Metonymy representation in English monolingual learners' dictionaries: Problems and solutions.[*]

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The paper aims to show how the tenets of the cognitive theory of metonymy can benefit the representation of metonymic lexemes in pedagogical lexicography, so that the semantic connections between basic and derived meanings become more transparent and motivated. It reports the results of a lexicographic study into the representation of conventionalised metonymic lexemes in the five most renowned English monolingual learners' dictionaries (henceforth MLDs): CALD2, COBUILD4, LDOCE4, MEDAL2 and OALDCE7. The study focuses on three elements of the dictionary entry: sense arrangement, definition, and the correlation between noun codification and exemplification. These features are evaluated against the background of both the cognitive theory of metonymy and the widely accepted principles of lexicographic practice. Significant inconsistencies concerning the treatment of metonymy are found within each dictionary, as well as numerous cases where the semantic relationship between the source and target senses of a metonymic lexeme is broken. It is also noticed that in the case of metonymisation which results in change of noun's countability, noun codes are sometimes ambiguously assigned, and some examples of usage do not explicitly show the count-mass distinction. Solutions are offered to arrive at a more systematic, transparent and cognitively oriented representation of metonymy. These include using template entries in the compilation process, subsuming the definition of the metonymic target under the source definition, and defining the target as a semantic elaboration of the source.

1. Introduction

Metonymy is an integral part of everyday communication, and its presence in pedagogical lexicography should not be disputed. Nonetheless, the phenomenon is hardly explored in (meta)lexicography and has, until now, remained the focus of attention for cognitive linguistics (henceforth CL). While authors such as Moon (2004) and Van der Meer (e.g. 1997) investigate the representation of figurative language in dictionaries, they concentrate mostly on metaphorical senses, and merely mention metonymy in passing. The only enquiry into metonymy in lexicography that the present author is aware of is Nikiforidou (1999).

The cognitive framework is adopted in this paper as it is the predominant approach to metonymy in the current semantic theory. Moreover, the advantages of the cognitive perspective in the dictionary-making process are recognised by increasing numbers of (meta)lexicographers (e.g. Adamska-Sałaciak 2008; Atkins and Rundell 2008; Moon 2004; Van der Meer 1997, 1999). This trend is particularly noticeable in the approach to metaphor in the MEDAL dictionary. As the only monolingual learners' dictionary, MEDAL contains *metaphor boxes* which explain the conceptual processes underlying metaphorical expressions. The movement towards explicit marking of figurative language in MLDs is supported by studies which prove that new lexical items are learned and recalled more effectively when their metaphorical underpinnings are explicated (e.g. Boers 2000). Among cognitive linguists the main advocate of the application of the cognitive theories in lexicography is Geeraerts (2007). The author claims that CL provides a theoretical framework that is highly congenial to the actual practice of dictionaries, more so than any structuralist theory.

Various cognitive models of metonymy have been proposed since Lakoff and Johnson (1980) drew attention of the linguistic community to metonymy as a category distinct from metaphor:

Metaphor and metonymy are different *kinds* of processes. Metaphor is principally a way of conceiving of one thing in terms of another, and its primary function is understanding. Metonymy, on the other hand, has

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[*] This paper is based on research carried out for the author's PhD thesis (Wojciechowska-Bartkiewicz 2009).

primarily a referential function, that is, it allows us to use one entity to *stand for* another (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 36).

The model of metonymy proposed in this study is eclectic with respect to current theories. In line with the definition of metonymy put forward by Panther (2006), metonymy is no longer regarded as a substitution relationship (X FOR Y).[1] It is considered a process of semantic elaboration of the source meaning. In this operation the target gains conceptual prominence in 'an integrated whole that contains the backgrounded source meaning and novel meaning components resulting from the process of elaboration' (Panther 2006: 147). Following Barcelona (2000), it is a prerequisite that both the source and the target should belong to the same experiential superordinate domain. Similarly to Peirsman and Geeraerts (2006), metonymy is assumed to be based on prototypicality, and it is not only present in the prototypical spatial domain, but also in the domain of time, and the spatio-temporal domain of actions/events/processes. Finally, three main types of metonymic relations are recognised: WHOLE-PART, PART-WHOLE and PART-PART, which agrees with the classification system postulated by Radden and Kövecses (1999). The first two configurations, examples (1) and (2), involve relations between a whole domain and its part, and the third configuration, example (3), concerns relations between parts of the same domain.

(1) This table is made of *oak*. (WHOLE-PART → TREE-WOOD)
(2) It was so cold and I had to put on my *fleece*. (PART-WHOLE → MATERIAL-OBJECT)
(3) Our company received the *shipment* yesterday. (PART-PART → ACTION-RESULT)

2. Aims of the study

The aim of the study is to analyse the representation of conventionalised metonymic lexemes in pedagogical lexicography on the basis of the 'Big Five' English MLDs: CALD2, COBUILD4, LDOCE4, MEDAL2 and OALDCE7. It attempts to find out whether metonyms are presented in a consistent way, and whether the semantic relationship between the source and the target of the transfer is noticeable. Section 3 reports the results of the enquiry into metonymic sense disambiguation and ordering. Section 4 examines to what extent dictionary definitions present the metonymic sense as a semantic elaboration of the source sense. Finally, section 5 deals with metonymisation which results in a change of the noun's countability. It evaluates the effectiveness of codes and examples as indicators of countability.

3. Arrangement of metonymic senses in the dictionary microstructure

The sample chosen for the study into the placement of the metonymic sense in relation to the source of the transfer is one hundred conventionalised nominal metonymic lexemes. It was selected from a collection of one hundred and fifty metonyms taken from English newspapers, magazines, books and stretches of spoken discourse. If metonyms were not defined in any of the dictionaries under scrutiny, or in only one of them, they were rejected from the original collection, as this indicated their low occurrence in the corpus. Another criterion was that the selected metonyms should represent the three main types of metonymy: WHOLE-PART, PART-WHOLE and PART-PART. If a certain metonymy subtype was represented by a number of examples, a few of them were included in the final sample in order to examine the uniformity of representation, e.g. various examples of the TREE-WOOD or ANIMAL-MEAT subtype. The

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[1] In order to avoid the understanding of metonymy in terms of substitution, the notation X FOR Y is replaced in the paper by a neutral notation X-Y, where X represents the source of the transfer.

number of one hundred metonyms proved to be sufficient enough to clearly indicate any tendencies in the arrangement of metonymic senses in each of the dictionaries.

The results of the study reveal that there is no consistent way of metonymy representation in any of the dictionaries. Metonymic meanings are entered as fully or partly independent senses, or to use other terms, distinct senses or subsenses respectively. Various typographic conventions have been recognised to attach a subsense. A metonymic meaning is subsumed under the preceding part of the definiens, presented after a semicolon or the conjunction *or*, entered as an add-on, bracketed information in the definition or a gloss in the examples section (Wojciechowska-Bartkiewicz 2009).

Metonymically related meanings presented as distinct entries or subentries make up a small proportion of the study, and they appear only in CALD2 due to its policy of homonymy maximisation. Maximisation of homonymy means assigning each core meaning a separate entry, as a result of which polysemous lexemes are listed in several entries. COBUILD4, LDOCE4, MEDAL2 and OALDCE7, on the other hand, maximise polysemy, so that not only polysemous words, but also homonyms are listed in one entry (Wojciechowska-Bartkiewicz 2007).

A comparative analysis of the five dictionaries shows that the same metonymic meaning is frequently presented either as a separate sense or a subsense, which rules out any possibility that the arrangement might be lexeme-dependent. Not only do discrepancies appear between the five dictionaries, but they are also observed within each dictionary. Examples of the same metonymy subtype, e.g. ANIMAL-MEAT (*lamb*, *rabbit*, *chicken*, *pheasant*, *duck* and *goose*), turn out to be inconsistently entered as distinct senses or subsenses within individual dictionaries. There does not seem to be any conscious motive for such discrepancies, as these metonyms are cases of regular polysemy in the sense of Apresjan (1995: 181), and as such deserve a systematic dictionary treatment.

Despite the inconsistencies discussed above, a preference for a certain way of dealing with metonymy can be observed in each dictionary (see Table 1). Metonyms appear most frequently as two separate senses in OALDCE7, LDOCE4 and COBUILD4, and as subsenses in MEDAL2 and CALD2. OALDCE7 turns out to be the most homogenous in the arrangement of metonyms (83% as distinct senses), and CALD2 is the most inconsistent in this respect. Although none of the dictionaries can pride itself on the coverage of all the conventionalised metonymic senses under investigation, LDOCE4, MEDAL2 and OALDCE7 stand out as more successful than either CALD2 or COBUILD4.

S = source meaning; T = target meaning

Sense representation (N = 100)	CALD2	COBUILD4	LDOCE4	MEDAL2	OALDCE7
2 entries, S first	9	-	-	-	-
2 entries, T first	-	-	-	-	-
1 entry, T subentry	3	-	-	-	-
1 entry, S subentry	-	-	-	-	-
2 senses, S first	23	48	63	33	77
2 senses, T first	4	9	9	5	7
1 sense, subsense, S first	32	19	17	45	11
1 sense, subsense, T first	7	3	6	9	3
T not covered	16	13	4	3	2
S not covered	4	5	1	4	-
S&T not covered	2	3	-	1	-

Table 1. Metonymic sense representation.

The ordering of the metonymic meaning in relation to the source meaning has also been analysed. The results are very similar, and quite satisfactory from the cognitive standpoint. All the dictionaries place the source of metonymy before the target in over eighty per cent of the covered metonymic lexemes, with OALDCE7 reaching the highest number of source senses ordered before target senses (90%). The model arrangement of metonymic senses postulated in this paper is in line with the recommendations made by van der Meer in his numerous publications. Van der Meer (e.g. 1997) argues that the literal meaning of a polysemous word should appear before the figurative one. The author assumes that this ordering should make it easier for the learner to see the relationship between senses, which in turn should lead to better understanding and recall of the derived meaning. He is not isolated in advocating the pedagogical role of the logical ordering. Scholfield (1999: 30-32) remarks that awareness of meaning extension is a crucial aspect of vocabulary learning, and as such should be reflected in MLDs.

The arrangement of metonymic senses becomes more challenging if the same meaning becomes a source of extension not only of metonymy, but also metaphor, or a few metonyms and metaphors. It is believed that senses which are not metonymic should not break the source-target sequence, even more so if they are homonyms with respect to the metonymic source. In the whole sample there is only one case when the source and target of metonymy are separated by a homonym: the entry for *lime* in MEDAL2. The source of the FRUIT-JUICE metonymy is separated from the target (sense 4) by the definition of the homonymous sense 2. Conversely, the homonymous sense 5 is rightly placed after the metonym.

> **lime 1** [C/U] a fruit with a hard green skin and sour juice that grows on a lime tree **2** [U] a white substance used for making cement and for helping plants to grow **3** [U] a LIME-GREEN colour **4** [C/U] *British* a sweet drink made from limes or tasting of limes **5** [C] *British* a tree with heart-shaped leaves and yellow flowers that smell pleasant
> (MEDAL2)

A few examples have been found of a metaphorical meaning coming in between the source and target of metonymy. To give an example of such an interruption, the metaphorical sense of *peach* breaks the sequence of the FRUIT-COLOUR metonymy *peach* in MEDAL2 and OALDCE7. This is not as serious an interruption as in the case of homonymy. Nevertheless, in line with Mel'čuk's (1988: 184) proposals, metonymy should take precedence over metaphor, as it is semantically closer to the literal sense. Discussing lexicographic principles and heuristic criteria for definitions in Explanatory Combinatorial Dictionaries (ECDs), Mel'čuk makes a few remarks about the ordering of senses. He postulates that '[i]n a vocable having a basic lexical unit L, the lexical units whose meanings are metonymic with regard to L precede the units whose meanings are metaphorical with regard to L' (Mel'čuk 1988: 184).

> **peach 1** [C / U] a fruit with a furry yellowish-pink skin that is yellow inside and has a large hard seed. It grows on a peach tree. **2** [singular] *informal old-fashioned* someone or something that is extremely good, impressive, or attractive **3** [U] a yellowish-pink colour
> (MEDAL2)

> **peach 1** [C] a round fruit with soft red and yellow skin, yellow flesh and a large rough seed inside **2** [sing.] ~ (**of a …**) (*old-fashioned, informal*) a particularly good or attractive person or thing **3** [U] a pinkish-orange colour
> (OALDCE7)

4. Arrangement of multiple metonymies

The more metonymic and metaphorical senses are distinguished, the more complicated their arrangement becomes. In fact, in all the dictionaries except MEDAL2, the 'manual worker' sense of the BODY PART - PERSON metonymy *hand* is separated from the source meaning by metaphorical uses. Although it would be ideal to subsume all the metonymic and metaphorical extensions as subsenses under the source sense which gives rise to them, this is not feasible in longer entries such as the one for *hand*.

Multiple metonymies may take two forms: the targets may not be related to each other (Figure 1) or they may become sources for other metonymic targets, being called serial metonymies or metonymic chains (Figure 2). While the logical ordering of multiple metonymies which do not give rise to new targets is not relevant as long as the source meaning opens the entry or subsumes all the targets, the opposite seems to be the case for metonymic chains. It would be ideal from the cognitive perspective to enter the source of the chain as the main sense, and present all the metonymic targets as subsenses in the same order as they appear in the metonymic chain. Nonetheless, this may not always be the most sensible policy in such cases as the serial metonymy of *tea*. The sense of the plant is too rare in use to be given the primary position in the entry, and the meaning 'dried leaves' seems to be a better candidate for this position.[2] The other meanings would appear as subsenses; first, the next ring in the metonymic chain, the 'drink' meaning, then 'a cup' or 'a meal'[3], depending on frequency, and finally the 'plant' subsense, provided it is the least frequent meaning according to the corpus.

FACIAL EXPRESSION   PLANT ⟶ DRIED LEAVES ⟶ DRINK ⟶ CUP

BODY PART

PERSON   MEAL
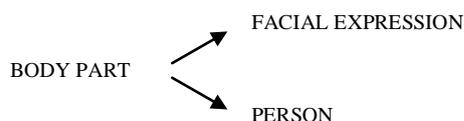
Figure 1. Multiple metonymies for *face*.   Figure 2. Metonymic chain for *tea*.
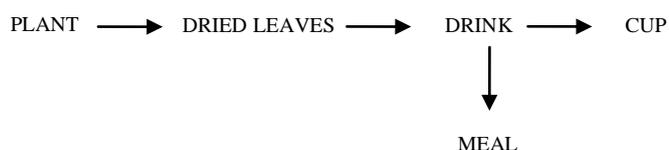
The study shows that in their representation of multiple metonymies, the examined dictionaries in most cases order the source sense before the target senses. The ordering of multiple targets, however, is not uniform when the five dictionaries are compared. Multiple metonymies also frequently appear as separate senses, which weakens the semantic relation. MEDAL2 is the only dictionary which nests subsenses on a regular basis. For a model arrangement of metonymic and metaphorical senses developing from the same source, MEDAL2's entry for *face* provides an apposite example. The two metonyms appear as subsenses 1a and 1b nested under the source of the transfer, and are followed by metaphorical meanings. The entry follows the cognitive approach, as it indicates the close connection between the source of metonymy and the targets that stem from it.

> **face** [C] **1** the front part of your head, where your eyes, nose, and mouth are **1a.** the expression on someone's face, that shows how they are feeling **1b** used for referring to a person: **a familiar face** (=someone you know or recognize) ♦ **a new face** (=someone you did not know before) **2** a side of a mountain or building that is high and very steep **3** one side of a coin **4** the way that something looks or appears to people **4a** the qualities that something such as an organization has, or wants people to think it has

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[2] In fact, the 'plant' meaning of *tea* is covered only in LDOCE4, where it is entered as a subsense.

[3] The last two rings, the 'cup' and 'meal' meanings, are not related by means of a metonymic chain. Therefore, their ordering with respect to each other is not essential from the cognitive viewpoint.

5 MATHS one flat side of an object such as a cube a shape with six square sides **6** the open front part of the goal, especially in football **7** the front of a clock, where the numbers are
(MEDAL2)

5. Metonymy as semantic elaboration in dictionary definitions

The semantic development of the metonymic meaning from the source meaning should not only be reflected in sense ordering, but also in the content of the lexicographic definition. Van der Meer (1997) suggests that indications of the relationships between literal and figurative senses should be built into the definitions themselves. He asserts that 'the figurative definition should run parallel − both syntactically and lexically − with the literal, so that the reader cannot escape the comparisons' (Van der Meer 1997: 567). It is assumed that to make the user aware of the relation between the source and the target of metonymy, a definition of the metonymic target should include the source concept. Such a definition would be a lexicographic application of the view of metonymy as semantic elaboration postulated by Panther (2006). Moreover, this way of defining matches the structure of the classical definition, with the target corresponding to the genus proximum, and the source coinciding with the differentiae specificae.

5.1. Inconsistent use of reference strategies

Definitions of fifty metonymic lexical items have been scrutinised to find out if the target concept is set against the background of the source concept. The sample consists of only the lexemes which are defined in all the five dictionaries, so that each dictionary is given an equal opportunity to prove itself. The fifty metonymic lexemes have been chosen from the initial sample of one hundred. In total, seventy metonyms out of one hundred are defined in all the five dictionaries, but the results were representative enough to reduce the sample to fifty items.

The vast majority of the definitions of metonymic senses examined in the study include the source concept, the exact numbers for the five dictionaries being comparable: 46 in MEDAL2 and OALDCE7, 44 in CALD2 and LDOCE4, and 41 in COBUILD4. As Table 2 shows, definitions which lack the source component are small in number. One such case is the definiens of the COMPONENT-PRODUCT sense of *coffee* in LDOCE4. It is considered to lack specificity, due to its inclusion of only the target meaning component. By comparison, the definition of the same metonymic sense in COBUILD4 captures the nature of semantic elaboration, referring to coffee beans from which the drink is made: 'coffee is a hot drink made with water and ground or powdered coffee beans'.

coffee 1 [U] a hot dark brown drink that has a slightly bitter taste (...) **3** [U] whole coffee beans, crushed coffee beans, or a powder to which you add water to make coffee
(LDOCE4)

Three ways of making reference to the source meaning in the definiens have been found: by the definiendum, by anaphoric reference, and by the use of the dictionary's DV (see Table 2). The first two strategies can be subsumed under recursive definitions in the sense of Hartmann and James (1998), and the last one can then be called an autonomous definition.

S = source component; T = target component; D = definiendum; AR = anaphoric reference; DV = defining vocabulary

Reference strategies (N = 50)	CALD2	COBUILD4	LDOCE4	MEDAL2	OALDCE7
S&T; D	12	17	19	21	21
S&T; AR	13	4	4	1	3
S&T; DV	19	20	21	24	22
T	6	9	6	4	4

Table 2. Semantic elaboration in definitions of metonyms.

The first defining strategy uses the definiendum to establish the connection with the source, e.g. in the definition of *chocolate* as the COMPONENT-PRODUCT metonymy in OALDCE7 (sense 2). The definition of the same metonym in CALD2 applies the second strategy, anaphoric reference. The anaphoric demonstrative pronoun *this* refers back to the explanation of the source, which functions as the antecedent. More dictionary space is taken up by the third method of referring. Here, the explanation of the source meaning is embedded in the definiens of the target, often in the form of a paraphrase of the source definition, e.g. the definition of the company sense of *business* in LDOCE4 (sense 2).

chocolate 1 [U] a hard brown sweet food made from COCOA BEANS, used in cooking to add flavour to cakes, etc. or eaten as a sweet/candy **2** [C] a sweet/candy that is made of or covered with chocolate
(OALDCE7)

chocolate [C or U] a sweet, usually brown, food made from CACAO seeds, that is usually sold in a block, or a small sweet made from this
(CALD2)

business 1 [U] the activity of making money by producing or buying and selling goods, or providing services **2** [C] an organization such as a company, shop, or factory that produces or sells goods or provides a service
(LDOCE4)

The study reveals that the three reference strategies are used inconsistently, and in many cases the properties of a particular word are unlikely to have played a role. Sometimes two or even all the three strategies of referring to the source are employed for a given metonymic sense in the five dictionaries. The definitions of the BUILDING-SECTION metonymy of *condominium* exemplify this variety. The definiendum is used in CALD2, COBUILD4 and MEDAL2; the DV in LDOCE4; and anaphoric reference in OALDCE7.

condominium [C] **1** US an apartment building in which each apartment is owned separately by the people living in it, but also containing shared areas **2** (INFORMAL **condo**) an apartment in a condominium
(CALD2)

condominium 1 A **condominium** is an apartment building in which each apartment is owned by the person who lives there. [AM] **2** A **condominium** is one of the privately owned apartments in a condominium. [AM]   N-COUNT   N-COUNT
(COBUILD4)

condominium [C] *especially AmE* **1** one apartment in a building with several apartments, each of which is owned by the people living in it **2** a building containing several of these apartments
(LDOCE4)

condominium [C] *American* a building that contains several flats, each of which is owned by the people who live there **a.** a flat in a condominium
(MEDAL2)

condominium (especially NAmE) an apartment building in which each flat / apartment is owned by the person living in it but the building and shared areas are owned by everyone together; a flat / apartment in such a building
(OALDCE7)

Discrepancies also concern definitions of metonyms belonging to the same subtype in one dictionary, such as the definitions of the two CONTENTS-CONTAINER metonyms, *coffee* and *beer*, in MEDAL2. The former refers to the source by the definiendum, the latter by anaphoric reference. This lack of uniformity is usually caused by the definitions having been written by different people or by the same person at different times.

coffee 1 [U] a hot, slightly bitter drink made by pouring hot water over brown powder consisting of COFFEE BEANS that have been GROUND (=crushed into very small pieces). Coffee served without milk is called **black** coffee, and coffee with milk is **white** coffee **1a.** [C] a cup of coffee
(MEDAL2)

beer [U] a yellow or brown alcoholic drink made from MALT (=grain that has been left in water and then dried) and HOPS (=a type of plant). You make or **brew** beer **a.** [C] a glass or bottle of this drink
(MEDAL2)

The problem of such inconsistencies could be resolved if the dictionaries used template entries (Atkins and Rundell 2008: 123-128) for words belonging to the same lexical set. Definition models included in such frameworks provide not only genus expressions, but also a checklist of other possible defining features together with recommended definition wordings. The template entry for the lexical set 'animals' (Atkins and Rundell 2008: 125) provides a model definition for the ANIMAL-MEAT recurrent metonymy, 'the meat of the ANIMAL'. Substituting the defined headword for 'ANIMAL' and keeping the rest of the definiens unchanged will ensure uniformity of definitions of other ANIMAL-MEAT metonymies. Similar defining frameworks should be created for all regular metonymic transfers.

5.2. Strength of semantic relation
The strength of forging the semantic relationship with the definition of the source has also been analysed. The link is always evident if the definiendum or anaphoric reference is used, but it may vary in strength if a non-recursive strategy is applied. The more words the target definition shares with the source definition, the stronger the bond. The semantic relation with the source is the most visible when the definition of the target contains the same words as the definition of the source. This is observed, for instance, in the definiens of the CHARACTERISTIC-ENTITY metonymic sense of *genius* in LDOCE4, and the definition of the ACTION-RESULT metonym *shipment* in OALDCE7. In both definitions, the string of words from the source definition is completely or partly repeated in the target definiens, with necessary changes in syntax. This way of defining clearly demonstrates the semantic elaboration of the source meaning.

genius 1 [U] a very high level of intelligence, mental skill, or ability, which only a few people have **2** [C] someone who has an unusually high level of intelligence, mental skill, or ability
(LDOCE4)

shipment 1 [U] the process of sending goods from one place to another **2** [C] a load of goods that are sent from one place to another
(OALDCE7)

In some cases, however, only one word is shared by the definitions of the source and the target, as in the definiens of the ACTION-PARTICIPANT metonymic sense of *fraud* in MEDAL2.[4] Here, the explanations of sense 3 and subsense 3a use the verb *trick*, whose gerund form is present in the definition of the source. As tricking someone is the essential meaning component of the source, the definitions of the targets can be considered to include the source. Admittedly, the semantic connection is not as apparent here as in the above definitions of *genius* and *shipment*.

> **fraud 1** [C/U] the crime of obtaining money from someone by tricking (...) **3** [C] someone who pretends to be an official or professional person in order to trick people **3a** something that is not what people claim it is, and is designed to trick people
> (MEDAL2)

The link has been evaluated as the weakest when the definition of the target does not have any words in common with the definition of the source, as in the definiens of the CHARACTERISTIC-ENTITY metonymic sense of *genius* in COBUILD4. The major flaw of the explanation of this metonymic sense is that the adjectives used are not derived from the nouns in sense 1.

> **genius 1 Genius** is a very great ability or skill in a particular subject or activity. **2** A **genius** is a highly talented, creative, or intelligent person. N-UNCOUNT
> N-COUNT
> (COBUILD4)

The source component, nevertheless, is still assumed to be present in the definition of the metonymic sense, as the words *ability*, *skill*, *talented*, *creative* and *intelligent* designate related concepts. The definition could be improved to show a stronger semantic link, for instance, if *skilful* were used in sense 2 and *talent* in sense 1:

> **genius 1 Genius** is a great talent, skill or creativity in a particular subject or activity. **2** A **genius** is a highly talented, skilful or creative person.
> [SW]

It is conceded, though, that in some cases the metonymic definition devoid of any words in common with the source definition seems to generate a more sensible and natural explanation, e.g. in the BODY PART - PERSON metonymy of *hand*. All the dictionaries define this metonym in a similar way, using the phrase *a person/someone who does physical work*, which is an indirect reference to the source concept. This strategy, nonetheless, should not prevent the user from forming a connection in the mind with the relevant body part. Doing physical work implies that somebody uses their hands, and the metonymic definitions are, therefore, considered to comprise the source concept. Although it is recommended that the part of the metonymic definition including the source concept should lexically match the source definiens as closely as possible, this aim should not be achieved at the expense of intelligibility and naturalness of the target definition.

6. Metonymy and the count-mass distinction

The study also deals with metonymisation which results in the change of noun's countability. It evaluates the effectiveness of codes and examples as indicators of countability. Exemplification of metonymic lexemes in MLDs is crucial not only from the grammatical

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[4] The target sense contains a subsense in MEDAL2. This split is not necessary though, as the target definition in CALD2 shows: 'someone or something that deceives people by claiming to be someone or something that they are not'.

perspective, but also because metonymy is a phenomenon which depends to a large extent on context (see Panther 2006). Metonyms whose source and target senses vary according to countability were selected from the initial sample of one hundred, giving the total of fifty lexemes. From these fifty metonyms, ten items were excluded, as they were not defined in each dictionary. Consequently, the study focuses on forty metonyms.

Opaque assignment of noun codes has been found when the [C/U] or [U/C] label is jointly attached to a sense containing the source and target of metonymy linked by a semicolon or the conjunction *or*, and when either of the above codes is placed at the top of the entry, before the division into the relevant senses. The analysis shows that CALD2 yields the worst results (see Table 3), as half of its codes are not clearly allocated to the distinct source and target senses. The poor results are the consequence of the frequent use of the conjunction *or* which joins the source and target of metonymy under one sense, as can be observed in the entry for *oak* as the TREE-WOOD metonymy. In the other dictionaries, a huge majority of codes are assigned so as to present the difference in countability in the most explicit way, with MEDAL2 succeeding in the proper assignment of all the codes, which is a direct result of this dictionary's extensive use of subsenses. It is postulated that to make codification more transparent, the respective labels should be attached to each single sense and subsense (see the definition of *oak* in MEDAL2).

oak [C or U] a large tree that is common especially in northern countries, or the hard wood of this tree: *a mighty oak* ○ *The timbers of those old sailing ships were mainly oak.* ○ *an oak table/cupboard*
(CALD2)

oak [C] a large tree that can live for a very long time and produces small hard fruits called **acorns**: *an ancient oak* **a**. [U] wood from an oak tree: *a solid oak table*
(MEDAL2)

S = source meaning; T = target meaning

Helpful coding (N = 40)	CALD2	COBUILD4	LDOCE4	MEDAL2	OALDCE7
S+ T+	20	39	34	40	38
S− T−	20	1	6	0	2

Table 3. Codification of the count-mass distinction.

One of the roles of exemplification is to reinforce grammatical patterns. Examples were assessed as helpful if, for the countable senses, the defined noun was preceded by an indefinite article or appeared in the plural, or for the uncountable ones, it was not preceded by a definite article. However, it is also believed that countability can be inferred from an example which places the countable sense in the singular, preceding it by a definite determiner (definite article, demonstrative, possessive or quantifier), provided that the definiendum is followed by a singular nominal complement with an indefinite article. This is demonstrated by the example of the target sense of the ACTION-RESULT metonym *publication* in CALD2. It can be deduced from this example sentence that if *magazine* is a countable noun and *publication* is a magazine, than it must also be countable. Although positively valued in the present study, this example is definitely not as straightforward as the illustration of the same metonymy in LDOCE4.

publication 2 [C] a book, magazine, newspaper or document in which information or stories are published: *Our latest publication is a magazine for health enthusiasts*.
(CALD2)

publication 2 [countable] a book, magazine etc: *He was the author of 70 major scientific publications. | a weekly publication*
(LDOCE4)

It is assumed that if a given sense of a metonymic noun is furnished with the code [C/U] or [U/C], at least two examples should be featured, of the countable and uncountable use of this sense. Therefore, the exemplification of *taste* as the PERCEPTION-PERCEIVED metonymy in LDOCE4 has been evaluated negatively. The codes under subsense a) indicate that the 'flavour' sense can be both countable and uncountable. The codified grammatical information, however, is not reinforced by examples, as only the countable form is explicitly illustrated (the first example sentence). In contrast, the examples of the 'flavour' meaning of *taste* in OALDCE7 (sense 1) clearly display the countable (the first and third examples) and uncountable (the fourth example) uses.

taste 1 a) [C,U] the feeling that is produced by a particular food or drink when you put it in your mouth; = **flavour**: **have a sweet/bitter/salty etc taste** *The medicine had a slightly bitter taste. |* [+**of**] *I don't really like the taste of meat any more.* **b)** [U] the sense by which you know one food from another: *Some birds have a highly developed **sense of taste**.*
(LDOCE4)

taste 1 [C, U] the particular quality that different foods and drinks have that allows you to recognize them when you put them in your mouth: *a **salty / bitter / sweet, etc. taste** ◊ I don't like the taste of olives. ◊ This dish has an unusual combination of tastes and textures. ◊ The soup has very little taste.* **2** [U] the sense you have that allows you to recognize different foods and drinks when you put them in your mouth: *I've lost my sense of taste.*
(OALDCE7)

The findings of the study reveal that it is not a frequent event for both the source and target to be illustrated in the way which shows the count-mass distinction most explicitly. The best results were obtained for OALDCE7, where in 22 out of 40 cases, both the source and target of metonymy were placed in a context which should not leave any doubts as to their countability. In the other dictionaries not even fifty per cent of the examples achieved the same (see Table 4). While improvements in the indication of the noun's countability in examples are desirable from the pedagogical viewpoint, it is understood that they may not always be feasible due to other functions of exemplification.

S = source meaning; T = target meaning; (0) no material

Helpful example (N = 40)	CALD2	COBUILD4	LDOCE4	MEDAL2	OALDCE7
S+ T+	16	17	16	16	22
S+ T−	-	4	4	4	-
S− T+	9	4	4	4	5
S− T−	2	3	1	-	2
S+ T0	3	1	1	1	3
S− T0	1	1	1	2	3
S0 T+	2	4	4	5	3
S0 T−	2	3	2	-	-
S0 T0	5	3	7	8	2

Table 4. Helpfulness of examples of the count-mass distinction.

7. Conclusion

Adopting the cognitive approach, MEDAL2 has been evaluated as the most successful of the five MLDs under investigation. This is mainly because it subsumes metonymic meanings as

subsenses more often than the other dictionaries, thus indicating semantic relatedness between basic and derived meanings. Nonetheless, even in MEDAL2, this strategy of metonymy representation has not been found to be systematically implemented.

The discrepancies found between the dictionaries as well as within each dictionary pertain to all the aspects of entry construction that were subjected to analysis: sense arrangement, defining, codification and exemplification. It is suggested that these inconsistencies could be avoided if the representation of regular metonymic transfers was clearly set out in template entries, which would then be closely followed by lexicographers. Such frameworks of entries should do the following to attain greater uniformity: recognise potential metonymic senses, specify their arrangement in the entry with respect to the source sense, provide definition models with ways of referring to the source, clearly assign countability codes to the source and target differing according to the count-mass distinction, and finally, formulate a clear exemplification policy which makes the difference in countability evident.

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