

Appraising the Origins of British Language and the Challenges of Business Communication

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ABSTRACT

The English language has shown the same history and development as Anglo-Saxon and British peoples. English ancestors were great warriors and business people. They showed great achievements in Germanic, Scandinavian, Greek, Roman, French, English and American wars, and other activities. This makes English a relevant and suitable language for Wars, social and economic activities; hence the sociolinguistic origins and dimensions of English and business. Nevertheless, this well-known and important language is challenged by business demands that shape and reshape English for communication in the direction of modernity and globalization. The purpose of this analysis is to use structuralism criticism to revisit the diachronic and synchronic aspects of the language to demonstrate connections and interconnections between the origins of the language, its development and the use of business communication for the promotion of social, political and economic activities. Languages promotion and business development or success are then interdependent for sustainable development.

Keywords: The English language, challenges, business communication, globalization, sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

English is the local language of England. It became the official and the national language of the United Kingdom, and later that of British Empire. It is still the official language of Britain and the Commonwealth. Its complexity originated from Germany, Rome and their associated territories. John Oakland shares it well:

From 600 BC – AD 1066, the islands experienced successive settlement and invasion patterns from peoples who originated in mainland Europe, such so-called Celts, Belgic tribes, Roman, Germanic tribes (Anglo-Saxons) Scandinavians and Normans. (Oakland, 3).

This further means that the forefathers, fathers, mothers and other parents of the English are mainly from Europe and associated territories or allies. The word English is an adjective from England; meaning the English language, English people or any object, material, thing and territory connected to England or deriving from it. The complex composition of the language makes it shown in its synchronic, diachronic, semantic and syntactic construction. It is then evident that people make languages and that no one can exist out of people who use or speak them. How can we understand the international spreading of English in social activities, mainly in Business? Different populations movements and linguistic developments of Anglo-Saxons

have favoured this reality that has made British people the greatest in the world, and who unfortunately, are economically challenged by others.

The purpose of this analysis is to base on Anglo-Saxon populations, individual, successive or collective, migratory and immigratory movements which have made up multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-social, or mixed ethnic groups, to revisit the imperialistic, colonialist and international socio-political, cultural, scientific and economic dimensions of the language in the world and mainly in Business communication.

Added to diverse documents and some empirical data that I have used, structuralist criticism has inspired and guided this study through which the diachronic, synchronic and semiotic dimensions of the language have been pointed out, to further explain and discover its utility and functions in classical, modern or electronic business. Qualitative and quantitative approaches have been associated to this research process and analysis to help present the achievements, challenges and new perspectives for coping with multilingualism highly influencing business and electronic business today. Two parts compose the work: the history of the English language and business communication, and challenges and new perspectives for the English language and Business communication.

THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

The History of the English Language and Business Communication

A language is a system of oral, written and signs communication, used to inform, educate, sensitize and entertain people and societies, through messages receiving or producing in close relation with language needs. (Hutchinson and Walters,27). The function of a language is to satisfy people's needs, general and specific needs through the expression of social ideas, thoughts, feelings and actions. Language then exists and moves on the rhythm of people and societies in time and space. Peoples' history then determines the evolution, the nature and the function of a language. The English language has been developed in the same vein. English peoples' history is the cornerstone of the changes, shaping and functioning systems of the English language. Even its composition has not escaped from the movements of earlier generations: "Furthermore, the word English derives from the name of the only one of the Germanic speakers who brought their language to the British Isles in the fifth century AD and not even the tribe that was originally dominant. (Brookes, Groves et al.,21).The very first and original speakers of the language came from modern Germanic family of languages that is a subset of the Indo-European family, including modern German Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, Iceland and others. English Ancestors had got close link with British and Anglo-Saxon peoples. Their ancient Germans caused great sorrows to the Roman Empire. Nevertheless, they were fierce, strong and brave warriors whom Rome hired as mercenaries to secure the extremities of the Empire, like Britannia, newly acquired. Those mercenaries came mainly from three different Germanic tribes: the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes. Not long after they arrived the Roman Empire collapsed and mercenaries stayed. They re-conquered the Britons and renamed them Welsh which in their language meant 'foreigners'. The three tribes initially stayed divided into Angles and Saxons (the Jutes seem to have been absorbed by the Angles Those coming from different tribes brought different dialects from Angles and Saxons. They mixed to give various accents of the language spoken in Britain as Old English or Anglo-Saxon. Modern English shows more Anglian influence than Anglo-Saxon English. In the following passage from the Old English poem, Beowulf, Anglo-Saxon words are glossed in italics :*Him se yldestra andswarode*/Him the

eldest answered // *Werodes wisa wordhord onleac*/The company's leader (his) word-board unlocked // *We synt gumcynnes greata leode*/We are the men of the Geatish people // *Ond Higelaces heorth geneatas*./And Higelac's hearth-companions.// *Waes min faeder falcum gecythed*,My father was known among his folk//*Aethele ordfrumea Ecgtheow haten*./a noble war-leader named Ecgtheow //*Gebad wintra worn aer he on weg hwurfe*./He lived many winters ere he went on his way.//*Gamol of geardum*!Old of years.(Ibid.).

Some words are recognizable: him, word, he, on; others have changed so little that their meanings are quite obvious: hord (hoard), ond (and); faeder (father), folcum (folk); some words have their equivalents in modern English, but they changed enough that the connection is not immediately obvious: gecythed means 'known' and survives adjective uncouth; gebad means 'lived' or 'stayed', and survives in bide and abide; geardum is a form of the word gear, year – anglo-Saxon ge - often becomes ye in Modern English. Only a handful words in the passage are truly unfamiliar: werodes (a company of men); ordfruma (war-leader); aethele (noble).

More than these pure and simple linguistic aspects of the Old English language, other socio-political, cultural and economic factors from British history have highly influenced the linguistic construction of the language. Understanding more British history, linguists agree that English began its formation around the time that Germanic tribes, the Angles and the Saxons invaded Britain in the early 5th century. Before that period, a variety of Celtic languages were spoken in the country. But, these languages were overtaken by the Western Germanic language of Anglo-Saxon settlers.(https://blog.e2language.com/A_brief_history_of_the_English_language”).

After the 5th century, the 9th century had been influenced by the Norsemen, the medieval Norwegians and the Germanic languages arrival in Britain. Indeed, hundreds of Norse words or phrases entered the Anglo-Saxon language. This includes: words like anger, birth, cake, dirt, gift, knife, leather, mistake, rotten, same, steak, take, though, they, until, want, wing, you and they ,etc. Furthermore, English words that begin with 'sk' are of Norse origin. They include : skate, skid, skill, skin, skip, skirt, skull and sky...The French Normans conquered Britain in 1066 and remained the dominant ruling class until the 15th century. The Middle English then occurred, with about 10,000 Norman French words entering Anglo-Saxon vocabulary. These words are related to government ,law, diplomacy, art, architecture, politics and literature. In this vein, about a third of current English vocabulary comes from French.

Linguists estimate that by the end of Norse and Norman invasions of Britain, over 80 per cent of the Anglo-Saxon words had overtaken. Celtic as the language of Britain, had been replaced. Many Latin and Greek words entered the language in 14th -17th centuries. (Ibid;).With the Norman rule over Britain, the middle English has been formed into the current version. The endings of old English words were replaced by those of middle English such as “s” at the end of nouns to indicate plurality. Some of the changes were sound changes which influenced pronunciations. The pronunciations of long vowels changed as well as some consonants, which became silent, such as the “k” in knife. This shows the reason why the spelling of many words doesn't match how they sound. Throughout the Middle English period, English was a spoken dialect without a standard written code. Prior to this, literature in Britain was written in Latin or French, before the birth of English literature by Geoffrey Chaucer and with written English

Canterbury Tales. It also included words from Old English, (loving and friendly), to which he has added around 2,000 new words such as outrageous, horizon and superstitious.

However, up to the Canterbury Tales, English did not yet have a codified written form. There was no connection between spelling and pronunciation. The literature from this area shows the random spelling of the same words used by different writers, and Chaucer himself spelled the same words differently in the same piece of work. For example, "year" can be found spelled as "yere" and "yeer". Then, with the introduction of the printing press, to Britain in 1467? the London dialect, which had displaced Norman French as the language of government, began to be codified in written form through literature. It then became necessary to have a commonly standardized system of writing English. But, only the first dictionaries, published in the 18th century has made this dream a reality ,with that spelling and grammar ,in a form of Early Modern English, the language of William Shakespeare.

After this step, followed the globalization of English with British imperialism, in the 16th century throughout the wider world as British Empire began to establish colonies, bringing its language with it .Although English has become a world language ,there are many different forms such as American English, Australian English, Canadian English as well as the forms of English spoken in South Asia, in the West Indies and in Africa ,which have distinct varieties.

Forms of the English Language and Business Communication

Getting further inspiration from the above-mentioned development of the English language, structuralist criticism has helped to shed light on diachronic and synchronic aspects of English throughout qualitative and quantitative approaches. As a matter of fact, this language has been developed along with the social, cultural, sociological, historical scientific, political and economic heritage of Anglo-Saxon, English or British populations. These dimensions have guided, shaped and impacted the intrinsic and extrinsic construction of English, in terms of semantics, syntax, morphology, phonetics and phonology. This structuralist theoretical framework of the study has been aided with various data collected from books, journals, articles, other printed sources or on line.

From various sources, the understanding is evident that there are complex and integrated socio-linguistic, historical, sociological and cultural relations between Old English, Middle English and Modern English .They are forefathers of the current forms of English, British and other Anglo-Saxon languages, inside or outside the United Kingdom. Most of them are from common origins in their multiple diversities. They are called Anglo-Saxon, British and English languages, depending on the regions, countries and societies. In this vein, the English, the Welsh, the Scottish, the Irish are all British or Anglo-Saxon languages. They likewise make identify the populations who speak the language. They are modified or influenced by socio-political and economic realities of countries who speak the language. These forms of the language take different names: American English, Canadian English, New Zealand English, Irish English, Welsh English, Scottish English, Nigerian English, Canadian English, South African English, East African English, etc. Borrowings, have also played a great part in the composition of English. Some examples are Latin phrases in fine (in the end); manu militari (with force); de noctu (by night); in cognito (secretly). Some Greek words have adopted in English: apostles, bishop, priest; church etc. Some botanic names in hard sciences also show this flexible way for the English language to borrow and adapt words or phrases from other languages. Examples:

the botanic name of baobab: *Adansonia digitata* ; the botanic name of pepper :*capsicum* ; the botanic name of rice :*oriza sativa*; the botanic name of maize : *zea pays* ; the botanic name of potato: *solanum tuberosum*, etc.

The English language has become, in British history, a strong tool for imperialism and colonization. It has been the official language of the British Empire. It has even become one of the main conditions to get British citizenship, then used for political purposes: "Applicants must now demonstrate knowledge about life in Britain, reach an acceptable level of English proficiency, attend a citizenship ceremony and swear a citizenship oath and pledge to the Queen and the country." (Oakland,70). English has been shown as closely part of Anglo-Saxons and their partners' languages in all social fields of activities. English has then become the language of all business, spoken and used in trade, in science, in education, in politics, in finance, in tourism, in agriculture, in games or sports, in transport, telecommunication and Technologies of Information and Communication, in electronic communication or media. This specific form of English for various purposes is called English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

We then have English for business, for trade, for international trade, for politics, for sociology, for economy, for sciences, for technology, for agriculture, for fishing, for forestry, for aquaculture, for civil engineering, for rural engineering, for fishing, for soil science, for education, for teaching, for medical science, for mathematics, for applied chemistry, for electronics, for communication, for geography, etc. Anglo-Saxon peoples have been for the world imperialism great conquerors or warriors, helping Greek imperialism until its collapse, helping Roman imperialism until its end, and playing a great role in different world wars with domination and victory. So they are all business, turning English into a business language for the whole world.

The meaning of ESP keeps its whole and original understanding. ESP then closer means the use of the language for specific professional and training requisites:

ESP, like any form of language... has paid scant attention to the question of how people learn, focusing instead on the question of what people learn, has in other words, been language-centered..., with very important insights into the nature of specific language needs. (Hutchinson and Waters).

These diachronic aspects of English for various purposes closely influence the synchronic dimensions of the English language; which puts a focus on the structure, functions, meanings and manifestations of the English language for business and e-business communication:

Flourishing in the 1960s, Structuralism is an approach to literary analysis grounded in structural linguistics, the science of language. By utilizing the techniques, methodologies and vocabulary of linguistics, structuralism offers scientific view of how we achieve Smeaning, not only in literary works but in all forms of communication and social behavior (Bressler ,59).

The English language is the official language of British and Anglo-Saxon peoples. It has been used to help and boost British and English imperialism and colonization. It has been a sine qua non condition to get British citizenship. It is still the official language of the UK and the Commonwealth. English is also the major condition for countries to belong to the

Commonwealth: "English in its many varieties remains the common language of the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth games". Oakland, Ibid.).

All those multiple functions of English orient the structural: semantic and syntactic meanings of English used for many various objectives. Whether grammatically, semantically, logically or coherently correct built, English oral or written sentences make use of words or phrases highly keeping their historical or original development of those words adapted to the purposes of communication. Whatever the form of the English language, the morphological aspects are perceived in the use.

Indeed, Morphology is the study of the internal structure of words. It is the study of systematic covariation in the form and meaning of words. It is the study of the combination of morphemes to yield words. (Haspelmath and Sims;1,2,3). A morphological structure shows words easily segmented into individually meaningful parts. Examples: - read: read-s, read-er, read-able; - wash: wash-es, wash-er, wash-able; kind: kind-ness, un-kind; -friendly: -friendli-ness, unfriendly.

Whatever the forms of words or phrases, inflection, derivation, paradigms and compounding intervene through the use of affixes, bases and roots. Words formation closely functions with words meaning to offer messages and communicate. Semantics is the study of the meanings of linguistic expressions, either simple or complex, taken in isolation. It further accounts for the interfaces of expression meaning with utterance meaning and communicative meaning". (Lobner,16). Semantics then sends to different in the study of words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs and texts. Surface meaning, common meaning, dictionary or denotative meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, political meaning, economic meaning, sociological meaning, cultural meaning, etc., may be examined to exhaustively understand a word, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph or a text. An example: - The economic meaning of customs is taxes; its social meaning social or traditional rules.

"Syntax means sentence construction: how words group together to make phrases and sentences. Some people also use the term grammar to mean the same as syntax, although most linguists follow the more recent practice whereby the grammar of a language includes all of its organizing principles; information about the sound system, about the form of words, how we adjust language according to context, and so on; syntax is only one part of this grammar". (Tallerman,1). Syntactic or grammatical organization of the English language, sends to the structural organization of the language in terms of subjects, verbs, objects or complements, with the identification of noun phrases, verbs phrases, the main clauses, the subordinate clauses, etc. Whether the English language is turned into a lingua franca, a pidgin, a broken English, a glottalized language or any other varieties of English, grammatical, semantical and morphological principles are more or less combined to convey messages, and make us have a specific form of English to be used in social activities or business, all over the world.

SOCIO-LINGUISTIC CHALLENGES OF ENGLISH IN SOCIAL AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Use and Utility of English Facing the Demands of Modernity and Globalization

The English language, from its remote origins up to now, has been a language of warriors, then that of wars. English ancestors had been hired by Greek authorities for conquest wars. Various Greek words or phrases had been mixed to English and had even influenced or transformed it. It has been the same, when they helped Roman imperialism to make collapse Greek Empire. Latin, Italian and other Roman languages integrated the English languages and added other transformations to it. This simply means that with the changing development of English, the pure native and original ancestors could not recognize the language of their parents in these Greek and Roman contexts. The English has become a very tolerable language, betrayal like this ,its socio-philosophical identity for political, military, economic or business purposes.

British imperialism, through colonization, is a complex linguistic challenge to the English languages. Whatever the land and peoples in the world, English should be taught to them to conquer them. This linguistic mission is to be assumed before a civilized one for colonization. The English language has played a great role as a medium of information and communication during the World Wars I and II, and others in the world. This has favoured the breaking of the language in Nigeria, in America and in other parts, as a lingua franca, losing its original linguistic principles in which even the pure native English, British ,or English speakers could get lost and disfavored in social, political activities and in business. These various forms of English sometimes betray grammatical rules edited and coded in the language. It makes great confusions in the speakers ,listeners and writers of the language.

External language competitions are also threatening. Germans, French, Russians, Chinese, Japanese, Italians speak their languages in official speeches and use them for business competition. In political conventions and cooperation, some of those countries make their languages teach in primary, secondary schools and universities, to make sure of their influences in the international communities. Beside the use of English in business Japanese, Chinese, Germans and others use their language to impose their products and services. They usually added to the translations of the names of their manufactured products their translations in their languages to make it travel all over the world and to value their own local or native languages, and also advertise about their linguistic cultures or sell them to other populations. The option today, for each country to better achieve its development, is to promote their local and native languages to decolonize linguistically and socio-linguistically their citizens' minds and to orient them to the integration of their local languages into the whole process of their sustainable development. This linguistic approach developing in this era of globalization and easy exchange of information, may become a threat to the linguistic expansion of English and a great challenge for which other non-imperialist strategies but mutual and complementary policies should be thought and implemented to make the English language and the native and local ones of each country develop without jeopardizing the socio-political, cultural, scientific and economic interests of one another.

This multilingualism trend is then and highly competing or challenging the promotion of English in politics, economies and business. There is a socio-psychological and philosophical realities in the development of a language that we should keep in mind to work and find ways for a sustainable promotion of a language .A language is created with the birth of a society. It

develops and is carried throughout times on line with the evolution of societies .In other words, it behaves as peoples who appeared in time, grew up ,got outdate or old and disappeared definitely ,when nothing is done to make them regenerate There is the example of Latin which is less used today so that it is called a dead language compared to the use of English in the world ..It is the same with the Greek language which has also been the most important and the most spoken language, and the most developed language in the world during Greek imperialism and which is less used today ,and even abandoned in business or in international relations .Those examples should make English people, English promoters and speakers think about new alternatives or perspectives to make the language useful and used sustainably, in spite of the current challenges that the promotion of the English language is facing .

Another series of challenges connected to the use of English is that of the electronic use of the language. Almost all of electronic programmers on internet throughout Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and others ,are set in English, with an easy access to the whole world in a few seconds. This makes share easily official, business and other information; but criminality and other social immoralities are also shared to harm people in the world at the same speed. The English language has then become, in this context, the most helpful or helpless means of communication in electronic activities ,to contribute to construction or the destruction of the world when they are well used or misused.

Some research results show that the major founders or designers of these electronic systems are British, Anglo-Saxons or English. That is the reason why most of the software and hardware related to those machines and devices are designed, labeled or named in English. Google, Facebook, WhatsApp. In the worldwide context, English is most used for trade, research, games and leisure, in seminars or international round tables. Handling electronic devices needs a good knowledge of English language. Here are some usual words or phrases of computers, mobile phones and internet named in English: World Wide Web (WWW.); Universal Resources Locators (URLs); Personal Computer (PC); Keyboard; screen; database; mouse; Central Processing Unit (CPU); Hard disc; website; network; cyberspace. (Brookes,85).New and relevant perspectives are needed to make English overcome all those difficulties and threat ,and make it remain the most important and international language for social, political and economic activities.

New Perspectives in the Promotion and Development Process of English:

Tolerable linguistic aspects of the English language, accessible to everybody needs to be revisited on line with the globalization, modern and electronic demands today. For easy exchanges in business and other socio-economic activities, the linguistic and communication policies of British or Anglo-Saxon countries and institutions should be made more offensive and boosting for international cooperation. Scholarships to students and work opportunities to non-native people should be revisited, reinforced and sustained by laws and institutions in the vein of the English linguistic promotion for sustainable development. The imperialist English language should become intelligible and include partnership approaches in every domain for the promotion of values and services of both developed and underdeveloped countries.

British ,English or Anglo-Saxon embassies and consular institutions are needed in Francophone and other non-English or Anglophone areas to motivate the peoples of those areas have interests in learning and enjoying living in Anglophone areas or establishing social, political,

economic, scientific and commercial partnership with Anglo-Saxon or Anglophone peoples. Reinforcing the promotion of the English language learning clubs in schools all over the world by the English, Anglo-Saxon or Anglophone diplomatic institutions are necessary to boost the learning of English in schools all over the world. English language institutes are to be promoted in the same purpose. The promotion of bilingualism: English-French, English-Spanish, English-German, English-Arabic, vice versa ,and others , is a great opportunity for the development of this language in many other areas in the world. The teaching of English, itself, apart from the basic grammatical, semantic and morphological knowledge should take into consideration the specific purposes of social, political and economic activities of societies. Migration movements constitute another opportunity for the promotion of the English language, when they are well regulated and used for work, political, social and economic activities or services. The commonwealth community should revisit its linguistic laws, policies or projects in the vein of the promotion or development of English in the world. British cooperation and Interco operation policies should set a specific field of linguistic development oriented to the promotion of English. Electronic learning and development should be included to these rules, strategies and projects to make the promotion of English fit the current realities of globalization of electronic world. Nevertheless, the local languages promotion along with the promotion and use of English in societies, is another equation to solve.

CONCLUSION

English is an eclectic language resulting from Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Scandinavian, French, Italian, Roman, Greek, Nigerian..., languages. This makes it accessible to peoples and to the world. It fits many and linguistic rules and modifications, showing, by the fact, many diachronic and synchronic endeavors. It is commonly called the international language or is among the most spoken languages in the world. It is also known as a language of business. It is the useful and powerful language of information, education, entertainment and communication of regional and international institutions or associations.

Nevertheless, this well known, useful and important language is challenged by some locally linguistic policies in bilingual and multilingual approaches within countries that plead for the promotion of native languages for sustainable development. In spite of this reality, modernization and globalization still impose the English language in politics, sciences , technology, in education, social and economic activities in the world. In this competitive context, linguistic reorientation of English should integrate local realities of languages favorable to interrelations between English and other languages for the development of countries and other institutions. Electronic demands should also be taken into consideration for a short, middle and long-term success.

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