More on (The) Changing English (Language) *

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It is a widely accepted fact that language is not something static that remains unaltered with the passing of time or unaffected by social and political factors, much to the regret of those who still associate linguistic change with decadence or corruption. If we compare a piece of Old English with its modern version we will immediately see that they differ so much from each other that they look like two completely different languages although, as we know, the difference is more apparent than real.

How much then does language change? What is the rate of change? The first two questions can be answered with more or less precision. As for future developments in a language, we can only guess on the basis of available evidence. Thus Quirk (1972:69-75). Suggests that neither the English language nor its role seem likely to remain unchanged or undergo violent alteration. He establishes two categories of changes: a) those dependent on modifications in the European role of English and b) changes that one expect independently. Among the first, he foresees a marked Europeanization of English, with large scale borrowing of vocabulary. The second category of changes is relatively small in his opinion but there are longer-term trends whose effect will be noticeable even over a short period of time, like the urge towards elementalism, a trend away from circumlocution and towards the colloquial and native models.

(*) As I hope the title will suggest, in writing this article I am deeply indebted to work already published on this subject, especially that of S. Potter (1969) and B. Foster (1970) quoted in the Bibliography.

Also, we must not forget that harmless events, in so far as they do not at first sight bear any direct relation to language, could in fact cause a tremendous revolution should they be fully implemented, as R. Carnicer reminds us in his admirable little book *Tradición y evolución en el lenguage actual,* Madrid, 1977. At one point in the book he refers to signs such as «Ladies-Gentlemen», which he thinks may well disappear one day owing to the strong opposition of the Women's Lib who believe these names are discriminatory and should no longer exist. By the same token, he says, these feminists may also demand the suppression of such things as the masculine and feminine distinction in nouns, adjectives, pronouns etc. which, obviously, would bring about great changes in the language.

But before proceeding, a few words of warning are obligatory. I am perfectly aware that for a non-native speaker of English the task of identifying possible deviations in the language is all the more difficult and risky and were it not for the fact that the undertaking seemed to me fascinating and worthwhile I would have resigned this venture from the beginning. It is true that, in a way, I was encouraged by Jespersen's opinion regarding the work of foreign grammarians who, he said. «are even more inclined than the natives to pay attention to everything in the language because they have no instinctive feeling of what is rare and what is common» (*How to Learn a Foreign Language,* p. 35).

Secondly, what I have tried to do in my investigation is not exactly a study of recent changes, since there is really little one can add to the available evidence in the works of Barber, Foster, Potter, etc. It occurred to me though that if I examined appropriate materials, especially the work of some contemporary authors —British and American— known to have a liking for innovations in their handling of the language, I could perhaps spot certain clues to what might eventually become real and permanent changes. Armed then with these good intentions and hopes of success, I set out to explore the writings of the brilliant and highly praised novelist A. Burgess, soon to discover that his novels were a mine if one were to look for Latinisms being used in preference to the more familiar Anglosaxon words: 'nacreous', 'editress', 'irradiable', 'cisatlantic', 'micturate', 'maligning', 'clavigerous', 'cloacal', 'putridity', mendacity', 'exiguity', and so on. (Cf. *Enderby Outside,* passim). As we have seen, the current trend runs precisely in the opposite direction which, incidentally, is good for the language but unfortunate for Spanish learners of English who would otherwise find their task inmensely facilitated.

In carrying out this small piece of research, my concern, I decided, was not to note down the proliferation of neologisms encountered in the scanning process but rather to point out peculiarities observed in a few selected language samples which, maybe, are nothing else but «ripples on the surface of language», although there is every reason to believe that they may carry the seeds of more substantial developments, being *parole,* as we know, the individual realization of *langue;* in other words, a reflection of the general patterns in the speech of a community.

I must emphasize the fact that all the samples that I have examined belong to the written medium. Obviously, it is an almost impossible task for a non-native speaker of English to research into phonological problems when his exposure to the spoken language is limited. Neither, therefore, would it be legitimate to adduce personal knowledge of the language as evidence in cases of doubt over the frequency of occurence or validity or certain usages.

1. WORD STRUCTURE.

Affixation is, as we know, extremely active today and classical prefixes, especially words in 'un—', are very common according to Foster (1970) who cites among others 'unalike', 'unhero', 'unfunny', 'un—radio' , 'unrich'. For my part, I have come across some curious examples:

> The ability to *unself-consciously admit* ignorance is the sign of the mature teacher.
>
> (Burt, et al (eds.). *Viewpoints on English as a Second Language*. Regents Pub. Co., 1977, p. 42).

> And so the Kirks ended up with an *unpropertylike* property after all. (Bradbury, AHM, p. 42).

The verb 'unstop' used intransitively with a transitive meaning is found in

> The traffic jam *unstops.* (Bradbry, AHM, p. 16)

We must bear in mind, in this respect, that the weakening of the transitive/intransitive opposition is very strong in Modern English as illustrated by the functioning of such verbs as *open, sell, sleep,* etc.

Classical '-ize' is also being used a lot and therefore the word 'permanentize' in the following example should not strike us as odd:

> ... and institution which, as Howard nowadays explains is society's technique for *permanentizing* the inherent contingency of relationships.
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 20)

Some vernacular suffixes are however very productive, especially those in '-manship' (OE manscipe) and '-ness'. Malcolm Bradbury in *A History Man* seems particularly fond of using the latter: 'Kirkness' (p. 4). 'movingness' (p. 10), 'separateness' (p. 40), 'thinginess' (p. 96), 'livingness' (p. 97), 'nothingness' (p. 189).

I also found a humorous creation in '-dom':

> You don't swim, I know. You're preparing your body for honoured *corpsedom.*
> (Burgess, EA, p. 222)

Finally, the old established process of compounding is still very common in present-day English and some writers make use of this procedure most effectively:

> As for Barbara, she became , of course, a housewife, or rather, as she put it, a *flatwife.*
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 20)

> 'Bloody fed-up, mate?' said Jed Foot, his mouth quivering. 'You don't know what bloody *fed-upness* is. I'll have another one of them'.

> 'That' *grudgemumbled Enderby,* 'is just what I said'.
> (Burgess, EA, p. 171)

> The lapelless jacket and tapering trousers were a kind of healthy *stirabout* colour.
> Burgess, EA, p. 36)

2. Sentence structure.

English sentence structure is not so rigid as one might think. In fact, the system of English allows a certain freedom in the choice of arrangements. An example of this related to the present trend known as «syntactic switch to front position» is the placing of attributive groups before the noun they modify, obviously for stylistic purposes; the aim is to make a sudden impression on the reader/hearer by creating a vivid image. In this respect I can quote three of my findings which, although they are not new, seem to me amusing:

> She described her attacker as good looking with *come-to-bed eyes.*
> (The Daily Telegraph, April 10, 1979, p.3)

> Perhaps it is easier to give examples of what incorrect English is than what is correct, and that may be why grammar sometimes seems to be preoccupied with *thou-shall-not* rules.
> (Scott, F. S et al. *English Grammar. A Linguistic Study of its Classes and Structures.* Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1968, p. 10)

> He himself spoke a sort of radio announcer's Arabic full of assertive *fish-in-the-throat* noises and glottal checks that sounded like a disease.
> (Burgess, EA, p. 127)

Another very effective though quite irregular formation can be seen in the following description:

> 'It's altogether possible' said *a dried ancient goitrous thyroid colloidally distended, eyes popping, voice hoarse,* 'that it was the act of a private entrepreneur.'
> (Burgess, EA, p. 197)

NOUNS

Partly related to the above-mentioned trend is also the growing use of premodifyng noun adjuncts in preference to attributive adjectives or postmodifying phrases: 'sex maniac', 'family member', etc.

Nominal groups consisting of more than one noun adjunct are also

very common and, as Potter points out, they are «serviceable preposition-saving devices». But more than three seems to make communication unnecessarily laborious, and very often ambiguous as in the following newspaper headlines [1]:

GENERAL STORES SECRET IN HIGH STREET
BRITISH FIRMS SHIPS SINKS TODAY

Basil Cottle (1975:32) rightly finds the following 7-noun group intolerable:

SPEEDBOAT DEATH BLAZE RESCUE BID MEN PRAISED

On the other hand, the piling up of descriptive titles before proper names is today accepted as normal:

British Former Prime Minister Mr. Wilson

ADJECTIVES

The main novelty here is the growing use of the periphrastic forms *more* and *most* to express the comparative and superlative degree in preference to the endings *- er, - est.*

It is interesting to note the curious combination *most + adjective of nationality* which is found normally in the world of advertising. Thus, we can read in British newspapers

LANCIA. THE MOST ITALIAN CAR

But A. Burgess also uses this construction:

> He yapped like a dog *most unspanishly,* at Hogg. Out, out, out, out, out, out.
> (Burgess, EA, p. 48)

A few other anomalies deserve some comment. The ending *-est* added to 'little', on the analogy of 'smallest', is found very occasionally. according to Zandvoort. I found one instance of this in Brautigan's *Trout Fishing in America,* p. 10:

> He went into the kitchen, stepping around the *littlest* children.

The use of an attributive adjective twice before a noun, without a comma, the first time obviously functioning as an intensifier, seems to me quite peculiar in English:

> Is Warren Enright a tall skinny *black black* boy with a phony English accent?
> (Jones, D, p. 10)

I came across only one case but I have a similar example of an adjective being used as an adverb which in turn is modified, or rather amplified, by the same word:

> ... the waves slapping *naughty naughty* at boats full of contraband goods.
> (Burgess, EA, p. 50)

A personal name may function metonymically as modifier of an adjective, as in

> ... the grass was kept *Peter Pan* green all the year round.
> (Brautigan, TFA, p. 26)

It is Burgess again who provides an example of *adjective of nationality + personal name*:

> *Spanish* John stood shaking his head, nastily pleased.
> (Burgess, EA, p. 9)

But this use is not consistent throughout the novel. Sometimes he is referred to as 'John the Spaniard'.

PRONOUNS

'He' replaced by 'it' is a colloquialism which reminds me of the Spanish construction with 'ese' in inverted position where the meaning is derogatory: 'El señor ese de la gorra'. R. Brautigan's *The Hawkline Monster* contains a couple of instances:

> 'I can't do it', Greer said
> '*It*'s a bastard all right', Cameron said
> 'I can't shoot a man when he's teaching his kid to ride a horse', Greer said.
> (p. 9)

In the second example 'it' alternates with 'he':

> 'God-damn!' Cameron said. *It*'s sure as hell gone now. One thousand dollars. By all rights, *he* should be dead... but there *he* goes into the house to have some lunch'.
> (p. 10)

Relative 'who' in subject function is often elided, though as Strang observes, grammars do not generally acknowledge this fact[2]. «Contact clauses», as Jespersen calls them, were however very common in Old English and Middle English: Hēr on þȳs gēare gefōr Ælfred wæs æt Baðum gerēfa; with hym ther was a plowman, was his brother, etc.

H. Pinter's *The Homecoming* provides these two examples:

> ... and here I've got a lazy idle bugger of a brother won't even get to work on time
> (p. 47)

> ... And there's lots of people of my age share that curiosity, you know that Dad?
> (p. 36)

In the following example 'which' is used after 'like' where 'what' would be the normal pronoun:

> 'Christ, Howard, how did we come to be like this?' 'Like *which?*', asked Howard.
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 17)

ARTICLES

While it is true that the tendency to drop the articles, especially the definite article, is fairly recent, sometimes we come across certain patterns where usage varies. Thus a name + Road frequently has *the,* according to Jespersen (AMEG: VII, 1. 2_5) when the meaning denotes the road leading to the place indicated by the first element of the pattern. But most frequently we find zero, he says.

In the case of *The King's / Road,* which is less frequent than *King's Road* as he himself admits, the suggestion is that it «should probably be analyzed as *The King's / Road*». However, in the following example that I detected in AHM it is clear that neither interpretation would fit

in easily, the only explanation for the presence of 'the' being that it obeys the tendency to single out that which is unique or fashionable:

> The Kirks go to publishers' parties in Bloomsbury and radical socialist parties in Hampstead, and parties for new boutiques in *the* King's Road.
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 52)

Another peculiarity in the novels of Bradbury is the use of 'the' with 'at' and 'on' in expressions of time, as in

> ... at *the* two o'clock of one early morning
> (Bradbury, EPW, n. 47)
> On *the* Monday Treece went down to the railway station.
> (Bradbury, EPW, p. 221)

In certain phrases the use of 'the' is hesitant:

> They run through the rain, and pull open the passenger door, arguing about who will sit *in front,* who *in the back.*
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 104)

A peculiar omission of the article before the word 'woman' can be observed in these two instances:

> As for Barbara, well, she is at this minute just a person, as she puts it, trapped in the role of wife and mother, in the limited role of *woman* in our society.
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 3)

> Barbara, her education over, had promtly closed out her opportunities and reverted to being *standard woman.*
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 24)

In both cases, the author's intention seems to be the same: to contrast the individual and the general, or rather to destroy Barbara's individuality by making an abstraction of the particular, concrete woman Barbara Kirk. In this respect, the use of the singular word 'woman', instead of the more usual plural form, is a very effective device.

In the following examples the indefinite article is elided, perhaps in order to make more forceful the words coming after it:

But it is *invisible expense, inconspicuous unconsumption,* and it creates no distances and makes them no enemies...
(Bradbury, AHM, p. 5)

Father, why have you forsaken me. Forgive me, I am only *youth.* Not sin or evil. Only youth.
(Jones, BT, p. 28)

VERBS

According to Potter (1969:118) the most extensive changes in current English usage are those affecting verbs. They can be grouped around the following headings:

a) Progressive forms. — There is today a growing use of the expanded forms of the verb affecting also those verbs which traditionally did not admit the progressive forms: 'think', 'believe', 'see'. Potter (1969) deals with this matter at length but no reference is made to two interesting constructions that I have encountered: a) the infinitive 'to be' expanded in the passive and b) the expanded present tense of the verb 'have to':

> But down was not where they wanted to settle; a hideous deceit seemed *to be being* practised.
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 39)

> Throughout the world literally millions of university students *are having to* read a significant part of the required materials for their courses in English.
> (M. Scott., *A Problem in Reading Comprehension,* MET, Vol. 6, No. 6, p. 10)

The first of these constructions is undoubtedly rare. Cf. Jespersen (AMEG, IV:13.7(6)) who records only two similar ones: 'Who could be being married?' and 'I shall always be being pushed away'.

b) Auxiliaries. — As an auxiliary, 'do' is extending is territory for, as Cottle (1975:61) regrets

> «it has invaded the negative, the interrogative, the imperative, and even the affirmative of almost every verb».

But even as a full verb 'do' is gaining new ground, acquiring new meanings: 'to do somebody' (colloq.), 'to do a country', 'to do an interview' (Bradbury, AHM, p. 34). We may say, borrowing a term from E. Lorenzo, that we are now witnessing an «inflation» of the verb 'do'.

Elliptical 'do' or 'have' is however frequent in questions:[3] (Colioquially or informally)

> Shuttle: (......) You get that weight-lifting set I sent you?
> Paul: It came yesterday. I haven't opened it yet.
> (Vonnegut, HB, p. 19)

> Shuttle (to Paul): You ever hear the story about the boy who carried a calf around the barn every day?
> (Vonnegut, HB, p. 20)

As regards question tags, where auxiliaries are always employed, the tendency in American usage at least, seems to be to replace them by 'right?' or 'huh?':

> Lula: But it's true, most of it, *right?*
> (Jones, D, p. 9)
> Lula: You think I want to pick you up..., *huh?*
> (Jones, D, p. 8)

c) INFINITIVE VS. IF-CLAUSE. — Probably for reasons of economy of language we sometimes find an infinitive where an if-clause would be the expected construction:

> They have been married now for twelve years, though you wouldn't think of it, *to look* at them, *to see* them, *to hear* them in action.
> (Bradbury, AHN, p. 4)

The use of the infinitive, however, is in line with the current trend to omit part of the traditional expression that Foster (1970:213) illustrates with the following examples: 'to adjust oneself to something' becomes 'to adjust to something', 'to identify oneself with' gives way to 'to identify with'.

d) NEW USES OF VERBS. —

> 'Jam' as a verb, is used intransitively
> the traffick line *jams*. (the street)
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 15)

e) PHRASAL VERBS. — The recent growth of phrasal verbs has been remarkable, as we know, and has made up for the loss of verbal inflections. By combining with a few particles, many frequently used verbs can express subtle shades of meaning that would otherwise be difficult to convey. The combinations are infinite and talented writers make use of these producing occasionally very fine and graphic descriptions. The following examples speak for themselves:

> 'Maybe one day', says Miss Calendar, *angling herself out of* the car...'
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 110)

> They each hold their glass of red wine, and they look at each other, and they begin to *talk the party into existence*.
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 6)

> He *shuddered his whisky down* in one
> (Burggess, EA, p. 200)

> His father *O-ing out* the smoke ......[4]
> (Burgess, EA, p. 7)

Phrasal verbs with two particles have increased lately but they are usually described as pleonastic or redundant:

> She *joined in with* a group of women's libbers.
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 50)

f) IS-THAT-WHAT-YOU-MEAN ECHO-QUESTIONS. — I use this rather unfortunate coinage to refer to a category of echo questions, probably colloquial and therefore not recorded in GCE, which repeat a message or part of a message not quite explicitly formulated in words but obviously clear from the context it occurs in. Vonnegut provides some instances of these:

> Harold
> We came up behind a sentry, and your father slit his throat before he could utter a sound.
> Paul (involuntarily)
> Uck
> Harold
> *Don't care for cold steel? A knife is worse than a bullit?*
> (Vonnegut, HB, p. 74)

Paul
Tell me some stories about Dad.
Harold
(Unused to the word) Dad? (Accepting it) Dad (To himself) The boy wants tales of derring-do. Name a country.
Paul
England?
Harold
(disgusted) Oh, hell
Paul
Dad was never in England?
(Vonnegut, HB, p. 72)

ADVERBS

As regards adverbs, A. Downing's article *La subjetivación del advervio en el inglés de hoy* [5] clearly shows the growing use of adverbs in front position as modifiers of a whole sentence. These sentence adverbials often convey, more or less explicitly, the speaker's own view of the situation, as in 'Honestly, I don't think you should go now', where 'honestly' represents other possible structures like 'to be honest', 'in all honesty', 'if I may be honest', etc.

Other curious usages are:

a. 'This', 'that' as modifiers of adjectives and adverbs; 'that bad', 'that good', 'this soon', etc. where normal usage would require 'so'.

b. An adverbialised adjective functioning as intensifier of the same adverb:

'... the waves slapping *naughty naughty* at boats full of contraband goods.
(Burgess, EA, p. 50)

c. 'Also' in

She didn't know that it was there. She *also* didn't know that she was naked.
(Brautigan, THM, p. 13)

d. 'Getting on for' as a substitute for 'nearly', a peculiar malformation which I found in a British newspaper:

> She discovered that she was sharing it (the flat) with *getting on for* a millions bees.
>
> (REVEILLE, June 29, 1979, p. 25)

PREPOSITIONS

Because prepositions are merely structure words with no specific meaning of their own they tend to be unstable and their choice, in a number of constructions, is subject to influences, mainly from America, that tend to upset traditional practice. So there is a growing preference for '- on' instead of other prepositions. M. Bradbury shows an inclination to use this preposition in phrases like 'on the second'; 'See you *on the second*' (AHM, p. 8), '*on* seven'; 'It was just *on seven* when he reached the farmhouse' (AHM, p. 173).

In book dedications we find both 'for' and 'to': 'For Mary', 'To John'.

In the next two examples 'be' has acquired a sense of motion, as it were, which justifies the use of 'into' following:

> He had never at that time *been into a restaurant*, and almost never *into* a pub.
>
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 19)

> ... and she discovered, what she already suspected, that he *had never been into a girl either*.
>
> (Bradbury, AHM, p. 19)

A pleonastic 'at' can be seen in

> ... Where's he *at?* Greer said 'Next door' the head Chinaman said.
>
> (Brautigan, THM, p. 13)

FUNCTIONAL SHIFTS

Examples of one part of speech operating as another part of speech have long been known to take place in English but this functional change is now becoming more marked.

There is not space here nor time to study in detail the large varie-

ty of functional changes which are taking place in English at the moment. Suffice it to say that the possibilities are practically limitless, although the most common shifts are from nouns into verbs and vice versa. S. Potter (1969) devotes a whole chapter to functional shifts and gives several examples of the more recent conversions. For the sake of illustration I'll mention a few personal findings which fit in the usual categories:

Adv + pronoun + verb into noun
John's thudding drowned the final *whatever it was*
(Burgess, EA, p. 32)

Pronoun into noun
... now she whispers a brief *something* into the ear of the chair
(Bradbury, AHM, p. 161)

Personal name into verb
Easy: Allah. He *allahed* quietly towards the sea under a frowning moon.
(Burgess, EA, p. 156)

Adjective + -ie into noun
The *baldies* of Europe have a new member — and he's only 12 years old.
(REVEILLE, June 29, 1979, p. 19)

ELLIPSES

Following the American model the use of elliptical constructions, commonly referred to as shortenings or suppressions, is also a trend in Modern English. It affects all parts of speech but mainly auxiliary verbs and pronouns. The following is a list of the most striking ellipses I have found:

'and'
You'll buy the drinks, I'll buy the food.
(Bradbury, AHM, p. 8)

'to'
I don't want to go my wife's house at the moment.
Do you hear me?
(Tennant, HD, p. 40)

'of'
They've done it to all us first-graders.
(Brautigan, TFA, p. 50)

'his'
He stands by the van, car keys hanging from one finger...
(Bradbury, AHM, p. 14)

'his'? 'her'?
A young reporter, cheeks ruddy from country living, eyes nervous and overawed...

'I'
Brindley: Oh, I don't think I should have any more.
Marks: Can't say I blame you, old man.

'The'
Beauchamp: (...) Not a smile. Man at the next table laughed out loud...
(Stoppard, AD, p. 23)

'I've'
Seen you somewhere, haven't I?
(Burgess, EA, p. 175)

'Are', 'I'
You one of his friends, then? asked the doctor
Didn't know he had any British ones.
(Burgess, EA, p. 174)

'It will'
Soon be winter now, said Hogg in a conversational manner.
(Burgess, EA, p. 16)

'I'll'
Martello: Tell you what — give Mouse a go on the horse.
(Stoppard, AD, p. 44)

'You'll'
Shuttle: What an awful sound!
Harold: Get used to it.
(Vonnegut, HB, p. 152)

'There is'
Then he looks around. No map, no compass, no torch-

only that low dense jungle that stretches for hundreds of miles...
(Theroux, CF, p. 50)

'There (was) a' and remodelling
It used to be. Time was when the building of a garden pool involved shifting tons of concrete...
(REVEILLE, June 29, 1979, p. 23)

'On the way (back)'
He vomited nineteen times to San Francisco
(Brautigan, THM, p. 11)

3. CONCLUSION.

We may conclude by saying that in so far as the structure of English is concerned, the commonly held view that sentence structure remains remarkably stable and uniform throughout the English -speaking world can be taken almost as dogma, with perhaps the slight qualification, as Barbara Strang puts it, that «the patterns are stable through time but even they (...) undergo gradual change as changing analogies come to be dominant» (1974:17).

I would like to end this article by quoting, because it is quite pertinent, the last paragraph (slightly modified) of E. Lorenzo's *El español de hoy, lengua en ebullición*. Gredos, Madrid, 1971:

> «Todos estos ejemplos... no suponen testimonio de tendencias claramente definidas. La mayoría son exponentes de las vacilaciones y tanteos con que la lengua, forzada a operar en condiciones anómalas, trata de resolver, con recursos e incluso aberraciones de urgencia, situaciones de comunicación en que el hablante o el escritor, por pereza o premura de tiempo, no encuentran cauce adecuado, o en última instancia, en que la lengua, en perpetuo desarrollo, no ha creado todavía moldes generalmente aceptados.

NOTES

1. Taken from H. G. Widdowson. *Language Teaching Texts.* English Language Series 8, OUP, 1971, p. 23.

2. More on deviations affecting the use of relative pronouns can be seen in A. Downing's «Desviación de la norma en el sistema de los pronombres relativos en inglés», *EFI,* Anejo II, Febrero 1979.

3. For curtailed interrogative constructions in Modern English see E. Lorenzo, «La oración interrogativa en el inglés hablado», *FILOLOGIA MODERNA,* 39, junio, 1970, pp. 233 - 244.

4. The use of letters as 'shape indicators' is very common in Modern English: T - shirt, S - bend, L - wing, V - neck, A - ladder, etc.

5. *FILOLOGIA MODERNA* 63 - 64, Febrero - Junio, 1978.

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