



CHANGES IN LANGUAGE USE

Dr. Narender Dahiya, Asstt. Prof. in English (P.G), A.I.J.H.M College, Rohtak

Abstract : Language change is the phenomenon by which permanent alteration are made in the features and the use of a language over time. All natural languages change, and language change affects all areas of language use. Types of language change include sound changes, lexical changes, semantic changes, and syntactic changes.

The branch of linguistics that is expressly concerned with changes in a language (or in language) over time is historical linguistics (also known as diachronic linguistics.

Language change is variation over time in a language’s phonological, morphological, semantic, syntactic, and other features. It is studied by historical linguistics and evolutionary linguistics. Some commentators use the label corruption to suggest that language change constitutes a degradation in the quality of a language, especially when the change originates from human error or prescriptively discouraged usage. Descriptive linguistics typically does not support the concept, since from a scientific point of view such changes are neither good nor bad.

Language is always changing. We’ve seen that language changes across space and across social group. Language also varies across time.

Generation by generation, pronunciations evolve, new words are borrowed or invented, the meaning of old words drifts and morphology develops or decays. The rate of change varies, but whether the changes are faster or slower, they build up until the “mother tongue” becomes arbitrarily distance and different. After a thousand years, the original and new languages will not be mutually intelligible. After ten thousand years, the relationship will be essentially indistinguishable from chance relationship between historically unrelated languages.

In isolated subpopulations speaking the language, most changes will not be shared. As a result, such subgroups will drift apart linguistically, and eventually will not be able to understand one another.

In the modern world, language change is often socially problematic. Long before divergent dialects lose mutual intelligibility completely, they begin to show difficulties and inefficiencies in communication, especially under noisy or stressful conditions. Also, as people observe language change, they usually react negatively, feeling that the language has “gone down hill”. You never seem to hear older people commenting that the language of their children or grandchildren’s generation has improved compared to the language of their own youth.

Here is a puzzle: language change is functionally disadvantageous, in that it hinder communication, and it is also negatively evaluated by socially dominant groups. Nevertheless is a universal fact of human history.

ISSN 2454-308X



9 770024 543081



There are many different routes to language change. Changes can take originate in language learning, or through language contact, social differentiation, and natural processes in usage.

Language Learning: Language is transformed as it is transmitted from one generation to the next. Each individual must re-create a grammar and lexicon based on input received from parents, older siblings and other members of the speech community. The experience of each individual is different, and the process of linguistic replication is imperfect, so that the result is variable across individuals. However, a bias in the learning process- for instance, towards regularization- will cause systematic drift, generation. In addition, random differences may spread and become ‘fixed’ especially in small populations.

Language contact: Migration, conquest and trade bring speakers of one language into contact with speakers of another language. Some individuals will become fully bilingual as children, while others learn a second language more or less well as adults. In such contact situations, languages often borrow words, sounds, constructions and so on.

All aspects of language change and a great deal is know about general mechanisms and historical details of changes at all levels of linguistic analysis. However, a special and conspicuous success has been achieved in modeling changes in phonological systems, traditionally called sound change. In the cases where we have access to several historical stages- for instance, the development of the modern Romance Languages from latin – these sound changes are remarkably regular. Techniques developed in such cases permit us to reconstruct the sound system- and some of the vocabulary- of unattested parent languages from information about daughter languages.

There are many different routes to language change. Changes can take originate in language learning, or through language contact, social differentiation, and natural processes in usage.

Language learning: Learning is transformed as it is transmitted from one generation to the next.

All languages change over time, and there can be many different reason for this. The English language is no different but why has it changed over the decades?

Some of the main influences on the evolution of languages include:

- **The movement of people across countries and continents, for example migration and, in previous centuries, colonization. For example, English speakers today would probably be comfortable using the Spanish word “loco” to describe someone who is “crazy”.**
- **Speakers of one language coming into contact with those who speak a different one. No two individuals speak identically: people from different geographical places clearly speak differently and even within the same community there are variations according to a speaker’s age, gender, ethnicity and social and educational background. For example, the word “courting” has become “dating”.**



- **New vocabulary required for inventions such as transport, domestic appliances and industrial equipment, or for sporting, entertainment, cultural and leisure reasons. For example, the original late 19th century term “wireless” has become today’s “radio”.**

Do to these influences, a language always embraces new words, expressions and pronunciations as people come across new words and phrases in their day-to-day lives and integrate them into their own speech.

As the English language has changed, it’s been easy to pick out words that pass into common usage. Here at Pearson English, we have explored some of these recent changes to the English Language. The rise in popularity of internet slang has seen phrases such as “LOL” (Laugh out Loud). “YOLO” (You only Live Once) and “bae” (an abbreviated form of babe or baby) become firmly embedded in the English language over the past ten years.

Every decade sees like these appearing in the English language. And while some words or abbreviations do come from internet or text conversation, other may appear as entirely new words, a new meaning for an existing WORD, OR A WORD THAT BECOMES MORE GENERALISED THAT ITS FORMER MEANING, BROUGHT ABOUT BY ANY ONE OF THE REASONS ABOVE. Decades ago, “blimey” was a new expression of surprise, but more recently “woah” is the word in everyday usage.

Hence structure is of course another change to English languages. Decades ago, it would have been normal to ask “Have you a movement?” Now, you might say “D” you have a sec?” Similarly. “ How do you do?” has become “How’s it going?” Not only have the sentences been abbreviated, but new words have been introduce to everyday questions.

Connected to this is the replacement of certain words with other, more modern versions. It’s pretty noticeable that words like “shall” and “Ought” are on the way out, but “will”, “should” and “can” are doing just fine.

Other changes can be more subtle. A number of verbs can take a complement with another verb in either the “ing” form or the “to” form, for example “they liked painting/to paint”, “we tried leaving/to leave”, “he didn’t bother calling/to call”. Both of these constructions are still used and have been for a long time but there has been a steady shift over time from the “to” to the “ing” complement.

There are many other changes to the English language-what have not noticed? Have these changes affected your teaching or learning methods? Tell us in the comment section below.

Most contemporary linguistic commentators accept that change in language, like change in society, is inevitable. Some think that is regrettable, but others recognize it as a reinvigoration of a language, bringing alternatives that allow subtle differences of expression.

In our Fact or Fiction report, linguist, write and lecturer considers whether “text speak” is undermining the English language. His response to the naysayers who claim it is damaging the English Language is to point out that abbreviations have been around for a long time. While some, such as the ones we discussed above, are new, others, such as the use of “u” for “you” and the number 8 as a syllable in “later”, have been around for a century



or more. Further to this, research shows that there is in fact a correlation between the ability to use abbreviations and the ability to spell. After all, in order to abbreviate, you have to know which letters to abbreviate.

As with everything, change isn't necessarily a bad thing and, as the needs of English language users continue to change, so will the language.

Yes, and so is every other human language, **Language is always changing, evolving and adapting to the needs of the users.** This isn't bad thing, if English hadn't changed since, say, 1950, we wouldn't have words to refer to modems, fax machines, or cable TV. As long as the needs of language users continue to change so will the language. The change is so slow that from year to year we hardly notice it, except to grumble every so often about the 'poor english' being used by the younger generation. However, reading Shakespeare's writings from the sixteenth century can be difficult, if you go back a couple more centuries. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales are very tough sledding and if you went back another 500 years to try to read Beowulf, it would be like reading a different language.

Language changes for several reasons. First, it changes because the needs of its speakers change. New technologies, new products, and new expenses require new words to refer to them clearly and efficiently. Consider texting originally it was called text messaging, because it allowed one person to send another text rather than voice messages by phone. As that become more common, people began using the shorter form text to refer to both the message and the process as in I just got a text or I'll text Sylvia right now.

Another reason for change is that no two people have had exactly the same language experience. We all know a slightly different set of words and constructions, depending on our age, job, education level, region of the country, and so on. We pick up new words and phrases from all the different people we talk with and these combine to make something new and unlike any other person's particular way of speaking. At the same time, various groups in society use language as a way of marking their group identity; showing who is and isn't a member of the group.

Many of the changes that occurs in language begin with teens and young adults. As young people interact with others their own age, their language grows to include words, phrases, and constructions that are different from those of the older generation. Some have a short life span but other stick around to affect the language as a whole.

We get new words from many different places. We borrow them from other languages, we create them by shortening longer words or by combining words and we make them out of proper names. Sometimes we even create a new word by being wrong about the analysis of an existing word, like how the word pea was created. Four hundred years ago the word pease was used to refer to either a single pea or a bunch of them, but over time, people assumed.



By correct English people usually mean Standard English. Most languages have a standard form, it's the form of the language used in government education and other formal contexts. But standard English is actually just one dialect of English.

What important to realize is that there's no such thing as a 'stopy' or 'lazy' dialect. **Every dialect of every language has rule** not 'schoolroom' rules like 'don't split your infinitives'. But rather the sorts of rules that tell us that the cat slept is a sentence of English, but slept cat the isn't. These rules tell us what language is like rather than what it should be like.

Here is a puzzle: language change is functionally disadvantageous, in that it hinder communication, and it is also negatively evaluated by socially dominant groups. Nevertheless is a universal fact of human history.

References:

- Altintas, K;Can,F;Patton, J.M (2007) “Language change Quantification Using time separated parallel Translations”.
- Coates Jennifer (1993). Women, men and language a sociolinguistic account of gender differences in language- Studies in Language and Linguistics.