

### **The English language of the 21 century**

The English language has changed from the Shakespearean age and through the centuries, and continues to evolve even now. Strange (or “un-English”) words are creeping into the dictionary through usage, and some words are being pushed into writing even before you can find them in any English dictionary. Language is the product of society. As a society changes, so does its language. One of the greatest signs of a changing language is the rapid expansion of its lexicons. Over the past 30 years, the dictionaries have grown at unprecedented levels. Words attesting to the rich contribution of global cultures, words created for scientific use, words recognizing technological advances, and, of course, words representing contemporary culture have expanded the English language. This means that we are really in the heart of ongoing changes, although we cannot notice them bright enough. Some of the biggest changes to language happen slowly and take many centuries.

Every language changes over time, and varies from place to place. It can change as a result of social and political pressures, such as immigration and colonization. New vocabulary is necessary for the latest inventions, like transport, domestic appliances, as well as for sporting, entertainment and industrial equipment and leisure pursuits. Besides, a language may also change through less important means.

Plastics, cell phones, automatic machines and the Internet were not used in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, for example. With using new and updating terms, we all drive languages change. But a special way that individuals speak too fuels language change. The reason is that there are no two individuals who use the same language in absolutely the same way. The phrases and vocabulary people use depend on the area they live, their age, social status, education level and other factors. Because of our interactions, we get new words, sayings, phrases and integrate them into our speech. Children, teens and young adults often use different sentences and words from their parents and grandparents. Some of them pass through the population and very slowly change the language. This way, every successive generation makes its own contribution into this process, but we can notice it when sufficient time has elapsed.

We can divide the language changes into some types: Lexical changes, Phonetic changes, Spelling changes and Semantic changes. Vocabulary changes very quickly as new words are borrowed and adopted from other languages, words also can get combined or shortened. A small part of words is even created by mistake. Changes in pronunciation are somewhat more difficult to document. For example, during the so-called “Great Vowel Shift” which took place 500 years ago, native English speakers modified their pronunciation of vowel dramatically. This change represents the most important difference between the pronunciations of Middle and Modern English.

The topic of language changes contains a lot of questions. What is the value of this process? Does it ruin English? If it does what will happen with this language in some centuries? Or it may lead to some other effects on the language. Does this process help people to be closer?

It is very difficult to answer all these questions. But I think that we can't judge this process. It is a normal, inevitable and ever-lasting process.

### **Литература**

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