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EXPRESSING THROUGH WORDS

DUTT ALKA

Master in Foreign Languages and English Lang. & Lit. Lecturer Delhi University



DUTT ALKA

ABSTRACT

Tracing history of any language is a tedious task. Why does one speak English and another person uses French? Why is a particular language used in so many different ways? Moreover at times written language is different from the spoken one in many places. Why so? These questions are difficult to answer. But still we can talk about the shaping up of English language, the global language, from its early times till date. The following paper tries to explore and bring to light few glaring and common facts about this popular language for those who have just started to deal with English Language and Literature in their course of study. Colonization has contributed to a large extent in making the language a popular form of communication. Computer age has certainly created a boom in the spread of this language. More and more people are making an effort to know this language in order to become one out of the many who belong to the largest English speaking community of this world. Language accompanied by literature is all about expressed feelings in some form or another in visual form. Passions are converted to words during a writing spell. Feverous writings have the power to affect another's mind and emotions. These can throw you in depression or take you out of it. One laughs or cries, smiles or snarls on reading through the compositions. Literature that produces no reaction is like a body without a soul. Language is the tool and the soul of a man of literature. Civilized world uses this language in all wakes of life. The language has managed to unite diverse cultural societies as one whole. Translation services have brought regional literatures to the forefront. Poor sections of societies have been able to make their voices heard and been able to seek change for a better tomorrow.

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INTRODUCTION

Old English was spoken by Anglo-Saxons sometimes during 5th Century. Writing of Beowulf is not easily decipherable by a normal reader. It is supposed to be a dialect that was evolved out of West Germanic, Anglo-Frisian, Anglic, Ingvaenic and Germanic family of languages. People of modern day England and those

from eastern parts of Scotland were in the habit of using this dialect. The language owes much of its grammar to German language and one another that is spoken in Iceland. Peculiar nature of this language was that there was no passive voice used in it and verbs were also used in two tenses only. Nouns also came with grammatical gender. While Moon was given a masculine gender, Sun came under the list of nouns that came under feminine gender.

Research

Hymn written by Caedmon comes to us in runic inscriptions. The poem was a vision of this blind poet who was certainly not a literate person. Song of Lord was later mentioned by Bede in his *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*. Dream of this gifted personality comes to us in alliterative verse. Works of Bede, Aldhelm and Cynewulf also fall under Old English. Influence of Norse and Latin people can also be found on the language of those times. Spread of Christianity caused Latin influence on Old English. Old French words also in- filtered through English. Similarity in words used in old languages help us to find about the influence of one language on another. Regional languages and variations in them too influenced English language with the passage of time. Alfred the Great did a lot to save and preserve old documents written in English. All efforts were made by him to retrieve old wives' tales and fables. He got people from afar to prepare written records of valuable literature that was not present in written form. He himself is credited with the translation of many books from Latin to English. One of these books is "Pastoral Care" by Pope Gregory. Phonetic variations also existed in the language of yesteryears.

Though we find prose literature in Old English literature, poetry ruled the literary field. Poems were generally religious in nature. *Beowulf* is a beautiful poem written in West Saxon. Author of this alliterative verse poem is still a mystery. Heroic nature of man from prime youth to old age is traced down the poem. And, any literature that talked about valour and heroic deeds of a hero in those days, soon gained popularity among its readers. Evergreen epic poem evokes strong emotions in its reader. Fiction and real events go hand in hand to make this epic poem into a powerful one. It is a unique example of its own kind till date. Excavations carried out by archaeologists on the mound of Eadgil stand as testimony to the reality presented in the poem. Like any other great epic, actual story starts from the middle of the events that are already taking place. Many selected portions of the poem have been translated into English that is read today. This poem gives us many rare words that are not in vogue in present day English.

Findings

Old English gave way to Middle English around 12thC. People residing in Scotland, Wales, Ireland and England used this language that had come from Indo-European languages. It stayed in power till 1470. Chaucer, John Gower, Pearl Poet and Langland used Middle English to reach their readers. Many believe that Shakespeare also wrote his great works in this language. Normans defeated Anglo-Saxons and replaced Old English with Middle English. If Chicken stood for Old English, Poultry stood for Anglo-Norman language. Word bold gave way to courageous and freedom to liberty. People writing in Midlands wrote in a different dialect from the one that was in fashion around Chaucer's land. Norman language has contributed much to Modern Administrative English. Possessive Case in English language though used in Old English, came to be used in full force by Anglo-Normans. Language underwent a drastic change after Wars of the Roses. Change was both political and social. It was during this period that we get a Standard English Bible for Christians of this world. Wycliffe translated Bible because he believed that "it helpeth Christian men to study the Gospel in that tongue in which they know best Christ's sentence".

Modern English was gradually beginning to emerge. Main writings of this period included Wycliffe's Bible, *Ormulum*, *Canterbury Tales*, *Confessio Amantis* by Gower and *Epitaph of John the Smyth*.

Renaissance literature was influenced by Italians. Sonnet was introduced in English poetry by Earl of Surrey and Thomas Wyatt in 16th C. Work of Petrarch was referred to for this purpose. Formal Petrarchan sonnet style of writing was introduced into English writing. The sonnet came with perfect rhyme pattern. A problem was taken up and dealt with at the end of a sonnet. Fourteen lines made up one sonnet.

Sound acts as a base for any good poetry. Stanzas vary in length, they rhyme differently and some poems are even termed as those written in blank verse. Alliteration was used along with rhyme by poets in

earlier times. Repetition of consonants was a typical feature of such poems. In fact Chaucer utilized rhyme to give comical effect to his works.

Different literary terms were related to this kind of writing. Wyatt did imitate Petrarch to some extent but was still able to evolve a new rhyme scheme of his own for his sonnets. Giacomina Da Lentini is considered to be the father of Italian sonnet. Fourteen line poems come with a predetermined structure and fixed rhyme scheme. Wherever a poet deviated and evolved his own style, his particular style was given his own name e.g. Dante's sonnet, Shakespearean sonnets, Occitan sonnet, Spenserian sonnet, modern sonnet and Urdu sonnet etc. Lord Byron wrote during 1788-1824. His style of writing came to be known as Byronism. Romantic writer of Don Juan, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and She Walks in Beauty was an influential personality. Byron uses strong and passionate words to describe his characters. His heroes come with a flaw that ultimately leads them to their destruction.

Literary writing comes with variation in language according to the writer who is writing, targeted readers and community in general.

American Colonies belonging to Britain became independent. Other colonies followed their example. Each colony gave English its new hues and colours. Standard grammar was evolved for using the language at global level. Even though English was given a universal structure, in colonies like India, upper class and affluent class spoke English in a different manner than their lower counterparts. Regional influence on the language can be seen all around the world. Tone and inflections while speaking also differ from one region to another. This is the phonological aspect of the language. This influence is what coins the words Cultural Diversity in a written and spoken language.

Regional literature of countries was translated to global language, English. This not helped writers from small communities to earn money through their translated works, but also made it possible for them to keep their own point of view, their own particular traditions and customs and cultural values in front of English speaking gentians. Small communities striving to survive have succeeded in getting help from worldwide communities due to efforts put in by authors.

Each writer expresses his thoughts in his own words. He becomes known for his own particular style of writing. This style could be in the form of verse or prose. It could be seen in the type of words he is opting for in order to use the words in his sentences to evoke a certain response from his readers.

Business English comes with its own set of words. Writing is more functional in nature. Words, terms and expressions are more scientific in nature. Literary language is all about understanding of human mind and human emotions. Special terms are used to express certain forms of expressions and emotions used by English writers.

A Dictionary of the English Language (1775) is a masterpiece by Samuel Johnson. Samuel Johnson is a renowned British Author who has given many worthwhile literary essays to the literary world. According to him, Bugbear Style of writing does not reveal to the reader what is directly being said by the author. Connotation is a device used by many writers to denote something totally different from what the original word stands for. Simple word like "dog" might mean something different according to what an author wishes to convey through his writing. Clichés or figures of speech that are used again and again, lose their glitter over a time period. But under expert hands, these words come alive once again to enrich a piece of writing. Some use them as nouns and some as adjectives.

Diction, parsing, organization of thought process etc. determines the style of writing that an author chooses in order to reach his audience. Writing depends on the purpose behind its existence. Some writers merely wish to inform, some wish to persuade public through their narratives and there are those who just want readers to enjoy their works. Writing fiction is not an easy thing. Managing to capture and retain a reader's attention through a bulky work is certainly something to applaud about. Charles Dickens wrote for common man and has given masterpieces to English literature. He observed real characters and brought them alive in his books. Humour and satire is his domain. At times he is almost poetic in his works.

CONCLUSION

There are different writing techniques applied by a writer to convey their thoughts to their readers. Some also call these techniques, literary devices. These devices could pertain to plot, setting, style, narrative, theme or character.

Cliffhanger ending of a story keeps a reader guessing at the end of the story about its possible ending. This technique is most common with writers writing scripts for television serials. Term Deus ex machine is related to Greek tragedy of early days. While in those times it was used as a device for stage activities, Aristotle, the Greek Philosopher, used it as a technique to wind up a tragedy. And abrupt endings to stories often leave readers hungering for a more satisfactory ending. Transcendentalism is associated with Walden from America. This kind of writing resists the dictates dictated by a society that is fully organized. Earlier writers of America were busy coining poetry for attaining political goals. There is more of war influence on American literature. Mood of disillusionment can be seen in most of post war poems. America gave to the world works full of symbolism and incidents dealing with occult. Novels of Nathaniel Hawthorne deal with pride, emotional repression and guilt. This kind of literature came under the banner of quasi-allegorical works. Sensational sea stories were soon taken up by Herman Melville. Dark Romanticism is the word given to works of authors like Hawthorne.

Formal writings use more inanimate nouns in the sentences. These nouns form the subjects of sentences. Writing is certainly a complex process. Passive sentences too are used in formal writings. Words originating from Latin language can be seen to dominate such pieces. On the other hand passive way of writing is almost non-existent in informal writing which is more spontaneous in character. Words originating from German language are more in vogue in this kind of writing.

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