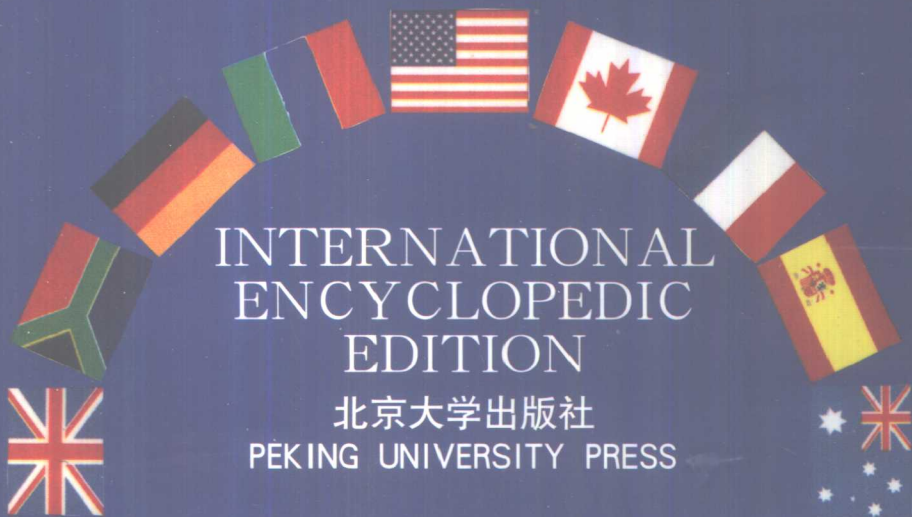


最新韦伯斯特学生英语词典

THE NEW
INTERNATIONAL

WEBSTER'S STUDENT DICTIONARY

OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE



INTERNATIONAL
ENCYCLOPEDIA
EDITION

北京大学出版社

PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

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INTERNATIONAL ENCYCLOPEDIC EDITION

SIDNEY I. LANDAU
EDITOR IN CHIEF



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Pronunciation Key

The primary stress mark (ˈ) is placed after the syllable bearing the heavier stress or accent; the secondary stress mark (ː) follows a syllable having a somewhat lighter stress, as in **com-men-da-tion** (kómˈən-dāːshən).

a add, map	g go, log	o odd, hot	t talk, sit	v vain, eve
ā ace, rate	h* hope, hate	ō open, so	th thin, both	w win, away
ā(r) care, air	i it, give	ō order, jaw	th this, bathe	y* yet, yearn
ā palm, father	ī ice, write	oi oil, boy	u up, done	z zest, muse
b bat, rub	j joy, ledge	ou pout, now	ū(r) burn, term	zh vision, pleasure
ch check, catch	k cool, take	ōo took, full	yōo fuse, few	
d dog, rod	l look, rule	ōo pool, food		
e end, pet	m move, seem	p pit, stop	a the schwa, an unstressed vowel representing the sound of	
ē even, tree	n nice, tin	r run, poor	a in above o in melon	
f fit, half	ng ring, song	s see, pass	e in sicken u in focus	
		sh sure, rush	i in clarity	

* Superscript *h*, as in *white* (ˈhwīt) or *whale* (ˈhwāl), and *y*, as in *due* (dyoo) or *Tuesday* (tyoozˈdā) represent sounds that commonly occur in certain regions but are commonly omitted in others.

FOREIGN SOUNDS

- a as in French *ami*, *patte*. This is a vowel midway in quality between (a) and (ä).
 œ as in French *peu*, German *schön*. Round the lips for (ō) and pronounce (ä).
 ü as in French *vue*, German *grün*. Round the lips for (ōō) and pronounce (ē).
 kh as in German *ach*, Scottish *loch*. Pronounce a strongly aspirated (h) with the tongue in position for (k) as in *cool* or *keep*.
 ̃ This symbol indicates that the preceding vowel is nasal. The nasal vowels in French are *œ̃* (*brun*), *ā̃* (*main*), *ā̃* (*chambre*), *ō̃* (*dont*).

This symbol indicates that a preceding (l) or (r) is voiceless, as in French *débacle* (dā-bāˈkl̥) or *fiacre* (fyāˈkr̥), or that a preceding (y) is pronounced consonantly in a separate syllable followed by a slight schwa sound, as in French *fille* (fēˈy̥).

Formation of Plurals and Participles

Basically, plurals in English are formed by the addition of *-s* or *-es* (depending on the preceding sound) to the complete word; past participles are formed by the addition of *-ed*, and present participles by adding *-ing*. There are, however, many exceptions. In this dictionary, all such exceptions (the "irregular" inflected forms) are indicated within the entry, in boldface immediately following the part-of-speech label.

fly (flī) *n. pl. flies* . . .
sheep (shēp) *n. pl. sheep* . . .
cal-ci-fy (kalˈsə-fī) *v.t. & v.i. -fied, -fy-ing* . . .
go (gō) *v. went, gone, go-ing* . . .

Some rules for the spelling of these forms (with the exception of nouns which form their plurals by some internal change and the so-called strong verbs) are listed below:

PLURALS

- Nouns ending in *y* preceded by a consonant change *y* to *i* and add *-es*.
 baby babies story stories
- Nouns ending in *y* preceded by a vowel add *-s* without change.
 chimney chimneys valley valleys
 Note, however, that *money* may have either form in the plural—*moneys*, *monies*.
- Some nouns ending in *f* or *fe* change this to *v* and add *-es*.
 knife knives shelf shelves
 But: roof roofs safe safes
 Some words may have alternate plural forms.
 scarf scarfs or scarves
- Most words ending in *o* add *-s* without change.
 cameo cameos folio folios

A few words ending in *o* (*echo*, *hero*, *Negro*, etc.) form the plural only in *-oes* (*echoes*, *heroes*, *Negroes*), but many others in this category have alternative plurals in both forms.

mosquito mosquitos or mosquitoes
 volcano volcanoes or volcanos

PAST AND PRESENT PARTICIPLES

- The final consonant is doubled for monosyllables or words accented on the final syllable when they end in a *single* consonant preceded by a *single* vowel.

control, controlled, controlling
 hop, hopped, hopping
 occur, occurred, occurring
 But: help, helped, helping (*two consonants*)
 seed, seeded, seeding (*two vowels*)

Some words *not* accented on the final syllable have a variant participial form with a doubled consonant; the single consonant form is preferred in the United States.

- travel, traveled or travelled, traveling or travelling
 worship, worshiped or worshipped, worshipping or worshipping
- Words ending in silent or mute *e* drop the *e* before *-ed* and *-ing*, unless it is needed to avoid confusion with another word.
 change, changed, changing love, loved, loving
 singe, singed, singeing dye, dyed, dyeing
 - Verbs ending in *ie* usually change this to *y* before adding *-ing*.
 die, died, dying lie, lied, lying
 - Verbs ending in *c* add a *k* before *-ed* and *-ing*.
 mimic, mimicked, mimicking
 picnic, picnicked, picnicking

Terms Used in the Guide to the Use of This Dictionary

cross-reference to illustration	saw-rate (sə'rat, -it) <i>adj.</i> Having sawlike teeth, as the margins of certain leaves. Also saw-rat -ed. [<i>< L. <u>serra</u> a saw</i>] [• See LEAF]
inflected forms	skin-ny (skin'ē) <i>adj.</i> [<i>ni-er, ni-est</i>] 1 Consisting of or like skin. 2 Without sufficient flesh; too thin. 3 Lacking the
homographs	skip (skip) <i>v.</i> [skipped, skip-ping] <i>v.i.</i> 1 To move with springing steps, esp. by a series of light hops on alternate feet. skip-per (skip'ar) <i>n.</i> 1 One who or that which skips. 2 Any of various insects that make erratic, skipping movements.
definition number	skip-per (skip'ar) <i>n.</i> 1 The master or captain of a vessel, esp. of a small ship or boat. [2] One who is in charge of any endeavor. — <i>v.t.</i> To act as the skipper of (a vessel, etc.) [<i>< Du. <u>schip</u> ship</i>]
abbreviation	[Skt.] Sanskrit.
variant form	sku-a (skyōō'a) <i>n.</i> A predatory sea bird. Also skua <i>gull</i> . [<i>< ON <u>skúfi</u></i>]
usage information	slice (slis) <i>n.</i> 1 A thin, broad piece cut off from a larger such a course. — <i>v.</i> sliced, slic-ing <i>v.t.</i> 1 To cut or remove from a larger piece: <u>often with off, from, etc.</u> 2 To cut,
cross-reference	slide fastener [ZIPPER]
synonym list	splen-did (splen'did) <i>adj.</i> 1 Magnificent; imposing. 2 Conspicuously great or illustrious; glorious: a <i>splendid</i> achievement. 3 Giving out or reflecting brilliant light; [• — <i>Syn.</i> 1 majestic, dazzling, sublime, superb, grand. 2 outstanding, renowned, celebrated, marvelous]
part-of-speech labels	splin-ter (splin'tar) [<i>n.</i>] 1 A thin, sharp piece of wood, glass, metal, etc., split or torn off lengthwise; a sliver. 2 SPLINTER GROUP . — <i>v.t. & v.i.</i> 1 To split into thin sharp pieces or
usage note	split infinitive A verbal phrase in which the sign of the infinitive "to" is separated from its verb by an intervening word, usu. an adverb, as in "to quickly return." [• Although this construction is often condemned by purists, it is sometimes justified to avoid ambiguity or awkwardness.]
syllabic dots	stra'to-cu'mu-lus (strāt'ō-kyōō'mya-las, strat'-) <i>n. pl.</i> -i (-i) [<i>Met</i>] Meteorol. A type of dark, low-lying cloud, characterized by horizontal bases and high, rounded summits.
subject label	strength (strength) <i>n.</i> 1 The quality or property of being physically strong: the <i>strength</i> of a weight lifter. 2 The capacity to sustain the application of force without yielding or breaking. 3 Effectiveness: the <i>strength</i> of an argument. 4 Binding force or validity, as of a law. 5 Vigor or force of style: [a drama of <i>great strength</i>]. 6 Available numerical force in a military unit or other organization. 7 Degree of intensity, as of color, light, or sound. 8 Potency, as of a drug, chemical, or liquor; concentration. 9 A support; aid: He is our <i>strength</i> . — <u>on the strength of</u> Relying on; on the basis of. [<i>< OE <u>strang</u> strong</i>] — <i>Syn.</i> 1 force, power, vigor. 2 solidity, tenacity, toughness.
main entry	stren-u-ous (stren'yōō-əs) <i>adj.</i> Necessitating or marked by strong effort or exertion. [<i>< L. <u>strenuus</u></i>] — stren'u-ously <i>adv.</i> — stren'u-ous-ness <i>n.</i>
illustrative example	strep-to-coc-cus (strep'ta-kok'əs) <i>n. pl.</i> -coc-ci (-kok'si, -sē, -i, -ē) Any of a large group of spherical bacteria that
idiomatic phrase	strep-to-my-cin (strep'tō-mī'sin) <i>n.</i> A potent antibiotic isolated from a mold. [<i>< Gk. <u>streptos</u> twisted + <u>mykēs</u> fungus</i>]
run-on derivatives	Swit-zer-land (swit'sər-lənd) <i>n.</i> A republic of CEN. Europe, 15,940 sq. mi., cap. Bern. [• See map at ITALY]
pronunciation	
etymology	
cross-reference to map	

Guide to the Use of This Dictionary

1. **Main entries** are in large, bold-faced type and are listed alphabetically by letter, regardless of whether composed of one or more words.

blue-jack-et
blue jay

2. **Syllabication** is indicated by syllabic dots dividing main-entry words. **blue-jack-et** may be hyphenated at the end of a line after *blue-* or after *bluejack-*. Phrasal entries are not syllabified when each element is entered elsewhere.

3. **Homographs** These words, identical in spelling but differing in meaning and origin (and sometimes in pronunciation), are separately entered and differentiated by a superior figure, as *bear*¹ (to support or endure) and *bear*² (the animal).

4. **Pronunciations** are shown in parentheses immediately following the main entry, as *di-chot-o-my* (dī-kot'ə-mē). When more than one pronunciation is recorded, the first given is usually the most widely used wherever it has been possible to determine extent of usage; often, however, usage may be almost equally divided. The order of the pronunciations is not intended to be an indication of preference; all pronunciations shown are valid for educated American speech.

The syllabication of the pronunciations follows, in general, the syllabic breaks heard in speech rather than the conventional division of the main entry, as *ju-dicial* (jōō-dish'əl), *an-es-the-tize* (ə-nēs'thē-tīz).

When a variant pronunciation differs merely in part from the first pronunciation recorded, only the differing syllable or syllables are shown, provided that there is no possibility of misinterpretation, as *equi-bale* (ek'wə-bəl, ē'kwə-). Phrasal entries are not pronounced if the individual elements are separately entered in proper alphabetic place.

5. **Part-of-speech labels** are shown in italics following the pronunciation for main entries, and are abbreviated as follows: *n.* (noun), *v.* (verb), *pron.* (pronoun), *adj.* (adjective), *adv.* (adverb), *prep.* (preposition), *conj.* (conjunction), *interj.* (interjection). When

more than one part of speech is entered under a main entry, the additional labels are run in and preceded by a bold-faced dash, as *cor-nēr* (kōr'nēr) *n.* . . . — *v.t.* . . . — *v.i.* . . . — *adj.* . . .

Verbs used transitively are identified as *v.t.*, those intransitively as *v.i.*; those used both transitively and intransitively in all senses are designated *v.t. & v.i.*

6. **Inflected forms** include the past tense, past participle, and present participle of verbs, the plural of nouns, and the comparative and superlative of adjectives and adverbs. The inflected forms are entered wherever there is some irregularity in spelling or form. They are shown in bold-faced type with syllabication immediately after the part-of-speech label. Only the syllable affected is shown, provided there is no ambiguity possible, as *com-pute* (kəm-pyōōt') *v.t.* — **put-ed**, **put-ing**. An inflected form that requires pronunciation or is alphabetically distant from the main entry may also be separately entered and pronounced in its proper vocabulary place.

a *Principal parts of verbs* The order in which the principal parts are shown is past tense, past participle, and present participle, as *come* (kum) *v.* *came*, *come*, *com-ing*. Where the past tense and past participle are identical, only two forms are entered, as *bake* (bāk) *v.* *baked*, *bak-ing*. When alternative forms are given, the first form indicated is usually the one preferred, as *grov-el* (gruv'əl, grov'-) *v.i.* *grov-eled* or *grov-elled*, *grov-el-ing* or *grov-el-ling*. Variant forms not in the standard vocabulary are shown in parentheses and labeled, as *drink* (dringk) *v.* *drank* (*Archaic drunk*), *drunk* (*Archaic drunk-en*), *drink-ing*. Principal parts entirely regular in formation—those that add *-ed* and *-ing* directly to the infinitive without spelling modification—are not shown.

b *Plural of nouns* Irregular forms are here preceded by the designation *pl.*, as *a-lum-nus* (ə-lum'-nas) *n.* *pl.* *ni* (-nī); *deer* (dir) *n.* *pl.* *deer*. When alternative plurals are given, the first shown is the preferred form, as *but-ter-fo* (but'ə-lō) *n.* *pl.* *-foes* or *-foe* or *-lo*.

c *Comparison of adjectives and adverbs* The comparatives and superlatives of adjectives and adverbs are shown immediately after the part of speech when

Guide to the Use of This Dictionary

there is some spelling modification or a complete change of form, as **mer-ry** (mer'ē) *adj.* **-rier, -riest; bad** (bad) *adj.* **worse, worst.**

7. Definition In entries for words having several senses, the order in which the definitions appear is, wherever possible, that of frequency of use, rather than semantic evolution. Each such definition is distinguished by a bold-faced number, the numbering starting anew after each part-of-speech label when it is followed by more than one sense. Closely related meanings, especially those within a specific field or area of study, may be defined under the same number and set apart by small bold-faced letters. Illustrative examples are provided when necessary to supplement definitions.

strength (strength) *n.* **1** The quality or property of being physically strong: the *strength* of a weight lifter.

8. Restrictive labels Entries or particular senses of words and terms having restricted application are variously labeled according to:

a usage level, as *Slang, Informal* (colloquial)

b localization, as *Regional* (restricted in usage to a particular region of the U.S.), *Brit.* (British), *Can.* (Canadian), *Austral.* (Australian), etc.; *U.S.* (United States) is used only to avoid confusion with another meaning of the same word not restricted to the U.S. It is understood that many unlabeled definitions are current chiefly or only in the U.S.

c field or subject, as *Astron.* (astronomy), *Ecol.* (ecology), *Med.* (medicine), *Naut.* (nautical), etc.

d language of origin, as *French, German, Latin*, etc. These entries, although used in English speech and writing, have not yet undergone the process of Anglicization of pronunciation, meaning, or usage, and are usually italicized in writing.

e *Nonstand.* (nonstandard) is applied to those usages which are not accepted as standard English by most native speakers.

Restrictive labels that apply to only one sense of a word are entered after the definition number. Restrictive labels entered immediately after the part-of-speech label apply to all the senses for that part of speech; those shown before the first part-of-speech label refer to the entire entry.

9. Cross-references Small capital letters are used to identify:

a A cross-reference from a variant form to the entry where the term is defined.

es-thet-ic (es-thet'ik) *adj.* **AESTHETIC.**

b A cross-reference to a synonymous meaning or term where a full definition will be found.

slide fastener **ZIPPER.**

c A cross-reference to an illustration, map, or usage note. These cross-references are preceded by •.

d A cross-reference in an etymology. See *Etymologies* below.

Variant forms that do not require cross-reference are shown after the definition or definitions to which they apply, and appear in bold-faced type with syllabication, stress marks, and, when necessary, pronunciation. When they apply to one sense only of an

entry having more than one definition, they are linked to the appropriate definition with a colon.

10. Spelling variations between U.S. and British usage are noted by the label *Brit. sp.*, followed by the usual British spelling or that part of it that differs from the U.S. spelling.

hon-or *Brit. Sp. -our.*

11. Idiomatic phrases, as those formed by a verb and preposition or adverb (*carry on, put down, set off*, etc.) appear in bold-faced type within the entry for the principal word in the phrase, following the definitions for the principal part of speech involved.

car-ry *v.t., v.i.* **19** . . . **20** . . . **21** . . . —**carry on** **1** To keep going; continue. **2** To behave in a free, frolicsome manner. **3** To continue, as a tradition. . . . —*n.* . . .

12. Etymologies are shown in brackets after the definitions. The following examples show the manner of entry and the use of cross-references:

a **special** [**< L. species** kind, species] means: ultimately derived from (**<**) the Latin (**L.**) word *species*, meaning "kind, species."

b **arroyo** [Sp.] means that *arroyo* was borrowed directly from a Spanish (Sp.) word of the same form and meaning.

c **cloche** [F. lit., bell], like *arroyo* above, *cloche* exists in the same form and meaning in another language, French (F), from which English borrowed it, but in this case the foreign word has a literal meaning (lit.), "bell," that elucidates its English meaning.

d **hassle** [**? < HAGGLE + TUSSLE**] means: possibly (?) derived from (**<**) a blending of "haggle" and (**+**) "tussle."

e **decency** [**< L. decens**. See **DECENT**]; "See" directs attention to the etymology under "decent" for further information.

13. Run-on derivatives Words that are actually or ostensibly derived from other words by the addition or replacement of a suffix, and whose sense can be inferred from the meaning of the main word, are run on in smaller bold-faced type at the end of the appropriate main entries. The run-on derivatives are preceded by a heavy dash and followed by a part-of-speech label. They are syllabified and stressed, and, when necessary, a full or partial pronunciation is provided.

14. Usage information, when an integral part of definition, is included, following a colon, after the particular sense of a word to which it applies, as:

slice . . . *v.t.* **1** To cut or remove from a larger piece often with *off, from*, etc.

More extensive notes consisting of supplementary information on accepted usage, style, grammar, status of variant forms, etc., are entered at the end of the relevant entries and prefaced with the symbol •. (See *anyone, Asia, shop, split infinitive*.)

15. Synonym lists are appended to many entries following the abbreviation **Syn.** In entries having more than one sense, synonyms are keyed by definition number, and, if necessary, by part of speech, to the appropriate sense.

16. Word lists The meaning of many combinations of words is easily apparent by combining the senses of their component parts. Such self-explaining compounds have been entered in six lists under the respective first elements: *in-*, *multi-*, *non-*, *over-*, *re-*, and *un-*. These lists serve to indicate the preferred form of a compound—whether written solid, with a hyphen, or as a two-word phrase. The listings are not intended to be all-inclusive; the prefixes and combining forms so entered combine freely in English in the formation of new compounds based on existing forms.

17. Trade names Some words used to identify trademarked or proprietary articles, drugs, processes, and services have been entered and defined because these terms are so familiar that their omission would be remarkable. In every case the word is identified with the notation "a trade name," and no treatment of any such term should be construed as affecting its status as a trademark.

18. Abbreviations commonly used in English are entered in their respective alphabetic places in the main section of this dictionary.

Usage

BY ALBERT H. MARCKWARDT

Every society places its stamp of approval upon certain forms or modes of social behavior and looks askance upon deviations from them. In our culture, applause for a fine musical performance would be considered out of place at a church service, but entirely appropriate and in fact praiseworthy in a concert hall. The particular mode of behavior which is accorded such prestige may vary according to geography and social class. The English and European continentals recognize one manner of manipulating a knife and fork to convey food to the mouth; Americans employ a quite different technique. The American way seems needlessly awkward to the European; the European way seems crude to the Americans. When they entertain at dinner, upper middle-class Americans are likely to eat by candlelight and to have flowers on the table. This is regarded as ostentatious, or at best superfluous, in working-class circles.

The use of language is one of many kinds of social behavior. Here, as in other matters, certain forms of speech and writing have acquired prestige, whereas others are looked upon with disfavor. Moreover, differentiations on the basis of geography and social class are readily apparent. The past tense of the verb *eat* (*et*), used by many speakers of British English of unquestioned social standing, would be considered rustic or uneducated by most Americans; conversely, the Americanism *donate* has not yet gained thorough acceptance in Britain. "Bring them crates over here," is a sentence calculated to produce cooperation and a speedy result when addressed to a group of factory workmen; the substitution of *those containers* in that particular social context would produce suspicion, resentment, and probably not the desired result.

Standard English

That form of the English language which has acquired prestige from its use by those educated persons who are carrying on the affairs of the English-speaking community (whether narrowly or broadly conceived) is known as Standard English. In short, the standard language is that which possesses social utility and social prestige. History bears out this ob-

servation with remarkable fidelity. All we know of the earliest stage of our language, that which we refer to as Old English, spoken on the island between the mid-fifth century incursions of Germanic-speaking Angles, Saxons, and Jutes and the mid-11th century Norman Conquest, was that there were decided regional differences, resulting in four major dialects. During the first two of these six centuries the center of power was clearly in the kingdom of Northumbria, and that dialect constituted the standard. At the time of the powerful King Offa, political and cultural influence shifted southward, and the dialect of Mercia acquired prestige. From the mid-ninth century onward, the West Saxon dynasty assumed political leadership; King Alfred fathered a cultural renaissance and a major educational program; and this time the standard moved westward, remaining there through the period of religious reform, also centered in the same area. Thus it is that most of the Old English literature which has come down to us is in West Saxon. Even the early selections originally written in other dialects were finally recopied in the prestige dialect.

The development of the language during the Middle English period (1050-1475) bears out the same principle. By the time the English language had recovered from its temporary subjugation to Norman French, London was firmly established as the political, economic, and cultural center of the island. It is interesting to observe that by the end of the 14th century the dialect of London was used by many of the major literary figures irrespective of where they were born. Chaucer, a native Londoner, employed it in his poetry, which is possibly no surprise, but so too did Gower, born in Kent, and Wycliffe, who hailed from Lincolnshire. One acute observer has pointed out that Standard English had its origin in the kind of language employed in the courts of law and the governmental offices at Westminster, that it was essentially administrative English. This is another telling bit of evidence of the close relationship between the standard language and the bases of influence.

The emergence of the London dialect as a standard for the entire country first won formal recognition in

Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) in which the language of London and of the shires within a radius of sixty miles, "and not much beyond," was recommended as a model for aspiring writers to follow. This was accompanied by the statement that educated gentlemen in the outlying portions of England had adopted London English as a standard and were speaking it as well as people living in the capital.

It was just at this point in time that the English language entered on its worldwide career. It was transported first across the Atlantic to the American mainland and the Caribbean islands. The spread to the Asian subcontinent followed in the 18th century; to Australia and South Africa in the 19th. At the outset the colonies were generally willing and eager to follow the standard of the mother country, even though it was at times less than ideally suited to all aspects of the local situation, but as they acquired more and more independence, economic and cultural as well as political, new national forms of the language tended to emerge and to develop their own standard norms.

Today English is spoken as a native language by vast numbers of people—approximately 275,000,000—distributed over four continents of the globe. The standard reveals a considerable amount of variation from one country to another, and even in one part of some countries as compared with another. Thus, Standard West Indian English differs from both Standard British and Standard American English, and Standard South African differs from all of these. Standard Canadian English is distinct from Standard Australian. It is even possible to speak of standard forms of English in areas where it is not the native language, notably India and the Philippines. In the United Kingdom itself there is a standard form of Scots and a standard Northern English, both of which differ from the Received Standard of the London area.

The Role of the Dictionary

Ideally a dictionary is an accurate record of a language as it is employed by those who speak and write it. But as we have already seen, the English language, even in terms of just its present use, to say nothing of its past, exists on such a vast scale that no single work is likely to do justice to it in its entirety. Inevitably the task has had to be broken up into smaller segments. Some dictionaries deal with pronunciation only, at times even confined to a particular country—England or America. Others confine themselves to particular segments of the language: dialect, slang, or one or another technical vocabulary. More ambitious is the attempt by the historical dictionary to include within the bounds of a single work evidence of both the present and earlier stages of the language, although sometimes a dictionary may be confined to just one early period—Old or Middle English, for example. There are dictionaries which concentrate on the language as it is, and has been, used in England, in Scotland, in the United States, and in Canada. Consequently, in the face of this inescapable specialization and division of labor, a dictionary which purports to be general in its purpose must of necessity exercise a high degree of selective reporting on those aspects of the language which will best serve the needs of those who consult it.

The editors of this dictionary have assumed that it will be used principally in the United States, by persons who are familiar with American English. Only rarely have they felt it necessary to identify features of the language which are characteristic of this country. For example, the past participial form *gotten* is identified in a note as an American usage, and the peculiarly American use of *integrate* as used in "to integrate schools" bears the label *U.S.* The editors have taken on the responsibility of identifying usages peculiar to Britain, Canada, or Australia, indicating these with the appropriate label. Any item not so identified is in current use in the United States. In this connection it should be realized that despite all that has been said here about differences throughout the world, the unity of the English language in the many countries in which it is spoken far outweighs the diversity.

The obligation of the dictionary to record the state of the language or some segment of it as accurately as possible has already been mentioned. This may properly be termed a descriptive function, and it reflects the way in which the editors approach their task. But the nonprofessional, the layman who consults the dictionary, does so from other motives. Either he is seeking information on some particular facet of the language about which he knows nothing—the most obvious instance being the meaning of a word he has not previously encountered—or to discover which of several possible uses of the language, relative to spelling, pronunciation, word division, word meaning, or grammatical form, has acquired a sufficient degree of prestige and propriety to justify his employment of it. In short, his view of the dictionary function is essentially prescriptive. He hopes to be told what to say and to write, or more accurately perhaps, how to say and how to write.

In the light of all that has been said up to this point, these two concepts, the descriptive and the prescriptive, should not be in conflict with each other. It has already been pointed out that the standard language is the language of the socially and culturally dominant group within a speech community. There can be no other source upon which to base it. Accordingly, if the dictionary records that language accurately and faithfully, it should constitute a reliable guide and preceptor.

Unfortunately, the problem is not so simple as it seems on the surface. For a number of reasons too complicated to explain here, many people, Americans in particular, are reluctant to accept this simple and straightforward view of the matter. For one thing, experience has taught them that some persons of position and influence have little feeling for or command of the niceties of the language, and accordingly they are led to question the reliability and usefulness of an accurate exercise of the descriptive technique. Second, they are committed to a rigid and monolithic view of what constitutes the standard language and expect to find a single answer as to what is linguistically approved or appropriate, irrespective of the circumstances in which it may occur. The facts of the case are quite at variance with this assumption. Again, language like any form of social behavior varies in response to the demands of the particular social situation. Many of us would not hesitate to pick up a chicken drumstick with our fingers at a picnic but would feel constrained to use a knife and fork at a formal dinner. Neither form of

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behavior is superior or inferior to the other; it is a question of adaptation to the circumstances. Differences in regional standards prevail as well. In some parts of the country, for the host at a cocktail party to employ a bartender smacks of ostentation, whereas a hired caterer is accepted as the norm. Elsewhere just the reverse set of values prevails.

Varieties of Usage

It is precisely for this reason that dictionaries find it necessary to employ various kinds of labels to indicate the sphere of usage in which a particular word or expression is or is not acceptable. Those labels which are most often misunderstood have to do with the degree of formality which characterizes the communication. No dictionary has found it possible to recognize more than a dichotomy here, namely a formal and an informal type of speech. Clearly, each one of us in the course of a day's use of the language communicates much more in an informal manner than in a formal. The differences are pervasive, including pronunciation and structure as well as vocabulary. To take just a few obvious instances: the clipped form *dorm* is a frequent informal equivalent for *dormitory*; the phrase *all in* often serves for *exhausted*; *catch on* for *understand*; to cover at least three of the four major parts of speech. There is a whole battery of adverbs such as *consequently* and *accordingly* which may find *so* as their normal equivalent in less formal discourse. The same distinction extends to such phrase structures as *at all events* and *needless to say*. In the negative-interrogative form of the verb, *isn't he*, *can't he*, *won't he* are the informal expressions corresponding to *is he not*, *can he not*, *will he not*, a consideration affecting both syntax and pronunciation.

Actually we are faced with more than a dichotomy here. Some observers recognize at least four distinct linguistic styles, including the formal (*This is not the man whom we seek*), the consultative (*This is not the man we're looking for*), the casual (*He's not our man*) and the intimate (*Fraid you picked a lemon*). It is beyond the bounds of practicality or serviceability for the dictionary to recognize more than two broad types of situation, the formal and the informal. Moreover, in terms of the expectations of most of the people who consult a dictionary, it is more to the point to label the justifiably informal than it would be to signalize the formal. Generally the length and stylistic aura of a word will identify it as being primarily confined to formal use.

Distinctions drawn on the basis of formality often cut across differences in the mode of communication, speech or writing. Much, but not all, of our speech activity in the course of a day is informal. Some of our writing at least is more likely to be formal, although many personal letters, memoranda, the private writing contained in diaries and journals, may well fall into the informal category.

The point is that these are matters of the function of language, not of acceptability or correctness. A person whose informal speech may be characterized as "talking like a book" or "talking as if he had swallowed the dictionary," has simply failed to sort out the styles properly. One may rest assured that whatever a dictionary labels as *informal* is not less correct than an unlabeled item but that it is appropriate to an informal situation or purpose. Dictio-

naries usually do not affix a label to those words appropriate only for formal use on the ground that the social penalties for excessive formality of speech, though very real, seem somehow less onerous than those for misplaced informality.

Slang

Somewhat akin to informality, but differing from it in several important respects, is the use of language we have come to call slang. Slang is difficult to define, partly because the term itself has changed in meaning over the centuries. Originally it referred to thieves' argot, and today the term is still applied to the special terminology of certain occupations and other groups, including oil drillers, baseball players, rock or jazz musicians, college students, shoe salesmen, tramps, drug addicts, and prison inmates, but it has also taken on a much broader application. It includes clipped forms like *benny* and *frag*, echoic terms like *slurp*, meaningless tag phrases of the class of *twenty-three skidoo* from the early years of the century, *so's your old man*, and *how, you better believe it*, all of which have had their fleeting currency, only to be replaced by what will undoubtedly be the equally temporary *got to* (*He's got to be the best ball player in the league*) and the interjection *Wow!* which appears to be the stock in trade of the younger generation and the mindless consumer pictured on television commercials.

Not included in the concept of slang are dialect, localisms, profanity, and the so-called four-letter words once taboo in polite society, now increasingly accepted. It is also important to recognize that most slang is colloquial in nature in that it occurs in speech much more frequently than in writing; on the other hand, it would be a grave error to think of all colloquial or informal language as slang. Nor is slang to be confused with nonstandard language; it is at times consciously employed for a particular effect by persons of unquestioned cultivation.

Dictionaries are far from uniform in what they label as slang; even the special dictionaries of slang include many entries which do not at all fit the concept as it has been set forth here. The label *slang* after a word or a particular meaning of a word is an indication of its general unsuitability for formal communication; it suggests moreover that when used informally, it may have something of a slight shock value in a serious context; at the very least it will call attention to itself. This would be true, for example, of *boss* used adjectivally in the sense of "great, wonderful," of *bug off* for "go away!" and of *bug out*, "to escape, run away." Each country where English is a native language has its own variety of slang. *Wizard* is often used in England as a blanket term of approval; *dinkum* is confined to Australia. Both are relatively unknown in the United States. In this dictionary, slang terms found in other English-speaking countries will be labeled as to their place of origin. If an item is simply characterized as *slang* with no additional qualifying term, it may be assumed to be current in this country.

Regional Variation

In no English-speaking country is the language uniform over the entire area. In certain fields of the vocabulary, terminology differs from one part of the

country to the other. This is especially true of words having to do with the more homelike and intimate aspects of life: the physical environment, the home, foods and cooking, the farm and farm operations, the fauna and flora. The literary term *earthworm* is called an *angleworm* in certain regions and a *fish-worm* or *fishing worm* in others, and in addition there are several terms which have a much more restricted currency: *eaceworm*, *angle dog*, and *dew-worm*. *Skillet* and *spider*, though now somewhat old-fashioned, are still used for *frying pan* or *fry pan* in some areas. Limited access highways have developed a highly varied terminology: *turnpike*, *freeway*, *expressway*, *parkway*, to mention only a few.

It is impossible in a general dictionary such as this to include all such variants, nor would it be helpful to label as *Regional* every term limited to extensive regions. Nevertheless, in terms of its function as an accurate recorder of the language, the dictionary must inform its users when a term, limited geographically, differs from a more commonly preferred synonym. There is a problem here in that dialect research in this country is still going on and that reliable information about the regional incidence of many terms is not yet readily available. In general the policy of this dictionary will be to indicate that a word is regional when that is known to be the case and when the word is not likely to be familiar to others outside the region of its use, but there will be no attempt to delimit the precise areas of its occurrence.

Nonstandard English

The very fact that a painstaking attempt has been made to the concept of Standard English should be evidence in itself that there are features of the language which do not meet these requirements. Most of the aberrations are matters of grammatical form: *hissel* instead of *himself*, *hissn* instead of *his*, *groued* instead of *grew* or *grown*, *anyways* instead of *anyway*, and so on. Occasionally these are matters which pertain wholly to the vocabulary, like *irregardless*, or to the pronunciation, as with the dropping of the first *r* in *secretary* and *library*.

At one time it was the custom for dictionaries to employ the label *illiterate* for such deviations from standard usage. For several reasons the term is far from satisfactory. The percentage of actual illiterates in the United States is relatively small, even if so-called functional illiteracy is to be used as a criterion. The type of expressions so labeled often extended to many persons who had experienced some schooling. Because of these and other considerations dictionaries have recently tended to use *nonstandard* as the preferred designation for deviations from the linguistic norm which tend to be matters of social rather than regional dialect. It is rare, of course, for anyone to consult the dictionary for the meanings of words so labeled. The principal service that the dictionary performs is to indicate their status.

Usage Notes

It must be recognized, however, that there is no immediately definable hard-and-fast line separating the standard from the nonstandard. There is, indeed, a gray area, a zone of disputed items about which there may be considerable difference of opinion, even

among authorities of equal experience and eminence. In connection with some of the locutions falling within this zone of uncertainty, not only must the extent of use by speakers of the standard language be considered but also the attitude toward the word or construction in question. For example, there can be no doubt about the extent to which the verb *finalize* has been used in American English by speakers and writers of unquestioned prestige. It is by no means a new coinage. It has appeared in magazines and newspapers with high editorial standards. It conforms to an active and long-standing pattern of converting adjectives to verbs by the addition of the *-ize* suffix, one which has been present in the language for some four centuries, evident in words like *fertilize*, *brutalize*, and *solemnize*, the propriety of which is never questioned. Yet the fact remains that a fair number of persons who can use the language with skill and discrimination react negatively to this single *-ize* formation. To them it suggests the awkwardness and bombast of bureaucratic language, administrators' jargon. Logical or illogical, informed or uninformed, this fairly widespread feeling is part of the total record, the total history of the word, and as such, it is the function of the dictionary to take note of that fact. Clearly no single label would suffice in this instance; an explanation of some sort is called for. This dictionary, along with many other reference works on language, copes with problems such as this through the device of a usage note, which, though necessarily brief and concise, does explain the nature of the problem that has arisen in connection with this particular word.

Further issues about usage may arise from mistaken grammatical analysis on the one hand, or the failure to distinguish what is current in informal as opposed to the formal standard language on the other. An instance of the latter is the use of *like* as a conjunction introducing a subordinate clause ("He didn't work like his father worked.") Reliable measures of the incidence of this construction indicate that it has a high frequency in informal English but that it occurs only rarely in the formal written language. But again there are some who are reluctant to accept it. Labeling the construction *informal* would probably satisfy the purely factual requirements of the situation, but it would fail to warn the reader of the dictionary that his use of the construction might give offense in some quarters. Again a brief statement is more helpful than a single unmodified categorization.

The usual ground for objecting to *hopefully* in a context such as "Hopefully, the project will be finished by the end of the year," is that *hopefully* as an adverb cannot properly modify the verb phrase *will be finished* and is therefore grammatically unacceptable. Again the facts are simple enough. The word, used in this manner, is widely current among those who employ Standard English. Moreover, the grammatical argument is unsound since in this instance the word modifies the entire clause and not just the verb phrase. This time the usage note serves to clarify a grammatical misconception.

As one compares the usage notes in various dictionaries, he is likely to find a wide divergence of attitude and philosophy, ranging from a fairly broad permissiveness to a nervous reluctance to admit any deviation from the most rigid adherence to approved formal usage of a century ago. It is the considered

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opinion of the editors of this work that neither of these extremes is well calculated to serve the needs of those who look to the dictionary for help in matters of this kind.

Language changes from century to century and from generation to generation. To the extent that these changes have affected the usage of Standard English it is the responsibility of the dictionary to acknowledge them. There is often a discrepancy, as well, between what is in actual fact current as Standard English and what many opinionated or ill-informed persons believe that usage to be. The responsibility of the dictionary here is to set the record straight, to report and interpret the facts as accu-

ately as possible. At the same time the dictionary must be equally perceptive in distinguishing, for the person who consults it, between standard usage which is acceptable beyond a shadow of doubt and that about which there is some qualification or question. Unfortunately, there is a great lack of awareness on the part of the general public about the services which dictionaries do perform with respect to matters of usage. As dictionaries improve in their faithfulness to fact and the nicety of their discrimination, it is reasonably certain that readers will take fuller advantage of the service which only a carefully and conscientiously edited dictionary is capable of offering.

Punctuation

BY HAROLD B. ALLEN

Punctuation is the art of using special marks to make written or printed material more easily understood, just as pause and stress and intonation or pitch change are needed to make speech understood.

Punctuation uses can be grouped, somewhat loosely, into two kinds. The first kind is structural, since it principally includes those uses that reveal the external structure of what is written, that show how its parts relate meaningfully to one another. In these uses punctuation marks do often correspond to the spoken signals of pause and intonation, so that generally that relationship is a useful clue to choice of punctuation. But it is not safe to rely unthinkingly upon that correspondence. A person who habitually pauses for emphasis after the adversative conjunctions *but* and *yet* can thus be misled into inserting an unnecessary comma, as in *We expected the shipment yesterday but, it did not come or Yet, the weather has remained too wet for planting*. A safer reliance is upon correspondence between the punctuation and the grammatical structure.

In ordinary communication the structural uses of punctuation typically conform to accepted conventions, although it is true that, as with the comma, options exist that the skilled writer can utilize in order to indicate more precisely his particular em-

phasis and shades of meaning. But punctuation is one area where individualism is likely to be self-defeating. Since the purpose of writing is to communicate, punctuation should help and not hinder the attainment of the objective—communication.

The second kind of punctuation use is essentially arbitrary, like that of a period after an abbreviation. Although some variation does occur in printers' styles, once a writer has memorized the arbitrary uses they should cause no problems.

Some marks are employed in different ways in other countries and in other languages. The uses described here are those common in the United States and Canada. They are treated in the following order. Three punctuation marks serve principally to end sentences. These are the period (.), called full stop in Britain; the question mark or interrogation point (?); and the exclamation point (!). The others are the comma (,); the semicolon (;); the quotation marks, both single and double, (' ') and (" "); parentheses, known as brackets in Britain, (); the brackets, known as square brackets in Britain, []; the hyphen (-); the apostrophe ('); and the virgule, also called the slant, slash, diagonal, or solidus (/). In each section structural uses are given first, under 1, and arbitrary uses next, under 2.

THE PERIOD

1. Put a period at the end of every sentence not signaled by a question word or intonation pattern as a question or exclamation.

The faucet leaked all night.

Please ship the remaining goods at once.

The chairman asked us to be seated.

Sometimes the sentence intonation justifies the use of a period with a word or words constituting less than a complete grammatical sentence.

No, sir.

Thanks.

Just as you like.

All right.

Especially in business correspondence a request in the form of a question may be followed by a period instead of a question mark. Spoken, such a request has a falling intonation pattern.

May we obtain a list of possible suppliers.

2. Use three periods in a row, called an ellipsis, to show omission within a quoted passage.

Housewares include a wide range of items from silverware to . . . stainless steel fixtures. . . .

The second ellipsis of three periods is followed by a fourth period to denote the end of the sentence.

Use a period after an abbreviation.

J. O. Morton, M.D. etc. Ms. Anne Janis

Omission of the period is common with frequent and familiar abbreviations.

YMCA

rpm

FBI

In Britain the period is now generally omitted after these:

Dr

Mr

Mrs