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**SPECIFIC FEATURES OF BRITISH CD AND ONLINE DICTIONARIES  
(CAMBRIDGE AND OXFORD ADVANCED LEARNER'S DICTIONARIES)****MARYIA ZALESKAYA, ZOYA TRATSIK**  
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*The brief information about the Oxford and Cambridge English Dictionaries is given. The micro- and macrostructures of CD and online versions are analyzed. The advantages and disadvantages of each edition considered.*

Nowadays people prefer CD and online dictionaries which have some advantages over traditional printed versions. British CD and online dictionaries can be a striking example of how a good modern dictionary should look like. They are easy to use and available for any Internet user. They give a clear definition, different variants of pronunciation, a wide list of examples that show how to use the word and contain a lot of exercises, tests and illustrations. Nowadays the most popular British learner's dictionaries are Oxford, Longman, Collins and Cambridge dictionaries.

The Oxford English Dictionary is linguistically unique because of its comprehensiveness and its inclusion of chronologically arranged quotations illustrating changes in the meaning of words. In terms of lexicography, it is a diachronic dictionary; it doesn't only define the language units of the present day, it also records their use at any period within the Dictionary's coverage [1, p. 3].

**The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (2010)** [2, 3] is widely used among learners, who study English as a foreign language. The dictionary is analyzed at the level of micro- and macrostructures.

**The macrostructure** of CD-version includes six sections: Dictionary&Culture; iWriter; My Topics; Activities; Resources; Genie.

The Dictionary&Culture section is subdivided into three parts: Search (a standard way of finding a word), Advanced Search and Results. Advanced search has a more complicated structure. It allows the user to find a word in a particular context (headword, definition, phrasal verb, idiom); to look up for entries that come from a particular variety of English (American English, Australian English, British English etc.), have a particular part of speech (adjective, adverb, noun, verb, preposition etc.) and some stylistic peculiarities (idiom, slang, taboo, humorous, informal, old-fashioned etc) [2].

The iWriter section is an interactive tool that can be useful for writing essays, articles, presentations, covering letters, different variants of CVs, letters of complaint, letters of enquiry, reviews, short and long reports and so on. Before that the user can get acquainted with some theoretical material in "I want to see model of writing", where it is possible to take a step-by-step tour of how the model is written. For example, if it is an essay, a presentation, a review or report, the user can get to know about the structure, plan, introduction, plot, conclusion; CV – making up personal information, education and qualification, work experience, skills, interests, references and so on. After reading and learning this material the user can demonstrate some knowledge in "I want to do my own writing" and make up something from the list and then see the results [2].

The section My Topics includes two parts: 1) ready-made topic dictionaries and 2) your own topic dictionaries. The first part contains over 350 mini-topic dictionaries which are divided into 15 subject areas (Body and Appearance, Business, Culture, Education, Family and Relationship, Food and Drink, Health, Houses and Buildings, Nature, Personality and Emotions, Science and Technology, Society, Sports, Travel and Tourism, Work). Each topic has the list of sub-topics as well. For example, the topic Society includes such sub-topics as Crime, Law, Politics, Religion, Social groups, War and conflict. And the second part of this section allows to create your own topic dictionary for topics that the user is particularly interested in. But the absence of illustrations in the whole section makes the perception of some words more complicated [2].

The section Activities contains the collection of lexical and phonetic exercises. They are directed for learning the material from the section My Topics. Also this section consists of three parts: Academic Word List, Topic Vocabulary and Dictation. Academic Word List contains exercises which are grouped into ten sublists. For each sublist the user can practise four areas of language: word meanings, word families, word combinations, synonyms and opposites. Topic vocabulary includes exercises which help to practice the vocabulary that is covered in the ready-made topic dictionaries. The user can choose a heading, a sub-topic and then a particular exercise by name. There are two different types of topic exercises: word meanings and missing words. And the last part of this section is Dictation. Here the user can practice listening skills. It is possible to listen to the

sentences in any of five different accents: British, American, Australian, Canadian or South African. The user can also hear the mixture of all five.

The section Resources contains only supplemental information: Dictionary Skills worksheets, Grammar reference, Word Lists, Maps.

The part Dictionary Skills includes a collection of grammatical and lexical exercises for improving the pronunciation, decoding abbreviations, learning some geographical names, irregular forms, idioms, stress position, spelling and punctuation.

The part Grammar is introduced as a guide to English grammar which contains some information about modal verbs, articles, tenses, reported speech, conditionals, pronouns and relative clauses.

The part Word Lists contains two documents: The Oxford 3000 and The Academic Word List. The Oxford 3000 includes the whole list of words which are used in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8<sup>th</sup> edition. And the second document, The Academic Word List, contains the list of the most frequently used English words.

The part Maps includes geographical maps of The British Isles, Canada and the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand.

The section Genie is another version of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary which displays as a small window. It is very convenient while using the Internet, reading an email or a Microsoft Word document.

**The microstructure** of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary is introduced by the dictionary entry which consists of the following elements: the main entry, grammatical, semantic and phonetic characteristics of the word, a definition and examples.

The entry of the verb "to get" is shown in the following way: it has 27 meanings and contains also a wide list of idioms and phrasal verbs [2].

The entry contains the following information: headword (get), part of speech (verb), variants of pronunciation (British (BrE) or American (NAme)), transcription and some extra information (Verb forms – the present simple, past simple, past participle and –ing forms; Word Origin – the etymology of the verb; Thesaurus – synonyms of the verb, example of how synonyms are used and notes about some particular differences between synonyms; Example Bank – extra example sentences showing how the verb can be used) [2].

**The macrostructures** of CD and online versions are quite different. Online version contains only two sections: Wordlists and Search.

The section Wordlists includes four parts: Oxford 3000, Academic Wordlist, Picture Wordlist, Usage Notes Wordlist. Oxford 3000 and Academic Word List are absolutely identical with the digital version. The keywords have been selected as the words which should receive priority in vocabulary study because of their importance and usefulness [3].

Picture Wordlist contains a list of words and their illustrations in order to expand user's vocabulary. Usage Notes Wordlist contains some notes on various aspects of English usage, including synonyms, collocations and other vocabulary points [3].

**The microstructure** of online version is almost the same as CD one. The only difference between the dictionary entries is the absence of some extra grammatical characteristics (Verb forms, Word origin, Thesaurus and Example Bank).

Thus, we come to the conclusion that CD-version of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8<sup>th</sup> edition has a wider structure than online one. The CD version is more suitable for students who study the English language as a foreign one. In spite of the lack of glossary, the CD-version includes more tasks, test and examination exercises which help improve the level of the English language.

**Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary** (2011) is also one of the most authoritative dictionaries [4, 5]. This edition is also analyzed at the level of micro- and macrostructures.

**The macrostructure** of the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary includes eight main sections: Look-up Window; Advanced Search; QUICKfind; SUPERwrite; Exercises; Pictures; Study Pages; Options [4].

The section Look-up Window provides the user with the quick search of the word and includes two parts: A–Z List and Results. The first part contains the whole wordlist which is arranged alphabetically, and the second one shows the results.

The next section is Advanced Search which helps to customize the user's search. It includes six different parts: category (headwords, phrases, definitions, examples); English Profile level (A1-C1); part of speech (nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, prepositions, etc.); grammatical forms (countable / uncountable nouns, transitive / intransitive verbs, etc.); stylistic components (formal, informal, literary, spoken, old-fashioned, literary, etc.); region (British / American English only); topic (weather, computer technology, music, religion, feelings, education, etc) [4].

The sections QUICKfind and SUPERwrite are quite convenient for working in Microsoft Word, using the Internet and making up some written texts. The use of these sections helps to avoid the most typical mistakes.

The section Exercises includes three kinds of tasks: lexical-grammatical, exercises with the use of illustrations and exercises for IELTS and TOEFL preparation. All the lexical-grammatical exercises have Level 1, 2 and 3. Besides, the exercises are divided into seven groups (Adjectives, Countability, Irregular verbs, Phrasal verbs, Prefixes, Suffixes, Verb patterns). The illustrated exercises are also topically divided (Bathroom, Cooking, Food, Shapes, Car exterior, Containers, Clothes, Colours, Medicine, Vehicles, etc). The third group includes some exercises in reading [4].

The Section Study pages contains phonetic and grammar rules, some information about writing letters and using email. Pictures section allows to see the black-and-white illustrations for some nouns.

**The microstructure** of the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary includes the dictionary entry, which consists of the following elements: the main entry, a headword, a definition, a transcription, semantic and grammatical characteristics of the word, examples.

The entry of the word "make" is introduced in the following way: it has six meanings as a verb and three as a noun. Lots of idioms, phrasal verbs and collocations are given as well. At the beginning of the entry, phonetic and grammar characteristics of the word are introduced, and the past form is given [4].

The user can listen to the British and American variants of pronunciation and also record their own version. There is also some extra information about the verb «to make», which includes Word Building, Verb Endings and Extra Examples. The level of the English language is shown according to English Profile system (in our case, it's A1). Then the user can see the translation of the word into Russian. Apart from that, there is Smart Thesaurus at the end of the entry. This is the structure of CD-version of Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary [4].

**Macro- and microstructures** of online version differ from the electronic one. The macrostructure is almost absent. It doesn't include the sections which are given in the CD-version of Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary. The Advanced Search is impossible. The only advantage of the macrostructure is the great variety of Cambridge dictionaries [4, 5].

The microstructures of CD and online versions are almost identical. The part of speech, transcription, British and American variants of pronunciation are given as well. But in comparison with the CD-version, it's impossible to record your own variant of pronunciation and have a look at the extra grammatical characteristics and synonyms of the given word [5].

Having analyzed CD and online versions of Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, we come to the conclusion that the online version gives in many aspects. But it also has some advantages. First of all, it is available for any Internet user for free. Secondly, in comparison with CD version, the wordlist of the online dictionary is constantly widening with new idioms, phrases and collocations.

#### REFERENCE

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