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Difficulty in Comprehending British and American Lexicology for Indonesian Student

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Abstract

In this chapter, we have tried to show that the vocabulary of English is in reaality a collection of 'vocabularies'. While all speakers off the language share a 'common core' of words, each one also has access, either solely as a reader/ listener, or additionally as a writer / speaker, to a number of 'specialist vocabularies'. The specialist vocabularies can be identified along a number of dimensions of variation of variation, including: geography, giving national and regional (dialect) varieties; occupation and interest, giving 'jargons'; sub- culture, giving types of 'slang'; and formality. The chapter concluded with a brief look at restricted languages, such as those used for air and sea navigation.

Keywords
American; British languages and lexicology; vocabulary

I. Introduction

Many people think that English vocabulary is inconsistent. Many letters are pronounced differently in different word contexts. The letter "i" for example is pronounced /ai/in "side" /Ə/in "skirt" and /i/in "sick" therefore., the letter are not consistently pronounced, or the same sound are not always represented by the same letters.

Most of pople have got unfavorable experience in learning and developing vocabulary. They consider the vocabulary is totally irregular, arbitrary or inconsistent. To make it worse, a great number of us do not have a clear idea about the system so that they do not know how to teach it.

Our difficulty in learning vocabulary may partly come from the fact that we mentally at least, keep comparing vocabulary to that ours. We have been accustomed to using vocabulary without knowing a phoneme- based spelling system. We might have been mentally finding out some regularity or consistency of English system.

Even though English spelling system is not phonemic, it is not whole arbitrary or inconsistent.

Ex: "oa" such as in "boat, goal, load, and toad" is pronounced /ou/ and "ae" such as in "tape, gate, mate, late, and tale" is pronounced / ei/ for more details, let's see in the next context. The writer realizes that there are many exceptions to the rules. English has adopted many foreign words.

II. Review of Literature

Vocabulary or lexicon is a level of language analysis and related fields such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantic, etymology and lexicography (Howard Jackson and Etienne, Ze Amvella, 2000:20).

Language is one of the most important things in the life of every human being (Purba, N. et al. (2020). Building vocabulary through context and structure (Rose Wassman and Lee Ann). Vocabulary is more than lists of target language words. As part of the language system, vocabulary is intimately interrelated with grammar. In fact, it is possible to divide the lexical system of most languages into "grammatical words" such as prepositions, articles, adverb and so on (David Nunan, 1999:101).

Knowing a word means knowing the pronunciation,. Spelling, part of the sentence it occupies, grammatical/ pattern, collocations, frequency, appropriateness, meaning and associations with other words (Nation, 1990)

2.1 Foreign languages

Scientific terminology passes on one side into purely foreign words, on another it blends with the technical vocabulry of art and manufactures. It is not possible to fix the point a: which the **'**English language' stops, along any of these diverging lines.

While some senses may belong to the common core, one or more senses may be part of a specialist vocabulary. For example, ***comeback*** has the technical sense in Australian sheep farming of 'a sheep that is three- quarters merino and one- quarter crossbred' (***collins English Dictionary*** (CED) 1986: 315), proof has specialist senses in law, maths/ logic, printing and engraving (see CED 1986: 1225).

a. Dimensions of Variation

One dimension of variation would be the historical one, charting the birth and death of words. At any point in time, there are words that continue to be recorded, even though they are "obsolote', i.e. no longer in current use, but found only older literature.

A second relevant dimension is that occupation, which includes ***OED's*** 'technical' and 'scientific'. The term 'occupation' is interpreted broadly to include any pursuit, whether as part of daily work or a leisure interest, which develops its own specialized vocabulary. It encompasses scientific, religious, legal, political, and journalistic language (Crystal 1995), as well as the vocabulary associated with particular jobs and professions, sport and hobbies. Such specialist vocabulary is referred to, often disparagingly, as 'jargon'.

A third relevant dimension. This dimension is probably included under the ***OED's*** 'slang' 'label'. An example might be the vocabulary peculiar to youth culture, or to the criminal underworld, or to the CB (citizen's Band) Radio fraternity, or to internet surfers. There is perhaps some overlap with the occupational dimension, but the emphasis here is on a shared sub- culture rather than on an 'occupatuion'.

Fourthly, we can identify a dimension of variation related to formality of context, which influences the style of language that a speaker or writer uses. Certainly there are differences of vacabulary between 'formal' and 'informal' discourse. Compare: Patrons are kindly requested to deposit their outer garments at the wardeobe. Please leave your coats in the cloakroom.

One father topic, however, that we need to concider as we look at specialist vocabularies concerns the use of ‘restricted languagees’, such as that which airline pilots speak when communicating with airport controls. We have set the agenda for the chapter. Let us now proceed to a more detailed discussion of the points that we have raised’.

b. National and Regional Vocabulary

McAthur (1987) accompanies his article dicussing ‘English languages’ with a diagram called “The circle of words English’ (repproduced in McArthur 1992). The central circle implies a ‘word’ or ‘International’ English, which English speakers with differing national Englishes use with each other when they meet at conferences, business meetings, or on holiday.

c. British and American English (BrE and AmE)

They are also the major players in the English- language teaching market (EFL and ESL). Although BrE speakers do not often like to thing so, AmE is the dominant variety in the word today, as aconseuence of the political, cultural and economic dominance of the USA. Because of the influence especially of American films and television series, as well as the pop music industry, many words that were formerly restricted to AmE are now well understoodin BrE and in many cases also part of many, especially younger, speakers active vocabulary.

We need to account for the fact that some words are specific to either the American or the British variety and not used in Word English, some are variety- specific but are used in Word English, some have a sense which is variety- specific, and so on. Benson *et al*. (1986b) identify ten groups of lexical differences.

1. no crossover potential from either side, e.g. (AmE words on the left BrE on the right:

candy	sweets
cot	camp bed
diaper	nappy
freeway	motor way
grab bag	lucky dip
kerosene	paraffin
wrench	spanner
zip code	post code

2. crossover potential from AmE to BrE, but not from BrE to AmE; so the AmE word is in World English, e.g.

can	tin
crepe	pancake
eraser	rubber
French fries	chips
Intermission	interval
Leash	lead
Stroller	pushchair
Zero	nought

3. crossover potential from BrE to AmE, but not to from AmE to BrE; so the BrE word is in World English, e.g.

ash can	dustbin
bathtub	bath

casket	coffin
drapes	curtains
fall	autumn
faucet	tap
line	queue
pantyhose	tights

4. crossover potential both from ArE to BrE and from BmE to ArE; so both words are in World English, e.g.

administration	government
antenna	aerial
baggage	luggage
dry goods	drapery
nightgown	nightdress
mail	post
sweater	jumper

All the above examples are taken from Crystal (1995 : 309). They begin to ilustrate the vast differences in vocabulary between AmE and BrE, differences that have come about as the two nations have developed their own identities and pursued their bown goals since the first settlers emigrated to America in the seventeenth century.

Enson ***et al***. (1986b) contains many more examples, including idioms, which may or may not have equivalents in the other language, e.g. AmE ***shootthe breeze*** = 'chat informally' (no BrE equivalent idiom), BrE fall off the back of a lorry = 'be stolen' (no AmE equivalent idiom).

d. Antipodean English

The convict language of the first settlers, drawn from a number of British English dialect, not to mention underworld slang, furnished Australian English with has some ten thousand distinctive words, e.g. ***cobber*** (friend), ***dinkum*** (genuine), ***larrikin*** (hooligan), ***shake*** (in the sense of 'steal'). As settlers spread out from the first point of arrival, they encountered new flora, fauna and geographical features in this vast country. Names were partly borrowed from the aboriginal languages, partly coined from English, e.g. ***dingo, brolga*** (bird), ***morwong*** (fish), ***billabong*** (stagnant pool in a stream), ***dillybag, outback, backblocks.***

e. African English

South African English (SAE) is a distinct regional variety, with a distinctive vocabulary drawn in part from Afrikaans (the South African variety of Dutch0, in part from native African languages (such as khoisan, Tswana, xhosa, Zulu), and in part from developments and adaptations of English words. The dictionary of South African English (Branford and Branford, eds, 1991) contains over five thousand items considered unique to this variety.

Some of the words Afrikaans have made their way into World English, e.g. ***aardvark, apartheid, eland, trek, veld.*** Other remain restricted to the SAE variety such as bakkie (basin, container), Kloof (ravine or mountain pass), lekker (nice, enjoyable), ***platteland*** (area outside cities and main towns), ***verkrampte*** (conservative, narrowminded), ***voorkamer*** (front roojm). Words from African languages that have entered South African Enlish include: ***gogga*** (insect) from Hottentot, ***indaba*** (matter of concern or for discussion)

from Zulu, ***muti*** (medicine) from Zulu, ***sangoma*** (witch doctor) from Zulu, ***tsotsi*** (violent young criminal) from, it is thought, a Bantu language, Words from English that are peculiar to South African include: ***bioscope*** (BrE cinema), bottle store (BrE off- licence, AmE liquor store), ***camp*** (paddock), ***matchbox*** (small standardized dwelling), *robot* (BrE traffict lights).

f. Indian English

Indian English (IndE) from local languages, as well as Portuguese. Directly from Portuguese are *ayah, caste and peon*: from local languages Potuguese, *bamboo, betel, curry and mango.* Directly from local languages into Indian English are: anna, chit (ty), pukka, pundit, sahib, etc. Among words borrowed from Arabic and Persian via local languages are: mogul, sepoy, shroff (banker), vakeel (lawyer). Loan translations include : dining- leaf, 'a banana leaf used to serve food' and ***cousin sister***, 'a female cousin'.

Indian English vocabulary also has items (compounds) that are cdomposed from one element of English origin and one element from a local language : *grameen bank,* 'vilage bank', *policewala,* 'policeman', *tiffin box,* 'lunch- box'. Some English words have also developed new senses or cbeen adapted to news form, e.g. *batch,* 'group of people' as in *bath- mate,* 'class- mate', *drumstick,* 'green vegetable', *condole,* 'offter condolences', *head-bath,* 'washing one's hair', *prepone*, 'opposite of postpone'.

Indian English is not the only variety of the subcontinent, thought many of its features are shared with Pakistani English (Baumgardner 1990), Lankan English (spoken in Sri Lanka) and the variety of English spoken in Bangladesh.

g. Other Englishes

What has been discussed so far should give a good flavour of the variety that occurs in the regional form of English. We do not have space to mention other Englishes, such as those spoken in the far East (Hong Kong, Malaysia, singapore), or in the Caribbean (including creole varieties). Nor do we have space to reflect on the rich diversity of regional dialects, e.g. in Britain and America, which have been investigated by extensive projects suchas the Survey of English Dialects (Orton *et al*.,eds, 1962-71) or the *Dictionary of American regional English* (Cassidy, ed., 1985).

2.2 Jargon

The term 'jargon' often has a pejorative connotation. We use it in this way when a prefessional (e.g. doctor or lawyer) uses their specialized vocabulary in inappropriate context, either to display their knowledge or to obscure what they have to say. Jargon is impenetrable to the outsider, often deliberately so; only those inside the particular occupational group have access to its specialist vocabulary. You can become a member of the group only by learning the vocabulary, the jargon and by using it appropriately.

In part, that is what a professional training or an apprenticeship does: it familiarizes you with the jargon and then test that you have acquired it sufficiently to be allowed to call yourself a member of the group (lawyer, electrician, or whatever).

In this section, we will take examples for the jargons of professional occupations and of leisure pursuits, and we will consider particularly religious jargon and that of the modern ecology movement.

III. Results and Discussion

3.1 Occupational Jargons

The jargon of computing is largely of this last type: novel, compounds formed from established English word, or new meaning for ordinary words. Among the compounds, consider: *central processing unit, disk drive, read only memory* (ROM), touch sensitive *screen, virtual reality, word processor*. Words with new meaning include: *chip, file, icon, monitor, keyboard, printer, scroll, setup, terminal, window*. What makes computer jargon especially difficult to understand is the exstensive use of abbreviations and acronyms: ASCII, BIT, DOS, SQL, SSADM, WYSIWYG. (See Lynch 1991).

3.2 Sport Jargons

Here is selection of cricket jargon, arranged under a number of headings:

a. General

Wicket, stumps, bails, bat, crease, boundary, sightscreen, inning, follow- on, declare

b. Over, maiden over

Opening bastman, middle order (bastman), tailender, nightwatchman

c. Field positions

Leg side, off side, slip, gully, cover, point, square leg, silly (mid off), long (on), wicket keeper

d. Types of 'out'

Bowled, lbw, (leg before wicket), stumped, run out, caught and bowled, played on

e. Types of 'bowling'

Pace, seam, swing, spin, off- break, leg- break, googly, Chinaman, inswinger, outswinger, Yorker, bouncer

f. Types of batting 'stoke'

On- drive, off- drive, cover drive, sweep, hook, edge, push, glance

g. Types of score

Single, boundary, bye, leg bye, dot ball.

3.3 Religious Language

Because of the dominance of Rome, much ecclesiastical and theological vocabulary in English is borrowed from Latin. Hawever, some religious words are of Anglo- Saxon origin, having been adapted to a Christian meaning ; for example, holy, ghost (spirit), sin, forgive, gospel (from god, 'God' + spell, 'story'), believe, heaven, worship. The vast majority of religious term in English have been borrowed from Latin. Until the first translation into English in the 1380s by John Wycliff and his associates, the Bible used was the Latin Vulgate translated by Jerome in the fourth century. Indeed, it was from the Vulgate that the wycliffites translated into English, borrowing more than a thousand Latin words in the process.

One of the features of ecclesiastical life as established by Augustine and his successors was the religious hopuse (monastery itself a fifteenth- century word), where education and training for the priesthood took place and books were kept and copied. Some words dealing with monastic life were borrowed from Latin during the Old English period- abbot, altar, cowl, mass, monk, nun, priest but many more entered English after the Norman conquest, during the Middle English period, when religious houses were revived and multiplied- chapel, cloister, compline, convent, eucharist, offertory, office, prior, rule, tonsure.

Parts of church buildings are mostly derived from Latin during the medieval period: cathedral, chancel, choir, nave, transept, sanctuary, crypt, tower, buttress. However, steeple is of Old English origin; as is the word church, tought it is tought to be derived from Greek kyriakon ('belonging to the Lord').

It was not until William Tyndale's version in the early sixteenth century that the Greek new Testament were used as the basis of the translation. Although we recognize them as 'technical' words of the Christian faith, we are no longer aware of the Latin origins of term such a: cross, faith, salvation, eternal, trespass, justify, scripture, confess, admonish, glory, praise, hymn, psalm, revelation, prophet, incarnation, resurrection, advent.

3.4 Green Jargon

The following items are market as sucht: acid rain, additive, alar, alternative energy/ technology, alternative fuel, (environmentally) aware, ecobabble, bio- (e.g. biodegradable, bio- diesel, bio- diversity), beetle bank, blue box (for collecting recyclable items), bottle bank, can bank, carbon tax, cat (catalyser), CFC (chlorofluorocarbon), crop circle, cruelty-free, deforestation, desertification, dumping (of toxic waste), Eart Summit, eco- (e.g. eco-friendly, eco- tourism), ecology, ecological footprint, energy audit, E number, (the) environment, environmentally sensitive/ sound, fly- tipping, free (e.g. meat- free, lead-free, nuclear- free), fundie (fundamentalist, i.e. a committed 'green'), Gaia, global warming, green, greenhouse (effect, gas), guppie (green yuppie), heritage, horsiculture, irradiation, landfill site, monergy, mousse, nega- (negawatt, negamile), nimby, nuclear winter, organic, orimulsion, oxygenated (of fuel), ozone, PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl), recycling, red route, set aside, (of land), speed bump/hump, sustainable, traffic calming, tree house, tree hugger, twigloo, unfriendly (e.g. ozone- unfriendly), ungreen, unleaded, Valdez principles, veal crate, Waldsterben, wind farm, wise use, zero emission vehicle.

Such a sub-culture can be found, for example, among young people – adolescents, teennagers. Indeed one such sub-culture has provided the word Valspeak: 'a variety of US slang which originated among teenage girls from the San Fernando's valley in California and was letter taken up more widely by youngsters in the US' (Tullopch 1991: 299). Two sub – culture that have a long history of lexical innovation are the armed forces and the criminal underworld : both are well represented in Partridge (1984), Of more recent origin are the vacabulary associated with the sub –cultures of citizens Band Radio users and of Rastafariannism.

IV. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have tried to show that the vocabulary of English is in reaality a collection of 'vocabularies'. While all speakers off the language share a 'common core' of words, each one also has access, either solely as a reader/ listener, or additionally as a writer / speaker, to a number of 'specialist vocabularies'.

The specialist vocabularies can be identified along a number of dimensions of variation of variation, including: geography, giving national and regional (dialect) varieties; occupation and interest, giving 'jargons'; sub- culture, giving types of 'slang'; and formality.

The chapter concluded with a brief look at restricted languages, such as those used for air and sea navigation.

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