『関東甲信越英語教育学会研究紀要』No. 2 (1988. 1)

Exploring the Cognitive Strategies of Dictionary Use: A Study of EFL Learners' Idiom Look-Up Operations

Tokyo Metropolitan College of Aeronautical Engineering Yukio Tono

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1. INTRODUCTION

Recently more attention has been paid to the scientific approach toward lexicography. The publications of some journals (*DICTIONARIES, EURALEX Bulletin, LEXICOGRAPHICA*) and books (such as Hartmann (1979; 1983); Ilson (1985; 1986); Benson *et al* (1986); McArther (1986)) all point out that it is high time that we should make a systematic survey, collecting and organizing the data on lexicography gathered from all over the world, in order to make lexicography a more scientific practice. The term, *metalexicography*, has lately been used (see Hausmann 1986) to show that scientific exploration into the making of the dictionary and the finished products is necessary for future dictionary-making.

One of the highlights in the recent development of lexicography is the focus on the user. This trend is supported by the growing concern held by today's lexicograhers, which is represented by the following remark by Robert Ilson (Ilson 1985, p.4):

> "Dictionaries have in the past too often been considered simply as systems of information storage. Too little attention has been devoted to the problem of information retrieval. Do people know what is in dictionaries? Can they find it? And, if they find it, can they use it? We know far little about the cognitive strategies of dictionary use."

These "cognitive strategies of dictionary use" have lately attracted the attention of metalexicographers, and the project team in EURALEX has started to do some research on this aspect of dictionary use on a worldwide scale. Lexicographers usually construct dictionaries according to their own expectaion of what the users want to find in the dictionaries and not what the real users actually want to know. Lexicographers' expectations of what should be in a dictionary determine the content and design of the dictionary and the result does not always reflect the user's real needs. The recent development of L2 lexicography in Europe has stressed the importance of the user study in order to fully understand what the real user wants to get from a dictionary (cf. Tomaszczyk 1979; Béjoint 1981). This user perspective prompts the notion of

empirical data collection as a necessary technique for better lexicographical output (cf. Hartmann (forthcoming)). The gap between the user's rudimentary reference skills and the sophistication of the present learner's dictionaries has been brought to our notice as more and more investigation of the user's reference needs and skills is made (cf. Cowie 1983). Our primary concern here is to see what kind of information the user thinks most necessary in a dictionary and how he or she tries to extract it from the given dictionary. Also we want to see if the dictionary user's priority in information-retrieval is truly in accord with the lexicographer's expectations.

2. WHY IDIOMS?

This paper proposes to explore one aspect of dictionary reference skills, which is the skill of finding idioms in appropriate places in a dictionary. Finding an appropriate headword is one of the essential, although at the same time very complicated, processes of dictionary look-up. It is often difficult for the dictionary user to look for the right headword under which to find the information needed. This is especially true with idioms. Many users have trouble finding idioms in a dictionary. For instance, in such an idiom as *paint the town red*, which word they look up first depends upon the user's level of language proficiency and the nature of the dictionary reference skills practiced. The more proficient you become, the less expectation you have of finding this idiom under the headword *the*. However, you might still be diffident about which of the three words remaining is the best headword. The best solution for the dictionary-maker is to insert the subentry for the idiom into the entry of each constituent word, which, however, is not always possible because of the space limitations.

If the user's habits of looking up idioms were to be identified, it would greatly contribute to the improvement of the design of idiom presentation. If we can find, for instance, that most of the users look up the verb *paint* first and not *town* or *red*, it may be a good idea to insert the subentry into the entry of *paint* only and give cross-references in other entries.

Identification of the dictionary user's idiom look-up habits not only improves the design of idiom presentation, but also gives us some insight into how much difference or discrepancy there is between the lexicographer's expectation of the user's priority and the user's actual priority in dictionary look-up strategies. The writer hopes that this paper will clarify the process of idiom look-up operations, contribute to better lexicographical output for the idiom presentation, fill the gap between the lexicographer's idea of what a dictionary should be and the user's actual reference skills and needs, and consequently contribute to a much broader context of information retrieval theory and cognitive aspects of human information processing.

3. IDIOM HEADWORD CHOICE TEST

Definition of the idiom

Though there are several different classifications of idioms (Zgusta 1971; Aisenstadt 1979; Cowie 1978, 1981; Mackin 1978; Weinreich 1980), a certain consensus seems to be reached at this point. That is, three types of lexical combinations are to be recognized: *free combinations*, *idioms*, and *collocations*. *Free combinations* (or free constructions (Cowie 1978); free phrases (Aisenstadt 1979)) are the ones whose components are the freest in regard to combining with other lexical items. Most of the lexical combinations belong to this category. *Idioms* are "relatively frozen expressions whose meanings do not reflect the meaning of their component parts." (Benson 1985, p.4) *Collocations* (or restricted collocations (Aisenstadt 1979); semi-fixed combinations (Cowie 1978)) are loosely fixed combinations between idioms and free combinations. The meaning of the whole does not reflect the meaning of the parts. However, it is not a free combination because, firstly, the synonymy of the verb is restricted and secondly the combination occurs frequently.

In this study, we will adopt this basic classification of lexical combinations and choose the idioms according to Cowie, *et al* (1985). Although idioms are relatively frozen expressions, some of them allow lexical varibility: *to jump* (or*climb* or *get*) *on* (or *aboard*) *the bandwagon*. Grammatical variability is normally possible: *they have - had an axe to grind* (Benson 1985, p. 66). As Cowie (1981, p.229) pointed out, while there are 'idioms proper', whose meaning is no longer analysable (and) seems completely unmotivated and petrified (or "congealed") (Glaser 1980), we can also find others like *do a U-turn*, *change gears*, *open the bowling* which have figurative meanings (in terms of the whole composite in each case) but which also preserve a current literal interpretation. Cowie called this latter type 'figurative idioms.' He said, "The boundary between these sub-groupings is not clear-cut but indeterminate in terms of the interpretations which individual native speakers place upon certain idioms." (*ibid.*)

Therefore, some of the readers may have a different idea of the level of idiomaticity and may think that some of the idioms taken up for the study are not idioms. However, because of the complexity of the issue, the present writer will just follow Cowie's classification of idiom patterns described in a later section and select sample idioms for the test from the *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English* (1985).

Idiom Headword Choice Test

Cowie, *et al* (1985) suggests the following classification of idioms:

I. PHRASE PATTERNS

[NP] a crashing bore

[AdjP]	free with one's memory
[PP]	in the nick of time
[AdvP]	as often as not
[V+Part]	bitch up
[V+P]	inlay with
[V+Part+P]	average out at

II. CLAUSE PATTERNS

[V+Comp]	go berserk
[V+O]	ease one's mind
[V+O+Comp]	paint the town red
[V+IO+O]	do sb credit
[V+O+A]	take sth amiss

Their classification is found to be helpful for the present research. We will find out the dictionary user's strategies for looking up these different types of idioms, especially whether there is any preference of the headword which they look up first according to the types of idioms. In order to implement this idea, an Idiom Headword Choice Test was developed for the study. It had a list of 62 idioms which represented the patterns described above (five or six idioms selected for each pattern). See the Appendix for the sample test.

4. METHOD

Subjects

129 undergraduate students at Tokyo Gakugei University, a national teacher's college in Tokyo, participated in this study. 45 of them majored in English and the rest of the subjects majored in either music, home economics or sociology. The English majors usually take about ten EFL courses including conversation, grammar, composition, literature, linguistics and TEFL. Non-English majors, on the other hand, have one English class twice a week. In the English department, the students are required to buy an English-English dictionary such as *LDCE* and become familiar with *OED* as they refer to it in literature courses. Therefore, those who major in English are supposed to be more exposed to English dictionaries than non-English majors.

Procedure

The subjects were tested in their own classes at either the beginning or the end of their regular classroom activities. They were presented with copies of the Idiom Headword Choice

Test. The instructor read the instructions aloud and explained how to do the test. The subjects were first asked to give the names of the dictionaries they used most often. Then they were asked to circle the word in each idiom under which they think they would find the meaning of the given idiom. If there were any words which they did not know, they were asked to underline them, which helped to show the effect of unknown words in idiom look-up. They were not allowed to use dictionaries to make sure if their choice was correct. Working time for the test was 30 minutes.

Data Analysis

For each word in the given idioms, the number of subjects who chose it as the headword was calculated and Chi-square tests were performed in order to see if there was any particular tendency for the subjects to choose certain words or constituents in the given idioms. Chi-square tests were also used to see if there was any difference in look-up patterns between English majors and non-English majors. Generalizations were made about the way the subjects looked up idioms according to the different patterns of idioms.

Critical Review of Dictionaries

After the data analysis was made, major learner's dictionaries (both English-English and English-Japanese) were critically reviewed to see whether the treatment of idioms in these dictionaries was proper or not in light of the empirical data obtained.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the research are threefold. First, the results of the Idiom Headword Choice Tests are presented in terms of the choice of headwords for each idiom pattern. Second, the difference of idiom look-up patterns between English majors and non-English-majors is clarified. Third, the major learner's dictionaries are critically reviewed with regard to idiom presentation.

Results of the Idiom Headword Choice Tests

Table 1 shows a list of idioms and the subjects' choice of the words in the idioms for purposes of retrieval. If there is any significant difference in the choice of words in a given idiom, in other words, if there is any tendency to look up word A more often than word B and if it is statistically singificant, then that particular word is listed as the primary choice for the headword. The results indicate that although there are some cases in which English majors chose a certain word more often while non-English majors were not of one mind, or vice versa,

no case was found in which the words that the two groups chose were different from each other. This shows that the users have quite fixed patterns of idiom look-up in certain cases.

Table 1 The subjects' choice of idiom headwords

IDIOMS	EMGLISH-MAJOR		NON-ENGLISH-MAJOR	
a *ministering angel*	ministering	(*7.84)	ministering	(*6.76)
an *odd fish*		(4.00)	odd	(*14.44)
a *disorderly house*	disorderly	(*46.24)	disorderly	(*70.56)
the *angel* of *death*	angel	(*31.36)	angel	(*30.56)
a *mine* of *information*		(5.76)	information	(*44.45)
the *beam* in one's own *eye*	beam	(*92.16)	beam	(*54.94)
dead to the *wide*	dead	(*21.26)	dead	(*24.26)
knee-high to a *grasshopper*		(5.76)		(0.00)
near and *dear*	near	(*27.04)	near	(*37.59)
cool and *collected*	cool	(*31.36)		(0.04)
cut and *dried*	cut	(*7.84)	cut	(*9.00)
old beyond one's *year*	beyond	(*17.42)	beyond	(*110.36)
in *broad daylight*	daylight	(*40.96)		(1.22)
with *bated breath*		(0.04)		(0.04)
for *dear life*		(1.44)		(0.09)
between the *devil* and the deep blue *sea*	devil	(*82.88)	devil	(*94.64)
by *fair means* or *foul*		(6.32)	means	(*10.51)
early on	early	(*100.00)	early	(*84.64)
hard by	hard	(*100.00)	hard	(*92.16)
hard and *fast*	hard	(*67.24)	hard	(*70.56)
far afield	afield	(*73.96)	afield	(*70.56)
none too *soon*	none	(*24.75)		(2.32)
inscribe with	inscribe	(*100.00)	inscribe	(*96.04)
lapse from *grace*	lapse	(*60.84)	lapse	(*57.76)
root to the *spot*	root	(*17.64)	root	(*17.64)
picture to *oneself*	picture	(*84.64)	picture	(*60.84)
twist around one's *little finger*	twist	(*68.18)	twist	(*76.36)
mark down	mark	(*100.00)	mark	(*84.64)

push home	push	(*11.56)	push	(*7.84)
scar over	scar	(*100.00)	scar	(*81.00)
push the *boat out*	boat	(*104.00)		
rub up the *right way*	rub	(*176.96)	rub	(*165.64)
average out at	average	(*200.00)	average	(*194.06)
back away from	back	(*104.00)	back	(*59.66)
blend in with	blend	(*200.00)	blend	(*188.18)
ease back on	ease	(*119.36)	ease	(*77.42)
muck about with	muck	(*200.00)	muck	(*200.00)
cut one's *cables*	cables	(*54.76)	cables	(*16.33)
break the *news*		(.36)		(5.76)
kick the *bucket*	bucket	(*46.24)	bucket	(*7.84)
show a *leg*	leg	(*40.96)	leg	(*21.16)
take silk	silk	(*67.24)	silk	(*40.96)
get sb *nowhere*		(2.56)	nowhere	(*8.82)
sell sb/sth *short*	sell	(*17.64)	sell	(*33.64)
make bricks without *straw*	bricks	(*150.02)	bricks	(*70.81)
make one's *flesh creep*	creep	(*85.76)	creep	(*67.58)
read sb *like* a *book*	read	(*65.18)	read	(*74.18)
get uptight about sth	uptight	(*49.00)	uptight	(*67.84)
go berserk	berserk	(*73.96)	berserk	(*60.84)
go crackers	crackers	(*92.16)	crackers	(*60.84)
be the *drink talking*	drink	(*76.46)	drink	(*100.46)
be no *great shakes*	shakes	(*188.24)	shakes	(*194.06)
get too *big* for one's *boots*	boots	(*160.34)	boots	(*87.92)
catch sb *napping*	napping	(*21.16)	napping	(*14.44)
bleed sb *white*	bleed	(*84.64)	bleed	(*84.64)
make sb a *laughingstock*	laughingstock	(*92.16)	laughingstock	(*46.24)
paint the *town red*	paint	(*52.82)	paint	(*102.62)
hold life cheap		(5.66)		
blow sb a *kiss*	kiss	(*7.84)		(1.96)
spin sb a *yarn*		(4.00)	spin	(*19.36)
promise sb the *earth*		(.04)	promise	(*14.44)
bear sb little *ill-will*	ill-will	(*25.00)		(3.24)

give sb the bum's *rush*	bum/rush	(*28.46)	rush	(*14.42)

NOTE: Underlines in each idiom show that those words with underlines are compared in chi-square tests as candidates for users' possible choice of the headwords into which the given idiom is best inserted as subentry. (*df=1; level of sighnificance. 01)

The results of the Idiom Headword Choice Tests give us the following general tendencies in the user's idiom look-up strategies:

[NP] ⟶ ? {Adj/N}
[AdjP] ⟶ Adj (first one)
[PP] ⟶ ? {Adj/N}
[AdvP] ⟶ Adv (in Adv+Part) or ? (in Adv+Adv)
[V+P] ⟶ V
[V+Part] ⟶ V
[V+Part+P] ⟶ V
[V+O] ⟶ N as object
[V+O+A] ⟶ ? {V/N as object/Adj, Adv, N, V as adjunct}
[V+Comp] ⟶ Adj, Adv, N as comp
[V+O+Comp] ⟶ ? {V/N as object/Adj, Adv, N as comp}
[V+IO+O] ⟶ ? {V/N as direct O}

Here, the question mark means that the user's choice is not unanimous and varied in the way indicated in the braces.

Table 2 The difference of idiom look-up patterns between English-majors and non-English-majors

IDIOM PATTERN	IDIOMS	CHI-SQUARE SCORES	
[NP]	mine/information	E:mine ; NE:infor	*19.19
	beam/eye	E:beam ; NE:eye	*51.72
[AdjP]	cool/collected	NE:collected	*29.17
	old/beyond/years	E:old ; NE:beyond	*109.81
[PP]	broad/daylight	E:daylight; NE: broad	*28.62
	between/sea	E: sea	*18.85
[AdvP]	none/soon	E: none; NE: too	*12.21

[V+Part]	push/boat/out	NE: push	*21.58
[V+Part+P]	back/away/from	E: back; NE: away	*10.43
[V+O]	cut/cables	NE: cut	*13.52
	break/news	NE: break	*9.55
	kick/bucket	NE: kick	*17.36
[V+O+A]	make/bricks/straw	E: bricks; NE: make	*17.36
	make/fresh/creep	E: fresh; NE: make	*385.46
[V+O+Comp]	go/crackers	NE: go	*8.27
	get/big/boots	E: boots; NE: get	*16.94
	make/laughing-stock	NE: make	*14.58
	paint/town/red	NE: paint; E:red	*34.65
[V+IO+O]	blow/kiss	NE: blow	*17.99
	spin/yarn	NE: yarn	*50.79
	promise/earth	NE: promise	*15.15

Differences between the English and non-English Majors

In this present research, both the English majors and the non-English majors were tested to see if there were any differences between the two groups. Table 2 shows the data obtained. Chi-square tests were performed in order to see how the look-up patterns of the two groups were different from each other. If there was any significant difference in the way they chose the words to look up, the words which each group preferred were listed.

The first noticeable difference between the English majors and the non-English majors is that more English majors took headnouns of NP or PP as adequate words to look up than the non-English majors. For instance, in NP- type idioms such as *a mine of information, the beam in one's own eye* and the like, more English majors chose the headnouns *mine* and *beam* while more non-English majors took *information* and *eye*. In PP, the same thing can be said, as in *in broad daylight*, where the English majors chose *daylight* while the non-English majors chose *broad*.

Secondly, the non-English majors had a marked tendency to choose verbs wherever the idioms contained verbs as main constituents. This was especially true with such idiom patterns as [V+O], [V+O+A], [V+Comp], [V+O+Comp] and [V+IO+O].

In this present study, the causes of the observed differences cannot be identified owing to the lack of control over proficiency level and the degree of exposure to dictionaries. The English majors may choose headnouns of NP or PP because they are more proficient language learners

or simply because they have been instructed to do so as they use the dictionaries. The relationship between language proficiency and dictionary look-up strategies must be clarified in future studies.

Critical Review of Major Learner's Dictionaries

The treatment of the idioms used in the test was reviewed in nine learner's dictionaries, both monolingual and bilingual.

They were chosen according to the subjects' responses to the question of what dictionary they used most often.

The size of each dictionary is as follows:

Dictionary	Number of Entries	Number of Pages
LDCE	55,000	1303
OALD	50,000	1037
CULD	40,000	907
KKS	75,000	1967
PROG	110,000	2071
COMP	100,000	2110
GLOB	51,000	1938
LIGHT	44,000	1711
UNI	41,000	1633

(See the bibliography for the abbreviations of the dictionary titles.)

In Japan, PROG and COMP are the two biggest learner's dictionaries, although there are other much bigger dictionaries such as *Kenkyusha's New English-Japanese Dictionary* (1985 Kenkyusha; 235,000 entries), which are not especially designed for pedagogical purposes. PROG and COMP are said to be designed for users ranging from high school and college students to general readers. On the other hand, GLOB, LIGHT and UNI are all designed primarily for high school students. The number of entries and total pages show the relative sizes of the dictionaries.

The data described in Table 3 and 4 suggests that the idiom presentation is strictly limited by space available. The coverage of idoms is basically in proportion to the size of the dictionary. It is shown that the advanced learner's dictionaries such as PROG, KKS, and COMP cover more idioms than those for the less advanced, such as GLOB, LIGHT and UNI. Monolingual learner's dictionaries do not always have wider coverage than bilingual ones. Only LDCE is equal to major English-Japanese dictionaries in terms of idiom coverage.

Those idioms which could not be found in any dictionary are *dead to the wide, old beyond one's years, push home, ease back on, muck about with, be the drink talking*, and *promise sb the earth*. The reasons why these idioms were not included may be that some of them are not so common expressions (such as *muck about with*) or that the dictionary-makers decided that some of them were not idioms but collocations. The idioms used for the study were chosen from Cowie, Mackin & McCaig (1983) and the judgment of idiomaticity can vary from person to person.

Another noticeable difference among these dictionaries is that in the advanced learner's dictionaries such as PROG, COMP, and KKS, more idioms are treated with illustrative examples as compared with smaller dictionaries like GLOB, LIGHT and UNI. More than 20% of the idioms are illustrated using examples in PROG, COMP and KKS while less than 10% were illustrated in GLOB, LIGHT and UNI, which makes a significant difference in coverage between these two types of dictionaries. Monolingual dictionaries also do not insert so many idioms in illustrative examples. LDCE is superior to the other two in terms of idiom coverage. It deals with 15.9% of all the idioms as main entries, which is a remarkably high rate as compared with other dictionaries. Béjoint's (1981) study suggested that the students rejected the notion of separate main entries for compounds or idioms, so this approach taken by LDCE can be controversial[2]. As for this approach, it is noteworthy that LIGHT also adopts the same approach and lists phrasal verbs as separate main entries. In this present study, we did not examine the advantage and disadvantage of separate main entries and subentries, which, however, is a question which merits investigation.

Table 3 The treatment of idioms in dictionaries

	AG					NO	DSAG
	ME	YES	CR	EX	TOTAL		OTH
LDCE	15.9	38.1	0	3.2	57.2	34.9	7.9
OALD	0	34.9	1.6	9.5	46.0	46.0	7.9
CULD	0	22.2	1.6	11.1	34.9	57.1	7.9
KKS	4.8	39.7	6.4	22.2	73.1	19.1	7.9
PROG	4.8	39.7	4.8	27.0	76.3	20.6	3.2
COMP	3.2	36.5	3.2	22.2	65.1	28.6	6.4
GLOB	0	47.6	1.6	9.5	63.5	36.5	4.8
LIGHT	3.2	44.4	0	3.2	50.8	46.0	3.2

UNI	3.2	36.5	0	4.8	44.5	54.0	1.6

(NOTE: The data is described in percentage. ME=main entry; YES=the idiom contained under the given headword; CR=cross reference; EX=the idiom treated in illustrative examples; NO=the idiom not contained; OTH=the idiom contained under a different headword; AG=the sugjects' choice in agreement with the actual presentation design; DSAG=disagreement)

Table 4 The treatment of the hard-to-look-up idioms

	BOTH				ONE OF THEM	NONE
	Y/CR	Y/EX	EX/EX	TOTAL		
LDCE	13%	13%	0%	26%	54%	20%
OALD	7%	0%	0%	7%	40%	53%
CULD	7%	0%	0%	7%	47%	47%
KKS	20%	13%	13%	46%	40%	13%
PROG	6%	28%	6%	40%	40%	20%
COMP	0%	33%	28%	61%	6%	33%
GLOB	13%	7%	0%	20%	40%	40%
LIGHT	7%	7%	0%	14%	46%	40%
UNI	7%	7%	0%	14%	40%	46%

(NOTE: BOTH=the idiom treated under both possible headwords; Y=treated as a subentry; CR=cross reference indicated; EX=treated in illustrative examples; ONE OF THEM=the idiom treated only under one of the possible headwords)

Table 3 implies that there are mainly three ways to present idioms: 1) as main entries, 2) as subentries, 3) as illustrative examples. It is difficult to decide which idioms should be treated as main entries and which should not. Further research on the user's reference skills is needed in this area in order to improve the design of idiom presentation.

While Table 3 reviewed the treatment of those idioms whose headwords were relatively easily and almost unanimously chosen by the subjects in the tests, Table 4 shows the treatment of the hard-to-look-up idioms (i. e. the choices of the headwords were rather varied).

Although the ways the given idioms were treated under the headwords varied from dictionary to dictionary, it can be basically said that there is a fairly high agreement between the user's expectation of where to find the idioms and the lexicographer's intention of where to insert them in the case of what we call "easy-to-look-up" idioms (compare, for example, the relative

percentages of AG and DSAG in Table 3.).

On the other hand Table 4 shows that when the subjects had difficulty in identifying optimum headwords for the idioms, the lexicographers were also perplexed by those idioms. Most of the dictionaries list more than 40% of those hard-to-look-up idioms only under one of the two possible headwords (see the column titled ONE OF THEM) while the tests showed that there was a strong possibility that the users would look up either of the two headwords with a fifty-fifty chance.

The findings suggest that the lexicographers need to collect more data on what kinds of idioms are problems for the user and develop a certain device to help the users, for instance, by providing enough crossreferences or illustrative examples. Since the space available in a dictionary is limited, this kind of metalexicographic research on dictionary use will become more necessary in order to refine the dictionary design.

The dictionary makers should consider two possibilities for improving the situation: one is to educate the users to become more familiar with dictionary conventions; another is to improve the dictionary design so as to fill the gap (Cowie 1983). The gap is twofold: one is the gap caused by the lexicographer's lack of information on the user's idiom look-up strategies, which is exemplified by the fact that most dictionaries lack cross-references with a group of "hard-to-look-up" idioms. The other gap is due to the poor user's lack of reference skills. The lexicographers have to provide such poor users with the means of getting the information from a dictionary while such users are also to be encouraged to become more skilled. This does not necessarily mean that every VP idiom should be inserted under the entry of headverb, but some kind of remedial devices are necessary to fill the gap, for we always have to allow for less competent dictionary users.

NOTES

1. This is a slightly modified version of my M. Ed. thesis presented to the Faculty of the Department of Education at Tokyo Gakugei University in January 1987.

2. The new edition of LDCE (1987) changed this policy so as to have compounds and idioms as subentries.

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APPENDIX: IDIOM HEADWORD CHOICE TEST (SAMPLE)

[問題] 次に挙げるのは、英語の熟語です。従って、一つ一つの単語の意味を分かっても、全体ではそれをただ足せばよいという訳にはいきません。これらの熟語を各々辞書で調べるとすると、まずどの語を引けば、一番早く適切にその意味を知ることができると思いますか。自分なら、まずこれを引くという語を丸で囲みなさい。

(The followings are English idioms. So even if you know the meaning of each word in a idiom, you cannot get the meaning of the idiom simply by putting those together. Suppose you are going to find the meaning of these idioms below, which word do you look up first? Circle the word you think which you are going to check first.)

a ministering angel
in broad daylight
be the drinking talking
catch sb napping
get sb nowhere
inscribe with
an odd fish
knee-high to a grasshopper
be no great shakes
bleed sb white
make bricks without straw
lapse from grace
a disorderly house
old beyond one's years
get too big for one's boots
paint the town red
make one's flesh creep
root to the spot
the angel of death
between the devil and the deep blue sea
get uptight about sth
give sb the bum's rush
promise sb the earth
read sb like a book
a mine of information
cool and collected
by fair means or foul
make sb a laughing-stock
bear sb little ill-will

dead to the wide
early on
cut one's cables
blow sb a kiss
mark down
average out at
with bated breath
hard by
break the news
spin sb a yarn
push home
back away from
hard and fast
for dear life
kick the bucket
show a leg
push the boat out
blend in with
near and dear

far afield
hold life cheap
scar over
ease back on
picture to oneself
go berserk
none too soon
take silk
sell sb/sth short

rub up the right way
twist around one's little finger
the beam in one's own eye
go crackers
muck about with
cut and dried

〔注意〕 sb=somebody; sth=something