

As early as 1967 Whitney Bolton and I were compiling a 'Dictionary of English-speaking peoples' for Cassell's – a project which began by making contacts with lexicographers (or, at least, lexicographically minded linguists) working in each of the newly independent nations (as well as the long-established ones). A country's biogeographical uniqueness will generate potentially large numbers of words for animals, fish, birds, insects, plants, trees, rocks, rivers and so on – as well as all the issues to do with land management and interpretation, which is an especially important feature of the lifestyle of many indigenous peoples. The scale of the 145 ENGLISH AS A GLOBAL LANGUAGE Most adaptation in a New English relates to vocabulary, in the form of new words (borrowings – from several hundred languages sources, in such areas as Nigeria), word-formations, word-meanings, collocations and idiomatic phrases. The country's mythology and religion, and practices in astronomy and astrology, will bring forth new names for personalities, beliefs and rituals. The country's oral and perhaps also written literature will give rise to distinctive names in sagas, poems, oratory and folktales. Virtually any aspect of social structure can generate complex naming systems – local government, family relationships, clubs and societies, and so on. Nobody has ever worked out just how much of a culture is community-specific in this way; but it must be a very significant amount. The project was cancelled after a year, leaving only the headword-lists (now long since superseded by other publications from the regional editors, such as Avis, et al. (1967)), a report to the publishers, and a paper to the Oxford Linguistic Circle as its epitaph. The whole world of leisure and the arts will have a linguistic dimension – names of dances, musical styles, games, sports – as will distinctiveness in body appearance (such as hair styles, tattoos, decoration). So, when a community adopts a new language, and starts to use it in relation to all areas of life, there is inevitably going to be a great deal of lexical creation. The project soon became much greater than anyone had expected, and, as costs mounted, publisher enthusiasm waned. We received initial headword-lists from several contributors, some of which already contained several thousand items. There are many cultural domains likely to motivate new words, as speakers find themselves adapting the language to meet fresh communicative needs. The culture will have its technology with its own terms – such as for vehicles, house-building, weapons, clothing, ornaments and musical instruments. Some studies are beginning to provide semantically based classifications of new lexicon, such as Dako (2001). It was evident that, even within a few years of independence, people were conscious of an emerging regional lexical identity. There will be words for foodstuffs, drinks, medicines, drugs, and the practices associated with healing, health-care, disease and death. There will be a body of local laws and customs, with their own terminology.