



Key Factors contributing to Language Variation

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Abstract

Language undergoes constant evolution due to various key factors. This review synthesizes insights from books and academic journals to examine the key factors driving language variation. Regional dialects, social hierarchies, migration, and historical events, such as colonization, significantly contribute to linguistic diversity. Additionally, globalization and digital communication accelerate language change by introducing new vocabulary and modifying linguistic structures. Political and educational systems also play a crucial role in shaping language standardization and variation. This paper aims to investigate on the significant factors that changes a language to variations which take place over periods of time on language characteristics. To collect the data, the researchers used research techniques such as textual and narrative analysis, and review synthesizes insights from books and academic journals to inspect the key factors that effect on language variation. The study reveals that there are many factors cause change in a language to dialects and accents such as social, geographical, cultural, and political factors. When a language changes to accents it changes from its pronunciation aspect but when a language changes to dialects the grammar, usage and vocabulary of the language are changing. So, it is a common phenomenon that a language changes to dialects and accents. Almost all languages change to various dialects and accents in their own area of spoken. The reason for such changes is needed to be cleared. So, in this paper I attempt to find out the result of what made English language to change, to what dialects, accents and finally variations.

Keywords: Effective Factors, English, Language, Variations

Introduction

Since society, culture, and individual needs are ever-changing, language is a system that is by its very nature dynamic and changeable. This continuous growth naturally leads to the emergence of language variation, which describes the various forms that a language might take. As Labov (2001) points out, a variety of factors influence how people and communities express themselves, which in turn drives linguistic diversity. These differences can arise in areas like usage, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, resulting in unique regional dialects, social dialects, and other forms of linguistic variety. A language's variations and modifications are caused by a number of important causes. Social influences such as socioeconomic status, gender, age, and ethnicity play a significant role in determining how

language evolves within different groups (Trudgill, 1974). For example, speakers from different social backgrounds or age groups often use language in ways that help to reinforce group identity or comply with social norms (Bourdieu, 1991). Geographical differences also strongly influence language, as people in different regions may develop unique linguistic features based on their local culture, history, and environment (Wells, 1982). In addition to these social and geographical factors, external influences, including language contact and technological advancements, also drive linguistic variation. The interaction between different languages and cultures often results in the blending and borrowing of linguistic elements, which can create new forms of speech (Haugen, 1950). This process has been further expedited by growing global interconnectedness, especially with the rise of English as a global lingua franca that integrates expressions and terminology from many languages and cultures (Crystal, 2003). The following questions are the focus of this study: What factors influence the formation of linguistic variations? Which aspects of a language get to change by the factors? To achieve the aims, the researcher used paper review, books, articles and journals to examine the key factors contributing to language variation. By analyzing sociolinguistic theories and historical case studies, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how and why languages change over time. It is a common phenomenon that almost all languages change to variations and verities but the reasons and factors for their changes are important to be known. That what elements go into a language's variants. Thus, English is spoken in a variety of ways, much like other languages. It indicates that there are multiple ways to speak the same term and that language is variable, meaning that there are multiple ways to convey the same thing. Speakers may have different accents, which are variations in pronunciation; lexicon-based word choices; and morphological and syntactic modifications, which result in variations in a language's grammar. The purpose of the study is to find out the factors affecting on language variations. To know when a language changes to dialects and accents. To know about the arbitrary characteristic of a language. A fundamental idea in sociolinguistics is language change, to the extent that it necessitates consideration of social variables. Since language is "a symbol system that is arbitrary," as Robin puts it, it can be said that society and its members have the power to alter and modify it. However, this requires community consensus and conventions, which lead to linguistic variations from one location, social group, and circumstance to another. Additionally, several social factors influence linguistic practices. People's main social considerations are those related to politics, business, education, interaction, and technology. The decision to look into these social determinants stems from earlier research on the sociolinguistics of language shift and endangerment conducted at the speech community level. Age, gender, socioeconomic class, and ethnic identification are some of the specific social elements that can influence learning a second language. Situational elements are those that change with every social encounter. Age, gender, socioeconomic class, and ethnic identification are some of the specific social elements that can influence learning a second language. Thus, a language might differ from one community to another for a variety of reasons. It is also evident that societal forces play a role in linguistic evolution. In order to set themselves apart from their elders, younger individuals modify the way they speak. The goal of islanders is to sound distinct from mainlanders. Working-class speakers try to sound distinct from middle-class ones, and vice versa. The manner that their sex is "supposed to" speak is often how men and women communicate. Ultimately, people communicate in ways that reflect who they want to be, sometimes intentionally and other times unintentionally.

The presentation of oneself in daily life is a question of linguistic difference. This paper will examine the primary factors that contribute to the development of language variation, considering both internal linguistic mechanisms and the external social and cultural influences that shape language. By investigating how these factors interact and contribute to the continuous evolution of language, this study aims to offer a clearer understanding of how different forms of language emerge and what drives their transformation over time.

Material and Method

This study follows a descriptive research design, focusing on analyzing and summarizing existing literature related to The Effective Factors that Change a Language to Variations. The objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject by reviewing previous studies, theories, and findings. The research relies on a systematic literature review, in which data were gathered from academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and credible online sources. The inclusion criteria for source selection were: (1) relevance to language variation and influencing factors, (2) publication within the last 15 years to ensure currency, (3) scholarly or peer-reviewed status, and (4) availability in English. Search databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, Scopus, and Research-Gate were used with keywords including "language variation," "linguistic change," "sociolinguistic factors," and "language evolution." A qualitative approach was used to analyze and synthesize the literature. This involved thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, concepts, and arguments. Key themes were grouped into categories such as sociocultural factors, geographical influences, educational background, and technological impacts. Each theme was compared across different sources to highlight consistencies and contradictions, and was then discussed in relation to relevant theoretical frameworks, including sociolinguistic and language change models. Limitations of the methodology include potential bias in source selection due to language restrictions (only English-language sources were used), and the exclusion of unpublished or non-digitized studies, which may have led to a partial representation of available knowledge. Additionally, the subjective nature of thematic interpretation could introduce researcher bias, although this was minimized through the use of clearly defined coding categories.

Language Variation

From the term variation, it means that a language loses its form of spoken and changes to another way of speaking. Which may cause due to some of factors such as: geographical, political, educational and business factors. Language change is "variation over time in a language's features. It is studied in several subfields of linguistics, historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, and evolutionary linguistics. Traditional theories of historical linguistics identify three main types of change: systematic change in the pronunciation of phonemes, or sound change, borrowing, in which features of a language or dialect are altered as a result of influence from another language or dialect and analogical change, in which the shape or grammatical behavior of a word is altered to more closely resemble that of another word" (AlBader, 2015: 158). Language variation, according to Lewis (1999: 46), "is regarded as a variation over time in a language's features." Historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, and evolutionary linguistics are some of the subfields of linguistics that study it. Every live language is changing all the time. Some critics use disparaging terms like "corruption" to

imply that a language's quality has declined as a result of a change, particularly when the change results from human error or is a usage that is prescribed to be prohibited. This idea is rejected by modern linguistics since, from a scientific perspective, such developments cannot be classified as either good or negative. "Any standard of evaluation applied to language variations must be based upon a recognition of the various functions a language 'is called upon' to fulfill in the society which uses it," according to John Lyons (ibid, 2011).

Types of Language Variation

As language is 'arbitrary' and needs people's conventions regarding the changing of the language, so, from different aspects a language can be varied. The term "language change" describes how a language's characteristics evolve throughout time. These alterations are typically permanent and occur gradually. This isn't always the case, though. The varying values of speakers of particular languages determine how quickly changes take place. The changes will be more gradual, for instance, if speakers of a particular language value its stability and heritage. Nonetheless, the changes will occur more quickly if individuals are more open to embracing uniqueness and unfamiliarity. The emergence of new words and the elimination of old ones are two instances of linguistic change. (Hale, 2007: 109).

Variation of Pronunciations

Sound change as change in the pronunciation of phonemes can lead to phonological change (such as a change in the relationships between phonemes within the structure of a language). For instance, if the pronunciation of one phoneme changes to become identical to that of another phoneme, the two original phonemes can merge into a single phoneme, reducing the total number of phonemes the language contains (John, 2017: 430).

Determining the exact course of sound change in historical languages can pose difficulties, inasmuch as the technology of sound recording dates only from the 19th century, and thus sound changes before that time must be inferred from written texts. The orthographical practices of historical writers provide the main (indirect) evidence of how language sounds have changed over the centuries. Poetic devices such as rhyme and rhythm can also provide clues to earlier phonetic and phonological patterns (ibid: 431).

A principal axiom of historical linguistics, established by the linguists of the Neo grammarian school of thought in the 19th century, is that sound change is said to be "regular" as a given sound change simultaneously affects all words in which the relevant set of phonemes appears, rather than each word's pronunciation changing independently of each other (Wardhaugh, 1986: 251).

The focus in this change is on how sound change takes place, rather than a useful approximation, is controversial but it has proven extremely valuable to historical linguistics as a heuristic and enabled the development of methodologies of comparative reconstruction and internal reconstruction that allow linguists to extrapolate backward from known languages to the properties of earlier, unattested languages and hypothesize sound changes that may have taken place in them (Labov, 2001: 16).

Vocabulary Variations

Since a language variation and changes a natural phenomenon then regarding changes in many aspects of a language by different factors, the vocabulary and lexical variation take place as well in a language. As Hale mentions that the study of lexical changes forms the

diachronic portion of the science of onomasiology. The ongoing influx of new words into the English language helps make it a rich field for investigation into language change, despite the difficulty of defining precisely and accurately the vocabulary available to speakers of English. Throughout its history English has not only borrowed words from other languages but has re combined and recycled them to create new meanings, whilst losing some old words. Hale (2007: 158)

To take English language as an Example, there are many new words have been supplied to the language since old English till now. All these changes are because of intervene of other languages as French, Latin, and Celtic and so on. Which are the results of political and geographical impacts.

Spelling Variations

Spelling variation is another result of language change, English Language has been changed in various ways regard spelling for example the spelling form of middle English which is the period of Geoffrey Chaucer is different with spelling form of old English and modern English. If we refer to the texts of Middle English, we can consider many differences of spelling and pronunciation in that as in old English the letters of (q/ k and z) were rarely used but came to be used more in Middle English.

Semantic Variation

Words meaning and new words creation of a language also changes according to many factors impacts. Words' meanings may also change in terms of the breadth of their semantic domain. Narrowing a word limits its alternative meanings, whereas broadening associates new meanings with it. For example, "hound" (Old English) once referred to any dog, whereas in modern English it denotes only a particular type of dog. On the other hand, the word "dog" itself has been broadened from its Old English root 'dogge', the name of a particular breed, to become the general term for all domestic canines (Patton, 2010: 90). After a word enters a language, its meaning can change as through a shift in the valence of its connotations. As an example, when "villain" entered English it meant 'peasant' or 'farmhand', but acquired the connotation 'low-born' or 'scoundrel', and today only the negative use survives. Thus 'villain' has undergone pejoration. Conversely, the word "wicked" is undergoing amelioration in colloquial contexts, shifting from its original sense of 'evil', to the much more positive one as of 2009 of 'brilliant' (ibid: 86-87).

Factors of Language Variations

Geographical Factors

There are many geographical barriers which are influential factors that have great impacts on the language variation such as high mountains, wide seas, forests and deserts that spread people from each other. When people of communities' stay apart of each other and rarely communicate makes a language in variation. And as language is arbitrary then it is the impact of geographical factors that people of different societies speak and use the same language differently. So, languages are a way of an environment that makes human contact difficult.

Political Factors

As language changes is a natural phenomenon, then political factors also effect on the language variation. The political factor can have a kind of external effect on language change. Beyond the changes on language is brought by political and economic attributes through the forms of migration, invasion and colonization. These given aspects pave the way and brought numerous changes on the formation of languages and enhancement. To take as example the English language has been changed in various ways due to the political factors and invasions of many tribes on it. As it can be seen many words in English are from French, Latina and Scandinavian languages that they invaded to the land of English people and put a great effect on the change and variation of the language. The most important influence the French language had on the English language was the introduction of too many words in English. French words related with war and military such as: enemy, challenge, danger, escape, prison and many others entered due to the invasion in English Language.

A large number of places in England bear the Scandinavian names. We find more than 600 places like Grimsby, Whidbey, Derby, Rugby and Thorsby etc. And their Latin words that politically entered to the English Language for Example words connected with trade and commerce like bargain, monger and coin. Words connected to buildings arts as chalk, copper and tile are Latin origin words that entered to the English Language. So, it can be said that political factors like invasion migration have great effects on language variations (Ararya, 2018, 85).

Social Factor

Class, ethnicity and gender are three social factors that play a role in language variation. Class is the structure of relationships between groups where people are classified based on their education, occupation, and income. Ethnicity refers to a group of people that share cultural characteristics and gender deals with the traits associated with men and women. This division among groups in each factor contributes to the differences of their use of the English language. Ethnic groups affect language variation, because they usually have to learn the language that is prominent in an area. Their Varity of the dominant language is called the substrate because it shows the differences between it and their language.

It is considered that changes through political, technological and cultural is because of social factor. Indeed, every changes begins from society where people get to discover newly formed words and terminologies as they live. Social changes produce changes in language. This affects values in ways that have not been accurately understood. Language incorporates social values. However, social values are only the same as linguistic values when the society is a stable and unchanging one. One society starts changing, then language change produces special effects.

Simply because no two people talk the same, there are differences based on a speaker's age, gender, and ethnicity even within the same small town. People learn new words and incorporate them into new speech patterns as a result of encounters. There is a chance that the words and phrases we use now may never be the same as those our parents or grandparents used (Payne, 1980: 128).

Social changes are typically brought about by changes in politics, economy, and technology. Language changes as a result of social developments. In other words, language change has specific impacts on society. In practically every community, certain people enjoy social

status, financial security, and financial power while others have less of these things. Common factors include occupation, educational attainment, income, and type of residence, with ordered levels for each. Individuals with varying social status levels respond to situations differently, view things differently, and use various words and phrases. For example, poor people who cannot afford an education or people who grew up in a rural setting where appropriate grammar wasn't encouraged would not talk as elegantly as someone of greater status (Paolillo, 2001: 60).

Migration and Movement Factor

Migration is another reason for variation of a language that affect people ways of speaking in a society they placed in. Speech communities, moving into a region with a new or more complex linguistic situation, will influence and be influenced by language change, they sometimes even end up with entirely new languages, such as pidgins and creoles (ibid: 171).

Interaction Factors

Language shift happens when people interact with those who speak a different language. Language contact is the term used to describe interactions between languages that can be brought on by a number of factors, including deliberate or unintentional social, technological, cultural, political, and foreign influences (Nichols, 1992: 248).

When kids engage with their caretakers in social settings, they automatically pick up a language. In fact, studies demonstrate that social engagement promotes lexical and phonological development during the formative years of a child's language development. A range of information needed for language development is provided through social interactions. Joint attention may give more referential information necessary for the association of a word and its referent, which may be "attracted more attention and increased motivation" in newborns during social interactions. Yet, newborns' language acquisition is influenced by social interaction (Paolillo, 2001: 65).

Interactional functions of language are employed to assist sustain or strengthen the relationship. The interaction is also made easier via interactional functions. Examples might include "Thank you," "Please," or "I care about you." Imaginative functions of language help to create imaginary constructs and tell stories (ibid: 66).

Technology Factors

The usage and separation of technology also can be mentioned as an influential factor affecting on language variation. Users of the English language find it challenging to keep up with new vocabulary and expressions due to the rapidly evolving nature of technology. Although language changes naturally slowly, the internet has accelerated this process even further. For example, some entirely new words like the verb "to google", "face booking", and many other words that are not yet in the Oxford English Dictionary, have come into popular use. However, not all these new words and slangs being used right now will survive forever. Over a decade ago, the term 'floppy disk' was considered a brand new lexical development, but now it is rarely used or featured in today's conversations as it has been replaced with 'memory stick' (Quirk, 1985: 224).

Results and Discussion

A review of scholarly literature highlights several key factors influencing language variation. These factors can be categorized into sociolinguistic, geographical, historical, and technological influences. Studies show that regional dialects arise due to physical and social barriers, leading to phonological, grammatical, and lexical differences among speakers of the same language. Social identity and group membership also shape language, with individuals adopting distinct linguistic features to reflect status, ethnicity, or profession. Historical events, such as colonization and migration, contribute to language variation by introducing contact-induced changes, including borrowing, code-switching, and language shift. Globalization and technological advancements further accelerate linguistic change, as digital communication fosters new forms of expression, abbreviations, and hybrid languages (Crystal, 2006). Additionally, political and educational systems play a role in standardizing or diversifying language use through policies and curriculum choices (Holmes, 2013).

The findings suggest that language variation is a natural and inevitable process driven by multiple interconnected factors. Geographic isolation fosters linguistic divergence, as seen in regional dialects that develop unique phonetic and syntactic characteristics.

Overall, the interplay between these factors illustrates the complexity of language evolution. While some variations fade over time due to language convergence, others persist or evolve into distinct linguistic forms. Understanding these influences is essential for language preservation, education, and policy-making in multilingual societies. As it is clearly stated in the table below.

(Table 1.A summarize of major factors and types of variation for better clarity)

Factor	Types of Variation	Example
Geographical	Dialect, Accent	British vs American
Political	Lexical and syntactic Change	Language reforms (e.g. Turkish alphabet)
Social	Slang, Register	Youth Slang vs formal speech
Migration	Mixed Dialects, Borrowed words	Creole or pidgin
Cultural	Vocabulary and Idioms	Influence of religion or media

The above table indicates a concise overview of the major factors that cause language variation and types of changes these factors usually lead to. It is designed to help readers clearly understand how language evolves in response to different influences. Each row in the table represents a specific influencing factor- such as geography, politics, or culture and shows: what kind of language variation that factor typically causes (such as changes in

pronunciation, vocabulary, or grammar). And a real- world example to illustrate that variation.

The study concentrating more on the variations aspects of a language and the main factors that effect on language to be changed. The main factors that have impact on language change and variations are political, social, migrations, cultural and geographical factors. When a language deals with the above mentioned factors its lexeme, syntax, pronunciations and spelling varies. So, the same language is spoken and used differently in various communities and societies which are the result of affecting factors on language. In this study, it is also clear that when pronunciation of a language is changed it is called accent but when a language changes from its grammar, vocabulary and usage it is dialects. To provide clarity in the discussion of language variations, it is important to define key terms such as dialect and accent, which are often misunderstood or used interchangeably. A dialect refers to a particular form of a language that is specific to a region or social group. It includes distinctive vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation features. For example, British English and American English are dialects of the English language that differ in spelling, word choice, and grammatical usage. An accent, on the other hand, refers only to differences in pronunciation. It indicates how words are spoken rather than the words or grammar used. For instance, a person from northern England may speak Standard English but with a regional accent that differs from someone in southern England. Understanding the distinction between dialect and accent is crucial when analyzing factors that contribute to language variation. These elements often reflect broader sociolinguistic influences such as geography, class, education, and identity.

Language Variation and Influencing Factors

This study focuses on the different aspects of language variation and the primary factors that influence language change. These factors include political, social, migratory, cultural, and geographical elements. When a language is exposed to these influences, changes can occur in its lexicon, syntax, pronunciation, and spelling. As a result, the same language may be spoken and used differently across various communities and societies. To ensure clarity in this study, two key concepts are defined:

Accent refers specifically to the pronunciation of words. When the way people pronounce words changes—while vocabulary and grammar remain relatively consistent—this variation is considered an accent.

Dialect, on the other hand, includes not only pronunciation but also differences in grammar, vocabulary, and language usage. A dialect is a broader form of variation that reflects both regional and social distinctions within a language.

Conclusion

To conclude, by examining the key factors that influence these variations, this research aims to shed light on how languages transform and what such transformations reveal about the people who use them. The findings of this study may also have implications for fields such as education, cultural preservation, and language policy in diverse and multilingual societies. The study depicts the main factors that effect on language variation. As Robins Says “a language is a symbol system based on pure or arbitrary conventions.... Infinitely extendable and modifiable according to the changing needs and conditions of the speakers.”

(Laskar, 2018) It means that language changing is depend on many factors that change a language but it needs people conventions to become agree with particular ways of language variations. Language can be changed from many dimensions as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and spelling. The study revealed that most of linguists have recognized the importance of language change in identities because language change enables people to express who they think they are and how they are connected with other people. Language variation is a continuous and natural process influenced by multiple factors, including geography, social structures, historical events, and technological advancements. Research shows that regional dialects emerge due to geographical separation, while social identity and class distinctions shape linguistic differences within communities. The rapid expansion of digital communication has also played a crucial role in transforming language, leading to new forms of expression and vocabulary. By studying these factors, linguists and policymakers can develop strategies to preserve and support linguistic variation in an increasingly globalized world. Language will continue to evolve, reflecting the dynamic nature of human interaction and societal development. . Limitations of the methodology include potential bias in source selection due to language restrictions (only English-language sources were used), and the exclusion of unpublished or non-digitized studies, which may have led to a partial representation of available knowledge. Additionally, the subjective nature of thematic interpretation could introduce researcher bias, although this was minimized through the use of clearly defined coding categories.

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Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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