



The issue of classifying linguistic deviation

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ABSTRACT

Linguistic deviation, the phenomenon where language usage diverges from conventional norms, plays a crucial role in both everyday communication and artistic expression. The classification of these deviations has been widely debated among linguists, due to their complexity and diversity across languages. This article explores the challenges of classifying linguistic deviations, emphasizing the inherent difficulties posed by the dynamic nature of language and its use. The paper reviews various approaches to categorizing deviations, including syntactic, phonological, morphological, and semantic types, as well as more specialized forms such as rhetorical and pragmatic deviations.

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Lingvistik deviatsiyaning tasnifi masalasi

ANNOTATSIYA

Kalit so'zlar:

sintaktik deviatsiya,
fonologik deviatsiya,
morfologik deviatsiya,
semantik deviatsiya,
pragmatik deviatsiya,
lingvistik me'yorlar.

Lingvistik deviatsiya, ya'ni til qo'llanishining an'anaviy me'yorlardan chetga chiqishi hodisasi, kundalik muloqot va badiiy ifodada muhim o'rin tutadi. Lingvistik deviatsiyalarni tasniflash masalasi turli tillarda kuzatiladigan deviatsiyalarning murakkabligi va xilma-xilligi tufayli lingvistlar o'rtasida munozaralarga sabab bo'lmoqda. Ushbu maqola ushbu deviatsiyalarni tasniflashdagi qiyinchiliklarni ko'rib chiqib, tilning dinamik tabiati va uning qo'llanishidan kelib chiqadigan murakkabliklarni yoritadi. Maqolada sintaktik, fonologik, morfologik va semantik deviatsiyalar hamda ritorik va pragmatik kabi ko'proq ixtisoslashtirilgan shakllarni tasniflashga bo'lgan turli yondashuvlar tahlil qilinadi.

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Проблема классификации лингвистической девиации

АННОТАЦИЯ

Ключевые слова:

синтаксическое отклонение, фонологическое отклонение, морфологическое отклонение, семантическое отклонение, прагматическое отклонение, лингвистические нормы.

Лингвистическая девиация — явление, при котором использование языка отходит от общепринятых норм. Это отклонение играет важную роль как в повседневной коммуникации, так и в художественном выражении. Классификация лингвистических девиаций является предметом споров среди лингвистов из-за сложности и разнообразия этих отклонений в различных языках. В данной статье рассматриваются проблемы, связанные с классификацией девиаций, и подчеркиваются трудности, возникающие из-за динамичного характера языка и его использования. В работе анализируются различные подходы к категоризации лингвистических девиаций, включая синтаксические, фонологические, морфологические и семантические отклонения, а также более специализированные формы, такие как риторические и прагматические отклонения.

INTRODUCTION:

Linguistic deviation, a concept central to both linguistic and literary studies, refers to instances where language use diverges from established norms and conventions. Such deviations can manifest in various forms, ranging from grammatical anomalies to creative manipulations of language for stylistic or rhetorical purposes. The study of linguistic deviation has long fascinated scholars due to its capacity to illuminate the boundaries of linguistic structure, creativity, and communication (Leech, 1969). However, the classification of linguistic deviations remains a complex and contested area within the field, posing significant theoretical and methodological challenges.

One of the primary difficulties in classifying linguistic deviations is their typical diversity across languages and contexts. While deviations in syntax, phonology, and morphology are often easily identifiable, more nuanced forms of deviation—such as semantic shifts, pragmatic violations, and rhetorical innovations—resist easy categorization (Crystal, 1998). Moreover, the distinction between intentional and unintentional deviation further complicates classification efforts. For example, in poetic and artistic contexts, deviations are often deliberate and serve to enhance meaning, whereas in everyday communication, such deviations may result from errors or non-standard usage (Short, 1996). This duality raises fundamental questions about the nature and function of linguistic norms.

Compounding these challenges is the fact that linguistic norms themselves are not static but evolve and vary between speech communities. What constitutes a deviation in one language or dialect may be considered normative in another (Aitchison, 2001). Furthermore, linguistic deviations often overlap with sociolinguistic phenomena such as code-switching, slang, and dialectal variation, further blurring the boundaries between deviant and normative language use (Cheshire, 2005). Thus, a universal framework for classifying linguistic deviations must account for both the dynamic nature of language and the sociocultural contexts in which deviations occur.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The study of linguistic deviation and its classification is deeply intertwined with the broader fields of linguistics, stylistics, and literary theory. As early as the 19th century, scholars began to take notice of how deviations from linguistic norms could provide insight into both the structure and flexibility of language. Over time, the focus of research has shifted from a prescriptive to a more descriptive understanding, where the fluidity of language and its variations are analyzed systematically. This section outlines the key milestones in the development of this field and the gradual evolution of ideas surrounding the classification of linguistic deviations.

The initial interest in linguistic deviation arose within the context of classical philology and structuralism in the 19th century. Early linguists like Ferdinand de Saussure (1916) laid the foundation for understanding language as a system of signs where any deviation was viewed largely in terms of errors or irregularities. Saussure's distinction between *langue* (the structured system of language) and *parole* (actual language use) implicitly acknowledged that deviations occur in *parole* but were often seen as exceptions to the rule-bound nature of *langue*. This era focused primarily on understanding language through its structural patterns, and deviations were largely considered aberrations or mistakes.

The mid-20th century witnessed a shift in perspective as scholars such as Roman Jakobson (1960) and Michael Halliday (1964) began to view deviations as not merely errors, but as deliberate, meaningful manipulations of language, particularly in literary contexts. Jakobson's work on poetic function and Halliday's systemic functional linguistics introduced the idea that linguistic deviation could be a stylistic tool. This period saw the rise of stylistics as a discipline, which treated deviations as purposeful divergences from norms to create specific aesthetic effects.

Geoffrey Leech (1969), in his seminal work *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*, was one of the first to formalize the classification of linguistic deviations in literature. He identified deviations at the phonological, syntactic, morphological, and semantic levels, establishing a framework that would influence later studies. Leech's approach marked a significant development by acknowledging the creative potential of deviation and offering a more structured classification method, although still largely limited to literary texts.

From the 1970s onwards, research began to expand beyond literary texts, incorporating sociolinguistics and pragmatics into the study of linguistic deviation. Scholars such as John Searle (1979) and Paul Grice (1975) shifted attention to how deviations operate in everyday communication, particularly in relation to conversational maxims and pragmatic norms. Deviations were now understood as phenomena that could serve communicative functions, whether to create humor, irony or to signal indirect meanings.

The 21st century has seen the emergence of more interdisciplinary approaches to the study of linguistic deviation, combining insights from linguistics, cognitive science, and cultural studies. Scholars such as Deborah Cameron (2005) and Guy Cook (2010) have explored how linguistic deviations intersect with issues of identity, power, and social norms. This period has also seen an increasing emphasis on cross-linguistic studies, recognizing that deviations manifest differently across languages and cultural contexts. Contemporary research acknowledges the dynamic nature of linguistic norms, making the classification of deviations even more complex.

Recent advances in corpus linguistics and computational methods have provided new tools for analyzing linguistic deviations on a larger scale. By analyzing massive corpora of spoken and written language, researchers can now observe patterns of deviation across diverse linguistic contexts and genres. This has allowed for a more nuanced understanding of how deviations function in both standard and non-standard varieties of language.

Despite these advancements, the classification of linguistic deviations continues to present challenges. The evolution of language, particularly in digital and online discourse, has introduced new forms of deviation that resist traditional classifications (Crystal, 2011). Moreover, the increasing recognition of sociolinguistic variation complicates any attempt to establish universal criteria for what constitutes a deviation, as what is "deviant" in one linguistic community may be normative in another.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the observations, *syntactic deviations* occur when sentence structures diverge from the standard grammatical norms of a language. One of the most prominent examples is found in poetic constructions, where word order is often manipulated for stylistic reasons. Consider the following line from Shakespeare: "*And all the air a solemn stillness holds.*"

In standard English, the expected syntactic order would be: "And a solemn stillness holds all the air." The deviation here, known as inversion, serves to foreground "the air" and adds a sense of poetic elevation (Leech, 1969). While such syntactic deviations are easily recognizable and often purposeful in literary contexts, they become more difficult to classify in spoken discourse, where deviations may result from performance errors, dialectal variation, or speaker innovation.

For instance, in African American Vernacular English (AAVE), the sentence "He be working" deviates from Standard American English (SAE) norms, yet it follows consistent syntactic rules within the AAVE system (Labov, 1998). This highlights the difficulty of classifying syntactic deviation: what is considered a deviation in one variety of English may be normative in another. The challenge here is not simply identifying the deviation but determining whether it reflects a regional or social variant of the language.

Phonological deviations involve changes to the expected sound patterns of a language. In literary contexts, these deviations often appear in the form of alliteration, assonance, or rhyme. For example, in Dylan Thomas's poem *Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night*, the line: "*Rage, rage against the dying of the light*" repeats the consonant sound /r/ and the vowel sound /aɪ/ in "rage" and "dying", creating phonological cohesion through deviation from typical conversational sound patterns. These deviations are classified within a broader framework of poetic devices, yet they raise questions about whether they should be treated as functional deviations or simply stylistic embellishments. In contrast, phonological deviations in spoken language often result from accent or dialect differences. For instance, in some dialects of British English, the dropping of the /r/ sound in words like "car" or "hard" (known as non-rhoticity) represents a standard dialectal feature, yet it could be seen as a deviation from other varieties of English where the /r/ is pronounced. Similarly, in languages such as French, where the final consonant is often dropped in spoken forms ("beaucoup" becomes /boku/), the classification of such deviations can be tricky, as they reflect accepted norms within casual speech but deviate from more formal phonological standards.

Morphological deviations involve alterations to the expected structure of words, often through affixation, compounding, or neologism. One clear example of this is the playful use of non-standard word formations in children's language, such as: "*She goed to the park yesterday.*"

In this case, the verb "go" has been overregularized, with the child applying the standard past tense marker -ed to an irregular verb. While this is easily categorized as a developmental error in the acquisition of English morphology, morphological deviations in adult usage are more complex to classify. Neologisms, for instance, often blur the boundaries between standard and non-standard forms. The coining of new words such as "Googleable" or "unfriend" represents a deviation from established word formation rules, yet such words rapidly become accepted into standard usage (Crystal, 2011).

Across languages, morphological deviation can take on culturally specific forms. In Japanese, for instance, the practice of *gairaigo* (loanwords from English and other languages) leads to the creation of hybrid forms like "パソコン" (*pasokon*, meaning "personal computer"). These borrowed and abbreviated forms deviate from traditional Japanese morphology, yet they are fully integrated into everyday speech. Such examples demonstrate the fluidity of morphological norms and challenge any rigid classification system that fails to account for language evolution.

Semantic deviations occur when words or phrases are used in ways that deviate from their expected meanings. One of the most widely discussed examples is metaphor, where words are used figuratively rather than literally. In the metaphor "Time is money", the concept of time deviates from its usual semantic role as an abstract entity and is instead equated with a tangible economic resource (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This type of semantic deviation is relatively easy to classify within frameworks of figurative language, yet everyday examples of semantic deviation pose greater classification challenges. For example, in online discourse, the word "literally" has shifted in meaning for some speakers to signify "figuratively", as in the phrase: "I literally died laughing." This semantic deviation represents an ongoing shift in language usage, where the original meaning of "literally" has been subverted for rhetorical effect. Such shifts raise questions about whether deviations should be classified based on prescriptive or descriptive norms, as meanings are constantly evolving.

Finally, *rhetorical and pragmatic deviations* involve deviations in how language functions in communication, often breaking conversational norms or expectations. Irony is a key example of this type of deviation. When someone says, "Great weather we're having," during a storm, the literal meaning of the sentence is subverted for ironic effect, deviating from the expected pragmatic use of the statement (Grice, 1975).

In cross-cultural communication, pragmatic deviations can lead to misunderstandings. For instance, in Japanese, indirectness is a common pragmatic strategy, so a statement like "Maybe we should think about other options" may actually mean "No." To an English speaker unfamiliar with these pragmatic norms, this could be interpreted as indecision rather than rejection. Classifying such deviations requires an understanding of the cultural and social norms that shape language use.

According to above analysis, it can be stated that while some deviations, such as syntactic inversion or metaphorical usage, can be neatly categorized, others—especially those related to dialect, sociolinguistic variation, and ongoing semantic shifts—resist rigid classification. We primarily believe that rather than applying universal norms,

classification systems must consider the specific linguistic, cultural, and social contexts in which deviations occur. This is particularly relevant in an era of rapid language change, driven by digital communication and globalization, where new forms of deviation constantly emerge.

Further research should focus on developing dynamic classification models that account for the fluidity of language. These models must integrate insights from sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and cross-cultural studies to more accurately reflect the diversity of linguistic norms and deviations in global communication.

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