Lexicography and Natural Language Processing

B.T.S. Atkins' outstanding contribution to bilingual and monolingual lexicography goes far beyond the many dictionaries she has worked on. Her quest for 'better ways to do it' brought her into contact with researchers in linguistics and natural language processing. The links she has helped to establish between these different communities have brought – and continue to bring – enormous benefits for lexicography. Her knowledge, her insights and her energy have inspired scores of lexicographers, linguists and computationalists.

This Festschrift in Honour of B.T.S. Atkins presented on the occasion of her 70th birthday is a tribute to her work in the fields of lexicography and natural language processing. It includes contributions on subjects as varied as dictionary use, metalanguage, corpus lexicography, frame semantics, electronic dictionaries, and systematic lexicography.

As she [B.T.S. Atkins] puts it 'after three weeks of trying to explain to me it's impossible, the programmers realise the only way they'll get any peace is to just write the system so then they get on with it'.
A. Kilgarriff

It is still unusual in Britain to find a working lexicographer with the time and inclination to keep an ear tuned to current developments in linguistics. When the dictionary-maker can move with assurance and distinction between the two worlds, as Sue Atkins does, we have a rarity to be cherished.
A.P. Cowie

At a symposium a decade ago which brought linguists into conversation with lexicographers, Sue Atkins offered the suggestion that if linguistic semanticists really wanted to make a contribution to lexicography, instead of just criticizing dictionaries, they could work at building a typology of lexical items in terms of which groups of words could be paired with the kinds of definitions they needed.
C. Fillmore