

Re: So it is true...

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2005-12/msg00288.html>

- *From:* "Seán O'Leathlóbhair" <jwlawler@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 4 Dec 2005 05:35:01 -0800
-

Peter T. Daniels wrote:

> Seán O'Leathlóbhair wrote:

>>

>> Peter T. Daniels wrote:

>>> Seán O'Leathlóbhair wrote:

>

>>>> There is now a Scottish Parliament with a moderate amount of power and

>>>> a Welsh Assembly with rather less. I would guess that even the

>>>> Scottish Parliament has rather less power than one of your States. The

>>>> Northern Ireland Assembly is currently suspended. Oddly, there is no

>>>> government at this level in England. The next level above county is

>>>> the United Kingdom. So, today at least, England probably has a weaker

>>>> claim to nationhood than the others.

>>>

>>> So you're adopting the American usage!

>>

>> Not really since, as I mentioned above, the word nation is mostly used

>> in a sporting context. I think that the official term for these

>> governments is: regional assemblies. This is probably to dodge the

>> difficult question of whether they are nations.

>

> In Britain, perhaps the word "nation" is mostly used in a "sporting"

> context, but perhaps not elsewhere.

To make things a bit more precise, I only meant that referring to England, Wales etc as nations is primarily limited to sports. It is used for further away places. At a guess, the usage here is similar to that in the US.

>>>> If you are offered British citizenship then you will need to swear an

>>>> oath of allegiance

>>>

>>> to the Monarch, right? not to the State?

>>

>> Why the capital S?

>

> Parallelism with Monarch.

So why the capital M? I would not use that either. I would regard the

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word "monarch" as the name of a job or role and no more deserving of a capital than doctor, teacher, garbage man etc. Despite being a "subject of Her Majesty", I don't support it and don't dignify it any more than I have to.

>> Yes but the monarch represents the state so it is not a significant
>> distinction. There are often debates on how rich the queen is. A
>> significant issue is what she owns personally and what belongs to the
>> job. Does she own Buckingham Palace? Could she sell it? Similarly,
>> the difference, if any, between an oath to the queen and the state is
>> debatable. Of course some see a difference, most notably NI
>> politicians who object to British rule.
>
> AIUI, the Queen has subjects while the rest of the world has citizens.

Yet my British passport refers to me as a citizen.

>>>>> The sense that I meant was an area under a particular government. Here
>>>>> is the first definition from the Cambridge Online Dictionary.
>>>>>
>>>>> 1 [C] a country, especially when thought of as a large group of people
>>>>> living in one area with their own government, language, traditions,
>>>>> etc:
>
>>>>> 2 [S] a large group of people of the same race who share the same
>>>>> language, traditions and history, but who might not all live in one
>>>>> area: the Navajo nation
>>>>>
>>>>> What are [C] and [S] introducing these definitions?
>>>>>
>>>>> (And what does Cambridge think "race" means?)
>>>>>
>>>>> I cannot speak for Cambridge but it is an online dictionary so you
>>>>> could have a look yourself.
>>>>
>>> As you should know by now, I don't click links, because when I do,
>>> either it takes a very long time for the website to resolve itself and
>>> then it doesn't have anything useful anyway, or else it all goes blooey
>>> right away. (Publishers' websites tend to be particularly picky.)
>>
>> Well, I don't do research for others if it is very easy for them to do
>> it themselves. I could copy and paste the dictionary's definition for
>> race but since it would be so easy for you to follow the link and see
>
> I just explained that it isn't easy.

You are an enthusiastic user of some internet functions so your reluctance to use the web is surprising. Young children find it easy. Many older people don't but you are the first I have encountered that is happy to use some internet functions but not the web. The converse, happy to use the web only, is common.

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> Why won't you tell me what [C] and [S] mean?

In my first reply after that question, I just missed it. Later, when I noticed it, I did not answer since I did not know the answer and did not have the time to check. I have now tried and unfortunately I could not, in a reasonable time, find the answer. Maybe they are hoping that we will go and buy the hard copy. Nouns are usually followed by [C] or [U] or both. It seems likely that they indicate countable and uncountable. [S] seems rarer and I cannot guess its possible meaning. Here for example, is one of the entries for race.

race (PEOPLE) Show phonetics

noun [C or U]

a group, especially of people, with particular similar physical characteristics, who are considered as belonging to the same type, or the fact of belonging to such a group:

People of many different races were living side by side.

Discrimination on grounds of race will not be tolerated.

An increasing number of people in the country are of mixed race (= with parents of different races).

>> it for yourself, I won't. If you don't like following links, try a
>> good bookshop or library, you should be able to find the real thing.
>
> Erm, no, it's not likely that any British dictionary, let alone
> "Learners'" ones, would be available in an American bookstore _or_
> library; who would buy or consult them?

Fair point on the bookshops. I have been in a few American bookshops and I was disappointed by them. Once, with some time to kill in a small city, I decided to buy an American dictionary. I could find only one bookshop in the downtown area and it only had pocket dictionaries. I wanted something of at least the size and seriousness of the Concise Oxford. Back here in the UK, a city of that size would probably have multiple bookshops and plenty of choice of dictionaries. I thought that you lived in, or at least often visited, New York, I would have guessed that it would have some good bookshops and that some of them would stock a few British dictionaries. My copy of the Oxford Learner's dictionary was bought in Bangkok while I lived there.

I have never been in a US public library, would not even the better ones have any British dictionaries? A decent sized library here would probably have some American dictionaries. Also, I had expected that you would have access to some university libraries and that they may have a good selection.

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> Peter T. Daniels grammatim@xxxxxxx

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Re: So it is true...

Seán O'Leathlóbhair

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- *References:*
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 - ◆ **[Re: So it is true...](#)**
 - ◇ *From:* Wiktor S.
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