Random House Webster's College Dictionary:
A new start

K Dictionaries is proud to announce it has acquired the electronic rights for the latest edition of the world-famous *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* (RHWCD).

First published to critical acclaim in 1947 as the *American College Dictionary*, RHWCD has maintained its status over the years as a favorite among American university students and the general public. Revised and updated annually, the dictionary was considered a leader in recording the important changes in the English language throughout the second half of the twentieth century and into the new millennium. The last edition appeared in 2005, and was the final version of RHWCD to be revised since Random House closed its dictionary department. This is the version that K Dictionaries has purchased, and which it began to revive.

The dictionary covers all levels of vocabulary, from formal English to slang, presenting common meanings first, arranged according to frequency rather than in historical order. It consists of 130,000 words and expressions, covering close to 200,000 senses. The entries include word usage guidance with clear explanations, sample sentences, pronunciations and etymological information, as well as sections with biographical and geographical entries.

K Dictionaries has undertaken to revise and update the dictionary and add new words. It will offer the full dictionary and its abridged versions for all types of digital media, and use it as a base for developing bilingual — and, eventually, multilingual — versions.

We have started by upgrading the dictionary data into state-of-the-art XML format, and proceeded to convert the phonetic transcription into standard IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet). First versions of our new electronic applications for desktop and online are already available, to be followed by versions for e-books and smart phones.
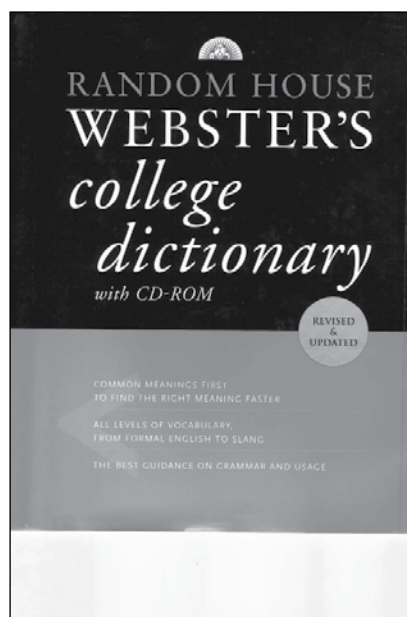
The editorial revision is also underway, led by RHWCD's former Senior Editor, Enid Pearsons. It mainly concerns introducing new entries and updating existing entries with new meanings. This year we aim to complete a good part of the vocabulary that has been added to the English language over the last decade, and we intend to keep the dictionary up-to-date with new words and phrases on a regular basis.

The main purpose of K Dictionaries is to use RHWCD as a base for developing major-size bilingual versions for the digital world. The first language translation that is currently in preparation is Brazilian Portuguese, a preliminary sample of which appears on p.5.

This issue contains also a recent discussion between Enid Pearsons and the former Publisher of Random House dictionaries, Charles M. Levine, reminiscing about Random House dictionaries, and a reprint of a brief comment that was made by Sidney Landau following the closure of Random House's dictionary department.

■ IJK

Editor ▌ **Ilan J. Kernerman**

The Random House dictionary tradition
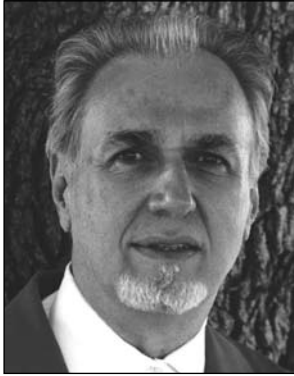
A conversation between Charles M. Levine and Enid Pearsons

Charles M. Levine has over thirty-years**'** experience as publisher and editor, specializing in both general consumer and reference products including dictionaries. He has published major bestsellers under the brands of Insight Guides, New York Public Library, J.K. Lasser, and Random House Webster's. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Columbia College, majoring in physics, and received a master's degree in the history and philosophy of science from Indiana University. He has worked as publishing executive for a number of major publishers, including Simon & Schuster, John Wiley, and Random House, where he was vice-president and publisher of Random House Reference. He currently is a contributing editor of the professional newsletter *Copyediting,* writing a bi-monthly column called "Technically Speaking." During 2006-08 he was the editor of an international journal on publishing, LOGOS (www. logos-journal.org) and in 2002 he co-authored *Meshuggenary: Celebrating the World of Yiddish*, which recently debuted on the Kindle. charlev@att.net

Levine: I find it quite gratifying that K Dictionaries has purchased the digital rights to the *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* (RHWCD) and plans to undertake annual updates of the entries. I am sure you must feel the same—sad that Random House decided to close its dictionary editorial department after more than five decades establishing a distinguished lexicographic tradition—yet comforted that the dictionary that we worked on for so many years (and you for many more years than I) lives on.

I remember rather vividly when I traveled to mainland China in 1997 to attend the launch by Commercial Press of Beijing of the Chinese edition of the College dictionary. I believe they worked on the Chinese translation for more than a decade. I was treated at the launch ceremony like a visiting dignitary, so much so, I was told, that an attending cultural attaché from our own American embassy wondered aloud who I was and why I was considered so important. This little American status dance highlighted for me the general lack of understanding, as I perceived it, of the importance of dictionaries in our own culture. What were words worth, really? Could you get rich compiling and publishing dictionaries? If not, then why bother?

And, by the way, later that same year, Commercial Press informed Random House that then Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, on his first state visit to Washington, D.C., brought a copy of the Chinese edition of the RHWCD as a gift to President Clinton. It seems that dictionaries did and do matter to some people.

I have a copy at hand of *At Random* [Random House, 1977], the delightful reminiscences of Random House co-founder Bennett Cerf, who soon after World War II "arrived at the office one day and cheerily announced, 'Let's do a dictionary!'" [231] Cerf admits that at first he had little idea of what goes into compiling a dictionary—he first thought that two bright editors on staff could manage to create one in their spare time. But he quickly realized he needed an expert, and so hired Clarence Barnhart, "who was considered one of the best lexicographers in the United States, [and] had just finished the Thorndike-Barnhart dictionary, and luckily was available." [231]

When the first Random House college dictionary, called the *American College Dictionary*, was published in 1947, however,

as Cerf notes, Random House was in debt to the banks: "One wonderful thing about dictionaries, though, is that a good one always makes money. Once it's completed, it's the publisher's property, and if it starts selling in quantity, the costs are recovered rather quickly because there is no royalty to pay. The *American College Dictionary* won great critical acclaim and was a huge success. It was the first brand-new dictionary in a long time. Once again the old Cerf luck prevailed; and we soon got out of that [debt] pickle." [232]

Pearsons: Yes. Indeed. It was absolutely devastating to think that all those years of careful lexicographic work would be lost. I am thrilled that the dictionary lives on, in capable hands.

And what memories, very personal ones, you bring back! It is no exaggeration to say that getting a job at Random House in the early 1960s, right after acquiring a bachelor's degree at Queens College (now part of the City University of New York), was a dream come true. Unhappy with prospects of a teaching job I had been offered, I scoured the *New York Sunday Times* employment pages for something else—anything else! To my astonishment, I came upon an ad for a pronunciation editor for a revision of the *American College Dictionary* (ACD), which turned out to be the first edition of *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged Edition*. Since phonetics, taught by Professor Arthur J. Bronstein, had been far and away my favorite class at Queens, I was ecstatic at the possibility of doing something I loved and getting paid for it! The job interview with Larry Urdang, then managing editor, was so full of puns and other arch linguistic exchanges that I felt at home immediately. I had found a career. And Arthur Bronstein, my professor, who had worked on the ACD in the 1940s, was on the dictionary's editorial board as the consultant for pronunciation. I was to be the in-house editor in charge of checking the pronunciations of all the words already in the dictionary and entering pronunciations for the new ones. I couldn't have been happier.

Early on, I learned a charming bit of dictionary history relevant to my work. The ACD, published in 1947, had been the first commercial dictionary to acknowledge a fact about spoken English that was either little known or understandably ignored by the general public. That is, English is replete

with occurrences of a neutral, unstressed vowel, which can be spelled with an *a, e, i, o,* or *u,* as in *sofa, paper, animal, random,* and *supply*; or even with some combination of vowels, as in the last syllable of…well, *combination*. In other words, different spellings for the same sound.

Realizing this, the 1940s ACD editors bravely introduced the schwa (ə) to American lexicography. A single pronunciation symbol would thus represent that single sound that other dictionaries still represented with multiple confusing symbols.

Apparently, although the dictionary itself was a great success, not everyone was immediately receptive to the little (ə) that just said "uh." I think it was Jess Stein himself, then editor-in-chief, who told me that somewhere, hidden away, there was an entire file cabinet filled with letters from irate early buyers of the ACD, all saying, in effect, "I bought this dictionary for my daughter/son/nephew/granddaughter, but unfortunately, I must return it. Your e's are upside-down!" Lexicographic urban legend? Perhaps. But I chose to believe it. And despite that early resistance, the schwa was an innovation destined to spread to all the other major American English dictionaries—and beyond.

Levine: In his memoirs, Bennett Cerf goes on to note that after the ACD was published, he hired Jess Stein, "who had studied under Sir William Craigie, the great editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*." [232] Stein "became the head of our reference department and later of our whole college textbook department, which made him one of the most important people at Random House."

In 1961, Cerf, who always had a keen eye for the marketplace and competition, saw that their main rival, Merriam-Webster, had issued an unabridged dictionary, which "was received with hostility by many critics....So we figured the field was wide open. Of course, this was a tremendous undertaking. For the unabridged *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* [RHDEL], we had at one time almost four hundred people working on it, top authorities in every field." [234] Cerf estimates that the first edition of the Unabridged cost three to four US million dollars to complete, over four years. Actually that was a remarkable feat that would be hard to beat today, even using computer-enabled lexicography.

You entered the Random House dictionary picture around then. What was it like working on Random House dictionaries in those pioneering days?

Pearsons: The unabridged RHDEL was exactly the project that was already in full swing when I first arrived. The staff seemed enormous to me, and the editor/consultant relationship that I had with Arthur Bronstein was mirrored throughout the reference department. The in-house staff was filled with specialists whose academic and professional backgrounds had prepared them to handle the vocabulary of various related fields, however esoteric. One editor, for example, handled building trades, furniture, and medieval armor, among other arcane subjects. Others worked on medicine, botany, biology, ichthyology, radio and TV, slang, literature.…I could go on for pages, just listing the varied fields of interest that were covered. The editors in turn all had consultants from the academic world who would vet their work and to whom they could turn when they needed to pin down an exact meaning. Sometimes a consultant would send in dictionary entries to which the in-house editor would apply lexicographic polish, and sometimes the work flowed in reverse. The terms in the common vocabulary of English were handled by other staff writers, some of whom were remarkably eloquent: Robert Costello comes to mind (he later became acting chief of Random House dictionaries, after by-then legendary Jess Stein and his successor, Stuart Flexner, had retired). Costello could write dictionary definitions that were not only on target in explicating meanings but were little lyrical gems. I was in awe of what my colleagues could do. My job in contrast seemed comparatively simple: transcribe the sounds of each term using a dictionary diacritical system that I had been able to modify to my satisfaction.

This was the 1960s. There were no desktop computers; nor were there typewriters at the editors' desks. New entries were created the old-fashioned way, hand-printed on pink 8 1/2 by 11 "add-forms," which had multiple, multicolored carbon copies. But Larry Urdang and Jess Stein were prescient pioneers. Urdang in particular was an eccentric computer enthusiast well before the breed existed. He had arranged to have the add-form entries typed up on a flexowriter, an early 20th-century precursor of word processing, which encoded the text by punching holes onto paper tape. The tapes were then used to produce enormous computer printouts that were then bound in large, heavy ledgers, separate ledgers for each field of interest—literature, linguistics, botany, fish, birds, French furniture, American history, and on and on. Another member of the staff had previously coded each add-form entry numerically, by eye and hand, so that all the entries from the various ledgers, once edited, could ultimately be

Enid Pearsons graduated from Queens College, City University of New York, in 1961, with a Bachelor of Science in speech, and immediately began her lexicographic career as pronunciation editor for first edition of *Random House Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged Edition*. Later she went back to school to earn her Master's degree and do post-Master's work in linguistics at Teachers College, Columbia University. She returned to Random House in the late 1970s as Senior Editor in charge of pronunciation and style for their line of dictionaries, and also was in-house editor for specialized dictionaries in fields as diverse as computers, law, medicine, and sign language, and was part of the Random House Mavens' team, writing word-of-the-day essays on grammar, usage, idioms, and pronunciation to be posted on the Web. Since her pseudoretirement in 2001, she has served as consultant on reference projects for various publishing houses. e.pearsons@earthlink.net

Random House announced the closure of its dictionary department in late 2000.

The following comment was made by **Sidney Landau** in a posting to the DSNA discussion group on November 4, 2001 and was reprinted in the DSNA Newsletter, 25.2, Fall 2001:

'This is another step in the long decline of editorial power in publishing houses generally. Corporate sponsors of books may become a growing phenomenon—these are preeminently market-driven, after all. Dictionary editors have always been hired hands, but they had at least some variable degree of impact on their product because of the traditional belief, or supposition, that books were intellectual products that really had to be created by someone, and that therefore their creators deserved some consideration.

One of the results of the computer revolution, I think, has been further to marginalize authorship, and to make "content" even more thoroughly a vehicle for sales. Most commercial publishers have really been discontinuing editorially-oriented initiatives for a long time, and I fear the trend can only get worse. The high up-front cost of dictionaries makes them peculiarly vulnerable. Lost in all this is the human hurt to lexicographers who have devoted years and years to producing good dictionaries. At times like this one remembers what an uncertain and bitter business lexicography can be.'

sorted—by computer, of course—into a single alphabetical order. Then off to the compositor they went, little by little, A through Z.

My ledger, in which I was to syllabify, stress, inflect, and pronounce the entries—because it contained the new headwords, which we called "main entries"—was called the Main Ledger. So I put a large sign up over my desk reading *LEGERDEMAIN*. Larry Urdang, passing by, casually asked if that meant I would never do any work on the 'ledger' until 'tomorrow'. I knew just enough French to reinforce my sense that I had found the right job.

Levine: Indeed, I believe that we all felt we had found the right home at Random House compiling and publishing dictionaries! May this great dictionary tradition live on. Like many of us, you left and then returned to Random House for a second time.

Pearsons: Yes, I returned to Random House in 1979, having taken some time after the first RHDEL was published in 1966 to start a family and to go to graduate school. Oddly, after all that, I went back to what was essentially the same job I had left. Happily, it soon became much broader in scope and grew to include stylistic minutiae and even defining.

The lexicographic staff for the second unabridged was considerably smaller than the one I had left in 1966. We all knew, however, that we were responsible for revising and enhancing a large, unabridged dictionary and that a smaller college dictionary was to follow. And this time, more thorough computerization, not only of dictionary production and composition, but of the actual editing process, was a tantalizing promise—so close, but not yet in reach. At last and at least, we editors had desktop computers. But they were merely used for word processing to produce neatly typed equivalents of an earlier generation's hand-printed entries. Everything was stored on floppy disks. (Remember floppies?) Stuart Flexner, our editor-in-chief, was determined to extend Larry Urdang's vision of dictionary computerization, and a small committee was formed to see if we could find a suitable vendor with appropriate editorial software for our purposes. We traveled, searching—to Baltimore, Chicago, Toronto, and more. We went to conferences sponsored by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), whose programmers at the University of Waterloo in Canada had been encouraged by the OED to share what they had learned and developed about computerized editing.

Their foray into SGML as an appropriate language for lexicography would eventually benefit us all, and the simpler XML is now a reference-book standard.

But back then, nothing was quite ready for our needs. We were visited and courted by a slew of companies with a range of software programs and specialized computers, some companies very promising, others not even literate—linguistically or technically. One company had a keyboard so large and complicated it could have accommodated Chinese ideograms. Another listed "Miriam Webster" as a hoped-for client. I remember all too vividly seeing one dedicated editing computer that would have driven us mad. To delete a single letter, an editor had to go through the following exchange:

Editor: Hit the Delete key.
Computer (on screen): "What do you want to delete—character, word, sentence, paragraph, page, document?"
Editor: Select "character"
Computer: "Are you sure?"
Editor: "%^$@#!*&^"

In the end, our staff programmer, Paul Hayslett, created and customized an editorial system for us. It came to life too late for the second unabridged, alas, but in time for its college offspring and for later revisions of the unabridged. Paul somehow knew what we needed editorially before we did! "Genius" does not begin to describe him. He and his coding prowess eventually joined with Steve Perkins to create PubMan at Dataformat.com (now a part of IDM), and they have been producing beautiful reference works ever since.

But it was not just the fun of plunging into the world of computers that made my second tour at Random House memorable. First, there was the staff—bright, generous colleagues and wonderful friends. Then, there was an underlying philosophy that focused in many ways on the needs of dictionary users. Notably, one facet of this concern was editorial receptivity to the new words that spring suddenly into the general lexicon. Mind you, we understood the wisdom exhibited in more traditional dictionaries. Their editors waited, sometimes for a decade or more, until a word became well established in written citational evidence before formally entering it into their reference works, thereby acknowledging that it was genuinely part of the English language.

We believed, however, that aside from those nonce words that seem to disappear almost as soon as they arrive, new words are exactly the ones people need to look up! We wanted to make sure that we supplied

The evolution of learners' dictionaries and
Merriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's English Dictionary

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Abstract
Since the first edition of the OALD was published in the 1940s, lexicography for learners of English as a second or foreign language has seen tremendous changes. The "Big Five" learners' dictionaries have been at the forefront of a great number of lexicographic innovations. In this paper I would like to sketch the evolution of the monolingual learners' dictionaries (MLDs) of English that have been published over the years. A selected vocabulary, simple definitions, and explicit information about use are the common characteristics of this type of dictionary, but the implementation of these features is quite varied from one dictionary to the other. The recently published *Merriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* will be analyzed in light of recent trends in this particular field.

Keywords
grammatical information, defining vocabulary, vocabulary selection, signpost, full-sentence definition, illustrations

1. Introduction

The publication of the ISED in Tokyo in 1942, which was to be better known a few years later as the OALD1 (1948), may be considered a decisive step in the creation of a new genre of dictionary (for more details concerning the early period of development of learners' dictionaries, see Cowie 1999). As is well known, during three decades the OALD was the only dictionary that tried to serve foreign learners of English in special ways. However, from 1978 on, when the first edition of LDOCE was published, several other dictionaries having the same aims have been compiled. In 1987 there was the first edition of COBUILD, followed in 1995 by CIDE (now with the title CALD), in 2002 by MEDAL, and, finally, in 2008 by MWALED.

The first edition of OALD that appeared in 1948 was a photographic reprint of the dictionary that had been published in 1942 in Tokyo, with about 250 recent words in an addendum. In the introduction, the general editor, A.S. Hornby, explained that the dictionary had been called "Idiomatic and Syntactic" because the compilers had "made it their aim to give as much useful information as possible concerning idioms and syntax." The main characteristics of this new type of dictionary were:

(a)   *a selected vocabulary*—not a "complete" list of English words, but just those elements that "the foreign student of English is likely to meet in his studies up to the time when he enters a university";

(b)   *simple definitions*—that is to say, no traditional phrases as were up to then typically found in dictionary definitions, but as natural descriptions of the meanings as possible, in order to make sure that advanced learners of English would be able to understand them easily;

(c)   *explicit information about use*, the dictionary being meant to be useful not only for reading purposes but for writing as well.

These three aspects are still characteristic of how learners' dictionaries are set apart from all other dictionaries. But these aspects have been implemented in quite different ways. A comparison between a page taken from OALD1 and the same run in the recent edition of this dictionary (OALD7, 2005) gives a good idea of the distance that has been covered on the way to what Herbst and Popp (1999) called the "Perfect Learners' Dictionary (?)."

2. A brief comparison between OALD1 and OALD7

Figure 1 presents two columns taken from OALD1. Figure 2 shows the same run, from **pulverize** to **punctilious,** in OALD7. What immediately catches the eye is the clearer presentation of the lexical units in OALD7, where all entries, idioms, and phrasal verbs are given in blue and where all senses are numbered in a consistent way. It is evident also that fewer pictures are given and that the one that is given in OALD7 is of another, less documentary or encyclopaedic nature. In the 2005 edition of the OALD, pronunciation is systematically given for the British as well as the American varieties of English. One also notices the presence of some old-fashioned words, such as **puncheon**, **Punchinello,** and **punctilio** in OALD1, and of modern words like **pump-priming** and **punch card** (although already marked with "in the past") in OALD7. Finally, one easily sees that the total number of lexical units treated is about fifty percent higher in OALD7 (about sixty as compared to forty lexical units for OALD1). The number of

idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs accounts for most of this difference in quantity.

When focusing more on details, other differences appear, some of which are quite fundamental. One of the first things is the number of examples given. Whereas in OALD7 the majority of the lexical units treated have one or more examples, in OALD1 we find only two examples with the second sense of **pump** as a verb, not counting the one used to illustrate the meaning of **pun** as a noun.

Another point is the presentation of the senses of forms or words. In OALD1, the system is based on etymological grounds, as is well shown in the treatment of **punch.** There are three entries for this form, two for nouns and one for verbs. As the "tool or machine" sense is quite different from the "drink" sense, these two etymologically different elements are not treated in the same entry. The verbs having this same form are partly treated under the first noun and partly in the third entry, where, in addition, two or three more noun senses are provided. This last case shows another aspect of the presentation: it is not always clear to what extent two definitions separated by a semicolon have to be taken as two different, but etymologically related, senses or as two more-or-less equivalent descriptions of one sense. The presentation of **pumpkin** with two numbered senses—one for the fruit and one for the plant—only adds to the puzzlement.

As to the definitions provided, there are again big differences. During the 1930s and 1940s, much had been done about the selection of vocabulary in Japan, especially by Harold Palmer and Michael West (see Bogaards 1994: 103 ff. for an overview), and it might have been expected that Hornby and his collaborators would have selected a special definition vocabulary. However, they clearly state in the introduction of OALD1 that they did not, because "the compilers could have no confidence that the definition vocabulary would be known to the prospective users of the dictionary." Remark that this is contrary to what has been suggested by Rundell (1998: 317). As can be seen in Figure 1, words like *porous, volcano, fist,* or *piston* are used to define words like **pumice, pummel,** and **pump**. In OALD7, the definition of the first sense of **punch** (verb) includes the word *fist*, but it is given in capitals and is immediately followed by a short explanation. Indeed, OALD7 sticks to what is called the "Oxford 3,000," a list of 3,000 key words that are selected in order to serve as the defining vocabulary and that are marked by a key in the dictionary (see **punch**). Moreover, in

OALD1, definitions are mostly very short and often take the form of one or more near synonyms (see **punch** noun 2: "energy; strong effect").

The grammatical information has changed in important ways also. In OALD1, verbs are given with a global characterization as transitive, intransitive, or both, and their use is then described with a letter and a number. These verb codes are explained in the introduction, in which a full list of verb patterns is given, with a fair number of examples. In OALD7, grammatical constructions are presented in a much more straightforward manner.

What has changed in a somewhat less radical way is the tendency to add a kind of encyclopedic explanation to some definitions in order to make concepts clearer. However, neither the entries that include such extra explanations nor the nature of the information are the same. In OALD1, we find this type of supplementary data in the case of **pump** and **Punchinello**, in which some additional technical or cultural facts are presented that were deemed essential for the audience. In OALD7, extra information is given with **pumpkin**, but here the authors have tried to complete the concept with information that is socioliguistically important because it is shared by all native speakers.

All these changes have been introduced over the more than sixty years of existence of the OALD. The publication of competitive learners' dictionaries has been one of the motors for these quite spectacular modifications. Research has played an important role as well. In the sections that follow, I will discuss in more detail the evolution of the three fundamental aspects distinguished above. As will become clear, every new MLD has proposed new elements and has provoked changes in the other MLDs.

3. The evolution of the three fundamental characteristics of monolingual learners' dictionaries

3.1 A selected vocabulary
All English MLDs are now based on the analysis of big language corpora. It is important to realize that it was only a bit more than twenty years ago that COBUILD1 was the first dictionary project to exploit this approach. In a collection of papers that accompanied its publication (Sinclair 1987), the whole procedure of building up a corpus and extracting data from it—which was entirely new at the time—is explained in detail. In hindsight, this approach may seem rather cumbersome and small-scale: the corpus included 20 million words in

pul-ver-ize [pʌ́lvəraiz] vt. & i. ❶ (P 1) break up into dust, powder, or spray; smash completely; crush. ❷ (P 21) be broken up into dust.

pu-ma [pjú:mə] n. a South American animal of the leopard type (also called a *cougar*).

pum-ice [pʌ́mis] n. [U] a light kind of porous stone thrown out of volcanoes (also *pumice-stone*); *a piece of pum-ice* (e. g. as used for removing stains from the hands).

pum-mel [pʌ́ml] vt. (Eng. -*ll*-; U. S. A. -*l*-) (P 1, 10) beat repeatedly with the fists.

¹pump [pʌmp] n. a device or machine for raising water or other liquids, or for compressing gases, etc. It is usu. in the form of a cylinder with a piston moving up and down inside it. A *bicycle-pump* is used for filling the tires with air. A *village pump* is one that supplies a village with water. The *pump-room* (in a watering-place or spa) is the room where medicinal water is pumped up. —vt. & i. ❶ (P 1, 7, 10, 18) raise and obtain by means of a pump. ❷ (P 10, 18) force or compress by means of a pump, as *to pump air into a tyré*; (fig.) *to pump knowledge into a class of dull boys*. ❸ (P 1) get information by repeated questioning; keep on asking questions. ❹ (P 1, 10) cause to be out of breath, and so unable to continue running, etc. ❺ (P 21) use a pump; do the work of a pump; move up and down like a pump-handle.

²pump [pʌmp] n. a light shoe, without buttons or laces, usu. of patent leather, worn with evening dress and for dancing.

pump-kin [pʌ́mp)kin] n. ❶ a large, egg-shaped or round, yellow fruit growing on a trailing plant. ❷ the plant bearing this fruit.

pun [pʌn] n. a play upon words, e. g. "A cannon-ball took off his legs, so he laid down his arms." —vi. (-*nn*-) (P 21, 24 with *on, upon*) make a pun or puns.

¹punch [pʌn(t)ʃ] n. a tool or machine for making holes in leather, metal, paper, etc.; also a machine for stamping designs, etc. on metal. —vt. (P 1) make a hole in or stamp with a punch.

²punch [pʌn(t)ʃ] n. [U] a drink made of wine or spirits mixed with hot water, lemon, sugar, spices, etc. punch-bowl, n. (1) a large bowl in which punch is made and from which it is served. (2) a deep, round hollow in the side of a hill.

³punch [pʌn'(t)ʃ] vt. (P 1, 18) strike hard with the fist. —n. ❶ [C] a hard blow with the fist. ❷ (colloq.) [U] energy; strong effect.

Punch [pʌn(t)ʃ] n. ❶ the odd, humpbacked, hook-nosed character in the puppet-show known as "Punch and Judy." **pleased [proud] as Punch**, very much pleased; very proud. ❷ the title of an English humorous weekly paper.

pun-cheon [pʌ́n(t)ʃən] n. a large type of cask varying in capacity from 72 to 120 gallons.

Pun-chi-nel-lo [pʌ̀n(t)ʃinélou] n. a stock character in Italian comedy and puppet-shows of the 17th century. He wore a white coat and trousers, a black mask and had a large, hooked nose, and was the origin of Punch in English *Punch and Judy* shows.

punc-til-i-o [pʌŋktíliou] n. (pl. -os) ❶ [C] a particular point of good conduct, honour, manners, ceremony, etc.; a formality. ❷ [U] careful attention to rules of honour, etiquette, etc. punc-til-i-ous [pʌŋktílias] adj. extremely careful, exact, observant or conscientious in points of honour, duty, ceremony, etc.

Figure 1 a page from OALD1

daily use, with another 20 million words coming from more specialized texts. But it was groundbreaking, and it was bound to set new standards—not only for MLDs but also for dictionaries as such all over the world. It is this renewed contact with language data that leads to the discovery of senses and uses of words that had been overlooked up to then (and to the outdating of old ones that were no longer in use), to a better representation of idioms and collocations, and to the introduction of more authentic examples.

Up to that time MLDs (that is, OALD and LDOCE) had been compiled by experienced language teachers like A.S. Hornby and P. Procter on the basis of existing general-purpose dictionaries. These compilers were, quite rightly, supposed to know what was essential and helpful for their students, and they did whatever they could to present and explain authentic English to them. It goes without saying that they were not able to give as faithful an image of the language as is nowadays possible with the aid of huge corpora and the sophisticated techniques to analyze them (see for instance Fontenelle 2003 as well as Atkins and Rundell 2008). The availability of more and more spoken corpora and the attitude toward colloquialisms has also changed the content of these dictionaries. But the target group of the MLDs seems to have changed somewhat also. Whereas OALD1 was meant to be useful up to the time the foreign student entered university (see above), nowadays most of the MLDs seem to be aimed at university students as well, if not in the first place. They all contain a far greater number of lexical items, including academic words (from about 70,000 to about 100,000 lexical units). In addition, more expressions that are used in English-speaking countries like New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa are included, especially in CIDE and MEDAL.

COBUILD1 did not only introduce a new kind of selection of the lexical material; it also debuted a totally different type of presentation. All senses and uses of a given form were given in a strict order of descending frequency. This was a radical shift away from the etymologically driven presentations that had survived in OALD and LDOCE up to that time. One of the drawbacks of this type of presentation, however, was that in longer entries the list of uniformly presented senses and uses could reach a discouraging length, and it was not clear to what extent the users were really served by this new layout (see Bogaards 1998).

Nowadays all MLDs include some kind of differentiation that permits a more direct access to particular lexical units. In its third edition LDOCE (1995) has introduced "signposts," simple words or phrases that should easily evoke the type of meaning a user is looking for. In the same year, CIDE presented a system of "guide words," which try to catch the gist of a cluster of senses and uses. The latter presentation, where a form such as **bank** has five entries and **like** eight, is based on semantic (and therefore partly etymological) principles: all derivatives are presented in the context of the sense that is treated in a specific entry (e.g., the verb **bank** in the financial sense under **bank** ORGANIZATION). This system has not changed in the newer edition, known as CALD2. OALD has followed in its sixth edition (2000) with the introduction of "shortcuts," words or phrases that show the context or the general meaning of a lexical unit. MEDAL (2002 and 2007) has a system where menus are given for all forms having more than five senses or uses, but different grammatical classes are systematically

treated in separate entries. In order to introduce the various types of lexical units covered by one form, COBUILD5 (2006) now uses menus that are intended to help navigate longer entries; these take the form of boxes summing up the core meaning of the different subentries. This dictionary opts for a grammatically based organization: a form such as **like** now has three subentries for "preposition and conjunction uses," "verb uses," and "noun uses and phrases" respectively. But homonymous nouns like **bank** now have separated subentries for "finance and storage" and for "areas and masses," in which nouns and verbs are treated in the same list. So, the etymological aspect seems to be partly back. (For a comparison of these presentation features, see Bogaards 1998).

3.2 Simple definitions

The first dictionary to adopt a defining vocabulary was LDOCE1 (1978). At the end of the book, a list is presented of "the words that have been used for all the explanations…. in this dictionary, except those words in SMALL CAPITAL letters." As is well known, however, the general policy that was established in this way was a far cry from what was found in practice (cf. Bogaards 1996: 289 ff.). In some cases, words not belonging to the about 2,000 selected items were used in definitions without being marked by small capital letters. In other cases, elements included in the list were used in meanings that were not necessarily very familiar to the users. In addition, words were constructed with the use of elements such as prefixes and affixes that were in the list, but these did not always seem to be easily understood by the users. Moreover, combinations of elements such as idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs were to be found in a way that did not always help the non-native learners in their struggle with unknown words. The list of defining elements has been refined in different ways in later editions. In LDOCE3, for instance, it was stated that only the most common and central meanings of the words in the list were used, so as to exclude less frequent senses of frequent words. In addition, in the more recent editions, the number of prefixes and affixes (rather extensive in the first edition) has been cut down. Phrasal verbs are used only as far as these have been explicitly included in the list, e.g., *look after*, *look for*, and *look sth up*.

Other learners' dictionaries have followed this new trend. In the most recent editions of the "Big Five," we find defining vocabularies that are described as sets of "important words" (OALD7), "common words" (MEDAL), "essential words" (CALD), or as belonging to the highest "frequency bands" (COBUILD). Although there is a big overlap in the contents of these lists, there are also noticeable differences that are not always due to the various numbers of elements that are contained in the lists (cf. Bogaards 2008).

Another innovation in defining meanings was introduced by COBUILD1 in the form of full-sentence definitions. Several types of complete sentences were adopted for the various word classes and adapted to the particular word to be defined. This approach is much nearer to what people do when they are asked to define a word in real life and it makes it possible to evoke

Figure 2 a page from OALD7

Dictionaries

CALD2 = Walter, E. (ed.) 2005. *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. (2nd edition.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

CALD3 = Walter, E. (ed.) 2008. *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. (3rd edition.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

CALDO = *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary Online*. 2007. http://dictionary.cambridge.org/.

CIDE = Procter, P. (ed.) 1995. *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

COBUILD1 = Sinclair, J. and Hanks, P. (eds.) 1987. *Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary*. Glasgow: Collins.

COBUILD2 = Hanks, P. (ed.) 1995. *Collins COBUILD English Dictionary*. (2nd edition.) Birmingham: Collins.

COBUILD3 = Sinclair, J. (ed.) 2000. *Collins COBUILD English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*. (3rd edition.) London: HarperCollins.

COBUILD4 = Sinclair, J. (ed.) 2003. *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*. (4th edition.) Glasgow: HarperCollins.

COBUILD5 = Sinclair, J. (ed.) 2006. *Collins COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary*. (5th edition.) Glasgow: HarperCollins.

COBUILD6 = Sinclair, J. (ed.) 2008. *Collins COBUILD Advanced Dictionary*. (6th edition.) London: HarperCollins.

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a normal context for each lexical unit. It is evident that this way of defining is quite space consuming, however, and it may sometimes be laborious for the user who has to read a lot of text before getting to the right meaning. This may, moreover, distract them from the (reading) task they were executing and may, therefore, be too big an investment (cf. Bogaards 1996: 292). Other dictionaries have taken up the idea of full-sentence definitions, but in a less radical way. CIDE used it fairly often, but it has been applied less frequently in CALD; MEDAL uses this type of definition rather rarely (cf. Rundell 2006). Anyhow, probably thanks to the "COBUILD revolution," the defining styles in all MLDs have become less awkward and more transparent.

As the introduction of a defining vocabulary in LDOCE1 made the definitions more comprehensible, illustrations were used in a different way. In OALD1, illustrations had been supplied with lexical units for which "definition in easy, common words was not practicable or satisfactory" (Introduction p. iv). In LDOCE1, entries like **puma** or **pumpkin** contained no drawings, but they had references to illustrations that were given elsewhere. In OALD1, this had been done only for words used in sports and music "because all over the world to-day Western games and music are very popular" (ibid.). All the drawings in LDOCE1 were of an encyclopedic, rather than technical nature, such as "respiratory and circulatory system," "sea mammals," or "castle." Each black-and-white plate was given at the alphabetical place of its title and presented a number of items belonging to a class or a context, which made it possible to better recognize the specifics of each element (e.g., guitar, violin, sitar, and cello in the case of "stringed instruments"), but also served as a means to find words that were unknown to the user or that had been forgotten.

This approach has been adopted by the other MLDs. In most cases the plates are now presented in separate, full-color sections. In LDOCE4, however, we still find plates, now in color, on the A–Z pages of the dictionary. As has been seen (Figure 2), OALD7 sometimes adds illustrations to specific lexical units. It also has classes of items in black-and-white plates accompanying one of the items belonging to the class or context (e.g., "chain," "thread," "string," and "rope" at **rope**). MEDAL also follows this policy. This is also the case for CALD, but in this dictionary we find many "tables" illustrating the various senses of a given word, like **ring** (on a finger, ring road, boxing ring, etc.) or **pipe** (water pipe, tobacco pipe, organ pipe,

etc.). One can wonder what the importance of this type of illustration in MLDs may be. COBUILD is the only MLD that does not have any illustration in the A–Z section; it has introduced a full-color section only in the latest edition (COBUILD5).

When introducing the first defining vocabulary in LDOCE1, the authors have used the list not only for making definitions, but also for writing examples. The other MLDs have not followed this innovation. COBUILD1, with its principled approach to linguistic reality as found in the corpus, gave examples only as they were literally found in the materials that made up the corpus. Although these were much more convincing in most cases than the constructed examples that were provided in the older editions of OALD and LDOCE, they had two serious drawbacks. The first was that quite often other words were introduced that were not only unknown to most of the users but were, in addition, not always explained in the dictionary itself. Secondly, some of the realistic examples referred to contexts that could be unknown to the users who did not share the same cultural background, or they lost much of their impact because the context in which they were originally used was lacking (cf. Bogaards 1996: 299). In all MLDs, examples are now based on corpus materials. However, the examples are screened for comprehensibility outside the original context as well as for the presence of "difficult" words, and they are shortened or otherwise adapted so as to serve most effectively in a dictionary for non-native learners.

3.3 Explicit information about use

The evolution of syntactical information, especially that attached to verbs, has been described by Cowie (1999) and by Bogaards and van der Kloot (2001). From a fairly incomplete and abstruse system of verb codes as given in OALD1, this type of indication has evolved to far more straightforward data that are given in an explicit way. Whereas in OALD1, **pump** as a verb is marked as "(P 1, 7, 10, 18)" for the first sense, we find in OALD7 a number of examples, each of which is preceded by quite simple codes like [VN] or [VN-AD] (see Figures 1 and 2). Other MLDs have more or less equivalent, relatively transparent coding systems. For the same sense of **pump** we find, for instance, in CALD2: [T usually + adv or prep] and in COBUILD5, where this type of information is given in the extra column next to each example: "V n with adv," "V n prep," "V n" and "V." MEDAL2 has gone a step further in simplifying the grammatical information given with verbs. In this dictionary, most verbs are classified

only as transitive (marked with a [T]) or intransitive (marked with an [I]), whereby the use of other explicit grammatical terminology is avoided. The examples are supposed to give all the other information that is needed to use the items correctly.

It is as yet unclear what type of grammatical information or which particular form of presentation of this information best serves the non-native users of the MLDs. What seems to be important, in any case, is the presence of good examples that can serve as models for what students want to formulate. This is what can be deduced from the results of empirical research conducted by Bogaards and Van der Kloot (2002) and by Dziemianko (2006). The former researchers add that more advanced learners may profit also from explicitly given information on grammar, but these learners hardly benefit from traditional codes given in grammatical terms. The latter author states that COBUILD-style definitions may serve as well and that, contrary to what had been found in other experiments, the information given in the extra column in COBUILD can, under certain conditions, be useful.

As has been said above, OALD1 was first published as *Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary*. What is a bit surprising is that, whereas the introduction is followed by a section called "Notes on Syntax"—almost twenty pages long and mainly devoted to the famous verb patterns—nothing more is said about idioms. One of the reasons for this absence of any comment on idioms may be that at that time it was generally thought that nothing very interesting could be said about language use if it was outside the realm of grammar. So, everything that was outside syntax could only be listed and semantically explained but, being a list of basic irregularities, could hardly be commented on. In that view, idioms and syntax form two opposing parts of the language, and a dictionary would be incomplete if one of these two parts was left out. The innovative aspect of OALD1 was, therefore, the syntactic part, which had to be explained in a comprehensive way. In contrast, the idiomatic part was a simple continuation of common practice in English dictionaries.

Comparing OALD1 and OALD7, it can be seen (Figures 1 and 2) that in the more recent edition idioms are clearly marked (IDM)—whether they are treated in the entry itself, such as those under **pump** as a verb, or whether they are referred to because they are treated in other entries, as in the case of the four idioms listed under **punch** as a noun. None of these idioms are mentioned in OALD1. What is more, other combinations with the headwords are

only rarely treated or mentioned as well. Collocations, which are essential for a user who wants to produce "natural" English, are also lacking. *Throw a punch* and *land a punch*, which are given in bold in OALD7, are missing in OALD1. The same goes for phrasal verbs.

3.4 Conclusions

What this brief overview of the development of MLDs makes clear is that all aspects of this type of dictionary are liable to change and that many different solutions have been proposed for the same problems over the years. In most cases, the publication of a new MLD was something of a revolution. This was, understandably, the case for OALD1, the first dictionary of this category. But the appearance of a real competitor thirty years later, LDOCE1, introducing a restricted defining vocabulary, was quite a shock also. A few years later, COBUILD1 not only introduced the use of language corpora but also broke with many conventions on the level of defining practices and the presentation of grammatical information. CIDE (and later CALD) experimented with new types of semantically clustered entries, trying to avoid the drawbacks of the old, etymologically founded presentation and to underline the semantic relationships between words of different grammatical classes. Finally, MEDAL tried to exploit all the successes that had been achieved so far. It did so in a quite satisfactory way, improving, for instance, on the clever use of a well-chosen defining vocabulary and of defining templates as well as on the possibilities users have to find items they did not know or had forgotten (see Bogaards 2003).

One can say that much has been attained and that, in some aspects, more is known about what constitutes a good MLD than in the early days of pedagogical lexicography. Quite often the five existing MLDs are referred to as "the Big Five." One can wonder then whether a sixth MLD was necessary and what this new MLD could add. In the next section we will analyse the MWALED in light of the evolutions sketched above.

4. *Merriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*

Figure 3 presents the same stretch, from **pulverize** to **punctilious**, as was used for the comparison of the two editions of OALD. MWALED offers exactly the same number and about the same selection of lexical units as OALD7. The total number of lexical units can be evaluated at about 85,000, which is higher than COBUILD5 (about 72,000) and OALD7 (about 76,000)

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ISED = Hornby, A.S., Gatenby, E.V. and Wakefield, H. (eds.) 1942. *Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary*. Tokyo: Kaitakusha. [Also referred to as OALD1.]

LDOCE1 = Procter, P. (ed.) 1978. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. Harlow: Pearson Education.

LDOCE2 = Summers, D. (ed.) 1987. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. (2nd edition.) Harlow: Longman.

LDOCE3 = Summers, D. (ed.) 1995. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. (3rd edition.) Harlow: Longman.

LDOCE4 = Summers, D. (ed.) 2003. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. (4th edition.) Harlow: Pearson Education.

LDOCE5 = Mayor, M. (ed.) 2009. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English for Advanced Learners*. (5th edition.) Harlow: Pearson Education.

LDOCEO = *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online*. 2007: http://www.ldoceonline.com/.

MEDAL1 = Rundell, M. (ed.) 2002. *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.

MEDAL2 = Rundell, M. (ed.) 2007. *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*. (2nd edition.) Oxford: Macmillan Education.

MWALED = Perrault, S.J. (ed.) 2008. *Merriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.

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OALD1 = Hornby, A.S., Gatenby, E.V. and Wakefield, H. (eds.) 1948. *Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. London: Oxford University Press. [Reprint of ISED.]

OALD2 = Hornby, A.S., Gatenby, E.V. and Wakefield, H.. (eds.) 1963. *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. (2nd edition.) London: Oxford University Press.

OALD3 = Hornby, A.S. (ed.) 1974. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. (3rd edition.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

OALD4 = Cowie, A.P. (ed.) 1989. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. (4th edition.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

OALD5 = Crowther, J. (ed.) 1995. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. (5th edition.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

OALD6 = Wehmeier, S. (ed.) 2000. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. (6th edition.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

OALD7 = Wehmeier, S. (ed.) 2005. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. (7th edition.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

OALD8 = Turnbull, J. (ed.) 2010. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. (8th edition.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

OALDO = *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary Online*. 2007. http://www.oup.com/.

but lower than MEDAL2 (about 91,000) and LDOCE4 (about 100,000).

The differences between the two runs that are compared here (Figures 2 and 3) can be considered marginal. Whereas OALD7 has words like **pump-priming**, **pump room** and **punch ball** that are not in MWALED, the latter dictionary offers more senses for words like **pump** (noun: "the act of pumping") and **punch** (noun: "a hole made by a cutting tool or machine") than OALD7. More interestingly, MWALED does not present some British words or senses, like **pump** "sports shoe" or "plimsoll" but has more lexical units that are marked as "US," like **pumped** or **punchy** "punch drunk." This seems to be the case in the whole of this first American MLD. Items like **dime store, diner** "restaurant," and **dingbat** can also be found in OALD7 or MEDAL, where they are marked as belonging to North American English. However, informal or slang items that are particular to that type of English can be found only in MWALED, e.g., **diddle** or **dim bulb.** It is telling also that both MEDAL and OALD7 give the British and the American senses of **dinky** in that order, whereas MWALED gives them in the reverse order. In line with this, we systematically find forms in the American spelling before their British variants (e.g., **pulverize** *also Brit* **pulverise**).

The preface of MWALED states that "The creation of this dictionary reflects the reality that English has become an international language, and that American English, in particular, is now being used and studied every day by millions of people around the world." This is certainly true. However, this greater importance of American English cannot be taken as an excuse for the absence of many Australian, Indian, or South African words, such as **bathers** "swimsuit," **bottler** "something very good," **brumby** "wild horse," **crore** "ten million," **devi** "goddess," **gur** "brown sugar," **spaza** "shop," **tsotsi** "criminal," or **voorkamer** "front room," all of which can be found in MEDAL2, and many of which are present in OALD7.

The presentation of the lexical units is based partly on etymological grounds and partly on grammatical grounds. For a form like **pump,** we find three entries: one for the verbal uses and two for the nouns. In the latter category, the activity-related senses are presented apart from the shoe-related senses. This type of presentation is similar to CIDE and CALD. In each of the two noun entries, there is a cross-reference to the other entry; this is done in a systematic way throughout the dictionary. Only research could make clear whether this type of cross-referencing is necessary and helpful. Another type of cross-reference is the one given under **puma.** The user is referred to **cougar,** where it is said that this animal (but does the user already know that it is an animal?) is also called "mountain lion, (US) panther, puma" but where no definition is given—only a new cross-reference to the "picture at CAT." As to the placement of multi-word expressions, the policy does not seem to be very clear. Whereas "beat (someone) to the punch" and "pull punches" are treated under **punch,** other expressions like "(as) pleased as punch," "pack a punch," or "roll with the punches" are treated under the verbs they contain.

According to the preface, "The definitions in this dictionary are written in simple language." There is no mention of a restricted defining vocabulary. This explains why a word like *fist* is part of the definition of one of the senses of **punch.** In the run studied here, some of the other less frequent words that are used for defining purposes are *grind, volcano,* and *rye.* The preface states that "Very often a word will be defined by a quite simple definition, followed by a definition that is perhaps somewhat less simple." What is meant is what we see at ***punch out* 2.** The first definition contains words that are part of the defining vocabularies used in other MLDs, but after a semicolon, a second definition is given that uses a phrasal verb. Similar double definitions can be found with ***choke off* 2** and **marvel.** Although this type of definition turns up quite regularly, they don't seem to appear "very often." Sometimes the difference in difficulty of comprehension seems to be very small, e.g., at **gray** (adj.), which reads: "having a color between black and white : having a color that is like the color of smoke." In other cases, a word appears in small capitals after the second colon. Such words are not a part of the definition but refer to synonyms. For reasons that are not explained, sometimes full-sentence definitions are used, e.g., for ***buy/sell a pup*** (under **pup**): "To *buy a pup* means to pay too much money for something or to buy something that is worthless....."

Illustrations have the form of on-the-spot line drawings. These can be found for words like **mask, pulpit,** or **puppet,** and they can inform about other words, such as *bill, wing, tail,* etc. at **bird.** There are also plates giving drawings of different species of a category, like **lynx, cheetah,** and **tiger** under **cat.** In addition, in the middle of the book there is a quire of full-color plates presenting colors, vegetables, fruits, fish, birds, clothing, and so on.

The real difference of MWALED as

compared to the other MLDs lies in the examples—or, more precisely, in the number of examples provided. The preface claims that "more than 160,000 usage examples" are to be found. Although this number seems to be a bit too high (my own evaluation goes up to about 140,000), MWALED really gives from about 50 percent to more than 125 percent more examples than its competitors. Most of these examples are "based on evidence of real English … [and] have been carefully written to show words being used in appropriate contexts which accurately reflect their uses in actual speech and writing" (preface). A minority of the examples are quotations taken from American and British literature. As can be seen in Figure 3, most examples are full sentences, but phrases are frequent as well. Quite often examples are explained between square brackets so as to make them perfectly clear. In some cases one may wonder whether such explanations are necessary or useful. Would anyone, knowing what a bicycle is and having understood what a pump is, need the information that "a bicycle pump" is "a small pump used for putting air in bicycle tires"? The explanation given with the second example accompanying *at the pump* seems to be too long. If it is necessary at all to explain the examples, something like "Expect long lines *at the pumps* [= at gas stations] this weekend" could be preferable. In the example provided with **pumped,** the information given between square brackets, "[= *pumped up*]" cannot be interpreted as a clarification. Instead, it functions as a cross-reference.

The grammatical information given is summary but seems to be adequate. For verbs the syntactic information is given at the highest level, which means that for a verb that is transitive in all cases, the indication "[+ *obj*]" is given at the level of the headword (e.g., **pulverize**). But this information goes down to sense level when the verb allows for various constructions (e.g., **pump 5**), or to example level whenever a sense can be expressed in grammatically different ways (e.g., **pump 4**).

As a conclusion, it seems fair to say that MWALED meets all the standards that are common by now for MLDs. However, with the exception of the number of examples provided—which is far higher than what can be found in any other MLD—it does not add new elements to this type of dictionary. This is especially surprising when one remembers that a new publishing house entered this market. Does this mean that we have reached the stadium of the "Perfect Learner's Dictionary"? I am not convinced that the evolution of MLDs has come to its end.

Figure 3 a page from MWALED

4ᵉˢ Journées allemandes des dictionnaires, 2010

The fourth international conference on lexicography held in Germany in the French language is taking place at Klingenberg am Main on July 2-4, 2010.

The conference theme this year is 'Dictionaries and Translation', with the following main axes:

• Historical aspects of the Dictionaries-Translation pair
• Monolingual lexicography and translation
• Bilingual lexicography in the wide sense, including "interlingual" monolingual lexicography (e.g. old French – contemporary French; sign language)
• Bilingual lexicography itself
• Translation as a transposition of the dictionary on paper to electronic media

The event is dedicated to the memory of Henri Meschonnic—linguist, poet and translator, who passed away on April 8, 2009—who presented the opening plenary in the 2008 conference ('Cultures and Lexicographies', in honor of Alain Rey) and who inspired the theme of the current conference.

This biennial meeting has been organized since 2004 by Michaela Heinz, from the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg.

The conference proceedings are published by Frank & Timme, Berlin, as part of the collection Metalexicographie. http://lexikographie.eu/

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Anatoly Liberman. *An Analytic Dictionary of English Etymology: An Introduction*

Preliminaries

The volume under review is the first installment and a sample volume of *An Analytic Dictionary of English Etymology*, whose publication is due to follow. The dictionary is based on a research project initiated by Anatoly Liberman in 1987. Of course, it is not the first product of the author's work on English etymology. He has published several articles on methodology, which prepare the ground for the forthcoming dictionary (e.g. Liberman 1994, 2000, 2002b, and 2005a), as well as studies on particular words, which disclose some of his results (e.g. Liberman 2001, 2002a, and 2007). Moreover, he has published a valuable introduction to methodology in etymological research aimed at the lay reader (Liberman 2005b). Last but not least, the present newsletter has witnessed publication of five sample entries—*fag, heather, lass, ragamuffin,* and *stubborn*—from the forthcoming dictionary, accompanying the author's survey of problems related to producing it (Liberman 2006). Nevertheless, the reviewed volume is the first work released under the official title of the project.

The idea for the new dictionary rests on the premise that etymological dictionaries fall into two categories: analytic and dogmatic. Within the first group we find, for example, the dictionaries by Feist and Lehmann (GED), Vasmer (REW), or von Wartburg (FEW). An entry in such a dictionary features a critical survey of derivations suggested so far, supported by references to relevant literature and concluded with the author's final verdict on whether any hypothesis is more convincing than others. Dogmatic dictionaries usually present etymologies as either firmly established (i.e. with only one possible derivation) or completely unknown (with the commentary frequently reduced to the statement 'of obscure/unknown origin'). No discussion or alternatives are offered, nor any literature cited. In the former case the reader has to believe the solution that is provided, whereas in the latter he or she is left with the impression that nothing can be nor has been said of the word in question. The reason for such a situation is the misconception that an etymological dictionary is meant for a mass audience rather than for specialists (see the introduction to the work under review, especially pp. xi–xiii), thus scholarly discussion is considered too technical by the authors and is eliminated.

According to the author (Liberman 2005b: 161–162), the etymological dictionaries of English published before the mid-19th century tended to be analytic, whereas practically all published ever since have been dogmatic, including the fourth edition of Skeat and the OED, the peaks of English etymology according to him. Early dictionaries were prescientific, and therefore part of being a careful etymologist was to list all the hypotheses that the author was aware of. Later scholars became equipped with the strong methodological tool called sound laws, which made them more self-conscious than conscientious.

The aim of the new publication is to introduce the concept of the analytic dictionary of etymology, formulate the methodology used for the research and advertise the merits of the forthcoming dictionary by the presentation of 55 sample entries.

The structure of the volume

The volume under review consists of the following sections: 1. Contents (p. vii); 2. Abbreviations of Linguistic Terms and Names of Languages (pp. ix–x); 3. Introduction: The Purpose and Content of a New Dictionary of English Etymology (pp. xi–xxxii); 4. The Etymologies at a Glance (xxxiii–xlvi); 5. An Analytic Dictionary of English Etymology (pp. 1–231); 6. Bibliography (pp. 233–312); 7. Index of Subjects (pp. 313–316); 8. Index of Words (317–348); 9. Index of Personal and Place Names (pp. 349–359).

The introduction begins with a survey of opinions on the purpose and methodology behind the production of an etymological dictionary. This is followed by a discussion of the choice of words and the number and type of borrowings to be included. All the aspects are illustrated by the author's critical overview of English etymological dictionaries. Worthy of special attention are the author's methodological principles (pp. xxv–xxvi; also cf. a similar, though not identical, list in Liberman 2005b), which have a direct bearing on the treatment of words in the dictionary section.

As its title suggests, the section entitled 'The Etymologies at a Glance' provides brief summaries of the etymologies discussed in the dictionary. However, the number of summaries is larger than the number of entries featured in the dictionary section. This is a consequence of the author's approach to etymology, which involves
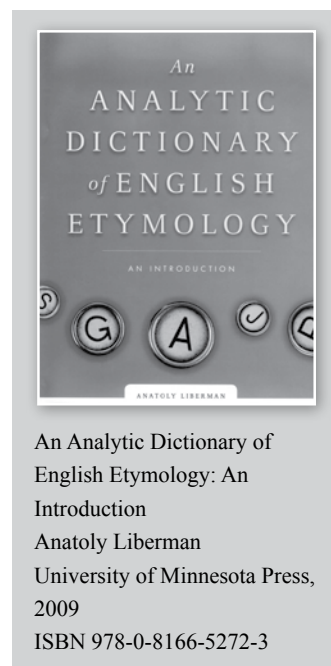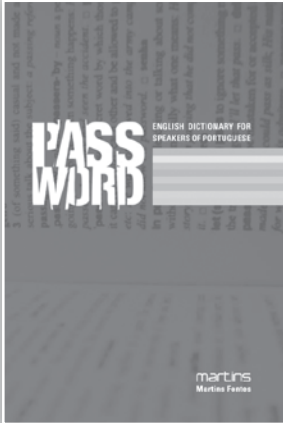
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identifying families of related words that can be explained in a single hypothesis. Certain words are sifted out in the process and interpreted in alternative ways. Thus 'The Etymologies at a Glance' provides a convenient summary of the major word forms discussed in the dictionary, whether they appear as separate entries or are discussed only as part of another entry.

As mentioned above, the dictionary section contains only 55 entries, but considering that they occupy 230 pages, the average entry is 4 pages long with two columns of text per page. The longest one, dwarf, is 12 pages long, whereas the shortest, drab, occupies about three quarters of a page. Each entry begins with a brief summary and description of its content. The most important points are highlighted using bold font. Each entry has its own structure determined by the problems posed by the word(s) discussed in it.

Given the small number of entries, I will allow myself to list them here. These are: adz(e), beacon, bird, boy, brain, chide, clover, cob, cockney, cub, cushat, doxy, drab, dwarf, eena, ever, fag/fag(g)ot, fieldfare, filch, flatter, fuck, gawk, girl, heather, heifer, hemlock, henbane, hobbledehoy, horehound, ivy, jeep, key, kitty-corner, lad, lass, lilliputian, man, mooch, nudge, oat, pimp, rabbit, ragamuffin, robin, skedaddle, slang, slowworm, strumpet, stubborn, toad, traipse, trot, understand, witch, and yet.

The list in the Index of Subjects features references to the linguistic topics discussed in the dictionary, references to word groups according to their semantics (e.g. diseases refers the reader to column 52a containing examples of words denoting diseases probably related to dwarf), and lists of entries where various kinds of relationship between words are mentioned (e.g. "words (allegedly) borrowed from Arabic").

The Index of Words includes "over 6000 words in over 80 languages and periods" (p. 317). Alphabetic lists of word forms are grouped according to the period in the history of a given language in reverse chronology (e.g. Modern English precedes Middle English precedes Old English) and language names are arranged into language families.

The Index of Personal and Place Names includes not only personal and place names but also other kinds of proper names that occur in the entries, such as titles of literary works (e.g. the Eddas, *Germania* etc.).

Evaluation

The author's assumption is that the writing of a new dictionary of etymology is a sensible enterprise as long as it makes advances in the discipline. The main asset of the sample

volume of the forthcoming dictionary is that it indeed promises a major improvement compared with many of its predecessors, especially those devoted to English.

The list of entries given above points to the unique character of the dictionary. At first sight, the selection may seem random, as the list includes a wide diversity of words. Some are of high frequency, while others are rare, or even obsolete. There are some colloquialisms as well as slang and dialectal words. They also differ in age, with some of them attested since Old English (e.g. *bird, dwarf, heifer, slowworm, yet*) and others coined fairly recently (*jeep, lilliputian*). What they all have in common is the difficulty they pose to scholars seeking to explain their origin. Such words are usually shrugged off with the phrase "origin obscure/unknown" in etymological dictionaries of English. By choosing these words the author highlights several blanks of English etymology and attempts to fill them in using a careful methodology. Even if no satisfactory conclusions can be reached, a valuable starting point for future research is established, which is what a good etymological dictionary should constitute.

Inclusion of such words in the sample volume was a good choice for yet another reason. It is exactly such cases that reveal with the utmost clarity the inadequacies of the etymological dictionaries that the author has been highlighting in his publications. It seems reasonable to present the advantages of a new methodology on the basis of the data that helped shape it. Of course, as a consequence of that, discussion of some words will be familiar to those who have been following these publications. In fact, the careful reader may occasionally recognise certain passages repeated without major changes, although the author writes in his introduction that none of the etymologies were left intact and the new entries "cancel" his earlier publications.

It is in terms of the content of the entries that the dictionary reveals its incomparable character. Each entry features an extensive overview of all the etymologies of the word and related forms in English offered so far, as well as an exhaustive discussion of their putative Germanic or Indo-European cognates. This means not only references to the etymological dictionaries for the relevant languages but, more importantly, a remarkable array of other sources, ranging from widely known articles to footnotes in obscure journals whose availability frequently verges on the impossible. Access to these sources has been made possible by two decades of research conducted as part of the project. The author's aim was to include all the information ever written or printed

about each word, and judging from his meticulous references it is easy to believe he has achieved this. This approach enables the author to acknowledge the original proponents of certain hypotheses, whether correct or fanciful (previous authors of English etymological dictionaries did not bother to mention their sources) and trace the development of the research into the history of each word. Moreover, he manages to salvage numerous forgotten but inspiring ideas which cast a new light onto the problematic words (cf. e.g. various etymologies of Germanic words for 'brain' on p. 21, or the ingenious suggestion discussed on pp. 54–58 and originally made by Kluge [EWDS1: *Zwerg*] that the *-r-* in the Germanic words for 'dwarf' is a product of rhotacism).

The author is not only a mere reporter of what he has read. He offers critical remarks on the cited derivations and supplements them with his own ideas. His approach to etymology rests not only on his outstanding expertise in Germanic linguistics but also on a number of methodological principles outlined in his introduction, an idea reminiscent of Skeat's cannons of etymology (see e.g. the fourth edition of Skeat: xxviii–xxix). Writers of etymological dictionaries seldom formulate their theoretical assumptions explicitly and it was a very fortunate decision on the part of the author to do so. Let us have a closer look at three of these principles which, in my view, have the strongest impact on the entries.

The first two principles state that an etymologist has to identify all the cognates of the word in question in the target language and in related languages and attempt to explain them by a single etymology (cf. also Skeat's Canon 10). This means that the entries in the new dictionary often discuss clusters of look-alikes in order to assess the probability that they are related (see e.g. *fuck* for Germanic words of the structure *f(l/r)* + vowel + stop, and *nudge* for various *gn-*, *kn-*, *hn-* and *sn-* words). In doing so the author makes use of the full repertoire of Germanic and Indo-European linguistics to make original comparisons (e.g. *cob* is compared with English *sheaf* ~ German *Schober* etc., which could be interpreted as a form with *s*-mobile; cf. also *dwarf*, which features a clever elaboration on Kluge's proposal, see above). In traditional alphabetically arranged dictionaries such relationships, whether hypothetical or factual, may only be expressed through cross-references, which does not contribute to the clarity of the picture.

The sixth principle has equally strong bearing on the author's etymologies.

According to it, sound correspondences are decisive in the majority of cases, but occasionally language forms result from ludic formations based on onomatopoeia or sound symbolism, which are seldom subject to regular sound change. The suggested balance, which does not undermine the basis of historical linguistics, does justice to the prescientific tradition in etymology, not equipped in sound laws, which nevertheless was also capable of producing creative results. What the author seems to be suggesting is that sound correspondences are the indispensable framework for historical linguistics, but at the same time they may confine the scholar's imagination (although one should remember that there also exist scholars whose imagination is not restricted by any sound laws, and the results are not the desired ones; some of these scholars are mentioned and criticised by the author). A good illustration of this principle are the entries *boy* (words in various languages of the shape *b/p* + vowel + stop and denoting an object of fear) as well as *cockeney* and *ragamuffin* (both discuss neological compounds built around unetymological *-a-*).

The balance between constituent parts of the dictionary is perhaps unusual. Nearly half of the volume is devoted to the introduction, the summary of etymologies, and the indexes. The introduction may seem especially lengthy, but it should be remembered that the volume is not a self-contained entity: as the full title suggests it is an introduction to the dictionary proper, whose publication will hopefully follow soon. The section entitled 'Etymologies at a Glance' may seem redundant, as similar summaries are offered at the beginning of each entry. However, unlike the latter, the former features words that do not constitute separate entries and are only mentioned in other entries.

Given the author's approach to etymology and his discussion of clusters rather than single words, indexes are indispensable. The Index of Subjects, not a very typical feature in an etymological dictionary, may prove very useful for drawing valuable examples of various phenomena frequently encountered in etymology such as migratory words, sound symbolism or vowel alternations due to ablaut or false ablaut. Interestingly, this index also contains a list of references to examples of pairs of vowels in Germanic being incompatible due to ablaut violation: given the high frequency of these curious pairs, this seems to be a suggestion for future research.

The dictionary is written in a lively, sometimes humorous manner. The author presents his views in a clear way. His

criticism is frequently quite sharp and witty, which should not surprise those who are familiar with the author's earlier publications, but it always concerns the subject matter, i.e. etymology.

The entries have clear structure, although it is useful to reread certain passages several times not to lose track of the various threads of the argument, due to the multitude of word forms discussed and names of scholars mentioned. The feat of putting in order all these minute details and drawing creative conclusions from them is indeed remarkable and the author should be praised for being successful. He is in full control of his material, and never misses interesting comments on the links between the words he discusses even if he highlights them with caution (see e.g. his comment on the probable Scandinavian origin of *cater-*, *clumsy*, *awkward*, and *gawky* on p. 134). On several occasions he offers elucidating digressions on secondary issues such as Germanic mythology or passages from Shakespeare (see e.g. entries on *dwarf* and *cockney*).

Perhaps it would be a good idea to precede the discussion of each word with a list of meanings in which it occurs in modern use. Their development is discussed within the entry itself, but it would be convenient for speakers of languages other than English to have a general idea about the word's semantics before they start reading the entry.

It is impossible to avoid mistakes in a work of this complexity. To be sure, those that I have been able to identify are of minor significance. Moreover, the selection does not pretend to be exhaustive and features only those errors I was able to spot in a random survey. I allow myself to list them here. I have identified four factual errors. Polish *figli* (col. 83a) is actually the genitive plural, the nominative singular is *figiel*, whereas the nominative plural is *figle*. Col. 99b seems to suggest that Polish *garlica* is a misspelling for *gardlica*, but both forms exist (see e.g. SP VIII: 278). In col. 229a the author quotes Berneker, who allegedly gives the Polish form *nedaktóry* (the same form is listed in the index to the reviewed dictionary as *nedaktory*). This is a misprint for the Polish dialectal *niedaktóry* and Berneker cites the correct form (1899: 157). Finally, the Middle English text *Ayenbite of Inwit* is a prose work and not a poem as suggested in col. 76b.

The remaining errors are technical in character. Two Polish words are wrongly indexed. *Fukać* and the erroneous *figli* occur in cols. 81b and 83a respectively, not in col. 89b. In the main body of the dictionary *Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang* is six times referred to as RHHDAS (in *jeep*) and twice as HDAS (cols. 87a and 189b; this abbreviation is not explained in the bibliography). Elsewhere it is always RHHDAS.

A comment is needed concerning the transliteration of Russian and Old Slavic. It seems to me that choosing one consistent system for both of them would be a better idea. The one used for Old Slavic seems a natural choice, as it is the standard among the majority of Slavists. The words are not numerous, but the inconsistent spelling of two cognates, Old Slavic *ešče* and Russian *eshche* obscures the fact that the pronunciation of the former most probably was very similar to the latter.

Conclusion
The reviewed volume provides an interesting foretaste of the forthcoming dictionary. It combines the best features of the dictionaries which the author gives as his models with results of twenty years of meticulous research. Let us hope that the publication of the final work proceeds without obstacles. If it follows the trend initiated in its sample entries, it is going to surpass its predecessors and establish a very high standard for publications of this kind.

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English Learners' Dictionaries at the DSNA 2009

PAPERS ON LEXICOGRAPHY AND DICTIONARIES | 2

English Learners' Dictionaries
at the DSNA 2009

Editors

Ilan J. Kernerman | Paul Bogaards

KDICTIONARIES

English Learners' Dictionaries at the DSNA 2009 consists of nine papers discussed at the Seminar on Learner's Dictionaries, held as part of the Dictionary Society of North America XVII Biennial Meeting at Indiana University on May 29, 2009, as well as two related papers delivered during the conference. The seminar coincided with the rising interest in learners' dictionaries in the United States and presented the first such debate by local and international scholars and practitioners. This volume brings together some of the main issues concerning English pedagogical lexicography for the first time in some years. See p19.