

A Little Book of Arsehole English

How did we do? (on prescription bags at *Boots*) Why the question?

Park For Free (notice at Chatsworth Park) = Free Parking

Enforcement of Anti Social Behaviour (Police advertisement on bike safety) Presumably the police meant the exact opposite of what this says.

Delivering Transportation Solutions (slogan on side of lorry) The ultimate in Americanised pomposity

Due To Relocation We Have Moved (sign on shop window)

The Emperor of Japan and his concert (*The Times*) The concert was his wife.

Haden Meats (sign on a van seen recently) Presumably Messrs Haden's are butchers. What is *a meat*? Can one eat *a meat*? Or is this a type of meat?

Only list people who are resident the majority of time (entry in the last general census) How can there be a *majority* of time? One might as well say "Only list people who are resident the majority of space."

TICKET MACHINE IS ON THE CORRIDOR (notice in the Hallamshire Hospital) This is "Babu English"—the English of the Indian subcontinent. It is grammatically parallel with "Tea is in the morning-room", but "Ticket machine" is not a quantity, like "tea".

Take a browse around the stallholders (from *Peak Rail—Visitor Guide & Timetable—2010*) The writer doesn't know what "to browse" means, confusing it with "to stroll". "Browsing" is what cattle do when they eat leaves. In any case, why should one either browse or stroll around the stall-holders? Besides which, "to *take a browse around . . .*" is American English, which hardly befits a piece to do with preserved traditional British transport.

He is qualified to teach only children (*The Times*, 23/9/09) What manner of qualification would this be?

Spell check This is pure pidgin English. The phenomenon is called "spelling" and what checks it would be a "checker". One might as well call a trigger a "trig".

Cookbook This implies either that the book is about cooks or that it is some sort of food ingredient.

Swimsuit This implies that the garments in question are some kind of aid to swimming. Again, the word "suit" implies the presence of at least two articles.

Americans cannot understand the -ing form of: swimming costume, rowing boat, rocking chair, *etc*, confusing it with the present participle.

Keep your eye out This implies that one must hang one's eye out of its socket. A confounding of two expressions: to "keep an eye open" and "to keep a look out for".

Aye' Crumb' Bar This is the title over a local baker's. When asked what it meant, the shop assistant said that it was Spanish and that it was on T.V. When asked what the apostrophes stood for, she repeated that it was on T.V. and that no-one else has asked about it.

Our troops on the front line in Afghanistan Frequently seen in the newspapers. This makes the front line sound like a washing line; *cf.* the second-world-war song "We're going to hang out our washing on the Siegfried Line".

Our troops on the front This makes it sound like the prom. at the seaside. What the journalists mean, though they don't know it, is "at the front".

Michael Wallerstein

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