ENGLISH LANGUAGE: LOGIC OF FACTS AND FREEDOM FROM THE PEDANTRY OF GRAMMATICAL RULES

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ABSTRACT

As we all know that the development of English Language as a separate idiom began when Germanic tribes- Jutes, Saxons and Angles, occupied the low-lands of Great Britain and when the invasions from the continent discontinued (449-700). The dialects spoken by the settlers in England belonged to the Great Germanic (Proto-Teutonic) branch of the Indo-European language family.

INTRODUCTION

Consonant Shift and *Stress Shift* distinguished the Proto-Teutonic language from the other classical languages originated from the Indo European language family. These shifts occurred in the Proto-Teutonic language gave it an independent identity in the family of Indo-European languages. In the process of *Consonant Shift* the consonant sounds of the Proto-Teutonic sound system such as /p/, /t/ and /k/ invariably changed into /f/, /th/ and /h/ e.g. *Pater* changed into *father, tres* into *three,* and *cornu* into *horn.* Similarly, /h/, /d/ and /g/ changed into /p/, /t/ and /k/ e.g. *sabar* changed into *sap, dwa* changed into *two* and *jna* changed into *knee.* Similarly, /bh/, /dh/ and /gh/ or /h/ changed into /b/, /d/ and /g/ or /y/. For instance, *bhu* changed into *be, rudhira* changed into *red,* and *vah* changed into *way.*

The second change affected the general character of the Proto-Teutonic language even more thoroughly. In the Proto Indo-European language stress was sometimes on the first syllable of the word, sometimes on the second or on the third without any seeming reason and without any regard to the intrinsic importance of that syllable. The Aryan stress system characterized by irregular accent is found in the following words borrowed from the classical languages e.g., *'family, fa'miliar, famili 'arity,* or *'photograph, pho tographer, pho'tographer, pho'tographic.*

The stressed words are the most important ones in a sentence; hence they carry stress on certain syllable. Thus, it is very natural that the vowels of unstressed words tend to be

obscure and hence go slightly pronounced. Mark an automatic change of the pronunciation of the vowel-sounds of the above listed words. But the occurrence of the fixed stress simplified the stress rule of the Teutonic language. The shifted Germanic system is shown in the following set of words *'love, 'lover, 'loving, 'lovingly, 'lovely, 'loveliness, 'loveless, 'lovelessness* or *'king, 'kingdom, 'kingship, 'kingly, 'kingless.* Nearly all words were stressed on the first syllable except a word with a prefix e.g., *Be'get, be'gin, mis'take* etc. this Stress Shift attributed musicality to the Teutonic languages. According to Verner the shifting of the place of the accent took place later than the Germanic consonant shift. The study of Stress Shift is very important because it enables philologists to distinguish Germanic words from the Non-Germanic loan-words available in English vocabulary.

The Jutes, Angles and Saxons who settled down in greater part of England had their own distinct dialects. The natives of England that time spoke the Brito-Roman dialect which was much different from the Teutonic ones. As England professed Christianity by 600 A.D., many Latin words were naturalized by the settlers in their own languages. In the course of interaction ever since 449 A.D. amongst the settlers speaking three different Teutonic dialects in the foreign land till 700 A.D. they evolved a new variety of the Teutonic tongues by fusion of these dialects. The new language evolved out of the fusion of three Teutonic dialects was come to be known as English after the name of the predominant race, Angles. The source material for the study of OE is *Beowulf,* the OE translation of the Old Danish legends about King Hrothgar and his beautiful hall Herorot.

The development of English language could be studied in terms of the three superstructures- a Scandinavian element, a French element, and a Latin element erected on the Anglo-Saxon foundation. The major events which caused great impact on the development of English language are *English men's Conversion to Christianity, Wedmore Treaty, The Norman Conquest,* and *The English Renaissance.* The authors representing these events are Caedmon and Cynewulf, King Alfred, Chaucer, and Shakespeare. The English language is a methodical, energetic, business-like and sober language that does care much for logical consistency and opposes to pedantry of rules either of grammar or of lexicons.

It appears from the history of English men that they have been proud of their possessions and they have been more inclined to imbibe things necessary for their development from all sources. For instance the Old English great epic 'Beowulf written by Caedmon and Cynewulf enumerates the heroic exploits of the Danish legendary king Hrothgar. In this translated work the poet provided many synonyms to the OE words e.g. for 'hero' or 'prince' there are thirty six words, for 'battle' or 'fight' there are twelve words, there are seventeen expressions for e' sea'. The same spirit could be marked working in later ages, too. For instance in all the European countries except England the fruit 'pine-apple' is called *'Ananas'.*

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VOL 2, ISSUE 2   www.puneresearch.com/times   APR-JUNE 2017
(IMPACT FACTOR 2.07) INDEXED, PEER-REVIEWED / REFEREED INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

The objective of this paper is to argue that English men are supportive to the abstract logical sense and structural simplification of the spoken language. To substantiate the point of argument many words and language structures will be selected from the works of eminent authors. To make the argument concrete and pointed the method of comparison will be adopted. Greater stress will be laid on the vocabulary and some comments will be passed on structures and tenses of the English language.

Tenses:

No language is logical in every respect and nor can it be expected that every usage in a language be guided strictly by logical principles. With regard to this underlying principle of every language Ferdinand D. Saussure says that human language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols. But there was error with the older grammarians that whenever the grammar rules based on abstract logic did not conform to a language usage they blamed the language and wanted to correct it. As compared to most of the languages of the world, apart from Chinese, there is perhaps no language in the civilized world that stands as high as English. The reason behind this is the linguistic approach of the English men who uphold and give currency to new tense forms and usages introduced by authors and creative speakers from time to time.

In OE there were only two tenses- past and present. Using adverbs, and simple and progressive present tense they communicated future actions. The OE speakers were highly creative in the sense that with limited language resources available in the tense forms they managed to communicate their ideas successfully. A remarkable point which I wish to emphasize is the distinct use of the simple past and present perfect tense forms in English language. The difference in use of these tenses in English is maintained with great consistency as compared with the similarly formed tenses in Danish and Germanic languages. As the difference in use of these tenses is not there in Germanic languages, the English speaking Germans make wrong use of these forms: 'Were you in Berlin?' for 'Have you been in Berlin?' Similar wrong use of tense could be marked in this sentence: 'In 1815 Napoleon has been defeated at Waterloo.' In French language also the distinction between 'I wrote' and 'I have written' is abandoned; on the other hand the distinction applies only to the past while in English it is carried through all tenses. English the simple past tense, present perfect and past perfect tense forms are used to communicate the definite past, recent past and remote past respectively.

Freedom of Choice of Words:

Vocabulary of a language comprises a stock of words used by speakers of the language in the speech act. Vocabulary comprises words and their different forms in terms of nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs etc. As compared to other languages English vocabulary, to a large

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VOL 2, ISSUE 2   **www.puneresearch.com/times**   **APR-JUNE 2017**
(IMPACT FACTOR 2.07) INDEXED, PEER-REVIEWED / REFEREED INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

extent, is free from the narrow-minded attitude. English men have been open minded in receiving words and making them a part of their vocabulary. Many words which were found synonymous with the native words were given new significance. For instance, the French word 'Prince' was attached new significance. In English there was no custom to give the ladies titles corresponding to those of their lords; but the word 'countess' (French word) was used as a title for the wife of an earl. The Indian words such as *ghee, achar, bhang, cheroot, Juggernaut* etc were naturalized in English vocabulary.

English men have been very patriotic in the matter of their language. Under the wave of nationalism during Elizabethan period Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, Marlowe and the authors of the Authorized Version of the Bible naturalized many Latin and French words in English. In 1660 under the auspices of the Royal Commission many Franco-Roman words were respelled on the sound system of the King Author's English. For instance, the Franco-Roman word 'nombre' (a derivative of Latin *numerus)* was introduced into English vocabulary during Middle English period. The same word was later respelled on the Anglo-Saxon sound system as 'number'; but the abbreviation 'No.' has continued till today.

Respect for the Logic of Facts:

Every language has a word making faculty based on the intuition lying in the social mind of the people. Because of the intuition the same sound in nature is heard by the people of two different languages differently. For instance the sound produced by a bell is heard 'Ding Dong' by the English men and the same sound is heard 'Tink Tink' by the Marathi speaking men. So in English it is called 'Ding Dong Bell' while in Marathi it is called 'Tink Tink Bell'. This is how intuition is at work while making new words in a language.

Logic of Facts with regard to Number:

In most languages there is narrow-minded pedantry which makes people shy of saying or writing things which are not 'strictly grammatical'. With regard to the rule of verb concord, a plural subject must take a plural verb and a singular subject must take a singular verb. The words such as *Family* and *Clergy* are, grammatically speaking, of the singular number; but in reality they indicate a plurality. Most languages treat such subjects as singulars, but in English one is free to add a verb in the singular if the idea of unity is essential, and then to refer to this as a unit. The same subject can take the verb in the plural if the idea of plurality is implied. English offers this liberty of choice to the speakers and it is often greatly advantageous in communication.

Grammatical Unity:

English offers freedom to its speakers to make long sentences consisting of several parts expressing grammatical unity. Such expressions create beauty in communication. For instance, mark beauty in the following expression 'I do not think 1ever spent a more delightful three weeks before' (Darwin) 'Pursuit of excellence involves a man in imaging and constant focusing his efforts to concentrate all the forces of the universe work for that inspired mind and thereby leading him to inventions or discoveries'.

Use of Adverbs or Prepositional Complexes Attributively:

English speakers take liberty in using prepositions and adverbs to form compounds and phrases. Such compounds and phrases communicate exact sense in minimum words and thus add beauty to the expression. For instance 'Men invite their out-college friends', 'he is smoking his before-breakfast pipe', 'an almost reconciliation', 'his then residence', 'a would-be artist', 'a stay-at-home man' etc. Whole phrases or sentences may be turned into a kind of adjective. Such expressions become catchy for their inherent subtlety. Mark pointedness in the following expressions: 'with a quite at home kind of air', 'in the pretty diamond-cut-diamond scene between Pallas and Ulysses' Such expressions made by authors become models for common men to make their expressions effective and thus they gain currency in the language society. Besides this, ese expressions open up immense possibilities of the language before a speaker; however the language grows.

Conclusion:

English language has imbibed most of the characteristic features of the British man's personality trait. The development of English language goes parallel with the development of the national consciousness of the British men. The major events serving mile stones in the development of English language are the Treaty of Wedmore, the Norman Conquest, and The English Renaissance. Through these events the British men learnt a lot on the line of finding own ways of progress. The development of English was enhanced when the English men switched over from synthetic pattern to analytical pattern. Secondly, the English men's open mindedness in the matter of accepting words, word-making techniques enriched the Vocabulary of this language. Thirdly, the English men's love of liberty and creativity rather than their obedience of the grammatical principles developed in this language the capacity of beauty and exactitude. English men's adherence to the logic of facts rather to the grammatical rules has developed English language as a perfect medium for literature and science.

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VOL 2, ISSUE 2   **www.puneresearch.com/times**   **APR-JUNE 2017**
(IMPACT FACTOR 2.07) INDEXED, PEER-REVIEWED / REFEREED INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL