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Research Article

## World Englishes and learner lexicography: View from the Expanding Circle

Galina N. LOVTSEVICH and Alexander A. SOKOLOV

Far Eastern Federal University  
*Vladivostok, Russia*

### Abstract

This article analyzes a World Englishes paradigm shift in four monolingual English-language learner's dictionaries designed to meet the reference needs of people learning English as a non-native language in the Expanding Circle. The study investigates the question of how modern learner's dictionaries reflect the current global status of English. The dictionary focus on educational learner needs exclusively seems to ignore the today's range and depth of the socio-cultural functions of global English. The authors examine the dictionaries' coverage of non-Inner Circle varieties of English and, in particular, analyze culture-loaded borrowings from Northeast Asian countries (China, Japan, Korea, and Russia) where English is widely used for intercultural communication. The particular interest is in the way the dictionaries define such entries and represent non-English cultures and identities of their speakers from the Expanding Circle through borrowings. Analysis of the wordlists of learner's dictionaries reveals an ethnocentric approach in compiling the dictionaries. This is manifested both in the patchy coverage of non-Inner Circle varieties of English in the dictionaries and in the inexplicable selections of borrowings to be included. Words associated with the Northeast Asian countries tend to be selected arbitrarily and according to Western rather than regional culture priorities. Anglocentricity is also evident in the definitions of the headwords related to Northeast Asia. The majority of the borrowings are defined in British or American terms without any perspective of the culture from which the words arise. The authors conclude that the representation of non-English cultures in learner's dictionaries is ideological and ethnocentric and therefore cannot meet the challenges of the globalized world.

**Keywords:** *ethnocentricity, learner lexicography, native speaker, World Englishes*

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## **Контактная вариантология английского языка и учебная лексикография: взгляд из Расширяющегося круга**

**Г.Н. ЛОВЦЕВИЧ, А.А. СОКОЛОВ**

Дальневосточный федеральный университет  
*Владивосток, Россия*

### **Аннотация**

В статье представлено исследование четырех англоязычных учебных словарей для изучающих английский язык как неродной в странах Расширяющегося круга с позиции возможного отражения ими положений контактной вариантологии английского языка. Основное внимание уделено тому, как современные учебные словари отражают текущий глобальный статус английского языка. Словарь, ориентированный исключительно на образовательные потребности обучающегося, как представляется, игнорирует весь спектр и глубину социокультурных функций глобального английского языка. Авторы исследуют представленность в словарях вариантов английского языка, не относящихся к Внутреннему кругу и, в частности, анализируют культурные заимствования из стран Северо-Восточной Азии (Китай, Японии, Кореи, России), где английский язык широко используется для межкультурного общения. Особый интерес представляют определения подобных заимствований в словаре и то, как в них представлена национальная идентичность пользователей английского языка из стран Расширяющегося круга. Анализ словника учебных словарей выявляет этноцентрический подход при составлении словарей. Это проявляется как в неоднородном охвате в словарях вариантов английского языка, не относящихся к Внутреннему кругу, так и в необъяснимом отборе заимствований для включения в словари. Слова, ассоциируемые со странами Северо-Восточной Азии, как правило, отбираются произвольно и в соответствии с приоритетами западной, а не региональных культур. Англоцентризм проявляется и в содержании словарной статьи. Большая часть заимствований определяется с позиции англо-американской культуры безотносительно к исходной культуре. Авторы приходят к выводу, что представление неанглийских культур в учебных словарях является идеологическим и этноцентрическим и поэтому словари не отвечают вызовам глобализованного мира.

**Ключевые слова:** *этноцентризм, учебная лексикография, носитель языка, варианты английского языка*

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By marginalizing the global uses of English, we are walling in an important world vision for which world Englishes have become an important resource.

(Kachru 1996: 18)

## 1. Introduction

This paper looks at modern learner's dictionaries of English as a world language and the way they reflect the current state of the language from the point of view of World Englishes.

It was Braj Kachru's plenary paper given at the JALT 1996 conference that sparked our interest in this issue. Kachru stresses the role of world Englishes in different parts of the world (Africa, Asia, North and South America, Eastern Europe) as "a resource, as a key to crossing borders and barriers of various types – cultural, linguistic, ethnic and social" (Kachru 1996: 10). This dimension of English is manifested in the fact that "English has acquired cultural identities which no other language has acquired." Kachru emphasizes the cross-cultural, pluricentric functions of English as an international language, comparing it with a shifting "grid" through which "we gain access to a variety of Western and non-Western cultures, ideologies, mythologies, and philosophies." Outer and Expanding Circle varieties of English express the ideas and cultural identities of their speakers, not those of Inner-Circle variety speakers.

Actually, two points from Kachru's paper strengthened our intention to proceed with the research questions. The first is Kachru's refrain that appears all through the paper on the new (in contrast to the traditional) regions of contact for English, the non-Western world (Chinese, Japanese, Thai, etc.). The second point relates to Kachru's concern about whether "the ELT Empire" and its materials reflect the intercultural dimension of World Englishes. The four myths<sup>1</sup> demystified by the author refer to the "earlier language teaching paradigm" that "suppresses the multiculturalism of English" and centers on the native-speaker cultures and norms.

The twenty-five years that have followed the publication of this program paper have brought a shift toward the World Englishes paradigm in sociolinguistics such that the Inner Circle and Outer Circle varieties are recognized by the majority linguists, and the legitimacy of Expanding Circle varieties is gaining more support (Proshina 2019). Practical lexicography has been contributing to the field of World Englishes by compiling dictionaries of various varieties of English which validate and valorize the regional lexicons. Today the number of dictionaries and glossaries for varieties of English amounts to more than 600 items (Lambert 2019: 415). Whereas English Language Teaching (ELT) practice is still shaped by the traditional native-speaker paradigm, it nowadays creates "a greater tension between what is taught in the classroom and what students will need in the real world once they have left the classroom" (Kramsch 2014: 296). However, the critique of the

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<sup>1</sup> The interlocutor myth, the monoculture myth, the model dependency myth, and the Cassandra myth (Kachru 1996: 16).

imposition of native-speaker norms and proficiency as the target for learners has brought to life the English as an International Language approach that is a pedagogical implication of the world Englishes orientation (Kumaravadivelu 2012, McKay 2012, Lovtsevich 2019).

It is worth emphasizing the heavy ELT dependence on English learner's dictionaries. They have been the main reference and pedagogical tools of ELT since the creation of the first monolingual learner's dictionary<sup>2</sup> in 1942. The worldwide demand and a very competitive and profitable market have made English learner lexicography a well-developed field with an extensive range of high-quality dictionaries for learners of all levels (Bogaards 1996, Herbst 1996, Cowie 2000, Kirkness 2004, Heuberger 2015). The distinctive features of learner lexicography are primarily determined by practical and pedagogical goals and are as follows: a specific elaborate selection of a wordlist, restricted defining vocabulary, pronunciation guidance, grammar notes, collocations and example sentences, usage comments, and culture notes. During almost eighty years of learner lexicography, these learner-centered features have resulted in the major lexicographic improvements to make the dictionaries user-friendly for language learners.

However, the dictionary focus on educational learner needs exclusively seems to ignore the range and depth of the socio-cultural functions of global English. This paper will attempt to tackle this problem and try to see to what extent current English-language learner's dictionaries reflect the shift to the World Englishes paradigm. The paper will begin by analyzing the representation of different varieties of English in the latest editions of the most authoritative English-language learner's dictionaries of the world's leading publishing houses: *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (2013) (CALD4), *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition (2018) (COBUILD9), *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (2014) (LDOCE6), and *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 10<sup>th</sup> edition (2020) (OALD10). These dictionaries are known in lexicography as "the big four" (Bogaards 1996, De Schryver 2012), "the perfect learner's dictionaries" (Herbst 1996) and are considered to be one of the most notable achievements of learner lexicography of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The analysis will have three points of focus:

(a) First, it examines the dictionaries' coverage of non-Inner Circle varieties of English (namely, the Outer and Expanding Circle).

(b) The study then focuses on culture-loaded borrowings from Northeast Asian countries representing the Expanding Circle and the issue of their selection in order to determine how the dictionaries convey the source culture as peripheral, exotic, and sometimes ideological.

(c) The third point of emphasis will be on definitions of culture-loaded borrowings and their treatments within dictionary entries. It will tackle the problem of Inner-Circle Anglocentricity in interpreting the source culture.

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<sup>2</sup> Hornby, A.S., Gatenby, E.V. & H. Wakefield. *Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary: The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Tokyo: Kaitakusha, 1942.

## 2. English coverage in learner's dictionaries

### 2.1. The definition of English

In order to see to what extent the learner's dictionaries recognize English as a language of international communication, we first turn to the dictionaries' entries for the *English language*.

Three out of four dictionaries display an Anglocentric view in defining English as the language used in Inner Circle countries (mainly the UK and the US):

**English** – the language that is spoken in the UK, the US, and in many other countries. (CALD4)

**English** is the language spoken in Great Britain and Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia, and many other countries. (COBUILD9)

**English** – the language used in Britain, the US, Australia, and some other countries. (LDOCE6)

These definitions show no recognition of the use of English in the Outer Circle post-colonial countries (India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, to name a few), to say nothing of the Expanding Circle countries.

In this respect, it is OALD10 that stands out. It is the only learner's dictionary which does not single out traditional countries, but instead explicitly legitimizes the global status of English, giving a reference to England just as the place of origin of the English language:

**English** – the language, originally of England, now spoken in many other countries and used as a language of international communication throughout the world. (OALD10)

Moreover, the definition is accompanied by an example, “*world Englishes*,” and a detailed *World English* culture note:

#### ***World English***

##### **Culture note**

English is the most widely spoken language in the world. It is the first language, or mother tongue, of over 350 million people living in countries such as Britain, Ireland, the US, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa, and it is spoken as a second language by many millions in countries where English is an official language. English is learned by many more people worldwide as a foreign language. English has many regional varieties such as South African English and Indian English and has also developed as a global language or international language, used as a lingua franca (shared language), sometimes called ELF (= English as a Lingua Franca) between people for whom it is not a first language. It is estimated that now only one out of every four users of the language speaks English as their first language.

<...>

As a global language, English can no longer be thought of as belonging only to British or American people, or to anyone else. As the number of people using English as a second or foreign language is increasing faster than the number who speak it as a first language, further movement away from a British or American standard is likely.  
<...>

The culture note presents the history of English, including its global spread, as well as its current statuses (as first language, second language, foreign language, global language). It recognizes regional varieties of English in formal colonies and declares the global ownership of English. It should be noted that this is a recent trend, as the earlier 6<sup>th</sup> edition of OALD (2000) provided an Anglocentric definition of *English*:

**English** – the language of Britain, Ireland, N. America, Australia and some other countries. (OALD6)

### 2.2. Regional varieties of English

Representation of different regional varieties of English by learner’s dictionaries can also be observed in the use of regional labels. The table below represents the regional labels used in the learner’s dictionaries under study (Table 1).

Table 1

Regional labels in learner’s dictionaries	
Dictionary	Regional labels
CALD4	Australian English, Indian English, Irish English, Northern English, Scottish English, South African English, UK (British English), US (American English)
COBUILD9	Am (American English), Australian (Australian English), Brit (British English), Northern English, Scottish (Scottish English)
LDOCE6	AmE (American English), AusE (Australian English), BrE (British English)
OALD10	AustralE (Australian English), BrE (British English), CanE (Canadian English), EAfrE (East African English), IndE (Indian English), IrishE (Irish English), NAmE (North American English), NBrE (Northern British English), NZE (New Zealand English), SAfrE (South African English), ScotE (Scottish English), SEAsianE (South-East Asian English), US (US English), WAfrE (West African English), WelshE (Welsh English)

The analysis shows that all four dictionaries legitimately recognize the Inner Circle varieties of English (British English, American English, and Australian English). Outer-Circle Indian English and South African English appear in two dictionaries (CALD4, OALD10), whereas East African English, West African English, and South-East Asian English are listed in only one dictionary (OALD10).

Speaking of OALD, it should be emphasized that its coverage of World Englishes has been slowly increasing over the last two decades. The 6<sup>th</sup> edition of OALD (2000) included only seven English varieties, admitting variability only inside the Inner Circle (American English, Australian English, British English, Irish

English, Northern English, New Zealand English, Scottish English), whereas the current 10<sup>th</sup> edition (2020) reflects fifteen varieties of English, including some varieties in the Outer Circle. This is in tune with the OALD publisher's claim<sup>3</sup> that "the dictionary focuses on language change and its evolution through the years, and has ensured that the language and examples used in the new edition are relevant and up to date with the times." The latest edition of OALD10 features, for example, 26 new Indian English words, including *Aadhaar*, *chawl*, *dabba*, *hartal*, and *shaadi*.

As for the Expanding Circle varieties of English, learner's dictionaries do not recognize them, despite the fact that the majority of English users (500 million – 1 billion) are in Expanding Circle countries (Crystal 2012: 61). We have not observed a single regional label denoting an Expanding Circle country. English words coming from Expanding Circle countries are included in learner's dictionaries as *borrowings*.

### 2.3. Inclusion

Within the framework of this article, we will examine the presence in the learner's dictionaries of four Expanding Circle varieties of English of Northeast Asia – Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Russian. The choice of this particular region is intentional on the part of the authors, who live in Vladivostok, in the Russian Far East – the region bordering China, Japan, and Korea, where English is widely used as an intermediary language for intercultural communication. Therefore, we are raising the issue of how the English of users in this region is reflected in the learner's dictionaries.

The present study shows that all the learner's dictionaries under consideration include, in varying degrees, culture-loaded words that came into English from Northeast Asia, a region where performance varieties of English are used in the context of the Expanding Circle. The dictionaries treat the borrowings in the entries as rare and unusual in a number of ways: by indications of a donor language, the absence of usage or cultural notes, the absence of collocations and illustrative examples. The donor language indications are of four types:

— indication of a donor language prior to the definition: *from Russian*, *from Japanese*;

— indication of a specific country where the word originates from, sometimes together with the field in which this word is most commonly used: *in Chinese philosophy*, *in the former Soviet Union*;

— etymological information<sup>4</sup>: *late 17th cent.: from Chinese (Cantonese dialect) kam kwat 'little orange'*;

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<sup>3</sup> URL: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/aadhaar-dabba-hartal-shaadi-make-it-to-oxford-dictionary/articleshow/73584050.cms>

<sup>4</sup> Etymological information appeared in the online version of two learner's dictionaries (LDOCE and OALD) in the form of separate Word Origin notes relatively recently. Unfortunately, it is absent in paper dictionaries.

— indication of the word origin within the definition itself: *used especially in Russia for..., used in Japanese cooking, a Korean dish made of...*

Table 2 below shows the distribution of borrowings among four countries within the dictionaries.

Table 2

Number of borrowings in the learner's dictionaries

Word origin	CALD4	COBUILD9	LDOCE6	OALD10	Total amount of different words
Chinese	83	44	121	96	169
Japanese	83	30	97	84	161
Korean	10	1	17	9	21
Russian	57	38	138	75	166
Total	233	113	373	264	

The quantitative analysis of Northeast Asian loanwords reveals that words of Chinese, Japanese, and Russian origin are approximately equally represented in learner's dictionaries (169, 161, and 166 lexical units respectively), while only 21 words are of Korean origin. It is worth noting a large-enough representation of Japanese borrowings. Even though the area of the country is many times smaller and geographically remote, the level of loanword donation is almost the same as that of China or Russia. The small number of Korean loanwords listed in the dictionaries might reveal little interaction across the languages and cultures, and also socio-economic and political factors.

In general, the study shows that loanwords of Northeast Asian origin are in the periphery of the dictionaries, which are still Inner Circle centered. The headwords with references to Northeast Asian origin constitute approximately 0.001% of the total number of headwords, which is true for all the dictionaries under consideration.

It should be pointed out that LDOCE6 stands out among all four dictionaries as listing the largest number of borrowings. They amount to 373 items, because of the dictionary's encyclopedic character<sup>5</sup>. It includes a rather large proportion of proper names: eminent figures, literary works, cultural phenomena, historical events, geographical names, etc. It is this dictionary's abundant examples of encyclopedic definitions on which we base our ethnocentricity arguments below.

How the borrowings to be included in the dictionary are selected and how borrowings from non-Inner Circle cultures are defined are key questions. Are these lexemes key words widely used in the source language? Or are they widely used in

<sup>5</sup> The revised 1992 edition of *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture* in addition to a complete language dictionary included a further 15,000 cultural and encyclopedic entries covering people, places, history, geography, the arts, and popular culture which are available now in LDOCE online.



Inner Circle English varieties and so can be assigned to its core vocabulary? To answer these questions, we analyzed the thematic affiliations of the borrowings.

Table 3 shows the 18 major categories of all the words associated with China, Japan, Korea, and Russia according to lexico-semantic categories.

Table 3

Lexico-semantic categories of borrowings in the four learner's dictionaries

Categories	Chinese	Japanese	Korean	Russian
1. Art	7	18		38
2. Business	4	7	3	
3. Ethnonyms	5	1	3	2
4. Flora and fauna	14	12		3
5. Food and cooking	<b>30</b>	22	2	6
6. Household items	8	7		11
7. Medicine	4	2		
8. Natural phenomena	2	2		
9. Philosophy and religion	15	5	2	
10. Place names	16	15	<b>6</b>	17
11. Politics	22		1	18
12. Recreation	4	11		
13. Science and space				10
14. Sport	2	11	1	3
15. State and society	10	11	2	<b>45</b>
16. Technology	3	<b>27</b>		
17. Weapon				2
18. Miscellaneous	23	10	1	11

The thematic affiliations of the borrowings from Northeast Asian countries in the dictionaries demonstrate a broad range of topics, from art to weaponry. However, the distribution within the categories and the predominance of some specific categories may correspond to the British stereotype of a region. The selection seems to have been made not from the perspective of the local culture (with dominant distinctive items from this or that country), but rather from the perspective of the “center” (Britain). Obviously, this selection leads to stereotypical representations of the countries. Thus, the bulk of Chinese borrowings are represented by food and cooking (30 items). Russia is depicted mostly through the borrowings of societal changes: from the revolution in 1917 to the Soviet period (45 items). Japan is presented as a country of technical advances and multinational conglomerate corporations (27 items). In the context of English as an international language, such a representation of national cultures causes an Anglocentric view of the world to leak into the modern dictionaries.

To reveal the subjectivity of the selections of borrowings from Northeast Asian countries, we compiled a list of words that occur in all four dictionaries under review, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

**Borrowings from Northeast Asian countries occurring in the learner's dictionaries**

Word origin	Borrowings from Northeast Asian countries	Number of words, % of all different words borrowed
Chinese	Cantonese, Chinatown, Chinese, chop suey, chopstick, chow, chow mein, feng shui, fortune cookie, ginseng, gung-ho, joss stick, junk, ketchup, kowtow, kung fu, lychee, Mandarin, paper tiger, pidgin, rice paper, Sino-, soy sauce, spring roll, t'ai chi, Taoism, tea, Triad, typhoon, wok, yang, yen, yin, yuan	34 words, 20.1%
Japanese	anime, bonsai, emoji, futon, geisha, haiku, hara-kiri, honcho, Japanese, judo, kamikaze, karaoke, karate, kimono, manga, origami, rickshaw, sake, samurai, satsuma, shiatsu, Shinto, sudoku, sumo, sushi, tsunami, tycoon, Walkman, yen, Zen	30 words, 18.6%
Korean	Korean, Moonie, North Korea, North Korean, taekwondo	5 words, 23.8%
Russian	agitprop, apparatchik, astrakhan, balaclava, Bolshevik, caftan, cosmonaut, glasnost, gulag, the intelligentsia, Kalashnikov, the Kremlin, mammoth, Molotov cocktail, parka, pavlova, perestroika, pogrom, the Politburo, rouble, Russian, Russian roulette, samovar, shaman, Soviet, steppe, troika, tsar, tsarina, tundra, vodka	31 words, 18.7%

China and Japan are presented as the exotic “Orient” with *chopstick*, *feng shui*, *kung fu*, *yin*, *yang*, *geisha*, *hara-kiri*, *kamikaze*, *kimono*, *sake*, *sumo*, etc. Such a representation is in compliance with the definition given to *Japan* in LDOCE6 which explicitly declares that “When people in the US and UK think of Japan, they typically think of ...its traditional culture, such as geishas (= traditional female entertainers) wearing beautiful kimonos and sumo wrestlers.” Global English-language learners will get to know Russia as a backward country, stuck somewhere in the period of the Iron Curtain and the Cold War, with such outdated Russian words as *Bolshevik* and *politburo*. These are not the key features of the source culture to introduce to the world of English-language learners.

To sum up, by analyzing the wordlists of learner's dictionaries, we can clearly see evidence of the ethnocentric approach. This is manifested both in the patchy coverage of non-Inner Circle varieties of English in the dictionaries and in the inexplicable selections of borrowings to be included. In particular, the dictionary wordlists remain British/American, to which the regional items are added as marginal. Words associated with the Northeast Asian countries tend to be selected arbitrarily and according to Western rather than regional culture priorities.

### 3. Northeast Asian culture-loaded borrowings defined

#### 3.1. The structure of definitions

An encyclopedic definition is a type of intensional analytical definition reflecting world knowledge rather than knowledge of the language as such. It usually conforms to a specific pattern that we have already encountered: the headword of the definition identifies a broader category to which the definiendum

belongs (*genus proximum*), and the rest of the definition specifies the characteristics that single out the defined item within that broad category (*differentias specificas*) (Sterkenburg 2003). To distinguish analytical from encyclopedic definitions, some scholars name the former “lexical”. Below is an example of a lexical definition:

**balaclava** – a type of hat made of wool that covers most of the head, neck and face. (OALD10)

The genus proximum is “hat”; the differentias specificas is “made of wool” and the fact that it “covers most of the head, neck and face.”

An encyclopedic definition is illustrated by *Pinyin*:

**Pinyin** – a system of writing the Chinese language in the Roman alphabet officially recognized in China since 1958 and used in Western newspapers and other public documents. (LDOCE6)

The genus proximum is expressed by the minimum salient information (“a system of writing the Chinese language in the Roman alphabet”), while the differentia specifica is some additional information that is salient but not essential (“officially recognized in China since 1958 and used in Western newspapers and other public documents”).

Usually, it is the definer who has to select encyclopedic information under the pressure of the economy of space. And here, there is the danger of a definer’s bias due to their cultural assumptions to supplement the differentia specifica part of the definition with additional highly specific and overt or covert evaluative information about the concept it refers to. In other words, our argument is that of the importance of encyclopedic definition thorough analysis. It is through the definition of the words related to Northeast Asia that we may see whose cultural context the definition expresses in making the referent known to the broader world. For these reasons, encyclopedic definitions in learner’s dictionaries are in the focus of our analysis, but this does not exclude the attention to lexical analytical definitions as well as synthetic synonym definitions. Below is an example of a synonym definition, where a Chinese borrowing is defined by its British synonym:

**junk** – a Chinese sailing boat. (LDOCE6)

### 3.2. Synonym definitions

We will turn now to the last type of definition, where the salient information about regional referent is conveyed by British/American synonyms.

This pattern is observed in the definition of *astronaut* and *taikonaut*:

A **cosmonaut** is an astronaut from the former Soviet Union. (all dictionaries)

**taikonaut** – an astronaut from China. (LDOCE6)

**astronaut** – a person whose job involves travelling and working in a spacecraft. (OALD10)

The forms of the definitions reveal that, of the three nouns, *astronaut* is a dominant word. It lacks any regional label, and what is more important, it is used as defining vocabulary for the intensional description of Russian English and Chinese English words. Actually, in contrast to *astronaut*, *cosmonaut* (Russian) and *taikonaut* (Chinese) are not fully defined for non-Inner-Circle users. Therefore, the non-Inner-Circle users who encounter the incomprehensible word *astronaut* in definitions for *cosmonaut* or *taikonaut* would have to look up that word from the one they looked at in the first place.

The same British/American synonym *astronaut* is used for *Yuri Gagarin*, the first man to travel to space:

**Gagarin, Yuri** – (1934–1968) a Soviet astronaut. On 12th April 1961 he became the first man in space when he travelled round the Earth in Vostok I. (LDOCE6)

The definer seems unaware of the Russian English word *cosmonaut* that might be the proper word to use in the case of a Russian cosmonaut.

The entry for *dacha* demonstrates the use of a British synonym in the definition:

**dacha** – a Russian country house. (OALD10)

**dacha** – a large country house in Russia. (LDOCE6)

In these examples, the definer chooses not to define *dacha* in its own terms but instead refers to the type of housing known to the British reader (a large house in the country, especially one that belongs or used to belong to a rich and important family). The British definition of *dacha* as a variation of its British counterpart is actually quite vague if not misleading. It gives the wrong idea of *dacha*, as a large country house of a rich family or even a palace like Blenheim Palace near Oxford (a culture note in OALD10), whereas in Russia, it often means a rather small piece of land in city suburbs where the family grows crops in summer.

From the analysis of synonym definitions, we may draw the conclusion of the Anglocentric treatment of the regional borrowings as if the intended reader of a dictionary came from the Inner Circle only. Using the British/American synonym in definitions makes the meaning of the loanword clear only to Inner-Circle speakers of English, while the international users can have only a vague idea of what the referent might mean in the source culture. It leads to a view of the global English language “through the British eye.”

### 3.3. Encyclopedic definitions

Usually lexical in genus proximum form and encyclopedic in content, encyclopedic definitions may have room for cultural/ideological judgment. It should be noted that some lexicographers have acknowledged that English dictionaries are ethnocentric works (Lee 1989, Cowie 1995, Whitcut 1995, Benson 2001, Chen 2019). In his study of Chinese loanwords in the *Oxford English*

*Dictionary*, Benson emphasizes the role of encyclopedic definitions in this respect: the definition of evaluative style plays “an important role in establishing the cultural center of the dictionary as one from which knowledge of the periphery is constructed and made known” (Benson 2001: 51).

With the question of whether encyclopedic definitions for an English-language learner’s dictionary incorporate an Anglocentric perspective or the perspective of the international group they refer to, we proceed to the analysis of definitions. In the description of the study that follows we go by a class of words that imply an ideological evaluation (public figures, historical events, and place names).

### **3.4. Defining public figures**

Many entries of this kind exhibit explicit evaluations of the public figures they refer to. LDOCE6 defines Catherine the Great of Russia as follows:

**Catherine the Great (also Catherine II)** – (1729–1796) the empress of Russia from 1762 to 1796 who greatly increased the size of the Russian empire. She is known for having had many lovers. (LDOCE6)

The first part of the definition gives biographical information about the Russian empress Catherine II, which is a typical way of defining public figures as the referent of the encyclopedic definition. The second part is an explicit evaluation of her as the empress who “had many lovers.” The information that is judged as salient is evidently an Inner Circle interpretation of the deeds of a great Russian empress. However, in Russian history she is remembered, first and foremost, as the empress of the Enlightenment, who founded the Russian Academy of Sciences and a number of tertiary institutions. Thus, the definition promotes the British/American perspective, absolutely excluding the source culture perspective.

A similar pattern is observed in the LDOCE6 entry for *Boris Yeltsin*:

**Yeltsin, Boris** – (1931–2007) a Russian politician who became president of Russia in 1991. Bad economic conditions and the growing crime problem in Russia made him unpopular with many, but he was elected president again in 1996. He had very serious health problems, and was sometimes criticized for drinking too much alcohol. (LDOCE6)

In the genus proximum part of the definition, Yeltsin is defined as a Russian politician, and in the differentia specifica part he is described as the president of Russia. The last sentence about Yeltsin’s health problems and alcohol addiction does not present defining information, rather it is an opinion of a British definer that is far from the view of Yeltsin held in the cultural context of Russia. It might be even offensive for users in the source culture, as it implies the inability of the Russian people to elect the right person to be their country’s president. In the Russian context, Yeltsin is remembered as the first president of the Russian Federation, who introduced societal reforms and prompted democracy in the

country. Thus, the British version of Yeltsin is encoded in the definition without even mentioning the alternative.

The entry of *Leo Tolstoy* is a purely lexical analytical one:

**Tolstoy, Count Leo** – (1828–1910) a Russian writer best known for his long novels *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. (LDOCE6)

This example demonstrates the ethnocentric principle of defining the public figure far from the perspective of the original culture. The genus-differentia definition describes Tolstoy as a Russian writer famous for his novels. The use of the adjective *long* as an attribute characterizing the two named works implies that it is this quality of the novels that made Tolstoy famous in Russia and all over the world. This is an example of an overt subjective evaluation. There are some inadequacies in this definition when it is judged in terms of its expression of its cultural context. Another feature of this definition is that being laconic, it should contain only salient information, and that is the way the reader accepts definition of Leo Tolstoy given in the dictionary. This makes it almost impossible for the international reader to see the inadequacies.

### 3.5. Defining historic events

The definition of *the Crimean War* is given in two dictionaries: LDOCE6 and OALD10. Comparing them, we are able to observe in what ways encyclopedic definitions carry ideological meanings:

**Crimean War, the** – (1853–1856) a war between Russia on one side, and Britain, France, Turkey, and Sardinia on the other. It started because Britain and France believed that Russia intended to take control of the Balkans (= southeast Europe), and it ended when the Russians were defeated and lost control of their naval base at Sevastopol. In the UK most people connect the Crimean War with Florence Nightingale, who cared for the injured soldiers and developed new ideas about nursing, and with a battle called the Charge of the Light Brigade, a serious military mistake in which many British soldiers were killed. (LDOCE6)

**Crimean War, the** – a war fought by Britain, France and Turkey against Russia between 1853 and 1856 in the Crimea, a part of the Ukraine. Russia wanted power over Turkey, and Britain and France wanted to end Russia's power in the Black Sea. Most of the military action was around Sevastopol, the Russian navy base. It was the first war during which the European public were able to follow events as they happened, because of the invention of the telegraph (= a device for sending messages along wires by the use of electric current). (OALD10)

Both definitions are formulated according to the conventional genus-differentia form with the word *war* as a genus proximum and a description of the war (its participants, location, and battles) as differentia specifica. In the differentia specifica part in OALD10, the cause of the war is implicitly attributed to Russia by

using the preposition “against” Russia. In both dictionaries, there is no word of the war being defensive on part of Russia and aggressive on part of Britain, France and Turkey, as they attacked the Russian port Sevastopol and Russia defended it for 349 days. Thus, the information that is judged is no more than the biased British representation of Russia as a power-hungry nation. The other striking feature in the OALD10 definition is mentioning the Crimea as a part of Ukraine at that time of the Crimean War. This is the fact contradicting the official history of the Crimea that became part of the Russian Empire as early as in 1783 and was a part of Russia during the war. We may say that it is a shortcoming of the definition bearing inaccurate information.

It is worth mentioning that the additional information about the referent in both dictionaries puts the war into the British cultural context. The LDOCE6 definition informs the international readers that people in the UK connect this event with British nurse Florence Nightingale and the battle in which many British soldiers were killed. In OALD10 the salient additional information is the invention of the telegraph, which allowed the European public to follow the events of the conflict. We may conclude that both definitions lack an international perspective by ignoring other countries which were involved in the Crimean War. Thus, from the Russian people’s perspective, this war is connected with such names as admiral Pavel Nakhimov and vice-admiral Vladimir Kornilov, a sailor Petr Koshka, and a Russian nurse Dasha Sevastopolskaya, who showed heroism defending their native seaport.

It should be emphasized that both definitions convey the ethnocentric assumption that British actions were the determining actions in the Crimean War.

### 3.6. Defining place names

The LDOCE6 defines two Japanese islands in the form of the classic definition model of genus + differentiae:

**Iwo Jima** – an island in the Pacific Ocean belonging to Japan, where US forces won a very difficult battle in World War II. There is a statue in Washington, D.C., of US marines raising the US flag on Iwo Jima after they had won the battle. (LDOCE6)

**Okinawa** – a Japanese island in the west Pacific Ocean, southwest of Kyushu, where an important battle took place between the US and Japan in 1945 near the end of World War II. (LDOCE6)

It is the additional information in both cases that reveals ethnocentricity and bias. Both islands might be lexically defined as “a Japanese island in the Pacific Ocean” with some details specifying the location of the island (“southwest of Kyushu”). Instead, the definition’s core is followed by the information irrelevant for the international reader. The choice of the additional information is Anglocentric, giving prominence to the facts that are important in the history of the US (“where US forces won a very difficult battle”) and glorifying the US forces. Evidently, the inclusion of these headwords (*Okinawa* and *Iwo Jima*) was not made

on geographical principles but on the Anglocentric principle to select lemmas having historic relevance exclusively in the Inner Circle.

The LDOCE6 definition of Siberia is an example of the British/American stereotype about the vast territory in Russia:

**Siberia** – a very large area in Russia, between the Ural Mountains and the Pacific Ocean where there are many minerals but very few people. It is known for being extremely cold, and for being the place where Russian criminals were sent, and during the communist years where Soviet governments had prisons to which they used to send anyone who disagreed with them. (LDOCE6)

The definition of this geographical proper name starts with the genus proximum (“a very large area”) followed by the more specific information on its location: “in Russia, between the Ural Mountains and the Pacific Ocean.” The additional encyclopedic information bears conventional Western interpretation of the nature of Siberia through the use of words “few people,” “extremely cold,” “criminals,” and “prisons.” Actually, it is the conventional British vision of remote Siberia that is presented in the dictionary. This version is contested by the official data: today Siberia is home to over 17 million people – 11.6% of Russia’s population. Among 29 cities, there are three big cities with a population exceeding one million people each. Novosibirsk, a major city, has a city Metro, one of the best Opera and Ballet Theatres in Russia, several tertiary institutions, and the Siberian division of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Analysis of the treatment of the headwords related to Northeast Asia through the framework of the definitional forms reveals Anglocentricity in learner’s dictionary definitions. The majority of the headwords are defined in British or American terms without any perspective of the culture from which the words arise. Despite the inclusion of many Expanding Circle items, the dictionaries remain typical in the representation of the English language as the one owned by its native speakers. Even in the third millennium that witnesses the global use of English as an International Language, English language learner’s dictionaries persistently promote the British/American perspective from which these countries and EIL users are to be known globally.

#### 4. Conclusion

We started our research with a certain question in mind: whether there is a shift to the World Englishes paradigm in English learner’s dictionaries. We have come to the conclusion that the shift is still very small. Both the inclusion of lexical items from Northeast Asian Englishes and their treatments manifest the Anglocentricity of the four dictionaries we examined. What is more, the study revealed the dictionaries’ adherence to assumptions based in the monocultural, monocentric, native-speaker dependency myths described by Kachru, which “block the crossing of borders and suppress the multiculturalism of English” (Kachru 1996: 16).



The on-going diffusion of English, the growth of the family of world Englishes, and the increase in the need to use English to express local culture and identity in intercultural communication challenge current English learner's lexicography, and call for change.

We would like to conclude the paper with Braj Kachru's words, which suggest how it is possible to meet the challenge: "What is needed is a pluralistic vision of models, norms, and canons that will use this immense, unparalleled resource with sensitivity and understanding locally and cross-culturally" (Kachru 1996: 18).

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**Bionotes:**

Galina N. LOVTSEVICH, Doctor of Philology (Habil.), Head, Department of Linguistics and Intercultural Communication, Far Eastern Federal University. FEELTA President. Research interests include Applied Linguistics, Teaching EIL, Lexicography, Sociolinguistics, World Englishes. She has authored the books on a cultural component in pedagogical terms (2010) and English-Russian dictionary of abbreviated terms of linguodidactics (2009) – in Russian.

**Contact information:**

Far Eastern Federal University  
8 Sukhanova St., Vladivostok, Russia, 690091  
*e-mail:* lovtsevich.gn@dvfu.ru

Alexander A. SOKOLOV is a Postgraduate Student, Department of Linguistics and Intercultural Communication, Institute of Oriental Studies – School of Regional and International Studies, Far Eastern Federal University. Research interests: learner lexicography, World Englishes.

**Contact information:**

Far Eastern Federal University  
8 Sukhanova St., Vladivostok, Russia, 690091  
*e-mail:* sokolov\_aa@dvfu.ru

**Сведения об авторах:**

Галина Николаевна ЛОВЦЕВИЧ – доктор филологических наук, профессор, зав. каф. лингвистики и межкультурной коммуникации, Дальневосточный федеральный университет. Президент Дальневосточной общественной организации преподавателей английского языка. Научные интересы: методика преподавания языков; преподавание английского как международного языка, лексикография, социолингвистика, контактная вариантология английского языка. Автор монографии «Кросскультурный терминологический словарь как средство репрезентации терминологии гуманитарных наук» (2010) и «Англо-русского словаря аббревиатур терминов лингводидактики» (2009).

**Контактная информация:**

Дальневосточный федеральный университет, Восточный Институт – Школа региональных и международных исследований  
690091, Приморский край, г. Владивосток, ул. Суханова, 8  
*e-mail:* lovtsevich.gn@dvfu.ru

Александр Анатольевич СОКОЛОВ – аспирант, кафедра лингвистики и межкультурной коммуникации, Восточный институт – Школа региональных и международных исследований, Дальневосточный федеральный университет. Научные интересы: учебная лексикография, контактная вариантология английского языка.

**Контактная информация:**

Дальневосточный федеральный университет, Восточный Институт – Школа региональных и международных исследований  
690091, Приморский край, г. Владивосток, ул. Суханова, 8  
*e-mail:* sokolov\_aa@dvfu.ru