

Dialectics of English Linguistics

Dr Raja Ambethkar M¹, Dr K B Glory²

¹Associate Professor, Dept of English, K L E F, Vaddeswaram, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India-522502

²Assistant Professor of English, K L E F, Vaddeswaram, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India-522502

Abstract

The research article "DIALECTICS OF ENGLISH LINGUISTICS" is an outcome of the direct study and observation of the use of English, of the teaching faculty at about 21 colleges, particularly Engineering colleges in Coastal Andhra area. It intends to expose various dialectics of English as a second language, identify redundant usage and use effective English. Change of trends in meaning and usage occurs mainly in the two components of communication, namely vocabulary and grammar, due to lack of clear understanding of Syntax and Semantics. Form of words like heterophones, besides other forms, confuses the learners. Confusion over the use of the American, the Australian, the British and the Indian English, in pronunciation, spelling as well as meaning: Word such as 'Offing' to mean 'likely to happen soon' is quite misleading. Exposure to Mass Usage has great influence on pronunciation of words by the masses and media Ex. Koombing, 'baeverse' etc. Bilingual errors, the result of undue influence of mother tongue, is a proven case, in all Indian States. Similarly the use of double positives, wrong association of words, double negatives, and mistaken negatives as positives has become the worst cases of mass influence. Use of colloquial or slang words due to interaction with people from different regions on account of L.P.G, result in assimilation, integration of this class of vocabulary, percolating subconsciously by the process of osmosis. Lack of suitable vocabulary, among English professionals ranging from lecturers to professionals, lead to monotonous use of words. For example, the word "beautiful" is used to describe many nouns.

Keywords: Dialectics, language, influence, communication, pronunciation..

1. Introduction

Poor grammar can lead to disastrous consequences. Wrong usage or interpretation can cause aversion to learning English, and annoys listeners. (Thrible-E for Triple-E (EEE); "THRIBLE-bed" for THREE-BED Room) are only a few cases.

Inability to collocate words and phrases creates 'gap fillers'. When these dialectics are identified and judiciously applied, there is no reason why one can't speak perfect and natural English effectively, with a chuckle.

According to 'Oxford dictionary of Philosophy', (Greek, dialektikē, the art of conversation or debate) Dialectics is the reasoning or logical structure that holds together a continuous argument or exposition;

Dialectics is fundamentally, the process of reasoning to obtain truth and knowledge on any topic. (This means 'to converse', or 'to discuss'). It is a method of argument or exposition.

Dialectics, I mean, is the art of formal reasoning, especially the procedure of seeking truth through debate or discussion;

Changes of meaning occur mainly in two components of communication, the vocabulary and grammar, due to lack of clear understanding of Syntax and Semantics.

Exposure to Mass Usage: Wrong pronunciation of words by the masses / mass media is misleading multitudes of people.

For example,

1. 'Hello! Wooyers' for 'Hello! Viewers'
2. 'Back to back' photo copying for 'front and back'
3. 'Koombing' for 'combing, in almost all TV Channels

4. 'Baeverse' fellow for 'Be worse' etc.
5. 'Black' teaching for 'block' Teaching (B. Ed students)
6. 'Bad rule note book' for 'broad rule' etc.

Bilingual errors as a result of undue influence of mother tongue are used from English with Telugu a proven case of mass influence in all Indian States, as 'plastic-glassu.

Bilingual Errors - This is also a proven case of mass influence in most Indian States. In Andhra Pradesh, English is combined with Telugu; For example,

1. Plastic – glass;
2. Whole – Mottham;
3. Total – Mottham;
4. Paper – Kagitham;
5. Prakka – side;
6. Salt – Uppu [powdered salt];
7. Danger – Apaayam etc;
8. Saar Garu

Use of double positives: Worst case of mass influence: Most speakers take it for granted that these usages are correct when they use these phrases by the peer groups who happened to be educated or doing some important job.

A few examples are

1. Must and should
2. In case if
3. Could able to
4. Same ditto

5. Please kindly
6. Suppose if
7. Repeat again
8. Why because
9. Because since
10. Return back
11. Regarding with
12. Just for merely

Is English a funny language? [Find out whether or not the following is a double positive]
Is anything wrong with these?

1. I saw the incident
2. I saw the incident with my eyes
3. I saw the incident with my own eyes

Some times wrong association of words leads to wrong usage, as

1. 'comedy' with 'tragedy' is quite misleading
2. 'worthful' candidate 'just as 'faithful' candidate

Use of double negatives: Some people subconsciously make sentences which mean just the opposite of what they intend to convey. This is possible when double negatives are used as,

1. You can't do nothing man ...
2. Unless you don't work hard ...

Mistaken negatives as positives

1. I am studying very hardly.

Lack of suitable vocabulary, in case of English teachers ranging from lecturer to professors, leading to use of one and the same word "beautiful" to describe many nouns.

For example,

Sl. No	Statement	Wrong	Right
1.	How is the song?	beautiful	melodious
2.	How is the food?	beautiful	delicious
3.	How is the lesson?	beautiful	interesting/boring / monotonous
4.	What is your experience?	beautiful	Strange / thrilling
5.	How is my diagram?	beautiful	artistic / skilful
6.	How is the marriage?	beautiful	grand, gorgeous, splendid

Form of words is a concern for many:

Confusion over words is quite misleading because they carry entirely different meaning from what we generally think of : For example,

1. Offing = likely to happen soon; not far away
2. Spoils = stolen goods
3. Worst = defeat; Worsted = fine twisted woolen thread

Confusion over words related to different classes of vocabulary: Lack of awareness: As most people are unaware of substitutes or alternatives

2. Confusion over Antonyms:

1. The bride groom is tall but the bride is short
2. These vegetables are fresh, but those are not good (in stead of 'stale')

3. A large number of scholars use the opposite of the word "higher" as "loayer"

Confusion over Homonyms:

1. Defer (v) = postpone (Payment is differed)
2. Defer (v)= give way to some body to express views out of respect (I defer to the experts)

Confusion over Homophones: Recall Derrida for a moment!

Defer (v) = postpone (Payment is differed)
Differ (v) = to disagree (to be unlike)

3. Confusion over words particularly heterophones:

For example, the word object may be pronounced in two different ways obviously leading to change in meanings: The word "object" /**abdʒikt**/ means a solid thing where as when pronounced as /**bdʒekt**/ it means protest. Many such words are

converse	express	resume
conduct	minute	wind
contract	premises	wound
content	present	
customs	quarters	

Excessive use of Idioms: The idiom ups and downs is different from up and downs. 95% of the professionals among Engineering Faculty are unable to distinguish them .

Alphabet not to be spoken out (silent letters) but spoken: For example,

Debris /**deibri** /=scattered fragments,
Debut /**diebju** /=First appearance in public as performer
Rapport / raepc: = good relationship with some one

Words containing letters that are spoken differently: Words like Champaign, Rendezvous.

Use of colloquial or slang words: Use of colloquial or slang words: Use of language permitted between close friends in a relaxed situations. Due to L.P.G, the human traffic has increased many fold. There is greater interaction between the people of native speakers of English and the non- native speakers. As a result, assimilation and integration of this class of vocabulary i.e. colloquial and slang words percolate unconsciously by the process of osmosis.

A few examples of this category are as follows:

1. Grub = food (infml)
2. Ain't = contracted form of am/is/are not
3. You bloody! What the hell are you talking? = Used to express anger
4. Gonna = going to
5. Wanna = want to
6. Fag = cigarette
7. Bull shit = nonsense or rubbish
8. Bugger = annoying or contemptible person
9. Bucks = US dollar (infml)
10. Shucks = Used to express annoyance, regret or embarrassment (interj)

Influence of mother tongue changes pronunciation in crores of teachers in most Indian States:

Words (not shown in phonetic script), as

1. Littil for Li'l;
2. /**dia**/ for deer,
3. Lajy for lazy;
4. Yerly for early;
5. Sensi-bully for sensibly;
6. Caeli-flower for cauliflower

Sentences as,

“You came aaa?”
 “She finishedaaaaa?”

Attachment of Stigma (Psychological) : Fear of difference of status in the public: When people of higher position speak, others decline even if they know it to be wrong.

A Senior Research Guide (Computer Science) at a famous University questioned the need for research in English and said, “There are a number of designs for research and you can choose any one PATRON” (instead of PATTERN)

Response: Research is necessary for your kind of people.

Kindly recall “William Shakespeare”! Is it justifiable to say? “The most unkindest cut of all”

Unaware of / Confused figures of speech such as: For example, I can’t lie at the office

Wrong usage or interpretation: For example,

A number of teachers ranking from Lecturers to professors at Engineering colleges use ‘Thrible – E’ for ‘Triple E’ (EEE):

1. A said to B: I bought a “THRIBLE- BED” Room house”. How many rooms are there in that house?
2. If so, how many rooms are there in a ‘THREE- BED’ Room apartment?

Inability to collocate words and phrases creates confusion: ‘Understanding people are suffering’

Gap Fillers - due to non-availability of suitable vocabulary

1. Yesterday I took.... aaa
2. I’m talking about.. I’mn (I mean) this thing

4. Grammar

Poor grammar can lead to disastrous consequences. Wrong usage or interpretation can cause aversion to learning English, and annoys listeners.

Possibility of wrong interpretation that may lead to misunderstanding and strife at times:

One Asst. Professor in English said, “I’m not free, ‘I am having periods’ ” (The intention of the speaker is to say that she is busy with class work.)

How many of you in the hall are gay?
 (The word ‘gay’ may mean ‘a homosexual person’ or the adjective ‘happy’).

A manager instructed his office secretary “open your drawer and search for the missing money”. The office secretary slapped him at once. Who’s wrong?

[A drawer could mean a. [furniture](#); b. A person who engages in [drawing](#) pictures; c. a person who draws a bill of exchange; [Undergarment](#), underwear; [Cash drawer](#).]

Confused interpretations / Lack of perceptions:

Study the following statement: X said to Y “Thank you for helping me”. What does this indicate?

What does it actually mean? Try selecting the answer from the options given below:

1. X received help
2. X did not receive help yet
3. Could be Either a or b
4. Could be neither a nor b

Unfamiliarity with phrasal verbs: The use of phrasal verbs is on the rise due to more of globalization. As they are also act as idioms they pose problems to many speakers.

1. A girl complained to the Principal of a college: “Mr X [laughed at](#) me”. The boy was suspended as a result.
2. In reality the situation was different. Mr X did not laugh at. He only smiled. The consequence might be the same for either of the actions, but the cause is definitely different.

Destructive Feedback or Poor feedback: These can hinder or help the interest and development of learning of the individual.

Present trends: A number of fallacies become obstacles to teaching as well as learning English:

Of many, a few are tested and the results show are worth mentioning: they may be

1. I know everything and I don’t need to learn because I’m in higher position
2. Need not pay attention; I can learn later
3. Preoccupation with something else
4. Prejudice and Self-centeredness
5. Lack of opportunities to practice
6. It’s a difficult language to learn
7. Being laughed at if I make mistakes
8. Casual listening would help learn automatically

Pronunciation matters: Confusion over the use of the American Computer Dictionary, the Australian, the British and the Indian English, in pronunciation as well as spelling.

S. No.	Word	American pronunciation	British
1.	past	/Paest/	/Pa:st/
2.	Schedule	/ʃ edju:l/	/ʃ kedju:l/
3	traveling	traveling	travelling

Word	British pronunciation	Australian
Wait	/weit/	/wait/
Eight	/eit/	/ait/

Word	British Spelling	Australian
programme	programme	program

In recent times proper pronunciation is essential not only to the speaker but also to the listener. Good pronunciation is like an ornament to the speech.

Over correction / Wrong Correction: The speaker may hesitate to speak again if he is corrected over and over again: However, unless the mistakes made are corrected orally or written at the appropriate time, place and method, it would lead to persistent drawbacks.

A Case Study: A blessing in disguise One of the non- native speakers of English happened to be my hostel mate. Having come from a local medium school, he said one day that “You fellows ‘We the understanding people are suffering’ (people standing in the ground floor) and ‘You the upper sitting people are enjoying (on the terrace), escaping the assigned duty.”

However, as people started teasing him for his poor English, he took it a challenge and opted English at the university level and today he is a Ph. D in English, working as a professor in Kerala. Sometimes such situation as this becomes a blessing in disguise.

5. Conclusion

Basically, non-native learners of English have three problems: Besides vocabulary, grammar and language skills, there is a dire need for teachers to identify the latest changing dialectics and trends before they go for teaching English.

Language can be further be improved by imitation of correct usage and regular practice. Many professors and comedians are able to imitate perfectly the speech of actors, politicians and even the native speakers. There is no reason why we can't speak a foreign language with a perfect, natural accent. If one has determination to learn English, it can be spread and learnt as effectively as an airborne contagion does. When these dialectics are identified and judiciously applied, there is no reason why one can't speak perfect and natural English effectively, with a chuckle.

References

- [1] Collins, P.and Hollo,C(2000)English grammar: an introduction. London : Macmillan.
- [2] Dixon, R.M.W(1991) A new approach to English grammar, on semantic principles.
- [3] Oxford :Clarendon press.
- [4] Palmer, H.E.(1924)A grammar of spoken English, on a strictly phonetic basis. Cambridge :W. Heffer & sons Ltd.
- [5] Gleason, Jr., H. A. (1965) Linguistics and English grammar. New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Toronto, and London: Holt, Rine hart and Winston.