



'Famous' words parading on the 'red carpet' of the english vocabulary over the last years

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Any language is a highly complex communication system. To understand the working principles of language, linguists distinguish different components or subsystems that give shape to this complexity. However, language is not only structurally complex. Rather than consisting of relatively uniform and static components, language is a dynamic communication system that is subject to different dimensions of linguistic variation. To tackle the complexity of the dynamics of language, linguists, in general, focus on three basic dimensions of linguistic variation: social variation, spatial variation, temporal variation. The linguistic system varies relative to social factors, i.e. it shapes and is shaped by different dimensions of social organisation. In a nutshell, language varies depending on who speaks it to whom in which context. The social variation and dynamics of language is focused at in the field of sociolinguistics. However, societies are themselves subject to variation and change with regard to cultural, political, or religious orientation. Thus, it should not come as a surprise that the language system(s) used by a generalised speech community are not static, but that they also vary through space and time. The historical dimension of language development and language change is the third basic dimension to describe the dynamics of linguistic structures and their corresponding conventions of usage. As a universal matter of fact, any language is subject to change. Language change is often triggered by social changes. Some of the words or phrases that came to special prominence over the past few years or which encapsulate some significant issue form the core of this paper.