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ENGLISH AND ENGLISHES

Please do ask questions during the presentation.

English is a language riddled with varieties, across both time and space. ASt this is such a huge topic, I'm ignoring the historical Englishes, OE and ME; I'm looking briefly at the 'occupational' varieties of English, such as legal, medical, engineering English, and so on, but only in terms of the OED. Varieties existing as a result of socialization—the various registers of English according to social context—I will touch on briefly, again in the OED context.

I'll be concentrating on regional varieties of English: I am a lexicographer, and will be dealing with the topic mainly as a lexicographer, often in the context of the OED's policies and practices. This will be a bit of a patchwork!

Varieties of English even within *countries* can cause great difficulties in understanding, let alone between regions of the world. Someone from the Deep South may find it hard to understand an English-speaker from Australia, certainly. But within England, a very small country, there are strong and characteristic forms of English, divergent in pronunciation and to a lesser extent vocabulary, which identify speakers from places often not very far from each other—Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle, the West Country, London. An extreme Glasgow English-speaker and one from Devon speak the same language but may struggle to understand each other.

Within South Africa under apartheid, differing varieties of English clustered more around *ethnicity* because communities were separated from each other by separate schooling and group areas. (Is social change now affecting these ethnically-based Englishes?) And just to complicate matters, there are differing statuses attached to varieties: recent surveys in Britain have indicated variously that the Edinburgh, or the Yorkshire, or the Newcastle, accent is the most trusted, while Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool English is not admired, and Cockney, or RP, the 'posh' accent, is the least trusted of all British accents. So one can take one's pick!

On a personal note, I find it fascinating that British people comment on my having an accent, which is still recognized as South African (or maybe Australian? Or New Zealand perhaps?) while they themselves speak such a plethora of clearly differentiated and characteristic regional varieties. There is no such thing as British English, it seems to me, but a large number of "Britishes"!.

As we know—and especially in South Africa—English may be seen as having two main roles worldwide—firstly that of mother-tongue (or first, and sometimes second) language, the language of idiom, literature, poetry, and the emotions; and secondly of international lingua franca, used for practical communication. English's strong position in the world is of course the result of British colonization during earlier centuries; subsequently the size and power of the United States (think of the reach of Hollywood, for instance); and now of the fact that English is the dominant language of the Internet and international scholarship. English is one of the official languages of the European Union, and here in SA it has (to me) the often rather uncomfortable position of being the de facto official language of multi-lingual South Africa despite the constitutional entrenching of 11 national languages. In this context, English is both a liberator (chosen to provide access to the international community and

world publishing), and an oppressor, dominating and side-lining other languages at the national level. The *Economist* has called English "the default language of the human race[1] "— perhaps a rather breath-taking overstatement, but with a grain of truth, as second-language speakers now probably outnumber native speakers.

The spread of English, and its diversification, is a relatively modern phenomenon. At the time of Elizabeth I (1533–1603) there were at most 7m first-language speakers of English, and almost no non-first-language speakers. At the time of Queen Elizabeth II, there are some 350m first-language speakers, and second- (or third-) language speakers would more than double this total.[2]

The status of English during the reign of Elizabeth I is illustrated in the following dialogue between an Englishman and an Italian, from John Florio's *Florio his firste fruites* in 1578[3]:

> *What thinke you of this English, tel me I pray you.*
>
> It is a language that wyl do you good in England but passe Dover, it is woorth nothing.
>
> *Is it not used then in other countreyes?*
>
> No sir, with whom wyl you that they speake?
>
> *With English marchants.*
>
> English marchantes, when they are out of England, it liketh hem not, and they doo not speake it.
>
> *But yet what thinke you of the speach, is it gallant and gentle, or els contrary?*
>
> Certis if you wyl beleeve me, it doth not like me at all, because it is a language confused, bepeesed with many tongues: it taketh many words of the latine, and mo from the French, and mo from the Italian, and many mo from the Duitch, some also from the Greeke, and from the Britaine, so that if every language had his owne wordes againe, there woulde but a fewe remaine for English men, and yet every day they adde.

So, compared with the small, isolated English of the 16th century, English's modern international spread offers a huge contrast, The phenomenon has challenged academics to come up with models showing how the varieties interact across the world—none of which is entirely satisfactory, but each of which contributes to the debate.

Three of these are the models of Braj Kachru, Tom McArthur, and Manfred Görlach.

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[1] *Economist* 15 May 1999 in Bruce Moore, *Who's Centric Now?* (2001), i. p. 1 (Melbourne, OUP)

[2] Laurie Bauer *An Introduction to International Varieties of English* (2002) p. 13 (Edinburgh University Press).

[3] John Florio (1578) *Florio his firste fruites,* xxvii. f. 50.

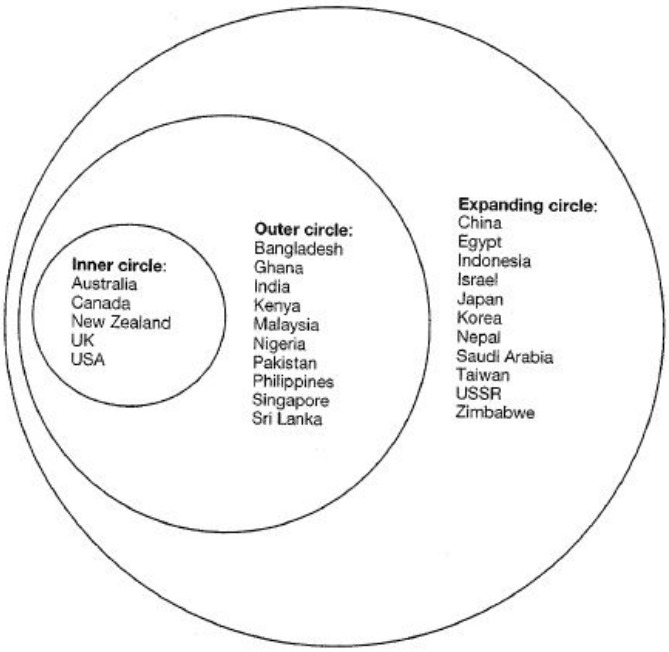


Figure 2.5 Kachru's concentric circles of English

(From Kachru, Braj B. (1985) 'Standards, codification, and sociolinguistic realism: the English language in the outer circle' in Randolph Quirk and H. G. Widdowson (eds.), *English in the World*. Cambridge: CUP. Reproduced in Laurie Bauer *An Introduction to International Varieties of English* (2002) ii. p. 23; Edinburgh University Press.

Kachru's model (1985)[4] sees the UK, US, and the old English-speaking colonies at the centre, where English is used in all domains (England is of course different from the rest, as it is the only region where English is endemic, the language having been carried to all other regions at different times). The other groupings are shown as moving away from the centre—the "outer circle" of countries where English is a post-colonial second language (frequently with many speakers for whom English is dominant, or their only language), used in education and administration; and finally the "expanding circle" of countries where English is a foreign language, used for trade and international interaction. You will notice that South Africa doesn't appear at all in Kachru's model: which is odd when one remembers that, considering only the first-language English-speaking population, let alone the vast number of proficient 2nd- and 3rd-language speakers, there are as many English speakers in SA as there are in New Zealand). Whether—and where—SAE should be included in Kachru's diagram is a challenging question. Perhaps it can justifiably fit into both the inner and outer circles? South Africa is an extremely complex society, and therefore has a complex variety of English, or Englishes, which commentators find hard to pin down or pigeonhole. Tom McArthur's analysis is as follows:

> The RSA resembles the UK in the core ethnicity and culture of its anglophones and in aspects of its standard speech and writing. It resembles the US in having a history of racial tension and kinds of 'Black' and 'White' English except that the population proportions are reversed… It shares with Canada a bicolonial history, resulting in a tense relationship between two long-established settler communities… It is like Australia and New Zealand in aspects of its southern-

[4] Kachru, Braj B. (1985) 'Standards, codification, and sociolinguistic realism: the English language in the outer circle' in Randolph Quirk and H. G. Widdowson (eds.), *English in the World*. Cambridge: CUP. Reproduced in Laurie Bauer (2002) *An Introduction to International Varieties of English* ii. p. 23; Edinburgh University Press.

hemisphere English and in degrees of tension with indigenous peoples and their languages—but on a far larger scale.[5]

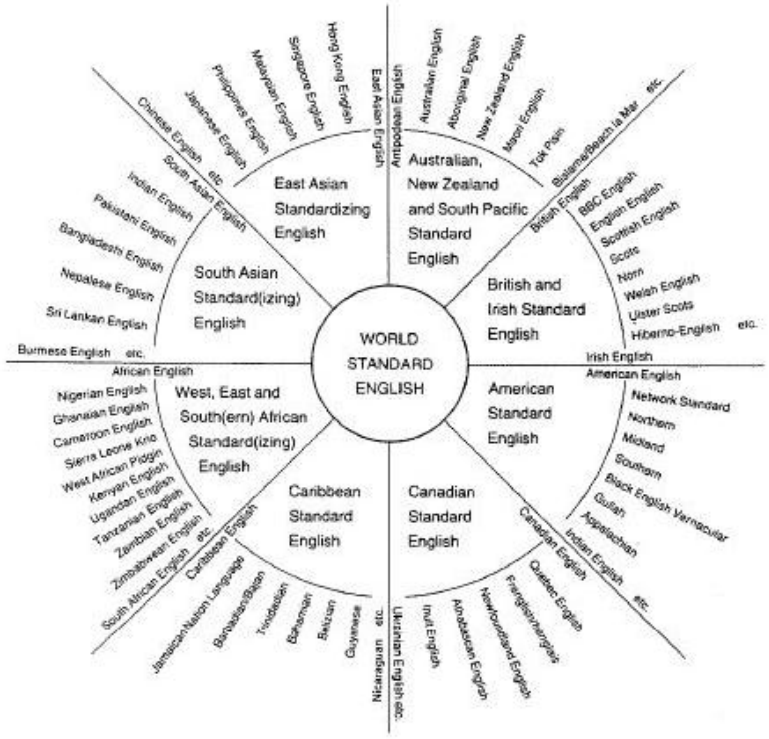
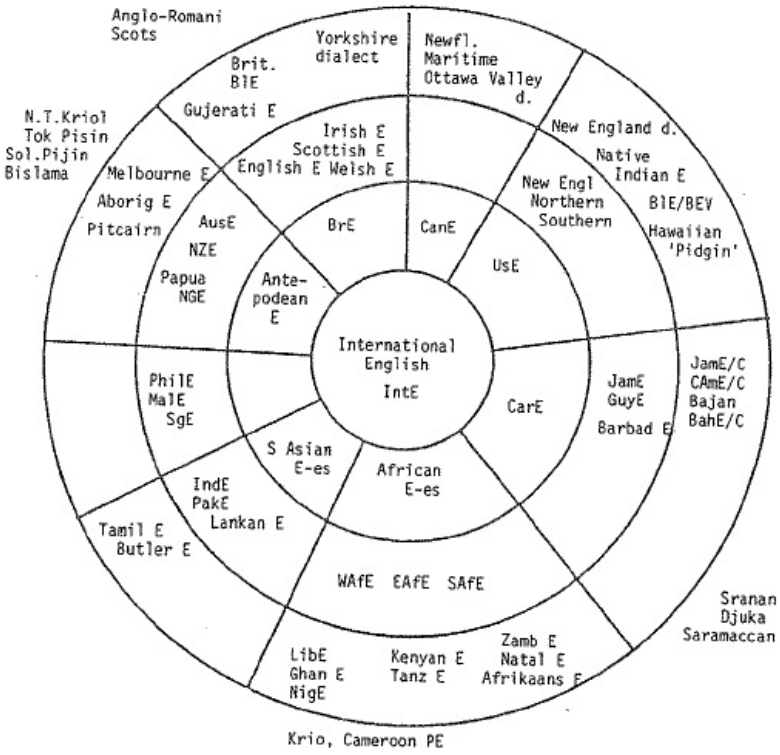


Figure 2.4 McArthur's model of Englishes

We may interpret McArthur's model (1987)[6] as more "democratic" than Kachru's, with all varieties (including British English) feeding into a central core of what he calls 'world standard English'. Of course all varieties also have what one would call "non-standard" forms, the extremes being for example West African Krio, North American Gullah, and New Guinea Tok Pisin. McArthur's diagram includes these pidgins in the outer circle, beside standard varieties such as South African or Australian English. Perhaps controversial? I find McArthur's diagram a bit of a hybrid.

[5] Tom McArthur (2002) *Oxford Guide to World English* p. 288. Oxford: OUP.

[6] McArthur, Tom (1987) 'The English Languages?' in *English Today* 11:9–11. Reproduced in Bauer (2002) p. 22.



Görlach's model (1990)[7] moves from what he defines as 'the most widespread variety of English (in the centre), to the most local varieties' (round the rim). It does include non-standard or pidgin varieties, but round the edges, outside the circles. Unlike McArthur, Görlach does not claim that the central English core, which he terms 'International English', is a "standard" form, and his circles are not indicating distance from the centre as much as gradually increasing detail about each regional family of varieties.

Each of the different models deserves study and discussion: all see English as a set of differing varieties, each with the potential for developing into a different language, but held together by the central hub of a common world English.

The OED

For James Murray, the Chief Editor of the OED, and citizen of late-19th century Britain, the question of what constituted the English language was a difficult one. We need to remember that English was seen as centred in, almost 'belonging to', Great Britain, which was in the 1880s and 90s a real power, the head of a great Empire, and with unselfconsciously imperial attitudes. The OED first edition is at times pretty parochial, talking of 'our language', 'our English', but Murray's world view should be seen in the context of his time. He should also be understood as a lexicographer desperately attempting to limit the boundaries of his dictionary in the face of a chaotic, sprawling language that grew almost by the minute, both by borrowing new words from across the world, and by creating new senses of old English words as well. So Murray too drew a diagram.

[7] Görlach, Manfred, *Studies in the History of the English Language*. Heidelberg: Winter. Reproduced in Bauer (2002) *An Introduction to International Varieties of English* , ii. p. 21 (Edinburgh University Press).



He concluded, in his 'Circle of the English Language', that English had a nucleus of common words which were unquestionably English; that these included both literary and colloquial words; and that as one moved further out from the centre, along the various paths, words had less and less claim to be included in an English dictionary. Inclusion, or not, in the OED would have to be a matter of individual judgement by editors. In Murray's words: 'There is absolutely no defining line in any direction: the circle of the English language has a well-defined centre but no discernible circumference. Yet··a Dictionary has definite limits: the lexicographer··must 'draw the line' somewhere, in each diverging direction…well knowing that the line which he draws will not satisfy all his critics.'[8] In Murray's 'Circle',

Foreign covered borrowings such as *á la mode, en fête, nil desperandum.* In OED1, such terms were usually identified as unassimilated, indicated by tramlines next to the headword.

Dialectal referred to varieties of English within a country, chiefly (in the OED) within the United Kingdom and United States. OED now uses the term "regional" instead of "dialectal". Some examples are *addle* v./1, to earn or merit something, (northern England); *alcatote*, a silly or foolish person (Devon), *handsmooth,* completely, flatly, thoroughly (East Anglian); *mouldwarp*, a mole (*Sc.* and northern); *snicket,* an alleyway (northern) (called a *jigger* in Merseyside, a *pass* in *Sc.* and Irish English (north.), a *trance* or *vennel* (*Sc.*), a wynd (*Sc*. and *northern Eng*.). In SAE, *bergie* would be seen as *regional (W. Cape)*, *madumbi* as *regional* (*KwaZulu-Natal*). If you could suggest any Gauteng regionalisms, I'd be very interested.

Slang, leading out of colloquial, tended to be understood in OED as comparatively ephemeral, and frequently used within defined groups, such as soldiers and sailors, gang-members, musicians, or young people. For instance, labelled *slang* in the OED are the examples *Abyssinia* meaning "I'll be seeing you", *AC/DC* meaning bisexual, *axeman* meaning a guitarist, *banjaxed* (Irish), ruined, destroyed, *bovver boy* (Brit.), a hooligan or member of a skinhead gang. [It's a sign of the era that Murray doesn't accommodate racial or sexual slurs or obscene language in his diagram—even though he included some in the OED. [bitch, nigger e.g.].]

[8] James Murray, 'General Explanations' in *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1933) p. xxviii.

Technical in OED terms included specialist areas such as banking, mechanics, printing, construction, sport, animal husbandry, and law---this is an example of legal speak from John Galsworthy novel. Inclusion in the OED would depend upon how widely known the term was judged to be. A modern example: the term *dry riser* is often seen on English buildings. A **dry riser** is a main vertical pipe intended to distribute water to multiple levels of a building or structure as a component of the fire suppression systems. The pipe is maintained empty of water.[9] The word is not in the OED, as it doesn't yet occur in printed material, except for technical handbooks.



And finally **Science** includes the many disciplines of medicine, botany, physics, zoology, mathematics, etc., and also computing as a relatively new science discipline. A test for inclusion in the OED is whether a science word has begun to appear in general literature and journals, and in newspapers, and is not restricted just to specialist publications. The first edition omitted both *appendicitis* and *radium* as too rarified: an embarrassment we now no longer have to endure, being able to add such words online relatively easily. When there is such a huge general vocabulary to cover, it is easy to see why coverage of specialist areas would be limited.



Note that REGIONAL, in the sense of 'world Englishes', is not considered to be one of the paths of the Circle, although James Murray did include many terms from "the Colonies" in the OED. These include words such as *hartebeest*, *impi, induna, knobkerrie*, *laager*, *meerkat*, *outspan*, *tickey*, and *Zulu* from South Africa, *boomerang, dingo, fossick, gibber*, *kookaburra* from Australia, and *huia*, *kahikatea*, *manuka*, and *Maori* from New Zealand.

[9] Wikipedia

Why was there no awareness in Murray's mind of the need for a path reflecting the rapid development of characteristic varieties of English in countries beyond Britain? Nor, in fact, did he see British English as one of the many world varieties, as modern lexicographers recognize it is.

I believe that the answer lies in the questions Murray asked in trying to decide on the 'boundaries' of the English language. He asked, was English that 'Of *some* Englishmen? or of *all* Englishmen? Is it *all* that *all* Englishmen speak, or *some* of what *some* Englishmen speak? Does it include the English of Scotland and Ireland, the speech of British Englishmen, and American Englishmen, of Australian Englishmen, South African Englishmen, and of the Englishmen in India?'[10]

As a late Victorian Briton, Murray saw the colonies as an extension of Great Britain: thus the new colonial words were simply an extension of the vocabulary of Britons, used when abroad. There was not the understanding that after a generation, English speakers abroad were no longer 'Englishmen'. But interestingly, the first dictionaries of 'colonial' English were prompted by the OED.

The first for Australia and New Zealand, *Austral English* by Edward Morris, was published in 1898. In the preface, Morris describes how (and I quote) 'Dr. Murray several years ago invited assistance from this end of the world for words and uses of words peculiar to Australasia, or to parts of it. In answer to his call I began to collect… When my parcel of quotations had grown into a considerable heap, it occurred to me that the collection, if a little further trouble were expended upon it, might first enjoy an independent existence.'[11]

The first dictionary of South African English, *Africanderisms: a Glossary of South African Colloquial Words and Phrases, and of Place and other Names*, by the Revd. Charles Pettman, appeared in 1913. In his Preface he explained his motivation:

> 'When the great 'Oxford Dictionary' not only omits to notice such recognized English words as African and Africanism.,.to say nothing of such well known South African words as Africander, Africanderism, and Africanderdom, there does appear to be an excuse, if not a reason, for the publication of a Glossary of South African Words and Phrases.'[12]

He describes how the Glossary was begun 'on the day of the author's landing in Cape Town in October, 1876, when he jotted down in his notebook a few of the strange words that then fell upon his ear.' This was three years before Murray began his work on the OED, and shows that Pettman had a very acute awareness of language. Pettman doesn't mention having sent Murray any contributions, but Murray's third son Wilfrid was living in Cape Town and was assistant registrar at UCT from 1908, and surviving correspondence shows that he assisted his father with information on SA words.

[10] Kathleen Murray, *Caught in a Web of Words* (1977) p. 193

[11] Edward E. Morris (1898) *Austral English: a Dictionary of Australasian Words Phrases and Usages*. London: Macmillan & Co.

[12] Charles Pettman (1913) *Africanderisms: a Glossary of South African Colloquial Words and Phrases, and of Place and other Names.*London: Longman. Preface, p. v.

The earlier (and wonderfully named) *Hobson Jobson*[13]*: a Glossary of Anglo-Indian Colloquial Words and Phrases,* by Yule and Burnell, published in 1886, had as its *raison d'etre* to (quote)

> 'deal with that class of words which, not in general pertaining to the technicalities of administration, recur constantly in the daily intercourse of the English in India… A certain percentage of such words have been carried to England by the constant reflux to their native shore of Anglo-Indians… A considerable number of the expressions in question have..become naturalized in the English language, and are meeting with ample recognition in the great Dictionary edited by Dr. Murray at Oxford.'[14]

These words included *bungalow*, *cheroot*, *curry, loot, pucka,* and *veranda, now permanent fixtures in general English.* But the so-called 'Anglo-Indian' English-speakers were temporary, generally returning to England, and the present-day speakers of South Asian English are now Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Sri Lankan.

The consideration of words from regional varieties of English leads to difficult decisions for the modern OED editors. The questions that arise are often very political ones. Are some varieties more important than others because of size or political power? In South African English, what words are central to the vocabulary of English speakers? And *which* speakers of English? Do we consider only the language of *first*-language English-speakers? What about the Afrikaans usage "to throw [someone] with [something]? What about the common SA usage, "My father is late", meaning that he has died? (This has now become well known across the world through Alexander McCall-Smith's Botswana novels.) These dilemmas are perhaps more difficult for a SA English dictionary than for the OED, as with the whole English-speaking world to cover, the OED is simply not able to contemplate including second-language vocabulary unless it moves into the central core of English.

But OED faces a similar problem with non-*standard* usage. How should we treat 'incorrectness'? Do we represent the pronunciation of *mischievous* as *mischievious* because it's now so common? Do we add the now prevalent use of *literally* to mean "figuratively" (In the UK: I literally died. She literally flew across the room.)? What about reflecting the vocabulary of the creoles of South Carolina and Georgia, Singapore, Malaysia, or Nigeria? Or of Fanakalo or *flaaitaal*? The answer for the OED is that if *any* word moves into the central core of English, it will be included, and we rely on regional dictionaries to complete the detailed picture of world English.

In South Africa and elsewhere, with English being in the presence of so many other languages, and with much bilingualism or multilingualism, there is bound to be code-switching, even in printed material, where the speaker or writer temporarily borrows a word more expressive than the corresponding English one, as: "I felt really *skaam*." "The water was *woeling* round." It seems to me that South Africans enjoy this mixing of languages as being representative of our own "indigenous" African variety of English—very different from the attitude of an Indian academic, say, who said she couldn't help us with recording Indian

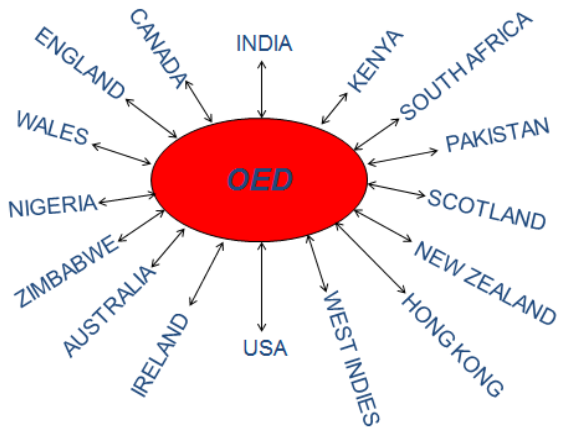
[13] Among British soldiers, the Muharram procession; hence this festal ceremony; from *Ya Hassan! Ya Hossein!*

[14] Henry Yule and Arthur Coke Burnell (1886) *Hobson Jobson: a Glossary of Anglo-Indian Colloquial Words and Phrases and of Kindred Terms*. London: John Murray. Introductory Remarks, p. xiv.

English because there was no such thing: borrowings from Indian languages weren't *real* English, and shouldn't be encouraged.

Murray included some unexpected words from SAE, words such as GEITJE n., which the OED might now think hard about including as a core SAE item. But Murray's test was the repeated use in print, and *Geitje* does have a long history. The *DSAE:Hist*. should certainly include the word, and does, with a modern definition, and a revised etymology, [explain] and with quotations illustrating the word until 1970.

This example illustrates the point that while the OED should indeed reflect the central core of English of ALL varieties of English, it cannot incorporate the less common words from these varieties. One could see this diagram as the new OED model for the Circle of English, where "OED" represents the core vocabularies of all Englishes—the pattern we follow as we revise the dictionary now:



Murray would have seen British English as the norm—the 'vanilla-flavoured' neutral English—and regional Englishes as flavoured, and needing labelling, as *S. Afr.* or *Austral.*, but the modern OED sees things very differently: British English is one variety of world English, with its own peculiarities, as much as US or South African English is. The task OED now has is to recognise which words in the OED are used only in Britain, and nowhere else, and to label them as *Brit. Eng.*—words such as *sleeping policeman* for a traffic hump, *pants* meaning dreadful, *knickers* for women's underpants, *sectioned* meaning committed to a mental hospital, and *tariff* for the standard (or minimum) penalty for a certain category of crime or injury.

Specialized dictionaries are needed to supplement OED coverage of more peripheral, and regional, words, local slang, etc. Luckily the OED has a family of these regional English historical dictionaries to consult— from Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, the Caribbean, and Sri Lanka, as well as some rather dated historical dictionaries from Canada, Nigeria, and the US.

The *OED* now contains over a thousand items labelled *S. Afr.,* and more will be added. Words like *abakwetha*, *biltong*, *induna, maizena*, *Mfecane*, *padkos, rand, tsotsi, veld, vlei,* and *voortrekker* need to be in the OED. *Dwaal* and *indaba* are interesting borrowings, showing that they are well and truly assimilated into SAE and therefore should be included. *Dwaal* has borrowed an Afrikaans verb and made it a noun, often in the fixed phrase "in a

dwaal". And *indaba* has taken a Zulu and Xhosa word with the meaning of "subject, topic, affair" and created another fixed phrase: "That's *your* indaba" – in other words "deal with it yourself". The word *traditional* seems to have developed a new life in southern Africa too, in *traditional leader*, *traditional weapon*, and, in Alexander McCall-Smith's wonderful description of Precious Ramotswe, *traditionally built*. *Trek* has moved beyond SA's borders into general English, so is now described in the OED as "orig. S. Afr.". And *apartheid* is now used figuratively across the world of separation of the genders, classes, or anything else.

Living in the UK for the past 12 years, I have really enjoyed discovering the words and constructions that we don't recognize as being specific to South Africa, but which can cause consternation abroad—items such as *geyser* for a water heater (*boiler* in the UK), *globe* for a light bulb, *cord* for electric lighting flex, *robot* for a traffic light, *circle* for a traffic roundabout, *packet* for a shopping bag*, sleeper-couch* (sofa-bed), and *interleading*, as in doors and rooms ("interconnecting"); the use of "rather" at the end of a sentence, as in "I'll come later rather." And from the 20th century, words like *mailboat* and *bioscope*. And of course the famous use of *no* as in "No, I'm fine."

There are interesting and unpredictable cross-overs in the vocabularies of the various Englishes: *pantyhose* is common to the US, SA, and Australia while *tights* is the UK use. Interesting, as SA is generally more influenced by British English than American. So is the use of *pantyhose* perhaps a result of the Equity ban during apartheid, when South Africans could only see US and not British television dramas? Similarly, *pants* are trousers in the US, SA, and Australia, but definitely underwear in the UK. A *barrister* in the UK is an *advocate* in both Scotland and South Africa. A *chook* is a chicken in Australia, originating among early colonists from northern England, and still heard there too. *Timeous* and *timeously* are SA and Scottish usages, though pronounced differently. The South African word *donga* seems to have been borrowed by Australian soldiers during the South African War of 1899-1902 and carried back to Australia, where it has taken on a new meaning of "makeshift shelter", or even "house". Another strange borrowing was discovered recently in the Australian words *spruik* and *spruiker*, which appeared in Australian English in 1902, also post South African War. Are they from *spreker*, or *spreuk*?

MANATOKA?

I will end with some questions—again, mainly from my perspective as lexicographer:

James Murray saw the English-speaking world as being globally united by one common language. But after a generation or so, speakers of the World Englishes diverge considerably from the British standard form in pronunciation, vocabulary, and even grammar. But what sort of influence *back* towards a common central English is now being exercised by international travel, the Internet, and international academic connections? Are we all speakers of two varieties, happily using our own at home, and adapting to world English when we are abroad, in order to be understood? Have we become more *aware* of regional differences since the advent of the Internet?

New questions arise for modern lexicographers: How does one treat the English of second-language speakers? How does one decide which scientific and technical words are in common use? How much of the *local* English of regions of (say) South Africa does one include?

Where do the creole and pidgin Englishes fit in? Can they be considered to be English?

How conscious are we of the factors that make SAE different? (We included 8,500 SA words in DSAE:Hist, included because they diverged in some way from other Englishes.)

Will the different varieties of English within South Africa, the result of decades of apartheid and separate education, gradually merge into one common South African English, as children mingle in schools, and adults come into contact more freely? *Should* they merge?

What about the language of children as a variety? It is so ephemeral and difficult to document: how can we describe it? (SAE words include *arlie, arvie*, *doedoe, dabbies, ghoen, kiepie, nikkies, puttysticks,* and *sarmie.*)

Is there a variety called 'Southern African English' which includes, for instance, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia, and Botswana? Do our Englishes have many common features? Should the next large dictionary describing the English of this region include all these countries? Or, if that were compiled in any one country, would that be another form of colonizing?

Enough of me. Time for questions.

Thank you.