

Phonetics and Phonemes.

Mechanism of Language change -

Change in a language is a continuous process which operates at three levels: ① Phonetic level, ② Semantic level and ③ Lexical level. Basic to all the problems of language variation is the complex process of linguistic change. There is no single entity; but the cumulative effect of a number of quite different processes operating more or less independently. There are four basic mechanisms of language change known as phonetic change, phonemic change, analogic change and borrowings phonetic change - change of sound which are common to several words are among the most frequent linguistic change. There are two important characteristics of such a language.

In the first place what is shifted is not the pronunciation of a specific sound in a specific place, say a certain word. If it were, we might expect to expect the same sound to change in a different way in some other place. Instead, the shift affects the statistical norm based on all occurrences of the given phoneme in a given environment - that is on all occurrences of a certain allophone. In turn this norm controls the pronunciation of this allophone whenever it occurs. Phonetic change affects any given allophone consistently. This is clear when we say that any phonetic change is regular. It means that

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any phonetic change will affect all instances of the sound concerned in the position in which it is operative. The same phonetic change may affect all the allophones of a given phoneme or only a single phoneme.

As an example what has been stated above, we may refer to Anglo-Saxon \bar{a} becoming 'oath' with perfect regularity. Anglo-Saxon \bar{a} in other words also has become \bar{o} or more accurately \bar{o} w as for example own from \bar{a} gaar, bone from \bar{a} n and goat from \bar{g} at, foam from \bar{f} am and whole from \bar{h} ail etc. Thus this change may be summarized in the formula.

As ~~accounted~~ accented \bar{a} become \bar{o} (or \bar{o} w) in modern English. It can also be called - Phonetic Law:

PHONETIC CHANGE Similarly IE 'd' becoming 't' in Germanic language, is based upon correspondences between the related IE and Germanic language such as those between the classical language and English.

decem - ten, duo - two, dens - tooth.

And, similarly Latin's 's' becoming 'r' between vowels as in 'jesus, genesis, nefos, nefarius' is ~~an~~ another example of phonetic change.

The second significant characteristic of phonetic change is a social phenomenon, the statistical norm that which contrasts the pronunciation of each allophones not based on one's pronunciation (of each allophones is not based on one's pronunciation).

Some extent on the speech of every individual whom it bears. Not all of them will have an equal effect on the norm. We, general speakers of higher prestige, will exert more influence than those of lower ^{prestige}. Thus phonetic change within the speech of any intimate group is likely to be shared.

Thus a social phenomenon is also responsible for making phonetic change. Sturment, for example, in his book 'Linguistic change' gives us an example of this kind of change. He says that in the greater part of the United States 'r' becomes a consonant, is retained in such words as card, hard, horn, but in the South a large part of New England and in the city of New York, 'r' in this position is lost with the lengthening of the preceding vowel. In Bihar, the Hindi word, for is dmru: but especially in ~~the~~ Patna region dmru: is changed to dmu: which is also an example of Spoonerism. Thus in the second place 'r' is replaced by 'r' by the people of Patna.

Sometimes a phonetic change is confined to a particular class. In Southern England the lower class have lost the second 'l' but it is carefully retained by the educated people. In Bihar again $|z|$ as in $|iz|$ or $|wɔz|$ is retained by the educated ~~people~~ speakers, but not

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by others. They replace /t/ by /d/.

PHONEMIC CHANGE - It is not produced by a phonetic change affecting the changing phoneme, but by the change of some other factors which condition the allophones with this change now patterns of contrast arise and the allophones become phonemes. One may say - the example ^{young which was} ~~of~~ /sing/ , then under certain conditions final /g/ dropped and /sing/ became [sɪŋ] it was contrasted with [sɪŋg] all the same. This raised /ŋ/ to the state of a phoneme, but also left /ŋ/ with a rather peculiar distribution. It mainly occurs at those places where /g/ is dropped or where /t/ is followed by /k/ or in a few other places.

Since phonemic change is generally the cumulative result of a series of phonetic changes, it is also regular.

ANALOGIC CHANGE - It is very different in its ^{mechanism} mechanism and effect, and is also not regular. If someone, instead of saying [maɪsɪz] as plural or ~~mouse~~ mouse says [maʊsɪz] on the analogy of 'house-houses' and if it comes into currency, it will serve as an example of analogic change. In children especially, there is a habit of saying one hand - two hands; one leg - two legs and so one foot - two foot. It is also an example of analogic change. In A.S. 'guma' meant man and (brydguma) brydguma

as bride man, but- in the course of time, 'guma' fall out-of use and the second member of the compound was connected with groom and hence bridegroom in modern English.

BORROWING - It means the copying of a linguistic item from speakers of another speech form. It is also mechanism of change and the loan and words are made to conform to the phonologic or morphologic pattern of the language, but such cases can usually be easily identified by tracing their etymology, this rather an un-systematic process of linguistic change like analogic creation.