

Sample essay on some observations pertaining to the amusing usage of words

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



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Organization

Abstract

English is not only known to be the most common language in the world today but is also known for the seemingly funny, and unexplainable, intricacies that surround the language. In this paper, we will address the topic of how and why do we come to know of the language as a comical and confusing one and yet manage to attain and retain it at the same time. We will delve on the observations made by Richard Lederer in his essay “ English is a Crazy Language” where he opines that there are numerous words in English which will never cease to amaze us with their bizarre usage.

Thesis Statement: In this report we will include our observations on the English Language based on our reading of the essay “ English is a Crazy Language”.

Introduction: What makes the language “ Funny”?

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the history of mankind. It is not only spoken by people belonging to the same tongue, but also by people belonging to various foreign countries all across the globe. English is considered the most coveted international language of all times. For instance, a person from India is more likely to be proficient in English than any other foreign language like French or German. In most countries, even though the national language is a different one, the educational system is still operated in the English language. It is quite intriguing that even after such popularity and acceptance, the quiriness of the language has not been denied.

Richard Lederer’s extensive study of the English language has helped in highlighting many amusing usages of words, the comedy of which was seldom realized earlier. For examples, if blueberries are blue, then what are gooseberries? If olive oil is made of olives, what is baby oil made of? If vegetarians eat vegetables, what do humanitarians eat? There are numerous such examples which the author has assembled together to enlighten and amuse the readers.

Some of the most commonly used words in the English language follow such a contradictory pattern of usage that it is quite difficult not to accept the irony of it. For instance, a woman can man a situation while a man can’t woman one. A teacher can teach and a preacher can preach, but when the teacher taught, the preacher had to “ praught”. This is just an example of

how we refuse to go by the rules of the language according to our convenience and understanding of the language. (Lederer)

The Confusion Arises When

The English Language does not attain its satisfaction only by confusing people with the innumerable exceptions that are accommodated within the language. It also confuses people by allowing the usage of commonly known words to define something when the object is barely related to the name that has been attributed to it. For example, a pineapple is neither a pine nor an apple. A Guinea pig is not from Guinea and is not a pig at the first place. And the best of all, a tomboy is not a boy! One may wonder as to why these words were formed at the first place. Is the formation of such words necessary to make the language more interesting or are they merely tools of creating confusing or amusement.

People and Places:

The confusing element of the English language is not limited to objects or things but further extends to people and places. A Red Indian is neither Red nor Indian. French fries were not invented in France and English muffins did not originate in England. A king can rule a kingdom but a queen has to make peace with the fact that her “queendom” will never exist. The intricacies of the English language, which have been specifically designed to represent something opposite, or irrelevant, makes the language quite a challenging one to master. For a person belonging to a different culture and one who speaks a different tongue, it would be quite difficult to learn the language

based only its literary meanings. If anybody attempts to do just that, he/she might end up “ finging” their fingers after the nth attempt.

Conclusion:

Based on our study of the essay by Richard Lederer, it would not be incorrect to conclude that English is indeed a funny language. It would require years of dedication and hard work for a person to master the language to such an extent that the slow speed of a quicksand and the male ladybugs do not haunt him/her anymore. It can also be said that despite the fact that English is considered to be one of the craziest languages of all times, it is still the most popular and the most studied languages in the world. As time progresses, we will get to see a whole new era where we would not even mind the bizarre usage of the words anymore and probably will end up coining new ones which would be equally amusing and intriguing.

References:

- Lederer, Richard. " English is a Crazy Language." (2014): Print.