



Journal of Social and Political Sciences

Sijia, Y. (2024). English Humor in the Canterbury Tales in a 14th-Century Setting in England. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 7(4), 117-122.

ISSN 2615-3718

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1991.07.04.530

The online version of this article can be found at:
<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

Published by:
The Asian Institute of Research

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English Humor in the Canterbury Tales in a 14th-Century Setting in England

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Abstract

British humor comes from the long history of evolving linguistic habits in England, with strong themes of irony and self-deprecation running through British humor. The Canterbury Tales contains rich British language humor, which has extremely important historical value and is one of the original carriers of British humor. In this paper, we will adopt the case study method as the research method, through the deconstruction of the prioress and her story in the collection of Canterbury tales, analyze the specific embodiment of English humor in the collection of Canterbury tales, and combine it with the social and historical background of the 14th century. It is found that English humor is strongly reflected in the Canterbury tales, and its satirical language habit is inseparably related to the historical background on which the literary works are based. It is hoped that this thesis will contribute to the research and development of modern English humor and the protection of its inheritance, and provide certain research ideas for literature.

Keywords: English Humor, Canterbury Tales, Literary Studies

1. Introduction

The charm of language cannot be separated from humor. As one of the symbols of national culture and human character, humor plays an indispensable role in every language in the world. As a global language, English has integrated the social situation and humanistic factors of different periods in the long history of its development. The emergence and development of British humor are accompanied by the gradual formation of the English language system and rooted in the development of British history and national character, and it is constantly updated with the advancement of time, but its strong irony and cold humor always run through the process of change of British humor. The Canterbury Tales, as a milestone of English literature in the 14th century, is not only a good model for social reaction, but also contains a wealth of English language humor and examples. As an important carrier of language development, literary and artistic works are key tools for studying the characteristics of a certain language. Nowadays, many theoretical researches and excavations on British humor are based on the rich literary and artistic works in the long history.

Today's existing researches are mainly based on actual materials (daily communication phrases, advertisements, etc.) or movie works as research materials, and analyze more in terms of the in-depth influence and meaning behind British humor, such as advertising, sociology, management, etc. In 1993, Associate Professor Lynette S.

McCullough took samples of advertisements from the U.S., U.K., and Germany respectively, and rated and classified the humor by combining the different types of business models and the language and cultural habits of each country to rate and classify humor. The study analyzed the specific samples of humor from the aspects of marketing and management, which is forward-looking in the field. After that, Lucy Delap took the 20th century British domestic service as the research blueprint, analyzed the phenomenon of linguistic humor in it from the foothold of the use of this daily language, and analyzed the social situation behind this phenomenon in the context of the 20th-century era, which to a large extent bridged the blank part of the research on linguistic humor. In the paper published by Zhang Yun in 2017, the film work British black comedy film and the historical development of Britain are organically combined, analyzing the British humor displayed in this kind of film from the perspective of subject matter strategy and narrative strategy respectively, and analyzing the connection between the film development and the social situation in the light of the history of the development of the British comedy film, which is more grounded in the social impact brought by the British humor. In 2018, the research published by Jia Hongli in which director Edgar Wright's film works are used as materials to analyze the British humor embedded in his works, which is comprehensively analyzed in terms of storyline, camera language, etc. In addition to the analysis of the work's humor, it probes more deeply into the mutual achievements of Edgar Wright and British humor, and does not explore the connection between this linguistic feature itself and the social situation. In 2019 Eugenia Zuroski, on the other hand, outlines a number of scholarly studies on humor, satire, comedy, and laughter in eighteenth-century England, focusing on the political purposes and functions behind humor and laughter, as well as focusing primarily on the social factors that shaped the development of English humor and the cultural significance it brought to the table, which focuses on the social relevance of humor and does not overly relate it to works of literature and art. The study focuses on the social reality of humor and does not associate it too much with literary and artistic works.

It can be seen that the research perspectives of the existing papers seldom focus on the connection between English humor and literary works, especially the lack of studies using 14th-century literary works as materials. It is almost impossible to see the figures of 14th-century English literary works and the historical background of the 14th century in the existing studies, and the studies that analyze the language against the background of the social landscape of this historical period are also scarce. There is also a dearth of research on the humor embedded in literary works and the connection between this linguistic feature and the social situation.

Therefore, this paper aims to solve the lack of research on the connection between English humor and literary works, to increase the research angle with the background of the social pattern and current situation of the 14th century England, to take the Canterbury Tales as the basis and the research blueprint, and to analyze the English humor contained therein from the perspective of historicity and literature. We also analyze the correlation between linguistic development and social progress by combining it with the socio-historical background of the 14th century in England. This study will fill in some of the gaps in the study of British humor in literature, provide reference and help for later research, and contribute to the research and development of modern British humor and its inheritance and protection.

The first part of this paper will provide a brief introduction to the concept of English humor and the Canterbury Tales, and a preliminary explanation of the overview and connection between the two. The second part of the paper is an analysis of the existing literature on the characteristics of English humor, irony, metaphor, and pun are its very prominent features, but also from the long history of the development of Britain's characteristics and unique expression. 14th-century England's historical background of the overview of the paper constitutes the third part of this part, the analysis of the part of the systematic analysis can help to understand the background of the formation of the Canterbury Tales and the overview of the story. The fourth part of the paper takes the prioress and her story as a case study to analyze the connotation and expression of English humor. The fifth part is the conclusion of this study, which highly summarizes the association and connection between English humor and the Canterbury Tales as well as the historical background of 14 actual England.

2. Characteristic of British Humor

From the existing literature, the main features of British cold humor are irony, metaphor and pun. In the following, these three points will be defined and summarized based on the analysis of the existing literature, and their association with British cold humor in the Canterbury Tales will be briefly explained.

2.1 Irony

In British humor, irony is a more common approach because British culture is concerned with indirection and ambiguity. Direct accusations and criticisms are considered ungentlemanly in British culture. And out-of-control language can lead to a loss of harmony so that many British aristocrats are good at using irony to express their dissatisfaction. And out-of-control language can lead to a loss of harmony so that many British aristocrats are good at using irony to express their dissatisfaction. Therefore, British irony is more indirect and produces the effect of contrast.

Satire is very evitable in the Canterbury Tales. For example, in the story told by the miller that the priest's ill will towards the carpenter. For example, in the story told by the miller that the priest's ill will towards the carpenter's pretty wife, the hypocrisy of Christianity and the dark ugliness of human nature is very vividly and significantly satirized.

2.2 Metaphor

The language expressed by the metaphorical approach in English is not plain, but makes the things expressed more vivid, graphic and concise. This phenomenon enhances the freshness, specificity and pertinence of the language. phenomenon enhances the freshness, specificity and pertinence of the language. The British are very good at using metaphors. The elegance rooted in their cultural habits and gentlemanly demeanor has made them adept at using this method in their language.

The use of metaphor is quite notable in the story of the Nun's Priest Tale. The use of the rooster and the fox as the main characters of the story actually satirizes the truth that trouble comes out of the mouth. The use of the rooster and the fox as the main characters of the story actually satirizes the truth that trouble comes out of the mouth. The story is a fable that demonstrates the metaphorical techniques that British humor makes good use of.

2.3 Pun

Pun refers to the use of words with multiple meanings and homophones in a certain language environment to intentionally make statements having double meanings. Pun refers to the use of words with multiple meanings and homophones in a certain language environment to intentionally make statements having double meanings. It can be divided into harmonic pun and semantic pun. It is concerned about the surface of the two layers of meaning, of which the inner layer of meaning is where the expression, both implicit, but not revealed, but also to make people realize, to find out. In the same cultural context appears to be a double meaning, but also funny and implicit. In the same cultural context appears to be a double meaning, but also funny and implicit. The use of puns can make the language more humorous and playful.

Puns are not very directly represented in the Canterbury story collection. But it will always have an important place in the development and use of British. But it will always have an important place in the development and use of British humor.

3. Overview of the historical background in the fourteenth century

3.1 Political situation

The author Chaucer lived and composed the Canterbury Tales in the late 14th century. At this time the Hundred Years' War between England and France had begun. The war, which was fought intermittently between England and France for more than a hundred years from 1337 to 1453, was a disaster for the people of England or France. The war, which was fought intermittently between England and France for more than a hundred years from 1337 to 1453, was a disaster for the people of England or France. And at that time, it was the era of the Black Death. Under the double blows of the war and epidemics, the economies of England and France were greatly traumatized, and the people did not have enough to live on.

At the same time, the religious situation in late 14th-century England was complex and dark. The corruption of the Papacy and the Pope and their monopolization of religion contrasted sharply with the poverty of the lower classes. The corruption of the Papacy and the Pope and their monopolization of religion contrasted sharply with the poverty of the lower classes. Besides, the Christian Church became an obstacle to the formation of the English nation-state and a negative factor in the strengthening of royal power.

Timed to this political environment and religious context, Chaucer's attack on the dark Middle Ages and religion in the Canterbury Tales makes perfect sense.

3.1.1. Social Situation

In the 14th century, England was suffering from the bubonic plague, also known as the Black Death. This plague pandemic originated in the 14th century A.D. and continued for more than 300 years, spreading throughout Eurasia and the north coast of Africa, especially in Europe. This plague pandemic originated in the 14th century A.D. and continued for more than 300 years, spreading throughout Eurasia and the north coast of Africa, especially in Europe. Similarly, the entire population of England, no matter what class they were in, struggled with the Black Death.

The Black Death had a dramatic impact on the economy, politics, culture, religion, science and technology of the European society in the Middle Ages, which had a great influence. The Black Death is seen by many scholars as an opportunity for the transformation and development of European society. The Black Death not only pushed forward the development of science and technology, but also prompted the Catholic Church's authoritarian status to be broken, which had an important impact on the development of European society. The Black Death not only pushed forward the development of science and technology, but also prompted the Catholic Church's authoritarian status to be broken, which had an important impact on the Renaissance, the Reformation and even the Enlightenment, thus changing the direction of the development of European civilization. The Canterbury Tales were also influenced by such a background.

3.2 Textual Developments

The 14th century coincided with the period when Middle English was in use. The Canterbury Tales are also an important representation of the Middle English period. The English language of this period was much changed from Old English in pronunciation and spelling, vocabulary and grammar. A large portion of Old English vocabulary was eliminated in favor of many French and Latin words. The English language of this period was much changed from Old English in pronunciation and spelling, vocabulary and grammar. A large portion of Old English vocabulary was eliminated in favor of many French and Latin words.

The Middle English period saw significant changes in the vocabulary, grammar, phonology and writing of English. In terms of vocabulary, the introduction of a large number of French words made English characterized by both Germanic and Romance languages. In terms of vocabulary, the introduction of a large number of French words made English characterized by both Germanic and Romance languages. Grammatically, Middle English inherited the grammatical structure of Old English. In terms of vocabulary, the introduction of a large number of French words made English characterized by both Germanic and Romance languages. The grammatical gender of adjectives and nouns disappeared, and the verb endings changes began to become blurred. In terms of phonology and writing, the influence of Upper French phonology on the English language was also recognized. In terms of

phonology and writing, the influence of Upper French phonology on English phonology and the change in political centers have led to changes in English phonology and writing.

4. Humor embodied in the Canterbury Tales

4.1 Synopsis of the Prioress and Her Story

The Jews killed Christian children who sang songs of praise to the Blessed Virgin. The children had their throats cut, but the Virgin Mary put a grain of in his throats and still sang. When the elders took the grain from the child's mouth, the Virgin Mary came down and the child died peacefully.

4.2 British humor in the episode

The narrative of the nuns unfolds the religious themes of "horror" and "redemption" through the abuse and murder of innocent children. It combines magical and grotesque plots with realistic narratives, with strong colors of magical realism. It combines magical and grotesque plots with realistic narratives, with strong colors of magical realism. The child, dead with his throat cut through to the collarbone, continues to sing in order to lead people to his body. This is an exaggerated and distorted form of absurdist writing, which does not correspond to the logic of reality. It is a subtle irony of the mainstream religious ideology's attitude of outward obedience and inward protest, a paradoxical situation of seeming cooperation but actually non-cooperation. It is a subtle irony of the mainstream religious ideology's attitude of outward obedience and inward protest, a paradoxical situation of seeming cooperation but actually non-cooperation.

Chaucer's description of the prioress in the General Introduction is full of humor and hilarious. One of the most important things about the prioress who appears in the General Introduction is her name. One of the most important things about the prioress who appears in the General Introduction is her name. She is called Lady Eglentyne. Eglentine (wild rose) was a title commonly used at the time to symbolize the Virgin Mary. It is highly ironic that Chaucer named the prioress after a flower that symbolizes the Virgin Mary, as Mary is a symbol of love and mercy - It is highly ironic that Chaucer named the prioress after a flower that symbolizes the Virgin Mary, as Mary is a symbol of love and mercy two things for which the prioress is shown to be disdainful in her tales.

5. Conclusion

Based on the above analysis of the characteristics of English humor, the historical context of England in the 14th century and the examples in the Canterbury Tales, the following conclusions can be drawn. Canterbury Tales, the following conclusions can be drawn.

The conception of the Canterbury Tales is inextricably linked to the historical situation of England in the 14th century. The Hundred Years' War between England and France and the corruption of the Christian Church provided the Canterbury Tales with real and vivid examples of stories. England and France and the corruption of the Christian Church provided the Canterbury Tales with real and vivid examples of stories. The Black Death was also the source of these dystopian tales. The Black Death was also the source of these dystopian tales. These social realities are satirized through funny and meaningful stories that draw on the rich perspectives of multi-professional people to express their own views. These social realities are satirized through funny and meaningful stories that draw on the rich perspectives of multi-professional people to express strong and deep condemnation. Such sharp satire and absurd metaphors laid an inaccessible foundation for the development of British humor and Middle English as a whole. Such sharp satire and absurd metaphors laid an inaccessible foundation for the development of British humor and Middle English as well. Its many years of circulation and importance as a classic early English poetic work remain influential today. Its many years of circulation and importance as a classic early English poetic work remain influential today.

In short, many of the stories in the Canterbury Tales contain the characteristics and colors of early British humor. The origin of British humor is thickly rooted in the soil and development process of British history and culture.

The origin of British humor is thickly rooted in the soil and development process of British history and culture. And under its influence, it has formed the language symbols that are uniquely British, which still have far-reaching influence in today's society. British, which still has far-reaching influence in today's society. From the Canterbury Tales' long-lasting circulation in the world, it is not difficult to see that British humor and British culture are not the same. From the Canterbury Tales' long-lasting circulation in the world, it is not difficult to see that British humor and British culture carry the train of books, which has a significant and far-reaching influence in today's world as well as in cross-cultural communication and many other aspects.

Author Contributions: All authors contributed to this research.

Funding: Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent Statement/Ethics Approval: Not applicable.

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