

СОЦІОЛІНГВІСТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ, ВЗАЄМОДІЯ ТА КОНТАКТУВАННЯ МОВ

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: FORMATION, FLEXIBILITY AND FANTASY

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У статті розглянуто походження і розвиток англійської мови в діахронічному аспекті, проаналізовано вплив соціокультурних чинників на формування сучасної англійської мови.

The article deals with the problem of formation, flexibility and fantasy of the English language. The development of the English language is viewed within diachronic aspect. The impact of sociocultural factors on the English language is considered.

English is just one of thousands of languages in the world, though tragically we are losing hundreds every decade. English, by contrast, is growing through globalisation largely fuelled by the twentieth century dominance of the USA, building on the nineteenth century imperialism of the United Kingdom (Morley and Robbins, 1995). Although English is not the most spoken language in the world, clearly Chinese and Hindi have more adherents, it is the most widely used in international discourse.

Being in this position has brought it to be in great demand, to such an extent that it is one of Britain's major exports, earning billions of pounds each year through programmes of study at home and abroad, and thousands of new publications printed and distributed. Programmes of study necessarily concentrate on learning the structure of the language and practising the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Such programmes tend to utilise English for specific purposes, such as for business or engineering, using technical guidelines and textbooks. Many fewer people from other cultures go further into the more demanding study of English Literature where, in response to the styles of the song, story, poem or play, a much greater range of English language is employed. The efforts of poets, playwrights, novelists, storytellers and biographers are greatly assisted by the extraordinary flexibility of English. This has much to do with its formation, and in its extreme form is evident in humour and fantasy.

Language is probably the most distinctive component of culture, and culture is closely related to place. This, therefore, has to do with an aspect of cultural geography known as 'Geo-linguistics' as illustrated in 'Linguistic Minorities, Society and Territory' (Williams 1991). English obviously has to do with the territory that became known as 'England' and the formation of the language is directly related to the sequence of cultural occupation of the land. The development of the English language was also influenced by the fact that the borders of what became known as England had remained relatively stable from several hundred years before the basis of the language- Anglo-Saxon – was introduced as the Roman Empire collapsed. For it is somewhat curious that what is now England corresponds almost exactly with the part of Britain under Roman control for about 500 years. Consequently elements of the pre-Roman 'Celtic' language, and then the Latin of the Romans themselves, fed into the formation of English as it was gaining ground through the Saxon conquest and control of the next 500 years.

The evidence of this is most easily seen in place names and personal names. For example the Celtic 'avon' for a number of rivers in England. The Latin legacy of the Romans is more obvious in the name of military camps that later became towns : the suffix 'caster' as in Manchester and Doncaster, and 'um' as in 'Londinium', which became London. Latin influences continued during the Anglo-Saxon period due to the Roman Catholic Church which survived throughout and strongly influenced the emerging language of education and contractual dealings over land and property.

Indeed it was not until King Alfred (871–899), the first Saxon king to control most of England (for there were several kingdoms before), decided to make English the language of education and administration that it began to overtake Latin. Saxon English can also be seen in place names today that end in ‘ing’, ‘ham’ and ‘ton, such as Tooting, Durham and Luton or combined as in Northampton and Birmingham. It was during this formative period of ‘early English’ that the first great work of the nascent language appeared ‘Beowulf’. This was an epic poem with clear Scandinavian influences, for invasions from across the North Sea resulted in the occupation of much of Eastern England. They too are represented in their place names ending in ‘ey’, ‘by’ ‘thorpe’ and ‘wick’, such as Haxey, Grimsby, Scunthorpe and York (Yorvik).

The type of English emerging at this time later became known as ‘Old English’, which had several regional dialects. This is a brief illustration from Wessex:

‘Ohtere saede his hlaforde Aelfrede cyninge paet he ealra Noromonna noromest bude’ (Ohtere said to his lord Alfred the king, that he of all Northmen northmost dwelt’), cited in (Pooley et al 1971).

The Saxon period was brought to an end by the invasions of the Normans (Norsemen who had settled in the northern France of today) under William the Conqueror in 1066. This was the beginning of nearly a millennium of relative territorial stability right up to the present day. Initially French became the language of administration with Latin regaining a hold on education. But English had taken hold among the mass of the population and was developing as the vernacular. Developing considerably from the ‘Old English’ it emerged as ‘Modern English’ in the famous first publication ‘The Canterbury Tales’ by Geoffrey Chaucer believed to have been begun in 1386. It is said that Chaucer, a high ranking official in the King’s court, was fluent in French and the writing shows this extract from the ‘General Prologue’.

‘He hadde a croys of latoun full of stones’,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones,
But with thise relikes, whan that he fond
A povre person dwellynge upon lond,
Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye
Than that the person gat in monthes tweye;
And thus, with feyned flaterye and japes.
He made the person and the peple his apes.

Modern English was thus established by the quality, singularity and popularity of this great work, containing as it did a great deal of linguistic invention, popular story telling and humour. As a modern English saying goes: ‘all human life is there’!

At this point we will leave the formative aspect of this discussion, as the flexibility had become dynamic, and the creation of the first printing press in England by William Caxton in 1476 enabled widespread access to Chaucer’s work and other early writers of ‘Modern English’. This was just before the arrival of the ‘Elizabethan

Age’ inaugurated, as it were, by the enlightened King Henry VII (1485-1509), the first of the ‘Tudors’ and extending to the reign of King James I (1603-1625), in fact the first of the ‘Stuarts’. At the heart of this period was the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603), during which ‘burst forth what has been called the finest flowering of the arts in all English history’ (Pooley et al, 1971, p50).

During the latter part of Elizabeth’s reign and the early part of that of James I came the incomparable contribution of William Shakespeare (1564-1616) to the English Language. Without the artistic freedom of the day and the company of numerous highly creative colleagues, it is unlikely that Shakespeare would have achieved as much as he did, but that is not to belittle his incredible contribution. His plays and poems as so well known as not to need any mention here in detail. But for our purposes in this discussion it is his inventiveness, taking advantage of the flexibility of Modern English still only 200 years after Chaucer, to coin numerous words and phrases that have become commonplace in contemporary English. As Bill Bryson (2007) explains: ‘He coined – or to be more carefully precise, made the first recorded use of – 2035 words, and interestingly he indulged the practice from the very outset of his career’ (p 112).

Bryson goes on to say that about eight hundred are still used today, but: ‘His real gift was as a phrasemaker. ‘Shakespeare’s language, says Stanley Wells (2002), ‘has a quality, difficult to define,

of memorability that has caused many phrases to enter the common language' Among them: one fell swoop, vanish into thin air, bag and baggage, play fast and loose, go down the primrose path, be in a pickle, budge an inch, the milk of human kindness, more sinned against than sinning, remembrance of things past, beggar all description, cold comfort, to thine own self be true, more in sorrow than in anger, the wish is father to the thought, salad days, flesh and blood, foul play, tower of strength, to be cruel to be kind, blinking idiot, with bated breath, pomp and circumstance, foregone conclusion – and many others so repetitiously irresistible that we have debased them into clichés. He was so prolific that he could (in 'Hamlet') put two in a single sentence: 'Though I am native here and to the manor born, it is a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance' (pp 113-114).

Bryson concludes: 'If we take the 'Oxford Dictionary of Quotations' as our guide then Shakespeare produced roughly one tenth of all the most quotable utterances written or spoken in English since its inception – a clearly remarkable proportion (p. 114).

By the time of Shakespeare's death, the voyages of Elizabethan seaman had begun to extend the possessions of Britain across the world, a process that continued on even to the early twentieth century. The three components of Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) had come together, and all Ireland continued to be under British control up to 1922, with Northern Ireland remaining in the United Kingdom thereafter. All this gave rise to further evolution of the English language both within the then British Isles and in the colonies. Developments took the form of new phrases and words, as well as local and regional accents, many of which remain to this day.

A few illustrations will serve: in American English 'sidewalk' replaces 'pavement'; and 'pants' replaces 'trousers'. Americans drive on the parkway and park in the driveway. They use the term 'tap dancing' for 'procrastination', and 'rubbernecking' to mean slowing down to view an accident on the other side of the road. Australian English is sometimes called 'Strine' (an abbreviation of 'Australian') to illustrate the accent and abbreviation, for example: 'scona' (it is going to) and 'emma' (how much?). In West Africa the lingua franca of some of the former British colonies is 'creole', sometimes called pidgin elsewhere. For example: 'glady for see you' (I'm pleased to see you); 'how de body man'? (are you well ?), to which one usually replies: 'de body fine man' (I'm very well thank you).

Returning to Britain and Ireland one can see in the literatures that have evolved, some clear differences in the language itself. In Scotland, Wales and Ireland the original Celtic languages survive to a greater or lesser degree: Scottish and Irish Gaelic, which are related and Welsh which is related to the Breton Gaelic of Northern France and the Gaelic of Galicia in north-west Spain. But in all three the form of English, the dominant language, is distinctive. In Scotland it is called 'Scots' and is best exemplified by the great poet Robert Burns. Here is the opening verse of one of his best known poems: 'Address to the Unco Guid, Or the Rigidly Righteous'

'O ye wha are sae guid yoursel',
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your neibours' fauts and folly!
Whose life is like a weel-gaun mill,
Supplied wi' store o' water
The heaped happers ebbing still,
And still the clap plays clatter.

Although Robert Burns lived entirely in the eighteenth century (1759-1796), this 'Scots' form of English is still strongly evident, especially in the southwest and the great city of Glasgow, as Bill Bryson (1995) found to his consternation when hiring a taxi in Glasgow: 'D'ye nae a lang roon', said the driver as we sped along a motorway towards Pollok Park by way of Clydebank and Oban. 'I'm sorry', I said, 'for I don't speak Glaswegian'. 'D'ye dack ma fanny?' I hate it when this happens – when a person from Glasgow speaks to me. 'I'm sorry' I said, and floundered for an excuse. 'My ears are very bad'.

The famous Welsh poet Dylan Thomas (1914-1953) was, unusually for a bard, not a Welsh speaker, but his extraordinary capacity for creative English owed much to his essential Welshness. The traditions of the Celtic peoples of Britain and Ireland are essential verbal. Storytelling and

musicality are at the heart of their English usage, as illustrated by the subtitle of Dylan's most famous work: 'Under Milk Wood: A Play for Voices'.

'To begin at the beginning:
It is spring, moonless night in the small town, starless
and bible black, the cobblestreets silent and the
hunched courtiers'-and-rabbits' wood limping
invisible down to the sloeblack, slow, black, crowblack,
fishingboat-bobbing sea. The houses are blind as
moles (though moles see fine tonight in the snouting
velvet dingles) or blind as Captain Cat there in
the muffled middle by the pump and the town clock,
the shops in mourning, the Welfare Hall in widows'
weeds. And all the people of the lulled and
dumbfounded town are sleeping now.'

Much of this Welshness is down to the strong traditions of Nonconformist preaching in the Chapel to which most people in Wales would have gone to worship at least twice on a Sunday. Here are some lines from Waldo Williams (1904-1971), translated by Tony Conran (in 'Wales: an Anthology' edited by Alice Thomas Ellis, 1991, p 223), about the Catholic martyrs:

John Roberts of Trawsfydd, priest to the needy,
in the dread plague shared out the bread of the journey,
Knowing the powers of the dark had come, and would
break his body.

John Owen the joiner, that many a servant concealed,
For the old communion his hand an unwearying shield,
Lest the plait be unravelled, and the beams of the great
house yield.

Richard Gwyn smiled in their face at what they were at:
'I have sixpence towards your fine' – for he'd not
In the cause of his Master, price his life more than that.

Ireland, likewise is rich in its storytelling and poetry in English. More so even than Wales or Scotland under the oppression of England, treated as a colony for the best part of eight hundred years. When the 'Irish Free State' was formed in 1922, the Irish language was made compulsory throughout the years of schooling, so that a far greater proportion of the people of the Republic today can speak their native tongue than is the case in Scotland or Wales, though the number of Welsh speakers is increasing. The rich history of Celtic mythology, attachment to place and storytelling have found their way into the English of the Irish. Here is a near two hundred year old poem that could well have been written today, from 'A Book of Ireland' edited by Frank O'Connor (1959). One of the greatest storytellers of them all:

Now with the springtime the days will grow longer
And after St. Bride's day my sail I'll let go;
I put my mind to it and I never will linger
Till I find myself back in the County Mayo;
It is in Claremorris I'll stop the first evening
And at Barra beneath it I'll first take the floor,
I'll go to Kiltimagh and have a month's peace there,
And that's not two miles from Ballinamore.

I'll give you my word that the heart in me rises
As when the wind rises and all the mists go,
Thinking of Carra and Gallen beneath it,
Scahaveela and all the wide plains of Mayo;
Killeadan's the village where everything pleases,

Of berries and all sorts of fruiy there's no lack.
And if I could but stand in the heart of my people
Old age would drop from me and youth would
come back. (Anthony Raftery : 1784 – 1835)

A love of the spoken word is a core feature of Irish life. Everything becomes a story, as shown here in 'A Telephone Operator' by Robert Gibbings (1889-1958): 'Even to get a call through on the telephone may entail a conversation. " Hold on a while now and I'll see if I can get him for you. I have an idea he was away shooting for the weekend, but I'll see if I can get him. Isn't it a grand day? Yerra 'tis like summer. Another fortnight now and we'll be into spring. Tell me, who am I speaking to? Oh, to be sure, I know you well. I saw you the other night. 'Who's that?' said I to Paddy Riordan. You remember Paddy, he lived at the cross below you. 'Sure that's Bob Gibbings, says he, 'the fellow is writing a book about Cork.' Hold on awhile I think you're through. Ah you're not. I'm Mick Ahern who lived at Curraheen. You wouldn't remember me but – hold on awhile – 'tis wonderful weather. Did you see any widgeon when you were down at Imokilly? They tell me the place is full of them. Oh indeed, yes, I saw you getting on to the bus. 'Tis a grand spot down there. Hold on a while, you're through. Good-bye now and good luck, you're through.'

And finally back to England and the issues of creativity, fantasy and humour in the English Language. It would have been possible to go through the canon of great English writers since Shakespeare such as John Milton (1608-1674), Daniel Defoe (1659-1731), William Blake (1757-1827), John Keats (1795-1821), Charles Dickens (1812-1870), Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930) and Philip Larkin (1922-1985), but time and space will not permit. In any case the focus here is on flexibility and this can perhaps be best illustrated by fantasy and humour.

Three of the greatest fantasy writers in the English language were dons (lecturers or tutors) at the University of Oxford, and all wrote primarily for children. Two of them were contemporaries at Oxford: J.R.R. Tolkien (1892 – 1973) author of 'The Hobbit' and 'Lord of the Rings' and C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) author of the Narnia Stories such as 'The Lion , the Witch and the Wardrobe'. They drew on the rich vein of fantasy literature from time immemorial, such a Tolkien's knowledge of Norse and Icelandic sagas and the Old English of Boewulf mentioned above. In the midst of the mid- nineteenth century penchant for such writing came the greatest of them all, Lewis Carroll (1832-1898), whose real name was Charles Dodgshon a clergyman and mathematics don at Christ Church, one of Oxford's grandest and wealthiest colleges.

Lewis Carroll created a great deal of fantasy literature but is rightly best known for his books 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' and 'Through the Looking Glass: What Alice Found There'. He wrote these for the young daughter of the Dean of Christ Church. The stories are full of nonsense, fantasy and humour, stretching the English language to improbable lengths but succeeding brilliantly, as with the humour in The Mock Turtle's Story, where Alice in on the beach by the sea with the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle: 'When we were little,' the Mock Turtle went on at last, more calmly, though still sobbing a little now and then, 'we went to school in the sea. The master was an old Turtle – we used to call him 'Tortoise.....' 'Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn't one?' Alice asked. 'We called him Tortoise because he taught us' said the Mock Turtle angrily: 'really you are very dull!' Later in the conversation The Mock Turtle and The Gryphon went through the curriculum at their school in the sea: 'Reeling and Writhing, of course to begin with' the Mock Turtle replied; 'and then the different branches of Arithmetic – Ambition, Distraction, Uglification and Derision.' 'I never heard of 'Uglification,' Alice ventured to say. 'What is it?' The Gryphon lifted up both its paws in surprise. 'What! Never heard of uglifying?' it exclaimed. You know what to beautify is I suppose?' 'Yes,' said Alice doubtfully: 'it--means--to--make--anything--prettier'. 'Well then' the Gryphon went on, 'if you don't know what to uglify is, you must be a simpleton'. Alice did not feel encouraged to ask any more questions about it, so she turned to the Mock Turtle, and said 'What else had you to learn?' 'Well there was Mystery, the Mock Turtle replied, counting off the subjects on his flappers, '---Mystery, ancient and modern, with Sea-ography: then then Drawling, Stretching and Fainting in Coils' They went on to add 'Laughing and Grief' before Alice, perhaps unwisely asked: 'how many hours a day did you do lessons?' 'Ten hours the first day, said the Mock Turtle: 'nine the next and so on'. What a curious

plan!’ exclaimed Alice. ‘That’s the reason they’re called lessons’, the Gryphon remarked: ‘because they lessen from day to day’.

In the second book ‘Through the Looking Glass’, Lewis Carroll created what has ever since been voted the favourite poem in the English language. Alice finds a book with a poem the words of which are incomprehensible. The narrative continues: ‘She puzzled over this for some time, but at last a bright thought struck her. ‘Why, it’s a Looking – glass book, of course! And if I hold it up to a glass, the words will go the right way again. This was the poem that Alice read.

JABBERWOCKY

‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Beware the Jabberwock my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought –
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgy wood,
And burbled as it came.

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker –snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

‘And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!
He chortled in his joy.

‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves’
And the mome raths outgrabe.

If ‘Jabberwocky’ doesn’t tell you something about the English and their language then nothing will!

In this brief paper I have attempted to show how the mongrel origins of English contributed to its formation and flexibility; how its spread within the British Isles and beyond was able to accommodate new societies and their communication; and how its attributes have been used in humour and fantasy. It is necessarily a very small and unworthy contribution, but I hope it will have been of interest to those who are new to the English language and would like to explore it further through its literature, and not just for its technical and material utility. For those who would like to read a very much fuller and more professional account, I recommend: ‘The Story of English’ by McCrum, Cran and MacNeil (1986).

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ВІДОМОСТІ ПРО АВТОРА

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АНГЛІЙСЬКА ЯК «МІЖНАРОДНА ДОПОМІЖНА МОВА» ЕПОХИ ГЛОБАЛІЗАЦІЇ НА ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОМУ ПРОСТОРІ

Сергій МАКСІМОВ (Київ, Україна)

Автор статті дотримується думки, що сьогодні існує так звана європейська англійська мова (EuroEnglish), яка широко використовується в країнах Європейського Союзу як "міжнародна допоміжна мова" (МДМ), перш за все в різних видах адміністративного дискурсу. Автор статті наводить свої аргументи на користь визнання цього варіанту англійської мови, що має свою специфіку на структурному, граматичному та лексичному рівнях, які підкріплює прикладами із автентичних англомовних виступів представників різних країн ЄС.

The author of the article claims that today the so-called European English (EuroEnglish) is in existence as one of the variants of "World Englishes" and is widely used in the European Union as an International Auxiliary Language (IAL), first of all, in various kinds of administrative discourse. The author suggests his arguments in favour of recognising European English as a specific variant of the conventional English language by giving examples and underlining structural, grammatical and lexical features characteristic of the EuroEnglish.

Глобалізація та її наслідки спочатку тлумачились дослідниками як суто економічне явище, пов'язане із розвитком глобальних ринків виробництва та збуту товарів та послуг. В нашому столітті спостерігається вплив процесів глобалізації у всіх сферах людського життя. Сучасний швидкоплинний світ все більше перетворюється на єдиний соціально-економічний простір, де все, що відбувається в одній країні має величезний вплив на життя окремих людей та суспільства інших країн. Дослідники зазвичай виділяли чотири основні напрямки глобальної інтеграції: збільшення потоків товарів, послуг та людей, що пересуваються між кордонами держав; бурхливий розвиток та інтернаціоналізація банківської діяльності; швидкий розвиток систем, форм та засобів комунікації на основі інформаційних технологій; поглиблення нерівності між розвинутими країнами та країнами, що розвиваються, а також між заможними та матеріально незабезпеченими громадянами в межах однієї країни [7: 2]. Виникли і бурхливо розвиваються такі нові галузі людської діяльності та міжнародно-правового регулювання, як транскордонне радіо та телемовлення, транскордонне право, транскордонна екологія тощо. Відповідно з'явилися нові поняття та терміни такі, як наприклад, "транскордонна шкода", "транскордонне телебачення", "транскордонна пропаганда" тощо. До виділених вище чотирьох напрямків глобалізаційних процесів слід додати ще й мовний напрям, оскільки глобалізація впливає на розвиток й функціонування національних мов [3: 2002], чому і присвячена дана стаття.

Стосовно Європи слід зазначити, що утворення Європейського Союзу значно прискорило інтеграцію людських спільнот, що розмовляють різними мовами. Це призвело до постановки на порядок денний питання про введення "міжнародної допоміжної мови" (МДМ, англійський термін – International Auxiliary Language – IAL), перш за все, як мови адміністративного спілкування (для зменшення витрат на письмовий та усний переклад) на рівні Європарламенту, Ради Європи (зокрема ПАРЕ – Парламентської Асамблеї Ради Європи), Єврокомісії, Європейського суду з прав людини, НАТО, Європейського космічного агентства та інших міжнародних регулятивних органів об'єднаної Європи. Спроби відродити в якості МДМ латину, Волапук (штучна мова, розроблена Й. Шлейером у 1879 р.) та Есперанто (розроблена Л. Заменгофом у 1887 р.) закінчились нічим, оскільки ці мови є