

Differences in the Inclusion and Treatment of Terminology in OALD3, OALD4 and OALD8*

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Abstract: This article deals with the inclusion and treatment of scientific and technical vocabulary in the third, fourth and eighth editions of *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. The comparison of these editions is based on a random sample of 50 pages from OALD8 from the lemma *foot* to *gimmick*. The same lemma range was also studied in OALD3 and OALD4. First, different ways of indicating terminology were identified: i.e., subject-field labels, definitions and short cuts. Then all the lemmata or their senses marked with a subject-field label were found and a list of all subject-field labels used in this lemma range was compiled to see similarities and differences between individual editions. The comparison showed that the number of subject-field labels in all three editions is almost identical, but the subject-field labels differ from edition to edition. The issue of overly specific labels (e.g., 'anatomy', 'phonetics') and labels that are too broad (e.g., 'science', 'technical') is addressed. The next part of the article is devoted to the changes in the treatment of LSP lexical items in these three editions of OALD, from missing labels to changes in labels and ways of indicating terminology by means of definitions and/or short cuts. The conclusion suggests improvements in the subject-field labels themselves, a more consistent way of including subject-field labels even when the definitions indicate the subject field and an improved use of short cuts when the reference is to a certain subject field.

Keywords: DEFINITIONS, GENERAL DICTIONARIES, LEMMA, MONOLINGUAL LEARNER'S DICTIONARIES, OALD3, OALD4, OALD8, SCIENTIFIC VOCABULARY, SENSE INDICATOR, SHORT CUTS, SUBJECT-FIELD LABELS, TECHNICAL VOCABULARY

Opsomming: Verskille in die insluiting en behandeling van terminologie in die OALD3, OALD4 and OALD8. Hierdie artikel gaan oor die insluiting en behandeling van wetenskaplike en tegniese woordeskat in die derde, vierde en agste uitgawes van *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. Die vergelyking van hierdie uitgawes is gebaseer op 'n willekeurige

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steekproef van 50 bladsye van OALD8 vanaf die lemma *foot* tot *gimmick*. Dieselfde lemmareeks is ook in OALD3 en OALD4 ondersoek. Eerstens is verskillende maniere van die aanduiding van terminologie vasgestel: d.i. onderwerpsveldetikette, definisies en kortpaaie. Daarna is al die lemmas of hul betekenis wat met 'n onderwerpsveldetiket gemerk is, opgespoor en 'n lys van al die onderwerpsveldetikette wat in hierdie lemmareeks gebruik is, opgestel sodat ooreenkomste en verskille tussen die verskeie uitgawes bepaal kan word. Die vergelyking het getoon dat die aantal onderwerpsveldetikette in al drie uitgawes amper eenders is, maar die onderwerpsveldetikette verskil van uitgawe tot uitgawe. Die kwessie van oordrewe spesifieke etikette (bv. 'anatomy', 'phonetics') en etikette wat te breed is (bv. 'science', 'technical') word behandel. Die volgende deel van die artikel word gewy aan die veranderinge in die behandeling van TSD- leksikale items in hierdie drie uitgawes van OALD, vanaf ontbrekende etikette tot veranderinge in etikette en maniere van aanduiding van terminologie deur middel van definisies en/of kortpaaie. Die slot stel verbeteringe in die onderwerpsveldetikette self voor, 'n konsekwenter manier om onderwerpsveldetikette in te sluit selfs wanneer die definisies die onderwerpsveld aandui en 'n verbeterde gebruik van kortpaaie wanneer die verwysing na 'n spesifieke onderwerpsveld is.

Sleutelwoorde: DEFINISIES, ALGEMENE WOORDEBOEKE, LEMMA, EENTALIGE AANLEERDERSWOORDEBOEK, OALD3, OALD4, OALD8, WETENSKAPLIKE WOORDESKAT, BETEKENISAANDUIDER, KORTPAAIE, ONDERWERPSVELDETIKETTE, TEGNIESE WOORDESKAT

1. Introduction

General dictionaries, be they mono- or bilingual, are primarily concerned with general vocabulary and are consulted more often by users than any other type of dictionary. The users of general dictionaries expect to find in them different pieces of information, such as definitions, translation equivalents, spelling, pronunciation, fixed word combinations, collocations, usage notes, grammatical information, information on word-division, etymology and register. They should be distinguished from LSP dictionaries, which include and treat the terminology of various specialist fields. As far as the treatment of lemmata is concerned, enormous differences can be observed between general and LSP dictionaries. General dictionaries usually include technical terms, particularly those that everyone can encounter in everyday life, but LSP dictionaries, as a rule, do not include words used in general language only (cf. Svensén 2009: 3).

Any dictionary user hopes to find a word he/she is looking up in his/her dictionary; on the other hand, it is impossible to include all the words everyone might want, which means that the compilers of a dictionary have to make decisions about what to include in a dictionary and/or exclude from it (cf. Atkins and Rundell 2008: 178). These decisions also concern the inclusion of scientific and technical vocabulary in general dictionaries. It should be stressed that in the last few decades, the proportion of entries in general dictionaries devoted to scientific and technical vocabulary has increased. This is in line with the increasingly important role of science and technology and consequently, with

new words that are coined on almost daily basis to name new inventions, concepts, devices or achievements. As Landau (2001: 32-35) points out, the larger general dictionaries are becoming a collection of LSP dictionaries merged with a general dictionary, for two reasons. The first reason is that the number of scientific and technical terms is increasing more rapidly than the number of general vocabulary items; the second reason originates in the prevailing cultural view in our society that science and technology are of the highest importance. The final decision about whether to include scientific and technical vocabulary depends mostly on the market, the user profile, and the cost of production, but it can be claimed that some dictionaries, especially more comprehensive ones, will include a considerable number of scientific and technical terms, whereas other dictionaries, especially pocket dictionaries, may exclude all or almost all of them (cf. Atkins and Rundell 2008: 182; Jackson 2002: 162).

The advent of computational lexicography and the use of corpora mean that dictionaries, including general-language dictionaries, can be updated more frequently and in a more representative way than is possible with manual methods. Apart from including new senses of already existing lemmata and new general vocabulary items, each update also contains scientific and technological neologisms, as well as more established terms. The unity between term and concept is an essential requirement of unambiguous communication (cf. Hartmann and James 1998: 138-39, Ahmad et al. 1995: 7). However, experts as well as laypeople use the same terms or are confronted by them. This is why terms are to be found in general-language dictionaries. What, however, are the criteria on the basis of which the terms are included in general-language dictionaries? According to Ahmad et al. (1995: 7), this depends on the status of the term in question, since we can make a distinction between 'field-internal' or 'field-internal/-external' terms. Field-internal terms are not part of the general language, since they are used in expert-to-expert communication. Terms falling into the category of field-internal/-external terms are encountered and sometimes used by laypersons as well as experts, thus being the best candidates for inclusion in general-language dictionaries. It can be claimed with a high degree of certainty that certain domains may not be covered in general-language dictionaries. It may also be expected that only subsets of terms from more accessible domains will be included and defined by their usage in communicative situations that are not exclusively field-internal (cf. Ahmad et al. 1995: 9). However, lexicographers should be aware that the main problem in selection is consistency.

In any general dictionary containing words that have special meanings in a technical field or science, field labels should be employed. In the course of planning a dictionary, a list of the domains should be drawn up whose vocabulary will be included in the dictionary. Field labels are applied to terms that are important in the field and in such widespread use that they have appeared in popular articles or in specialized magazines for the amateur. They are also employed when a word is used in two or more different disciplines with dif-

ferent meanings, or if it is used in one sense technically and in another popularly. It can be seen that in some dictionaries, field labels are used abundantly, whereas in others, the user hardly ever comes across one. In many cases, the information that a word, expression or a sense belongs to a field of science can be inferred from the definition (cf. Landau 2001: 226) or in recent editions of monolingual learner's dictionaries from short cuts (which are also called signposts, guidewords or items in a menu in various English monolingual learner's dictionaries).

The aim of this article is to compare three editions of OALD, i.e., OALD3, OALD4 and OALD8, to see how terminology is included and treated in each individual edition. First, we were interested in the number of lemmata labelled with a subject-field label in these three editions. Next, we wanted to investigate the number and types of subject-field labels to identify similarities and differences between OALD3, OALD4 and OALD8. Finally, we intended to study other ways of indicating technical and scientific vocabulary.

2. Methodology

In order to be able to analyse the treatment of terminology in English monolingual learner's dictionaries, it is essential to choose dictionaries that have been on the market for a longer period of time. Among the learner's dictionaries, only two dictionaries satisfy this criterion, i.e., *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (first published in 1948) and *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (first published in 1978), while their competitors are all too new to facilitate comparison. For the sake of our analysis, we chose the oldest among the learner's dictionaries: *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. Our analysis focuses on the 3rd, the 4th and the 8th editions, because our aim was to observe the developments concerning inclusion and treatment of terminology from the relatively old OALD3 (published in 1974 and referred to as a dictionary belonging to the second generation of learner's dictionaries by Cowie (1999: 82, 97-105)) to OALD4 (published in 1989, referred to as a dictionary belonging to the third generation of learner's dictionaries by Cowie (1999: 144, 148-151)) and to the most recent edition: OALD8 (published in 2010). OALD4 was chosen because it was published approximately in the middle of the 36-year time span between the 3rd and the 8th editions. Another reason for choosing OALD4 is that the 1980s marked a watershed in learner lexicography, and as Cowie (1999: 144) points out, it was clear early in this decade that computers would play an increasingly important role in the compilation of dictionaries and that the next phase of dictionary development would be affected by the increasing professionalism of lexicography.

The analysis was carried out on a sample of 50 randomly chosen pages from OALD8, from the lemma *foot* to *gimmick* (pp. 602-653). The same lemma range was then also studied in OALD4 (44 pages, pp. 477-521) and OALD3 (29 pages, pp. 339-368). First, all the lemmata or their senses marked with a subject-

field label were identified, then a list of all subject-field labels used in this lemma range was compiled and compared. Last but not least, we examined the definitions, sense indicators and short cuts to see whether they are also used to indicate specific subject fields.

3. Ways of indicating terminology

English monolingual learner's dictionaries use several ways of indicating terminology: subject-field labels, definitions, sense indicators and short cuts. Since the subject-field labels are the most obvious elements indicating terminology, we will first examine how subject-field labels are used in OALD3, OALD4 and OALD8.

On the inside cover of OALD3, a list of subject-field labels and abbreviations can be found referred to as 'Specialist English registers' (i.e., specialist or technical fields). Terms appearing in the 'Specialist English registers', such as 'botany (bot)', 'nautical (naut)' and 'rugby', are self-explanatory and refer to as many as 58 different fields or sub-fields:

accounts, aerospace, algebra, anatomy, architecture, arithmetic, art, astronomy, ballet, biblical, biology, book-keeping, botany, business, chemistry, cinema, commerce, computers, cricket, ecclesiastical, engineering, electricity, farming, finance, football, gambling, geology, geometry, grammar, history, journalism, legal, linguistics, mathematics, mechanics, medical, meteorology, military, music, mythology, nautical, pathology, philosophy, phonetics, photography, physics, physiology, politics, psychology, racing, radio telegraphy, rugby, science, sport, tennis, theatre, trigonometry, zoology.

The list of subject-field labels in OALD3 is comprehensive and contains labels that fall beyond the scope of learner's dictionaries. Labels such as 'accounts', 'book-keeping', 'algebra', 'arithmetic', 'trigonometry', 'pathology', 'physiology', 'radio telegraphy', belong to LSP dictionaries rather than general dictionaries, let alone learner's dictionaries. They are far too specific and technical for the target user of a monolingual learner's dictionary to comprehend.

When going through the list of subject-field labels in OALD3, the label 'computers (comp)' captured our attention, since this dictionary was published in 1974, i.e., in the early days of computers. One might wonder which technical terms used in the field of computer technology would merit inclusion in a learner's dictionary, given the fact that no corpora and consequently no frequency counts were available at that time. With the help of a computer expert, we compiled a list of ICT terms that were known and used at the end of the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s, i.e., in the period of time when the lemma list for this edition of OALD was compiled. These terms include: micro-processor, processor, bus, ISA bus, I/O, drive, floppy drive, diskette, floppy

diskette, printer, laser printer, FTP, CD, VoIP, mainframe, EPROM, memory, monolithic main memory, ATM, file, disc and Ethernet. These terms are either not included at all or included but without the specialized sense referring to the ICT field. On the other hand, terms such as computer, computerize, programme, programmer, hardware and software are included in the wordlist of OALD3, but they are not labelled 'comp'. Interestingly, the lemma *computer* is defined as 'electronic device which stores information on discs or magnetic tape, analyses it and produces information as required from the data on the tapes, etc.', but the lemma *disc* is not treated in the sense of 'a device for storing information on a computer, with a magnetic surface that records information received in electronic form'. The lemma *programme* is another interesting example. OALD3 includes just the British English spelling as a lemma and gives *program* as a variant spelling in brackets without further explanation. Sense 3 of the lemma *programme* is defined as 'coded collection of information, data, etc fed into an electronic computer'. In the fourth edition of OALD as well as in all subsequent editions of OALD, two lemmata are included: *programme* and *program*. The latter has two senses: the American English spelling for *programme* and the specialized sense used in computing. Considering all this, the question arises why the subject-field label 'comp' is listed among the subject-field labels. It is not to be found in the dictionary, so it seems to be redundant. Is it there simply to impress the target user of that time, given the fact that in the early 1970s computer technology was still in its infancy at least as regards general use of computers?

In OALD4, the user's guide (called Detailed Guide) appearing as part of the back matter also includes a chapter on style and field (pp. 1572-75) but only a short passage (cf. 12.7 Technical fields, p. 1574) is dedicated to the treatment of terminology. Nowhere in the dictionary, however, can a user find a list of subject-field labels. The latter also holds true of OALD8, whose user's guide is limited to the graphic presentation of entries and a list of labels used in the dictionary (p. i), among which the only reference to subject-field labels is the label 'technical', though quite a few other subject-field labels appear in the body of the dictionary. The subject-field label 'technical' is explained as "language used by people who specialize in particular subject areas, for example *accretion*, *adipose*" (OALD8, p. i), which is a vague and far from informative explanation (see also 4. Subject-field labels in the studied segment in OALD3, OALD4 and OALD8 compared).

One of the improvements in OALD4 which definitely contributes to less confusion in understanding the labels is that labels are typographically distinguished from sense indicators in that italics are used to mark subject-field labels. The same applies to OALD8:

<p>genus /.../ <i>n</i> (<i>pl</i> genera /.../) 1 (science) division of animals or plants within a family /.../</p> <p>OALD3, p. 364</p>

genus /.../ *n* (*pl* genera /.../) **1** (*biology*) group of animals or plants within a family(4), often itself subdivided into several species(1). /.../
OALD4, p. 515

Besides subject-field labels, the definition itself often suggests that the word being defined belongs to a specific subject field:

geriatric /.../ *noun* **1** **geriatrics** [U] *the branch of medicine concerned with the diseases and care of old people* /.../
OALD8, p. 648

Another method frequently used by lexicographers to indicate terminology is the use of sense indicators, which are an entry component and are thought up by lexicographers to help a user choose the appropriate sense of the lemma:

front /.../ *n* /.../ **6** [C] (*of weather*) forward edge of an advancing mass of warm or cold air
OALD 4, pp. 496, 497

foreclose /.../ *v* [I, Ip, Tn] ~ (*on sb/sth*) (*of a bank, etc that has lent money for a mortgage*) take possession of the property of (sb), usu because repayments have not been made /.../
OALD4, p. 481

game point *noun* (*especially in TENNIS*) a point that, if won by a player, will win them the game
OALD8, p. 637

One feature relatively newly introduced into monolingual learner's dictionaries to aid users with the disambiguation of polysemous items is called short cuts (in OALD, they were introduced in the 6th edition). Short cuts give the core meanings of highly polysemous words. They help the users to make mental connections with the word in the context in which they encountered it. It should be pointed out that in many cases the context in which the user has met an unknown word will prompt the choice of short cut. Short cuts do not replace the full definition, but rather form a quick menu for the user's eye to run down. Consequently, users should usually be able to select the right sense paragraph to read fully without having to read all the details in several other paragraphs first.

freeze /.../ ► **COMPUTER 8** [I] when a computer screen **freezes**, you cannot move any of the images, etc. on it, because there is a problem with the system /.../

OALD8, p. 620

foot /.../ ► **IN POETRY 7** [sing.] (*technical*) a unit of rhythm in a line of poetry containing one stressed syllable and one or more syllables without stress. Each of the four divisions in the following line is a foot: *For 'men / may 'come / and 'men / may 'go. /.../*

OALD8, p. 603

As can be seen from the above dictionary entry for *foot*, two different ways of indicating the subject field can be combined in one and the same entry or one and the same sense. Sense 7 in *foot* combines a short cut ('in poetry') and a subject-field label ('technical'). Another possible combination is a subject-field label ('finance') and a sense indicator ('especially of a bank'), as illustrated by the example below:

foreclose /.../ *verb* 1 [I, T] ~ **(on sb/sth) | ~ sth (finance)** (especially of a bank) to take control of sb's property because they have not paid back money that they borrowed to buy it /.../

OALD8, p. 606

4. Subject-field labels in the studied segment in OALD3, OALD4 and OALD8 compared

Lemmata accompanied by subject-field labels are the most obvious terminological lemmata. In OALD3, 30 words with subject-field labels can be found in the range of the lemmata studied, while OALD4 includes 43 such lemmata and OALD8 as many as 126. If the number of lemmata in these three editions of OALD is compared, we can see that there is not an enormous difference between OALD3 and OALD4, but in OALD8 the number of lemmata marked by subject-field labels rises considerably. Interestingly, the number of subject-field labels does not change drastically from edition to edition. Table 1 presents subject-field labels found in the lemma span studied: OALD3 includes 18 subject-field labels, OALD4 only one more (i.e., 19), and the same applies to OALD8. Labels appearing in all three editions are shaded grey (6 labels), if the entire cell is shaded black, it marks the labels that can be found in both OALD3 and OALD4 (3 labels), whereas the entire cell shaded grey indicates the labels found in OALD4 and OALD8 (6 labels).

OALD3	OALD4	OALD8
1. anatomy	1. anatomy	1. anatomy
2. biology	2. Bible	2. architecture
3. botany	3. biology	3. astronomy
4. chemistry	4. botany	4. biology
5. cinema	5. chemistry	5. business
6. commerce	6. computing	6. chemistry
7. football	7. commerce	7. computing
8. grammar	8. finance	8. finance
9. legal*	9. grammar	9. geology
10. meteorology	10. law*	10. grammar
11. military	11. French law	11. law*
12. music	12. mathematics	12. linguistics
13. nautical	13. medical	13. mathematics
14. theatre	14. music	14. medical
15. science	15. religion	15. music
16. sport	16. physics	16. physics
17. swimming	17. psychology	17. phonetics
18. tennis	18. politics	18. psychology
	19. sport	19. technical

*The label 'legal' as used in OALD3 was replaced by 'law' in OALD4 and OALD8, but both labels refer to the same field of science, thus they can be regarded as the same label.

Table 1: Subject-field labels in OALD3, OALD4 and OALD8

Sports terminology deserves special attention, since it represents quite a lot of vocabulary in various editions of OALDs, especially in OALD8. Labelling of sport, however, presents a huge problem, since most of the labelling is carried out by indirect methods of labelling and not by subject-field labels proper. In fact 'sport' is the only subject-field label proper (found in OALD3 and OALD4, but not in OALD8), while all other references to different sports are only indirect ways of indicating the subject field. Only OALD3 uses two additional labels referring to sport, i.e., 'football' and 'tennis'. The various sports disciplines referred to in the OALDs and used either in the form of sense indicators or short cuts (only in OALD8) are as follows:

OALD3: football, swimming, tennis, golf

OALD4: cricket, snooker, football, tennis, golf, hockey

OALD8: American football, basketball, baseball, cricket, football, soccer, rugby, tennis

In many cases, the delimitation of two or even three seemingly related labels is

unclear. One can wonder about the utility of the subject-field labels 'anatomy' and 'medical' (in OALD4 and OALD8). Is anatomy not a subfield of medicine? Is it necessary to bother a general dictionary user who is not a specialist with such specific subject fields? The same can be said of labels such as 'linguistics', 'grammar' and 'phonetics' in OALD8 or 'commerce' and 'finance' in OALD4 and 'business' and 'finance' in OALD8. On the other hand, OALD8 uses the label 'biology', but not, for instance, 'botany', while OALD3 and OALD4 employ both 'botany' and 'biology' as labels. This means that some subject-field labels are used more generically to refer to the entire field of the science, whereas some subject-field labels refer to sub-fields themselves.

Another two labels that must be mentioned are the generic 'science' in OALD3 and 'technical' in OALD8. These two labels are very general and do not refer to any specific field or sub-field. In OALD3, 'science' is used to label words such as *genus*, which could be labelled with the more specific label 'biology'. In OALD8, for instance, 'technical' is used to label lemmata such as *fruit* ('a part of a plant or tree that is formed after the flowers have died and in which seeds develop'), which could more logically be labelled 'biology' (or 'botany' if this label existed; in OALD3 and OALD4, the label 'botany' is used) and *geld*, which could also be labelled 'biology' (or 'zoology' or even 'veterinary' if one of these existed).

Contrary to the general labels 'science' and 'technical', we can find the label 'French law' in OALD4, which is a very specific label, considering the fact that the label 'law' is also used in this edition of OALD. The lemma *force majeure* is labelled 'French law' in OALD4, while in OALD8, it is more reasonably labelled as 'from French, law'. The interpretation of both ways of labelling is completely different: 'French law' implies that the term is used only to refer to the French law and 'from French, law' means that the expression comes from French and is used in legal terminology.

5. Changes in the treatment of technical and scientific words in OALD3, OALD4 and OALD8

When the three editions of OALD are compared, certain changes in the treatment of technical and scientific words can be observed which are discussed below.

(1) A term that clearly belongs to technical or scientific vocabulary lacks a subject-field label in OALD3, but includes one in OALD4 and OALD8:

<p>formula /.../ 2 statement of a rule, fact, etc esp one in signs or numbers, as in chemistry, mathematics, etc, eg 'Water = H₂O'</p> <p>OALD3, p. 344</p>
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formula /.../ 1 [C] (a) (*chemistry*) set of symbols showing the elements that a substance is made of /.../ (b) (*mathematics or physics*) expression of a rule or relationship in algebraic symbols /.../

OALD4, p. 485

formula /.../ 1 [C] (*mathematics*) a series of letters, numbers or symbols that represent a rule or law /.../ 2 [C] (*chemistry*) letters and symbols that show the parts of a chemical COMPOUND, etc /.../

OALD8, p. 611

It is evident from the definition in OALD3 that *formula* is a term used in chemistry, mathematics, etc., but in spite of that, the label has not been included. In OALD4, the unlabelled sense 2 from OALD3 is divided into two subsenses both labelled with very specific subject-field labels ('chemistry' and 'mathematics or physics'). OALD8, however, treats both subsenses from OALD4 as separate senses with 'mathematics' and 'chemistry' as the subject-field labels. The biggest step forward is the development from OALD3 to OALD4, where the term is treated with greater precision.

Other examples of lemmata which are unlabelled in OALD3 but include a label in OALD4 and OALD8 are: *futures* (labelled 'commerce' in OALD4 and 'finance' in OALD8), *garbage* (labelled 'computing' in OALD4, not included in this sense in OALD8), *gastric* and *gastritis* (labelled 'medical' in OALD4 and OALD8), *genital* (labelled 'medical' in OALD4 and without a label in OALD8), *gender* (labelled 'grammar' in OALD4 and OALD8), *genesis* (labelled 'Bible' in OALD4 and 'formal', which is a style label, in OALD8) and *gilt-edged* (labelled 'finance' in OALD4 in OALD8).

(2) In some cases, OALD3 includes a subject-field label, OALD4 drops it, but OALD8 includes it once again.

foreclose /.../ vt, vi (legal) [VP6A,2A] use the right (given by a mortgage) to take possession of property (when interest or capital has not been paid at the required time) /.../

OALD3, p. 342

foreclose /.../ v [I, Ip, Tn] ~ (on sb/sth) (of a bank, etc that has lent money for a mortgage) take possession of the property of (sb), usu because repayments have not been made /.../

OALD4, p. 481

foreclose /.../ *verb* **1** [I, T] ~ **(on sb/sth)** | ~ **sth** (*finance*) (especially of a bank) to take control of sb's property because they have not paid back money that they borrowed to buy it /.../
OALD8, p. 606

In OALD3, the subject-field label 'legal' is used, which is replaced by the label 'finance' in OALD8, whereas OALD4 lacks a label.

(3) A lemma is marked by a subject-field label in OALD3, but lacks a subject-field label in OALD4 and OALD8 (e.g., *foxhole*). Another possibility is that a subject-field label in OALD3 is replaced by a sense indicator in OALD4 or a short cut in OALD8:

front /.../ *n* /.../ **7** (*met*) boundary between masses of cold and warm air
OALD3, p. 352
front /.../ *n* /.../ **6** [C] (*of weather*) forward edge of an advancing mass of warm or cold air
OALD 4, pp. 496, 497
front /.../ *noun, adj., verb*
■ *noun* /.../
► **WEATHER 12** [C] the line where a mass of cold air meets a mass of warm air /.../
OALD8, p. 624, 625

The same situation applies to the lemma *force* in the sense of 'authority'. At first sight, OALD3 and OALD4 both define this sense in exactly the same way: '(legal) authority'. A closer examination, however, shows that 'legal' is the subject-field label in OALD3 and a sense indicator in OALD4 (this confusion is due to the lack of italics in OALD3). OALD8, however, uses neither the label nor the sense indicator but instead employs the short cut 'authority':

force¹ /.../ *n* /.../ **5** (*legal*) authority; power of binding(6): *put a law into ~, make it binding. When does the new law come into ~? The rule/regulation is no longer in force.*
OALD3, p. 341
force¹ /.../ *n* /.../ **8** [U] (*legal*) authority: *This decree has the force of law behind it. ...*
OALD4, p. 480

force /.../
■ **noun** /.../
▶ **AUTHORITY 5** [U] the authority of sth: *These guidelines do not have **the force of law**.* ◇ *The court ruled that these standards have force in British law.*
/.../
OALD8, p. 605

(4) A lemma or one of its senses is included in OALD3 but not in OALD4 and OALD8 (e.g., *foretop*, *foot* in the meaning of infantry). This is understandable because every dictionary must stick to certain principles of selection and must exclude many words and expressions because they are obsolete, rarely used, or too specialized for a general monolingual learner's dictionary.

(5) Adding new lemmata and/or new senses: owing to the development of science and technology, new terms are invented on a daily basis, or sometimes new senses are added to the existing ones, which is evident in every new edition. In OALD4 and OALD8, the lemma *function key*, labelled 'computing', is added, while it is not included in OALD3. In OALD8, the lemmata, such as *function word* (labelled 'grammar') or *fuzzy logic* (labelled 'computing'), appear in the wordlist; these lemmata are not included in OALD3 and OALD4. Some lemmata have developed new senses, which is evident from the treatment of the noun *footfall* in OALD8, where sense 2, 'the number of people that visit a particular shop/store, shopping centre, etc. over a period of time' (labelled 'business') is added.

(6) Inconsistent use of subject-field labels: in OALD3 and OALD4, *formic acid*, which is clearly a scientific term, lacks the subject-field label. *Acid*, on the other hand, is labelled in both editions with the label 'chemistry'. This is certainly an example of an inconsistent treatment of terms, which should be avoided by either labelling both terms 'chemistry' or suggesting the subject field within the definition. In OALD8, this inconsistency has been corrected by labelling both terms:

acid /.../ *noun, adjective*
■ (*chemistry*) a chemical, usually a liquid, that contains HYDROGEN and has a Ph of less than seven. The HYDROGEN can be replaced by a metal to form a salt. Acids are usually sour and can often burn holes in or damage things they touch. /.../
OALD8, p. 12
formic acid /.../ *noun* [U] (*chemistry*) an acid made from CARBON MONOXIDE and steam. It is also present in a liquid produced by some ANTS.
OALD8, p. 611

Another example of inconsistent labelling can be observed in the case of the lemma *gene*, which is labelled 'biology' in all three editions of OALD under investigation, and its derivatives and all the compounds containing 'gene', 'genetic' or 'genetically', which are mostly unlabelled. In Table 2 below, words marked by a subject-field label in any of the three editions of OALD are indicated by the subject field in brackets and in italics.

Derivatives
OALD3: gene (<i>biology</i>), genetic, geneticist, genetics
OALD4: gene (<i>biology</i>), genetic, genetically, geneticist, genetics
OALD8: gene (<i>biology</i>), genetic, genetically, geneticist, genetics
Compounds
OALD3: /
OALD4: genetic code, genetic engineering
OALD8: gene pool (<i>biology</i>), gene therapy (<i>medical</i>), genetically modified, genetic code, genetic engineering, genetic fingerprinting, genetic fingerprint

Table 2: Labelling of derivatives and compounds

It is evident from Table 2 that the field of genetics has undergone rapid development in the last four decades, which has clearly exerted great influence on the inclusion of terms connected with it in these three editions of OALD. In all unlabelled terms, it is only the definition that tells the user that the word or expression belongs to a specific subject field. Inconsistent labelling can also be observed in terms denoting names of diseases, plants, animals and measures. For example, *foot-and-mouth disease* or *flu/influenza* are not labelled 'biology' or 'medical' but are only defined as diseases, while *gastritis* is labelled 'medical' in OALD8, although it is also defined as an illness. It certainly makes perfect sense not to label *flu*, because the word belongs to LGP, *gastritis*, on the other hand, belongs to LSP. Another example is *foot* as a unit of length measurement, which is not labelled, whereas *gigabit*, a unit used in computer science, is. Certainly, *foot* in this sense has been used in English for a long time, whereas *gigabit* (or more precisely *bit*, from which *gigabit* is formed) originates from the 1940s. It can nevertheless be claimed that labelling some words belonging to a certain semantic field but not the others belonging to the same field can be quite confusing for a dictionary user.

6. Conclusion

A label as a special symbol or abbreviated term used to mark a word, expres-

sion or sense as being associated with a particular subject field is by far the most obvious sign that a word, expression or sense belongs to LSP. Thus, from a user's perspective, labelling terms by means of subject-field labels is the most user-friendly way of indicating terminology. But some remarks should also be made concerning the use of subject-field labels. The first problem is the use of closely related subject-field labels (e.g. 'linguistics' vs. 'grammar', 'phonetics'; 'business' vs. 'commerce', 'finance'). A general dictionary user cannot be expected to recognize the subtle differences between such subject-field labels. If such labels are used, one would expect an explanation of the distinction between them, but taking account of the type of dictionary and the target audience, it can be claimed with a high degree of certainty that this is an unnecessary complication. In monolingual learner's dictionaries, one would expect that the subject-field labels would refer to fields of science only and would disregard the sub-fields. On the other hand, OALD3 and OALD8 make use of one general subject-field label ('science', 'technical') that is only vaguely defined (if at all). It is recommendable to use this type of subject-field label only to mark entries common to several domains, i.e., as a higher-level domain marker. Otherwise, lemmata belonging to lower-level domains should be labelled using a more specific subject-field label that is also listed as a subject-field label in a given dictionary ('technical' vs. 'biology' or 'chemistry').

The next remark concerns the labelling of a lemma by means of a definition. A dictionary user may be puzzled that some lemmata are equipped with subject-field labels whereas in other lemmata, this function is taken over by a definition. This is a more indirect way of indicating technical and scientific vocabulary. It is thus questionable whether a general dictionary user is aware that he/she is dealing with an LSP lexical item. A considerable number of LSP lexical items lack a subject-field label but instead provide this piece of information within the definition. A more consistent policy in this respect should be expected, which means that a subject-field label should be provided even though it is clear from the definition that the word, expression or sense belongs to terminology.

The final remark refers to the use of short cuts as the third way of indicating LSP lexical items. Those short cuts that are lexically identical with the subject-field labels are not problematic from the point of view of the user who can easily recognize a lexical item as one belonging to LSP. Unfortunately, some short cuts are not so transparent and resemble sense indicators. It is therefore doubtful whether such short cuts are recognized by a dictionary user as indications of a subject field.

To sum up, subject-field labels should be listed in the front matter of a dictionary and, if necessary, explained. Apart from that, they should also be used more consistently throughout the dictionary, even in those cases where the subject field is indicated only by a definition or a short cut.

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