

Deviation of English-A Subjective Study

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Abstract

This article explores the deviation of English from the Anglo-Saxon till the present time and possible reasons are speculated. Emphasis is made on the influence of internet on literature which this paper calls 'silicon literature', gave rise to new deviations in existing genres. In this work, language democracy is used to define the freedom to adapt language where the user became the creator. Words like e- words, truncations etc. are mentioned with examples.

The study done revealed that deviation is not a sudden appearance but it is an endless process that started in the beginning and would continue forever.

Key words: Norm, deviation, language, Englishes, silicon literature, # literature, language democracy

Introduction

The transformation of English in recent times is an interesting point to study. Though British colonization is one of the reasons for language mixing, globalization and internet connectivity changed English to 'Englishes' like Indian English, Australian English, American English and so on. Changes like writing /i/ for /I/ and even pronouncing silent letters as in the word 'often' are often seen in present usage. English is going through a phase where, whatever is spoken or used by most users would end up in the Oxford Dictionary the next year or the year after. Some people argue that the words, phrases are coined for the purpose of mere communication or expression which need not be bound by rules of English language. In this process, they are killing the essence of this ever demanding language. However, to safe guard the identity of English, or for the matter any language, there should be some rules that are to be agreed by majority of people for common communication and these rules must be followed in the semantic, phonological, stylistic and pragmatic aspects of a language. The Swedish linguist Ulf Teleman thinks that it is the norm -system that constitutes a community or group, and the most important norm- system in any society is the language.

But after reaching certain point of development, some common properties of language that form predispositions influence language evolution. During this process, the very definition of language for effective communication which deserves to evolve into a form of art is forgotten. The notion to attribute some property to the human cognitive faculty of language and providing an account of its external aspect are mutually exclusive. That means a change or drift in language is either a consequence of the structure of universal grammar or it has a basic function or

processing or the working of historical change or something else external to the system of language itself. These external factors are drastic changes which the society demands for effective communication. So, demarcation is seen between learning language for communication and language learning for its own sake. Cognitive revolution states that one should not study the sets of sounds or words or sentences or texts for their own sake but, rather study the system or the working of historical change and the cognitive capacity that underlines our ability. Thus the ability to use language to satisfy different needs brings a change. If this change is different from the usual norm, it is deviation.

Deviation is doing something different from what people consider to be normal or accepted. Wales (pp.103) says, "Strictly, deviation refers to divergence in frequency from a Norm, or statistical average. Such divergence may depend on: the breaking of normal rules of linguistic structure whether phonological, grammatical, lexical or semantic." This might be due to need, acute requirement of time and sometimes intentionally for specific reasons. For example, 'my bad' for 'I am sorry.'

Language is propagated through literature so a glance of it will show the degree of deviation in that particular period. In this article, deviations are discussed over important time periods of English literature. Only significant deviation is mentioned from time to time, which is a subjective observation.

The study of English Literature or for the matter of fact any literature has two aspects which is said by William Long as "...one is for simple enjoyment and appreciation and the other for analysis and exact description." Though to love a good book for its own sake is important and joyous and to analyze it is less joyous, it still is an important matter.

Significant deviation observed in English over a period of time

Period	Significant events	Literary deviation observed	Possible reasons
The Anglo-Saxon or old English (450-1050)	Literature was of songs of tribes consisting of love of home, battles, brave deeds, glory	The first speech was written by Alfred. Language which was in the form of songs, became speech.	In order to express quick feeling, songs became speech.
The Anglo-Norman (1066-1350)	Norman conquest Mass migration from north to south of England. Poetry had bright romantic tales of love and adventure.	Middle English came into existence. Phonetic deviation (The Great Vowel Shift which is the phonetic change of vowels and consonants.) is observed. Loan words came into the vocabulary.	One possible reason is due to conquest and mass migration, there were mixed accents that were prevailing which forced to change London vernacular.
The Age of Chaucer (1350-1400)	Wycliffe's bible, Chaucer developed English into a highly flexible literary	Lexical deviation is observed. It is seen in the coinage of new words by Chaucer. Midland dialect	Bible brought people together and thus a common language came into being. People tried

	language.	became national language and verbs like – shall, to have, to do, will, can, were brought by Chaucer. Compound words were coined. A new poetic genre heroic couplet was also introduced by him.	to convey mixed feeling in the form of compound words
The Revival of Learning (1400-1550)	It's a transition period. Decline of Chaucer. No remarkable work was done for nearly a century and a half. Tyndall translated New Testament	The drama came into existence.	Romantic and nationalist feelings influenced literature. There was a mixture of transition and intellectual upraise. There was rise of drama to convey the message effectively in first person.
The Age of Elizabeth (1550-1620)	Writings of this period received impetus from renaissance, reformation, exploration, national spirit, religious tolerance, intellectual progress and enthusiasm which are seen in the works of Shakespeare. Ben Johnson had written the first dictionary.	This age is marked when middle English was on the verge of becoming modern English. A deviation of historical period is observed because Shakespeare not only took words from middle and modern English but also from old English.	There was political, economic and religious stability in England. English was nurtured which led to the development of literary works in poetry, drama and prose.
The Puritan age (1620-1660)	Struggle for purity of thought and liberty are seen in the works of John Milton. Thought was given importance rather than deep feeling. This period was regarded as second renaissance. Righteousness and morality were given importance.	The literature was in the form of first person narratives that are seen in diaries, journals and poetry.	American colonists wrote their accounts of immigration, settling in America, and day-to-day life in journals to pass their stories down. The people were very religious. So, the writings were mostly on morality.
The Period of Restoration	Theatres reopened. There was dancing,	Heroic couplet was mastered by John	To express ideas of wit and elegance which

(1660-1700)	vanities and pleasures of the other world.	Dryden, that expressed ideas in concise, clear and formal style. There was a distinction between high and low verse.	were not seen during the puritan age, heroic couplet was used. Ordinary people also began to write poetry, which had broad humor and it ridiculed puritans.
18 th century literature (1700-1800)	Classism, revival of romance, beginning of modern novel	Prose based literature leading to the birth of modern novel	Rapid social development. Man has a long tale to say about his experiences during revolutions.
The age of Romanticism (1800-1850)	Literature was influenced by French revolution and this turmoil is reflected in the works of Wordsworth, Shelly, Byron and others. Keats poems reflected the idea of art for art sake. Rise of feminism and appearance of woman novelist like Jane Austin. Literature is largely poetic and romantic in sprit.	Deviation in register is seen in the poems of Byron where he uses certain register in a wrong domain (example, writing letter in the form of a poem) and semantic deviation is seen.in the works of John Keats and others (example, beauty is truth, truth beauty.) It was an artistic, literary, and intellectual movement,	There was a revolt against convention and authority and a search for freedom in personal, political and artistic life. So the writers took liberty to deviate from the norms that were followed. This age placed high value on personal reflection which resulted in creating a space for women writers.
The Victorian age (1850-1900)	Literature has come close to daily life. Writers like Browning, Tennyson, Tyndall, Spencer revealed truth, brotherhood, love, justice to be the ends of life. Science influenced literature (Darwin).	Dialectal deviation is seen. Spencer took Words from social dialects. He used ‘rontes’ to describe young bullocks. In the same way he used words like ‘pleck’ for place, ‘aks’ for ask. Language worked not for prestige but for popularity (John. H. Nadal) and rise of feminism (Charlotte Bronte).	Writers came face to face with realism. writings reflected life problems. Literature was asserted moral purpose. By using dialects in wittings, they casted a permanent image on the reader’s mind
Twentieth century	Literature brought Afro-Americans	Narrative fiction and the birth of ironic writers.	Urbanization, scientific and technological

literature (1900-2000)	together. Writings celebrated black identity (The Color Purple, Beloved). World wars and scientific advancement influenced literature. (The Time Machine, The War of the Worlds) Satirical writings on the society.(G. B. Shaw, Oscar Wilde)	Scientific fiction, works on absurdity and existentialism,(The Outsider, Waiting for the Godot) narrations and non-linear writings(Joseph Conrad), lexical deviation in the writings of E.E. Cummings.(neologisms and nonce words).	development, inventions, discoveries, world wars, awareness on religion.
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Deviation in modern literature

Science on literature

Man's pursuit to know the secrets of the universe was present from the times immemorial. Due to rapid increase in technological advancements, many age old problems in science have been solved. This trend is reflected in the emergence of literature based on science. Examples are The Grand Design (Stephen Hawking), Physics of the future (Michio Kaku) and The Return of Vaman (Jayant Narlikar).

Children's literature

Apart from the usual themes which generally consists of animals, moral stories and enjoyment, animation (Kung Fu Panda series) and comics (The Adventures of Tintin) are emerging into another form of children's literature where the child experiences thrill and adventure through the protagonist. A new form which is also seen where the writings are becoming cynical, more realistic and dealing with real life problems. The Diary of Wimpy kid is one such work that is written in the form of a diary for the first time in children's literature. The excerpt of this book is "... Greg's father does not encourage his way of life — playing video games all day — rather than going outside and playing sports" show the modern aspect of society where a child is allowed to express what he feels.

literature

In recent times, a new type of literature is emerging where emphasis is on sharing of personal stories over an issue. In this work, this is called # literature. Blogging, vlogging are such forms where people share their experiences, react and respond to a common problem. According to Luers, "video bloggers make their videos accessible to the public in an effort to encourage conversation and elicit feedback among their peers" and get possible solutions for their problems. For example, in Chicken soup series, ordinary people share their personal and professional experiences. People are so much connected to these true stories that they find solace to see someone like them entangled in real life problems. Thus reader become the author and hero of their story.

Visual Media on literature

These days, many novels have been adapted to blockbuster movies (Me before you) and TV series (Game of Thrones). Literature which was previously confined to books is coming into limelight with the rise in visual media. Hence, deviation is seen in works where the writings are becoming more like movie scripts. Due to innovations like 3D, CGI, steady cam, drones etc., genres like fantasy (Harry Potter series), science fiction (Star Wars series) which are in general difficult to film, are making use of these state of the art technologies which catapulted them into new heights of stardom. So, many works are produced in these genres.

LGBT Literature

This literature is produced by or for the LGBT community which involves characters, plot lines, and themes portraying the behavior of homosexuals. The term is now used most specifically for male as gay male literature (Giovanni's Room), with a separate genre of lesbian literature (Nightwood) existing for women. This remains a fresh subject after their acceptance in the present society which was continued from historical times as seen in the works like 'The diaries of Anne Lister.'

Silicon literature

In this work, the literature which is influenced by the advent of technology like mobiles, TV, tabs, computers, kindle etc. is termed silicon literature. A sudden change, which can be called language mutation, is seen in the past twenty years due to globalization and technological advancement. When computer, mobile and in extension internet became an important commodity of nearly every household, it was as though the world is in a fist; it not only affected the lives, but also the minds of people. Works on socio science, arts, fashion and fantasy, history, to name a few, nearly every work has a significant impact of technology.

Print and mass media are adding new words every day catering to the trends of today's usage. Shortened forms have become a part of everyday conversation. Adam Kelly argues "...we have the birth of a "new sincerity" that self-consciously rewrites post-modernist irony as the search for authenticity while being acutely aware of the impossibility of "returning to" an earlier and more authentic age. This century opened new possibilities of what might mean to write politically, scientifically, aesthetically, technically with or without the norms of language use."

The cheap and easy accessibility of internet in the twentieth century made world into a global village. Due to this hyper connectivity of people, many deviations in English are observed. Shortening of words, emoticons, initializations, flashy and catchy vocabulary are preferred by people of all age groups and becoming a part of active vocabulary. The inter mixing of cultures, freedom to use language according to one's need, viral bombing on one side and on the other, intellectual impetus, different ideologies, the 'ever fast' attitude added words into the vocabulary.

Language democracy as a consequence of Silicon Literature

"One of the main impacts of scientific and technological development has had on society and culture in general is breaking down boundaries, making it both easier and harder to find things that were previously obscure" says Cassandra. In this work, language democracy is defined as the freedom of the user to modify, introduce new words, phrases etc. to suit the given situation without considering the rules of Standard English. Innovations like tabs, smart phones etc. catalyzed language democracy. The competition against time to work, the fragility in relations, the need to express multiple feelings in a single word motivated the user to create

words to describe situation in the shortest, deepest and quickest way. Some of such words are described below:

e- words: These words are coined in connection to the computer. Words like click bait, window blogging, tweet (one who uses twitter), info mania (one who has a desire to check information from his mobile), noob are some of the examples.

Truncations: These are monosyllabic word formations that are a part of active discourse. It is obvi that such formations are in active vocabulary because they express the meaning of a word in the briefest possible way. Ex: Mini-me, po-po, defo, totes, pro, demo, bro, sissy, vom etc.

Superfluous expressions: Words like, fantabulous, chillax, bromance, showmance, show a mixture of feelings the user want to put in a word. As Allen and Greenough's New Latin Grammar says, 'in current discourse the word most prominent in the speaker's mind comes first, and so on in the order of prominence.'

Acronymic expressions: Words and expressions like My bad, for I am sorry, YOLO, YODO, YOMO, LOL, BFN, NBD, OMG, ASAP are no longer used as esoteric codes. Though they form a part of euphemism, they are extensively used.

Productive analogy: Instant words are created by users to fit their context. Words like yoga moon, child moon, are analogies of honey moon. Oxy junkie, adrenaline junkie, techno junkie, tinder junkie, media junkie are other similar productions. Words like manikini, burkhini, blue whale, pink whale, green whale, vacation followed by funacation, runacation are some of such instantaneous formations.

Hamilton Niculescu in his article 'Technology, society and their cultural impact' wrote about the influence of technology on literature. He says that, "the ongoing technological bombardment on society led to desensitization, so that the perception of new messages, of the innovation, and of the changes happening all the time became imperceptible. The human sensorium is under assault from the very media into which it extended itself. The society is so saturated with information travelling at high speed that the society fails to take notice or even react, as long as the level of change is kept under a certain threshold."

Conclusion

In this paper, a brief mention of the deviation of English as a language is studied subjectively. When the deviation is observed from the time of Anglo Saxon to the twenty first century, it is evident that the process did not happen as a sudden change. The civilization of man, wars, and socio political and religious changes reflected in the works of each time. The study of the influence of technology on literature termed in this paper as silicon literature showed different aspect of language study. As a result of language democracy, a new set of vocabulary came into lexicon by active netizens.

This study helps in understanding the deviation of English in each period. It helps in knowing history of those times through a study of literature. It helps in relating technological aspects that influenced language in twenty first century which is known by studying new trends that appears in literature. It gives a scope to predict and study further possible deviation and to guess the effects of prevailing societal conditions on language.

The study of the history of literature not only reveals the significant works of art, but also the significant deviation in language that took place in each period. We know about the ideals on which the race and its civilization stand on. The analysis of deviation will let us know the soul of

man rather than his actions. “In a word”, says William J. Long, “our whole civilization, our freedom, our progress, our homes, our religion, and rest solidly upon ideals for their foundation.”

Language evolution is similar to the philosophy of life. It is created with babbles which became speech, added emotions, formed rules, deviated for convenience, shared, developed, adapted, adopted and is curious to reframe this ever demanding language. It will be a fascinating point to observe the future of English. The shortening of vocabulary that can express the deepest meaning or returning to a song like expression depends on the demand of time cycle.

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