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Setting the record straight

An in-depth examination of Hobson-Jobson

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Published in:
International Journal of Lexicography

DOI:
[10.1093/ijl/ecy010](https://doi.org/10.1093/ijl/ecy010)

Published: 01/12/2018

Document Version
Early version, also known as pre-print

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Lambert, J. (2018). Setting the record straight: An in-depth examination of *Hobson-Jobson*. *International Journal of Lexicography*, 31(4), 485-506. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ijl/ecy010>

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Article in *International Journal of Lexicography* · May 2018

DOI: 10.1093/ijl/icy010

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SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: AN IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION OF *HOBSON-JOBSON*

Abstract

Yule and Burnell's famous Anglo-Indian glossary *Hobson-Jobson* was first published in 1886 and thence updated by William Crooke in 1903. It is still widely available today, and despite the fact that its contents are over a century out of date, it is still used as a reference work for Indian English. Since its publication it has generally received positive reviews and very little in the way of critical comment or analysis of the text. Moreover, the literature on *Hobson-Jobson* is beset by inaccurate statements or is otherwise couched in hedges due to a lack of precise knowledge about the dictionary's contents. This paper provides an overview of the critical attention *Hobson-Jobson* has received, summarises the editing and printing history, and then presents a wholly new analysis of the dictionary, bringing to light many previously unknown facts.

1. Introduction

The most recognised and lauded dictionary of Indian English today is Yule and Burnell's *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Anglo-Indian Colloquial Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms; Etymological, Historical, Geographical and Discursive*, first published in 1886 and updated by William Crooke in 1903. *Hobson-Jobson* achieved an 'iconic position' in the lexicographical tradition of Indian English (Bolton and Kachru 2007: xix), being considered 'already an Anglo-Indian classic' just a year after publication (Birdwood 1887: 166). Unlike other colonial-era Indian English dictionaries (e.g. Wilson 1855; Whitworth 1885), *Hobson-Jobson* is still widely available. A search on the AddAll website (accessed 13 Mar 2018) listed over 320 second-hand copies of the second edition for sale. New copies continue to be printed and electronic versions are readily available. In this way, *Hobson-Jobson* acts both as a historical and a current dictionary: it still is a dictionary that many people, including scholars, turn to in order to find out information about Indian English lexis.

However, despite the importance of *Hobson-Jobson* as a dictionary of Indian English, there has been very little critical analysis of the dictionary. This paper gives an overview of such commentary it has received, minimal as it is, and highlights a number of inaccuracies that appear to adhere to the dictionary with worrying regularity. This is followed by a summary of the editing and printing history and an analysis of the contents. The analysis concentrates on the lexicography of *Hobson-Jobson*, especially the scope and focus of the coverage and how useful the dictionary is as a lexicographical source today. This is of relevance to scholars of Indian English, the British Empire, British India, etc. At the same time, it is hoped that the close qualitative and quantitative examination will provide

metalexigraphers a model of analysis that may be profitably applied to other dictionaries.

The analysis is restricted to the 1903 edition as it is the most up-to-date and most widely available. For the sake of clarity, headwords, when quoted, are set in **bold sans serif** typeface. The term *Bibliography* (capitalised and italicised) refers to the front matter section entitled ‘List of fuller titles of books quoted in the glossary’ (1903: xxvii–xlvii), and the term *Index* (capitalised and italicised) refers to the index of ‘the words occurring in the quotations’ (987–1021). The semantic field classification section uses SMALL CAPITALS for the names of subject/topic areas.

2. The critical tradition

Commentary on *Hobson-Jobson* is generally cursory in nature and often involves inaccuracies. The common format employed is to praise the work, quote examples from the text, give accounts of the authors, and reiterate Yule and Burnell’s (incomplete and partly misleading) explanation of the enigmatic title. The following are examples of the typical unmitigated praise *Hobson-Jobson* has received: ‘a delightful collection of old-world information’ (Birdwood 1887: 148), ‘extremely entertaining, [...] comprehensive and well-documented’ (Partridge 1950: 283), ‘a master-work of mellow, witty and leisurely scholarship’ (Lewis 1991: 4), ‘unique in style, erudition, and, above all, readability’ (Hankin 2003: 201); ‘[o]ne of the most fascinating documents in English literary and linguistic history’ (Lerer 2007: 259), ‘a book that anyone seriously interested in Indian languages owns’ (Shapiro 1989: 474). Salman Rushdie extolled it as ‘the legendary dictionary of British India’ (1985: 81) while Kachru labelled it ‘monumental’ (1973: 359). In the four-volume supplement to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (hereafter, *OED*), its editor, Burchfield, supplied a separate subdefinition stating that *Hobson-Jobson* was ‘[u]sed as the title of a famous collection of Anglo-Indian words’ (1976: 112). Thus, along with the *Bible* and the *Koran*, *Hobson-Jobson*, the book, has been elevated to the special status of being defined in the *OED*. Indeed, some writers even use the term ‘the *Hobson-Jobson*’ (see Lambert 2014b).

Counterpoints to this praise are less easy to come by. Lewis (as we shall see, inaccurately) draws attention to the fact that *Hobson-Jobson* is ‘sadly lacking [...] in references to the words arising from interest in the main religions of India’ (1991: 4). Shapiro states that the transcriptions of etymons are ‘either charming or amusing’, but does not provide details, and on the whole praises the dictionary for its factual reliability and for being ‘wonderful to read’ (1989: 474). Rushdie oxymoronically notes that *Hobson-Jobson* ‘can be wonderfully imprecise at times’ (1985: 82). Such criticisms are superficial in nature and appear as asides in what are otherwise unabashed encomiums. More serious critiques do exist, such as Görlach (1994) who notes that ‘the two compilers collected rare and often dubious words, many of which were probably little known and whose status as *English* was doubtful even in the 19th century’ (49; emphasis in original). But, this information is relegated to a

footnote, and no examples of dubiously English words are provided. Nagle (2010) and Lambert (2014b) have revealed that the famous title of the dictionary is derogatory at base and that its selection by Yule and Burnell was more pointed than the much-repeated explanation they present in the dictionary front matter, but, these adverse evaluations are restricted to the title alone. Nagle (2014) details the *OED*'s indebtedness to Yule, but generally avoids explicit appraisal of *Hobson-Jobson*. Other critiques have not focussed on the lexicography but rather have situated *Hobson-Jobson* within a larger postcolonialist critique of the British imperial project (e.g. Majeed 2006; Lambert 2009; Anand 2011; see also Teltscher 2011: 45).

Significantly, many inaccurate statements have been made about the dictionary. Some scholars connect *Hobson-Jobson* with the process of language standardisation. Mencken calls *Hobson-Jobson* 'a standard dictionary of Anglo-Indian terms' (1919: 41), as does Shah (1977: 219), while Joshi (2002) claims that *Hobson-Jobson* 'standardized and legitimated a bastard, hybrid, colloquial English' (255; emphasis in original). Contrary to this, others claim that *Hobson-Jobson* is primarily a dictionary of colloquialisms (Lerer 2007: 259, Shah 1998: 316). Winchester (2003) describes *Hobson-Jobson* as 'an endlessly fascinating collection of Hindustani terms' (211), rather than English words, while Baharloo (2009) claims that 'the authors have arranged each word alphabetically according to its commonest pronunciation by the Anglo-Indians of the late nineteenth century, followed by other versions when applicable' (99), and then criticises the authors because 'they did not use any of the Hindi, Urdu or Persian dictionaries available at the time, which would have enriched the work' (99). As we shall see, all of these statements are of limited verity.

When not inaccurate, much commentary on the contents of *Hobson-Jobson* is couched in hedges or relies on speculative estimates in the absence of exact information. For example, Dolezal comments that 'names of flora and fauna and customs constitute much of what we find' (2006: 701, emphasis added), and Mills states that 'the latest book which they consulted appears to be *Fankwae* published in 1881' (Mills 1975: 148, emphasis added). Such hedging is necessitated by the lack of in-depth knowledge of the contents, which also gives free rein to the scripting of unsubstantiated factoids concerning the book. Franks (2008: 105) contends that *Hobson-Jobson* 'explains about 6000 words', a figure he takes from the introduction of Chaudhuri (1994) in the front matter of the Linguasia facsimile reprint. But, Chaudhuri's figure is merely 'a rough count' (1994: xiv) based on his estimate of the number of terms in the *Index*. Crooke's *Index*, however, lists headwords and all variant forms found in citations, and so is not equivalent to lexis covered. The following analysis will allow future critical commentary, both academic and popular, to move away from speculation, guesstimation, hedging, generalisation, and erroneous statements.

3. Publishing history and authorship

Before moving onto the content of *Hobson-Jobson*, an explication of the publication history is necessary since this has clearly challenged many commentators. For example, there is some confusion regarding whether the twentieth-century printings are reproductions of the 1886 or 1903 edition (e.g. Kochanek 1974: 136; Sedlatschek 2009; Mallampali 2011: 36). Yet, the 1886 edition has never been reprinted. Others have misdated the first edition to 1882 (John 2007: 7) or referred to a non-existent ‘third’ edition (Lewis 1991: 41). Majeed (2006: 9) incorrectly assumes that the title of the 1996 reprint, *Hobson-Jobson: The Anglo-Indian Dictionary*, is the title of the original work, while Singh (2002) claims the dictionary is by ‘Yule and Brunell’ (269; emphasis added), an error compounded in his reference list (273). Almost unbelievably, some authors have formed the erroneous conception that ‘Hobson-Jobson’ is actually the double-barrelled surname of the dictionary’s editor (Arata 1996: 221; Shah and Sinroja 2006: 119; Deefholts and Deefholts 2010: 228).

To set the publishing record straight, *Hobson-Jobson* was first published by John Murray, London, in 1886. This was followed by a second ‘new’ edition in 1903 from the same publisher with additional text from a new editor. The new edition was not titled a ‘second edition,’ though it is reasonable to refer to it in that way. The first edition had a print run of 1000 copies and sold for 36 shillings (Teltscher 2013b: xxxiii). The original editors were Henry Yule (1820–1889) and A[rthur] C[oke] Burnell (1840–1882), and for the second edition, William Crooke (1848–1923). As Burnell had passed on in 1882, the task of collating and editing the material into book form fell to Yule. Crooke’s additions to the original 1886 text appear in square brackets [], though other silent changes were made by Crooke to the 1886 text, some of which are substantial (e.g. the entry for **piece-goods** was completely restructured).

It is popularly believed that *Hobson-Jobson* has never been out of print (Yusof 1996: 10; Ellis 2012: 15; Gilchrist 2012: 39). To the contrary, the 1886 edition was out of print by 1900 and never reprinted, and the 1903 edition eventually sold out by 1940 (John Murray Archives 155–156), and so it was out of print for 28 years, before an edition (now rare) was published in 1960, impoverished by having all citations removed. Then in 1968 three facsimile reprints of the 1903 edition simultaneously appeared by publishers in London, New York, and Delhi. Further facsimiles of the 1903 edition have continued to appear. The following list summarises all facsimile reprintings to the end of 2017:

- 1960: Madras: Indian Universities Press. [hardcover; ‘edited’ by G.B.T. Kurian; all citations removed]
- 1968: Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal. [hardcover]
- 1968: New York: Humanities Press. [hardcover]
- 1968: London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. [hardcover]
- 1985: London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. [hardcover; foreword by Anthony

Burgess]

- 1986: Calcutta: Rupa & Co. [hardcover/softcover; the ‘Bengal Chamber Edition on the tercentenary of Calcutta’]
- 1994: Sittingbourne: Linguasia. [hardcover; preface by Nirad C. Chaudhuri]
- 1995: New Delhi: Asian Educational Services. [hardcover]
- 1995: Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press. [hardcover/softcover]
- 1996: London: Taylor and Francis. [hardcover/softcover]
- 1996: Ware: Wordsworth Reference. [softcover; retitled *Hobson-Jobson: The Anglo-Indian Dictionary*]
- 2005: Sittingbourne: Linguasia. [softcover; preface as 1994 edition]
- 2005: Pilgrims Publishing. [hardcover]
- 2006: New Delhi: Asian Educational Services. [hardcover; reprint of 1995 printing]
- 2011: Cambridge: Cambridge Library Collection. [softcover; 2 volumes]
- 2013: Oxford: Oxford University Press. [hardcover; abridged and retitled *Hobson-Jobson: The Definitive Glossary of British India*; introduction by Kate Teltscher]

This list omits print-on-demand books run off from electronic copies of the 1903 edition available on the Internet.

Technically, when quoting from the text there are only two ways to correctly reference the work: (a) Yule and Burnell (1886), or, (b) Yule, Burnell & Crooke (1903). If modern reprints are used, these may be referenced as Yule, Burnell & Crooke (1903/1995), but the second date is unnecessary since all later printings are ‘facsimiles’ and the text and page numbers are identical to the 1903 edition (with the exception of the 1960 Kurian edition and the 2013 Teltscher abridgement). Careful scholars wishing to accurately date information from the book should consult both editions (now freely available in electronic form) before assigning either 1886 or 1903 as a date, or adhere to 1903 to be on safe side.

4. Methodology

The content analysis of *Hobson-Jobson* is based on an extremely faithful HTML version of the 1903 edition. Mark-up coding was programmatically added to identify certain data types from others, for example, headwords and citations. In order to overcome inconsistencies in the data structure an iterative system of checking output and refining programs in response was instituted and the entire marked-up text was read closely in order to remove any remaining irregularities. Following this, coding was added to delineate multiple senses within entries and nested terms within entries; then part of speech labels were added for every sense, and each sense was classified according to semantic content/topic area based on the system used by Baumgardner, Kennedy and Shamin (1993). No categories were mutually exclusive.

Each semantic field label began with <CAT> and ended with </CAT>, in between which were placed category names separated by a vertical bar (|). For example, the definition for **Eed**, ‘[a] Mahomedan holy festival’ (336), was labelled with the following code: <CAT>religion|Islam|festival</CAT>. This allows programmatic tabulation of senses concerned with RELIGION, or ISLAM, or FESTIVALS, or any combination of these. All percentages given are rounded to one decimal place.

5. Results

It is crucial to note that Yule and Burnell were pioneers of historical lexicography and that their goals and methods differ from those of the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the numerous historical dictionaries which have since been written in the *OED* style (e.g. Craigie et al. 1931–2002, Lighter 1994–1997, Orsman 1997, Moore 2016, Green 2017), all of which are concerned with tracing the history of ‘English’ words. It appears to be little recognised that, in contrast to the *OED*, *Hobson-Jobson* treats the intersection over time of many different languages from both East and West. There is a danger that modern users of *Hobson-Jobson* may expect it to conform to the *OED* model because of the superficial similarity in style and layout (i.e. dictionary text accompanied by a chronological set of citations). In order to mitigate any possible misconstrual, the following sections highlight this fact where it is relevant.

5.1 Overall contents

Hobson-Jobson (1903) contains 2467 dictionary entries, of which 31 are merely cross-references to other entries. In addition, there are 1272 nested entries, plus an additional 43 terms resulting from the fact that some entries have multiple headwords. Thus there are 3751 lexical items covered in total. Taking into account polysemy, there are 4315 separate senses. Of these, 1021 terms are proper nouns. Thus 23.7% of the lexis covered consists of encyclopaedic material. There are 11,619 illustrative citations, though 419 entries (17.0%) do not have citations.

5.2. Parts of speech

In *Hobson-Jobson* (1903), nouns make up the bulk of the lexis covered. Table 1 displays the breakdown by grammatical class.

Table 1: Frequency of grammatical classes in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903)

Grammatical class	Quantity	Percentage
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common noun	3147	72.9%
proper noun	1021	23.7%
adjective	85	2.0%
verb	32	< 1%
transitive	25	
intransitive	7	
interjection	13	< 1%
phrase	12	< 1%
adverb	4	< 1%
suffix	1	< 1%
Total	4315	

Together, common and proper nouns account for 96.6% of total senses. Adjectives account for 2.0%, and all other categories account for less than 1% each. There are no prepositions, pronouns, prefixes, conjunctions, articles, or determiners treated in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903). This noun-heavy distribution of part-of-speech differs to that found in general dictionaries which attempt to record the core lexis of a language. My own analysis of other dictionaries reveals that a strong noun-bias is not uncommon for dictionaries that cover a subset of language (see for example Lambert 2014a: 276–477).

5.3 Headwords and variants

Entries in *Hobson-Jobson* begin with a headword, or a set of headwords (for 16% of entries). The headword field is defined as all text of an entry before the part of speech label. The additional lemmas in the headword field may be a variant spelling (e.g. **jagheer/jaghire**), an alternate name for the referent (e.g. **clearing nut/water filter nut**), or a related lexical item (e.g. **Ditch/Ditcher**).

In assembling the work Yule had to select a headword form for each entry. His stated intention was ‘to give the headings of the articles under the most usual of the popular, or, if you will, vulgar quasi-English spellings’ (Yule 1903: xxiii). Chaudhuri (1994) took Yule at his word, writing that headwords ‘are in the final form of phonetic evolution of each word’ (xiv). However, it is not clear how Yule determined ‘the most usual or popular’ form for the headword. A conventional method in historical lexicography is to follow the citations and use the most frequent and recent forms attested in the citation set. However, it does not appear that Yule was always guided by his own citations. A comparison of headwords against the citational evidence given for each word reveals that 52.5% of headwords (1359 of 2588) are not found in the adjoining citations. For example, the entry for **Mussulman**, ‘a Muslim’ (1903: 603–604), does not have that exact headword form in the citations, where instead are

recorded *Massoleymoen*, *Musulman*, *Mosleman*, *Mansulman*, and *Musslemen*, plus four more variants beginning with the letter ‘B.’ Similarly, the entry for **mutt**, **muth**, a type of convent, has neither of the headword forms in the citations, but instead *mut* and *math* (605). Neither does it appear that Yule employed an existing spelling system. In the colonial era there were two major competing orthographies for rendering words from Indian languages, the ‘Jones system,’ based on the spelling in the original language and requiring a substantial application of diacritics, and the ‘Gilchrist system,’ based on pronunciation and requiring less diacritics (see Wilson 1855: xii–xvii). *Hobson-Jobson* employs a Jones-like system for non-English words within entries (e.g. *Hindī*, *Hindū*), and a Gilchrist-like system for headwords (**Hindee**, **Hindoo**). But Yule does not adhere to the Gilchrist system very strictly (for example *Hindūstānī* should be rendered *Hindoostanee*, but the headword form in *Hobson-Jobson* is **Hindostanee** (1903: 417), a spelling which is also absent from the citations. At times there is consistency to Yule’s headword spelling (e.g. long-a /a:/ is rendered *au* except when word final, where it is rendered *a*), but there is also inconsistency (e.g. short-a /ʌ/ is sometimes rendered *a* and sometimes *u*). My analysis indicates the lack of any overarching systematicity.

From a modern perspective, a number of headwords are rendered in a now-outdated orthography which makes certain terms hard to locate (e.g. **Bancock**/Bangkok, **crease**/kris, **gooroo**/guru, **hadgee**/haji, **mussalla**/masala, **Oordoo**/Urdu). For some terms there is no *Index* entry that approaches the current spelling, making look-up difficult. Further, for a number of entries, many different and/or unrelated lexical items are grouped together. For example, the entry for **shoe of gold**, ‘ingots of precious metal, somewhat in the form of a Chinese shoe’ (830), has only one citation for the headword, but eight other citations for synonymous terms, including *cakes*, *loaves*, *boats*, *shoe money*, and the Dutch word *Goltschut* (literally, gold-shoe). How Yule decided which of these to make the headword remains unknown. A similar situation occurs at the entry for **bowly**, **bowry**, a step-well (108–109), where citation forms are *bowlee*, *boolee*, *bhoulie*, and *bhourie*. These might be reasonably placed under the one entry. However, the entry also has citations for *bāīn*, *vavidee*, *wāīn*, and *wāv*, which while etymologically cognate with the headword are not directly involved in the origin of the word *bowly/bowry*. Again, the *Index* does not cover all of these, making look-up impossible in some cases.

5.4 Citations

5.4.1 Description of citations.

Hobson-Jobson has been praised for its extensive use of illustrative quotations (Birdwood 1887: 148; Burgess 1985: viii; Chaudhuri 1994: xiv). However, prior to now, little was known about the number, size, or temporal distribution of the citations, nor the variety of sources utilised. Importantly, no assessment of the accuracy, and hence reliability, of the citations has been undertaken before. The citations are set in smaller font, start on a new indented line and are headed with a date. There are 11,619

illustrative citations in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903), with a total word count of 464,235 words, making up 58.8% of the entire text of the dictionary proper (that is, excluding front matter and *Index*). This word count includes the citation text as well as the date and source details.

5.4.2 Distribution and number of citations. Not all entries have supporting citations. There are 419 entries without any citations in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903), equal to 17.0% of all entries. Figure 1 shows the number of citations per entry for entries with 0–25 citations.

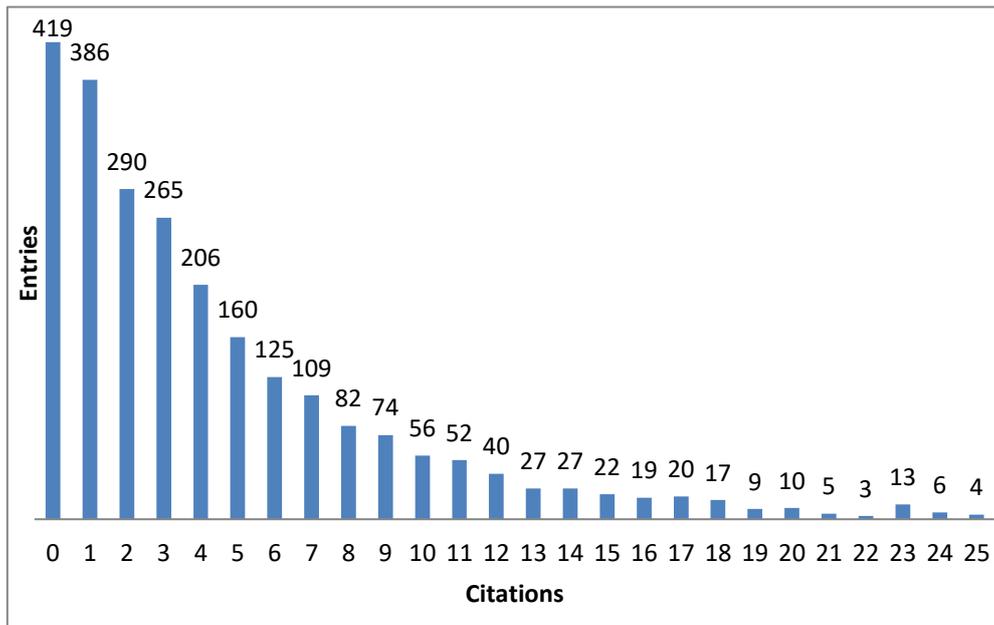


Figure 1: Number of citations per entry in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903)

There are 386 entries supported by a single citation (15.6% of total entries), a further 290 entries with only two citations (11.8%), and 265 entries with only three citations (10.1%). Thus, 55.1% of entries have three or fewer citations, including those with none. The citationless entries are spread relatively evenly throughout the alphabet and show no obvious bias towards the earlier or later pages of the dictionary.

At the other end of the spectrum, the entry with the most citations is **suttee**, with 50 citations. The entry for **pagoda** has 49 citations, but that entry covers two etymologically distinct terms (i.e. the temple structure and the coin). Entries with between 30 and 40 citations are **a muck**, i.e. amok; **palankeen**; **tea**; **sepoy**, an Indian soldier; **Gentoo**, an obsolete term for Hindu; **cooly**; **mort-de-chien**, cholera; **cowry**; **India/Indies**; **nabob**, a foreigner who made a fortune in India; **firinghee**, a foreigner; and **gallevat**, a kind of warship. These entries represent those terms that the editors devoted the most space to. Unlike present-day historical dictionaries, the number of citations in *Hobson-Jobson* is not an indication of how common a term was (e.g. the entry for **Himalaya** has only one citation, though it was clearly a common word in Anglo-Indian speech and writing), but is more an indication of how complex the

word’s history was or how interesting the editors found it.

Citations vary greatly in extent. The longest extract is in the entry for **tobacco** and runs to 455 words. The shortest citations are only a single word with abbreviated source information, for example, ‘1685. — “**Triquinimale...**”—*Ribeyro*, Fr. Tr. 6’ (1903: 939). Such citations are given to demonstrate a particular orthographical form occurring at a certain date.

In terms of distribution by years, there is minimal coverage up to the fifteenth-century, a distinct increase of coverage at the beginning of the sixteenth-century, peaking in the seventeenth century, dipping slightly in the eighteenth century, and rebounding in the nineteenth century. Figure 2 displays the distribution of citations in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903), omitting 11 undated citations and 37 citations from the twentieth century because these do not cover a full century (only from 1900–1902).

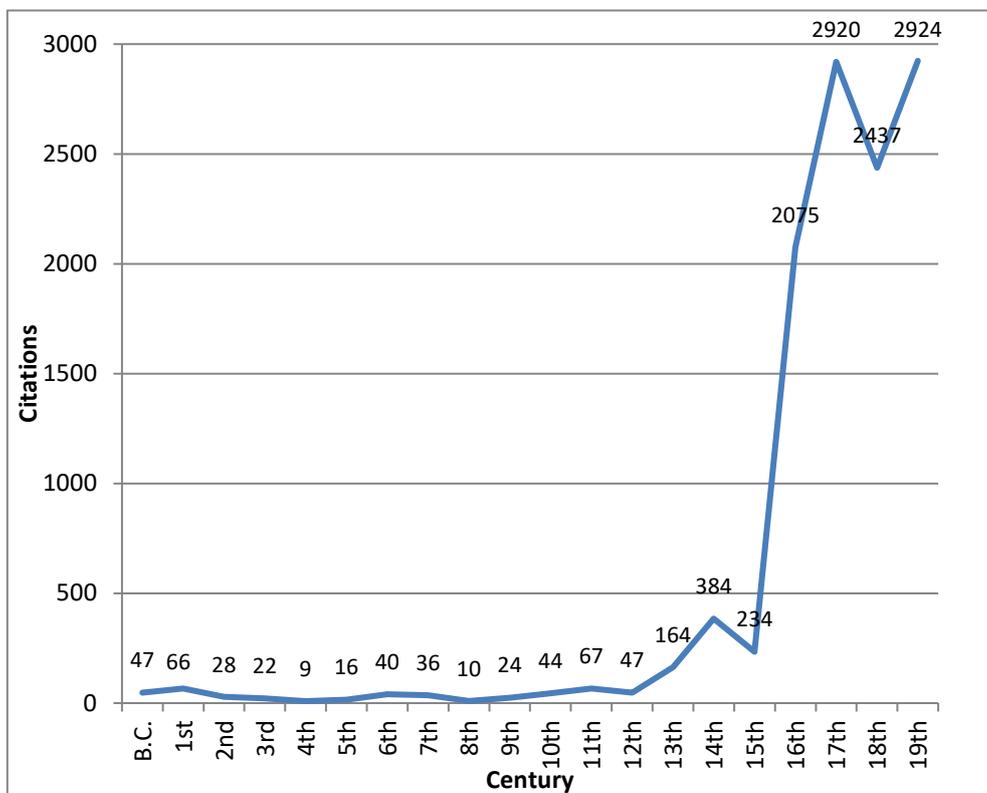


Figure 2: Citations by century in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903)

The overall distribution is partially a factor of the increase in available literary sources due to the expansion in publishing, but also the increase of trade/contact between Europe and the East. It is essential to recognise that the English did not enter India until the seventeenth century. Citations prior to 1600 are largely from Portuguese, Dutch, and Spanish sources, and citations prior to the 1500s are representative of East/West contact via the trade in goods.

5.4.3 Oldest and most recent citations. Detecting the oldest citation is challenging due to the problem of inaccurate dating of ancient texts by the editors. For example, a citation dated

'B.C. 692' is actually taken from Sayce (1885), while a quotation from Arrian's *Indica* is dated 'B.C. 325,' even though Arrian was born in the first century A.D. The oldest reliably dated citation is part of the Behistun inscription of Darius the Great (died 486 B.C.), which is given in transliterated Old Persian in the entry for **Aryan** (1903: 38). The latest citation is from April 1902, and occurs in the entry for **Hobson-Jobson** (1903: 420). It is the only citation from 1902, and was clearly added to the manuscript at a late stage, being only one of two examples of the dictionary's namesake actually discovered by Crooke. There are only 81 citations dated after 1886 (the date of the first edition). Of these, 36 are from the twentieth century.

5.4.4 The Bibliography. Full references for citation sources are given in the *Bibliography* (1903: xxvii–xlvii) and in the 'List of glossaries' used by the editors (xxiii–xxiv). The 1903 edition lists 812 works in the *Bibliography* and 30 works in the 'List of glossaries,' totalling to 842 texts. However, many titles are missing from the *Bibliography*. For example, Fraser's *Journey into Khorasan* is quoted in the entry for **martaban** (1903: 560), but that book is not in the *Bibliography*. Also missing from the *Bibliography* is a text variously referred to as extracts of a 'lately discovered' manuscript of *The Travels of Sir John Mandevill* (e.g. 1903: 33, 86, 595, 629). The text of these citations appears to be Middle English, but the citations are dated 1860. Apparently these extracts are from a mock medieval manuscript penned by Yule himself (Teltscher 2013a: xv). Perhaps these quotations arose from some in-joke of Yule's, but whatever the case the lexicographical worth of these citations is dubious. The *Bibliography* also fails to list many dictionaries of eastern languages referred to by the editors such as Badger (1881), Howison (1801), Jansz (1876), Jäschke (1881), Kowalewski (1844), Maffei (1883), Monier-Williams (1889), Redhouse (1880), Steingass (1882), Thompson (1846), Williams (1896), and Winslow (1862). Here I might add that contrary to the claim that the editors did not use available dictionaries of Hindi, Persian, etc. (Baharloo 2009: 99), in fact, throughout the discursive text of *Hobson-Jobson* there are references to 45 dictionaries of various non-European languages.

5.4.5 Frequency of cited texts. A paucity of early sources is revealed in the citational record. For example, of the 388 fourteenth-century citations, 119 are from Ibn Batuta (i.e. de Frémery and Sanguinetti 1853–58), 57 are from Yule (1866), 51 from Elliot (i.e. Dowson 1867–1877), and 23 from Friar Jordanus (i.e. Yule 1863). Thus, these four sources, two of which Yule wrote himself, account for over 64% of the citations for the fourteenth century. The fifteenth century, by comparison, has only 234 citations, over half of which come from five sources: Velho (1861) (39 citations), Major (1857) (36 citations), Kunstmann (1863) (22 citations), Purchas (1625) (20 citations), and de Lima Felner (1858–1864) (13 citations). This is best interpreted as a factor of the unavailability of relevant texts, rather than as a simple bias for

certain texts.

While Yule does refer to his own works, this is most likely because he was very familiar with the material they contained rather than for vanity’s sake, for although there are 169 citations quoting three of his works (Yule 1863, 1866 and 1871), Yule’s name is not mentioned in any of these citations. No citations were taken from any of Burnell’s works, except for three references to a reprint of an Italian letter from the sixteenth-century (i.e. Burnell 1881). Crooke made a few references to two of his monographs (1896a and 1896b) but did not take quotations from his own works.

The work which is most frequently cited in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903) is Fryer (1698), with 286 citations. In the *Bibliography*, the editors noted that ‘[n]o work has been more serviceable in the compilation of the Glossary’ (1903: xxxiv). In addition to citations, Fryer is referred to in the discursive text of entries a further 40 times. The 5 most frequently cited works in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903) are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: The 5 most frequent citation sources in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903)

Rank	Listed as	Citations	Editions used
1	<i>Fryer</i>	286	Fryer (1698)
2	<i>A. Hamilton</i>	202	Hamilton (1727; 1744)
3	<i>Correa</i>	136	de Lima Felner (1858–1864); Stanley (1869)
4	<i>Barros</i>	130	Barros (1778–1788)
5	<i>Valentijn</i>	125	Valentijn (1724–1726)

These 5 works account for 879 citations, equivalent to 7.6% of all citations. When we extend this calculation to the 20 most frequently cited works, almost a fifth of all citations (19.8%) are accounted for. The bulk of these 20 sources relate either to early European travellers to the East, or to the East India Company, and again reflect the nature of available relevant texts.

5.4.6 Language of citations. Previous assessments of *Hobson-Jobson* have not mentioned the fact that not all citations are in English. Table 3 provides the number of citations by language. The figure for English-language citations includes texts originally written in English, texts translated into English, and extracts that have been silently translated into English by Yule and Burnell (i.e. where there is no English-language original source). The figures are based on citations that are solely or substantially in a language other than English, and omit citations that contain only a handful of non-English words.

Table 3: Language of citations in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903)

Language	Citations	Percentage	Average length*
English	10315	88.8%	40.3
French	598	5.1%	41.5
Latin	282	2.4%	37.6
Portuguese	170	1.5%	38.6
Italian	138	1.2%	38.8
Ancient Greek	55	<1%	28.0
Spanish	31	<1%	26.2
Dutch	17	<1%	12.0
German	13	<1%	37.5

* Average length (in words) is rounded to one decimal place

English-language citations account for 88.8% of all citations. French-language citations account for 5.1%, and all other languages account for less than 3% each of overall citations. These figures are reflective of *Hobson-Jobson*'s goal of revealing the transmission of words from Eastern languages not just into English but also into other European languages. From a modern perspective, however, for 11.2% of citations in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903), the untranslated texts required a user to have sufficient knowledge of eight different non-English languages, and in the case of Ancient Greek, also a knowledge of the Greek alphabet. An exception are the 39 citations from the Portuguese classic *Os Lusíadas* of Luís Vaz de Camões which are given in the original Portuguese accompanied by a translation by Burton (1880).

Significantly, the citations in *Hobson-Jobson*, in both the 1886 and 1903 editions, are not completely reliable for a number of reasons. First, many citations are dated with a conjectured date of composition, rather than with the date of the edition used, and hence do not necessarily provide evidence of the exact citation form at that date. To be fair, Yule owns up to this in the introduction (1903: xxvi), but if a user has not read and absorbed this information, nothing in the dictionary proper indicates that the date assigned to a particular citation may be much earlier than the date the actual word first appeared in print. In contrast, modern historical dictionaries exclusively provide publication dates. Second, the use of both acknowledged and unacknowledged (silent) translations of non-English sources makes it difficult for users to determine if a certain term genuinely appeared in an English-language text. Third, omissions and inconsistencies in the *Bibliography* and the citation references add further uncertainty. For example, the entry for **bankshall**, a warehouse or office of a port authority, has the following citation from the chronicles of Gaspar Correa, a sixteenth-century Portuguese traveller to India:

1561.—“... in the **bengaçaes**, in which stand the goods ready for shipment.” —
Correa, Lendas, i. 2, 260. (Yule, Burnell & Crooke 1903: 61)

Because the target word is within a wholly English-language context, a user might mistakenly infer that an English-language text using the term *bengaçaes*, in this precise spelling, was published in 1561. However, to do so would be quite wrong. First, the text used by the editors was an edited version of the original manuscript, published in 1859. The date of 1561 has been assigned to it since that was the latest year Correa mentioned in the manuscript (see *Bibliography*: xxxi). Second, the original 1859 text is ‘e deu na terra nos “bengaçaes” em que estauão as fazendas que aquião de embarcar’ (de Lima Felner: I. ii. 620), that is, in Portuguese, not English. There never was an English-language text, either in 1561 or 1859. Yule and Burnell have silently provided a translation. A user who is suspicious of whether *bengaçaes* is actually English would need to confirm this by consulting the *Bibliography* and deducing that since the text was published in Lisbon it was presumably written in Portuguese. This method of presenting citational information means that individual citations cannot always be taken at face value, and each citation in *Hobson-Jobson* should be checked against the original source in order to ensure accuracy. Users familiar with present-day lexicographical practice will be used to citations being entirely reflective of the original orthography, punctuation, etc., of the source document (e.g. as they are in the *OED*, Moore 2016, Green 2017, etc.).

5.5 Pronunciations

There is very little pronunciation information in *Hobson-Jobson*, and what information is given is generally cursory in nature and often ambiguous. For some entries the headword spelling is meant to supply the pronunciation, as made explicit in the entry for **shooldarry**, a ‘small tent with steep sloping roof,’ where it is stated that the word ‘is habitually pronounced as we have indicated’ (1903: 831). However, the headword could reasonably indicate either /ʃu:l'dəri/ or /ʃu:l'dæri/, or, given that no stress is indicated, perhaps even /'ʃu:ldəri/. For over 95% of entries there is nothing to indicate pronunciation except the headword spelling. For common words, such as **banana** and **elephant**, this presents no problem, but as with **shooldarry** many headword forms suggests a number of plausible pronunciations. Stress is not given for polysyllabic words (e.g. **Doorsumund**, **kedgerree**, **sicleegur**, and **Siwalik**), and for words ending in a final ‘e’ it is unknown if the final vowel should be pronounced (e.g. **cerame**, **Melinde**, **Mone**). Additionally, for words spelled with the same vowel sequence, it is not clear if this indicates the same pronunciation (e.g. **cael** and **tael**).

Only 97 entries use diacritics for headword lemmata (e.g. **déwálé**), and only 20 entries make explicit reference to Anglo-Indian pronunciation, with two entries that do both. Thus only 115 of 2467 entries (4.7%) give any specific indication of pronunciation. Unfortunately,

the dictionary front matter does not indicate the meanings of the diacritics used, and users are left to their own devices to interpret how words such as **déwálé** should be pronounced.

5.6 Subject categories

The analysis of the domains of the senses covered in *Hobson-Jobson* gives an indication of the basis of the intersection of East and West (primarily trade and consequent administration of that enterprise) but to some extent also reveals the interests of the editors themselves and the dictionary's remit to cover the history of the lexis of Anglo-India. There is no ultimate right and wrong as to what to include and the editors were well aware of the eclectic nature of their selection:

Other divagations still from the original project will probably present themselves to those who turn over the pages of the work, in which we have been tempted to introduce sundry subjects which may seem hardly to come within the scope of such a glossary. (Yule 1903: xvii)

Nevertheless, certain themes are preeminent in the dictionary. Table 4 lists the most common subject categories.

Table 4: Most common primary subjects in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903)

Subject	Count	Percentage
People	876	20.3%
Place	766	17.8%
Flora and fauna	420	9.7%
Food	353	8.2%
Religion	255	5.9%
Currency	182	4.2%
Articles of use	178	4.1%
Cloth	178	4.1%
Building	175	4.1%
Military	147	3.4%
Commerce	133	3.1%
Transport	131	3.0%
Weights and measures	125	2.9%

The five most significant primary categories in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903) are PEOPLE (20.3% of total senses), PLACE (17.8%), FLORA AND FAUNA (9.7%), FOOD (8.2%), and RELIGION (5.9%). Together these account for 61.8% of all senses. No other primary category is over 5%.

Of the PEOPLE category, 486 senses classify people according to their OCCUPATION (11.3% of entire senses). Examples include **amah**, '[a] wet nurse' (1903: 17); **baboo**, 'a native clerk who writes English' (44); **bheesty**, 'the domestic [...] who supplies the family with water' (92); **Jack-Sepoy**, 'in former days a familiar style for the native soldier' (440); and **kittysol-boy**, '[a] servant who carried an umbrella over his master' (487). Included in this semantic field category is the subcategory LEADER, referring to any person having a position of authority, such as ruler, sovereign, king, queen, minister, commissioner, chief, headman, elder, etc., excepting for religious authorities who are categorised as HOLYMAN. The category LEADER occurs 119 times (2.8% of entire senses). Coupled with the 30 terms for HOLYMAN, this amounts to 149 senses (3.5% of entire senses, and 17% of the PEOPLE category). This focus on Indians and, to a lesser extent, British residents who held positions of authority is testimony to the hierarchical structure of both Indian and Anglo-Indian society.

Other common subcategories class people by communal group, such as 'caste', 'clan', 'class', 'community', 'race', 'tribe', and regionality. The numbers for each subcategory in descending numerical order with percentage of overall senses are: RACE 65 (1.5%), REGIONAL 59 (1.4%), and CASTE 45 (1.0%). The terms TRIBE, CLASS and SECT each account for less than 1% of overall senses. Together, communal groups account for 4.9% of total senses.

Reflective of a male-dominated society, there are only 48 senses relating to women (1.1% of total senses). These include **beebee**, a 'lady' (78); **daye, dhye**, a 'wet-nurse' (300); **ranee**, a 'Hindu queen' (757); and the slang term **spin**, an 'unmarried lady; popular abbreviation of "Spinster"' (859). Five terms for a 'Hindu dancing-girl' are recorded: **bayadère** (75); **cunchunee**, (280); **dancing-girl** (295); **deva-dāsī**, (307); and **nautch-girl**, (620). Another five terms refer to the practice of secluding women from public: **gosha**, 'an Anglo-Indian technicality, to indicate that a woman was secluded, and cannot appear in public' (390); **pardah**, 'a curtain screening women from the sight of men' (744); **gosha-nishīn** (390) and **parda-nishīn**, both meaning 'a woman of position who observes such rules of seclusion' (744); and **zenana**, 'the apartments of a house in which the women of the family are secluded' (981). In contrast, there are 438 male occupations listed (10% of total senses).

A less significant subcategory is for people of MIXED parentage, such as the Sri Lankan term **burgher**, 'any persons who claim to be of partly European descent' (130); **castee**, an obsolete Indo-Portuguese term for 'children born in India of Portuguese parents' (172); **Eurasian** (344); **half-caste** (410); and **mustee**, defined as 'a half-caste' (604). There are 12 senses in this category.

There are 255 senses that relate to RELIGION, 5.9% of total dictionary senses. These are

skewed towards the two principal religions, Islam and Hinduism. The proportion of senses for various religions is given in Figure 3.

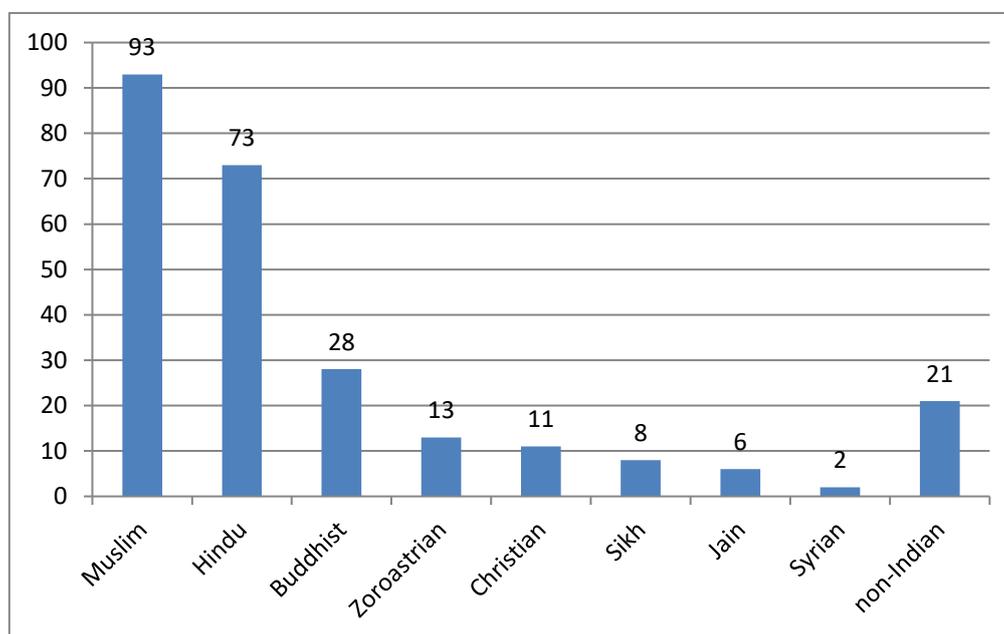


Figure 3: Senses relating to religions in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903)

There are 93 senses relating to Islam (36.4% of senses relating to religion, and 2.2% of total senses), and 73 senses relating to Hinduism (28.6% of religion senses and 1.7% of total senses). Together these two religions account for 65% of senses relating to religion, and 3.8% of total senses. Buddhism (28 senses, 11% of religion senses) has over twice the number of senses as Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Sikhism, Jainism, and the Syrian Church in southern India. Note that *Hobson-Jobson* does not record names of Hindu or other Indian gods and goddesses. Other common themes in the RELIGION senses include HOLYMAN (30 senses), all male, RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS (23 senses), and RELIGIOUS TEXTS (18 senses). There are 14 senses devoted to TEMPLES or other places of worship, and 14 for RELIGIOUS MONUMENTS.

Terms relating to FLORA AND FAUNA account for 9.7% of all senses defined. There are 252 senses relating to FAUNA, and 168 to FLORA. FAUNA consists principally of MAMMALS (108 senses), BIRDS (82 senses), FISH (26 senses), and REPTILES (20 senses). Of FLORA, TREES and PLANTS account for 170 of the senses (67.5% of FLORA). Only 19 senses are for CROP plants.

Terms relating to FOOD account for 8.2% of all senses in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903). The 353 FOOD senses consist principally of FRUIT (88 senses), DRINKS (77 senses), DRUGS (76 senses), DISHES (34 senses), SPICES AND CONDIMENTS (26 senses), and VEGETABLES (22 senses). A further 13 senses relate to SMOKING.

In terms of the overall coverage of lexis in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903), the content analysis reveals a number of subject areas with very few items recorded. These include HEALTH AND

MEDICINE (36 senses), MUSIC (8), of which 7 are musical instruments, and EDUCATION (1 sense). The significance of these low figures is highlighted when compared to the 150 senses for COINS and the 125 senses for various WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

5.7 Provenance of lexis

Despite the dictionary's title, not all the entries in *Hobson-Jobson* relate to Indian English lexis, or to words that can be classed as Indianisms. This feature of the dictionary is explained in the Introductory Remarks:

[A]s the work proceeded, its scope expanded somewhat, and its authors found it expedient to introduce and trace many words of Asiatic origin which have disappeared from colloquial use, or perhaps never entered it, but which occur in old writers on the East. (Yule 1903: xvii)

The compass of Yule and Burnell's interest coincides with early concepts of 'the Indies' and 'the East' and hence includes the Middle East, Russia, Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, China, Japan, South-East Asia, and extends as far east as the Philippines, Java, and even New Guinea. The editors were concerned with tracing the movement of linguistic entities along the trade routes between East and West. To this end, their criteria for inclusion were expansive. For example, they noted that the word **martingale**, a strap of a horse's harness, 'is no specially Anglo-Indian word' but it was included under 'the belief that it is of Arabic origin' (1903: 561). In order to assess the non-Indian material, the provenance of each sense was recorded. Table 5 illustrates the number of senses relating to each non-Indian region in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903).

Table 5: Senses for regions outside India in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903)

Region	Senses
China	134
SE Asia	119
Middle East (including Turkey and Persia)	78
Burma	77
Japan	25
Africa	24
Russia and Central Asia	21
Australasia (including New Guinea)	5
America	4
Others	42

Approximately one in eight (12.3%) senses in *Hobson-Jobson* relate to regions outside of India. These calculations include Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka within ‘India’ (Pakistan and Bangladesh did not exist as political entities in 1903). Burma could also be considered part of India as it was under British rule from 1885 to 1948. Adjusting the figures for the inclusion of Burma, the total of non-Indian senses is reduced to 452, 10.5% of total senses. No terms relating Korea were recorded. Of the Chinese material (3.1% of total senses), there are 27 Chinese Pidgin English terms, including **chin-chin**, a salutation; **chop**, a stamp or seal; **chop-chop**, a command for greater speed; and **joss**, an idol or god. The 24 African terms recorded in *Hobson-Jobson* all relate to places on the trade routes to the East.

5.7.1 Colloquial lexis. The subtitle of *Hobson-Jobson* (1903) is ‘A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases,’ which might be taken by modern readers to indicate a focus on ‘colloquial’ lexis in the sense of ‘informal’ or ‘slang’ vocabulary. On the contrary very little lexis recorded in *Hobson-Jobson* is informal. Rather, the subtitle uses ‘colloquial’ to mean the ordinary day-to-day conversation of Anglo-Indians. This can be seen in the entry for **rains**, defined as ‘common Anglo-Indian colloquial for the Indian rainy season’ (753, emphasis added), and the entry for **bandicoy**, a ‘colloquial name in S. India of the fruit of *Hibiscus esculentus*’ (59, emphasis added). In this sense, nearly all the Indian vocabulary of the dictionary can be classified as ‘colloquial,’ thus justifying the subtitle’s use of this word.

However, this does not mean that *Hobson-Jobson* is totally devoid of informal language. A total of 83 senses were categorised as INFORMAL (2.0% of total senses). Examples include, **anna**, one sixteenth of a rupee, ‘applied colloquially to persons of mixt parentage,’ for which the example that ‘[s]uch a one has at least 2 *annas* of dark blood’ is cited (1903: 32), and **jawaub**, ‘used for a lady’s refusal of an offer; whence the passive construction “*to be jawaub’d*”’ (456), that is, to have a marriage proposal rejected (for more on this lexis see Lambert 2018).

5.7.2 Non-English lexis. One little known, or at least little noted, fact about *Hobson-Jobson* is that not all headwords are terms borrowed into English. A total of 193 terms were categorised as NON-ENGLISH (4.5% of all senses). These are either (a) words in European languages, especially Portuguese, or, (b) a small number of English and Portuguese loanwords in Hindustani. The Portuguese words were included because of their importance in the accounts of early travellers to the East. Examples include **bengala**, a term ‘applied in Portuguese to a sort of cane carried in the army by sergeants’ (86), and **madrafaxao**, ‘the name of a gold coin of Guzerat’ appearing in ‘old Portuguese works’ (532). The Hindustani terms were presumably included to demonstrate that the flow of vocabulary in the multilingual language-

contact environment was two-way, from Indian languages to European languages but also from European languages to Indian languages. Of the 99 Hindustani terms in *Hobson-Jobson* (1903), 33 are words from the technical jargon of lascars, all of which can be found in Small, Smyth, & Roebuck (1882). Yule and Burnell (1903) refer to these terms variously as ‘sea Hindustani,’ ‘Lascar dialect,’ ‘Lascar’s Hind.,’ ‘marine Hind.,’ ‘nautical H.,’ ‘sea dialect,’ and ‘ship Hind.’ Examples include **bolta**, ‘a turn of rope,’ from Portuguese *volta* (1903: 102); **caxsen**, ‘a coxswain,’ from English *coxswain* (143); and **silmagoor**, ‘a sail-maker,’ from English *sail-maker* (837). Such nautical terminology may have been used by British sailors who worked with lascars, but no citations for these words are provided.

Other English words were borrowed into Hindustani by Indians working for the British as household servants (referred to as ‘domestic Hindustani’), or in the military (‘sepoys Hindustani’). Examples include **cartooce**, ‘a cartridge,’ from English *cartouche* (166); **durjun**, ‘a dozen,’ from English *dozen* (333); **ekteng**, ‘a substitute or fill-in,’ from English *acting* (337); and **kissmiss**, ‘Christmas,’ from English *Christmas* (486). As with the nautical Hindustani words, no citations of these Hindustani terms used in English contexts are given, presumably because the editors could find none. According to the language attitudes of the era such terms would not have been considered ‘legitimate’ words in either English or the indigenous Indian languages and thus they may have been avoided by Anglo-Indian writers (indeed, I could not locate any of them in my 40 million word corpus of Anglo-Indian English). The one exception to this is the term **simkin**, an adaptation of the word *champagne* (836), which appears to have been in common use amongst Anglo-Indians (see Green 2017).

5.7.3 Hobson-Jobsonisms. One final set of terms of interest are HOBSON-JOBSONISMS, that is, loanwords that have undergone phonetic assimilation through what is described as ‘striving after meaning’ (1903: 53, 93, 168, 191), a term introduced by Yule (1883: 297). There are 32 senses for such words (less than 1% of total senses), and thus despite the dictionary’s title, such terms account for a relatively insignificant part of the entire lexis covered. This figure includes terms that are referred to by the editors as instances of ‘Hobson-Jobson,’ such as **cow-itch** (268), **dumbcow** (330), **jackass copal** (444), **snow rupee** (849), **summerhead** (851), and **upper roger** (959), but also terms described as having arisen through, or been falsely etymologised through, ‘striving after meaning,’ such as **bilabundy** (93), **fool’s rack** (356), **lily-oak** (516) (see Lambert 2014b for more on this topic).

6. Conclusion

In the annals of lexicography, *Hobson-Jobson* (1903), much reprinted and widely available today, is a unique work. Its fame rests on its vast coverage, its abundance of arcane knowledge, and the Victorian-era enthusiasm that clearly motivated the work. To date there has been no detailed assessment of the contents of *Hobson-Jobson* and previous assertions

about the dictionary's contents have been unreliable. In order to set the record straight a comprehensive and exacting analysis of *Hobson-Jobson* (1903) was undertaken and it is hoped that future commentators will be able to use the quantitative information provided by the research profitably.

While not decrying the enormous achievement of Yule, Burnell, and Crooke, for *Hobson-Jobson* is indeed a truly magnificent work, and one of my personal favourites, some of the results of the analysis of *Hobson-Jobson* stand in contrast to the overwhelmingly positive appraisals that the dictionary has to date received. From a modern perspective, *Hobson-Jobson* needs to be used with care. As a consequence of the way in which citations are dated, coupled with the incomplete *Bibliography* and the fact that an unknown number of non-English quotations have been silently translated into English, the accuracy of individual citations should not be trusted outright. Pronunciation information in *Hobson-Jobson* is sporadic and inconsistent, being provided for less than 5% of headwords. Headword spelling is not a reliable indicator of pronunciation and although diacritics are used for some headwords, no explanation of their phonemic meaning is supplied. The method of selecting headword forms remains unknown but appears not to be wholly based on the orthographical forms in the citations nor to exactly match the major orthographical systems used in the Anglo-Indian era. Finally, some of the lexis is difficult to locate due to the dated orthography of headwords, the fact that many lexical items are nested within lengthy discursive entries, and the incomplete *Index*. So while *Hobson-Jobson* is a veritable treasure trove of scholarly knowledge, unless it can be independently verified, that knowledge is best used with caution. Further, while *Hobson-Jobson* was a pioneering work that had a great influence on the *OED* and hence modern-day historical lexicography, users today should bear in mind that unlike following historical dictionaries *Hobson-Jobson* was not solely concerned with tracing the English language.

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