DOI: 10.15503/jecs20151.26.39

Dictionaries and ideologies: some remarks of the EFL lexicography[12]

Anna Włodarczyk-Stachurska
Faculty of Philology and Pedagogy,
Kazimierz Pulaski University of Technology and Humanities in Radom,
Malczewskiego 29, 26-600 Radom.
E-mail address: a.stachurska@uthrad.pl

Abstract

The term ideology itself has recently gained a lot of attention in anthropology, sociolinguistics and cultural studies. As a starting point it seems crucial to form an area of inquiry, that is the sense of language ideology. Here Alan Rumsay's (1990, p. 346) definition is a useful starting point: „[…] linguistic ideologies are shared bodies of commonsense notions about the nature of language in the world". The article aims to look at the way *EFL* dictionaries cope with the task to present the standardization of certain words and usages. In other words, we will attempt to find out if/how lexicographers cope with the job of being legislators, if their products advise about the proper usage as well as meanings of the words available in the standard forms of English. In order to achieve this goal, the number of issues of paramount importance will be investigated:

(i) The term of linguistic ideology,
(ii) The concept of standardization
(iii) The dictionaries and ideology of standard – the state of the art

Our method is making comparisons between different lexicographic sources (dictionaries) in relation to selected entries, and generalising from the way the latter are presented (in the sense of formal and semantic values).

Keywords: word, ideology, correctness, standardization, EFL lexicography, dictionary.

Recently, it seems that *EFL* lexicography has been developing at an unprecedented pace. Both compilers and publishers seem to be watching each other's products very closely in order to see whether a new feature, introduced in other works of reference, might be adopted in their new dictionary. The present paper focuses on the question of how *EFL* dictionaries cope with the problem of the ideology of the standard language (here understood as the denotational as well as connotational value of words).[13]

Linguistic ideology – towards a definition

The very term ideology was coined in 1796 by Antoine Destutt de Tracy, to name *a science of ideas*.[14] In his view, the application of the term to the social life

12 This paper enlarges on issues raised earlier in Włodarczyk-Stachurska (2010, 2012).
13 Here are the following: *CCAD* (2009), *CALD* (2008), *LDCE* (2005), *OALD* (2005).
14 Underline mine (A.W.-S.).

could support reason, education, democracy and the like. Since that time, the term was rather pejoratively used (associated with the writings of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Vladimir Lenin, Jean-Paul Sartre and the like and used with reference to totalitarian systems). However, throughout the XX century the word started to denote a sociopolitical system of any kind. It might have been not only totalitarian, but also secular or, even coherent.

According to *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) ideology is regarded as „justifying actions, […] held implicitly or adopted as a whole, […] maintained regardless of the course of events". As to the present-day understanding of the word, it is defined in *CALD* (2008) as „[...] a theory, or set of beliefs or principles, especially one on which a political system, part or organization is based: socialist/capitalist ideology". Not surprisingly, the wording of *CCAD* (2009) accounts for the sense of ideology much along the similar lines as: „[...] set of beliefs, especially the political beliefs on which people, parties, or countries base their action". But when we look further than the word itself, we immediately see that the concept also applies to language studies as indicated, among others, by Michel Pêcheux (1982), John B. Thompson (1984), Paul Friedrich (1989). From this particular perspective, as explained by Kathryn A. Woolard and Bambi B. Schieffelin (1994, p.55) „[...] ideologies of language are significant for social as well as linguistic analysis because they are not only about language. Rather, such ideologies envision and enact links of language to group and personal identity, to aesthetics, to morality, and to epistemology". In spite of many possible points of divergence, Michael Silverstain (1979, p. 193) seems to clarify the concept: „[…] linguistic/language ideologies are sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use". As Shirley Heath (1977, p. 53) puts with a social stress: language ideologies are „[…] self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds, concerning roles of language in the social experiences of members as they contribute to the expression of the group". Obviously, differences in the above definitions are rooted in the concept of ideology itself. From our point of view, of particular importance is standard language ideology[15]. Since the emphasis on the ideological dimension of language practices has started, standard has been treated as an ideological process rather than linguistic fact.

Standard/standardization

When we talk of English as an international language or as a universal language, the *lingua franca* of today, we are – to a considerable degree – talking of an abstract concept as there are a number of versions of English present in the world. The all-embracing concept of the English-using speech community entails strong generalization, since this speech community includes a number of (sub)communities which may be (sub)divided in various ways. The first broad division that comes to mind is the one in terms of the English-speaking nations of the world, for example, American English, Australian English, British English, Canadian English, Indian English and many others. Alternatively, if we employ ethnic criteria, we have, among

15 On detailed discussion concerning language ideologies see, among others, Schieffelin (eds.) 1998.

others, Chicano English, Yinglish[16] and Anglo-Indian English. On the other hand, if we were to choose the parameter of colour, we would come up with such series of labels as Black English, Brown English, White English, and Yellow English. To the best of the author's knowledge no one has seriously classified English in this way and it seems that it would be extraordinarily offensive to make global generalizations based on colour. As somewhat metaphorically formulated by Frank Smolinski (1993, p. 274), the ways to cut the cake are limitless here, and one may – in fact – use a number of linguistic or functional criteria to do so.

Before we proceed, one needs to ponder on particular distinctions among the users of English which is crucial to the present discussion. Namely, the English-speaking community should be divided into three sub-groups in order to see the roles and functions of the world variants of English in a real international context. The first group comprises those who use English as their *first* language or *mother tongue*, so they are native speakers of English, forming – at the same time – culturally distinct groups (Americans, British, English-speaking Canadians, Australians). Then, there are those who use English as their *second language,* and in their case English is an acquired language which is learned after they have mastered their mother tongue, which may be one of the languages of Asia, Africa, or the Philippines. The second language speakers of English must further be separated from those who use it as a *foreign language*, as for example in China for science and technology, in Japan for international tourism, or in Sweden, Poland and many other countries where English has become the most popular language in schools.[17] Thus, one may say that the members of the English-speaking community form a wide spectrum with reference to their competence in English, namely:

1) those who use English as their first language or mother tongue,
2) those who use English as a second language, a medium of education, language of government, and the like and,
3) those who employ English as a foreign language.

The English language is a member of a group of languages called the Indo-European group of languages that are spoken by a community representing wide ethnic diversity, whose parent tongue, called Proto-Indo-European, was spoken about 5.000 years ago by nomadic tribes in Europe and parts of Asia[18]. The history of English goes back to the landing of a few thousand, rather than hundreds of thousands of, members of three Germanic tribes (Angles, Saxons and Jutes), who arrived in the Islands starting from the second half of the 5th century AD and in the following 15 centuries grew to form one of the largest, economically and culturally strongest language communities, known as the Anglo-Saxon community, which spread over all the continents of the globe. Given such geographical, temporal, social and racial distinctions it is understandable why we tend to speak of variants rather than one uniform language called English that looks alike in all its national, social, ethnic or individual manifestations. The *Dictionary of Lexicography* (1998, p. 82) identifies

16 The term, used in the sense: „language in which Yiddish words are integrated into English usage", has recently found its way into lexicography in, for example, Bluestein's (1998).

17 For detailed discussion concerning this problem see Kachru (1993).

18 On this issue see, among others, Baugh and Cable (1993) and *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2008).

the problem of language variety as follows: „The presence in a language of several distinctive systems, conditioned by such factors as regionality (DIALECT), personality (IDIOLECT), gender (GENDERLECT), social class (SOCIOLECT), subject field (TECHNOLECT), or historical stage (PERIOD) (cf. Jackson, 1989; Chambers, 1994)".

The distinctions alluded to here are important since they separate these varieties in terms of their functions, proficiency of their speakers and the processes which are used to acquire each language variety. It is estimated that nowadays speakers who use English as their mother tongue number over 400 million language users. (*Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*, 2011, p.311) The five largest national groups are the English speakers of America, the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Obviously, while talking about the varieties of the particular language it seems reasonable to stress the fact that the very first thing that characterizes most natural languages is some form of standard variety of that language which – though defined differently by different authors – must ultimately be viewed as a prestige variety, used as an institutionalised norm in a given linguistic community. And so, the *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (2002, p. 509) defines the targeted term *standard language* in the following way:

> Also **standard dialect**, **standard language**, **standard** the variety of a language which has the highest STATUS in a community or nation and which is usually based on the speech and writing of educated native speakers of the language. A standard variety is generally: a) used in the news media and in literature, b) described in dictionaries and grammars, c) taught in schools and taught to non- native speakers when they learn the language as a foreign language. Sometimes it is the educated variety spoken in the political or cultural centre of a country, e.g. the standard variety of French is based on educated Parisian French. The standard variety of American English is known as **Standard American English** and the standard variety of British English is **Standard British English.**

However, a variety of a language that is considered to be the standard most frequently shows different degrees of variation in pronunciation according to the region of the country where it is used, for example Standard British English in Scotland, Wales and Southern England. Also, the *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (2002, p. 509) draws our attention to the fact that the term *Standard English* is sometimes used as a cover term for all the national standard varieties of English which exhibit differences in spelling, vocabulary, grammar and – in particular – in pronunciation, but one may certainly speak of the existence of some common core of the language. Pavel Štekauer (1993, p. 15) claims that:

> Standard English can be characterized by saying that it is that set of grammatical and lexical forms which is typically used in speech and writing by educated native speakers. Standard English includes the use of colloquial and slang vocabulary as well as swear words and taboo expressions. Modern Standard English comes in two main, semi-autonomous varieties: North-American English as employed in the USA and Canada; and British English as employed in the United Kingdom and, with differences that are minor except at the level of colloquial vocabulary, in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

It is fairly evident that the existence of some form of standard variety makes it possible for educated native speakers of the various national standard varieties of English to communicate with one another. Approaching the issue from a somewhat different perspective Bernd Kortmann (2005, pp. 256-257) stresses that:

> [...] as far as the structural properties are concerned, standard varieties are of no higher value or quality than other varieties. For obvious reasons, they do of course enjoy a higher prestige. [...] The standard variety represents something like a common structural core of all varieties (especially the national varieties) of a language. Accordingly, Standard English represents the common core of the different forms of English - the 'old' English, especially British and American English, as well as so-called 'New English' (e.g. Australian, New Zealand, Indian, Caribbean and African English).

However, according to other sources such as, for example, Grzegorz A. Kleparski, Małgorzata Martynuska, Anna Dziama (2010), the consequently prevailing view nowadays is that the standard variety represents something that may be defined as a common core of all regional varieties. Along rather similar lines of social importance and prestige, David Crystal (1994, p. 110) attempts to define the concept of language standard in the following manner:

> (...) the linguistic features of SE are chiefly matters of grammar, vocabulary and orthography, not a matter of pronunciation; that SE is the variety of English which carries most prestige within a country; that the prestige attached to SE is recognized by adult members of the community and it is the norm of leading institutions such as the government, law courts and the media; and that although SE is widely understood, it is not widely produced.

As to the scope of its use, B. Kortmann (2005, p. 256) specifies that Standard English is used mainly in the following sectors of life and activity:

1) in written language (particularly literature and print media),
2) in television as well as radio broadcasts,
3) in politics, administration, courts, etc.,
4) in schools, universities,
5) as a teaching target of learners of English in schools and universities all over the world,
6) by the educated middle and upper classes.

Somewhat prescriptively, Dennis Freeborn (1986, p. 2) apparently equates Standard English with what he calls *good English* adding that this language variety „[...] has been accepted as the variety of written English against which other varieties are assessed". Further, the author continues to the following effect: „You may hear people use the term Standard English when they are talking about the kind of pronunciation just described as a good accent, but it is better to use the term Received Pronunciation for this". Arthur Hughes, Peter Trudgill, Dominic Watt (2005, p. 12) are far from equating the notions of Standard English and R.P. English, when they say that the accent taught to most foreign learners of British English

is R.P. while the dialect used as a model is known as Standard English, which is the dialect of educated people throughout the British Isles „[...] normally used in writing, for teaching at in schools and universities, and the one most often heard on radio and television. Unlike RP, Standard English is not restricted to the speech of any particular social group".

All in all, in spite of the differences of opinion formulated in this respect, one is fully entitled to say that the standard variety seems to be customarily employed by a relatively small number of speakers of high status or at least higher educational background. Note that for that reason, the standard variety is frequently perceived and accepted as the prestigious linguistic norm by the members of a particular language community. Narrowing our perspective towards English, because of the nature of its sociolinguistic history, the standard variety of the language has a certain, yet less easily defined, circle of native speakers, which is not necessarily true of standard varieties of all living languages.

Standard English taken aside, all other dialects of English may be referred to as non-standard varieties and typically have native speakers coming from lower social strata and educational backgrounds. At the same time, non-standard dialects are typically regional, as well as social, that is, they are associated with a particular geographical region and a particular social stratum. In contrast to this, the standard variety is non-regional. In fact, Standard English may be viewed as a *polycentric standard variety*, with other standard varieties (Scottish, American, Australian) differing somewhat from it and from each other. Schematically, the relation of the standard variety to other varieties is depicted in the diagram below:

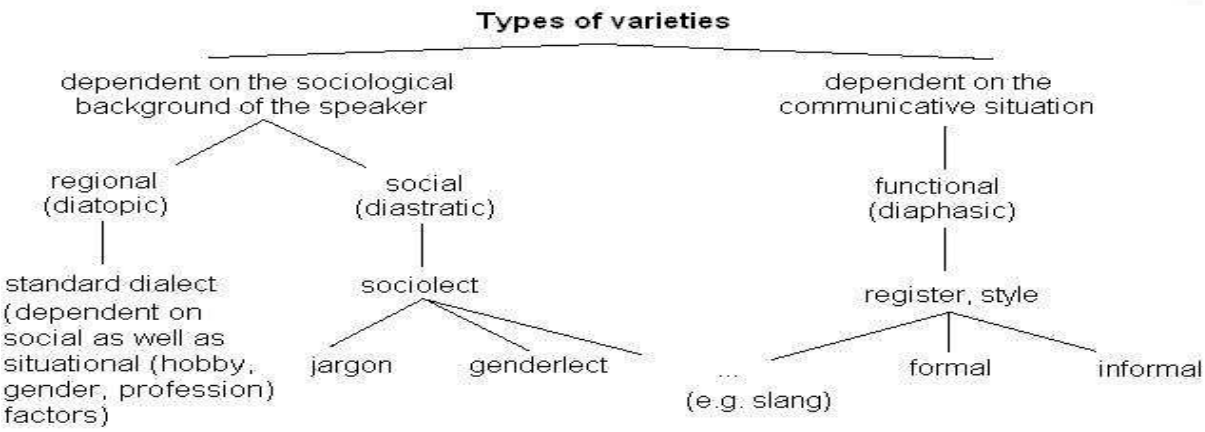


Fig. 1. Language varieties
Source: see Kortmann 2005, p. 257.

G. A. Kleparski et al. (2010, p. 31) treat British English as the variety of English spoken in Great Britain that shows far greater internal diversity than English spoken in other areas of the English-speaking world. Tom McArthur (1992, p. 156) goes deeper into the issue in distinguishing between two terms, namely:

1) A broader interpretation: British English is the English language used in Great Britain, and following this way of thinking it covers all (standard and non standard) varieties, including all social levels,

2) A narrower interpretation: British English is the form of Standard English used in Britain at large (more specifically in south-eastern England). Socially, it is basically the medium of communication of the middle and upper classes. It is, at the same time, associated with the accent known since the 1920s as Received Pronunciation.

Let us add at this point that owing to the functional status, the standard variety of English can be seen as the fourth main type of variety (see Figure 1), although according to B. Kortmann (2005, p. 257) „its classification as a primary social dialect would be adequate, too". As far as grammar is concerned, there are relatively few differences between the national standards of English, yet one may speak of different degrees of preferences for individual forms and constructions, measurable in terms of higher or lower frequencies of use.

Accounting for accent, Standard British English – spoken by the minority of the English-speaking population in Great Britain – sometimes called *BBC English* is traditionally termed as *Received Pronunciation* (RP).[19] The qualifier *received* is to be understood here in its 19th century sense of 'accepted in the most polite circles of society' and – as pointed out by A. Hughes et al. (2005, p. 3) – while British society has changed a good deal since that time, RP has nevertheless remained the accent of those in the upper reaches of the social scale. Obviously, the notion of accent pertains merely to the pronunciation and the phonological system of a particular variety of language, while dialect concerns lexical and grammatical differences as well.

EFL DICTIONARIES AND IDEOLOGY OF STANDARD – THE STATE OF THE ART

As the main target set to this section is to analyse dictionaries with regard to the manner they establish the standardization of the language (here the style/register of a particular lexical item). Such a system is realised, it seems reasonable to start our discussion by taking a closer look at each of the *EFL* dictionaries separately. As indicated within the previous section, the concept of standard variety stands for „[...] an idea in the mind rather than reality – a set of abstract norms to which actual usage may conform to a greater or lesser extent" (Milroy & Milroy 1992, p. 23). Simultaneously, in the words of the same authors, „[...] standard refers to the long – established codified variety, promoted by education, grammar books, text-books and dictionaries, that establish what is correct and proscribe what should not be said or written. Such system of attitudes to linguistic variation has been labelled *the ideology of standard*"[20].

Providing that compilers' practices have changes since 70's of the previous century, as being descriptive rather than prescriptive, today's *EFL* dictionaries tend to emphasise the standard language. Although more non-standard words are included, a wide range of sociolinguistic stratification has been adapted by the editors[21].

19 On this issue see Bauer (2002, p. 3).
20 Underline mine. (A.W.-S.).
21 However, it may be discussed if these ways of lexical presentation is purely ideological.

As the main target set to this article is to analyse dictionary macrostructure with regard to the manner in which the presence of standard variety or – more generally – sociolinguistic stratification is marked, it seems reasonable to start our discussion by taking a closer look at each of the *EFL* dictionaries separately. To start with *CCAD* (2009), its stylistic information is provided in the section titled 'Guide to Key Features'. Here, the editor's introduction is devoted to both style and usage, with particular emphasis on style. Among others, we find the following passage:

> [...] some words or meanings are used mainly by particular groups of people, or in particular social contexts. In this dictionary, when it is relevant, the definitions also give information about the kind of people who are likely to use a word or expression, and the type of social situation in which it is used. This information is usually placed at the end of a definition, in small capital letters and within square brackets (CCAD 2009: xiii).

Additionally, relevant attitudinal labels are explained as follows:

Style labels

BUSINESS: used mainly when talking about the field of business, e.g. **annuity**

COMPUTING: used mainly when talking about the field of computing, e.g. **chat room**

DIALECT: used in some dialects of English, e.g. **ain't**

FORMAL: used mainly in official situations, or by political and business organizations, or when speaking or writing to people in authority, e.g. **gratuity**

HUMOROUS: used mainly to indicate that a word or expression is used in a humorous way, e.g. **gents**

INFORMAL: used mainly in informal situations, conversations, and personal letters, e.g. **pep talk**

JOURNALISM: used mainly in journalism, e.g. **glass ceiling**

LEGAL: used mainly in legal documents, in law courts, and by the police in official situations, e.g. **manslaughter**

LITERARY: used mainly in novels, poetry, and other forms of literature, e.g. **plaintive**

MEDICAL: used mainly in medical texts, and by doctors in official situations, e.g. **psychosis**

MILITARY: used mainly when talking or writing about military terms, e.g. **armour**

OFFENSIVE: likely to offend people, or to insult them; words labelled OFFENSIVE should therefore usually be avoided, e.g. **cripple**

OLD-FASHIONED: generally considered to be old-fashioned, and no longer in common use, e.g. **dashing**

RUDE: used mainly to describe words which could be considered taboo by some people; words labelled RUDE should therefore usually be avoided, e.g. **bloody**

SPOKEN: used mainly in speech rather than in writing, e.g. **pardon**

TECHNICAL: used mainly when talking or writing about objects, events, or processes in a specialist subject, such as business, science, or music, e.g. **biotechnology**

TRADEMARK: used to show a designated trademark, e.g. **hoover**

VERY OFFENSIVE: highly likely to offend people, or to insult them; words labelled ⚠ VERY OFFENSIVE should be avoided, e.g. **wog**

VERY RUDE: used mainly to describe words which most people consider taboo; words labelled ⚠ VERY RUDE should be avoided, e.g. **fuck**

WRITTEN: used mainly in writing rather than in speech, e.g. **avail**

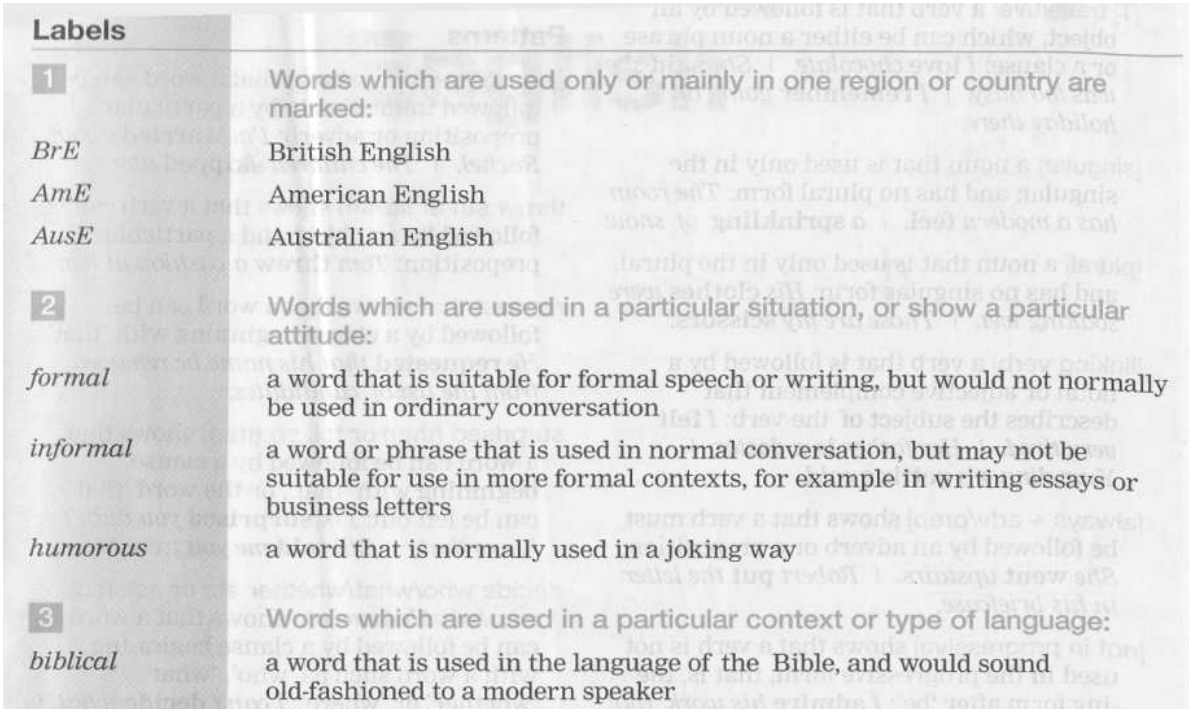
Fig. 2. Style labels in CCAD (2009)
Source: Collins Cobuild Advanced Dictionary, 2009.

Although most of the labels are defined, one gets the impression that the list of labels provided is somewhat incomplete because – among others – such major attitudinal labels as SLANG, VULGAR or TABOO are missing. As far as the register diversity is concerned, it is hardly indicated at all as a separate category. One can easily notice that register labels are not clearly separated from the category of style (e.g. medical, literary, journalism, technical).

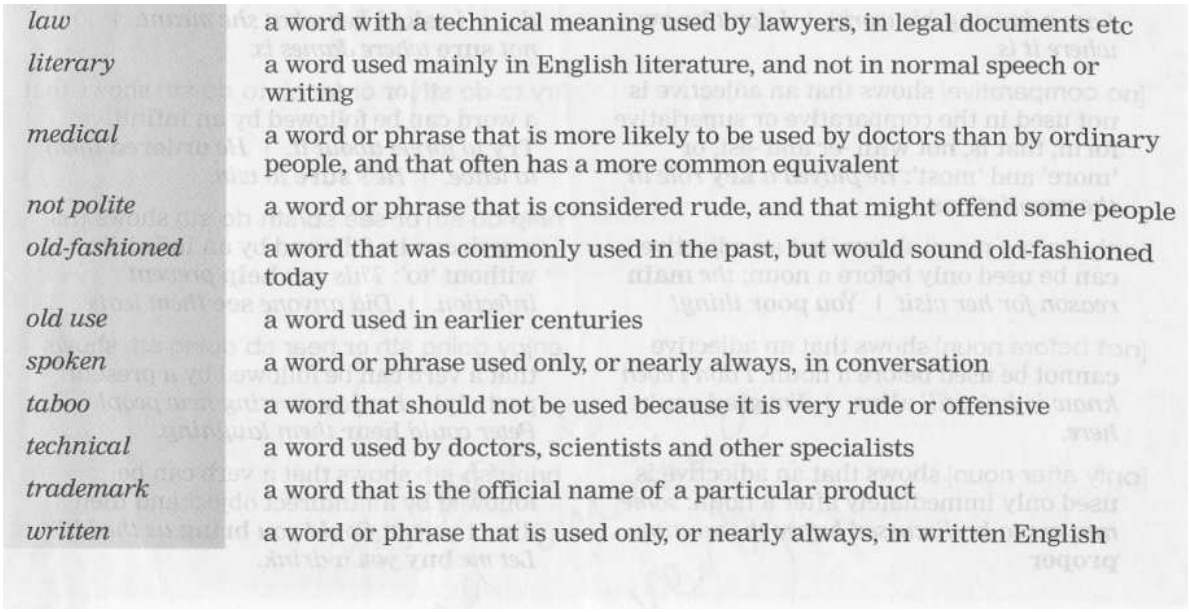
When we move on to the relevant features of *LDCE* (2005) we see that its treatment of style is merely restricted to the inside front cover within the space given and the labels are grouped in a systematic way. In particular, one may observe two major categories of words, which are:

1) words that are used in a particular situation, or show a particular attitude (*formal, informal, humorous*);
2) words that are used in a particular context or type of language (*biblical, legal, literary, medical, not polite, old-fashioned, old use, spoken, taboo, technical, trademark, written*).

Additionally, the editors provide a short explanation of the labels they introduce. For example, *formal word* is defined as „[...] a word that is suitable for formal speech or writing, but would not normally be used in ordinary conversation". One of the infrequent cases is that of the labelling of *biblical* („a word that is used in the language of the Bible") as having nothing or little in common with contemporary English. Likewise, one has the impression that it may not be entirely clear to every dictionary user what the difference between *old-fashioned* and *old use* is. Another critical remark that may be formulated is the lack of explicitness in case of register labelling. One has grounds to claim that the terms *style* and *register* are used somewhat freely and interchangeably. The stylistic labels provided in *LDCE* (2005) are as follows:



Labels	
1	Words which are used only or mainly in one region or country are marked:
BrE	British English
AmE	American English
AusE	Australian English
2	Words which are used in a particular situation, or show a particular attitude:
formal	a word that is suitable for formal speech or writing, but would not normally be used in ordinary conversation
informal	a word or phrase that is used in normal conversation, but may not be suitable for use in more formal contexts, for example in writing essays or business letters
humorous	a word that is normally used in a joking way
3	Words which are used in a particular context or type of language:
biblical	a word that is used in the language of the Bible, and would sound old-fashioned to a modern speaker



law	a word with a technical meaning used by lawyers, in legal documents etc
literary	a word used mainly in English literature, and not in normal speech or writing
medical	a word or phrase that is more likely to be used by doctors than by ordinary people, and that often has a more common equivalent
not polite	a word or phrase that is considered rude, and that might offend some people
old-fashioned	a word that was commonly used in the past, but would sound old-fashioned today
old use	a word used in earlier centuries
spoken	a word or phrase used only, or nearly always, in conversation
taboo	a word that should not be used because it is very rude or offensive
technical	a word used by doctors, scientists and other specialists
trademark	a word that is the official name of a particular product
written	a word or phrase that is used only, or nearly always, in written English

Fig. 3. Style labels in LDCE (2005)
Source: Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2005.

As far as the *OALD* (2005) is concerned, in the stylistic information on the inside cover the editors provide a list of labels used in the dictionary. It is there that we find the following explanation: „(...) the following labels are used with words that express a particular attitude or are appropriate in a particular situation".

Labels used in the dictionary

The following labels are used with words that express a particular attitude or are appropriate in a particular situation.

approving expressions show that you feel approval or admiration, for example *feisty*, *petite*.

disapproving expressions show that you feel disapproval or contempt, for example *blinkered*, *newfangled*.

figurative language is used in a non-literal or metaphorical way, as in *He didn't want to cast a shadow on* (= spoil) *their happiness*.

formal expressions are usually only used in serious or official language and would not be appropriate in normal everyday conversation. Examples are *admonish*, *besmirch*.

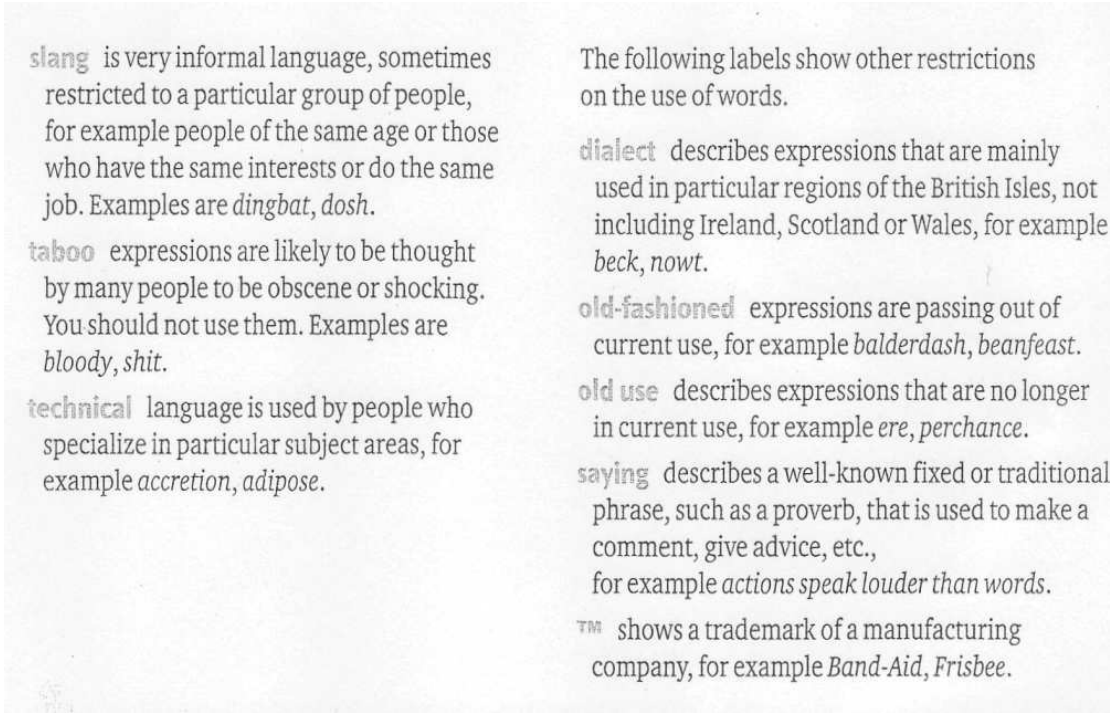
humorous expressions are intended to be funny, for example *ankle-biter*, *lurgy*

informal expressions are used between friends or in a relaxed or unofficial situation. They are not appropriate for formal situations. Examples are *bonkers*, *dodgy*.

ironic language uses words to mean the opposite of the meaning that they seem to have, as in *You're a great help, I must say!* (= no help at all).

literary language is used mainly in literature and imaginative writing, for example *aflame*, *halcyon*.

offensive expressions are used by some people to address or refer to people in a way that is very insulting, especially in connection with their race, religion, sex or disabilities, for example *half-caste*, *slut*. You should not use these words.



slang is very informal language, sometimes restricted to a particular group of people, for example people of the same age or those who have the same interests or do the same job. Examples are *dingbat*, *dosh*.

taboo expressions are likely to be thought by many people to be obscene or shocking. You should not use them. Examples are *bloody*, *shit*.

technical language is used by people who specialize in particular subject areas, for example *accretion*, *adipose*.

The following labels show other restrictions on the use of words.

dialect describes expressions that are mainly used in particular regions of the British Isles, not including Ireland, Scotland or Wales, for example *beck*, *nowt*.

old-fashioned expressions are passing out of current use, for example *balderdash*, *beanfeast*.

old use describes expressions that are no longer in current use, for example *ere*, *perchance*.

saying describes a well-known fixed or traditional phrase, such as a proverb, that is used to make a comment, give advice, etc., for example *actions speak louder than words*.

™ shows a trademark of a manufacturing company, for example *Band-Aid*, *Frisbee*.

Fig. 4. Style labels in OALD (2005)
Source: Oxford Advanced Learner`s Dictionary, 2005.

One notices immediately that – as in the case of the representatives of *EFL* dictionaries discussed previously – there is no obvious line of distinction between the parameters of style and register. What is more, the explanation given on the inside cover indicates that one can expect merely the stylistic labels set out there. Upon investigating the system of labels used within the *OALD*, the fact that deserves our attention is the placement of *technical* and *dialect* labels among them.

In case of *CALD* (2008), on the front page the explanation of style and usage labels used in the dictionary is provided in the following manner:

Style and usage labels used in the dictionary

ABBREVIATION	a shortened form of a word
APPROVING	praising someone or something
AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH	
CANADIAN ENGLISH	
CHILD'S WORD/EXPRESSION	used by children
DATED	used in the recent past and often still used by older people
DISAPPROVING	used to express dislike or disagreement with someone or something
EAST AFRICAN ENGLISH	
FEMALE	
FIGURATIVE	used to express not the basic meaning of a word, but an imaginative one
FORMAL	used in serious or official language or when trying to impress other people
HUMOROUS	used when you are trying to be funny
INFORMAL	used in ordinary speech (and writing) and not suitable for formal situations
IRISH ENGLISH	
LEGAL	specialized language used in legal documents and in law courts
LITERARY	formal and descriptive language used in literature
MALE	
NORTHERN ENGLISH	used in the North of England
NOT STANDARD	commonly used but not following the rules of grammar
OFFENSIVE	very rude and likely to offend people
OLD-FASHIONED	not used in modern English – you might find these words in books, used by older people, or used in order to be funny
OLD USE	used a long time ago in other centuries
POLITE WORD/EXPRESSION	a polite way of referring to something that has other ruder names
SAYING	a common phrase or sentence that gives advice, an opinion, etc.
SCOTTISH ENGLISH	
SLANG	extremely informal language, used mainly by a particular group, especially young people
SPECIALIZED	used only by people in a particular subject such as doctors or scientists
TRADEMARK	the official name of a product
UK	British English
US	American English
WRITTEN ABBREVIATION	a shortened form of a word used in writing
E	Essential: the most common and useful words in English
I	Improver: the next level of words to learn to improve your English
A	Advanced: words to make your English really fluent and natural

Fig. 5. Style labels in CALD (2008)
Source: Cambridge Advanced Learner`s Dictionary, 2008.

Generally speaking, one feels justified in saying that for the foreign learner the *CALD* account of stylistic values seems to be rather inconsistent. Given all the style and register labels definitions mixed, learners may not be made aware of linguistic blunders. What is more, the inclusion of such stylistic labels as *dated*, defined in the following way: „[...] used in the recent past and often still used by older people" (*CALD*, 2008). may in fact sound somewhat ambiguous for the category of *EFL* learners. Or, to give other examples, if one is told that *old-fashioned* is to be understood as a word that is „[...] not used in modern English – you might find these words in books, used by older people, or used in order to be funny" (*CALD*, 2008), it seems odd to see *old-use* explained as: „[...] used a long time ago in other centuries" (*CALD*, 2008).

Conclusion

One is led to believe that in order to indicate that language use depends on the pragmatic context of discourse, as well as the social relation between the discourse partners, all the *EFL* dictionaries under scrutiny should modify their labels by providing a clear division between style and register parameters. The situation seems to signal the problem of the reference point from which the levels are judged and described. If one, for example, takes as his reference point the relaxed conversational style with his family, his judgment on formal language use will differ considerably from someone who takes the English of television news. What is more, native speakers of a language often disagree when they discuss attitudes towards language use. This may be a consequence of the universalised difference of the reference bases. It is largely due to the fact that the description of a particular use of a word depends on the discourse situation as well as the relation between the discourse patterns. However, one feels that a more complex treatment of dialect diversity should be attempted, as the tendency to include the dialect labels in the category of style and usage labels seems to be entirely without foundation.

Subsequently, yet another question that arises at this point is the fluctuating number of stylistic labels employed in various lexicographic works. Assuming that *EFL* teachers should not encourage the use of non-standard English, a reasonable solution would be to employ the two major terms on the formality scale (providing that the reference point is the unmarked neutral level).

However, although one may formulate a general rule that the English language tends to be shifting towards a more informal style, the informal style is not always appropriate to a given communicative situation. Consequently, *EFL* students still need thorough instruction in formal language use, or at any rate neutral usage that is not informal. This seems to hold particularly true at higher levels of foreign language mastery. Let us point to the fact that the discussion proposed in the preceding raised some doubts as to *EFL* dictionaries' reliability as a tool in recognizing style/register of the individual elements that make up the English lexicon.

References

Adrian-Vallence, E. (Ed). (2005). *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* London: Pearson Education Limited.

Baker, C., & Prys Jones, S. (2011) *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education.* Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Goetz, P.W. (Ed.). (2008). *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Hands, P. (Ed.). *Collins Cobuild Advanced Dictionary*. 6th edition (2009). New York: Harper Collins.

Hartmann, R.R.K., & James, G. (1998). *Dictionary of Lexicography.* London: Routledge.

Hornby A. (Ed.). (2005). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richards, J. C., & Smith, R. (2002). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics.* London/New York: Pearson Education.

Simpson, J.A., & Weiner, E.C.S. (1989). *Oxford English Dictionary* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Baugh A.C., & Cable T. (1993). *A History of the English Language*. London: Routledge.
Bluestein, G. (1998). *Anglish/Yinglish: Yiddish in American Life and Literature.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
Crystal, D. (2006). *How Language Works.* London: Penguin Books.
Freeborn, D. (1986). *Varieties of English: An Introduction to the Study of Language*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
Friedrich, P. (1989). Language, ideology and political economy. *Am. Anthropol. 91(2).* 259-312.
Hughes, A., Trudgill, P., & Watt, D. (2005) *English Accents and Dialects: An Introduction to Social and Regional Varieties of English in the British Isles.* London: Hodder Arnold.
Kachru, B.B. (1993). American English and other Englishes. *Landmarks of American Language and Linguistics, 2,* 127-146.
Kleparski, G. A., Martynuska, M., & Dziama, A. (2010). *The Highlights of Anglo-Saxon Culture and Language. A College and University Guide.* Rzeszów: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego.
Kortmann, B. (2005). *English Linguistic: Essentials – Anglistitik – Amerikanistik.* Berlin: Cornelsen Verlag.
McArthur, T. (1992). *The Oxford Companion to the English Language.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Milroy, J., & L. Milroy (1992). *Authority in Language: Investigating Language Prescribtion and Standardisation.* London: Routledge.
Pêcheux, M. (1982). *Language, Semantics and Ideology.* London: Macmillan.
Rumsay, A. (1990). Wording, meaning and linguistic ideology. *American anthropologist, 92,*346-361.
Schieffelin, B. B. (Ed.) (1998). *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Silverstain, M. (1987). Monoglot 'standard' in America: Standarization and metaphors of linguistic hegemony. [In:] D. Brennies, & R. K.S. Macaulay (Eds.), *The Matrix of Language: Contemporary Linguistic Anthropology* (pp.284-306). Boulder, Colorado: Westwiev Press.
Silverstain, M. (1979). Language structure and linguistic ideology. In: R. Clyne, W. Hanks, & C. Hofbauer. *The Elements: A Parasession on Linguistic Units and Levels* (pp. 193-274). Chicago: Chicago Linguist Soc.
Smolinski F., (1993). *Landmarks of American Language and Linguistics*, vol.1, Materials Development and Review Branch English Language Programs Division United States Information Agency: Washington, D.C.
Štekauer, P. **(**1993). *Essentials of English Linguistics.* Presov: Slovacontact.
Thompson, J.B. (1984). *Studies in the Theory of Ideology.* Cambridge: Polity.
Walter, E. (Ed.). (2008). *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. 3rd edition Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Włodarczyk-Stachurska, A. (2010) *On sociolinguistic variation: the case of English women terms*. Radom: Wydawnictwo Politechniki Radomskiej.
Włodarczyk-Stachurska, A. (2012). Sociolinguistic stratification in EFL lexicography. [In:] P. Łozowski, & A. Włodarczyk-Stachurska, A. (Eds.), *Words in Contexts: From Linguistic Forms to Literary Functions*. (pp.161-176.) Radom: Wydawnictwo Politechniki Radomskiej.
Woolard, K., A., & Schieffelin, B., B. (1994). Language Ideology. *Annual Reviews. 24,* 55-82.