

10

The Nineteenth Century and After

211. Influences Affecting the Language.

The events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries affecting the English-speaking countries have been of great political and social importance, but in their effect on the language they have not been revolutionary. The success of the British on the sea in the course of the Napoleonic Wars, culminating in Nelson's famous victory at Trafalgar in 1805, left England in a position of undisputed naval supremacy and gave it control over most of the world's commerce. The war against Russia in the Crimea (1854–1856) and the contests with princes in India had the effect of again turning English attention to the East. The great reform measures—the reorganization of parliament, the revision of the penal code and the poor laws, the restrictions placed on child labor, and the other industrial reforms—were important factors in establishing English society on a more democratic basis. They lessened the distance between the upper and the lower classes and greatly increased the opportunities for the mass of the population to share in the economic and cultural advantages that became available in the course of the century. The establishment of the first cheap newspaper (1816) and of cheap postage (1840) and the improved means of travel and communication brought about by the railroad, the steamboat, and the telegraph had the effect of uniting more closely the different parts of Britain and of spreading the influence of the standard speech. During the first half of the twentieth century the world wars and the troubled periods following them affected the life of almost everyone and left their mark on the language. At the same time, the growth in importance of some of England's larger colonies, their eventual in-dependence, and the rapid development of the United States have given increased significance to the forms of English spoken in these territories and have led their populations to the belief that their use of the language is as entitled to be considered a standard as that of Great Britain.

Some of these events and changes are reflected in the English vocabulary. But more influential in this respect are the great developments in science and the rapid progress that has been made in every field of intellectual activity in the last 200 years. Periods of great enterprise and activity seem generally to be accompanied by a corresponding increase in new words. This is the more true when all classes of the people participate in such activity, both in work and play, and share in its benefits. Accordingly, the great developments in industry, the increased public interest in sports and amusements, and the many improvements in the mode of living, in which even the humblest worker has shared, have all contributed to the vocabulary. The last two centuries offer an excellent opportunity to observe the relation between a civilization and the language which is an expression of it.

212. *The Growth of Science.*

The most striking thing about our present-day civilization is probably the part that science has played in bringing it to pass. We have only to think of the progress that has been made in medicine and the sciences auxiliary to it, such as bacteriology, biochemistry, and the like, to realize the difference that marks off our own day from that of only a few generations ago in the diagnosis, treatment, prevention, and cure of disease. Or we may pause to reflect upon the relatively short period that separates the Wright brothers, making history's first powered and controlled airplane flight, from the landings of astronauts on the moon, the operation of a space shuttle, and the voyages of spacecraft past the outer planets of the solar system. In every field of science, pure and applied, there has been need in the last two centuries for thousands of new terms. The great majority of these are technical words known only to the specialist, but a certain number of them in time become familiar to the layperson and pass into general use.

In the field of medicine this is particularly apparent. We speak familiarly of *anemia*, *appendicitis*, *arteriosclerosis*, difficult as the word is, of *bronchitis*, *diphtheria*, and numerous other diseases and ailments. We use with some sense of their meaning words like *bacteriology*, *immunology*, *orthodontics*, and the acronym *AIDS* (*acquired immune deficiency syndrome*). We maintain *clinics*, administer an *antitoxin* or an *anesthetic*, and *vaccinate* for smallpox. We have learned the names of drugs like *aspirin*, *iodine*, *insulin*, *morphine*, and we acquire without effort the names of antibiotics, such as *penicillin*, *streptomycin*, and a whole family of *sulfa* compounds. We speak of *adenoids*, *endocrine glands*, and *hormones* and know the uses of the *stethoscope*, the *EKG* (*electrocardiogram*), and the *CAT scan* (*computerized axial tomography*). We refer to the combustion of food in the body as *metabolism*, distinguish between *proteins* and *carbohydrates*, know that a dog can digest bones because he has certain *enzymes* or digestive fluids in his stomach, and say that a person who has the idiosyncrasy of being made ill by certain foods has an *allergy*. *Cholesterol* is now a part of everyone's vocabulary, and there is an awareness that some fats are *polyunsaturated*. All of these words have come into use during the nineteenth and, in some cases, the twentieth century.

In almost every other field of science the same story could be told. In the field of electricity words like *dynamo*, *commutator*, *alternating current*, *arc light* have been in the language since about 1870. Physics has made us familiar with terms like *calorie*, *electron*, *ionization*, *ultraviolet rays*, *quantum mechanics*, and *relativity*, though we don't always have an exact idea of what they mean. The development of *atomic energy* and *nuclear weapons* has given us *radioactive*, *hydrogen bomb*, *chain reaction*, *fallout*, and *meltdown*. In recent years *laser*, *superconducting supercollider*, *quasar*, and *pulsar* have come into common use; and *black holes*, *quarks*, the *big bang model*, and *superstrings* have captured the popular imagination. Chemistry has contributed so many common words that it is difficult to make a selection—*alkali*, *benzine*, *creosote*, *cyanide*, *formaldehyde*, *nitroglycerine*, *radium*, to say nothing of such terms as *biochemical*, *petrochemical*, and the like. The psychologist has taught us to speak of *schizophrenia*, *extrovert* and *introvert*, *behaviorism*, *inhibition*, *defense mechanism*, *inferiority complex*, *bonding*, and *psychoanalysis*. Originally scientific words and expressions such as *ozone*, *natural selection*, *stratosphere*, *DNA* (for *deoxyribonucleic acid*) became familiar through

the popularity of certain books or scientific reports in magazines and newspapers. Among the most publicized events since the 1960s have been the achievements of space and engineering in the exploration of space. In addition to *astronaut* and *cosmonaut*, space science has given us dozens of new words, especially compounds like *spacecraft*, *space shuttle*, *launch pad*, *countdown*, *blast off*, *flyby*, *command module*. Consciously or unconsciously, we have become scientifically minded in the last few generations, and our vocabularies reflect this extension of our consciousness and interest.

213. *Automobile, Film, Broadcasting, Computer.*

Scientific discoveries and inventions do not always influence the language in proportion to their importance. It is doubtful whether the radio and motion pictures are more important than the telephone, but they have brought more new words into general use. Such additions to the vocabulary depend more upon the degree to which the discovery or invention enters into the life of the community. This can be seen especially in the many new words or new uses of old words that have re-sulted from the popularity of the automobile and the numerous activities associated with it. Many an old word is now used in a special sense. Thus we *park* a car, and the verb *to park* scarcely suggests to the average driver anything except leaving his or her car along the side of a street or road or in a *parking space*. But the word is an old one, used as a military term (*to park cannon*) and later in reference to carriages. The word *automobile* is new, but such words as *sedan* (*saloon* in Britain) and *coupe* are terms adapted from earlier types of vehicles. The American *truck* is the British *lorry* to which we may attach a *trailer*. We have learned new words or new meanings in *carburetor*, *spark plug* (British *sparking plug*), *choke*, *clutch*, *gearshift* (British *gear lever*), *piston rings*, *differential*, *universal*, *steering wheel*, *shock absorber*, *radiator*, *hood* (British *bonnet*), *windshield* (in Britain *windscreen*), *bumper*, *chassis*, *hubcap*, *power steering*, *automatic transmission*, and *turbocharger*. We engage *cruise control*, have a *blowout*, use *radial tires*, carry a *spare*, drive a *convertible* or *station wagon* (British *estate car*), and put the car in a *garage*. We may *tune up* the engine or *stall* it, or we may *skid*, *cut in*, *sideswipe* another car and be fined for *speeding* or running a *traffic light*. We must buy *gas* in America and *petrol* in Britain. Many more examples could be added to terms familiar to every motorist, to illustrate further what is already sufficiently clear, the way in which a new thing that becomes genuinely popular makes demands upon and extends the resources of the language.

The same principle might be illustrated by film, radio, and television. The words *cinema* and *moving picture* date from 1899, whereas the alternative *motion picture* is somewhat later. *Screen*, *reel*, *film*, *scenario*, *projector*, *closeup*, *fade-out* are now common, and although the popularity of *three-D* (or *3-D*) as a cinematic effect was short-lived, the word is still used. The word *radio* in the sense of a receiving station dates from about 1925, and we get the first hint of *television* as early as 1904. Since many of the terms from radio broadcasting were applicable in the later development of television, it is not surprising to find a common vocabulary of broadcasting that includes *broadcast* itself, *aerial*, *antenna*, *lead-in*, *loudspeaker*, *stand by*, and *solid-state*. Words like *announcer*, *reception*, *microphone*, and *transmitter* have acquired special meanings sometimes more common than their more general senses. The abbreviations FM (for

frequency modulation) and *AM* (for *amplitude modulation*) serve regularly in radio broadcasting for the identification of stations, while terms associated with television include *cable TV*, *teleprompter*, *videotape*, *VCR*, and *DVD*. The related development of increasingly refined equipment for the recording of sound since Thomas Edison's invention of the *phonograph* in 1877 has made the general consumer aware of *stereo* and *stereophonic*, *quad* and *quadraphonic*, *tweeter*, *woofer*, *tape deck*, *reel-to-reel*, and *compact disc* or *CD*.

The first electronic digital computers date from World War II, and a few terms have been in general use since then. New meanings of *program*, *language*, *memory*, and *hardware* are familiar to people who have never used a computer. With the widespread manufacturing and marketing of personal computers during the 1980s, a much larger number of English speakers found the need for computer terms in their daily work: *PC* itself, *RAM* (*random-access memory*), *ROM* (*read-only memory*), *DOS* (*disk operating system*), *microprocessor*, *byte*, *cursor*, *modem*, *software*, *hacker*, *hard-wired*, *download*, and new meanings of *read*, *write*, *mouse*, *terminal*, *chip*, *network*, *workstation*, *windows*, and *virus*. The use of *bug* for a problem in running a computer program is sometimes traced in computer lore to an actual moth residing in the Mark II at Harvard in 1945. It was discovered by Grace Hopper and is taped in the logbook for September 9, 1945. As it turns out, however, the 1972 Supplement to the *OED* records *bug* for a problem in technology as early as 1889, by Thomas Edison working on his phonograph. Admiral Hopper may have a stronger claim to the first use of *debug*.

214. *The World Wars.*

As another example of how great developments or events leave their mark upon language we may observe some of the words that came into English between 1914 and 1918 as a direct consequence of World War I. Some of these were military terms representing new methods of warfare, such as *air raid*, *antiaircraft gun*, *tank*, and *blimp*. *Gas mask* and *liaison officer* were new combinations with a military significance. *Camouflage* was borrowed from French, where it had formerly been a term of the scene-painter's craft, but it caught the popular fancy and was soon used half facetiously for various forms of disguise or misrepresentation. Old words were in some cases adapted to new uses. *Sector* was used in the sense of a specific portion of the fighting line; *barrage*, originally an artificial barrier like a dam in a river, designated a protective screen of heavy artillery or machine-gun fire; *dud*, a general word for any counterfeit thing, was specifically applied to a shell that did not explode; and *ace* acquired the meaning of a crack airman, especially one who had brought down five of the enemy's planes. In a number of cases a word that had had only limited circulation in the language now came into general use. Thus *hand grenade* goes back to 1661 but attained new currency during the war. Other expressions already in the language but popularized by the war were *dugout*, *machine gun*, *periscope*, *no man's land*, and even the popular designation of an American soldier, *doughboy*, which was in colloquial use in the United States as early as 1867. *Blighty* was a popular bit of British army slang, derived from India and signifying Britain or home, and was often applied to a wound that sent a man back to Britain. Other expressions such as *slacker*, *trench foot*, *cootie*, and *war bride* were either struck off in the heat of the

moment or acquired a poignant significance from the circumstances under which they were used.

It would seem that World War II was less productive of memorable words, as it was of memorable songs. Nevertheless it made its contribution to the language in the form of certain new words, new meanings, or an increased currency for expressions that had been used before. In connection with the *air raid*, so prominent a feature of the war, we have the words and expressions *alert* (air-raid warning), *blackout*, *blitz* (German *Blitzkrieg*, literally 'lightning war'), *blockbuster*, *dive-bombing*, *evacuate*, air-raid *shelter*. The words *beachhead*, *parachutist*, *paratroop*, *landing strip*, *crash landing*, *roadblock*, *jeep*, *fox hole* (as a shelter for one or two men), *bulldozer* (an American word used in a new sense), *decontamination*, *task force* (a military or naval unit assigned to the carrying out of a particular operation), *resistance movement*, and *radar* are not in the first edition of the *OED* or its 1933 Supplement. *To spearhead* an attack, *to mop up*, and *to appease* were new verbs or old verbs with a new military or political significance. *Flak* (antiaircraft fire) was taken over from German, where it is an abbreviation of *Fliegerabwehrkanone*, 'antiaircraft gun'. *Commando*, a word that goes back to the Boer War, acquired a new and specialized meaning. Some words that were either new or that enjoyed great currency during the war—*priority*, *tooling up*, *bottleneck*, *ceiling* (upper limit), *backlog*, *stockpile*—have become a part of the vocabulary of civilian life, while *lend-lease* has passed into history. The aftermath of the war gave us such expressions as *iron curtain*, *cold war*, *fellow traveler*, *front organization*, *police state*, all with a very special connotation.

215. *Language as a Mirror of Progress.*

Words, being but symbols by which people express their ideas, are an accurate measure of the range of their thoughts at any given time. Words obviously designate the things a culture knows, and just as obviously the vocabulary of a language must keep pace with the advance of the culture's knowledge. The date when a new word enters the language is in general the date when the object, experience, observation, or whatever it is that calls it forth has entered public consciousness. Thus with a work like the *OED*, which furnishes us with dated quotations showing when the different meanings of every word have arisen and when new words first appear in the language, we could almost write the history of civilization merely from linguistic evidence. When in the early part of the nineteenth century we find growing up a word like *horsepower* or *lithograph*, we may depend upon it that some form of mechanical power that needs to be measured in familiar terms or a new process of engraving has been devised. The appearance in the language of words like *railway*, *locomotive*, *turntable* about 1835 tells us that steam railways were then coming in. In 1839 the words *photograph* and *photography* first appear, and a beginning is made toward a considerable vocabulary of special words or senses of words such as *camera*, *film*, *enlargement*, *emulsion*, *focus*, *shutter*, *light meter*. *Concrete* in the sense of a mixture of crushed stone and cement dates from 1834, but *reinforced concrete* is an expression called forth only in the twentieth century. The word *cable* occurs but a few years before the laying of the first Atlantic cable in 1857–1858. *Refrigerator* is first found in English in an American quotation of 1841. The words *emancipation* and

abolitionist have for every American specific meanings connected with the efforts to abolish slavery, efforts that culminated in the Civil War. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century an interesting story of progress is told by new words or new meanings such as *typewriter*, *telephone*, *apartment house*, *twist drill*, *drop-forging*, *blueprint*, *oilfield*, *motorcycle*, *feminist*, *fundamentalist*, *marathon* (introduced in 1896 as a result of the revival of the Olympic games at Athens in that year), *battery* and *bunt*, the last two indicating the growing popularity of professional baseball in America.

The twentieth century permits us to see the process of vocabulary growth going on under our eyes, sometimes, it would seem, at an accelerated rate. At the turn of the century we get the word *questionnaire*, and in 1906 *suffragette*. *Dictaphone*, *raincoat*, and *Thermos* became a part of the recorded vocabulary in 1907 and *free verse* in 1908. This is the period when many of the terms of aviation came in, some still current, some reflecting the aeronautics of the time—*airplane*, *aircraft*, *airman*, *monoplane*, *biplane*, *hydroplane*, *dirigible*. *Nose-dive* belongs to the period of the war. About 1910 we began talking about the *futurist* and the *postimpressionist* in art, and the *Freudian* in psychology. *Intelligentsia* as a designation for the class to which superior culture is attributed, and *bolshevik* for a holder of revolutionary political views were originally applied at the time of World War I to groups in Russia. At this time *profiteer* gained a specialized meaning. Meanwhile *foot fault*, *fairway*, *fox trot*, and *contract bridge* were indicative of popular interest in certain games and pastimes. The 1933 supplement to the *OED* records *Cellophane* (1921) and *rayon* (1924), but not *nylon*, *deep-freeze*, *air-conditioned*, or *transistor*; and it is not until the first volume of the new supplement in 1972 that the *OED* includes *credit card*, *ecosystem*, *existentialism* (1941, though in German a century earlier), *freeze-dried*, *convenience foods*, *bionics*, *electronic computer*, *automation*, *cybernetics*, *bikini*, *discotheque*. Only yesterday witnessed the birth of *biofeedback*, *power lunch*, *fractal*, *chaos theory*, and *cyberspace*. Tomorrow will witness others as the exigencies of the hour call them into being.

216. Sources of the New Words: Borrowings.

Most of the new words coming into the language since 1800 have been derived from the same sources or created by the same methods as those that have long been familiar, but it will be convenient to examine them here as an illustration of the processes by which a language extends its vocabulary. It should be remembered that the principles are not new, that what has been going on in the last century and a half could be paralleled from almost any period of the language.

As is to be expected in the light of the English disposition to borrow words from other languages in the past, many of the new words have been taken over ready-made from the people from whom the idea or the thing designated has been obtained. Thus from the French come *apéritif*, *chauffeur*, *chiffon*, *consommé*, *garage*; from Italian come *ciao*, *confetti*, and *vendetta*, and from Spanish, *bonanza*, *canyon*, *patio*, *rodeo*, *barrio*, *machismo*, and *cantina*. In the Southwestern United States and increasingly throughout the country, the dinner table is enriched and spiced by borrowings from Mexican Spanish. Although *chili* has been in the language since the seventeenth century, most of the culinary terms date from the modern period: *enchilada*, *fajita*, *jalapeño*, *nachos*, *taco*,

tortilla, tostada; and through Spanish from the Native American language Nahuatl, *guacamole* and *tamale*. German has given us *angst, festschrift, gestalt, schadenfreude, weltanschauung, zeitgeist*, and *zither*. From Russia have come *troika, vodka*, and, with momentous political and economic changes, *glasnost* and *perestroika*. *Goulash* is a Magyar word, and *robot* is from Czech. Asia is represented by *karma, loot*, and *thug* from India; *pajamas* (British *pyjamas*) from Persia; *yin, yang, t'ai chi*, and *chow mein* from China; and *geisha, haiku, Noh, sake, samurai, sayonara, shogun, sushi, soy*, and *yen* from Japan. The cosmopolitan character of the English vocabulary, already pointed out, is thus being maintained, and we shall see in the next chapter that America has added many other foreign words, particularly from Spanish and the languages of the Native Americans.

217. Self-explaining Compounds.

A second source of new words is represented in the practice of making self-explaining compounds, one of the oldest methods of word formation in the language. In earlier editions of this book such words as *fingerprint* (in its technical sense), *fire extinguisher, hitchhike, jet propulsion*, the colloquial *know-how, lipstick, steamroller, steam shovel*, and *streamline* were mentioned as being rather new. They have now passed into such common use that they no longer carry any sense of novelty. This will probably happen, indeed has already happened, to some of the more recent formations that can be noted, such as *skydiving, jet lag, house sitter, lifestyle, hatchback, greenhouse effect, acid rain, roller blades, junk food, e-mail*, and the metaphorical *glass ceiling*. Many of these betray their newness by being written with a hyphen or as separate words, or by preserving a rather strong accent on each element. They give unmistakable testimony to the fact that the power to combine existing words into new ones expressing a single concept, a power that was so prominent a feature of Old English, still remains with us.

218. Compounds Formed from Greek and Latin Elements.

The same method may be employed in forming words from elements derived from Latin and Greek. The large classical element already in the English vocabulary makes such formations seem quite congenial to the language, and this method has long been a favorite source of scientific terms. Thus *eugenics* is formed from two Greek roots, $\epsilon\upsilon$ —meaning *well*, and $\gamma\epsilon\nu$ —meaning *to be born*. The word therefore means *well-born* and is applied to the efforts to bring about well-born offspring by the selection of healthy parents. The same root enters into *genetics*, the experimental study of heredity and allied topics. In the words *stethoscope, bronchoscope, fluoroscope*, and the like we have *-scope*, which appears in *telescope*. It is a Greek word $\sigma\kappa\omicron\pi\acute{o}\varsigma$ meaning a *watcher*. Just as $\tau\eta\lambda\epsilon$ in Greek means *far* and enters into such words as *telephone, telescope, television*, and the like, so we have *stethoscope* with the first element from Greek $\sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\theta\omicron\varsigma$ (breast or chest), *bronchoscope* from Greek $\beta\rho\acute{o}\gamma\chi\omicron\varsigma$ (windpipe), and *fluoroscope* with the same

first element as in *fluorine* (from Latin *fluere*, to flow). *Panchromatic* comes from the Greek words *παν-* (all) and *χρωματικός* (relating to color), and is thus used in photography to describe a plate or film that is sensitive to all colors. An *automobile* is something that moves of itself (Greek *αὐτός* 'self' + Latin *mobilis* 'movable').

Orthodontia is from Greek *ὀρθός* 'straight' and *ὀδούς* (ὀδόντ-) 'tooth', and thus describes the branch of dentistry that endeavors to straighten irregular teeth. A few minutes spent in looking up recent scientific words in any dictionary will supply abundant illustrations of this common method of English word formation.

219. Prefixes and Suffixes.

Another method of enlarging the vocabulary is by appending familiar prefixes and suffixes to existing words on the pattern of similar words in the language. Several of the Latin prefixes seem to lend themselves readily to new combinations. Thus in the period under discussion we have formed *transoceanic*, *transcontinental*, *trans-Siberian*, *transliterate*, *transformer*, and several more or less technical terms such as *transfinite*, *transmarine*, *transpontine*, etc. We speak of *postimpressionists* in art, *postprandial* oratory, the *postclassical* period, and *postgraduate* study. In the same way we use *pre-* in such words as *prenatal*, *preschool* age, *prehistoric*, *pre-Raphaelite*, *preregistration*; we may *preheat* or *precool* in certain technical processes; and passengers who need more time may *preboard*. In film parlance we may have a *preview*, a *prerelease*, or even a *prequel*. From World War I came *counterattack* and from World War II *counterintelligence*. In his *Man and Superman* Bernard Shaw coined the word *superman* to translate the German *Übermensch* of Nietzschean philosophy. We *subirrigate* and build a *subcellar*, and foreign movies sometimes come to us with *subtitles*. We can *decode* a message, *defrost* a refrigerator, *deflate* the currency, and we may *debunk* a statement, *debug* a machine, and *decaffeinate* coffee. It is so also with suffixes. Twentieth-century popular creations on old patterns are *stardom*, *filmdom*, *fandom*, *gangster*, *pollster*, *profiteer*, *racketeer*. Familiar endings like *-some*, *-ful*, *-less* can be freely added in accordance with longstanding habits in the language.

220. Coinages.

A considerable number of new words must be attributed to deliberate invention or coinage. There has probably never been a time when the creative impulse has not spent itself occasionally in inventing new words, but their chances of general adoption are nowadays often increased by a campaign of advertising as deliberate as the effort that created them. They are mostly the product of ingenuity and imitation, the two being blended in variable proportions. Thus the trademark *Kodak*, which seems to be pure invention, was popularly used for years to refer to cameras of any brand, and *Victrola* and *Frigidaire* enjoyed something of the same currency as synonyms for *phonograph* and *refrigerator*. *Kleenex* and *Xerox* are trade terms that are often treated as common nouns, and *Zipper*, a word coined by the B.F. Goodrich Company and registered in 1925 as the

name for a boot fitted with a slide fastener, has become the universal name for the fastener itself. Words formed by combining the initial or first few letters of two or more words are known as acronyms. *Radar* (*radio detecting and ranging*) is an example, as are *scuba* (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus) and OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries).¹ In deliberate coinages there is often an analogy with some other word or words in the language. This is felt, consciously or unconsciously, to be desirable. It permits the meaning more easily to be guessed at, reveals a mild degree of ingenuity on the part of the inventor, and focuses the attention on the distinctive syllable or syllables. *Mazola* obviously refers to *maize* and *oil*, and *Sine-off* in addition to its reference to sinuses evokes associations with “signing off” in broadcasting or going to sleep. *Dictaphone* combines elements found in the words *dictate* and *telephone*, just as *travelogue* is a cross between *travel* and *dialogue*. *Bureaucrat* and *plutocrat* are obviously formed on the model of *aristocrat*, *autocrat*, etc., as *electrocute* is modeled after *execute*. Sometimes a Latin formative element is used and the new word has a rather specious classical air, as in *novocaine* from Latin *novus* (new) grafted upon the English word *cocaine*.

¹ More than 520,000 other examples have been collected in *Acronyms, Initialisms, and Abbreviations Dictionary*, ed. Jennifer Mossman (16th ed., Detroit, 1992).

Words such as *electrocute* or *travelogue* are often called *portmanteau* words, or better, *blends*.² In them two words are, as it were, telescoped into one. This was a favorite pastime of the author of *Alice in Wonderland*, and to him we owe the words *chortle*, a blending of *snort* and *chuckle*, and *snark* (snake+shark). Similarly, the tunnel beneath the English Channel is called the *Chunnel*. Often such coinages are formed with a playful or humorous intent. The *OED* records *brunch* in the year 1900. Although it was originally used facetiously in speaking of those who get up too late for breakfast and therefore combine breakfast and lunch, it is now as likely to be used for the name of a social occasion. *Paradoxology*, *alcoholiday*, *revusical*, *yellocution*, *guestimate*, *condomania*, *ecopolypse*, and the like, often reveal flashes of wit. They carry a momentary appeal, like the coinages of *Time* magazine (*cinemactress*, *cinemaddict*, *cinemagnate*), but only a few of them—*socialite* for one—are likely to find a permanent place in the language. Like epigrams they lose their luster when passed about at second hand.

221. Common Words from Proper Names.

Another source from which many English words have been derived in the past is the names of persons and places. For example, *sandwich* owes its use to the fact that the earl of Sandwich on one occasion put slices of meat between pieces of bread. Like other processes of English word derivation this can be well illustrated in the nineteenth century and later. Thus we get the word for *tabasco* sauce from the name of the Tabasco River in Mexico. *Camembert* comes from the village in France from which cheese of this type was originally exported. A *limousine* is so called from the name of a province in France, and during the 1920s the American city Charleston gave its name to a dance. The word *colt* for a certain kind of firearm is merely the name of the inventor. *Wistaria*, the vine whose most common variety is now known as *wisteria*, is named after Caspar Wistar, an American anatomist of the mid-1800s. In 1880 Captain Boycott, the agent of an Irish landowner, refused to accept rents at the figure set by the tenants. His life was threatened, his servants were forced to leave, and his figure was burnt in effigy. Hence from Ireland came the use of the verb *to boycott*, meaning to coerce a person by refusing to have, and preventing others from having, dealings with him. Similarly, *lynch law* owes its origin to Captain William Lynch of Virginia, about 1776, and in the early nineteenth century we find the verb *to lynch*. *Shrapnel* is from the name of the British general who invented the type of missile. More than 500 common words in English have been traced to proper names, and they must be con-

² See Louise Pound, *Blends: Their Relation to English Word Formation* (Heidelberg, 1914) and Garland Cannon, "Blends in English Word Formation," *Linguistics*, 24 (1986), 725–53.

sidered as illustrating one of the sources from which new words are still being derived.

222. *Old Words with New Meanings.*

The resources of the vocabulary are sometimes extended from within by employment of an old word in a new sense. We have already seen many examples of this in some of the paragraphs preceding, especially many of the words now applied to the automobile and the computer. But the process can be widely illustrated, for it is one of the commonest phenomena in language. *Skyline* formerly meant the horizon, but it is now more common in such an expression as the New York *skyline*. *Broadcast* originally had reference to seed, but its application to radio seems entirely appropriate. A *record* may be many other things than a phonograph disc, and *radiator* was used for anything that radiated heat or light before it was applied specifically to steam heat or the automobile. *Cabaret* is an old word meaning a booth or shed, and later a small drinking place. Today it signifies a certain type of nightclub. We *sign off* or *stand by* in broadcasting, *take off* in an airplane, *kick off* in football, *call up* on the telephone, and in each of these cases we convey a specific, often technical meaning, quite different from the sense that these expressions previously had.

A certain amount of experimenting with words is constantly going on, and at times the new use of a word may meet with opposition. Many people still object to the use of *contact* as a verb, and *impact* has drawn similar criticism (as in "The needs of industry have impacted the university's graduate program"). The shift in transitivity of verbs often meets with resistance: *transform* as intransitive ("He transformed into a hero") or *commit* as intransitive ("The player wouldn't commit to the team"). It is well to remember that Swift objected to *behave* without the reflexive pronoun. Time will decide the fate of these words, but whether or not the new uses establish themselves in the language, they must be considered as exemplifying a well-recognized phenomenon in the behavior of words.

223. *The Influence of Journalism.*

In the introduction and popularizing of new words journalism has been a factor of steadily increasing importance. Newspapers and popular magazines not only play a large part in spreading new locutions among the people but are themselves fertile producers of new words. Reporters necessarily write under pressure and have not long to search for the right word. In the heat of the moment they are likely as not to strike off a new expression or wrench the language to fit their ideas. In their effort to be interesting and racy they adopt an informal and colloquial style, and many of the colloquialisms current in popular speech find their way into writing first in the magazine and the newspaper. In this way we have come to *back* a horse or a candidate, to *boost* our community, *comb* the woods for a criminal, *hop* the Atlantic, *oust* a politician, and *spike* a rumor, and we speak of a *probe*, a *cleanup*, a business *deal*, a *go-between*. Sportswriters are often hard pressed to avoid monotony in their descriptions of similar contests day after day, and in their desire to be picturesque they seldom feel any scruple about introducing the latest slang in their

particular field of interest. Many an expression originating in the sports page has found its way into general use. We owe *neck and neck* and *out of the running* to the race track, and *sidestep*, *down and out*, *straight from the shoulder*, and many other expressions to boxing. In America we owe *caught napping* and *off base* to baseball. If some of these locutions are older than the newspaper, there can be no question but that today much similar slang is given currency through this medium. Several magazines make the use of verbal novelties a feature of their style with puns, rhymes, coinages (*nobility* for winners of a Nobel prize, *jeerworthy*), strings of hyphenated words (from one short review: *zillion-dollar*, *double-dome*, *dimbulbed*, *dog-stealing*, *summer-stocked*), and many other examples of the search for novelty.

224. Changes of Meaning.

It is necessary to say something about the way in which words gradually change their meaning. That words do undergo such change is a fact readily perceived, and it can be illustrated from any period of the language. That we should choose to illustrate it by more or less recent examples is a matter merely of convenience. Differences of meaning are more readily perceived when they affect current use. It should be clearly recognized, however, that the tendencies here discussed are universal in their application and are not confined to the twentieth century or to the English language. They will be found at work in every language and at all times. The branch of linguistic study that concerns itself with the meanings of words and the way meanings develop is known as *semantics*.

It has been observed that in their sense development, words often pursue certain well-marked tendencies. Among the more common of these are *extension* of meaning, *narrowing* of meaning, *degeneration*, and *regeneration*. By *extension of meaning* is meant the widening of a word's signification until it covers much more than the idea originally conveyed. The tendency is sometimes called *generalization*. The word *lovely*, for example, means primarily worthy to be loved, and *great* means large in size, the opposite of *small*. But today *lovely* and *great* have no such meaning. A box of candy or a chair may be *lovely*, and anything from a ball game to the weather may be *great*. When a college student says that a certain book is *great*, it is more than likely that the statement has nothing to do with the value of the book judged as a work of art but simply means that he or she thoroughly enjoyed it. In everyday use these words have come to express only enthusiastic approval of a rather vague sort. The word *proposition* primarily means a statement set forth for purposes of discussion, or in mathematics, for demonstration. It was so used by Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address: "a new nation...dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." But in America during the last century it began to be used more loosely. Owen Wister says in *The Virginian*, "Proposition in the West does, in fact, mean whatever you at the moment please." "That's a different *proposition*" expresses an idea that in more formal English becomes "That's a different matter" (an equally general word). The word is often accompanied by an adjective: *a tough proposition*; *he was the coolest proposition I ever met*. All of these uses are distinctly colloquial and are not accepted in England, but they illustrate the principle of generalization. A more acceptable illustration is the word *dean*. It has, of course, its proper meanings, such as the head of the chapter in a cathedral church or the head of the

faculty in a college. But it has come to be used as a designation for the senior or foremost person of any group or class, so that we may speak of the *dean* of American critics or, indeed, of sportswriters.

The opposite tendency is for a word gradually to acquire a more *restricted* sense, or to be chiefly used in one special connection. A classic example of this practice is the word *doctor*. There are doctors (i.e., learned men and women) in theology, law, and many other fields beside medicine, but nowadays when we send for *the* doctor we mean a member of only one profession. In some of the preceding paragraphs, especially that in which were presented examples of old words in new meanings, will be found a number of similar instances. The verb to *park* as applied to automobiles and the war word *tank* are cases in point. The use of a word in a restricted sense does not preclude its use also in other meanings. There was a time in the 1890s when the word *wheel* suggested to most people a bicycle, but it could still be used of the wheel of a cart or a carriage. Often the restricted sense of a word belongs to a special or class vocabulary. An *enlargement* means to a photographer a large print made from a small negative, and in educational circles a *senior* is a member of the graduating class. Consequently, it sometimes happens that the same word will acquire different restricted meanings for different people. The word *gas* is an inclusive term for the chemist, but it calls up a more restricted idea in the kitchen and a still different one in the garage. Narrowing of meaning may be confined to one locality under the influence of local conditions. *Nickel* in America means a coin, and for a number of years the word *prohibition* in this country generally suggested the prohibition of alcohol. In the same way the terms *democrat* and *republican* seldom have their broader significance to an American but rather imply adherence to one or the other of the two chief political parties in the United States.

Degeneration of meaning may take several forms. It may take the form of the gradual extension to so many senses that any particular meaning which a word may have had is completely lost. This is one form of generalization already illustrated in the words *lovely* and *great*.³ *Awful* and *terrible* have undergone a similar deterioration. In other cases a word has retained a very specific meaning but a less favorable one than it originally had. Phillips in his *New World of Words* (1658) defines *garble* as "to purifie, to sort out the bad from the good, an expression borrowed from Grocers, who are said to garble their Spices, i.e. to purifie them from the dross and dirt." The word was still used in this sense

³ Chesterfield has an interesting comment on this development in the word *vast* in his time: "Not contented with enriching our language by words absolutely new, my fair countrywomen have gone still farther, and improved it by the application and extension of old ones to various and very different significations. They take a word and change it, like a guinea into shillings for pocket-money, to be employed in the several occasional purposes of the day. For instance, the adjective *vast*, and its adverb *vastly*, mean anything, and are the fashionable words of the most fashionable people. A fine woman, under this head I comprehend all fine gentlemen too, not knowing in truth where to place them properly, is *vastly* obliged, or *vastly* offended, *vastly* glad, or *vastly* sorry. Large objects are *vastly* great, small ones are *vastly* little; and I had lately the pleasure to hear a fine woman pronounce, by a happy metonymy, a very small gold snuff-box that was produced in company to be *vastly* pretty, because it was *vastly* little." (*The World*, No. 101, December 5, 1754.)

down through the eighteenth century and even beyond. But in the time of Johnson it occasionally carried the implication of selecting in an unfair or dishonest way, and as used today it always signifies the intentional or unintentional mutilation of a statement so that a different meaning is conveyed from that intended. *Smug* was originally a good word, meaning neat or trim; its present suggestion of objectionable self-satisfaction seems to have grown up during the nineteenth century. The same thing is true of *vulgar* in the meaning bordering on obscene, and of *pious* in its contemptuous sense. *Amateur* and *dilettante* now imply inexpertness or superficiality, although the former word still conveys a favorable idea when applied to athletics. In England one speaks only of *insects*, since the word *bug* has degenerated to the specialized meaning “bedbug.” A very interesting form of degeneration often occurs in words associated with things that it is not considered polite to talk about. In 1790 the satirist Peter Pindar wrote:

I’ve heard that breeches, petticoats and smock,
Give to thy modest mind a grievous shock
And that thy brain (so lucky its device)
Christ’neeth them *inexpressibles* so nice.⁴

Thus the common word for a woman’s undergarment down to the eighteenth century was *smock*. It was then replaced by the more delicate word *shift*. In the nineteenth century the same motive led to the substitution of the word *chemise*, and in the late twentieth century, after various other euphemisms have come and gone, including *combinations* and *step-ins*, the usual words are *bra*, *panties*, and *slip* (the last of which referred to an outer garment in the eighteenth century and an undergarment as early as the mid-nineteenth). Changing attitudes toward this part of the vocabulary may halt the process of degeneration and give a longer life to those terms currently in use.

⁴ *Roland for Oliver*.

If words sometimes go downhill, they also undergo the opposite process, known as *regeneration*. Words like *budge*, *coax*, *nonplus*, *shabby*, *squabble*, *stingy*, *tiff*, *touchy*, *wobbly*, which were recorded with proper disparagement by Dr. Johnson, have since passed into the standard speech. In the eighteenth century *snob* and *sham* were slang, but in the nineteenth they attained respectability, the former word partly through the influence of Thackeray. The word *sturdy* originally meant harsh, rough, or intractable. We now use it in a wholly complimentary sense. Even the word *smock*, which was mentioned above as losing caste in the eighteenth century, has now been rehabilitated as applied to an outer garment. We use it for a certain type of woman's dress and we speak of an artist's smock. The changes of meaning that words undergo are but another evidence of the constant state of flux that characterizes the living language.

225. *Slang.*

All the types of semantic change discussed in the preceding paragraph could be illustrated from that part of the vocabulary which at any given time is considered slang. It is necessary to say "at any given time" not only because slang is fleeting and the life of a slang expression likely to be short, but also because what is slang today may have been in good use yesterday and may be accepted in the standard speech of tomorrow. Slang has been aptly described as "a peculiar kind of vagabond language, always hanging on the outskirts of legitimate speech, but continually straying or forcing its way into the most respectable company."⁵ Yet it is a part of language and cannot be ignored. One of the developments that must certainly be credited to the nineteenth century is the growth of a more objective and scientific attitude toward this feature of language. The word *slang* does not occur in Johnson's *Dictionary*. It first occurs a few years later and in its early use always has a derogatory force. Webster in 1828 defines it as "low, vulgar, unmeaning language." But the definition in the *Oxford Dictionary*, expressing the attitude of 1911, is very different: "Language of a highly colloquial type, below the level of standard educated speech, and consisting either of new words, or of current words employed in some special sense." Here slang goes from being "unmeaning language" to having a "special sense," and it is treated frankly as a scientific fact.

One reason why slang cannot be ignored even by the strictest purist is that it has not infrequently furnished expressions that the purist uses without suspecting their origin. Even students of language are constantly surprised when they come across words that they use naturally and with entire propriety but find questioned or condemned by writers of a generation or a few generations before. The expression *what on earth* seems to us an idiomatic intensive and certainly would not be objected to in the speech of anyone today. But De Quincey condemned it as slang and expressed horror at hearing it used by a government official. The word *row* in the sense of a disturbance or commotion was slang in the eighteenth century and described by Todd (1818) as "a very low expression," but

⁵ Greenough and Kittredge, *Words and Their Ways in English Speech* (New York, 1901), p. 55.

today we find it in the works of reputable writers as a word that fittingly suggests the qualities of a vulgar brawl. *Boom*, *slump*, *crank*, and *fad*, in becoming respectable, have acquired an exact and sometimes technical meaning. Even the harmless word *joke* was once slang.

In surveying contemporary English, not only do we have to consider the slang that has lifted itself into the level of educated speech but we must recognize the part played by slang in its own character. For there is hardly a person who does not make use of it upon occasion. Slang results from an instinctive desire for freshness and novelty of expression. Naturally the less a person is inclined to submit to the restraints imposed by a formal standard, the more ready he or she is to accept indiscriminately the newest slang locution. *To criticize* seems to the person in the street tame and colorless, if not stilted, so *to bad-mouth* is substituted. For the same reason a person who fails to keep an engagement with another person *stands him up*. Since novelty is a quality that soon wears off, slang has to be constantly renewed. *Vamoose*, *skedaddle*, *twenty-three skiddoo*, *beat it*, *scram*, *buzz off* have all had their periods of popularity in the twentieth century as expressions of roughly the same idea, usually in imperative form. It can hardly be denied that some slang expressions, while they are current, express an idea that it would be difficult to convey by other means. *Nerd*, *geek*, *dweeb*, *dork*, *bimbo*, and *scumbag* undoubtedly owe their popularity to some merit that is recognized by a sure instinct among the people. It is sometimes difficult to define the precise quality that makes an expression slang. It is often not in the word itself, but in the sense in which it is used. *Put down* is proper enough if we speak of soldiers who put down a rebellion, but it is slang when we speak of a remark that *put someone down* or refer to the remark as a *put-down*.

It is dangerous to generalize about the relative prominence of slang in this and former times. But it would seem as though the role it plays today is greater than it has been at certain times in the past, say in the Elizabethan age or the eighteenth century, to judge by the conversation of plays and popular fiction. The cultivation of slang has become a feature of certain types of popular writing. We think of men like George Ade, who wrote *Fables in Slang*, or Ring Lardner or O. Henry. They are not only the creators of locutions that have become part of the slang of the day, but they have popularized this outer fringe of the colloquial and given it greater currency. It would certainly be an incomplete picture of the language of today that failed to include slang as a present feature and a source from which English will doubtless continue to be fed in the future.

226. Cultural Levels and Functional Varieties.⁶

The discussion of slang has clearly indicated that there is more than one type of speech. Within the limits of any linguistic unity there are as many language levels as there are groups of people thrown together by propinquity and common interests. Beyond the limits of the general language there are local and class dialects, technical and occupational vocabularies, slang, and other forms of speech. Even within the region of

⁶ For the distinction, see John S. Kenyon, "Cultural Levels and Functional Varieties of English," *College English*, 10 (1948), 1–6. For a criticism of the distinction, see William Labov, *The Study of Nonstandard English* (Champaign, IL, 1970), pp. 22–28.

the common language from which these are diverging forms it is possible to distinguish at least three broad types.

Occupying a sort of middle ground is the *spoken standard*. It is the language heard in the conversation of educated people. It is marked by conformity to the rules of grammar and to certain considerations of taste that are not easily defined but are present in the minds of those who are conscious of their speech. Whatever its dialectal coloring or qualities varying with the particular circumstances involved, it is free from features that are regarded as substandard in the region. To one side of this spoken standard lies the domain of the *written standard*. This is the language of books, and it ranges from the somewhat elevated style of poetry to that of simple but cultivated prose. It may differ both in vocabulary and idiom from the spoken standard, although the two frequently overlap. When we say *big time* and write *to a superlative degree* we are making a conscious choice between these two functional varieties. In the other direction we pass from one cultural level to another, from the spoken standard to the region of *popular* or *illiterate speech*. This is the language of those who are ignorant of or indifferent to the ideals of correctness by which the educated are governed. It is especially sympathetic to all sorts of neologisms and generally is rich in slang.

While the three types—the literary standard, the spoken standard, and popular speech—are easily recognized, it is not possible to draw a sharp line of demarcation between them. To a certain extent they run into one another. The spoken standard itself covers a wide range of usage. In speech suitable to formal occasions the spoken standard approaches the written standard, whereas in easy and relaxed conversation it may tend in the direction of its more unconventional neighbor. Some interchange between one type and the next is constantly going on. The written and the spoken standards have been drawing appreciably closer, possibly because reading is such a widespread accomplishment today, possibly because we have come to feel that the simplest and best prose is that which most resembles the easy and natural tone of cultivated speech. In the same way words and locutions current among the masses sometimes find their way into the lower reaches of the spoken standard. This is particularly true of slang. One may reason that when slang is acceptable to those who in general conform to the spoken standard it should no longer be called slang. But such a conclusion is hardly justified. It is better to hold that there are different levels in slang, and that some use of slang is rhetorically effective in the conversation of most educated speakers.

It is necessary to recognize that from a linguistic point of view each of the varieties—whether of cultural level or degree of formality—has its own right to exist. If we judge them simply on their capacity to express ideas clearly and effectively, we must admit that one kind of English is seldom superior to another. *I seen it* and *I knowed it* may not conform to the standard of correctness demanded of cultivated speech, but these expressions convey their meaning just as clearly as the standard forms and historically are no worse than dozens of others now in accepted use. Likewise much could be said, historically and logically, for *ain't* and the double negative. It is rather in their social implications that the varieties of English differ. The difference between the spoken standard and popular speech is in their association with broadly different classes. As Bernard Shaw once remarked, "People know very well that certain sorts of speech cut off a person for ever from getting more than three or four pounds a week all their life long—

sorts of speech which make them entirely impossible in certain professions.” Statements such as Shaw’s reporting a bias against certain ways of speaking and the practical economic effect of that bias have been made by enlightened linguists who do not share the bias at all and who aim to remedy its practical effect. However, the topic is fraught with pitfalls for well-meaning observers and authorities, and the movement for bidialectalism during the 1960s was criticized on these grounds.⁷ James Milroy cites ostensibly objective studies of linguistic variation and says of their treatment: “This has the effect of marginalizing non-standard vernaculars—appearing to present them as abnormal or pathological language states—when the majority of human beings throughout history must have used varieties that were, to a greater or lesser extent, nonstandard.”⁸ Thus, the tendency of the historical linguist is often to present the development of the language retrospectively as a uniform dialect proceeding in a straight line toward Received Standard English. The implicit ideology of the dispassionate and scientific study of the language may inadvertently reinforce the very bias that the linguists criticize as naïve and unfortunate. The irony is especially acute if the speaker of the standard variety happens to be pretentious or prolix. Listeners even of the same social class may find the speech of one who employs language of the literary variety in their conversation, who talks like a book, an obstacle to free intercourse, because they associate such language with stiff and pedantic qualities of mind or a lack of social ease. In this case what is objected to has clearly nothing to do with the question of correctness. It is a question merely of appropriateness to the occasion. As in numerous other linguistic matters, we have come in recent times to look upon the different types of speech more tolerantly, to recognize them as one of the phenomena of language. We do not expect (or wish) people to talk like Matthew Arnold, and we do not include in a sweeping condemnation all those who fail to conform to the spoken standard of the educated. In recent years a sometimes strident discussion among linguists and sociologists has dealt with the relations between the standard dialects of the middle classes and the nonstandard dialects of lower socioeconomic groups. African American Vernacular English in the United States presents especially vexed questions for the educational system and society as a whole (see § 250.8). The issues are finally economic, political, and psychological in a debate that seems far from arriving at a satisfactory resolution.

227. *The Standard Speech.*

The spoken standard or, as it is called in Britain, *Received Pronunciation*, often abbreviated RP, is something that varies in different parts of the English-speaking world. In Britain it is a type of English perhaps best exemplified in the speech of those educated in the great public schools but spoken also with a fair degree of uniformity by cultivated

⁷ See James Sledd, “Bi-dialectalism: The Linguistics of White Supremacy,” *English Journal*, 58 (1969), 1307–15; and Rosina Lippi-Green, *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology, and Discrimination in the United States* (London, 1997).

⁸ *Linguistic Variation and Change* (Oxford, UK, 1992), p. 52.

people in all parts of the country. It is a class rather than a regional dialect. This is not the same as the spoken standard of the United States or Canada or Australia. The spread of English to many parts of the world has changed our conception of what constitutes Standard English. The growth of countries like the United States and Canada and the political independence of countries that were once British colonies force us to admit that the educated speech of these vast areas is just as "standard" as that of London or Oxford. It is perhaps inevitable that people will feel a preference for the pronunciation and forms of expression that they are accustomed to, but to criticize the British for omitting many of their *r*'s or the Americans for pronouncing them betrays an equally unscientific provincialism irrespective of which side of the Atlantic indulges in the criticism. The hope is sometimes expressed that we might have a world standard to which all parts of the English-speaking world would try to conform. So far as the spoken language is concerned it is too much to expect that the marked differences of pronunciation that distinguish the speech of, let us say, Britain, Australia, India, and the United States will ever be reduced to one uniform mode. We must recognize that in the last 200 years English has become a cosmopolitan tongue and must cultivate a cosmopolitan attitude toward its various standard forms.⁹

228. *English Dialects.*

In addition to the educated standard in each major division of the English-speaking world there are local forms of the language known as regional dialects. In the newer countries where English has spread in modern times these are not so numerous or so pronounced in their individuality as they are in the British Isles. The English introduced into the colonies was a mixture of dialects in which the peculiarities of each were fused in a common speech. Except perhaps in the United States, there has scarcely been time for new regional differences to grow up, and although one region is sometimes separated from another by the breadth of a continent, the improvements in transportation and communication have tended to keep down differences that might otherwise have arisen. But in Great Britain such differences are very great. They go back to the earliest period of the language and reflect conditions that prevailed at a time when travel was difficult and communication was limited between districts relatively close together. Even among the educated the speech of northern England differs considerably from that of the south. In words such as *butter*, *cut*, *gull*, and *some* the southern vowel [ʌ] occurs in the north as [U], and in *chaff*, *grass*, and *path* the southern retracted vowel [ɑ:] occurs as short [a] in northern dialects. In the great Midland district one distinguishes an eastern variety and a western, as well as a central type lying between. But such a classification of the English

⁹The issues are clearly presented and debated by Randolph Quirk, "Language Varieties and Standard Language," *English Today*, 21 (1990), 3–10, and Braj B. Kachru, "Liberation Linguistics and the 'Quirk Concern,'" *English Today*, 25 (1991), 3–13.

dialects is sufficient only for purposes of a broad grouping. Every county has its own peculiarities, and sometimes as many as three dialectal regions may be distinguished within the boundaries of a single shire. This wide diversity of dialects is well illustrated by the materials published since 1962 in the *Survey of English Dialects*. In the six northern counties at least seventeen different vowels or diphthongs occur in the word *house*, including the [u:] of Old English *hūs*.¹⁰

The dialect of southern Scotland has claims to special consideration on historical and literary grounds. In origin it is a variety of Northern English, but down to the sixteenth century it occupied a position both in speech and in writing on a plane with English. In the time of Shakespeare, however, it began to be strongly influenced by Southern English. This influence has been traced in part to the Reformation, which brought in the Bible and other religious works from the south, in part to the renaissance of English literature. The most important factor, however, was probably the growing importance of England and the role of London as the center of the English-speaking world. When in 1603 James VI of Scotland became the king of England as James I, and when by the Act of Union in 1707 Scotland was formally united to England, English was plainly felt to be standard, and Scots became definitely a dialect. During the eighteenth century it managed to maintain itself as a literary language through the work of Ramsay, Ferguson, and Robert Burns. Since then it has gradually lost ground. English is taught in the schools, and cultivation of English has, rightly or wrongly, been taken as the first test of culture. The ambitious have avoided the native dialect as a mark of lowly birth, and those who have a patriotic or sentimental regard for this fine old speech have long been apprehensive of its ultimate extinction.¹¹ Prompted in part by this concern, three major linguistic projects have focused on Scottish speech. *A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* records the language before 1700, *The Scottish National Dictionary* after that year. In addition, the Linguistic Survey of Scotland, which collected information since 1949 on both Scots and Gaelic, has published the three volumes of its *Atlas*.¹²

The characteristics of this dialect are known to most people through the poetry of Robert Burns:

O ye wha are sae guid yoursel,
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell

¹⁰ Orton and Dieth, eds., *Survey of English Dialects*, 1, part 2, 459. See also two studies deriving from the *Survey*: Eduard Kolb, *Phonological Atlas of the Northern Region* (Bern, Switzerland, 1966), and Harold Orton and Nathalia Wright, *A Word Geography of England* (London, 1974).

¹¹ See an interesting address by the philologist most responsible for Scottish lexicography in the twentieth century, Sir William Craigie, "The Present State of the Scottish Tongue," in *The Scottish Tongue* (London, 1924), pp. 1–46. The survival of the dialect now appears unlikely. Cf. David Murison, "The Scots Tongue—the Folk-Speech," *Folklore*, 75 (1964), 37–47.

¹² See Angus McIntosh, *An Introduction to a Survey of Scottish Dialects* (Edinburgh, 1952). and J.Y. Mather and H.H. Snettel, eds., *The Linguistic Atlas of Scotland* (London,

1975–1986).

Your Neebour's fauts and folly!
 Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill, [well-going]
 Supply'd wi' store o' water,
 The heapet happer's ebbing still, [heaped hopper]
 And still the clap plays clatter.

Here we see some of the characteristic differences of pronunciation, *wha*, *whase*, *sae*, *weel*, *neebour*, *guid*, etc. These could easily be extended from others of his songs and poems, which all the world knows, and the list would include not only words differently pronounced but many an old word no longer in use south of the Tweed. Familiar examples are *ain* (own), *auld* (old), *lang* (long), *bairn* (child), *bonnie* (beautiful), *braw* (handsome), *dinna* (do not), *fash* (trouble oneself), *icker* (ear of grain), *maist* (almost), *muckle* (much, great), *syne* (since), *unco* (very).

Irish English, or Hiberno-English, has also left its mark on the literary tradition, although in different ways at different periods. In the eighteenth century, "stage Irish" was a familiar convention for representing and often ridiculing Irish characters in plays written by English authors whose use of stereotypical linguistic features was not always accurate. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Irish authors, especially Douglas Hyde (1860–1940), J.M.Synge (1871–1909), and W.B.Yeats (1865–1939), used selected features to give an Irish flavor to their works. In the twentieth century there has been a more realistic tradition, including the work of Sean O'Casey (1880–1964) and Brendan Behan (1923–1964) and the use by James Joyce (1882–1941) of carefully collected dialect phrases in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*.¹³ The distinctiveness of Irish English derives from a mixture of three sources: the influence of the Irish language; the influence of Scots, especially in the Northeast; and the nature of the original English that was brought to Ireland from western England in the seventeenth century and that has remained quite conservative compared with both RP and American English. For example, Irish English is firmly rhotic in contrast with RP. Except in the Scots-Irish district of Ulster, the English language in Ireland has not preserved so many old words as have survived in Scotland. But the language of the southern part of the island has an exuberance of vocabulary that recalls the lexical inventiveness of Elizabethan times, the period during which English began to spread rapidly in Ireland. The vocabulary has been influenced also by Irish (*blarney*, *galore*, *smithereens*, and many other examples of the

¹³ See Alan Bliss, *Spoken English in Ireland 1600–1740* (Dublin, 1979), pp. 312–26, and Michael V.Barry, "The English Language in Ireland," in *English as a World Language*, ed. R.W.Bailey and M.Görlach (Ann Arbor, MI, 1982), pp. 92–93.

diminutive ending *-een*, from the Irish diminutive ending *-in*, which may be added to any English word: *maneen*, *boyeen*, *girleen*). Although different varieties of Hiberno-English are distinguished, especially in the north and the south, certain peculiarities of pronunciation are fairly general. Dialect stories make use of spellings such as *tay* (tea), *desaive* (deceive), *foine* (fine), *projuce* (produce), *fisht* (fist), *butther* (butter), *thru* (true), and the like. As an instance of *sh* for *s* before a long *u*, P.W.Joyce quotes the remark of one Dan Kiely “That he was now looking out for a wife that would *shoot* him.”¹⁴

Syntactic structures in Hiberno-English often reflect the patterns of the Irish language.¹⁵ The present perfect and past perfect tenses of English (*have got*, *had got*), which have no equivalents in Irish, can be expressed using *after*, the verb *to be*, and the present participle: *He said that he knew that I was after getting lost* (“...that I had got lost”). Irish also does not have the equivalent of indirect questions introduced by *if* and *whether*; instead of the declarative word order of Standard English, these sentences have the interrogative word order that is found in other varieties of English, including African American Vernacular English (see § 250): *He wanted to see would he get something to eat*. The influence of the Irish prepositional system upon Hiberno-English is evident in the use of *with* instead of *for* meaning “for the duration of”: *He’s dead now with many a year*; *He didn’t come back with twenty-eight years*. The lack of an expression for *no one* in Irish, explains why *anyone* is used where *no one* is expected in Standard English: *Anyone doesn’t go to mass there*.

229. English World-Wide.

In the various parts of the former British Empire, as in the United States, the English language has developed differences that distinguish it from the language of England. In Australasia, Africa, South Asia, and Canada, peculiarities of pronunciation and vocabulary have grown up that mark off national and areal varieties from the dialect of the mother country and from one another. These peculiarities are partly such as arise in communities separated by time and space, and are partly due to the influence of a new environment. In some countries the most striking changes are the result of imperfect learning and systematic adaptations by speakers of other languages. Differences of nature and material civilization, and generally contact with some foreign tongue, are clearly reflected in the vocabulary.

1. Australia and New Zealand.

In Australia it has been well said, “It is probably not too much to say that there never was an instance in history when

¹⁴ *English as We Speak It in Ireland* (Dublin, 1910), p. 96.

¹⁵ An illuminating treatment of Hiberno-English syntax, from which the following examples are taken, is A. Lunny, “Linguistic Interaction: English and Irish in Ballyvourney, West Cork,” in

Aspects of English Dialects in Ireland, 1, ed. Michael V. Barry (Belfast, 1981), pp. 118–41. See also P.L. Henry, *An Anglo-Irish Dialect of North Roscommon* (Dublin, 1957).

so many new words were needed, and that there never will be again, for never did settlers come, nor can they ever come again, upon Flora and Fauna so completely different from anything seen by them before. An oak in America is still a *Quercus*, not as in Australia a *Casuarina*. But with the whole tropical region intervening it was to be expected that in the South Temperate Zone many things would be different, and such expectation was amply fulfilled.”¹⁶ Australian English uses many words that would not be understood in England or America. Some of these are old words that have acquired new meanings by being applied to new things. Thus the term *robin* is used for various birds not known in Europe. The word *jackass* (shortened from *laughing jackass*) means a bird whose cry is like a donkey’s bray. Other words have been borrowed from the aboriginal languages of Australia and from Maori in New Zealand. *Kangaroo* and *boomerang* have become general English, but *wombat* is still chiefly Australian because it is the name of an Australian animal.¹⁷ The Australian calls a rowdy street loafer a *larrikan*. A *swagman* is a man traveling through the *bush* (back country) carrying a *swag* (tramp’s bundle). Where an American talks of a *ranch*, the Australian speaks of a *station* and, like us, distinguishes between a *sheep station* and a *cattle station*. A *boundary rider* is one who patrols an estate and keeps the owner informed concerning every part of it. The English of Australia not only is characterized by interesting differences of vocabulary but varies strikingly in pronunciation from the received standard of England. The accent of the majority of Australians has characteristics often associated with Cockney, especially in the quality of the vowels and diphthongs that occur in the words *say*, *so*, *beat*, *boot*, *high*, and *how*.¹⁸ Because an Australian’s pronunciation of *hay* may register on an American as *high*, or *basin* as *bison*, these systematic differences have been the source of misunderstandings between speakers of General Australian and speakers of other national varieties, though not among speakers of General Australian themselves. Within Australia there are possible difficulties in the different patterns of General Australian, the dialect of the great majority, and Cultivated Australian, a minority accent that approaches the received standard of England.¹⁹ Social varieties such as these, and Broad Australian at the uncultivated extreme of the scale, are the only significant dialectal differences in a country where regional variations are negligible. The distinctive characteris-

¹⁶ E.E. Morris, *Austral English: A Dictionary of Australasian Words, Phrases and Usages* (London, 1898), p. xii.

¹⁷ Of course, this has not prevented *kangaroo* from gaining general currency.

¹⁸ For important differences with Cockney, see A.G. Mitchell, *The Pronunciation of English in Australia*, rev. ed. with Arthur Delbridge (Sydney, 1965), pp. 7–8.

¹⁹ See A.G. Mitchell and Arthur Delbridge, *The Speech of Australian Adolescents: A Survey* (Sydney, 1965), pp. 37, 83.

tics of General Australian pronunciation and the uniformity of the dialect throughout the continent are attributed to the circumstance that the early settlers were deported prisoners and adventurers often drawn from the lower classes of England (cf. § 207). Although detailed information about the dialects spoken by these settlers is lacking, it is clear that the predominant varieties were lower-class urban dialects of southeastern England. In Australia the constant moving of convicts from place to place brought about the development of a mixed dialect that became homogeneous throughout the settled territory and distinct from any of the British dialects that contributed to the mixture. The English of Australia offers an interesting example of the changes that take place in a language transplanted to a remote and totally different environment.

2. South Africa.

The same thing is true in a somewhat different way of Africa, the most multilingual continent on earth. The present Republic of South Africa had been occupied successively by the Bushmen, Hottentots, Bantus, Portuguese, and Dutch before the English settlers came. From all these sources, but especially from Dutch and its South African development, Afrikaans, the English language has acquired elements. A few words that occurred earlier in peculiarly South African contexts have passed into the general English vocabulary. In addition to *apartheid* and *veldt* (or *veld*), which retain their original associations, British and American speakers use *commando*, *commandeer*, and *trek* in contexts that no longer reflect their South African history. The great majority of Afrikanerisms (i.e., words and expressions borrowed from Dutch and Afrikaans) would still be generally meaningless in other parts of the English-speaking world yet are quite common in the daily life of South Africans. A recently compiled list of words and phrases that South Africans themselves consider to be characteristic of their variety of English includes *biltong* (strips of dried meat), *braaivleis* (a barbecue), *donga* (ravine), *gogga* (insect), *koeksisters* (a confection), *kopje* (hill), *lekker* (nice), *mealies* (Indian corn), *ou* (fellow, U.S. guy), *spruit* (gully), *stoep* (verandah, U.S. *stoop*), and *veldskoen* (hide-shoes).²⁰ As in Australian English, a number of good English words are used in quite new senses. South African racial policies gave a new meaning to *location* as an area in which black Africans are required to live. *Lands* in South Africa are just those portions of a farm that can be used for cultivation of crops, *camp* refers to the fenced-in portion of a farm, and the *leopard* (Afrikaans *tier*, from *tyger*) is sometimes called a

²⁰ William Branford, "Aardvark to Zwarthout: Social and Historical Aspects of the South African English Vocabulary," in *Seven Studies in English*, ed. Gildas Roberts (Cape Town and London, 1971), p. 134.

tiger.²¹ *Cookies* (small cakes) is the same as our word, which we also learned from the Dutch. *Divide* (watershed) is said to be borrowed from American use, and *upcountry* is used much as we use it in the eastern states. The use of *with* without an object (*Can I come with?*) can be found dialectally in this country, but we do not say "He threw me over the hedge with a rock" (i.e., "He threw a stone over the hedge and hit me"), a syntactic pattern that occurs in the English speech of Afrikaners and in the spoken language of relatively uneducated English speakers. Occasionally an old word now lost to Standard English in Britain has been preserved in South Africa, although this does not seem to have happened so often as in America. *Dispense* or *spens*, meaning a pantry or kitchen cupboard, is found in Chaucer (Al vinolent as botel in the spence: *Summoner's Tale*). It was doubtless carried to South Africa from one of the English dialects. The variations of the English vocabulary in different parts of the former British Empire are so fascinating that one is tempted to pursue them at too great a length. Enough has probably been said to illustrate the individual character of many expressions in South African use. In pronunciation the English of South Africa has been much influenced by the pronunciation of Afrikaans and to a lesser extent by the speech of many Scottish schoolmasters.²² To Afrikaans it apparently owes not only the peculiar modification of certain vowels (e.g., [pen] for *pin*; [keb] for *cab*, etc.), but also its higher pitch and the tendency to omit one of two or more consonants at the end of a word (e.g., *tex* for *text*). South African shares with American English the general disposition to pronounce the *r* when it appears in the spelling and to give full value to unaccented syllables (*extraordinary*, rather than the English *extraord'n'ry*).

3. West and East Africa.

In other parts of sub-Saharan Africa that were once British colonies and are now independent countries, the English language has a complex relationship to the many African languages. Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Uganda, and other former colonies have a choice of retaining their colonial linguistic inheritance or rejecting it. In Nigeria three main African languages—Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo—and scores of languages spoken by smaller groups exist alongside English. Although only a tiny minority of the population speaks English, almost always as a second language, it is the official language of the country. Ethnic jealousies that would arise from the selection of one of the African languages, and the ad-

²¹ See also Charles Pettman, *Africanderisms: A Glossary of South African Colloquial Words and Phrases and Place and Other Names* (London, 1913), and W.S.Mackie, "Afrikanerisms," in *Standard Encyclopaedia of South Africa*, 1 (Cape Town, 1970), 188.

²² See David Hopwood, *South African English Pronunciation* (Cape Town and Johannesburg, 1928), and L.W.Lanham, *The Pronunciation of South African English* (Cape Town, 1967).

vantages of English for communication both internally and internationally, are sufficient to overcome the reluctance toward using a colonial language. Swahili is the official language in Tanzania, but government business is routinely transacted in English. Some nations have deferred making the choice of an official language and continue to use English simultaneously with one or more of the African languages. Even more complex than the choice of an official language is the question of a standard. Among speakers who learn English as a second language there will inevitably be a wide range of varieties, from pidgin at one extreme to a written standard of international acceptability at the other. Because many speakers know no English and many know only the patois of the marketplace, West African English is remarkable for its varieties. With as yet no identifiable West African standard, graders of examinations often have difficulty drawing the line between an incorrect answer and a local variant. Such practicalities illustrate the larger philosophical problem of correctness and acceptability in varieties of English that diverge markedly from the international Standard English of educated speakers in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and many speakers in the West African countries. The question of whether a West African standard will emerge, and if so, whether such a standard is desirable and should be taught, evoke a wide range of answers that reflect a bewildering diversity of opinion concerning language and its use.²³

Examples from Nigerian English illustrate the distinctions that must be made in describing a regional or national standard. We have seen differences in pronunciation among standard British dialects, and in Chapter 11 we shall see an even more basic set of differences between British English and American English. It is to be expected that the standard dialects of English throughout the world will vary according to settlement history and the local linguistic influences that are at work. In Nigeria the phonological systems of the languages spoken as first languages by the great majority of people—Yoruba and Igbo and in the South and Hausa in the North—have contributed to the distinctive Nigerian accent. Vowel harmony in Igbo, for example, causes *follow* to be pronounced with the same back vowel in both syllables: [fɔlɔ]. Hausa speakers tend to break up consonant clusters by inserting a vowel, so that *screw* becomes [s^uk^uru]. The smaller number of vowel contrasts in the

²³ Cf. the contrasting views in M.A.K. Halliday, Angus McIntosh, and Peter Stevens, *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching* (London, 1964), pp. 203–4 et passim; C.H. Prator, “The British Heresy in TEFL,” in *Language Problems of Developing Nations*, ed. Joshua A. Fishman et al. (New York, 1968), pp. 459–76; J.H. Sledd, “Un-American English Reconsidered,” *American Speech*, 48 (1973), 46–53; and K.A. Sey, *Ghanaian English: An Exploratory Survey* (London, 1973).

African languages carries over into Nigerian English, where *beat* and *bit* have the same tense vowel, distinguished if at all by length: [bi:t] *beat* and [bi:t] *bit*. The absence of the tense-lax distinction, which J.C.Wells calls “one of the most characteristic features of African English,” produces a large number of homophones in Nigerian English and in other African varieties: *leave—live, seen—sin, and Don’t sleep on the floor—Don’t slip on the floor*, all with the tense vowel.²⁴ The rarity of the central vowel [ə] and of syllabic consonants accounts for the full value of vowels in the final syllables of words—for example, *smoother* [smuθa], [smuda] (where Nigerian English, like Southern British

English, is nonrhotic), *bottle* [bɒtəl], *lesson* [lɛsən]. The rarity of reduced vowels and weak forms is typical of syllable-timed languages such as those of West Africa, in contrast with the stress-timed rhythms of English—thus, the difference between the Received Pronunciation and the West African pronunciation of the following sentence:

RP [aIv sɪn hɪm təde]

West African [aI hav si-n him tude]²⁵

Notice also the lack of a diphthong in *today*, which has the simple vowel [e] instead, a feature that is common in African English.

The usual processes that allow for expansion of vocabulary and for new meanings of words operate with especially interesting effect in countries where English is mainly a second language. Typical lexical items in Nigerian English, which often reflects aspects of the cultural background by way of borrowings or calques from the local languages, include *head-tie* (woman’s headdress), *juju music* (a type of dance music), *bush meat* (game), *tie-dye cloth* (cloth into which patterns are made by tying up parts of it before dyeing), *akara balls* (bean cakes), *white-cap chiefs* (senior chiefs in Lagos whose rank is shown by the white caps they wear). Extensions and narrowing of meanings of words occur in *corner* (a bend in a road), *globe* (a lightbulb), *wet* (to water [flowers]), *environment* (neighborhood), *gallops* (potholes), and *bluff* (to give an air of importance).²⁶ It is sometimes difficult to distinguish general West African usage from a national variety—Nigerian English, Ghanaian English, Cameroon English; the following words and expressions occur in West African English, some with quite widespread currency: *balance* (change, “You did not give me any balance”), *bata* (sandals, shoes), *move*

²⁴ J.C.Wells, *Accents of English* (3 vols., Cambridge, UK, 1982), III, 637.

²⁵ This example and several other examples in this section are from Loreto Todd, “The English Language in West Africa,” in Bailey and Görlach, pp. 281–305.

²⁶ See Ayo **Bamgbose**, *Language and Society in Nigeria* (Stanford, 1973), pp. 106–7.

with (court, go out with), *wedding bells* (invitation to a wedding), *take in* (become pregnant), *be in state* (be pregnant), *give kola* (offer a bribe), *have long legs* (have influence), *cry die* (wake, funeral rites).

The morphology and syntax of English in Africa have generally the same structures as those of the international varieties of standard English, although one may note formations with the plural suffix of words that are not ordinarily count nouns (*equipments, aircrafts, deadwoods, offsprings*). Also, some standard English transitive verbs gain particles and become phrasal verbs, as in *voice out* instead of “voice” (“I am going to voice out my opinion”); *discuss about* instead of “discuss” (“We shall discuss about that later”); and *cope up with* instead of “cope with.” After some verbs the *to* is dropped from the following infinitive (“enable him do it”). As in other second-language varieties and pidgins, certain tag questions are common: “He loves you, isn’t it?” or “He loves you, not so?”

In East Africa, including Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Malawi, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Seychelles, the syntactic and lexical patterns of English that differ from varieties spoken elsewhere in the world often do so in ways that parallel the West African divergencies. For example, verbs that are phrasal in standard English lose the adverbial particle but keep the meaning of the phrasal verb (“Her name *cropped* in the conversation” for “cropped up”; “I *picked him* outside his house and he *dropped* at work” for “picked him up” and “dropped him off”). Some nouns in Kenyan and Tanzanian colloquial speech have a plural form but are treated as singulars: *behaviours, bottoms, laps, minds, nighties, noses, popcorns*. Hancock and Angogo point out that in “My noses are stuffed up,” the influence of Bantu is clearly apparent since there is no single word for nostril in Bantu.²⁷ The Bantu language Kiswahili is the most important African language throughout East Africa, and from its influence the East African variety of English has acquired some of its characteristic phonological patterns (for example, the lack of [ð]/[θ] as in [zis sin] *this thing*). From Kiswahili also have come loanwords that have passed into international currency: *safari, simba* (lion), *bwana* (master), *jambo* (hello).

4. South Asia.

The issues concerning English in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal are similar in many respects to those in Africa except that a clearly identifiable South Asian variety of English has emerged over the years. The problems and prospects of Indian English were summarized by Raja Rao more than half a century ago: “The telling has not been easy. One has to convey in a language that is not one’s own the spirit that is one’s own. One has to convey the various shades and omissions of a certain

²⁷ Ian F. Hancock and Rachel Angogo, “English in East Africa,” in Bailey and Görlach, p. 316.

thought-movement that looks maltreated in an alien language. I use the word 'alien,' yet English is not really an alien language to us. It is the language of our intellectual make-up...but not of our emotional make-up. We are all instinctively bilingual, many of us writing in our own language and in English. We cannot write like the English. We should not. We cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be a dialect which will some day prove to be as distinctive and colorful as the Irish or the American. Time alone will justify it."²⁸ Peculiarly Indian features of pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax, which the British regarded with condescension during the days of the Empire, have in recent years received more appropriately neutral descriptions from linguists. Certain pronunciations result from the systematic influence of Indian languages. For speakers of the variety of Hindi that does not permit *sk*, *st*, and *sp* at the beginning of words, English *station* is regularly pronounced with an initial vowel [Iste: šən]²⁹ In some varieties of Indian English [v] and [w] are not distinguished, and [t], [d], [l], and [r] are pronounced with retroflexion. Dozens of words and phrases that strike British and American speakers as strange are the natural expressions of cultural contexts that are absent in Western society. Indian English is characterized by greetings such as *bow my forehead*, *fall at your feet*, *blessed my hovel with the good dust of your feet*; abuses and curses such as *you eater of your masters*, *you of the evil stars*, *the incestuous sister sleeper*; blessings and flattery such as *thou shalt write from an inkwell of your shoe and my head*; and modes of address such as *cherisher of the poor*, *king of pearls*, *policewala*, *mother of my daughter*.³⁰ The future of English in India and the rest of South Asia will be determined by a complex set of social, political, and linguistic forces. The Indian Constitution of 1950 recognized fourteen Indian languages, of which Hindi was to be the first national language. English was to serve as a transitional language with Hindi until 1965, but it has continued to be used as an official language. Whatever the stated policies may be in the future, it is certain that the English language will be spoken and written by a small but influential minority of the Indian population, including leaders in government, education, and the press. It is also certain that the variety of English recognized as standard in India—and in Bangladesh and in Pakistan—will be a distinctively South Asian variety in its pronunciation, syntax, and vocabulary. It will continue to be affected

²⁸ *Kanthapura* (1938; reprinted New York, 1963), p. vii. Cf. Noah Webster on American English, § 246.

²⁹ Braj B. Kachru, "South Asian English," in Bailey and Görlach, p. 359.

³⁰ Further examples are given in Braj B. Kachru, "The *Indianness* in Indian English," *Word*, 21 (1965), 391–410.

by the culture and native languages of South Asia, and in turn it will affect those languages and serve as the medium for Western influences on the culture.

5. *Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong.*

The development of English as a second language in the Pacific rim is especially interesting because of the influence of background languages (the Chinese dialects Hokkien, Cantonese, and Mandarin; Malay; the southern Indian Tamil) and because of the effects of different language policies instituted by the various governments. Historically, the Malay peninsula has been among the most important trading areas of the world, the site of a productive if sometimes uneasy cultural mix of Chinese, Malays, Indians, and, since the sixteenth century, Europeans. The state of Malacca on the Malay peninsula was ruled by the Portuguese from 1511 to 1640, then by the Dutch, and, after 1824, by the British. In 1819 Sir Stamford Raffles founded Singapore at the tip of the Malay peninsula, which together with Malacca and Penang became a British crown colony, the Straits Settlements. From the very beginning, Singapore prospered economically, and throughout the rest of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, English was an important language of government, business, and education.

When independence came to the British colony in 1957 Singapore was originally federated with the Malaysian mainland and islands that surrounded it. The separation of the states two years later resulted partly from ethnic and cultural tensions between the Malays, who formed a majority of the population outside of Singapore, and the Chinese, who formed a majority of the population within Singapore. These different cultural settings are reflected in the subsequent history of the English language in the region. During the 1970s a national fervor in Malaysia brought about a policy of promoting Bahasa Malay as the official language, and the use of English declined rapidly. By the mid-1980s, however, it was clear that the advantages that had been gained in unifying the country's diverse ethnic populations under a national language had been offset by the growing inability of Malaysians to read English, including scientific publications, and to compete internationally in commerce. A former vicechancellor of the University of Malaya described the situation: "You should sit among the students in the library. You see these people open the book and they don't move the pages. And they're looking awfully concerned."³¹ Recently, the Malaysian government has quietly begun to reemphasize English.

In Singapore the changing relationship between English and the Asian languages has been in a sense the reverse of that in Malaysia. With English as

³¹ Margot Cohen, "Malaysian Students Struggle to Cope with Language Shift," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (June 8, 1988), p. A29.

one of the four official languages and the main medium for administration, commerce, industry, and education, the country has prospered in international trade and in its domestic economy. However, key government leaders, including the founder of the independent state, Lee Kuan Yew, have expressed concern over the loss of Asian values and have begun to promote the use of Mandarin. As the director of the Confucian Ethics Project Team expressed it: "English is for getting on in life, for practical use. But for moral behavior we must learn Chinese, our own language."³² Thus, Malaysia and Singapore in their separate ways illustrate the tensions between the international language and the languages of ethnic and cultural identity. Bilingualism and multilingualism will be essential in both countries for years to come.

Hong Kong, although more than a thousand miles across the South China Sea from Singapore, has similarities in the use of English because of its British colonial history. The main difference is in the relatively homogeneous population, which is 97 percent Chinese. English is much less frequently used for oral communication among Hong Kong's Cantonese-speaking Chinese than among the Chinese in Singapore.

Some of the specific features of English in Malaysia and Singapore are shared by English-based creoles in other parts of the world and by African American Vernacular English in the United States: the lack of an ending to mark the third person singular present tense of the verb; the omission of *be* both as a copula ("This coffee house—very cheap," in contrast with standard British and American English "This coffee house is very cheap") and also as an auxiliary ("My brother—working" instead of "My brother is working").³³ These structures reflect corresponding structures in the background languages. Among the differences in syntax is the word order of indirect questions ("May I ask where is the stamp counter?" or "I'd like to know what are the procedures"). In phonology, the pronunciation of both British and American English is with a "stress-timed rhythm." Stressed syllables recur at equal intervals, but unstressed syllables are unequally spaced in time. In Singaporean English, however, the rhythm is "syllable-timed." Syllables tend to recur at equal intervals of time, stressed or unstressed.

6. *The Caribbean.*

The countries of the Caribbean face multilingual situations that in certain respects of their history and present status resemble those of the Pacific. Paradoxically, however, the solutions to social problems involving languages in contact appear to become more difficult as the varieties of the languages are more similar. The very question of whether Ja-

³² Ian Buruma, "Singapore," *New York Times Magazine* (June 12, 1988), p. 58.

³³ John Platt and Heidi Weber, *English in Singapore and Malaysia: Status, Features, Functions* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1980), pp. 63–64.

maican Creole is a separate language or a point on a continuum that includes Jamaican English is a charged political question with implications for educational policy, the legal system, and the mass media. As we shall see in § 230, the problem of definition involves whether a creole language is stable or evolving, and, if evolving, in what direction.

A determination of these questions requires a consideration of the complex history of the region, which, for the English language, goes back to the arrival of settlers in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607 and in Bermuda two years later. A full history would take into account the Spanish presence in the Caribbean during the sixteenth century, a heritage that is clearly seen in Puerto Rico, where both Spanish and English survive side by side, as well as in Belize, Panama, and Guyana.³⁴ For most of the anglophone Caribbean islands, however, including Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, the Leeward Islands, and the Windward Islands, the most relevant languages in contact are those of the west coast of Africa. Ewe, Twi, Efik, Yoruba, Ibo, Hausa, and other African languages were spoken by slaves who were brought to the islands during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. In addition to the syllable-timed rhythm that we have seen in other varieties of world English, final syllables in Jamaican Creole frequently have rising tone, reflecting the West African tone language spoken by the slaves, who carried their own phonology into their reinterpretation of a Germanic language with light and heavy stresses.

Despite gaps in the written records of both the early forms of Caribbean English and of the African source languages, continuing lexicographical efforts have revealed much about the complex history of English in this part of the world. A large number of words can be traced clearly to African languages. Forms of *nyam* (to eat) occur as verbs in Wolof and Fula and as nouns referring to food in Hausa *na:ma* (flesh, meat), Efik *unam* (flesh), Twi *enām* (flesh, meat of any animal). In Jamaican Creole, *nyam* is generally the verb, *ninyam* a noun (food), and *nyaams* a specific food (yam). One of the most characteristic Jamaicanisms, *juk* (to prick, poke, spur, jab, stab), has been traced to several possible sources, the most plausible of which is perhaps F.G.Cassidy's suggestion of Fula *jukka* (to spur, poke, knock down).³⁵ *Obeah* (the practice of malignant magic) has roots in Efik *ubio* (a charm) and Twi *ɔ-bayifö* (witch, wizard). Part of the vitality of Caribbean English is in

³⁴ See John Holm, "The Spread of English in the Caribbean Area," in *Focus on the Caribbean*, ed. Manfred Görlach and J.A.Holm (Amsterdam, 1986), pp. 1–22.

³⁵ See F.G.Cassidy, *Jamaica Talk: Three Hundred Years of the English Language in Jamaica*, (2nd ed., London, 1971), p. 146. For other examples cited here, see also F.G.Cassidy, "Etymology in Caribbean Creoles," in Görlach and Holm, pp. 133–39.

the formation of compounds that are loan-translations of African metaphors: *door-mouth* (a doorway, or the place just outside the doorway of a small house or hut) can be compared with Yoruba *iloru enu* (threshold; literally porch mouth) and Hausa *baki* (a mouth, an opening, an entrance); and *strong-eye* (firm, determined) is possibly a loan-translation from Twi *n'ani ye deɲ* (strong-eye, insolent, self-willed). It is often difficult to be certain about etymologies in Caribbean creoles. Cassidy points out that *kakanabu* (foolishness, nonsense) at first appears African, with the initial reduplication and the final vowel [u], but it turns out to be quite regularly derived from *cock-and-a-bull*, as in “a cock-and-bull story.” Conversely, *dutty* (earth, soil; excrement) at first appears to be a regular Jamaican development of Standard English *dirt*, *dirty*; however, the main source turns out to be Twi *dɔ̃tɛ* (soil, earth), with some influence from the English words. More recent developments are recorded fully in print and especially as regards music in the electronic media. The speech of the Rastafari (a religious and social movement that arose during the 1940s among the Jamaican poor and was energized by a sense of identification with Africa, and specifically Ethiopia) has given new forms to pronouns: *you* is eliminated for being divisive and *I and I* is used instead, as well as for *I* and for *me*. From popular culture Jamaican English and the world at large have received the words *reggae* and *ska*.

The variety of creoles in the Caribbean can be illustrated by versions of sentences in as many as thirty-three different languages.³⁶ The Standard English sentence “The dog of the man who lives in that house is named King” becomes in Jamaican Creole [di ma:n wa ɪɪb i:na da **hɔʊs** da:g nɛm kɪŋ]; in Trinidad Creole [di **dɔg** dat **bɪlɔŋ** tu di man dat ɪɪvɛn In dat **hɔʊs** ne:m kɪŋ]; in Caymans Creole [da man hu lrv In da **hɔʊs** i dag ne:m kɪŋ]. Comparisons can be made with African creoles. In Nigerian Creole the sentence takes the form [di **dɔg** we na di man we lif **fɔ** da haʊs get am, i nem kɪŋ] and in Krio, the creole language of Sierra Leone, [di man we tap na da os **dɔg** nem kɪŋ].

Phonetic transcription is useful for those who have studied it, though not for the general public, and the question of the written representation of creole languages is part of the unresolved complex of political, social, and psychological issues surrounding the linguistic question. A modified standard orthography with markings for tone is another way of representing speech on paper, as in these examples of Jamaican English:

³⁶ See Ian Hancock, “A Preliminary Classification of the Anglophone Atlantic Creoles with Syntactic Data from Thirty-three Representative Dialects,” in *Pidgin and Creole Languages: Essays in Memory of John E. Reinecke*, ed. Glenn G. Gilbert (Honolulu, 1987), pp. 264–333.

mi granma chier
 “my grandmother’s chair”
 Him did go down Hope Ruod
 “He/she went down Hope Road”

7. Canada.

Canadian English, as would be expected, has much in common with that of the United States while retaining a few features of British pronunciation and spelling. Where alternative forms exist the likelihood for a particular choice to be British or American varies with region, education, and age. British items such as *chips*, *serviette*, and *copse* tend to occur more frequently in the West, while the more common American choices *French fries*, *napkin*, and *grove* tend to occur in the East. British spellings such as *colour* and pronunciations such as *schedule* with an initial [ʃ] occur most frequently throughout Canada among more highly educated and older speakers.³⁷ In addition there are a number of words with meanings that are neither British nor American but peculiarly Canadian. Thus one finds *aboiteau* (dam), *Blue nose* (Nova Scotian), *Creditiste* (member of the Social Credit party), *Digby chicken* (smoke-cured herring), *mukluk* (Inuit boot), *reeve* (chairman of a municipal council), *salt-chuck* (ocean), and *skookum* (powerful, brave). The *Dictionary of Canadianisms*, published in Canada’s Centennial Year, allows historical linguists to establish in detail the sources of Canadian English.³⁸ Many of the earlier settlers in Canada came from the United States, and the influence of the United States has always been very strong. A writer in the *Canadian Journal* in 1857 complained of the new words “imported by travellers, daily circulated by American newspapers, and eagerly incorporated into the language of our Provincial press.” Needless to say, he considered the influence wholly bad, and his words are still echoed by Canadians who deplore the wide circulation of American books and magazines in Canada and in recent years the further influence of movies and television. Nevertheless a linguistically informed opinion would have to concede that in language as in other activities “it is difficult to differentiate what belongs to Canada from what belongs to the United States, let alone either from what might be called General North American.”³⁹

230. Pidgins and Creoles.

Of the varieties of English discussed in the preceding section, those of West and East Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Rim coexist and interact with well-established English-based pidgins

³⁷ See H.J. Warkentyne, “Contemporary Canadian English: A Report of the Survey of Canadian English,” *American Speech*, 46 (1971; pub. 1975), 193–99.

³⁸ Walter S. Avis *et al.*, *Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles* (Toronto, 1967).

³⁹ Raven I. McDavid, Jr., “Canadian English,” *American Speech*, 46 (1971), 287.

and creoles.⁴⁰ The linguistic and sociological issues that are raised by these varieties of language in daily contact have already been suggested with respect to Jamaican English. The theoretical interest to linguists, however, goes even deeper, because the study of pidgin and creole languages may give clues to a better understanding of a number of interrelated problems: the analyticsynthetic distinction, which we have considered in the development of Middle English; the idea of a “continuum” among varieties of a single language and between closely related languages; the acquisition of language by children; the language-processing abilities of the human brain; and the origin of language. Because English-based creoles are so numerous and so widespread, the study of present-day English in all its worldwide varieties is useful not only in itself but also in the illumination that it gives to some of these most basic issues in language and cognition. Of the approximately 125 pidgin and creole languages throughout the world, spoken by more than nine million people, about thirty-five are English-based.⁴¹ Historical settlement and colonization produced two major groups of English-based creoles, an Atlantic group and a Pacific group. The Atlantic creoles were established in West Africa and the Caribbean area mainly during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and include varieties in Sierra Leone (Krio), Liberia, Suriname (formerly Dutch Guiana in northern South America), Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Jamaica, and other West African countries and Caribbean islands. The Pacific group, established largely during the nineteenth century, includes varieties in Hawaii, Papua New Guinea (Tok Pisin), and other islands.

The lexical impoverishment of pidgin and creole language often results in periphrastic and metaphorical expressions to designate things and events which in established language are signified by unrelated morphemes. The single word *hum* in English is expressed in Tok Pisin (literally ‘talk pidgin’) by the circumlocution, *singsing long taim maus i pas* (‘to sing when the mouth is closed’). English ‘grass’ in Tok Pisin is *gras*; ‘moustache’ is *mausgras*; ‘beard’ is *gras bilong fes* (‘grass on face’); ‘hair’ is *gras bilong hed*; ‘eyebrow’ is *gras antap longai* (‘grass on top along eye’); ‘weed’ is *gras nogut*. In these pidgin expressions, prepositions and word order rather than inflectional endings signal the grammatical and semantic relationships.⁴² The preposition

⁴⁰ A creole, like a pidgin, is based on two or more languages, but unlike a pidgin it is learned as a native language, and it contains fuller syntax and vocabulary.

⁴¹ For helpful surveys of pidgins and creoles, see Ian F. Hancock, “Appendix: Repertory of Pidgin and Creole Languages,” in *Pidgin and Creole Linguistics*, ed. Albert Valdman (Bloomington, IN, 1977), pp. 362–91; and John Holm, *Pidgins and Creoles*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, UK, 1988–1989), especially, for English-based creoles, 11.405–551.

⁴² See Suzanne Romaine, *Pidgin and Creole Languages* (London, 1988), pp. 26–36.

bilong (from the verb 'belong') serves a number of functions in Tok Pisin that in English would be assigned to varying case forms, including possession: 'my mother' is *mama bilong mi*; 'John's house' is *haus bilong John*. With a greatly reduced system of inflections and a correspondingly greater reliance on function words and word order, pidgin and creole languages show clearly the analytic structure that we noted when we observed the development from Old English to Middle English.

The other side of lexical impoverishment is the visibility and richness of certain aspectual distinctions, some never explicitly marked in the verb phrase of historical English. For example, habitual or continuing action is indicated in Hawaiian Creole by including the particle *stay* in the verb phrase, and other creoles have similar markers: *I stay run in Kapiolani Park every evening* indicates habitual or repetitive action rather than action completed at a certain point. Similarly, the accomplishment of purpose is made explicit in creole languages around the world. The English sentence "John went to Honolulu to see Mary" does not specify whether John actually saw Mary. Such ambiguity must be resolved in Hawaiian Creole. If the speaker knows that John saw Mary, the appropriate sentence is *John bin go Honolulu go see Mary*. If John did not see Mary or if the speaker does not know whether John saw Mary, the appropriate verb form expresses intention without expressing completion: *John bin go Honolulu for see Mary*.⁴³

Another important factor of language in general which the study of pidgins and creoles clarifies is the idea of a linguistic continuum. Whereas earlier observations noted only a binary distinction between the standard language and the "patois," research during the past quarter century has made it clear that there are multiple, overlapping grammars between the *basilect* (the most extreme form of pidgin or creole) and the *acrolect* (the standard language). These intermediate grammars are known as *mesolects*. There is often an observable hierarchy of linguistic features associated with various points on the continuum (for example, different past tense formations of verbs, some closer than others to the standard). If a speaker has a nonstandard feature located near the basilectal extreme, it is likely that the speaker will also have all of the other nonstandard features that are increasingly closer to the standard language. This technique of analysis is known as an "implicational scale."⁴⁴ The regularity of such scales in pidgin and creole languages world-wide leads to yet another interesting problem: the order of acquisition of the scaled features

⁴³ These examples are from Derek Bickerton, "Creole Languages," *Scientific American* (July 1983); rpt. in *Language, Writing and the Computer* (New York, 1986), pp. 24–30.

⁴⁴ On the theory underlying the creole continuum, see Derek Bickerton, *Dynamics of a Creole System* (Cambridge, UK, 1975).

in the process of learning a language. Typically the standard features near the basilectal end of the implicational scale are learned first, and those near the acrolectal end are learned later if at all. The study of language acquisition leads finally to a convergence in the concerns of creolists and generative grammarians (see § 255). In what Noam Chomsky has called “Plato’s problem,” generative grammarians have aimed to explain how language can be acquired at all, given the poverty of the stimulus.⁴⁵ “How can we know so much on the basis of so little experience?” they ask. Their answer is that a knowledge of linguistic universals is part of the innate structure of the human brain. Similarly, on the basis of evidence such as we have seen, Derek Bickerton has developed a theory of a “bioprogram” for the acquisition of language.⁴⁶ Although these theories often differ on the details of their specific analysis, as indeed all theories do, they both see the study of language as ultimately rooted in the biology of the speaking animal.

231. *Spelling Reform.*

In the latter part of the nineteenth century renewed interest was manifested in the problem of English spelling, and the question of reform was vigorously agitated. For nearly 400 years the English have struggled with their spelling. It was one of the chief problems that seemed to confront the language in the time of Shakespeare (see pages 208–14), and it continued to be an issue throughout the seventeenth and to some extent in the eighteenth century. The publication in 1837 of a system of shorthand by Isaac Pitman led to his proposal of several plans of phonetic spelling for general use. In these schemes Pitman was assisted by Alexander J. Ellis, a much greater scholar. They were promoted during the 1840s by the publication of a periodical called the *Phonotypic Journal*, later changed to the *Phonetic Journal*. The Bible and numerous classic works were printed in the new spelling, and the movement aroused considerable public interest. By 1870 the English Philological Society had taken up the question, and the *Transactions* contain numerous discussions of it. Prominent members who took part in the debate included Ellis, Morris, Payne, Sweet, Furnivall, Skeat, and Murray. The discussion spread into the columns of the *Academy* and the *Athenaeum*. America became interested in the question, and in 1883 the American Philological Association recommended the adoption of a long list of new spellings approved jointly by it and the English society. Spelling Reform Associations were formed in both countries. In America men like March, Lounsbury, Grandgent, William Dean Howells, and Brander Matthews lent their support to the movement. In 1898 the National Education

⁴⁵ Among many writings by Chomsky on this subject, see *Knowledge of Language: Its Nature, Origin, and Use* (New York, 1986).

⁴⁶ *Language and Species* (Chicago, 1990).

Association formally adopted for use in its publications twelve simplified spellings—*tho*, *altho*, *thoro*, *thorofare*, *thru*, *thruout*, *program*, *catalog*, *prolog*, *decalog*, *demagog*, and *pedagog*. Some of these have come into general use, but on the whole the public remained indifferent. In 1906 there was organized in the United States a Simplified Spelling Board, supported by a contribution from Andrew Carnegie. Their first practical step was to publish a list of 300 words for which different spellings were in use (*judgement*—*judgment*, *mediaeval*—*medieval*, etc.) and to recommend the simpler form. This was a very moderate proposal and met with some favor. Theodore Roosevelt endorsed it. But it also met with opposition, and subsequent lists that went further were not well received. Newspapers, magazines, and book publishers continued to use the traditional orthography, and though the Simplified Spelling Board continued to issue from time to time its publication, *Spelling*, until 1931, its accomplishment was slight, and it eventually went out of existence.

The efforts that have been described produced only slender results, but they did succeed in stimulating public interest for a time and gained the support of various people whose names carried weight. This interest, however, was far from universal. Advocates of reform had to contend with the apathy of the public and face at the same time a certain amount of active opposition. Innate conservatism was responsible for some of it, and there are always those who feel that the etymological value of the old spelling is an asset not to be lightly relinquished.⁴⁷ An influential opinion was expressed by Henry Bradley in his paper “On the Relation of Spoken and Written Language” (1919). He held that it was a mistake to think that the sole function of writing was to represent sounds. For many people nowadays the written word is as important as the spoken word, and as we read, many words convey their meaning directly without the intermediate process of pronunciation, even mental pronunciation. To change the symbol that long practice enables us instantaneously to translate into an idea would be a handicap to many people, even though a temporary one. Besides, there are the numerous words that are distinguished in writing, though pronounced alike. For these and other reasons Bradley was opposed to any radical change in English spelling. The history of spelling reform makes it clear that in opposing radical change he was expressing the attitude of the majority of people. It is probably safe to say that if our spelling is ever to be reformed, it must be reformed gradually and with as little

⁴⁷ The case against spelling reform is stated by Sir William Craigie, *Problems of Spelling Reform* (Oxford, 1944; *S.P.E. Tract No. 63*). More recently it has been argued that predictable morphophonemic alternations (e.g., *divine*~*divinity*) make conventional orthography “a near optimal system for the lexical representation of English words.” See Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle, *The Sound Pattern of English* (New York, 1968), p. 49.

disruption to the existing system as is consistent with the attainment of a reasonable end.

232. *Purist Efforts.*

Conservatives in matters of language, as in politics, are hardy perennials. We have seen many examples of the type in the course of this history. They flourished especially during the eighteenth century, but their descendants are fairly numerous in the nineteenth and scarcely less common today. They generally look upon change with suspicion and are inclined to view all changes in language as corruptions. In retrospect they seem often melancholy figures, fighting a losing fight, many times living to see the usages against which they fought so valiantly become universally accepted. Thomas De Quincey argued at length against the use of *implicit* in such expressions as *implicit faith* or *confidence*, wishing to restrict the word to a sense the opposite of *explicit*. The American philologist George P. Marsh spoke against "the vulgarism of the phrase *in our midst*" and objected to a certain adjectival use of the participle. "There is at present," he says, "an inclination in England to increase the number of active, in America, of passive participles, employed with the syntax of the adjective. Thus, in England it is common to hear: 'such a thing is *very damaging*,' and the phrase has been recently introduced into this country. Trench says: 'Words which had become unintelligible or *misleading*,' and 'the phrase could not have been other than more or less *misleading*'; 'these are the most serious and most *recurring*.' Now, though *pleasing*, *gratifying*, *encouraging*, and many other words have long been established as adjectives, yet the cases cited from Trench strike us as unpleasant novelties."⁴⁸ Dean Alford, the author of *The Queen's English* (1864), a curious composite of platitude and prejudice with occasional flashes of unexpected liberality, a book that was reprinted many times, finds much to object to, especially in the English of journalism. "No man ever *shows* any feeling, but always *evinces* it.... Again, we never *begin* anything in the newspapers now, but always *commence*.... Another horrible word, which is fast getting into our language through the provincial press, is to *eventuate*.... *Avocation* is another monster patronised by these writers.... *Desirability* is a terrible word.... *Reliable* is hardly legitimate..." and so with many others. The battle over *reliable* was still being waged at the end of the nineteenth century, as over *lengthy* and *standpoint*. Often the American was accused of introducing these supposed outrages against good English, and just as often accused unjustly. It is unnecessary to multiply examples that could be useful only to the future historian of human error. If we might venture a moral, it would be to point out the danger and the futility of trying to prevent the natural development of language.

⁴⁸ *Lectures*, I, 657.

An effort that gave promise of being saved from some of the pitfalls that beset the reformers of language took the form of a *Society for Pure English* (*S.P.E.*). If it were to escape the common fate of such efforts, it would have been because of the moderateness of its aims and the fuller knowledge of the ways of language that some of its members possessed. The society was founded in 1913, but World War I delayed its plans and it was not until after the Armistice that it began its activities. The original committee was composed of Henry Bradley, the distinguished philologist, Robert Bridges, the poet laureate, Sir Walter Raleigh, Oxford Professor of English Literature, and Logan Pearsall Smith, a well-known literary man. The moving spirit was Bridges. In their proposals they stated their aim to be "to agree upon a modest and practical scheme for informing popular taste on sound principles, for guiding educational authorities, and for introducing into practice certain slight modifications and advantageous changes." They specifically disavowed any intention "of foolish interference with living developments." Their hope of directing the development of the vocabulary seems, in the light of history, perhaps overoptimistic, but their recognition of the popular voice inspired confidence. "Now, believing that language is or should be democratic both in character and origin, and that its best word-makers are the uneducated classes, we would prefer vivid popular terms to the artificial creations of scientists." This at least is sound doctrine. One must likewise applaud the recognition given to local dialects, from which the standard speech has so often been enriched in the past. But most praiseworthy of all was the intention to achieve its ends not by authoritative pronouncement but by the dissemination of fact and enlightened opinion. For this purpose it proposed to issue from time to time short *Tracts* on various linguistic topics and promote the discussion of pertinent questions. In this respect the *S.P.E.* recalls the proposal of the anonymous writer of 1724 (cf. § 196). The difference lies in the fact that this society actually issued more than three score of its *Tracts* before becoming inactive.

Almost from the beginning some skepticism was expressed. Dissent appeared as early as 1926. "The 'Society for Pure English,' recently formed by the Poet Laureate, is getting a great deal of support at this moment, and is the literary equivalent of political Fascism. But at no period have the cultured classes been able to force the habit of tidiness on the nation as a whole.... The imaginative genius of the uneducated and half-educated masses will not be denied expression."⁴⁹ Nevertheless the movement appealed to many on

⁴⁹ Robert Graves, *Impenetrability, or The Proper Habit of English* (London, 1926), pp. 30–31. Cf. Basil de Selincourt: "The best and most English instinct is still that of resistance to change, and above all to any plan or method of change, any committee or academy or association to school and enlighten us." (*Pomona, or The Future of English*, London, n.d., p. 69.)

both sides of the Atlantic. In 1922 a group of Americans proposed that some plan of cooperation between England and America be devised, and a committee was appointed in England to consider the question. A few years later, at a meeting of the Royal Society of Literature held in London, a number of English and American writers and scholars agreed to form an "International Council for English" to consider the problems of the common language of the English-speaking countries.⁵⁰ Such movements indicate that even if the idea of a formal academy was no longer entertained, not all hope had been given up of exercising some control over the development of the language.

233. *Gender Issues and Linguistic Change.*

The course of the history of English since the Renaissance has seen numerous conscious attempts to reform the language in one way or another: to prohibit or encourage borrowings, to prescribe matters of grammatical usage, to change the established spellings of words, to found an academy with goals like these. More often than not the reforms have failed and the language has developed in a seemingly inexorable way, especially in the later periods when the efforts of any one person or group of persons appear powerless against the language's very vastness in geographical extent and number of speakers. Since the 1970s the efforts to eliminate sexism from English, though having met with resistance, have been more successful than most attempts at reform. Published works from just a few years earlier now seem oddly dated in their use of what is now seen as sexist language. Among the most obvious instances of the earlier usage are the noun *man* and the masculine pronoun *he*, sometimes with *man* as the antecedent, both words referring to men and women. Such usage was normal in the English language for two centuries, although one interesting result of recent research is the demonstration that grammarians since the eighteenth century, mostly male, have helped to bring about and reinforce a usage that is socially biased and grammatically illogical.

Writers at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century have generally found it easy to substitute *people*, *person*, or *human beings* for *man* and *mankind*, though the problem of the pronoun has proved thornier. In the sentence, "Everybody should button their coat," males and females are treated equally, but the plural pronoun *their* has as its antecedent the singular noun *everybody*. English does not have a gender-neutral, or epicene, pronoun for persons. For more than a century proposals have been suggested to remedy this lack including *thon*; *e*, *es*, *em*; *heshe*, *hes*, *hem*; *shey*, *shem*, *sheir*, and many others. None of these has gained general accep-

⁵⁰ See J.H.G.Grattan, "On Anglo-American Cultivation of Standard English," *Review of English Studies*, 3 (1927), 430–41, and Kemp Malone, "The International Council for English," *American Speech*, 3 (1928), 261–75. Nothing came of the proposal.

tance, and it is clear that none will. The closed class of personal pronouns is much more resistant to additions and substitutions than the open classes of nouns and adjectives. We have seen during the late medieval period the plural pronouns in *h-* (*hie, hem, hir*) replaced by borrowings from Old Norse (Present-day *they, them, their*) and the rise of analogical *its* during the Renaissance. However, most of the changes in pronouns have simply been losses in number and case, and it would be unprecedented for a consciously constructed pronoun to come into general use.

There is precedence, however, for the simplest solution to the problem of pronoun agreement in gender, and that is lack of agreement in number, as in the sentence with which we began: "Everybody should button their coat." English, which once distinguished between singular *thou, thee, thy* and plural *ye, you, your* in the second person, has had plural *you, your* as the standard form for the past four centuries. An extension of the plural *they, their* to certain singular contexts would cause no more disruption in syntax than the change in the second person, and of course it already shows up in informal usage, as in the sentence quoted.⁵¹

Other nouns, adjectives, and forms of address have supplanted sexist language so naturally that it is sometimes hard to imagine the resistance with which they originally met. *Ms* is a happy replacement in many contexts for the uncertainties that often attend a choice of *Miss* or *Mrs.*, putting the female form of address on the same footing as *Mr.*, for which indications of marital status have always been considered irrelevant. *Flight attendant* has given *stewardess* a dated ring, somewhat like a 1950s movie, where one might also hear *girl* for *woman* in a way that now jars, especially if there is no question of referring to the *man* as a *boy*. *Poetess, authoress, and sculptress* were out or on their way out before the feminist writings of the 1970s, while *actress* has had more resilience, possibly in part because of distinctions in awards for performance that would not apply to *poets, authors, and sculptors*. Job titles ending in *-man*, such as *chairman* and *Congressman*, sometimes substitute *-person*, though there is variation according to personal preference. A familiar choice in recent years is the shorter form *chair*, a word that the *Oxford English Dictionary* records with this meaning as early as 1658.

234. *The Oxford English Dictionary.*

In the more enlightened attitude of the Society for Pure English, as distinguished from most purist efforts in the past, it is impossible not to see the influence of a great work that came into being in the latter half of the nineteenth century. About 1850 the inadequacy

⁵¹ See Ann Bodine, "Androcentrism in Prescriptive Grammar: Singular 'they', Sex-indefinite 'he', and 'he or she,'" *Language in Society*, 4 (1975), 129–46.

THE EDITORS OF THE NEW
(OXFORD) ENGLISH DICTIONARY

Herbert Coleridge

Frederick James Furnivall

Sir James A.H.Murray

Henry Bradley

Sir William A.Craigie

C.T.Onions

(see § 234)

of the existing dictionaries of the English language began to be acutely felt. Those of Johnson and Richardson, even in their later revisions, were sadly incomplete and far below the standards of modern scholarship. In 1857 at a meeting of the Philological Society in London a committee was appointed to collect words not in the dictionaries, with a view to publishing a supplement to them. The committee consisted of Herbert Coleridge, Dean Trench (whose little books *English Past and Present* and *The Study of Words* had shown his interest in word history), and F.J.Furnivall, that great student and inspirer of students of early English literature. Furnivall seems to have suggested the undertaking. The most important outcome of the committee's activity was a paper read to the Society by Dean Trench, "On Some Deficiencies in Our English Dictionaries." In it he laid down the historical principles on which a dictionary should be compiled. As a result of this paper the society decided that a supplement would not be satisfactory, and in January 1858 it passed resolutions calling for a new dictionary. A formal "Proposal for the Publication of a New English Dictionary by the Philological Society" was issued the following year. The two principal aims of the new project were to record every word that could be found in English from about the year 1000 and to exhibit the history of each—its forms, its various spellings, and all its uses and meanings, past and present. The last-named feature was especially to be shown by a full selection of quotations from the whole range of English writings. This would of course necessitate the systematic reading of thousands of texts. A call for volunteers was issued and met with a most gratifying response. Hundreds of readers not only from England but all over the world began to send in material. This was the nucleus out of which the future dictionary grew. The number of contributors increased, and before the last part of the dictionary was published some six million slips containing quotations had been gathered. An important by-product of the dictionary enterprise was the founding of a society for the publication of unedited texts, chiefly from the Middle Ages. It was early apparent that the words from this great mass of literature could be obtained only with great difficulty as long as much of it remained in manuscript. In order to provide the machinery for the printing of this material by subscription, Furnivall founded in 1864 the Early English Text Society. Through this society more than 400 volumes, chiefly of Middle English texts, have been published.

The first editor appointed to deal with the mass of material being assembled was Herbert Coleridge, already mentioned. Upon his sudden death in 1861 at the age of thirty-one, he was succeeded by Furnivall, then in his thirty-sixth year. For a time work went forward with reasonable speed, but then it gradually slowed down, partly because of Furnivall's increasing

SUN (sən), *sū*.¹ Forms: 1-7 *sunne*, (1 *sunna*), 3-7 *sonne*, 4-5 (6 *Sc.*) *sune*, 4-7 *sone* (chiefly *Sc.*), *sun*, 5-6 *son*, (3 *seonne*, 4 *sonn*, *Kentish zonne*, *Sc. sowne*, *swn*, 5 *soen*, *swne*, *Sc. soune*, 6 *Sc. soun*), 4- *sun*. *β. Sc.* 4 *sene*, 6 *syn*, 7-8 *sin*, 8 *sinn*. [*Com. Teut. wk. fem.*: OE. *sunne* = OFris. *sunne*, *sonne* (WFr. *sinne*, dial. *sonne*, *son*, NFr. *sen*), OS. *sunna* (MLG., LG. *sunne*), MDu. *zonne* (Du. *zon*), OHG. *sunno* (MHG. *sunne*, *sun*, MG. *sonne*, *son*, G. *sonne*), ON. *sunna* (poet.), Goth. *sunno*; also wk. masc. OE. *sunna*, = OFris. *sonna*, OS. *sunno*, OHG. *sunna*, Goth. *sunna*:—OTeut. **sunnon-*, -*on-*, f. *sun-*, s(u)*wen-*, whence also Zend (gen.) *χvōng sun*, Gr. *ἥλιος* glittering, OIr. *fur-sunnud* lighting-up.

From the same root *sau-* (*sū-*) with *l-* instead of *n-* formative, *sāw(e)l-*, s(u)*wel-* (*sūl-*), are Skr. *sūar* (*svār*), *sūra*, *sūrya* sun, Zend *hvarə* (gen. *hūrō*), Gr. *ἥλιος*, *ἥλιος*, Doric *ἄλιος*, Cretan *ἄβλιος*, Alb. *ūl star*, L. *sōl* sun, W. *haul*, Ir. *sūil* eye, Lith. *saulė*, Goth. *sauil*, ON. *sól*.]

I. 1. a. The brightest (as seen from the earth) of the heavenly bodies, the luminary or orb of day; the central body of the solar system, around which the earth and other planets revolve, being kept in their orbits by its attraction and supplied with light and heat by its radiation; in the Ptolemaic system reckoned as a planet, in modern astronomy as one of the stars.

The ordinary language as to the sun's course, its rising and setting, etc., is based upon the old view of the sun as a body moving through the zodiac, rising above, passing across the heavens, and sinking below the horizon, etc.

Beowulf 606 *Sunne sweglwæred supan scineð*. c888 ÆLFRED *Boeth.* ix, *Donne seo sunne on hadrum heofone beorhtost scineð, þonne aþeostrīap ealle steorran*. 971 *Blickl. Hom.* 51 *þære sunnan hæto*. a1000 *Riddles* lxxvii. 3 (Gr.) *Leohtr þonne mona, swiftre þonne sunne*. c1000 ÆLFRED *Gen.* xxxii. 31 *And sona eode sunna upp*. c1200 *ORMIN* 7273 *Æst, tær þe sunne riseþþ*. *Ibid.* 9400 *þe sunness brihte leome*. c1205 *LAY.* 27805 *Ær þe sunne eode to grunde*. a1300 *Cursor M.* 291 *In þe sune pat schines clere Es a thing and thre thinges sere; A bodi rond, and hete and light*. *Ibid.* 388 *þe ferth [day].. Bath ware made sun and mon*. 1340 *Ayenb.* 27 *þe brihtnesse of þe zonne*. 1390 *GOWER Conf.* III. 313 *The Sonne arist, the weder clereth*. c1420 in *Rel. Ant.* I. 232 *C. Wherefore is the son rede at even? M. For he gothe toward hell*. 1526 *TINDALE Eph.* iv. 26 *Lett nott the sonne goo doune apon youre wrathe*. a1569 *KINGESMYLL Conf.* *Satan* (1578) 14 *Gods words remaine beyond the days of the Sunne*. 1570 *Satir. Poems Reform.* xv. 7 *3e Mariguldīs, forbid the sune To oppin þow euerie morrow!* 1634 *MILTON Comus* 374 *Though Sun and Moon Were in the flat Sea sunk*. 1785 *BURNS 3rd Ep. to J. Lapraik* ix, *Now the sinn keeks in the west*. 1844 *H. STEPHENS Bk. Farm* I. 292 *When the sun rises red, wind and rain may be expected during the day*. 1873 *DAWSON Earth & Man* i. 9 *The sun is..an incandescent globe surrounded by an immense luminous envelope of vapours*.

b. In conformity with the gender of OE. *sunne*, the feminine pronoun was used until the 16th c. in referring to the sun; since then the masculine has been commonly used, without necessarily implying personification; the neuter is somewhat less frequent.

a900 *O.E. Martyrol.* 21 *Mar., On domes dæge..þonne scineð seo sunne seofon siðum beorhtor þonne heo nu do*. c1275 *Passion our Lord* 479 in *O.E. Misc.*, *þe sonne bileuede hire lyht*. 1377 *LANGL. P. Pl.* B xviii. 243 *How þe sonne gan louke her lihte in her-self, Whan she seye hym suffre þat*

FROM THE OXFORD ENGLISH
DICTIONARY

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absorption in other interests. Meanwhile James A.H.Murray, a Scottish schoolmaster with philological tastes, had been approached by certain publishers to edit a dictionary to rival those of Webster and Worcester. After the abandonment of this project Murray was drawn into the Philological Society's enterprise, and in 1879 a formal agreement was entered into with the Oxford University Press whereby this important publishing house was to finance and publish the society's dictionary and Murray was to be its editor. From this time on the work was pushed with new energy and in 1884 the first installment, covering part of the letter A, was issued. By 1900 four and a half volumes had been published, extending as far as the letter H. World War I made serious inroads in the dictionary staff, and progress was for a time retarded. But in 1928 the final section was issued, just seventy years after the Philological Society had passed its now notable resolution looking toward "A New English Dictionary."

Dr. Murray did not live to see the completion of the task that he had undertaken. But his genuine scholarship and sure judgment in laying down the lines along which the work should be carried out were of the greatest importance to its success. In 1887 he secured the services of Henry Bradley, then comparatively unknown but instantly recognized through the merit of a long review which he wrote of the first installment. In 1888 he became a co-editor. In 1897 William A. Craigie, recently called to Oxford from the University of St. Andrews, joined the staff and in 1901 became a third editor. Finally, in 1914, Charles T. Onions, who had been working with Dr. Murray since 1895, was appointed the fourth member of the editorial staff. Two of the editors were knighted in recognition of their services to linguistic scholarship, Murray in 1908 and Craigie in 1928. But the list of editors does not tell the story of the large number of skillful and devoted workers who sifted the material and did much preliminary work on it. Nor would the enterprise have been possible at all without the generous support of the Oxford University Press and the voluntary help of thousands who furnished quotations. The dictionary was originally known by the name *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles (NED)*, although in 1895 the title *The Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* was added and has since become the standard designation. The completed work fills ten large volumes, occupies 15,487 pages, and treats 240,165 main words. In 1933 a supplementary volume was published, containing additions and corrections accumulated during the forty-four years over which the publication of the original work extended. A four-volume *Supplement* that absorbed the 1933 *Supplement* was published under the editorship of R.W. Burchfield between 1972 and 1986. A second edition by J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner in 1989 amalgamated the first edition, the Burchfield *Supplement*, and approximately 5,000 new words, or new senses of existing words, in twenty volumes. The second edition contains about 290,500 main entries, or about 38,000 more than the first edition with its 1933 *Supplement*. In the 1970s a micrographic reproduction of the first edition in two volumes made the dictionary available to many who could not afford it in its original format, and the availability of the second edition online has opened up new possibilities for the use of computer technology. In preparation for the third edition Oxford University Press is publishing supplements to the entries of the second edition

and completely new entries under the title *Oxford English Dictionary Additions Series*. Three volumes were published between 1993 and 1997.

The influence of this great publication—the greatest dictionary of any language in the world—has been far-reaching. Its authority was recognized from the appearance of the first installment. It has provided a wealth of exact data on which many questions relating to the history of the language have been resolved. But it has had a further important effect that was scarcely contemplated by the little committee of the Philological Society to which it owed its inception. It has profoundly influenced the attitude of many people toward language, and toward the English language in particular. By exhibiting the history of words and idioms, their forms and various spellings, their changes of meaning, the way words rise and fall in the levels of usage, and many other phenomena, it has increased our linguistic perspective and taught us to view many questions of language in a more scientific and less dogmatic way. When historians of English a century or two hence attempt to evaluate the effect of the Oxford Dictionary on the English language they may quite possibly say that it exerted its chief force in making us historically minded about matters of English speech.

235. *Grammatical Tendencies.*

The several factors already discussed as giving stability to English grammar (§ 152)—the printing press, popular education, improvements in travel and communication, social consciousness—have been particularly effective during the past two centuries. Very few changes in grammatical forms and conventions are to be observed. There has been some schoolmastering of the language. The substitution of *you were* for *you was* in the singular occurs about 1820, and *it is I* is now seldom heard. What was left of the subjunctive mood in occasional use has disappeared except in conditions contrary to fact (*if I were you*). Some tendency toward loss of inflection, although we have but little to lose, is noticeable in informal speech. The nonstandard *he don't* represents an attempt to eliminate the ending of the third person singular and reduce this verb in the negative to a uniform *do* in the present tense. Likewise the widespread practice of disregarding the objective case form *whom* in the interrogative (*Who do you want?*) illustrates the same impulse. Though some people are shocked by the latter “error,” it has a long and honorable history. Shakespeare often commits it, and historically the reduction of case forms in this pronoun is as justifiable as that in the second person (*you* for *ye*; cf. § 182).⁵² Occasionally a new grammatical convention may be seen springing up. The *get* passive (*he got hurt*) is largely a nineteenth-century development, called into being because *he is hurt* is too static, *he became hurt* too formal. This construction is noted only from 1652⁵³ and is unusual before the nineteenth century. One other tendency is sufficiently important to be noticed separately, the extension of verb-adverb combinations discussed in the following paragraph.

236. *Verb-adverb Combinations.*

An important characteristic of the modern vocabulary is the large number of expressions like *set out*, *gather up*, *put off*, *bring in*, made up of a common verb, often of one syllable, combined with an adverb.⁵⁴ They suggest comparison with verbs having separable prefixes in German, and to a smaller extent with English verbs like *withstand* and *overcome*. The latter were much more common in Old English than they are today, and we have seen (§§ 138–39) that their gradual disuse was one of the consequences of the Norman Conquest. Old English made but slight use of the modern type, and during the Middle English period the large number of new verbs from French seems to have retarded for a time what would probably have been a normal and rapid development. Such combinations as we do find before the modern period are generally expressions in which the meaning is the fairly literal sense of the verb and the adverb in the combination (*climb up*, *fall down*), often a mere intensification of the idea expressed by the simple verb. One of the most interesting features of such combinations in modern times, however, is the large number of figurative and idiomatic senses in which they have come to be used. Familiar examples are *bring about* (cause or accomplish), *catch on* (comprehend), *give out* (become exhausted), *keep on* (continue), *put up with* (tolerate), *hold up* (rob), *lay off* (cease to employ), *turn over* (surrender), *size up* (estimate), *let up* (cease), *bid up*, *bid in*, and *knock down* with their meanings at an auction sale. Another is the extensive use, especially in colloquial speech, of these verb-adverb combinations as nouns: *blowout*, *cave-in*, *holdup*, *runaway*.⁵⁵

⁵² Cf. J.S.Kenyon, "On *Who* and *Whom*," *American Speech*, 5 (1930), 253–55.

⁵³ *OED*, s.v. *get*, 34b.

⁵⁴ On this subject see A.G.Kennedy, *The Modern English Verb-Adverb Combination* (Stanford University, 1920), and Bruce Fraser, *The Verb-Particle Combination in English* (corrected ed., New York, 1976).

⁵⁵ See Edwin R.Hunter, "Verb+adverb=noun," *American Speech*, 22 (1947), 115–19; U.Lindelöf, *English Verb-adverb Groups Converted into Nouns* (Helsinki, Finland, 1937; *Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum*, vol. 9, no. 5).

It will be noticed that many of these expressions are substitutes for single verbs such as *comprehend*, *continue*, *surrender*, etc., of more learned or formal character, and the interesting observation has been made that the vocabulary has thus been pursuing a development similar to that which took place in English grammar at an earlier period and which changed the language from a synthetic to an analytic one.⁵⁶ It is also apparent that many of the expressions among the examples given are more or less colloquial and betray clearly their popular origin. Many others are slang or considered inelegant. The single adverb *up* enters into such combinations as *bring up*, *brace up*, *cough up*, *dig up*, *dish up*, *drum up*, *fly up*, *gum up*, *jack up*, *loosen up*, *pass up*, *perk up*, *scrape up*, *shut up*, *spruce up*, *whack up*, and we have recently seen the frequent use of *crack down*. Everyone in America will recognize the familiar meaning that attaches to these expressions in colloquial speech.

Opposition is sometimes expressed toward the extensive growth of these verb-adverb combinations, and not only toward the less accepted ones. Even among those that are universally accepted in both the spoken and written language there are many in which the adverb is, strictly speaking, redundant. Others, to which this objection cannot be made, are thought to discourage the use of more formal or exact verbs by which the same idea could be conveyed. But it is doubtful whether the objection is well founded. Usually the verb-adverb combination conveys a force or a shade of meaning that could not be otherwise expressed, and there can be no question about the fact that the flexibility of the language, to say nothing of its picturesqueness, has been enormously increased. The twenty verbs *back*, *blow*, *break*, *bring*, *call*, *come*, *fall*, *get*, *give*, *go*, *hold*, *lay*, *let*, *make*, *put*, *run*, *set*, *take*, *turn*, and *work* have entered into 155 combinations with more than 600 distinct meanings or uses.⁵⁷ The historian of language can view this development only as a phenomenon going on actively for over 400 years, one that shows no tendency to lose its vitality and that has its roots in the most permanent and irresistible source of linguistic phenomena, the people.

237. *A Liberal Creed.*

In closing this chapter on the language of our own day it may not be inappropriate to suggest what should be an enlightened modern attitude toward linguistic questions. It has often been necessary in the course of this book to chronicle the efforts of well-meaning but misguided persons who hoped to make over the language in accordance with their individually conceived pattern. And we will find all too often provincialism and prejudice masquerading as scientific truth in discussions of language by men and women who

⁵⁶ Kennedy, p. 42.

⁵⁷ Kennedy, p. 35.

would blush to betray an equal intolerance of the music or furniture or social conventions of other parts of the world than their own. Doubtless the best safeguard against prejudice is knowledge, and some knowledge of the history of English in the past is necessary to an enlightened judgment in matters affecting present use. Such knowledge warns us to beware of making arbitrary decisions on questions that only time can settle. It teaches us that reason is but a sorry guide in many matters of grammar and idiom and that the usage of educated speakers and writers is the only standard in language for the educated. It should make us tolerant of colloquial and regional forms, because like the common people, they claim their right to exist by virtue of an ancient lineage. And finally, it should prepare us for further changes since language lives only on the lips of living people and must change as the needs of people in expressing themselves change. But knowledge of the ways of language in the past is not all that is necessary. Knowledge must be coupled with tolerance, and especially tolerance toward usage that differs from our own. We must avoid thinking that there is some one region where the “best” English is spoken, and particularly that that region is the one in which we ourselves live. We must not think that the English of London or Oxford, or Boston or Philadelphia, is the norm by which all other speech must be judged, and that in whatever respects other speech differs from this norm it is inferior. Good English is the usage—sometimes the divided usage—of cultivated people in that part of the English-speaking world in which one happens to be.

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