

# Organization of information in a bilingual dictionary entry

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## 1. Introduction

In this age of information, the general bilingual dictionary (GBD) —even a single-volume, desk-sized one— is expected to include a vast number and variety of elements. A «good» GBD is supposed to include different classes and kinds of lexical items: words from different disciplines and domains, regionalisms, neologisms, multi-word items, idiomatic expressions, appellations, epithets, exclamations, nicknames, proper names, brand names, abbreviations, and acronyms, to name only some of those listed by Roger Steiner in his «Guidelines for Reviewers of Bilingual Dictionaries» (1984). Moreover, it is no longer deemed sufficient to provide only translation equivalents for source language headwords, accompanied by an occasional example; it is now considered highly desirable to provide semantic and stylistic discrimination of equivalents, detailed grammatical information, and collocational specifications for each headword and even for each sense division of the headword (Meyer, 1987 and Al-Kasimi, 1977).

These requirements, which can vary to some extent according to purpose and size of the dictionary, involve not only expansion of both the macrostructure and the microstructure of the bilingual dictionary, but also and principally problems of organization of information. How can the mass of information deemed necessary for users be presented in book form in such a way that they can find it easily, understand it readily, and use it effectively? That is the question that will be addressed in this paper on the basis of work in progress on a new bilingual French-English, English-French dictionary, the *Bilingual Canadian Dictionary* (BCD), which will be published in the late 1990s.

The BCD, which will reflect English and French as they are used in Canada, will be a bidirectional dictionary written for both English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians, and intended for advanced second language learners and bilingual language professionals in this officially bilingual country. In other words, its audience will be sophisticated users of the second language, who seek more than just basic equivalents from a GBD. To meet their needs, the BCD will contain more and more varied information than most single-volume dictionaries: it will provide not only Canadianisms and North Americanisms, but also a large number of technical terms, multi-word items (compounds and fixed expressions), and collocations, as many TL equivalents as possible, meaning indications for SL headwords, meaning discrimination for TL equivalents, stylistic marking for SL and TL items, and a variety of examples of free combinations including the headword accompanied by a variety of possible translations. All this material must be organized to allow for quick and easy consultation by busy language professionals such as translators, who simply do not have the time to wade through a user-unfriendly dictionary, however rich, in the hope that they may find the specific information they are seeking.

While certain questions related to the macrostructure (e.g. what multi-word items should constitute headwords?) still remain to be determined, the most imme-

diate problems concern the microstructure. After trying out a variety of entry formats, we have tentatively adopted the following one:

*Introductory Zone*

**headword** › (spelling variants) › (feminine form for French adjectives and nouns; irregular plural form for French adjectives and nouns and English nouns) › phonetic transcription › grammatical category › (irregular verb forms)

*Sense Division(s)*

**(Number of division)** › (geographical label) › (field label) › (register label) › (currency label) › (commentary label) › (preposition and other remarks - SL) › (sense) › (actants) › equivalents › (preposition and other remarks - TL) › (geographical label) › (register label) › (currency label) › (commentary label) › (free combinations - SL + TL) › (collocations - SL + TL) › (collocation cross-references)

*(Fixed Expression Section)*

**(exp)** › (SL & TL) › (cross-references)

*(Compound Section)*

**(cmp)** › (SL whose first element is the headword + TL)

**(cmp)** › (SL whose first element is not the headword + TL) (cross-references)  
[The elements in parentheses are those that will not necessarily be present in every entry. Those that are not in parentheses will be found in every entry that is not simply a cross-reference.]

This format seems, in principle, to allow for inclusion of a large variety of elements in a systematic and easily accessible form. However, when it is actually used to cover all the information compiled on a given lexical item, the results do not always seem satisfactory. We intend to test our conclusions by means of a user survey to be conducted this Fall and then make any necessary changes in information organization. Meanwhile, in this paper, I will present the reasoning underlying certain aspects of the preliminary entry format, examples of its application, some modifications introduced therein, and preliminary conclusions on the organization of information within entries for a printed bilingual dictionary.

Organization of information within an entry involves two different aspects: placement of one type of information with regard to other types of information (e.g. placement of spelling variants in relation to the phonetic transcription), and the ordering of a number of occurrences of the same type of information (e.g. the ordering of a variety of senses or examples). Both aspects will be treated in this paper.

## 2. Four main parts of the entry

As the format above clearly reveals, the entry is divided into four main parts: the introductory zone, which presents characteristics applicable to the headword as a whole, in all its senses; the sense division section, which is divided into as many subsections as there are senses identified for the headword, each of which contains all

pertinent information related to a given sense; the fixed expression section; and the compound section.

The concept of separating compounds from sense divisions has been borrowed from the *Robert-Collins* and carried further by applying the same principle to fixed expressions. The fixed expression section was originally intended to cover (a) exocentric expressions, whose meaning cannot be deduced from the meaning of their parts (e.g. *avoir un coeur d'artichaut* to be fickle); and (b) conventional formulas, clichés and proverbs (e.g. *lu et approuvé* read and approved, *le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas* the heart has its reasons that reason knows nothing of). However, it has since expanded to cover prepositional phrases which do not fit neatly into the sense divisions identified (e.g. *par coeur* by heart – for we have not made a division for the sense of «memory» in the entry for *coeur*), expressions that may be both endocentric and exocentric (e.g. *partir sans laisser d'adresse* to leave without giving a forwarding address - endocentric; to skip town - exocentric); and expressions which could fit equally well into several sense divisions (e.g. *à coeur ouvert*, in which *coeur* has the sense of «organe» in *être opéré à coeur ouvert* to have open-heart surgery, that of «siège des pensées intimes» in *parler à coeur ouvert* to speak openly/straight from the heart, and that of «disposition à la bonté, la générosité» in *recevoir qn à coeur ouvert* to give sb a hearty/cordial welcome). It is therefore a very handy category that allows us to include information that would have to be forced in elsewhere. We also feel that users will be able to find the type of information identified above more easily if it is placed in one separate section rather than in several sense subdivisions. However, the danger we have to watch out for is that the fixed expression section does not become a catchall category.

However logical the overall organization of the entry may appear, there are nevertheless specific problems of organization of material within each section. Those related to the introductory zone and the sense division(s) will be discussed in some detail below.

### 3. Introductory zone

As the format outlined above reveals, the information presented in the introductory zone —spelling variants, feminine and irregular plural forms, phonetic transcription, grammatical category, and irregular verb forms— is common to most good bilingual dictionaries, as is the order in which the elements are presented. Nevertheless, questions have already surfaced with regard to the presentation of spelling variants and feminine forms of certain French nouns.

#### 3.1. Spelling variants

Three problems have been identified as far as spelling variants are concerned. The first concerns determination of what form to indicate as the spelling variant and which one to consider the headword. In principle, the less common form is presented as the spelling variant. And the decision as to which form is less common in relation to another is made on the basis of: (a) the way each graphic form is treated in unilingual dictionaries; (b) frequency lists, and (c) frequency of occurrence in the BCD textual

database. However, frequency lists are notoriously incomplete and our textual database is still in an embryonic stage, which causes problems. Let us take, as an example, the forms *shampooineur*, *shampouineur* and *shampooingneur*, none of which are found in our frequency lists or in our textual database. The last form *shampooingneur* is found in only two major French dictionaries (*Lexis* and *Grand Robert*) and can thus be considered the least frequent and therefore obviously a spelling variant. In any case, for lack of Canadian references for this form, we have eliminated it. But in the case of the other two forms, the solution is far less obvious: *shampouineur*, and not *shampooineur*, is found in *Lexis*, *Grand Robert* and *Petit Larousse*, while both forms are found in *Grand Larousse*, *Petit Robert*, *Plus*, and *Multi*, often with *shampooineur* as the headword. For the time being, we have taken *shampouineur* as the headword and placed *shampooineur* after it as the spelling variant, following the model of two Canadian French dictionaries (*Plus* and *Multi*). But we are left wondering whether the order of presentation of the two forms in these two dictionaries is based on frequency, which is our criteria, or on alphabetical arrangement.

The ordering of different forms as headword and spelling variant is further complicated in certain instances by recommendations by language standardization organizations such as the Office de la langue française. This is the situation in the case of *canoë* and *canoé*. The frequency list we are using contains only the former, as do most dictionaries, including Canadian ones, and most of our examples. However, the Office recommends *canoé* as the form to be used in Canada. In such a case, should we place *canoé* before *canoë*, despite the evidence of our documentation, given the Canadian orientation of our dictionary? This is what we have done for the moment. However, it is a decision which needs to be reviewed at a later date.

The example of *canoé* brings up yet another problem which we had not foreseen: that of adding a geographical label to spelling variants. As the format presented above reveals, we had anticipated identifying Canadian words and senses, but not Canadian spelling. Thus, we have had to add this possibility to our format. The entry for *canoé* now begins as follows:

**canoé (CD) ou canoë**

### 3.2. Feminine forms

The current vogue of feminizing discourse is complicating the lexicographer's existence, at least in Canada. This is particularly the case for French nouns marking titles and positions. In the past, these nouns either were not feminized or had a different feminine form. Both cases pose a problem for organization of information. The headword *recteur* illustrates the first case: it is a noun that did not have a feminine form; now, the Office de la langue française has recommended *rectrice* as the official feminine form, which means that the BCD should include it. Given the fact that this form is not only a neologism but a questionable one, considering that *rectrice* also means «tail feather», we feel obliged to preface it with the note *fém. proposé par l'OLF*.

The problem with the feminine of *directeur* is of a different nature. This noun has always had a feminine form: *directrice*. However, given the traditional association of *directrice* with a principal of an elementary school, female directors at other educational levels and in other contexts are increasingly using the form *directeure*. If both

female forms are given, then the questions of which one to place first —the traditional or the modern—, what additional annotation is required, and where this annotation should be placed become crucial.

The example of *recteur* brings out an additional problem. The feminine form of *rectrice* applies only to the Canadian sense of the word: that of «president of a university». It does not apply to the continental French sense of «person in charge of an educational district». This means that, in this case, the feminine form cannot be placed in the introductory zone, as foreseen in the proposed format, but must be included in a given sense division. Our entry for *recteur* reads as follows:

**recteur** nm 1 (CD) (*chef d'une université*) (fém. proposé par l'OLF: **rectrice**)  
 rector ...  
 2 (FR) (*responsable d'une académie*) rector ...

We have placed the feminine form *rectrice* not only in the appropriate sense division but also after the geographical label and the definition of the sense to indicate clearly that it applies only to the indicated Canadian sense.

#### 4. Sense divisions

The addition of «unforeseen» elements —such as specific feminine forms referred to above— to the sense division section increases the information density of this already information-packed part of the entry. Careful organization of lexicographic material here is not just desirable but an absolute necessity. We are striving to achieve this by several means, including: (a) a clearcut division of senses and therefore the establishment of several sense subdivisions; (b) conscious ordering of senses and thus of sense subdivisions; (c) logical placement of different types of information within sense subdivisions, and (d) judicious organization of examples.

##### 4.1. Division of senses and establishment of several sense subdivisions

The principle the BCD has adopted for senses of the headword is that all the major senses will be clearly separated. The reason underlying this principle is our intended audience: since our dictionary is intended for sophisticated language users, such as translators, we feel they would need a more detailed breakdown of senses than would beginning foreign language users. Thus, the BCD's sense subdivisions are more numerous than those found in most similarly-sized general bilingual dictionaries: the headword *âge*, for instance, has four sense subdivisions in the BCD («nombre d'années d'existence/période de la vie», «vieillesse», «âge requis pour faire qch», and «ère»), compared to two in the *Robert-Collins* and the *Larousse* (general sense and sense of «ère»). The establishment of several sense subdivisions in view of our audience has had definite side-benefits from the point of view of the organization of material.

First, this has permitted inclusion, in the list of equivalents, of many equivalents which would either cause confusion or be avoided in broader sense divisions. In presenting a list of equivalents for a broad sense division, the lexicographer has

one of two choices. Either he can group together a large number of distinct, non-synonymous equivalents, which can be intimidating for the reader even if basic semantic discrimination devices are added<sup>1</sup>, or he can place in the list only those equivalents applicable to the headword in its very general sense. The former tendency was common in older bilingual dictionaries. In more recent ones, the latter trend can be observed. Thus, the *Robert-Collins* and the *Larousse*, which tend to include broad sense divisions labelled «general», provide only one or at the most two equivalents in such cases. In the entry for *âge*, for instance, the «general» sense division found in these two bilingual dictionaries lists only one «general» equivalent, *age*. The BCD's subdivision of this one general sense into three specific senses (1. «nombre d'années d'existence/période de la vie»; 2. «vieillesse»; and 3. «âge requis pour faire qch») allows it to list as equivalents not only *age* (in all three sense subdivisions), but also *years* in the first subdivision and *old age* in the second.

Second, the larger the number of sense subdivisions, the more examples one can provide without obliging the reader to wade through an impossibly long list. For the examples will thus be divided up among several sense subdivisions. Thus, where the *Robert-Collins* presents 20 examples for *âge* taken in a very general sense—which is probably close to the maximum number that a user would have the patience to check in one given list<sup>2</sup>— the BCD is able to present 41<sup>3</sup>, divided as follows between its three sense subdivisions that cover *Robert-Collins'* one: 26 in the first, 5 in the second, and 10 in the third.

However, while a larger number of sense subdivisions is an aid to the organization of information, on the one hand, it also creates organization problems, for the many senses have to be carefully ordered.

#### 4.2. Ordering of senses and sense subdivisions

The ordering of senses has long been a preoccupation of lexicographers, who have identified four basic methods of doing so: chronological ordering, ordering by frequency, logical ordering, ordering in order of sense dominance.<sup>4</sup> However, given the fact that each of these methods has limitations, many dictionaries make a habit of combining them. The BCD has clearly adopted the principle of combining sense ordering techniques.

In this dictionary the following four criteria are now being used to order senses

1. See, for instance, Ernest A. Baker, *Heath's New French & English Dictionary* (Boston: D.C. Heath & Co., 1932), which, in addition to listing strings of very partially synonymous equivalents, provides no meaning discrimination.

2. I know of no survey or study that has tried to determine the maximum number of examples in a series that readers can readily cope with. Such a study would be most useful to all lexicographers.

3. This figure includes alternative source language examples, which have approximately the same meaning. These are of two kinds: alternatives for a part of the source language example, and alternatives for the entire example. If these are not included the total number of examples drops to 31.

4. Each of these methods has been described in Daniel van Scherrenburg, «The Arrangement of Information in the General Bilingual Dictionary Entry», unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1990, pp. 36-46.

and sense divisions: a) more common usage before less common usage; b) standard and widely used senses before more specific Canadian senses; c) Canadian senses before senses restricted to continental French or British English, and d) modern usage before somewhat outdated usage. An additional criterion used at the start of the BCD Project, that of concrete senses before abstract senses, has since been eliminated because of frequent contradictions between this criterion and criterion a) above: in many cases, a concrete sense is a technical sense, which represents less common usage, whereas an abstract sense represents more common usage (cf. *coeur* in the concrete sense of «bois le plus ancien au centre d'un arbre» and *coeur* in the abstract sense of «courage»).

The four essentially common-sense criteria retained work relatively well. Nevertheless, they have to be used intelligently. For it is possible, for instance, for a Canadian sense to be used more frequently in Canada than one that is used internationally (cf. *bleuet* in the Canadian sense of «fruit» —*blueberry*— and in the standard botanical sense of «fleur» — *bachelor's button*). And in many cases it is hard to determine that a given sense is more common than another, for frequency lists present words, rather than senses. The criteria listed above provide guidelines, but there are no hard-and-fast rules that can be applied to the ordering of senses and sense divisions.

### 4.3. Placement of different types of information within sense divisions

The placement of material in each sense subdivision has not changed very much in the course of our preparation of entries. On the whole, the original order of presentation of information, reproduced below, has proved satisfactory:

(**Number of division**) › (geographical label) › (field label) › (register label) › (currency label) › (commentary label) › (preposition and other remarks - SL) › (sense) › (actants) › equivalents › (preposition and other remarks - TL) › (geographical label) › (register label) › (currency label) › (commentary label) › (free combinations - SL + TL) › (collocations - SL + TL) › (collocation cross-references)

The application of this format can be seen in the following sense subdivisions for the French noun *métro* and the English verb *abhor*:

**métro...1** (*chemin de fer urbain; ensemble des installations de ce moyen de transport*) subway (system), (rail) rapid transit (system); [*Montréal, Paris*] Métro (*CD*), metro, subway; [*Londres*] underground. \* **le ~ de Toronto** the Toronto subway (system); **la station de ~ Radisson** the Radisson Métro station; **je l'ai rencontré dans les couloirs du ~** I ran into him in the subway. \*\* **prendre le métro** to take the subway; **billet/ticket de ~** subway ticket. **qv bouche, ligne, rame, réseau, station.**

**abhor...1** (*detest for moral reasons*) avoir (*qch*) en horreur, ‹ avoir (*qch*) en abomination, exécuter, abhorrer, abominer ++, avoir de l'aversion (*pour*)›. \* **he ~ red slavery** il avait l'esclavage en horreur = l'esclavage lui faisait horreur; **she ~ s any form of cruelty** la cruauté sous toutes ses formes lui fait horreur = elle

abhorre la cruauté quelle qu'elle soit; **they ~ the thought of going to war** l'idée de faire la guerre leur fait horreur.

However, this model does need some modification on occasion. These modifications take one of two forms: additions and placement changes.

As already pointed out above (see the example of *rectrice*), the feminine form of nouns in a specific sense must, in some instances, be inserted into a sense subdivision: this is done after the definition. Another addition that is sometimes required is that of a spelling variant (if the addition of capitalization can be considered a spelling variant). A good example of this is found in the entry for *maple leaf*. This noun, in two of its senses —«Canadian flag» and «coin»— is spelled with a capital M and L. Rather than making a separate entry for this graphic form, we have indicated the spelling variant at the beginning of these sense subdivisions as follows:

**4 Maple Leaf** (*coin*) feuille f d'érable. \* **the gold** ~ la feuille d'érable en or.

While the additions just mentioned involved moving elements of information from another section of the entry (the introductory zone) to a sense subdivision in certain cases, two other additions consisted of elements of information not foreseen in the original format. The first is a gloss. This is sometimes required after a translation equivalent (in the listing of equivalents) to explain a reality that is not known in the target language culture. This, for instance, is the case of *polyvalente*, a typically Québec institution:

**polyvalente** (*CD*) (*école secondaire*) high school, secondary school (*offering both technical and academic training*).

The gloss also seems necessary in certain cases to explain the context of use of a given target language equivalent. In such cases, it is placed, like an actant (words associated with the headword which influence the choice of equivalent), before the equivalent. The addition of this kind of gloss as well as that of a specific referent, the second new element included in some sense subdivisions to mark semantic discrimination between equivalents, can be seen in the entry for the French noun *navette*:

**navette...1** (*véhicule; service de transport*) shuttle (service); (*bus*) shuttle bus, (*bateau*) ferry, (*d'un aéroport*) limousine, limo-.

The gloss, (*d'un aéroport*), pinpoints the airport context in which the equivalent *limousine* is used, whereas the indications (*bus*) and (*bateau*) indicate the exact referent of their respective translations *shuttle bus* and *ferry*.

While the addition of unforeseen elements of information does change the placement of those elements included in the original format, there have been relatively few other placement changes. The most important is that of the preposition accompanying the headword. To begin with, we had anticipated always placing the preposition following the headword after the headword and the one following the translation equivalent after the equivalent. And we still follow this order when either the headword or one or more equivalents takes a preposition (see *abhor* above) or when both take a preposition, but the preposition varies from one equivalent to another.



However, when both the headword and all equivalents take a preposition, with the latter all requiring the same one, the SL and TL prepositions are placed together before the list of equivalents as follows:

**absolve 2** (*set free*) (**from, of de**) dégager; [*obligation, responsibility, duty*] dispenser, décharger, délier, libérer, <affranchir>; [*promise, vow, oath*] relever, délier; [*debt*] libérer.

The other change is in the positioning of register labels. Given the fact that we have decided to mark register using symbols, much like the *Robert-Collins* does, they are now placed more prominently than in the original format to ensure that they are easily visible. Thus, instead of following geographical and field labels, it now appears directly after the headword, or the sense division number if it applies to only one sense of the headword, or the pertinent target language equivalent, as illustrated in the following examples:

**maple...2**— (*NA*) (*Bowling*) (*pin*) quille

Despite these few modifications required in certain entries, the original arrangement of information in the sense division section of our entry format has met our overall needs adequately so far and is unlikely to undergo major changes.

#### 4.4. Organization of examples

An important feature of the BCD is the large number and different varieties of examples of usage presented. The general category of examples has been subdivided into three classes: (a) free combinations, (b) collocations, and (c) fixed expressions. A free combination is a phrase or sentence «whose properties follow automatically from the properties of its components» (Meyer, 1987: 7); an example found in the entry for *abhor* and presented above is *she abhors any form of cruelty*. A collocation is a phrase «which is more or less fixed in a given language, i.e. whose properties do not follow automatically from the properties of its components» (Meyer, 1987: 5); an obvious example found in the entry for *bilan* is *dresser un bilan*. What is covered by the term «fixed expression» has already been covered in Section 2. Given the nature of fixed expressions, they are treated in a separate zone of the entry, and will be discussed in the next section. However, free combinations and collocations, which illustrate specific senses of a headword, are placed in the sense subdivisions and their arrangement will be discussed here.

The first decision made concerning their arrangement was to separate free combinations from collocations. The reason for this is twofold: first, given the large number of examples of all kinds that we are planning to include in the BCD, their organization is a key factor, and grouping by categories of examples on the basis of their «cohesiveness» provides an initial arrangement technique; second, sophisticated users such as translators seem to consult examples primarily to check collocations, and placing them separately from free combinations should, in principle, save them much time and effort. The two categories of examples are placed one after the other, with free combinations preceding collocations, but are identified by different markers: free

combinations are preceded, at least at the moment, by one bold asterisk, and collocations by two bold asterisks.

While free combinations and collocations are different in that substitutability of elements is more restricted in the latter, the problem is that there is no clear dividing line between them. As Cowie puts it: «openness and restrictedness of co-occurrence can be represented as the end-points of a scale or continuum» (Cowie, 1978: 133). This means that it is often very difficult for lexicographers to determine whether a specific example should be classified as a free combination or a collocation. For example, are *avoir le cœur malade* (to have a weak heart/a heart condition/heart trouble), and *ne pas avoir le cœur de faire qch* (to not have the heart to do sth = to not be able to bring oneself to do sth), and *ne pas avoir le cœur à faire qch* (to be in no mood to do sth) all really collocations? These are the questions that we struggle with on a daily basis in an attempt to better organize our examples.

Another difficulty is that of ordering free combinations or collocations among themselves. As far as free combinations are concerned, there are a few general organizational guidelines that can be established: for instance, placing the most obvious and least complicated ones first; grouping together examples that are similar (e.g. for a verb entry, placing together examples illustrating use in the active voice), and ordering examples according to equivalents, placing those in which several different equivalents are interchangeable first and grouping those that take the same equivalent together. However, in reality, these guidelines are often in contradiction with each other, and therefore cannot be respected integrally. This can be seen in the entry for *absolve*, in the subdivision for the sense «excuse, declare innocent», presented below:

**absolve...1** (*excuse, declare innocent*) (**from, of de**) ne pas tenir responsable, innocenter, disculper. \* **his excuses do not ~ him** ses excuses ne le disculpent pas = les raisons qu'il donne ne l'excusent pas; **the captain is ~d from all blame and responsibility for the shipwreck** le capitaine est déchargé de toute responsabilité dans ce naufrage = le capitaine n'est pas tenu responsable du naufrage = on reconnaît que le capitaine n'est nullement responsable du naufrage; **the court ~d her of guilt in the child's death** le tribunal a reconnu qu'elle n'avait aucune responsabilité dans la mort de l'enfant.

Here the order of the second and third examples is debatable. *The court absolved her of guilt in the child's death* should, in principle, be placed after the first example, which is also in the active. However, the fact that *absolve* cannot be rendered directly in this context by any of the equivalents listed caused us to put it in at the end of the series of examples.

The arrangement of collocations seems, at first sight, much easier, for collocations can, in principle, be subdivided into categories (e.g. verbal collocations, prepositional collocations) and within each category an alphabetical order can be established. However, this type of division and arrangement is not always feasible when many collocations have to be included, as in the following listing of collocations for the sense of «dire» or «faire» for *adresser*:

**adresser...3** (*dire, faire*)... \*\* ~ **un blâme**\un compliment\une critique à qn to blame\compliment\criticize sb; ~ **des injures**\des questions\des remerciements à qn to insult/question\thank sb; ~ **la parole** à qn to speak to sb; ~ **des reproches**

à **qn** to direct/level reproaches at sb = to reproach/blame sb; ~ **une requête à qn** to make a request to sb = to request sth of sb; ~ **un geste de la main\signe de tête\sourire\regard à qn** to nod to\wave at/to\smile at\look at sb; **il m'adressa une critique acerbe** he criticized me harshly; **ils se sont adressés des mots très durs** they had (some harsh) words; **il leur adressa un regard furtif** he shot them a furtive glance = he looked at them furtively; **elle adressa aux spectateurs son plus beau sourire** she gave the audience her most beautiful smile.

The collocations here are all verb + noun collocations, which simplifies the situation. However, three factors militate against a strict alphabetical ordering. First, there is the question of space: in the interest of space-saving, different verb/noun collocations are often placed together, with a back slash separating the noun objects. As can be seen above, this is only done when the objects are similar in number and take the same type of article. And within a collocation series —such as *adresser un blâme\un compliment\une critique à qn* to blame\compliment\criticize sb— the objects are arranged in strict alphabetical order. However, from one collocation series to the next —cf. *adresser un blâme\un compliment\une critique à qn* to blame\compliment\criticize sb and *adresser des injures\des questions\des remerciements à qn* to insult\question\thank sb— the maintenance of alphabetical order is a matter of pure chance. Second, as soon as a sense subdivision covers more than one narrow sense, as in the case presented above for *adresser*, collocations must also be grouped by sense. Hence, *adresser un geste de la main*, in which *adresser* has the sense of «faire» rather than «dire», is not placed in alphabetical order (between *adresser une critique* and *adresser des injures*), but at the start of the collocation series *adresser un geste de la main\signe de tête\sourire\regard à qn*, in which *adresser* has the sense of «faire». Finally, even when a collocation in the SL fits into a given collocational series in alphabetical order, it may be placed separately after this series because the TL equivalent is very different. This is the case, for example, of *adresser des reproches à qn* above. There is no doubt that the ordering problems for collocations would be reduced if we did not bear space in mind and listed each collocation independently. However, the last two of the three considerations listed above would still need to be taken into consideration by the lexicographer.

## 5. Other sections of the entry

Neither the fixed expressions section nor the compounds section will be treated in depth in this paper. However, there are fewer problems in organizing information in these zones since both deal only with one specific element. Moreover, the problems we do face in the fixed expressions section resemble those discussed above in the context of collocations. Finally, of all the entry zones, the compounds section is the easiest to organize —once compounds, as opposed to collocations, have been clearly identified. For each compound is presented as a separate entity, with compounds in which the headword is the first element separated from those in which it is the second in cases where the latter are included in the entry,<sup>5</sup> and with strict alphabetical order established within compounds in each group.

5. Compounds in which the first element is weak (e.g. *bel âge*) are placed in the entry for the second element (*âge* in the case of the example cited).

One feature worth noting is the space-saving device used in this section. When there are synonymous compounds in the SL, each is listed in its appropriate place in alphabetical order, but the equivalent is given only at the compound in the synonym series that comes last alphabetically, with a cross-reference down to this point from the synonymous compounds that come earlier. Presented below is an example:

**coeur...** (*cmp*) ~ **adipeux**; ~ **gras**; ~ **artificiel** *a.* artificial heart; *b.* heart-lung machine; ... ~ **gras** (*Méd*) fatty heart...

The downward reference should certainly make the compounds section easier to use because it eliminates back-tracking through the entry.

## 6. Conclusion

User friendliness, large quantities of information of many kinds, and space considerations are difficult to reconcile in any dictionary. There is no doubt that the combination of these three issues, which are presented above in order of priority for the BCD, create a number and large variety of problems of information organization.

One may well wonder why we have decided to deal simultaneously with all of them. The argument can be, and has been, made that both the placement of information and its ordering can be left till the end of the Project, since computing allows for easy manipulation of data. However, how can the user friendliness of entries be evaluated by potential users without sample pages? And, in the preparation of sample pages, space considerations must surely be taken into consideration.

Another argument that has been made is that we should not work in terms of a book-bound dictionary but a computerized dictionary. The BCD certainly has a computerized lexical database: information therein will be both more detailed and differently organized from what has been presented above. However, given the fact that the BCD will first be presented in printed form and that many users will consult it only in that form, it seems important to us to tackle the issue of space considerations at the same time as we do those related to information quantity and variety, and user friendliness.

The question of the variety of information to be included in the BCD and that of its overall organization have been settled, to a large extent, to our satisfaction. That of the quantity of information to be presented and the related issue of space considerations will require further discussion with the publishers. These negotiations will be heavily influenced by the responses to the user survey to be conducted this Fall, which aims to determine whether the amount and type of information the BCD has planned to cover is adequate for the needs of sophisticated language users and whether the organization of this information meets with their approval.

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\* Only bilingual dictionaries, with which our entries have been compared, and French Canadian dictionaries, which are less widely known, are included.