square brackets have been shortened or deleted. In some cases, some illustrative examples in *MWALED1* have been lengthened by adding some words or phrases. In any case, all these illustrative examples have been improved and have become easier to understand.

The following 13 illustrative sentences have been changed into phrases:

**cloth** *noun* *out of whole cloth* · He would make up stories *out of whole cloth* just to stir up trouble. → a story *out of whole cloth*

**direct** *adj* 5 · He claims to be a *direct* descendant of George Washington. → a *direct* descendant of Genghis Khan.

**echelon** *noun* · We heard stories of corruption in the upper/higher

- echelons* of the firm. → the upper/higher *echelons* of the firm
- ecological** *adj* · The organization promotes *ecological* awareness.  
→ *ecological* awareness
- fragment** *verb* · The property is being *fragmented* into subdivisions. → property being *fragmented* into subdivisions
- functional** *adj* · They worked outside, so they preferred wearing *functional* clothes. → workers wearing *functional* clothing
- goose-step** *verb* · The soldiers *goose-stepped* past the general in the parade. → soldiers *goose-stepping* down the road
- gorilla** *noun* **800-pound gorilla** · Their company is the 800-pound gorilla of the computer industry. → the 800-pound gorilla of the computer industry
- million** *noun* · The company is worth *millions*. [=worth millions of dollars, pounds, euros, etc.] → a company worth *millions*. [=millions of dollars, pounds, etc.]
- pocket** *noun* 3 · The tickets are in the zippered *pocket* on the front of the suitcase. → a zippered *pocket* on the front of a suitcase
- pockmarked** *adj* · A severe case of the chicken pox had left her badly *pockmarked*. → *pockmarked* skin
- twang** *noun* 2 · We heard the *twang* of an electric guitar coming from the basement. → the *twang* of an electric guitar
- violation** *noun* 2 · They protested the government's *violation* of human rights. → trying to prevent *violation* of human rights

The following illustrative complex sentences and compound sentences have been changed into simple sentences in *MWALED2*:

- baby** *verb* 2 · It looks like he was *babying* his injured foot. → He was *babying* his injured foot.
- back** *noun* **at/in the back of your mind** · The thought of retiring and moving out into the country has been *in the back of her mind* for many years, and now she's finally doing it. → The thought of retiring and moving out into the country has been *in the back of her mind* for many years.
- put your back into** · If you want to get that floor clean you'll have to *put your back into it*. → To clean that floor you'll have to *put your back into it*.

**damage** *noun* 3 · He tried to repair the *damage* by apologizing, but it was too late. → He tried to repair the *damage* by apologizing.

**mince** *verb* 1 · The recipe says that you should *mince* the onions. → She *minced* the onions.

**tussle** *verb* 1 · Some guy *tussled* [=scuffled] with a security guard for a few minutes before he was arrested. → Some guy was *tussling* [=scuffling] with a security guard.

**tutorial** *noun* 1 · An online *tutorial* gives basic instructions for those who have never made reservations on the Web. → An online *tutorial* gives basic instructions for using the software.

**yourselves** *pronoun* 1 b · Keep in mind that you were young once *yourselves*. → You were young once *yourselves*.

In the following cases, illustrative examples in *MWALED1* have been shortened somehow or other:

**account** *noun* *bring/call (someone) to account* · He was called to *account* by his boss for failing to spot the mistake in the company's records. → He was called to *account* by his boss for failing to spot the mistake.

**back** *noun* 1 a · He was handcuffed with his hands behind his *back*. → He had his hands behind his *back*.

1 b · a bird with a spotted *back* → a bird with a dark *back*

**back is to/against the wall** · *With our backs to the wall* we made a last desperate effort to finish the project on time. → *With our backs to the wall* we made a last desperate effort to finish on time.

**badger** *verb* 2 · She finally *badgered* me into cutting my hair. → She finally *badgered* me into going.

**cloud** *verb* 4 · The sky had *clouded* over, and it was beginning to rain. → The sky *clouded* over, and it began to rain.

**cloudy** *adj* 2 · a puddle of *cloudy* [=dirty, murky] water → *cloudy* [=murky] water

**dam** *verb* · They created a reservoir by *damming up* the river. → They *dammed up* the river.

**damage** *verb* b · This news will undoubtedly *damage* the government's reputation. → This news will *damage* his reputation.

- He was worried that his comments had seriously *damaged* their relationship. → He was worried that his comments had *damaged* their relationship.

**explanation** *noun* 2 · Did the company offer an *explanation* for the delay? → Did she offer an *explanation* for the delay?

- There are several possible *explanations* for the current oil shortage. → There are several possible *explanations* for the oil shortage.
- a likely/probable/possible/plausible *explanation* of how the accident occurred → a likely/probable/plausible *explanation* of how the accident occurred

**fraction** *noun* 2 · The new technology allows us to complete the job in a *fraction* of the time [=in much less time] it formerly took. → We can now do the job in a *fraction* of the time. [=in much less time]

**gingham** *noun* · a red and white *gingham* tablecloth → a *gingham* tablecloth

**goof** *verb* **goof around** · The kids are *goofing around*, watching TV and hanging out. → The kids are *goofing around* in the backyard.

**goofy** *adj* · She was making *goofy* faces at us in class. → She was making *goofy* faces at us.

- an actress known for her *goofy* charm → *goofy* charm

**gooseberry** *noun* 2 · He was left to play *gooseberry* while the other two talked and laughed all evening. → He was left to play *gooseberry* while the other two talked and laughed.

**hard drive** *noun* · an external/removable *hard drive* → an external *hard drive*

**harrowing** *adj* · She gives a *harrowing* account/description of her battle with cancer. → She gives a *harrowing* account/description of her illness.

- They managed to escape after several *harrowing* encounters with the enemy. → They escaped after several *harrowing* encounters with the enemy.

**hot** *adj* **hot under the collar** · He tends to get a little *hot under the collar* when his wife keeps him waiting. → He tends to get a little *hot under the collar* when he has to wait.

- hots** *noun* **the hots** · Everyone knows she has the *hots* for the new guy in her office. [=she is very attracted to the new guy in her office] → Everyone knows she has the *hots* for him. [=she is very attracted to him]
- melodramatic** *adj* · a *melodramatic* movie/story/script → a *melodramatic* movie/story
- melody** *noun* **2** · He sang a few old-fashioned *melodies*. → He sang a few old *melodies*.
- poach** *verb* **poach on someone's territory/turf** · You can't keep other candidates from *poaching on your turf*. [=from trying to get voters who usually vote for you or your party to vote for them] → The other candidates are *poaching on his turf*. [=trying to get voters who usually vote for him or his party to vote for them]
- pocket** *adj* **1** · a *pocket* calculator/dictionary → a *pocket* calculator
- pocket** *adj* **2** · a *pocket* watch/handkerchief → a *pocket* watch
- self-help** *adj* · *self-help* books/manuals → *self-help* books
- smart** *verb* **2** · He's still *smarting* at/from/over losing the match last month. → He's still *smarting* at/from/over losing the match.
- soft** *adj* **8 b** · He used to love adventure, but he has *gone/gotten soft* in his old age. → He used to be tough, but he has *gone/gotten soft* in his old age.
- tablet** *noun* **2** · aspirin/vitamin *tablets* → aspirin *tablets*
- take** *verb* **35** · Her reaction **took me (completely) by surprise** [=surprised me] → Her reaction **took me by surprise** [=surprised me]
- tussle** *verb* **1** · The two basketball players *tussled* for the ball. → The two players *tussled* for the ball.
- tutor** *verb* · She spent her evenings *tutoring* her son in math. [=helping her son study math] → She was *tutoring* her son in math. [=helping her son study math]
- twinge** *noun* **2** · I felt a *twinge* of guilt/jealousy. · I must admit to a *twinge* of envy. → I felt a *twinge* of guilt/jealousy/envy.
- virgin** *adj* **1** · a *virgin* wool/wood/timber → a *virgin* wool/timber

Sometimes illustrative examples in *MWALED1* have been lengthened by adding some words or phrases, as follows:

**blood** *noun* **blood on your hands** · Her *blood is on your hands!*  
→ It's your fault she died. Her *blood is on your hands!*

**expiation** *noun* · *expiation* of his guilt/sin → *expiation* of his guilt ·  
hoping to make *expiation* for their sins

**sod** *verb* · *Sod* this machine. → *Sod* this stupid machine. I can't  
get it to work.

**tutorial** *adj* · We offer *tutorial* instruction for test preparation.  
→ We offer *tutorial* instruction for students preparing for the  
examination.

There are cases where illustrative examples in *MWALED1* have been improved or corrected by changing some words or phrases:

**bag** *noun* 1 a · (US) *grocery bags* =(Brit) *carrier bags* → (US)  
*shopping bags* =(Brit) *carrier bags* · (US) *grocery bags*

**ear** *noun* **out on your ear** · If you're late to work again, you'll  
be *out on your ear!* [=you'll be fired] → If I'm late to work again,  
I'll be *out on my ear!* [=I'll be fired]

**drivel** *noun* · I'm not going to waste my time reading this *drivel*.  
[=nonsense] → I won't waste my time reading this *drivel*.  
[=nonsense]

**millennial** *adj* · *millennial* celebrations → a *millennial* celebration

**tit for tat** *noun* · a *tit for tat* between two rival politicians → rival  
politicians playing a game of *tit for tat*

**viscosity** *noun* · a liquid with a high/low *viscosity* → liquids with  
high/low *viscosities*

In the following cases, the explanations in square brackets have been shortened, deleted, or improved by being lengthened.

**bachelor** *noun* 1 · an *eligible bachelor* [=an unmarried man who  
is regarded as a desirable husband] → an *eligible bachelor* [=a  
bachelor who is seen as a desirable husband]

**clothes** *noun* · work *clothes* [=items that are appropriate to wear  
at work] → work *clothes* [=things you wear at work]

**crescendo** *noun* · The excitement reaches its *crescendo* [=climax,  
peak] when he comes on stage. → The excitement reaches its

*crescendo* [=peak] when he comes on stage.

**expertise** *noun* · This question falls outside my *area of expertise* [=the subject area I know a lot about] → This question falls outside my *area of expertise* [=the question is about something I do not know much about]

**hassock** *noun* 2 · a sofa and *hassock* [(more commonly) ottoman] → a sofa and *hassock* [=ottoman]

**hot stuff** *noun* 1 · I remember when that guy was *hot stuff*. [=I remember when he was very popular] → I remember when that guy was *hot stuff*. [=when he was very popular]

**pocket** *noun* *in your pocket* · She knew that she had the game/match *in her pocket*. [=she knew she would win the game] → She knew that she had the game/match *in her pocket*.

**smart** *adj* *smart money* · *The smart money is on* Jones to win the election. [=people think that Jones will win the election] → *The smart money is on* Jones to win the election. [=people think that Jones will win]

**soap opera** *noun* · My life is a *soap opera*. [=my life has a lot of dramatic events and problems like the ones that occur in soap operas] → My life is a *soap opera*. [=my life has a lot of dramatic events and problems]

**tabular** *adj* · data displayed in tabular form [=data displayed in a table] → data displayed in tabular form [=in a table]

**virgin** *adj* 1 · a *virgin* bride [=a bride who has never had sexual intercourse before her marriage] → a *virgin* bride [=a bride who has never had sex before her marriage]

In the following case, the illustrative sentence has been moved to its correct position: the verb “increase” in this sentence is used as a transitive verb.

<MWALED1>

**increase** *verb* 1 [no object]: to become larger or greater in size, amount, number, etc. . . . · The store is *increasing* [=raising] its prices.

<MWALED2>

**increase** *verb* 2 [+ obj]: to make (something) larger or greater in

size, amount, number, etc. . . . . The store is *increasing* [=raising] its prices.

### 5.3. Comparison of *MWALED2* and other EFL dictionaries

The Preface of *MWALED2* says, "Although not every entry in this dictionary includes an example—there is usually very little value in providing an example for, say, a noun like *microchip* or *monoplane*—the great majority of the entries do, and a large percentage of them include more than one." (p. 7a) According to the back cover, there are "more than 160,000 usage example sentences—the most of any learner's dictionary." Table 5.1 shows the results of the survey of examples conducted on the same ranges of headwords in *MWALED2*, *COB8*, *COBAm2*, *LDOCE6*, and *OALD9*. This table shows clearly that *MWALED2* has by far the most examples among these dictionaries.

### 5.4. Concreteness of examples

As cited below, *MWALED2* states that the word "actor," for example, refers to a man or boy, and can also refer to a woman or girl, which is clearly shown in its illustrative examples in addition to the definition. This could be user-friendly. In this respect other EFL dictionaries show no illustrative examples.

<*MWALED2*>

**actor** *noun* [count]: a person who acts in a play, movie, etc.

**usage** *Actor* is often used to refer specifically to a man or boy who acts. • He's a talented *actor*, and his wife is a well-known actress. *Actor* can also refer to a woman or girl, and many women now prefer this use. • His wife is also an *actor*. The plural form *actors* is used for groups that include both men and women. • She and her husband are both talented *actors*.

**actress** *noun* [count]: a woman or girl who acts in a play, movie, etc.

<*COBAm2*>

**actor** N-COUNT An **actor** is someone whose job is acting in plays or films. 'Actor' in the singular usually refers to a man,

Table 5.1 Comparison of the numbers of examples among ESL dictionaries

entry words	COB8	COBAm2	MWALED2	LDOCE6	OALD9
a~abatement	37	27	96	62	56
backwoods~badger	55	37	135	66	61
bureaucracy~burn	59	40	132	72	67
commonality~communicator	45	31	78	40	45
defenceless~defined	40	46	99	58	45
elementary~elimination	34	33	59	43	41
flatbed~flatware	31	25	51	19	31
grower~grudgingly	38	26	64	48	40
incongruous~increasingly	42	38	105	50	54
liar~liberty	45	30	59	29	32
mist~misunderstood	46	32	82	50	56
ordinal number~organize	44	29	74	58	50
pollinate~polymer	19	16	37	28	16
redeem~redistribution	40	36	71	22	31
seafood~seaport	35	32	52	32	35
spark~spay	49	35	88	40	51
taste bud~tax	33	28	67	42	39
underarm~underground	47	34	67	36	35
wish~with	69	47	150	114	104
total of samples	808	622	1,566	909	889
total text pages	1,828	1,539	1,909	2,125	1,820
samples/total text pages	0.44	0.40	0.82	0.43	0.49

but some women who act prefer to be called 'actors' rather than 'actresses.' □ *His father was an actor in the Cantonese Opera Company.*

**actress** N-COUNT An **actress** is a woman whose job is acting in plays or films. □ *She's not only a great dramatic actress but she's also very funny.*

<LDOCE6>

**actor** *n* [C] someone who performs in a a play or film: **leading/principal actor** *She has starred with many leading actors.* | **character actor** (=an actor who takes unusual or interesting roles)

**actress** *n* [C] a woman who performs in a play or film

### THESAURUS

**actor** someone who performs in a a play or film: *Her son wants to be an actor.*

**actress** a woman who performs in a play or film. Many women prefer to be called actors rather than actresses: *Who was the actress who played Jane Eyre?*

<OALD9>

**actor** *noun* a person who performs on the stage, on television or in films/movies, especially as a profession

**actress** *noun* a woman who performs on the stage, on television or in films/movies, especially as a profession [HELP] Many women now prefer to be called actors, although when the context is not clear, an actor is usually understood to refer to a man.

(Section 5 by Ikeda)

## 6. The Front and Back Matter of *MWALED1* and *MWALED2*

### 6.1. The front matter

We looked through the front matter of the two versions of *MWALED* and were rather surprised to find that after the copyright page this is identical in both, including the title and page allocations of each element of the front matter, as well as what is written in them. As far as we could see, even the contributors' names and their titles and affiliations mentioned in the Preface are apparently the same in the two editions. The front matter after the copyright page consists of (the table of) 'Contents,' 'Preface,' 'Using the Dictionary' (i.e. the user's guide), 'Labels Used in This Dictionary,' and 'Pronunciation Symbols.'

We would just like to mention one minor error on the Contents page. The 'Color Art' pages, a collection of beautiful full-color graphic illustrations inserted in the middle of the A-Z dictionary text pages, are described as 'following page 1002' in both editions. They

were actually bound after p. 1002 in the first edition, but were somehow moved to after p. 986 in *MWALED2*. We know that this is a negligible mistake, however, perhaps they should have given a final look to the front matter to see if it was really all right to leave things totally intact. After all, they had eight years to do so.

(Section 6.1 by Kokawa)

## 6.2. The back matter

The constitution of the pages of *MWALED2* is the same as that of *MWALED1*. The back matter includes 26 pages of “English Grammar Review,” four pages of “Irregular Verbs,” one page of “Contractions,” two pages of “Prefixes and Suffixes,” and two pages of “English Word Roots.” One page of “Pronunciation Symbols,” which appears in the front matter, is repeatedly included in the back matter.

Pragmatic information is given, such as three pages of “Words That Are Often Confused,” three pages of “Spelling Rules,” two pages of “The Spelling of Different Sounds in English,” seven pages of “Handbook of Style,” two pages of “Numbers,” one page of “Dates,” two pages of “Envelope Addresses,” five pages of “E-Mail, Letters, Memos, and Résumés.”

Encyclopedic information is also given, for example, 17 pages of “Geographical Names,” two pages of “Common First Names,” one page of “Money,” two pages of “Weights and Measures,” and one page of “Holidays.” Abundance of encyclopedic information is characteristic of American dictionaries.

### 6.2.1. Prefixes, Suffixes, and Word Roots

*MWALED2* retains the 40 prefixes, 44 suffixes, and 155 word roots which *MWALED1* had.

The prefix “**de-** (do the opposite of; remove from; reduce, exclude, not)” has examples, “deactivate,” “defrost,” and “devalue” on p. 1958. The word root “**de** (=down, away)” has examples “dejected,” and “descent” on p. 1960. This “**de**” should also be treated and listed as a prefix. In the main body the headword “**de-**” has the definition “reduce”

with an example “*devalue* currency.” *COB8* has “**de-**” on the prefixes list and states, “**de-** is added to some verbs to make verbs which mean the opposite. For example, to *deactivate* a mechanism means to switch it off so that it cannot work.” on p. xxix.

The number prefixes “**bi-**,” “**semi-**,” “**tri-**,” and “**uni-**” are on the list of “PREFIXES.” Likewise, “**mega** (=large),” “**micro** (=small),” “**macro** (=large),” “**mono** (=one, only),” “**multi** (=many),” “**omni** (=all),” and “**poly** (=many),” which are used at the beginning of words, could be on the “PREFIXES” list instead of the “English Word Roots” list. In addition, the prefix “**pan** (=all, whole)” on the list of “English Word Roots” should also be on the “PREFIXES” list. Instead, the word root “**pan** (=bread)” could be on the list of “English Word Roots,” because it is used to make such words as “company,” “companion,” “accompany,” and “pantry.”

### 6.2.2. Geographical Names

Two headwords “**South Sudan**” and “**Uluru (Ayers Rock)**” have been added to the list of “Geographical Names” of *MWALED2*. Besides, “**Timor-Leste**,” and “**Pyeongyang**,” have been added as other forms of the headwords “**East Timor**” and “**Pyongyang**.” The headword “**Curacao**” of *MWALED1* has been changed into “**Curaçao**” in *MWALED2*.

The 17 pages for “Geographical Names” in *MWALED2* is far more than the four pages for those in *LDOCE6* or the three pages for those in *OALD9*.

(Section 6.2 by Ikeda)

## 7. Boxed Usage Notes and Pictorial Illustrations in *MWALED1/2*

### 7.1. Boxed Usage Notes

We looked through all the entries with headwords beginning with ‘a’ as well as two in every 50 pages (e.g. pp. 100 and 101, 150 and 151, . . .) afterwards, and compared all the boxed usage notes between those found in *MWALED1* and *MWALED2*. We discovered that as far as the sampled pages were concerned, all of the boxed usage notes are

identical in the two editions, both in terms of presence and the description within the boxes. (Boxed) usage notes have already been discussed extensively in Kokawa et al. (2010: 71–81), and also touched upon in this paper (in 5.4 above), so we would just like to point out that nothing has changed in this regard through the revisions from *MWALED1* to *MWALED2*.

## 7.2. Pictorial Illustrations in *MWALED1/2*

We looked through all the A-Z dictionary text section of the first and the second editions of *MWALED* for pictorial illustrations, and identified 351 (groups of) illustrations in addition to the 16-page full-color collection of pictures (called ‘Color Art’) categorized into 11 groups (Colors, Vegetables, Fruits, Plants, Landscapes, Fish and Shellfish, Birds, Insects and Arachnids, Gems and Jewelry, Patterns, Clothing) and inserted in the middle of the A-Z dictionary text of *MWALED1* (between pp. 1002 and 1003) and in *MWALED2* (between pp. 986 and 987). Again, all the pictorial illustrations in the two editions are identical—not a single alterations, including the drawings themselves, were applied to the graphics of *MWALED1*.

Basically, all of the illustrations attached to the A-Z dictionary text of *MWALED1/2* are line drawings, except for the illustrations for **family**, **orchestra** and **zodiac**, which are actually presented in the form of a family tree, an orchestral stage configuration delineated by instruments and zodiac sign diagrams respectively. We found 274 single drawing illustrations (that is, where a single drawing is presented for one entry), which account for approximately 78% of the drawing presentations<sup>1)</sup> in *MWALED1/2*<sup>2)</sup>. In this category, 7 instances of drawings of an item accompanied by a human using it (demonstrative illustrations) as well as one three-frame cartoon strip (of *Garfield*) for the entry **comic strip** are included. Others are made up of 36 hyponymous groups of illustrations (showing more than one hyponyms for the entry word—e.g. drawings of a chimpanzee, an orangutan, a gibbon and a gorilla for the entry **ape**), 10 panoramic illustrations (e.g. a perspective picture of a **bathroom** with various items likely to be

found in it with captions), 9 comparative illustration groups (e.g. one presenting drawings of an alligator and a crocodile s.v. **alligator**) and so on.

Overall, the pictorial illustrations in *MWALED1/2* are clear, but there are some points in individual drawings that may need improvement. The dictionaries show animals of the cat family (a leopard, a lynx, a cheetah, a lion and a tiger along with a domestic cat) as the graphic illustrations for the entry **cat**, while they depict various kinds of 'domestic' dogs, such as a dachshund, a poodle, a husky and a golden retriever, instead of canine family animals like a wolf and a coyote. The latter treatment (i.e. for **dog**) may make more sense, and the former (i.e. for **cat**) looks a bit unusual.

When the dictionary shows some different sorts of things denoted by the entry word in a group, the overall title for the illustration is sometimes in plural, in other cases in singular. Thus, various types of windows are dubbed as 'windows,' while different sorts of brass instruments are collectively labeled as 'brass instrument.' From the standpoint of language learning, the former treatment may be preferable.

Some illustrations (e.g. those for **clown**, **lacrosse** and **whale**) are not quite representative of what we or native speakers of English might visualize when we hear the word. In the case of **lacrosse**, it's actually the lacrosse stick, instead of a lacrosse game, that is presented as an illustration. Also, some drawings in *MWALED*, being presented in black and white, may not evoke a clear image of what they are (e.g. the illustrations for **octopus**, **popcorn**, **sandwich**, **satellite dish** and **scaffold**) and puzzle the users, if they have never actually seen the objects denoted by the word.

In some drawings, it may be necessary to specify exactly which part of the image is the notion denoted by the entry word (e.g. for **wedge**). In those cases, an arrow or a line to show the specific part may be needed. Also, it is sometimes difficult to tell which meaning (i.e. sense number) for a polysemous entry the presented illustration represents. For this reason, the drawing for the entry **pipe** should preferably have

been titled **'pipe 2**.

The board surface of the illustration for **blackboard** is depicted as white, so it is actually a 'whiteboard' which is nowadays commonly used. (Although we may sometime call a whiteboard a blackboard.)

In spite of these points that await future updates, the pictorial illustrations in *MWALED* have, by and large, attained a reasonable standard. The illustrations in the Color Art section of *MWALED* are very colorful and well-drawn. With that in mind, we might contend that the overall graphic images in the dictionary do not surpass the appeal that we find in the maybe more true-to-life illustrations in one of the other recent comparable EFL dictionaries, *COBAm2*, which presents vivid full-color illustrations all through the volume.

What we expect from Merriam-Webster, the sole major American publisher of an EFL dictionary, may be an EFL work which is truly unique, and more preferably, a 'uniquely American' or 'uniquely Merriam-Webster' EFL dictionary. We would like to present here two ideas that may add some unique flavor to *MWALED* and make the dictionary a little more distinct from its EFL competitors.

One is to present illustrations that may help users visualize a stereotypical image of something or someone typically found in America. For instance, a learner of English may want to know what image an American would have when s/he hears the word '**redneck**.' A stereotypical image is difficult to grasp easily but constitutes a very important part of culture. That kind of information may well be welcomed by EFL learners.

The other suggestion is an extensive use of *Garfield* comic strips as a graphic aid to learning English words. Merriam-Webster published the *Merriam-Webster and Garfield Dictionary (MWGD)* in 1999, which we consider a remarkable lexicographical work. It was apparently intended for native speaker children (and perhaps adults with learning disability), as the top page comment written by Jim Davies, creator of *Garfield* suggests, but the dictionary seems useful also for ESL and EFL learners. The dictionary contains plenty of *Garfield* three-frame comic strips—maybe more than one comics in two pages on average—

so if one opens a page in *MWGD*, there is a fair chance that one will encounter Garfield and his friends. Each comic strip includes a word featured in an entry on the same page. We offer two strips as examples:

Fig. 7.1 Comic strip linked to **hopefully** in *MWGD*



Fig. 7.2 Comic strip linked to **rule** in *MWGD*



Many comic strips, including *Garfield*, reflect an American way of thinking, humor and way of life, but at the same time they are not always unique to America. Instead, the story and its humor can be shared by people all over the world. It would also be good reading material for an advanced learner—they might be keen to read them and have fun, and if they hit upon an expression they don't understand, they can look it up in the dictionary! Thus a dictionary comprised of comic strips can offer valuable material for learners of not only the English language, but of the culture and the way of thinking of an English-speaking society.

We would like to cite Jim Davies' words from the top page of *MWGD*, in the hope that some day an EFL version of *MWGD* may be realized.

It's common knowledge that we retain 20 percent of what we hear and up to 80 percent of what we see. Words accompanied by pictures are much easier to recall for one simple reason . . . association . . . one of the fundamental ways our mind remembers.

Another advantage of using the comic strip to build the vocabulary is that the words are utilized squarely tithing the American vernacular, and not in a dry way. One educator once told me that, first, you have to get a student's attention. With that accomplished, teaching is easy.

Replacing most of the pictorial illustrations now present in *MWALED* with comic strips may be too bold an idea, but may help the Merriam-Webster dictionary stand out as a truly distinctive EFL product.<sup>3)</sup>

(Section 7 by Kokawa)

## 8. Electronic versions of *MWALED2*

Besides the paper version of a learner's dictionary (*MWALED1/2*), Merriam-Webster has made Web- and app-based EFL dictionaries available. The digital versions are all titled the *Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary* (henceforth *MWLD*), but we found out the contents are all based on either the 1st and/or the 2nd edition of *MWALED*. App-based *MWLDs* have been classified into three versions according to the hardware and/or operating systems on which the application software is run: *MWLD* for Android, for iPhone and for iPad respectively. The differences between the latter two are only due to display types and resolution, so we would like to abbreviate *MWLD* for Android as *MWLD-aApp*, and combine the latter two here as *MWLD-iApp*. The Web-based *MWLD* (*MWLD-Online*) is announced on the back cover blurb of *MWALED2* as follows:

Visit [LearnersDictionary.com](http://LearnersDictionary.com) for vocabulary quizzes and audio pronunciations by native speakers of English

The blurb does not explain anything about the dictionary material itself, but naturally we can look up words and idioms in *MWLD-Online*. In fact, *MWLD-Online* is available to anyone (even for those who have not bought the paper version of *MWALED2*) for free.

Table 7.1 Paper and digital versions of the *MWALED* and the *MWLD*

	<i>MWALED</i> 1	<i>MWLD</i> -Online	<i>MWLD</i> -aApp	<i>MWLD</i> -iApp	<i>MWALED</i> 2
Media	paper	online access	application	application	paper
Platform	N/A	a major Internet browser	a hardware on Android OS	an iPhone/iPad on iOS	N/A
Released in	Sept. 2008	June 2012	March 2016	April 2016	October 2016
Price	US \$29.95	available for free	JP ¥542 <sup>1)</sup>	JP ¥600 <sup>1)</sup> US \$4.99 <sup>2)</sup>	US \$29.95
Information found in the Front and Back matters	Yes	geographical names only	geographical names only	geographical names only	Yes
A-Z dictionary part lookup	available	available	available	available	available
Pictorial illustrations	line drawings and Color Art	line drawings and Color Art	line drawings and Color Art displayed if connected to the Internet	line drawings and Color Art displayed if connected to the Internet	line drawings and Color Art
Audio pronunciation for non-geographical entry headwords	not available on paper	available for all the headwords except for new additions	available for all the headwords if connected to the Internet	available for all the headwords if connected to the Internet	not available on paper
Audio pronunciation for major geographical names	not available on paper	available	available if connected to the Internet	available if connected to the Internet	not available on paper
Other materials not found in <i>MWALED</i>	N/A	Word of the Day, Quizzes, Core vocabulary, etc.	Word of the Day	Word of the Day, Vocab Quiz	N/A
Advertisements	N/A	constantly appear on the dictionary page	do not appear on the screen	do not appear on the screen	N/A
Information found added in <i>MWALED</i> 2	N/A	mostly available	mostly available	mostly available	N/A
Information found deleted or shortened in <i>MWALED</i> 2	N/A	basically left undeleted	basically left undeleted	basically left undeleted	N/A

In Table 7.1 the different paper and digital versions of the *MWALED* and the *MWLD* are compared.

What we can see from this comparison is that most of the major information presented in the paper version of the learner's dictionary is available in the Web- and App-based dictionaries for free or for about a fifth of the price charged for paper dictionaries (although audio pronunciation files and pictorial illustrations, which are presumably stored in the dictionary server on the Web, are only available if connected to the Internet even for *MWLD*-aApp and -iApp. Additionally, a large number of advertisements are always displayed in the free Web version of the *MWLD*).

Words and run-on idioms can be looked up in the three digital versions of the dictionary by entering the word or phrase in question into the search window on the screen. Set phrases (idioms, etc.) presented in italics and other information (e.g. word(s) in definitions, illustrative examples) cannot be searched in any way in the three versions of digital *MWLD*. On the other hand, those geographical names which are presented in the back matter, separately from the A-Z dictionary text in *MWALED2*, are integrated in the main text and can be retrieved through the search window just as can an ordinary, non-proper name entry word in any *MWLD*.

In all three digital versions, line drawing illustrations are automatically displayed as part of the relevant entry when an Internet connection is available, and pictures in the Color Art pages can be accessed by clicking the link that appears within the entry for items included in the color section of *MWALED1/2*. (Incidentally, illustrations including those in Color Art pages displayed in *MWLD*-aApp cannot somehow be expanded, so if you are using an Android phone you may find the pictures too small; pictures on *MWLD*-iApp can be expanded through 'pinch-out' action on the screen.)

The updates to *MWALED2* are not always found in the electronic versions. All of the new (head)words have found their way into the *MWLD*, but only a fraction of the updates for definitions and illustrative examples can be seen in the digital versions. Especially, most of

the example sentences and phrases shortened or deleted in the *MWALED* revision were left untouched online or in the applications. This may be because there are virtually no space limitations in the digital versions, and there was no need for unnecessary alterations (compressions and deletions) to be applied.

The reason why audio pronunciations for new items such as **hashtag**, and **selfie** (see those listed in 2.1) are missing in *MWLD-Online* may be that additional recordings were made between 2013 (after the launch of *MWLD-Online*) and 2015 (before the release of *MWLD-aApp* and *MWLD-iApp*), and the audio additions to new words were only applied to the *MWLD-aApp* and *MWLD-iApp*, while *MWLD-Online* may have been left un-updated.

In spite of these minor differences, we can regard the three types of electronic *MWLD* dictionaries as digital versions of the *MWALED2*, and basically, most of the information that can be retrieved in *MWALED2* can be accessed in the *MWLD-Online*, the *MWLD-aApp* and the *MWLD-iApp*.

(Section 8 by Kokawa)

## 9. Concluding Remarks

The eight year span between the first and the second editions of the Merriam-Webster's EFL dictionary, the total renewal of the cover design and the high esteem in which such a prestigious dictionary publisher is held may have given rise to unreasonable expectations, and unfortunately, analysis this time suggests that the new edition does not quite live up to our elevated standards. *MWALED2* may certainly be more reasonably priced than its American EFL competitors from British publishers, that is, *COBAm2*, *LAAD3* and *OAAD*. However, the attractive price and time-honored dictionary publisher's brand name aside, would learners of English who are looking for an EFL dictionary with truly attractive American feature pick *MWALED2* as their first choice among the four titles mentioned above? Certainly the choices of headwords, and its definitions and illustrative sentences are original and based on good sense, but we are

afraid that the dictionary does not really stand out from its peers with appealing features of its own.

If the publisher succeeded in appealing to the owners of the first edition of the dictionary and led them to think that it would be worth renewing their ownership, it would also lead to the *MWALED2*'s gaining more ground. However, as the dictionary has not changed drastically, that may not give them much hope.

The *MWALED2* must also compete with its digital siblings. If you have a computer and/or a smartphone, or a tablet device, you can have access to the same level and amount of information contained in *MWALED2*, with audio pronunciations, for much less cost, or even for free. Who would buy something much heavier and bulkier and carry it around, when a lighter and smarter version is available digitally?

The policy of containing the process of updating within each page that we discussed in Section 1 may be an obstacle for radical change, making it harder to make *MWALED* a truly distinctive dictionary. The present author felt a thrill when he saw the *Merriam-Webster and Garfield Dictionary* nearly twenty years ago. We hope to experience a 'genuine Merriam-Webster' thrill in the next revision to come.

## NOTES

### Section 1

1) In fact, as is mentioned in Section 5.1, in some pages in *MWALED1/2* the volume of illustrative examples (printed in blue) are so dominant that texts in black rather than blue appear actually 'highlighted' in those pages.

### Section 2

1) The addition of headwords necessitated the shortening of many example sentences, as is fully discussed in Section 5.

2) This figure is in stark contrast to 455 new stand-alone headwords added in *OALD9*, for example.

3) A new compound word, **cloud computing**, appears not as a headword, but rather in an example sentence for the new meaning (sense four) of the noun **cloud**.

4) Likewise, a run-on **directness** moved from under the headword **direction** to **direct**. This is a case of correction, not just a movement of the word.

5) The word remains in the iOS version of the dictionary.

6) The list is called "Frequent words," which is almost identical to the list called "Defining words" in the previous edition. The list included words like **uh huh** and **oh**, which are unlikely to be part of defining vocabulary. Furthermore, the previous list included **railway** and **metre**, which gives away its derivation from a British edition of *COBUILD* dictionary. **Railway** was replaced by **railroad**, but **metre** is still there.

7) We used the American version of the list available for *OAAD*.

8) It should be noted that the results to follow show rough approximation, not exact numbers. The idea is to get a picture of how *MWALED2* treats core vocabulary words, as compared with other dictionaries.

9) We examined how this list compares to a supposedly more basic word list. *OBAD* provides a list of around 2,000 basic words, and we found the two lists have 1,550 words in common. Some may expect the number should be higher than that, given the nature of both lists.

10) To be added are nine months, seven days of the week, and 57 numbers. **April**, **August**, and **October** are already included in the list. The three month words, which editorially should have been eliminated from *MWALED2*'s core vocabulary, must have slipped past the editors and been left underlined in the dictionary. **Sixteenth**, which should have been in *OAAD*, is missing from the dictionary's list, while the other 56 number words are there. This is also the case with the Oxford 3000 for *OALD9*.

11) *CLAD3* has no headword for the verb. *LAAD3* includes the noun among the top 3000 common words while excluding the verb from its 9000 words list. This suggests the verbal use of **wolf** is not a part of core vocabulary.

#### Section 4

1) For the discussion of newly-added or deleted entries, see Section 2.1.

2) The newest edition of Merriam-Webster Inc.'s *MWALED* (iOS) App version is from April 13th, 2016. Among some other new features, this edition claims to have "Newly revised 2015 definitions," which suggests that it is something of a transitional edition between *MWALED1* and *MWALED2*.

3) In the case of the new sense for **hot spot** that was added in *MWALED2* (p. 801), the modification of the three example sentences for **hot under the collar** (under 'hot), **the hots** (under **hots**), and **hot stuff** may have contributed to the decision to create two more extra lines for the new sense. For a detailed discussion of the changes in example sentences, see Section 5.2. However, it must be noted here that, in both cases, the Web version follows the modifications even if it does not necessarily have to worry about the layout change of the page caused by the addition of a few dozen words. The App version keeps the definitions from *MWALED1*.

4) It should also be noted here, however, that *LAAD3* does not label the phrase "informal."

5) For a detailed discussion of the definition types, see Section 4.2 in Kokawa et al. (2010).

#### Section 7

1) Each instance of single drawing or groups of drawing representing one entry are counted as one drawing presentation (instance).

2) The figures exclude the three items mentioned above, i.e. illustrations for **family**, **orchestra** and **zodiac**.

3) Incidentally, a readable mini-dictionary called ‘Garfield’s Daffy Definitions’ with 43 words, their definitions and three comic strips is attached at the end of *MWGD*. We will cite three definitions from that material.

**dog:** A brainless, four-legged flea magnet whose breath could stun a moose.

**eat:** What one does between naps.

**telephone:** A communication device permanently attached to an adolescent’s ear.

## Section 8

- 1) App prices vary according to the date of the purchase and the terms of payment.
- 2) This price was listed on the website <https://www.merriam-webster.com/apps>.

## DICTIONARIES

- CLAD3:* *Collins COBUILD Learner’s American English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. Edited by John Sinclair (as Founding editor-in-chief). Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2016.
- COB8:* *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*. 8th ed. Edited by John Sinclair (as Founding editor-in-chief). Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2014.
- COBAm1:* *Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary of American English*. 1st ed. Edited by John Sinclair (as Founding editor-in-chief). Boston: Thomson Heinle, 2007.
- COBAm2:* *Collins COBUILD Advanced American English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. Edited by John Sinclair (as Founding editor-in-chief). Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2016.
- EPD18:* *Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary*. 18th ed. Edited by Peter Roach, Jane Setter, and John Esling. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- LAAD3:* *Longman Advanced American Dictionary*. 3rd ed. Edited by Michael Mayor. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2013.
- LDAE4:* *Longman Dictionary of American English*. 4th ed. Edited by Laurence Delacroix. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2008.
- LDAE5:* *Longman Dictionary of American English*. 5th ed. Edited by Laurence Delacroix. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2014.
- LDOCE6:* *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. 6th ed. Edited by Laurence Delacroix. Harlow: Pearson Education, 2014.
- Lighthouse6:* *Lighthouse English-Japanese Dictionary*. 6th ed. Edited by Shigeru Takebayashi, et al. Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 2012.
- MWGD:* *Merriam-Webster and Garfield Dictionary*. Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 1999.
- MWALED1:* *Merriam-Webster’s Advanced Learner’s English Dictionary*. 1st ed. Edited by Stephen J. Perrault. Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2008.
- MWALED2:* *Merriam-Webster’s Advanced Learner’s English Dictionary*. 2nd ed.

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- MWLD-aApp*: *Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary* (a digital application version for Android OS). Merriam-Webster, 2016.
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- MWLD-Online*: *Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary*, Last retrieved on 7 Dec. 2017 at <http://learnersdictionary.com/>. First released on June 2, 2012.
- OAAD*: *Oxford Advanced American Dictionary for Learners of English*. Edited by Alison Waters. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- OALD9*: *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. 9th ed. Edited by Margaret Deuter. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- OBAD*: *Oxford Basic American Dictionary for Learners of English*. Edited by Alison Waters. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

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