English Language Essay, Research Paper

English is a language that is constantly evolving and changing with the times.

According to George Orwell, this evolution of the English language is full of

bad habits which are spread by imitation and which are leading to the general

collapse of English. This bad English is caused by various mental vices which

lead to bad writing that is vague that and lacks precision. These mental vices

include the use of dying metaphors, pretentious diction, and meaningless words.

The combination of these mental vices give Modern English a certain staleness of

imagery and lack of clarity. While a good metaphor assists an author by evoking

a visual image in the reader, ?dying?metaphors that are too commonly used

can lose their vividness. For example, in an article for the Ottawa Citizen, Dan

Leeth described the landscape of the Grand Canyon as vast emptiness?, a

metaphor that has lost it?s effect on the reader due to the fact that it is

used too frequently in Modern English. Another way that a metaphor can lose

it?s effect on the reader is when it is manipulated by the author and twisted

out of context. For example, in another article, Randall Denley, speaks of the

unions and their ?kangaroo courts?, a metaphor that is commonly used without

any knowledge of it?s meaning. In another article, metaphors like ?His voice

thunders…? and ?…taken the theater scene by storm? are too frequently

used just because the author lacks the imagination to make one up for himself, a

common problem in Modern English. The use of dying metaphors could be avoided if

writers would just take the time and trouble to make up a new metaphor for

themselves. The use of pretentious diction is probably the most prevalent mental

vice used in writings today. Author feel the need to dress up simple statements

with unnecessary words to make their sentences appear more intelligent. ? The

deserted house of worship now serves as a memorial to futile efforts.? The

author of this work used pretentious words such a ?futile? in an attempt to

dress up his sentence, but end up increasing the vagueness of his work. Another

example of pretentious diction is when large, useless words are used in

sentences where it would be advantageous to use shorter more direct ones.

?Collectively, unions are outmoded organizations, more coercive and irrational

than the corporate bosses they allegedly protect workers from.? Some writers

even string series of these obscure words together to make their sentences

appear more profound. This fact is illustrated a sentence written by Jamie

Portman that contained words like ?deft direction? and ?performers

cavort?. Instead of using these words, the authors could use words that are

simpler to decrease the ambiguity of their work. The use of meaningless words is

another large problem with Modern English. Authors will often string words

together in long passages that are completely lacking in meaning. Instead of

giving concrete examples, a writer will just string together a bunch of words

that are basically pointless like in this paragraph: ?The route to the rim

slices through an open valley that intrigues with starkness, yielding no hint

that a chasm bisects the land beyond. Dust devils dart and twist, and parched

grasses huddle in isolated clumps.? Authors using Modern English constantly

add meaningless words to sentences that are unnecessary to try and give the

sentence a feeling of symmetry. ? The show does not lampoon aspects of the pot

culture; more important, in its own skewed fashion, it is a rallying cry against

campaigns of lies and misrepresentation by people of power and influence.?

Sentences liek this are now so commonly used in English that the reader almost

expects to see them and doesnt really pay attention to what the paragraph is

actually saying. The evolution of Modern English has brought along many bad

habits and mental vices that are constantly being passed from author to author.

These very habits are what is keeping authors from thinking clearly and

expressing their thoughts in a direct way. The combination of dead metaphors,

pretentious diction, and the use of meaningless words in writing has led to a

certain vagueness in writing and to the collapse of English language.