

# The Main Factors Underlying English and Language Changes and Real-world Effects

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**Abstract:** Language is dynamical and liable to changes. This paper discusses “the main reasons underlying English and language changes”. It aims to ascertain the major factors which lead to language changes. The paper seeks mainly to focus on the following elements: grammatical, semantic, spelling and phonological changes. The paper also focuses on etymological aspects like, transmission, source identification and personal names, language contact and shift, linguistic accommodation, and new technologies. With regards to the current study, the researchers have adopted the qualitative approach through the interview data collection method, in line with explanatory research design, plus the review of literature review. The study involved language lecturers and university students in the English Course at *Universidade Licungo* in Quelimane-Zambezia. The study concludes that at any given moment English language, for example, has variations which are known as synchronic variation and the effect of language change over time. The conclusion is evidenced with regards to words or phrases concerned with a particular group of people of the language science, the language of medicine, the language law, and the language of advertisement. Indeed, several factors contribute to language change, invented words, borrowing, new technologies, trades and migration often occurring in response to social, economic and political pressures if enough users alter the way the language should be spoken. The study concludes there are positive effects on language changes, which include the accommodation of new inventions, standardization of the language and the linguistic historic evolution. There are also negative effects based on communication challenges, misunderstanding and linguistic interferences.

**Keywords:** Factors, Underlying, Language Changes, Effects

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## 1. Introduction

It is of paramount importance discussing first about the concept of “knowing a language” and its importance in communication. According to Hornby [12] language is defined as “system of sound words patterns, etc. used by humans to communicate thoughts and feelings”. Fromkin *et al* [8] argue that “knowing a language is also to know that certain sound sequences signify certain concepts or meanings.” This implies to say that, for ones to affirm that they know a language, they must have the capacity of producing sounds with meaning and be able to understand or interpret those produced by the others. Thus, knowing the sounds system of a language implies not only the inventory of sounds, but being able to recognise, for example, which

sounds may start or end a word as well as what sound comes after which. This knowledge is applicable to all languages, regardless of whether they are standards or variants. The authors go further with the example which states that speakers of English, for example, know what “boy” means, and that it means something different from “toy” or “girl”. In addition, knowing a language is not only about speaking. It implies being able to write and decode written messages addressed by the others. Language may come naturally; therefore, people learn how to communicate even before they can talk and as they grow up, they find ways to manipulate language to truly convey what they really want to say with words and sentences. Language is an important tool used to exchange information and for social interaction among humans, having the speaking and writing skills two of the most powerful means which enable the human beings to

socially interact each other. Language allows humans to share their feelings, thoughts and ideas with others. One of the most important aspects to refer in the use of any language is that people do not write or speak the same way. "A language, then, like everything else, gradually transforms itself over the centuries", Aitchison, [2]. Holding the same view with the author, it can be referred that any language is a result of changes that can be noticed ever since such language existed until the present days as well as the changes that may happen because of several aspects such as politics, religion, culture, geography, economy and so forth, in a given point of time.

### 1.1. Research Aim

To explore the main factors underlying English and language changes and the real-world Effects.

### 1.2. Specific Objectives

1. To find out the causes which underlie English and language changes;
2. To describe the factors and relevant issues which underlie English and language changes;
3. To discover the effects of English and language changes.

### 1.3. Research Questions

1. What causes underlie English and language changes?
2. What factors and relevant issues underlie English and language changes?
3. What are the main effects of English and language changes?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Factors Affecting Language Changes

All aspects of a language structure and use are liable to change, but the most noticeable and frequent changes are pronunciation, vocabulary and sentence structure. For example, the word *body*, pronounced [bodi] by most of the British English speakers, it is mostly pronounced [badi] by the majority of American English speakers. Another example is when in the United States of America speakers say "*I'm gonna take it.*" where in the United Kingdom they would say "*I'm going to take it.*" As it has been put,

English pronunciation is gradually changing, although it continues to reflect both geographical and social differences among speakers. No longer is it true, if it ever was, that all educated people speak with Received Pronunciation (RP). A person's speech can gradually alter over the years in the direction of those around, as is shown by British people who pick up an American accent in a very short time, Aitchison, [2].

Apart from pronunciation, there are many elements affecting language change. Harya [13] contends that "language can change and develop because of adaptation of

development and pattern change and system of society life, such as level of education, social, culture and technology mastery". Through literature, it appears there are many reasons for language changes and this finds a back-up expounded on Harya's view [13] when he warns that "there is no simple explanation for why languages change. This is an area in which there is much speculation and little proof. The area is an interesting and fruitful one but there are few if any direct answers".

Several factors turn out to be implicated for language change, some have to do with the nature of language and others the nature of society. For example, people from the north Zambézia and Nampula provinces tend to change *d* and *t* sounds in words like [teto] which means roof, instead of [dedo], which means finger; [çaça] which means hunting, instead of [casa] which refers to a house. The other reason is that large-scale shifts often occur in response to social, economic and political pressures, if there is a need users alter the way the language should be spoken. Furthermore, the needs of speakers influence the language change. For example, new technologies, industries, products simply require new words and political factors. With this regard, it is traced the political factor which also affects the language change is also shared by Aitchison [2] when he clarifies that,

Many times, language change has some kind of political roots such as human migration and invasion. When people move to a country and learn a new language, they learn their adopted language imperfectly. They then pass on these slight imperfections to their children and to the people in their social circle, and eventually alter the language [2].

Through social interaction, people pick up new words and sayings and integrate into their speech. Teenagers and young adults for example, often use words and phrases which some of them spread through the population and slowly change the language. For example, the word [bazzar] which means *to go* is now becoming popular in Mozambican Portuguese. Another instance can be seen in the word "*brother*", which when used by teenagers in Mozambican Portuguese means "*amigo*" (friend). Furthermore, the linguistics allows the linguists to look at the synchronic and diachronic changes of a language. Therefore, discussing about changes that may occur with the development of a language, as well as those in a certain point of time, we find the distinction about synchronic and diachronic changes. Largely known, the synchronic change is an investigation of language which deals with a language or its parts when studied as a fixed phenomenon existing at a given moment of time, approaching analyses of the similarities and differences of languages at a given point of time by focusing on their structural features and characteristics. In the other hand, we have the diachronic change, which deals with how a certain language evolved from its beginning to the present. A clear example of this type of change is the distinction which can be found in three main periods of English. To refer that, the diachronic change is a result of synchronic changes when happening in a long period of time.

Through the history of the English language, much has happened to its changes with attention to Old English, Middle English and Modern English. As it is known The English language started when three Germanic tribes, namely the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes from 450 to 1100 occupied Britain. The referred tribes crossed the North Sea from what today is Denmark and northern Germany and reached Britain. At that time the inhabitants of Britain spoke a Celtic language. At the time, the three tribes spoke similar languages, which in Britain developed into what in the present we call the Old English. The way this language was used did not sound or look like the type of English is used today. If one happens to expose native English speakers today to Old English, they would have great difficulty to understanding it. However, about half of the most commonly used words in Modern English have Old English roots. What other words arose that are directly connected to new inventions? Here we can find some words, from which we mention the following ten: *android*, *app store*, *bluetooth*, *wireless*, *windows mobile*, *wi-fi*, *play store*, *tablet*, *WhatsApp* and *Instagram*.

## 2.2. Internal and External Changes of a Language

Changes in any language may occur internally and externally. Hickey [11] contend that “the first division to be made among factors in language change is that between those, which operate from within the language, and those which are active from outside.” The terms within and outside themselves make it clear the distinction between them, which mean internal and external, respectively. Internal changes initially happen in the speakers’ behaviour in their everyday interactions attempting to adjust to each other, and followed by a tendency to innovate in groups of people who are already familiar. After this phase, in sequence, the speakers witness language changes which make the language different from each other, although originally derived from a single language family. Contrastively, external changes of a language are caused by the contact of a language with other languages, where humans as social beings are interconnected in a community, country or in the world. In addition to this, external changes must not only be explained by superficially examining the language. There is a need of making reference to the speakers’ social characteristics that are involved in the change, such as their attitudes, affections and aspirations as well as the context in which the linguistic changes are taking place.

## 2.3. Analogy, Lexical and Semantic Changes

The most noticeable way in which grammatical systems change is known as “analogy”. The process of transferring information from a particular subject (the analogy or source) to another particular (the target), linguistic expression corresponding to such process where at least one of the premises is general is also referred to as *analogy*. For the analogy process, Crystal [5] maintains that “in this process regular grammatical terms are changed in accordance to the

grammatical patterns which already exist in language”. He further provides the following example, the word *helpan* (help) in the past 1000 years it had *healp* as past tense and *holpen* as the past participle, but by the 14<sup>th</sup> century the verb became regular using the normal *-ed* ending *helped*. In hand with the grammar aspects, lexical change refers to people using different words today than people from the past. In line with Crystal’s view, linguists observe that a semantic change is very closely linked to a lexical change but semantic change has something to do with changes in meaning behind the words. The scholars point out that it is probably the most frequent type of language change and certainly the easiest to observe. For instance, one can make confident assertions about the age of a speaker who uses the word *courting* to mean “going out with, or one who uses the adjective *fit* to describe someone they find attractive. In another example, an older person would use the word “wireless” to mean “radio”, whereas the word *wireless* would certainly mean wireless technology such as phones and laptops for a younger person Crystal [6]. While this has been made the case, Crystal [6] explains semantic change as a change in the meaning. Therefore, the major types of semantic changes are: extension or generalization – widening of a word’s meaning often by a process called analogy. For example, the word *virtue* was initially a quality that could only be applied to *men*, but in contemporary society it can equally be applied to *women* as well. Furthermore, the scholar presents a different type of semantic change that is widely known as narrowing, where a word becomes more specialised in meaning, often limiting a generic word to a more specialised or technical use. For example, in old English *mete* referred to *food* in general. However, today it refers to only one type of food *meat*. The other type of semantic change is known as semantic drift, the movement of the entire meaning of a lexeme to a new meaning and is particularly evidenced by semantic differences between cognates. For example, the English word *to starve* is cognate with German *sterben* “to die” and in some parts of England; the word can mean “the old”, since it evolved through the meaning “to die of cold”. Apart from the so described types of semantic changes, we can also find the amelioration, which occurs as a word loses negative connotations or gains positive ones. For example, the word *mischievous* used to mean “disastrous”, where it now only means “playfully annoying”. Peroration or deterioration is one more type of semantic change, whereby a lexeme develops a negative sense of disapproval. For example, the word *gay*, which can mean “happy, colourful” was, used commonalty until it became a reference to homosexual. Another example is of the Middle English *villain* described as a “serf”, where as in Modern English *villain* is by no means neutral. Besides the aforementioned aspects of semantic changes, linguists find figurative use, grammaticalisation, metonymy and synecdoche and multiple processes as types of semantic changes. Figurative use is a change in the meaning that is based on an analogy or licenses between things. For example, the word *crane*, which is a bird with a long neck, it can also now mean a piece of equipment

for lifting weights. Grammaticalisation – is the development of function of words and grammatical effaces from content words. It often begins with extension of a word to include a grammatical function and the subsequent narrowing of the word a solely or predominantly grammatical use. An example of this is the French word *pas*, which literally means “step” but it is also used with *ne* in forming negative statements “*je ne pense pas*”=“I don’t think so”. Metonymy and Synecdoche – is the use of a part of an object to refer to a whole. For instance, in many languages the word *head* can be used in substitute of the word person. In English we have the phrase “*a head*” resembling to the Latin “*per capita*”. The word *poll* originally meaning “the top of the head” can refer to the whole head, and a “poll tax” is a fixed tax applied to each person. At last, we have the Multiple processes. With regards to this, a good example is the word *punk*, it initially meant “young boy”. However, in 1970 the word was then ameliorated to describe a music genre, furthermore, in some areas, this change has gone even further and *punk* can mean “*someone who doesn’t stand up for himself*” and this is pushed around.

#### 2.4. Spelling and Phonological Changes

Modern spellings were not the result of consistent system, rather they show evidence of previous pronunciations which had changed over time. For example, the spelling of words such as “*might*” would represent the original pronunciation, the [gh] representing a sound similar to that in the Scottish [ichi]. Not willing to be distant from spelling, other examples that were previously pronounced including the [k] in *knee* and *knight* and “ch” in *chicken* and *cheese* were once pronounced /k/ too. According to Labov [14] phonological change is a specific language change in which phonological systems are affected sounds laws as they act on contrast points in the system. In a typological scheme there are five phonological arrangements which are: mere change in pronunciation, primary split, secondary split, merger and loss. Mere change in pronunciation – is “mere” in the sense that it involves no reshuffling of the number or distribution of contrast in phonological system. Mere changes are examples of allophonic differentiation, which are sounds in specific environments, acquire new phonetic features or perhaps lose phonetic features they originally had. For example, a ramification of original /s/ into [s z S 3 s z x] would qualify as long as all the phone types remained in complementary distribution. Primary split – takes place when some allophones of a phoneme merge with another phoneme. For example, without alter notion, early Middle English /dr/ after stressed syllables became /dð/, *weder* – *whether* and so on. Since /s/ was already a structure point in the language, this innovation merely resulted in more /s/ and fewer /d/ and a gap in distribution of /d/ sound. There were also many cases of original voiceless stops in final position. *Belt* “bunt”, *stock* (walking) stick cane, thus, there are number of structure points as before / p t k b d g /, but there are more cases of / p t k / than before and fewer of / b d g /; and there is a gap in the distribution of / b d g / which are never found in word find

position or before a compared boundary. In secondary split – a new contrast arises when allophones of a phoneme cease being in complementary distribution and are therefore necessarily independent structure points. Also, secondary split was a major factor in the creation of contrast between voiced and voiceless fricatives in English. Thus, /f/ was [f] in *fise* [fiS] “fish” *lif* as still seen in *wolves*. The voiced fricatives are typically seen in verbs too, often with variations in vowel length or diverse sources for example: *gift* but *give* and *shelf* but *shelves*. Merger – that is unconditioned loss of contrast between two or more phonemes. Examples of true merger are: *hypp*, *cynn*, *cyssan*, *bryeg*, *fyllan*, *fur*, *mys*, *bryd*, which became modern *hip*, *kin*, *kiss*, *bridge*, *fill*, *fire*, *mice* and *bride*. Loss – it is disappearance of segment or even of a whole phoneme which was treated as form of primary split or merger, depending on whether the loss was conditioned or unconditioned. For example, in say *furth* “*furrow*”, *mearh* “*marrow*” there is vocalization at the last sounds. Moreover, / g, k / are lost in English in initial position before /n/ in: *gnaw*, *gnat*, *knight*, *known*. The same as /t/ is lost after fricatives before nasals and /l/ in: *soften*, *castle*, *bristle*, *chestnut*, *Christmas* and others. According to Mantiri [15] “there are regulatory organizations to preserve national languages in many countries but neither the United States nor Great Britain have such regulatory bodies in place”. The author further explains that the English language changes with the publication of new dictionaries, or the way media uses language, or with the creation of colloquial terms. Below are some examples of spelling changes that took place in the history of the English language, according to Mantiri, [15].

Table 1. Examples of Spelling Changes.

Spelling during 16 and 17 centuries	Re-spelling
Aventure	Adventure
Avice	Advice
Crume	Crumb
Descryve	Describe
Langage	Language
Neveuw	Nephew
Samon	Salmon

Source: Mantiri (2010, p. 8).

#### 2.5. Etymology and Folk Etymology

Crystal [6] defines etymology as “the study of lexical history. It investigates the origin of individual lexemes, the affinities they have had to each other and how they have changed in meaning and form to reach their present state”. The best examples of the vocabulary of old English is homogeneous (home “same” + gen “origin”), which cultural changes following the Norman of a heterogeneous (hetero “other diverse”) vocabulary. Another example is of the *hysteria* derived from the Greek word for “womb” which later, history was referred to the real meaning of history as investigation or learning by enquiry. Thus, the last example is related to what is called etymological fallacy, the view that an earlier meaning of lexeme or its original meaning is true or correct one.

## 2.6. Transmission, Etymology and Source Identification

Stockwell & Minkova [19] postulate that, “the transmission of borrowed vocabulary into English has been both direct (oral transmission) and indirect, mediated by them was the word *discus*, “a flat round plater”. In Old English this word was used to refer to the flat plates on which food was served, and it also came to mean platter or bowl. Later, the form of the word as changed from *discos* to *disc* pronounced the same way as the word *dish*. Then, in 17<sup>th</sup> century, the French word *disque* or its source Latin *discus* was borrowed again, this time strictly with the meaning of “flat surface”. The word was pronounced [disk] spelling either *disk* or *disc*, first recorded in 1664. The borrowing of the word quickly spread to medicals, zoological and botanical uses. Later it evolved into a technical term as disk brake. According to the authors, the musical meaning of *disc* was first recorded in 1885. Next, the word *discotheque* was coined from French, borrowed into English in 1951, where it produced *disco* by shortening, in 1964. Then the word was modified yet again and given a specialized new meaning, recently with the introduction of the *compact disc* in 1979. Finally, the invention and popularisation of computers gave it a new life and new meanings too: *floppy disk*, *hard disk*, *disk drive* and the word *diskette*.

## 2.7. Personal Names

The earlier forms of a name are often uncertain scribes that may have introduced errors copying from manuscript to other different dialect pronunciations that may have led to divergent spelling of the same name. Crystal [6] argues that, “variations involving a single letter may be used elsewhere: *Steven* is usually considered the same name as *Stephen* (but spelt with [v]), *Catherine* as *Katherine* as *Christina*”. Another good example is the name *Elizabeth* provided by Crystal.

Short forms		Foreign forms
Bess	Lisa	Babette, Elise, Lise, Lisette,
Bet	Lisbet	Elsa, Else, Ilse,
Beth	Lisbeth	Liesel (Germany)
Eliza	Liz	Bettina, Elisabetta (Italian)
Elsa	Liza	Isabela, Isabel, Izzie, Isabela (spanish, and Portuguese)
<b>Pet forms</b>		
Elisis	(Iris)	
Bessie	Libby	Elasaid (Scottish Gaelic)
Bessy	Lilibet	Bethan (Welsh)
Betsy	Lizzie	
Bette	Lizzy	
Betty	Tetty	

Thus, the name “Elizabeth” has developed many variants and shortened forms as can be seen from the examples given above. Moreover, in Portuguese names like *Clementina* and *Diamantina*, they are subject to change to other variations such as: *Dina*, *Tina*, *Tininha*, *Tita* and *Titi*, these varieties come to be used as real names.

## 2.8. Language Contact and Shift VS Linguistic Accommodation

According to Labov [14] language contact occurs when speakers of distinct speech varieties interact or when speakers of different languages interact closely”. Therefore, it is typical their language to influence each other. The forms of influence of one language on another are described as *language shift* and *creolization*. Sometimes it is referred to as language transfer or language replacement or assimilation, which is a progressive process whereby a speech community of a language shifts to speaking another language. An example of language shift is that of *Quebecois French*, widely spoken by French – Canadian immigrants in New England in early 20<sup>th</sup> century, has more or less disappeared from the US replaced by English, [14]. The other factor worth referring in language change is the Linguistic accommodation. Under linguistic accommodation we can discuss about two main categories: convergence and divergence. Convergence means changing one’s speech, which includes changes in pronunciation, pause and utterance in order to converge with the speech of other speakers. A clear example of the above can be witnessed when speakers address themselves to the elderly. In most of the cases, youth tend to avoid using slang or other informal forms or they tend to speak more slowly and end up drawing upon different cultural references than those they would preferably use with interlocutors of their age. Here we find young speakers converging towards elderly forms of speaking. A young boy who would say: “Dude! Wanna put off the chill to ‘n meet me...?” to his friend, would hardly use the same form to one whom he respects, such as his father, boss, etc. Rather he would, for example, say: Father! *Would you like to postpone the party tonight and join me...?* Phrasal verbs, direct questions and any forms of abbreviations would be avoided. The other type on how speakers may merge or not to other else’s type of language is divergence. The definition is rather clear. Unlike convergence, divergence happens when a speaker accentuates speech differences, most often in order to shown domain or power. A good example of this would be, for example, a friend of yours whom you meet in the beginning of a school term suddenly in your classroom as your new lecturer. Far from the forms of speech you usually have when hanging out with him, the new lecturer needs to find a way to establish authority in the classroom, who are likely to be of the students’ age. A good way to do this would be to diverge away from the normal everyday speech patterns attempting to call attention to formality.

## 2.9. Barbarism and New Technologies

Barbarism is a term used by some people to refer to a non-standard pronunciation, word or expression in a language. For example, the use of the word *nuclear* instead of the word “nuclear” is a barbarism. Consider the word “barbarism” in language change, it is related to the word, “barbarian”, the idiophone “bar-bar-bar” was the ancient Greek equivalent of modern English “blah-blah-blah”. The speed and efficiency

in communication and adaptation to new technologies changes language drastically. Therefore, new methods of sending and receiving information enable us to communicate with banks and interrogative a library catalogue database. In each case, we learn new conventions of communication, new technologies of accessing or asking information; whereby we are provided with variety of terms which are uncommon in daily use. Hansson (2004) observes that, in the Swedish case, writing has changed. For example, combined words are most often written in one word in Standard English Sweden. *Mobitelefon* is combined word in Swedish but increasingly it is spelled incorrectly as two words *Mobitelephone*, influenced by English where it occurs as *mobilephone*.

### 3. Research Methodology

In this section, the researchers describe the methodology used to conduct the study. It includes the research design and approach, the population and sampling procedures, the data generation methods and tools, ethical issues, credibility and trustworthiness of the study.

#### 3.1. The Qualitative Research Design and Approach

This study adopted the qualitative approach because it was explorative one with the goal to understand phenomena around the changes in languages, mainly English. According to Richardson, Peres, Wanderly, Correia and Peres [17], “qualitative research, apart from being an option from the researcher is justified by being an adequate means to understand the nature of a social phenomenon” (p. 79). The study was exploratory based on participant’s experiences through an interview and the review of literature based on linguistic scholars.

#### 3.2. Population and Sampling Procedures

Marconi and Lakatos [16] define the concept as “any subset of the universal set or population.” Thus, the total number of lecturers is 25 in the same university lecturing in Portuguese, English and French programmes and the number of students about 300 students. Participants for the study were identified using non-probability sampling based on purposive selection of participants considering the participants’ openness, and need to involve active ones who could speak and provide information. Richardson, Peres, Wanderly, Correia, and Peres [17] argue that “the intentional or rational selection samples are the elements that make up the sample and are related intentionally according to certain characteristics set out in the plan and the assumptions made by the researcher” (p. 161). Thus, the intentional sample is presented as representative of the universe. The researcher selected six lecturers who deal with sociolinguistics matters and, eight students from the English Course and four from Portuguese and French courses.

#### 3.3. Data Generation Method and Tool

To collect data in this study, the researchers used in-depths

interviews through an unstructured interview guide sheet. According to Blaxter, Hughes and Tight [4], “the interview method involves questioning or discussing issues with people. It can be a very useful technique for collecting data, which would likely not be accessible using techniques such as observation or questionnaires.” Similarly, Bell [3] states that:

One major advantage of the interview is its adaptability. A skillful interviewer can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings, which the questionnaire can never do. The way in which a response is made, the tone of voice, facial expression, hesitation, etc. can provide information that a written response would conceal.

Using the interview guide instrument, the researchers interacted with individual lecturers and university students pursuing language programmes in the last years. The interviews for teacher trainers lasted between twenty-eight minutes and three seconds to thirty-three and eight seconds. For graduate students, interviews lasted between nineteen minutes and forty-two seconds to twenty-six minutes and thirteen seconds. With in-depth interviews, the researcher intended to generate from respondents, data regarding experiences and views regarding the causes, factors and the effects of the English and language changes. The researcher used recordings and interview guide sheet to take notes to avoid missing information.

#### 3.4. Ethical Issues

Adler and Lerman [1], in their theory of relational ethics observe that the researcher must actively care about the researched and their rights, in order to ensure that the research participants are not adversely affected in any way by the research or publication of its findings. For ethical issues, formal permission and informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and justice were the aspects to consider during the research conduction.

#### 3.5. Credibility and Trustworthiness of the Study

Gasson, [9] reinforces the need of “ensuring rigor in the research process and communicate to others that we have done so”. For Sandelowski [18], trustworthiness in research, is a matter of persuasion whereby the scientist is viewed as having made the practices visible and therefore auditable. The strategies for ensuring credibility and trustworthiness in this study were: peer review and participants’ quotes.

## 4. Data Presentation and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the findings from the interview guide sheet underpinned by the interviewees’ experiences and the review of literature review. It starts with the causes for English language changes, which includes diachronic and synchronic causes. Next, it discusses the factors affecting English and language changes, followed by the aspects involved in English and language changes. Finally, it discusses the positive and negative effects of the English and language changes.

#### 4.1. Causes for English and Language Changes

The researchers bring in this and the following two

sections the main causes for English and language changes, and further the causes are split and taken into account the two core perspectives: diachronic and synchronic perspectives.

**Table 2.** Causes for English and Language Changes.

Interviewees	Causes for English and language changes	No. of participants
Lecturers in the English Course	Region, the speakers' needs, new technologies, imperfect learning	2/1
Lecturers in French and Portuguese Courses	Interaction with other languages / low grammar performance / geographical factors/ language police	3/1/2/1
Students	Culture interaction /internal and external reasons / language development / new experience	2/1/4/3

Lecturers and students referred that internal and external causes that affect English and language changes include: the imperfect learning, the speakers' needs, new technologies, interaction with speakers of other languages, geographical factors, language police and the language development are the most highlighted causes for English and language changes. The quotes below substantiate our findings:

*"Internal factors are: the use of the language in specific society or area of study.....Whereas external factors are: the contact between two or more languages and cultures leading to new way of pronunciation, new words borrowed in order to refer a particular new thing and the development of technology urge to language change". [ST2 - 13.11.2021]*

*"It is that, language change through the development made by society, in the society.....so the changes it makes will obviously result in the language change". [ST5 - 13.11.2021]*

*"Contactos com outras línguas, fraco domínio das regras gramaticais por parte dos falantes, razões de índole interna advindas da localização geográfica dos falantes e todos os aspectos particulares de cada comunidade de falantes. [OL15 - 14.11.2021]*

*"Tais contactos podem ser no contexto comercial ou de turismo onde as pessoas sentem-se obrigados a conhecerem a língua do outro para facilitar a comunicação, e havendo dificuldades, quem não compreende o outro acaba recorrendo-se ao uso de empréstimos, o que quando exagerado pode criar alterações numa língua". [OL2 - 14.11.2021]*

Converging issues towards English and language changes impacting on language changes include trade and tourism due to the speakers' needs. The causes on language changes are also indicated in tables two and three on diachronic and synchronic changes.

**Table 3.** Diachronic Reasons for English and Language Changes.

Interviewees	Causes for English and language changes	No. of participants
Lecturers in the English Course	Migration, trade, shifts for language accommodation	2
Lecturers in French and Portuguese Courses	Social contacts / new words / the society dynamics and evolution / timing	2/1/2/1
Students	New procedures for communications / political causes / trade and migration / new experiences and culture	1/1/2/4

The study has shown that the diachronic reasons for English and language changes are; migration, trade, shifts for accommodation, new experiences, the society dynamics and evolution, timing and new words from technologies inventions. This is substantiated the following responses:

*"The constant changing of the human life, the experiences, new technologies and inventions, and trades". [ST5 - 13.11.2021]*

*"Geography immigration, globalization at nowadays and media plays an huge impact to contribute how language change". [ST8 - 13.11.2021]*

*"Com o tempo as comunidades possuem necessidade de nomear certas situações nunca dantes enfrentadas, de igual modo, algumas palavras ganham novos significados ao mesmo tempo que o léxico recebe novas palavras sem deixar de lado o facto de que com tempo algumas palavras caem e desuso". [OL1 - 14.11.2021]*

*"....e o recorrer aos empréstimos passa a ser algo normal, podendo alterar alguns termos de uma língua ou originar uma outra língua diferente". [OL2 - 14.11.2021]*

The views of the OL1 and OL2 overlap to the language change praxis, as language communities need to attribute names to new objects and due to the fact that in a Portuguese speaking country, like Mozambique the need to borrow words from English in bordering regions, in languages learning environment is quite often occurring with speakers of two different languages including English. Furthermore, diachronic change, which is the investigation of language with concerns to the development of language or its parts over time, this type of change focuses on how a certain language evolved since its existence. A good example of this can be seen when discussing the three main periods of English, namely the Old, Middle and Modern. The following section presents the synchronic reasons for language changes.

**Table 4.** Synchronic Reasons for Language Changes.

Interviewees	Causes for English and language changes	No. of participants
Lecturers in the English Course	Political factors / communicative needs	1/2
Lecturers in French and Portuguese Courses	Communicative needs / social, historical and economic reasons / language police / semantic generalization	3/2/2/1
Students	Choice and style / social and geographical variations / standardization / political reasons	3/2/2/1



The discussion on synchronic changes includes aspects such as the communicative needs entailing the social, historical and economic reasons, the choice and style, social and geographical variations, the political pressures and standardization due to language police, most of which are influenced by socio-cultural factors that occur in society. The following quotes underpin the findings presented on table 3:

*“Need to communicate, political factors, social factors, economical factors, cultural factors and new technology”. [ST7 - 13.11.2021]*

*“When language suffer with a brutal change in a specific sort of time.....with events happening in that moment which contributes to origins different terminologies within society. For instance the corona virus pandemic is a clear example of this change”. [ST8 - 13.11.2021]*

*“As necessidades comunicativas de cada momento propiciam a adoção de medidas que contenção que podem consubstanciar mudanças radicais na estrutura da própria língua”. [OL1 - 14.11.2021]*

It is also important to refer that these types of changes may be analysed either in a given point of time in present or past. An example of synchronic changes can be found when citizens move from one place to another because of war

conflicts. People who start living together in countries next to Cabo Delgado because of terrorism faced in the last years, for example, may develop a type of language which will sound rather different from the standard. If they learn or speak English, this is unlikely to be pronounced with Portuguese or Mozambican local language patterns, which will obviously make it different from the standard English. Another example of the above can be found in Maratane, a refugee camp in Nampula province, northern of Mozambique. The type of language they developed from the time they started living in the camp is undoubtedly different from any of their official or native. Not only politics can lead people to start speaking or using a language differently, but also geographical, economic, social, cultural aspects as well.

#### 4.2. The Main Factors Affecting English and Language Changes

The next discussions analyses and discusses the main factors, which affect English and language changes. The section includes the presentation and discussion of the main aspects involved in English and language changes and it provides with real-world examples.

**Table 5.** Factors affecting English and Language Changes.

Interviewees	Causes for English and language changes	No. of participants
Lecturers in the English Course	Region, economy, imperfect learning, language / contact and social prestige	2/1
Lecturers in French and Portuguese Courses	Internal and external factors / social, historical and economic reasons / linguistic polices	1/2/3
Students	Foreign language influence / interference of dialects / borrowing, invented words and social evolution / trades and migrations	4/2/2/2

The main factors affecting English and language changes entail the following: the imperfect learning, lack of language police, foreign language influence, social, historical and economic factors, trades and migration, borrowing and new words from new objects with regards to technology.

*“factores religiosos, factores económicos e também factores políticos, o grau de escolarização e também o estatuto social das pessoas nomeadamente (ligados a própria língua que se consubstanciam na necessidade de se manter como uma língua viva);.....e factores (os utentes da língua procuram mecanismos para que a língua consiga expressar os seus sentimentos)”. [OL2 - 14.11.2021]*

*“Factores sociais (o jovem tem a tendência de usar as suas próprias expressões diferentes do formal), planeamento linguístico (o governo pode promover as línguas no ensino obrigando desta forma a sua padronização – é o caso de seminários de padronização das línguas moçambicanas)”. [OL3 - 14.11.2021]*

*“When there is interaction between cultures always changes in language may occur to meet the need of both cultures. Furthermore, the new inventions and technologies,...because news words, new pronunciations existing, and from the contact with different cultures new words are being introduced in the English language. [ST5 - 13.11.2021]*

*“Therefore different cultures can choose to use the same word in different contexts consequently causing change to the word meaning and context. Social environment affect English language change because social groups are free to choose or invent the words in their context. Time also affects the English language change because over the time some words are lost and some are created”. [ST6 - 13.11.2021]*

According to Crystal [6] “when people speak a foreign or unfamiliar word for the first time, they try to make sense of it by relating to words they know well, they guess what it must mean and often guess wrongly.” Such erroneous forms are called Folk Etymologies. A good example of folk etymologies is the word *bridegroom*. The Middle English form was *bridgome* which goes back to the old English *brydguma*, from *bride* + *guma* “man”. However, *gome* died out during the Middle English period. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century its meaning was no longer apparent and it came to be popular replaced by similar – surrounding word, “*Serving lad*”. This later developed the sense of “*servant having the care of horses*”. Harya [13] pledges that “there are two factors in language change; they are internal and external factors”. The internal language changes internally occurred in the behaviour of speakers in their everyday lives to adjust to each other, and followed by a tendency to innovate in groups of



people who are already familiar, then followed by other changes in sequence, which ultimately makes a language different each other, although originally derived from a single language family. Internal language change relates to the language change itself. Whereas changes in the external language change and language development is caused by the contact of a language with other languages, where humans as social beings who have been cultured either interconnected or inter-ethnic nations in the world in a country. They have many purposes in interaction and activities, for example economy, politic, religion, science, acculturation of culture, technology and etc. the language as communication tool in many activities.

Beard (2004) as cited in Mantiri [15] explains how political, social, cultural and technological factors affect the language change. The author explains that political factor is caused by foreign invasion, migration and colonization. With the Social factor he brings examples of foreign influences from Latin, French, American, Australian, Indian and others.

The unique way that individuals speak also fuels language change. Vocabulary and phrases people use depend upon the place, age, gender, education level, social status. The cultural factor means the exposure of one language group to another via television, radio, films, music, magazines and fashion and the technological factor is in hand with the rapid advances in information technology, industries, products and economy simply require new words that drive language change.

Duffy [7] calls attention to the fact that the ever-changing technology is creating difficulty for the English language users to keep track on new vocabulary and expressions. The statement is evidenced by Duffy [7] as he stresses that a language itself changes slowly but the internet has speeded up the process of those changes even more quickly. For example, some entirely new words like the verb “to google”, “facebooking”, “to SMS”, and many other words that are not yet in the Oxford English Dictionary, have come into popular use. The following table presents the aspects involved in English language changes.

**Table 6.** Aspects involved in English and Language Changes.

Interviewees	Interviewees' responses	No. of participants
Lecturers in the English Course	Grammar-syntax and meaning, phonology, orthography and lexical/semantics	2
Lecturers in French and Portuguese Courses	Morphological, syntactical or grammatical, phonological / language police, borrowing and interference	4/1
Students	Morphological, syntactical or grammatical, phonological / regional difference, globalization and technological	7/1

Participants of the three groups are unanimous that the foremost issues involved in English and language have to do with morphology, syntax, phonology, orthography, lexical. What more, the issue of language police and regional differences are of paramount importance to underline. Additionally, one of the lecturers in the English course has put the issue of semantics, which occur diachronically. More examples of semantic changes which have diachronically taken place are brought by McMahon (1994) as cited in Mantiri [15], when he refers the following: The word “awful” originally meant “inspiring wonder or fear”. It is blended of the words “awe” and “full”, used originally as a shortening for “full of awe”. In contemporary usage the word usually has negative meaning. The word “demagogue” originally meant “a popular leader”. Now the word has strong connotations of a politician who panders to emotions and prejudice. The word “egregious” originally meant something that was *remarkably good*. Now it means something that is remarkably bad or flagrant. The word “guy” was used as a

term for any “person of grotesque appearance” and then to a general reference for a male person. However, in the 20th century under the influence of American popular culture, the word “guy” has been gradually replacing “fellow”, “bloke”, “chap” and now in plural, it refers to a mixture of genders, for example. “Come on, you guys!” could be directed to a group of men and women). Furthermore, the word “gay” used to mean “bright, cheerful” before the 1960s, but now it generally means “homosexual”. The next table presents the positive effects of the English and language changes.

#### 4.3. The Positive and Negative Effects of the English and Language Changes

This section presents and discusses the positive and negative effects of English and language changes. Findings derive from the lecturers in the English course, lecturers from French and Portuguese courses from *Universidade Licungo*.

**Table 7.** Positive Effects of the English Language Changes.

Interviewees	Causes for English and language changes	No. of participants frequency
Lecturers in the English Course	Accommodation of new inventions / Standardization of the language	1/1
Lecturers in French and Portuguese Courses	Adequate the communicative challenges / language evolution / linguistic diversity, lexical enrichment and adaptation to the geographical and historical context and its adjustment	1/3/4
Students	Adequate pronunciations / accommodation of cultural experiences / diversity and linguistic enrichment	4/2/3

Many aspects turn out to implicate on the effects of the English and language changes. To start with, it has do with

the standardization of the language itself, the accommodation of the new inventions, the development of history of the

language itself, the opportunity for the linguistic diversity and enrichment and accommodation of cultural experiences. The quotes below substantiate the findings presented on table six.

*“The positive effects of the English language change are noticed when new English language words emerge, more complex English language structures are formed, adequate pronunciations and other relevant linguistic aspects are studied and most of all, the standardization of the English language itself”. [ST1 - 13.11.2021]*

*“I think the positive effect of English language change is*

*its flexibility and adaptability to every context facilitating the communication. So if there wouldn't have been changes to English language I think there several difficulties the communication. For example if we could bring someone who lived in the XVIII century in nowadays, the one would probably communicate with us, but with serious problems”. [ST8 - 13.11.2021]*

After presenting and discussing the positive effects of the English and language changes, in the next section, the researcher present and discuss the negative effects of the English and language changes.

**Table 8.** Negative Effects of the English and Language Changes.

Interviewees	Causes for English and language changes	No. of participants
Lecturers in the English Course	Communication challenges, misunderstanding,	2
Lecturers in French and Portuguese Courses	Linguistic interference / economical costs / challenges for standardization and internationalization of the changes / adaptation of new rules and its full implementation	1/2/4
Students	Unfamiliar words / lacking rules to govern changes / accommodation of slangs / death of some terminologies	2/1/2/1

Participants claimed that the negative effects of the English and language changes are: communication challenges due to misunderstanding, linguistic interference, challenges for standardization of the changes on the language itself due to high cost for material production, which include: dictionaries, grammar books, leaflets, language police documents that must be popularised around the world. Another issue affecting negatively include is the lose of the originality of the language opening rooms for accommodation of slangs, jargons and to some extent informal language. In hand with the negative effects, there are challenges, mainly on language police in foreign speaking countries, and lack world-wide language committees to govern the rules. The next quotes sustain our findings:

*“The negative effect of the English language change in my opinion is the growing of English slang over the entire world; it is like English language is losing its originality or quality”. [ST5 - 13.11.2021]*

*“Lacking of rules to govern this process of language change, because of the way these changes happen, sometimes people can misunderstand each other because language is changing constantly”. [ST5 - 13.11.2021]*

*“Os custos econômicos que podem advir na concepção de manuais e dicionários para o ensino da língua, etc...” [OL3 - 14.11.2021]*

*“Tratando-se de uma língua internacional, a mudança pode criar dificuldades na padronização e internacionalização das mudanças, as políticas educacionais não têm acompanhado as mudanças nas suas reformas curriculares”. [OL4 - 14.11.2021]*

Another negative effect which has been mentioned by the interviewees and the researchers agree with is the death of terminologies, which lead to have old terms, as new lexical rise, and the accumulation of old terminologies lead the existence of old language (written and spoken). The effects on English and language changes discussed in this article are not conclusive. Nevertheless, most of the times and if not

usually, the changes in English language are hardly noticed as such changes occur unconsciously to some extent, and planned to other extent. People are always growing up and things around them are changing. Therefore, in order to adapt to the new changes, in accordance to the speakers' needs, English changes diachronically and synchronically in order to help speakers of different languages or the same to interact successfully.

## 5. Conclusion

In all, the authors maintain that several factors contribute to language change, often occurring in response to social, economic and political pressures if enough users alter the way the language should be spoken. In grammar, it can be concluded that the most noticeable and frequent changes affect pronunciation, vocabulary and sentence structure. Furthermore, the needs of speakers such as new technologies and industries, influence language change where people have to use new methods of sending and receiving information. Therefore, it is widely argued that under no circumstances one would stop changes of languages because, languages are always in state of flux. All in all, from our own view, languages are inevitably and rarely predictable impossible to change. Thus, it may be concluded that those who try to plan language future would better spend their time devising fresh ways of enabling society to cope with new linguistics forms that accompany each generation. It is important to refer to the importance the language plays in humans' everyday interaction as it enables humans to store meanings and experiences to facilitate communication. Nations would hardly develop without the use of language. Nevertheless, language is dynamic and nothing can hinder it to change its vocabularies, although most of its rules may remain unchanged. The changes in vocabulary, which occur since language exists, is always noticed and will be so in the years coming. This is the diachronic type under the change in languages – examining the evolution of a language. The

examples provided include the features of English use since the Old to the Late Modern period. On the other hand, it was referred in this paper that several aspects in a certain point of time may lead to language changes, such as geography, culture, society, politics, and so forth. This is the synchronic change in a language. Another perspective on how a language may change is to look at it in terms of its internal (inside) and external (outside) factors. Internal are intra elements every individual brings with him into the same language, which may lead to a language being used different. Nevertheless, external aspects are those where languages interconnect each other resulting in a new form of use. Finally, it was also discussed in this paper about linguistic accommodation, where a clear distinction, with examples, was presented on convergence versus divergence. In convergence, speakers surrender, that is, they switch in order to adapt themselves in a new form of language use, whereas in divergence they tend to show authority, leading others to adapt themselves.

English tends to change dramatically due to the influence of other languages and cultures. In this respect, we are all involved in the process of turning English useful and interesting more than it is now. New studies in this area should be carried out in order to assist the development of English and languages in general. As a linguistic and cultural vehicle, the change of English language is extremely important, because it responds to the social, technological and economic interests. These changes are significantly helpful in developing the world. The important point is that although alterations happen in languages and many features are lost, the speakers are still perfectly capable of communicating. Lecturers, teachers, the language police decision-makers, the curricula designers and university language students have to be flexible to accommodate these changes in order to not be overtaken by them. As we can see for example new words are being created every day and word meaning and context are being invented in the world. The changes are crucial because they enable us to transmit world knowledge and increase interconnectedness. English language change is inevitable process which happens for several reasons aforementioned. So, it happens naturally and we must be worried on how the effects affect our production, creativity and development on the linguistics field regardless the positive or negative impacts.

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