

Language Features of Lower-Class People in DICKENS' “A TALE OF TWO CITIES”

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Abstract

What makes literature the way, it is in the first place, is the writer's eccentric use of language. He/she violates the common rules of writing or everyday speech, and according to Leech (1969) this process is called linguistic deviation by which a writer enjoys the freedom in departing from the conventional norms of a language.

When a writer wants to make his fictional work creative, he sometimes uses linguistic deviations which according to Short (1969) have a strong and excellent psychological effect on the recipient's (hearer and reader) responses to the characters, and Dickens' unique use of language is not an exception that it has made him the greatest Victorian writer and novelist of England during the eighteenth century.

This study attempts to explore the linguistic deviations, particularly the grammatical and phonological ones, and the purpose or the reason behind the usage of language deviations in Dickens' novel A Tale of Two Cities. This novel is stylistically analyzed based on Leech's theory (1969) in his work "A linguistic Guide to English Poetry" about linguistic deviations. The theory contains eight types of deviation, the current research, however, concentrates on the grammatical and phonological violations of the use of English language in Dickens' mentioned novel.

The research problem is related to the exploration of linguistic deviation in Dickens' style. To what extent Dickens deviates from the linguistic conventions in his use of language as far as grammar and phonology are concerned? What is the purpose of incorporating linguistic deviations in A Tale of Two Cities?

Dickens' novels have a number of different types of deviations. This study is significant as it presents a stylistic analysis from a linguistic point of view, and it sheds light on Charles Dickens' writing style and his creative use of language.

Keywords: Novel, Deviations, Grammatical, Phonological, Tale, Linguistics, Class-distinction, Discourse, Stylistics.

Literature Review

Introduction to discourse and discourse analysis

Discourse is a wild field that scholars develop numerous different definitions to explain the nature of discourse. For example, Ochs and Shieffeline (1983) define discourse as "any sequence of two or more speakers who are interacting with one another." As for Foucault

(1977) discourse is a "socially constructed way of knowing some aspect of reality which can be drawn upon when that aspect of reality has to be represented." Fairclough (2003) on the other hand, simply defines discourse as "the representation of the world." It indicates the representation of feelings, processes, beliefs, structures and materials of the material world, the world of thought 'mental world,' and social world (ibid). The dictionary defines discourse as

"the use of language in speech or written in order to produce meaning" (Oxford, 2007: 434).

After a discussion on discourse, a question of how discourse is analysed is raised. The term discourse analysis (here abbreviated as DA) was first introduced by the scholar Zellig Harris in 1952, he defined DA as "a way of analyzing connected speech and writing" (Paltridge, 2006).

As time goes by, scholars have developed theories, definitions, and studies about DA. Cook (1989), for instance, states that DA is the study of language whether spoken or written in its psychological and social context. DA means exploring the written and/or the spoken language in all functions and forms. It explores not only the social function, but also the textual function to form proper and well-formed text, and also ideational function to express experiences and thoughts coherently (Yule, 1996).

Gernoble (2000) claims that DA requires a comprehensive knowledge (full knowledge) of language understanding. Comprehensive knowledge means not only fluency in speaking, but also understanding of social and literary traditions. Gernoble also states that a complete and thorough analysis of discourse needs an account on pragmatics, syntax, phonetics, paralinguistics, semantics, and also knowledge of real world.

Style and Stylistics

On their book *Style in Fiction* (1981) Leech and Short claim that style is the way in which language is used and it can be applied on both spoken and written, literary and non-literary language. Crystal (2003a), however, defines style as "stylistically distinctive uses of language."

Carter and Stockwell (2008) define style as "a choice of certain structures over others available in the language." To claim that style is a choice is not, of course, to claim that it is always a conscious choice. Indeed, if one had to make all phonological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic choices consciously, it would take a very long time to say anything at all. In literature, as in all discourse, a sense of the best way of putting something can be intuitive or conscious; the result as far as the reader is concerned will be much the same."

Stylistics is not a narrow term, it has gained different meanings assumed by different linguistic scholars. Stylistics requires different levels of linguistic description as form, structure, meaning, and sounds. It is also concerned with the grammatical, semantic, lexical, and phonological properties.

Widdowson (1975) states that stylistics is a field that gets more attention than the other fields as linguistics, criticism, English language, and literature. Some linguists believe that stylistics is the study of style in language whether literary or non-literary, Widdowson, however, argues that stylistics is basically concerned with the written literary texts from a linguistic point of view.

Verdnok (2002) on the other hand, states that stylistic is "the analysis of distinctive expression in language and the description of its purpose and effect."

Among all the former definitions, the researcher agrees with the opinion that stylistics is primarily concerned with the use of language in literature, it is concerned with the style that is used as a mean by the writer to make his work creative and with a strong impact on the reader.

Foregrounding and Linguistic Deviation

Foregrounding

Before getting into the explanation of the types of linguistic deviations and analysis of some selected texts from Dickens' novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, it is important to shed some light on the stylistic term foregrounding. Leech (1969), refers to foregrounding in poetry in particular, but he also points out that foregrounding is not "confined" to poetry. When a part of literary text deviates from linguistic or other socially accepted norm, it builds up some elements of surprise and interest, such deviations are commonly given the name of foregrounding.

According to Short (1996), the linguistic deviation phenomenon has an important psychological effect on the readers and/or the hearers, this psychological effect is called foregrounding. As for Leech (1969), foregrounding is achieved by linguistic parallelism other than linguistic deviation. Whether in art or elsewhere, by linguistic

deviation or by parallelism, foregrounding is considered as an important principle of aesthetic communication.

Linguistic Deviations and its Various Types

Linguistic deviation is associated with the eccentric and unexpected usage of a language that is distinguished from everyday language usage. Cook (1989), refers to deviation as "a case of non-conformity to the norms and regularities of discourse structure." According to Leech (1969), there are eight types of deviations, he discusses these type distinguishing the three main levels of language; realization, form, and semantics. Lexicon and grammar comprise the form of language, realization is realized by graphology and phonology, and semantics represents the cognitive or denotative meaning.

Although this study focuses on the grammatical and phonological deviations, it is significant to refer with some explanation and examples to some of the other types.

Lexical Deviation

Leech (1969), states that lexical deviation is represented by neologism which is the creation "invention" of new vocabularies and it is one of the most "obvious ways in which a poet may exceed the normal resources of the language." The newly invented words are "nonce – formation" because they are not created for enhancing the number of the English vocabularies, but for exclusive and unique situation.

Crystal (2003a), agrees that nonce-formation is a linguistic form created by a speaker on a single occasion. He also states some reasons that can cause nonce-formation, for instance, the speaker cannot remember the word so he creates "an alternative approximation" (as in linguistified, said by a student who felt he was going nowhere with linguistics), or is restricted by some condition that needs to create a new form (as in newspapers headlines).

Another example of lexical deviation that is common in literary language is functional conversion. It happens when "adapting an item to a new grammatical function without changing its form" (Leech,1969). For example the word

"fill-out" which has no function of a noun but is used as such in the following example:

"let's have a quiet fill-out for the first time these three days!" (Dickens' *Oliver Twist*: Toby Crackit,XXXV,182), as analysed in Miyata's *Types of Linguistic Deviation in Oliver Twist* (1981).

Clark (1977), adds that the slips of the tongue and speech errors are also considered as lexical deviations because the speaker creates a new form of a word. This process is called malapropism which is the misuse of words that happens when a speaker utters, for example, "derangement" for "arrangement."

Grammatical Deviation

Although the number of English grammatical rules is large, but the foregrounding possibilities caused by grammatical deviations are also large (Short,1996).

Grammatical deviation has two aspects: deviation in syntax (how words are formed within a sentence), and deviation in morphology (the grammar of words). The situation of "ungrammaticality" is an important feature in grammatical deviation as in the case of the misuse of verbs like: "I doesn't like him," or the case of the violation of structure (syntactic structure), like: "I know not," and "he me saw" Leech(1969).

So grammatical deviation is when a writer violates the rules of words and sentence forming. There are different types of grammatical deviation, but mostly it can be found as double negatives, double comparison and double superlative or the misuse of comparison and superlative. The idea of double negation in the old and middle English was often expressed several times in one single sentence: "I will never do nothing no more," also using two ways of comparison for one word as in: "this was the most nicest of them all" (Brook,1977). Another good example is: "You are one of the most bare-facedest " (*Oliver Twist*, Mr. Bumble,III,21), as analysed in Sadoon's *Grammatical and Phonological Deviations in Dickens' Oliver Twist* (2014).

Grammatical deviations can also be a result of false analogy which is a term used in language acquisition and in historical and comparative linguistics. It refers to a process of regularization

which affects the grammar of language. In English, for instance, the influence of the regular pattern of plural formation can be heard in the treatment of irregular forms in the early utterances of children, e.g. childs, mans, mens. The children produce these utterances "on the analogy with" the regular patterns, e.g. dog, dogs, door, doors (Crystal, 2003a).

Analogical processes can be illustrated in the common errors of foreign learners of the language when they apply regular forms for irregular e.g. knowed, seed, for knew, saw (ibid), and in Dickens' *A Tale of two Cities*: "I thought you knowed everything, father" (XIV, 231).

It is also important to mention that the existence of grammatical deviations indicates the social class of the speaker as in the following sentences:

Speaker A	Speaker B
- He ain't done it	He hasn't done it
- It weren't me what said it	I didn't say it

It is not difficult to guess that speaker A is of a lower-class than speaker B because of language differences or varieties between social statuses (Trudgill, 2000).

phonological deviation

According to Fromkin (2011), one part of language knowledge is knowing the sounds of that language and how to combine them into words. For example, the sounds produced from the letters n, e, w, can be combined into one word which is new. However, sometimes not the same goes on literature because a writer may delete, add, or change some letters which violates the rules of combining sounds into correct words.

It is worth mentioning that phonological deviation is related to social class. All phonetic behaviour is determined by individual and social needs like education and a reasonable conformity to a serviceable norm will act like a sort of standard in all speech communities. Then, educated speakers show a wide range of admissible variations in usage and pronunciation. This variation is controlled partly by a literary norm and partly by a social sanction though the half educated often abandon good

local speech for something which is difficult to refer to as a norm (Firth, 1972).

According to Trudgill (2000), grammatical differences are associated with phonetic and phonological differences, i.e. there are social-class dialects, but there are social-class accents as well.

Leech (1969), mentions that phonological deviation is of two parts: the first part represents elision which is the omission of a part of a word or a phrase and it is divided into three types:

- a- Aphaesis: the omission of an initial part of a word or phrase as in; " 'ave" instead of have.
- b- Syncope: the omission of a middle part of a word or phrase as in; "ne'er" instead of never.
- c- Apo cope: the omission of a last part of a word or phrase as in; "goi'n " instead of going.

Leech (ibid) also mentions that the second part of phonological deviation represents a special pronunciation. It could be either a substandard pronunciation (incorrect pronunciation), or a substitution of sounds in which one sound is replaced by another. For instance, in Sadoon's *Grammatical and Phonological Deviations in Dickens' Oliver Twist* (2014):

"If the parish would like him to learn a, ..., I wasn't a prentis and I am ready to take him" (III: 19).

"Vould" represents a substitution of sounds for would, and "a prentis" represents a substandard pronunciation for apprentice.

Phonological deviations might also be a result of a habit, e.g. childish mispronunciations that have never been corrected, or they may happen because of a physical defect, (Jones, 1918), that causes inability to utter some sounds as in; "thith" instead of this.

Graphological Deviation

Graphological Deviation is when a writer violates the rules of writing like the capitalization, spelling, hyphenation, paragraphing, and italization which are determined, basically, by syntax and noticed in texts when a writer makes a graphological choice such as the case of misspelling (Leech and Short, 1981).

Graphological deviations can be seen in different ways for different purposes such as: emphasis, spacing, and special symbols. Hyphen, for instance, is used to mark two types of word division: part of a compound word (empty handed), and a break at the end of a line, or it is sometimes used to indicate a contrast in meaning. Capitalization can be used for literary purposes such as: irony, emphasis, satire, etc. Dash, on the other hand, is used after a thought at the end of a sentence, or to indicate a comment or an incomplete utterance, or sometimes it is used to mark a missing letter or word (crystal,2003b).

Cumming, according to Leech (1969), is known for using different types of graphological deviations and breaking the conventional norms of writing such as: decapitalization, punctuation, strange use of parentheses, which are, for Cumming, expressive devices and not just symbols.

An example of capitalization is in Dickens' David Copperfield:

"And SHE. How is SHE?" (Betsey Trotwood, I, 23).

This was said by David's aunt when David was just born and she thought that the baby was going to be a girl addressing it as "SHE," and capitalization is being used as a way of emphasis.

3.2.5- Semantic Deviation

Semantic deviation is important because it deals with figurative language which is significant in literary texts. According to Leech (1969) Semantic deviations are of three main types: transference of meaning (metaphor), semantic oddity, and honest deception. They are ways to lead the mind to comprehend a figurative plan.

So semantic deviation is deemed to "absurdity" or nonsense" and here is an example: " this child is father of the man" (Wordsworth, My Heart Leaps up). This is "absurdity" and very nonsensical because a child cannot be a father to a man (ibid).

Analysis of Phonological Deviations in Selected Texts of "A Tale of Two Cities"

Present-day English is set as a standard of the deviation in this study. The types of phonological deviations that occur repeatedly in A Tale of Two Cities are: aphesis, syncope, and Apo cope, all the three represent elision. The other type indicates the substandard pronunciation of regional dialects, while the last one represents the substitution of sounds which could be a result of physical defect or just to indicate people's social class.

The following texts from Dickens' novel are good examples to show phonological deviations:

Elision

Text (1)

" flop in favour of your husband and child, and not in opposition to 'em. If I had had any but a unnat'ral wife,..." (Book2,I,77).

Text (2)

" and let that father go into the line of the reg'lar diggin',..., if it was so-by diggin' of 'em in with a will, and with convictions respectin' the futur' keepin' of 'em safe." (Book3, IX, 439).

Analysis of the above texts:

a- Aphesis: " 'em" = them, the initial part of the word is deleted.

b- Syncope: "unnat'ral" = unnatural, "reg'lar" = regular, middle parts of the words are deleted.

c- Apo cope: "diggin' " = digging, "respectin' " = respecting, "futur' " = future, "keepin' " = keeping, final parts of the words are deleted.

Substandard Pronunciation

Text (3)

" They ain't worth much, then. Whether or no, I won't be prayed agin, I tell you." (Book2, I, 77).

The Analysis

Phonological deviation can be found in the word "ain't" because the standard pronunciation of this word is aren't. Another deviation found in the fragment above is the word "agin" which is a substandard pronunciation (incorrect pronunciation) for the word against.

Text (4)

" Why, you're at it afore my face." (Book2, XIV,224).

Text (5)

" he IS your'n, ain't he?" (Book2, XIV, 226).

Text (6)

" Whether they drink your health or the Old Un's." (Book3,VII,414).

The Analysis

Words of substandard pronunciation are: "afore" = before, "your'n" = yours, "ain't" = isn't, "un's" = one's.

Substitution of Sounds

Leech (1969), says that this type of phonological deviation is used for the convenience of rhyming. It can be found in both, vowels and consonants in which a sound is replaced by another as in the following examples:

Text (7)

" What do you want to convey to your own father, you young rip?" (Book2, XIV,219).

The Analysis

The identified phonological pronunciation, as substitution of sounds, found in the fragment above is shown by the word "convey" which stands for convey, the sound /v/ is being pronounced as /w/.

Text (8)

" even if it wos so- I don't say it is but even it wos" (Book3,IX,438).

Substitution of sounds in the above text is found in the word "wos" which stands for was, the sound /ɒ/ is pronounced as /ʊ/.

Text (9)

"as anything of wot I have ever said or done should be wisited on my earnest wishes for them poor creetures now! Forbid it as we shouldn't all flop (if it was anyways convenient) to get 'em out o' this here dismal risk!" (Book3, XIV,519).

The Analysis

Substitution of sounds occurs in: "wisited" = visited, "creetures" = creatures, "convenient"= convenient.

The table below provides statistics and purposes of the above phonological deviations.

Table (1) *analysis of phonological deviations in Dickens' novel*

Type of phonological deviation	Frequency of Occurrence	Purposes	Percentage
Elision (Aphesis, Syncope, Apo cope)	7	To indicate people's social-class	38.9%
Substandard Pronunciation	6	To indicate character's lower-class	33.3%
Substitution of Sounds	5	To indicate the convenience of rhyming and sometimes people's social-class	27.8%
Total Linguistic Deviation	18	-----	100%

According to the table above, different types of Phonological deviations existed in the novel A Tale of Two Cities. One type of phonological

deviation can show more than one purpose, however, the main purpose here is to indicate people's social lower-class. This clarifies that Charles Dickens is trying to provide an important theme which is class distinction, the main concern of the research.

Analysis of Grammatical Deviations in Selected Texts of "A Tale of Two Cities."

The types of grammatical deviation that occur in this novel are:

Comparison of Adjectives

It is common that lower-class people sometimes use the double comparison to emphasize their speech, they also may add -est and -er to the adjectives that would normally be preceded by more-, or most- in standard English, or even the opposite like adding more- or most- to the adjectives that should end in -er, or -est.

Text (1)

"I shall be more happy to execute it" (Book1,iv:29).

The Analysis

In standard English, one-syllable comparative adjectives and adverbs are made by adding -er at the end of the word as in: slow -slower. Adjectives and adverbs that end in -y, to change them into the comparative form, -y should be replaced by -i and then -er is added at the end of the word as in: easy -easier. Two or more syllable comparative adjectives and adverbs are made by placing more- before the word as in: polite -more polite.

In the text above, the one-syllable (happy) is preceded by more-, while the comparison in this condition is normally expressed by adding -er at the end.

Text (2)

"The raggedest nightcap, awry on the wretchedest head" (Book2,XXII:314).

The Analysis

In standard English, one-syllable superlative adjectives and adverbs are normally made by adding -est at the end of the word as in: small -smallest. To change the Adjectives and adverbs which end in -y into the superlative form, -y

should be replaced by -i and -est is added to the end of the word as in: healthy -healthiest. Two or more syllable superlative adjectives and adverbs are made by placing most- before the word as in: beautiful -most beautiful.

The text above shows that the two -syllable (ragged) and (wretched) are used in the superlative form by adding -est to them, while it is common to use most- in this case.

Text (3)

"Patches of most coarse vegetable substitutes for wheat" (Book2,VIII:159).

Text (4)

"Monseigneur (often a most worthy individual gentleman) was a national blessing,..." (Book2,XXII:322).

The Analysis

(Coarse) and (worthy) are one-syllable words preceded by most- in the above two fragments, while -est is normally used in order to make a superlative form of them.

Multiple Negation

The tradition of Double Negation is normally used to emphasize the speech, and it can be traced back to the times of Old and Middle English (Brook, 1970:20).

Text (5)

"I won't have none of your no harms" (XIV: 220)

Text (6)

"It would be ungenerous to affect not to know that yourself denial is to be referred to your consideration for her father" (X:187).

Text (7)

"He'd never have no goods of it" (IX:439).

Text (8)

"He don't get no iron rust in here" (I:80).

The Analysis:

In modern standard English, double negatives are not used since this usage goes back

to the Old and Middle English. In Charles Dickens', *A Tale of Two Cities*, double, and sometimes even triple, negatives are repeatedly used and they show up in lower- class people speech as a way of emphasizing.

The Mistaken Use of Verbs

Another feature of grammatical deviation that appears in the speech of lower- class people is the use of mistaken verbs,

and here are some examples from *A Tale of Two Cities*:

Text (9)

" Always rusty! His fingers is always rusty! " (I:80).

Text (10)

" I'd hold half a guinea that HE don't get no low –work to do. Don't look like the sort of one to get any, don't he? " (III:106).

Text (11)

" You was to honour and obey; why the devil don't you? " (XIV:230).

The Analysis:

The grammatical mistakes in the previous texts refer to the social class of the characters. For example, the plural noun (his fingers) is used with the singular verb (is), and in the next text (do) is used instead of (does). The pronoun (you) is used with the verb (was). This indicates the speech of lower- class people.

5.4- Adverbs ending in –s

Text (11)

" during the next fortnight, while you are in Warwickshire and thereabouts,..." (Book2, XVIII:274).

The Analysis

Some people use adverbs that end in an unnecessary –s on the analogy of other adverbs such as sometimes, always, as in the adverb above "thereabouts".

Table (2) *Analysis of grammatical deviations in Dickens' novel*

Types of Grammatical Deviation	Frequency of occurrence	Purposes	Percentage
Adverbs Ending in –s	1	To indicate a character's social lower -class	7.1%
Comparison of Adjectives	5	To show people's social lower- class and to emphasize the speech	35.7%
Multiple Negation	4	To show people's social lower- class and to emphasize the speech	28.6%
Mistaken use of Verbs	4	To show people's social lower- class	28.6%
Total Grammatical Deviation	14	-----	100%

As with phonological deviations, table (2) shows different types of grammatical deviations that are more related to the speech of lower-class people, which indicates Dickens' main purpose

of introducing the theme of class distinction to the readers.

Conclusion

Throughout the study there has been an attempt to analyze Dickens' novel *A Tale of Two Cities* stylistically as far as phonology and grammar are concerned.

It is clear that the main theme of this novel is class distinction. The writer uses phonological and grammatical deviations to reflect not only the uneducated statues of lower-class people, but also their social statues through their ability to use grammar and their pronunciation and utterances.

The types of deviation discussed in this research have a strong impact, psychological effect which is called fore-grounding, on the readers' emotions. They also add to the aesthetic sense of the literary text.

From a humble researcher's point of view, one effective way to make a literary text extraordinary and extremely peculiar is when a writer decides to forget about the official rules of writing and starts framing his own lines, sentences, structures and words what makes the reader feel curious and pay close attention to what may happen next on the story.

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