CHAPTER IV
THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC FEATURES OF THOMAS HARDY’S NOVELS

4.1 Preliminaries
This chapter is devoted to the sociolinguistic features of Hardy’s novels. It focuses on the linguistic experiments made by Hardy. The novelist set the majority of his novels and short stories in the southwest of England; in a part of the country, he named ‘Wessex’, an area which includes Dorset, Somerset, Cornwall, Hampshire and Wiltshire. Factors influencing the characters’ speech like education, age, social class membership, gender and ethnicity are taken into account while discussing the sociolinguistic features of the characters’ speech. The chapter also discusses the language features and their association with sociological relations with respect to morphology and syntax. The language used by the major as well as the minor characters is evaluated using the principles of sociolinguistics. The comments made by literary critics regarding Hardy’s use of language is discussed and evaluated thereafter. The researcher has analysed Hardy’s use of dialect in the five selected novels of Thomas Hardy with reference to the rustic characters because represent different social and economic classes.
(Dorset labourers). Linguistic peculiarities of these characters is examined thoroughly. Therefore, studying the characters from the perspective of sociolinguistics gives authenticity to the characters and thus, enriches the work of art.

4.2 Factors Influencing the Characters’ Speech

Since Thomas Hardy’s characters belong to various different sociological backgrounds, there is variety of dialects spoken by them. In a review of September 1972 Hardy’s friend, Horace Moule, noted ‘an occasional tendency of country folk to express themselves in the language of the author’s manner of thought, rather than their own.’ Hardy, on the other hand, expresses his intention:

“...to show mainly the character of the speakers and only to give a general idea of their linguistic peculiarities.”

The rustics of Hardy’s novels sound right because of the authenticity of the dialects. In a letter to Pall Mall Gazette Hardy indicated its importance in the novels:

‘All that I know about the Dorset labourers I gathered ...from living in the country as a child and from thoroughly knowing their dialect. You cannot get at the labourer otherwise. Dialect is the only pass-key to anything like intimacy.”
Blake has pointed out in Non-Standard Language in English Literature that linguistic realism is not attempted in literature. Although “sociolinguistics has shown us that we each possess a multitude of languages which we use in the different social situations which we meet daily,” literature cannot accumulate the variety. Generally, each character has given one language for use. Sociolinguistics studies different people’s language and dialects. Hence, it is interesting to study the different factors which influence characters’ speech.

4.2.1 Education Factor
Regarding education factor, Blake’s accounting for the use of non-standard language is worth mentioning. He says that as standard language is considered educated, non-standard language is considered the opposite because non-standard language is not usually used extensively, it is often given to minor characters, such as taxi drivers [or rustics], (brackets are researcher’s) who naturally have little to say in the work as a whole. Since the standard language is an educated language, non-standard language has almost always been regarded as uneducated and unsophisticated….Hence non-standard language has been a marker of class and of comedy, for we are generally sufficiently self-satisfied to laugh at those who cannot match our own educational attainments and who reveal this through the way they speak.
Critics were disturbed by the act of representing lower class speech in Standard English, which belied the expectations of more realism in the novel. In 1837, a reviewer went so far as to criticise *Oliver Twist* (Dickens) and warned his readers about incongruities of speech of the title character, a young country boy in a London workhouse. The review was published in National magazine and Monthly Critic which reads as follows:

“We should notice the incongruity (the more remarkable in one so true to nature) of which [Dickens] has been guilty in the character of Oliver Twist. To say nothing of the language which this uneducated workhouse-boy ordinarily uses, there are many phrases which amount to positive absurdities in one of his standing.”

Writer George Gissing, who knew both Hardy and Dickens personally, echoed this sentiment by claiming that Dickens’ inconsistency in use of dialect was idealistic and caused him [Dickens] to misrepresent facts.

What this amounts to is that readers and critics alike seem to expect a set of precise guidelines on dialect in the novels they read. Children should speak simply and working class characters should use only their own dialect(s). This type of realism was reflected in the reviews of Victorian critics, who commented on whether the character’s speech style accorded with the real social conditions.
In reading and reviewing ‘The Peasant’s Confession’ William Archer criticised Hardy sharply as follows:

*Hardy ‘sometimes seemed to lose all sense of local and historical perspective in language, seeing all word in the dictionary on one plane, so to speak, and regarding them all as equally available and appropriate for any and every literary purpose.’*

Regarding dialogue and dialect in the English novel, much information has come to light recently. In *Speech in the English Novel (1973)*, Page has explained many functions of dialogue and emphasised *character development* and *character-presentation*. That dialogue, either in standard language or in a dialect, reveals character and intention is an established fact. Speech is an expression of thought, and, henceforth, reveals intention. Thought is an internal aspect of character. But Page continues to look into the dialogue:

*Within the dialogue itself, differences may exist in the variety of modes of speech employed: in their range, the qualities they suggest, and the means by which they are differen-ti-tated…. [Anthony] Trollope, according to Geoffrey Tillotson, tends to make most of his characters speak with a single voice, his own; Scott uses at least two languages, formal English and Scots vernacular. And Dickens exhibits an astonishing*
diversity of styles, individualized in many different ways.⁸

Scots vernacular and the styles of Dickens are, to all extents and purposes, dialects. Page continues at this point, to mention that speech conveys two types of information: the former links the speaker with a specific group or class and the latter reveals the individuality of the character. Precisely, the former is called dialect and the latter is idiolect. He adds that an idiolect “may incorporate certain dialect features as part of the sum of characteristics, some of them widespread, but adding up to a unique combination.”⁹ Page sheds light on the Cockney speech, and deems it to be both regional and social dialect.

Two rather general rules concerning dialect in the novel arose during that time. The former is that literary dialect is derived by altering non-phonetical writing system such as Standard English and henceforth is imprecise; the latter is that Victorian writers and novelists elevated some of their virtuous characters by making them speak Standard English. Moreover, scholars and critics who discuss this artistic dimension to the shaping of literary dialect often do so because fictional dialect is, from the socio-linguistic perspective, so often irregular or entirely wrong.¹⁰ One more issue is that Hardy remarked about Tess Durbeyfield that she spoke her mother’s dialect more or less, when at home. The phrase ‘more or less’ is estimation and not exact in itself. It frequently means less. Readers
and critics should bear this in mind. Ingham suggests that this shift implies Hardy’s “uncritical acceptance of dialect as a class marker,” and notes that it was essential that Tess be distinguished from her parents and other speakers of dialect.\textsuperscript{11}

It is noted that Hardy had a usual straightforward and somewhat rye repartee to this view: the representation of dialect in his novels was not an end in itself but an artistic means, his aim being ‘to depict men and their natures rather than their dialect forms.’\textsuperscript{12}

The following is his response in Athenaeum, November 30th, 1878, in defense of his use of dialect in 'The Return of the Native':

'A somewhat vexed question is reopened in your criticism of my story, Return of the Native; namely the representation in writing of the speech of the peasantry when that writing is intended to show mainly character of the speakers, and only to give a general idea of their linguistic peculiarities'.

'An author is said to fairly convey the spirit of intelligent peasant talk if he retains the idiom, compass, and characteristic expressions, although he may not encumber the page with obsolete pronunciations of the purely English words and with miss pronunciations of those derived from Latin and Greek. In the printing of standard speech hardly any phonetic principle at all is observed; and if a writer
attempts to exhibit on paper the precise accents of a rustic speaker he disturbs the proper balance of a true representation by unduly insisting upon the grotesque element; this directing attention to a point of inferior interest and diverting it from the speaker’s meaning, which is by far the chief concern where the aim is to depict the men and their natures rather than their dialect forms.\textsuperscript{13}

It must be recalled that a novel is a work of imagination and is not intended to be realistic. Furthermore, end should justify the means; so, if the reader is convinced of the nature of the character, the author has indubitably succeeded. True to his own character, Hardy reproached the extremes of either literary or critical realism in 1888 when he criticised writers who, whilst using idioms and slang more precisely, still ‘lift their tea-cups and fan themselves to date.’\textsuperscript{14}

Hardy’s territory is worth mentioning as a factor. Certainly, the centre was Dorset, and the range extended to Oxford (Christminster, in Jude) in the north, eastern Cornwall in the west and Wiltshire in the east. As with his characters, Hardy assigned fictitious names to real and historical places. One of its distinctive features was of course its dialect. Chapman has heralded Hardy’s use of dialect ‘an important part of his contribution to literary language.’\textsuperscript{15} He compares Hardy’s use of the dialect to the Lancashire dialect of Elizabeth Gaskell’s Mary Barton and to the cockney speech of
Dickens’ novels. This is a strong contrast to earlier mentioned criticism of Dickens.

The aim of this study is to illustrate the several dialectal characteristics which Hardy uses to create the impression of Wessex speech and to combine local colour to his rustic scenes and to describe country life. In fact, Hardy uses dialect as a vehicle to indicate social class and irony. This can be clearly seen in the following examples:

*Boldwood and Bathsheba Everdene, both are educated and it shows in their speech:*

“I wish I could say courteous flatteries to you,” the farmer continued in an easier tone, “and put my rugged feeling into graceful shape; but I have neither power nor patience to learn such things. I want you for my wife—so wildly that no other feeling can abide in me; but I should not have spoken out had I not been led to hope.”

“Mr. Boldwood, it is painful to have to say I am surprised, so that I don’t know how to answer you with propriety and respect—but am only just able to speak out my feeling—I mean my meaning; that I am afraid I can’t marry you, much as I respect you. You are too dignified for me to suit you, Sir.” (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, pp.124-125)
Hardy further illustrates the extent of education of his characters through the dialogue between Phillotson and his friend George Gillingham, who is also a schoolmaster. Here, they speak of Sue Bridehead:

*She was a pupil-teacher under me, as you, know, and I took advantage of her inexperience, and tolled her out for walks, and got her to agree to a long engagement before she well knew her own mind. Afterwards she saw somebody else, but she blindly fulfilled her engagement.* (Hardy, *Jude*, UBSPD, p.284)

Besides Phillotson’s background, Sue Bridehead was born and grew up in Christminster which had an impact on her education and personal manner. It is noted in her speech, as in the dialogue with Phillotson, as follows:

‘There – you can see the great red sun now!’ she said.
‘And I am sure it will cheer you – I do so hope it will!’
She spoke with a child-like, repentant kindness, as if she could not do too much for him.

Phillotson smiled sadly. ‘You are an odd creature!’ he murmured as the sun glowed in his eyes. ‘The idea of your coming to see me after what has passed!’
‘Don’t let us go back upon that!’ she said quickly. ‘I have to catch the omnibus for the train, as Jude doesn’t know I have come; he was out when I started; so I must return home almost directly. Richard, I am so very
glad you are better. You don’t hate me, do you? You have been such a kind friend to me!’
‘I am glad to know you think so,’ said Phillotson huskily. ‘No. I don’t hate you!’ (Ibid. p.309)

Some characters stick to the usage of the standard form, if they want to show that they have more knowledge than others do. In addition, the standard form is used by people from the higher class. On the other hand, the non-standard form is used by people from the lower class. A selection of dialogues from Mayor of Casterbridge, ironically between Henchard and Elizabeth, illustrates this point. In the introduction to Chapter 20, Hardy mentions that Elizabeth uses dialectic words in picturesque manner which gives Henchard consternation:

*It was dinner-time—they had never met except at meals—and she happened to say when he was rising from the table, wishing to show him something, “If you’ll bide where ye be a minute, father, I’ll get it.”
“Bide where you be,” he echoed sharply. “Good God, are you only fit to carry wash to a pig-trough, that ye use such words as those?”
She reddened with shame and sadness.
‘I meant “Stay where you are”, father,’ she said, in a low, humble voice. ‘I ought to have been more careful.’*
(Hardy, MC, UBSPD, p.158)
“That depends on whether they be afeard.” (Timothy)
“I bain’t afeard at all, I thank God!” said Christian strenuously. “I’m glad I bain’t, for then ’twon’t pain me…. I don’t think I be afeard - or if I be I can’t help it, and I don’t deserve to suffer. I wish I was not afeard at all!” (Hardy, RN, UBSPD, pp.55-56)

According to the above examples, one can see evidently the lack of education among Hardy’s rustics. Other examples include the conversations between John Durbeyfield, Tess’s father and Parson Tringham:

I’ve got a wold silver spoon and a wold grven seal at home, too; but, Lord, what’s a spoon and weal?
(Hardy, Tess, UBSPD, p.19)

In 'Jude the Obscure', there are examples of rustic speech of Jude as shown below:

‘O, well, it med be all that, or it med not. As I say, I didn’t see nothing of it the hour or two I was there; so I went in and had a pot o’ beer, and a penny loaf, and a ha’porth o’ cheese, and waited till it was time to come along home. You’ve j’ined a Colledge by this time, I suppose?’ (Hardy, Jude, UBSPD, p.139)
4.2.2 Age Factor

Age factor differentiates the use of standard and non-standard form of language. Some adults use the standard form and some use non-standard form, but the younger use the non-standard one. Teddy Coggan (FMC) is the youngest speaker. However, the difference in usage lies not in dialect and Standard English but in the usage and pronunciation between adults such as Liddy and small children such as Teddy Coggan. Study the following conversation:

“I’ve got a pen-nee!” said Master Coggan.

“Well-who gave it to you Teddy?” said Liddy.

“Mis-terr Bold-wood!” (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, p.78)

In the above conversation, the manner of speaking is different for Teddy Coggan (age unknown) and for Liddy. The style in Teddy’s first two lines shows playfulness as opposed to seriousness. Moreover, Liddy is Bathsheba’s peer and they both speak more regularly.

In Tess, we encounter a very exceptional case of standard diction and a philosophical content which would make astute readers wonder whether a girl like Tess would ever say such things:

‘Did you say the stars were worlds, Tess?’

‘Yes.’

‘All like ours?’
'I don’t know; but I think so. They sometimes seem to be like the apples on our stubbard-tree. Most of them splendid and sound—a few blighted.’

‘Which do we live on—a splendid one or a blighted one?’

‘A blighted one.’ (Hardy, Tess, UBSPD, p.42)

This dialogue shows the use of standard language rather than dialect between Tess and her little brother. Nevertheless, it also shows the difference in age, as smaller children ask questions. Perhaps a more descriptive rendering of age difference and age as a factor in sociolinguistics is the following dialogue between Little Jude/Father Time (Arabella’s child) and Sue Bridehead. Besides, it shows the level of education of the characters.

‘Can I do anything?’

‘No! All is trouble, adversity and suffering!’

‘Father went away to give us children room, didn’t he?’

‘Partly.’

‘It would be better to be out o’ the world than in it, wouldn’t it?’

‘It would almost, dear.’

‘Tis because of us children, too, isn’t it, that you can’t get a good lodging?’

‘Well – people do object to children sometimes.’
'Then if children make so much trouble, why do people have 'em?'
'O -- because it is a law of nature.'
'But we don't ask to be born?'
'No indeed.' (Hardy, Jude, UBSPD, pp.409-410)

In the dialogue below, the manner of speaking is different for the ancient maltster and for Gabriel Oak:

'My father and my grandfather were old men of the name of Gabriel,' said the shepherd placidly.
'Thought I knowed the man's face as I seed him on the rick!—thought I did! And where be ye trading o't to now, shepherd?'
'I'm thinking of biding here,' said Mr. Oak.
'Knowed yer grandfather for years and years!' continued the maltster, the words coming forth of their own accord as if the momentum previously imparted had been sufficient.
'Ah—and did you!'
'Knowed yer grandmother.'
'And her too!'
'Likewise knowed yer father when he was a child. Why, my boy Jacob there and your father were sworn brothers—that they were sure—weren't ye, Jacob? (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, p.59)
4.2.3 Social Class Factor

Social class plays a very vital role in determining the dialect of character. Rustics and lower social class workers speak their own dialect. This realism is preferred in the English novel. The researcher provides here a few cases thereof. The first case is FMC and the speaker is Jan Coggan, Teddy’s father:

“Well, now, you’d hardly believe it, but that man—our Miss Everdene’s father—was one of the ficklest husbands alive, after a while. Understand, ’a didn’t want to be fickle, but he couldn’t help it. The poor feller were faithful and true enough to her in his wish, but his heart would rove, do what he would. But at last I believe he cured it by making her take off her wedding-ring and calling her by her maiden name as they sat together after the shop was shut, and so ’a would get a fancy that she was only his sweetheart, and not married to him at all. (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, p.66)

In 'Return of the Native', the Cantles [i.e., Christian and Grandfer] and Timothy Fairway represent the exemplary social class. The following is a speech from Christian Cantle:

“‘Get out of my sight, you slack–twisted, slim-looking maphrotight fool,’ was the woman’s words to me.” (Hardy, RN, UBSPD, p.32)

“‘Tis very lonesome for ‘ee in the heth tonight, mis’ess,” said Christian, coming from the seclusion he
had hitherto maintained. “Mind you don’t get lost.
Egdon Heth is a bad place to get lost in, and the winds
do huffle queerer tonight than ever I heard ’em afore.”
(Ibid. p.39)

In 'Mayor of Casterbridge', a variety of characters use the dialect
form, including local magistrates. In the following, a character
called Stubberd speaks:

"Stubberd, with a suppressed gaze of victorious
rectitude at the old woman, continued, “Was standing
myself. She was wambling about quite dangerous to
the thoroughfare, and when I approached to draw near
she committed the nuisance and insulted me.”
“She said “Put away that dee lantern,” she says.”
“Says she, “Dost hear, old turmit-head? Put away that
dee lantern. I have floored fellows a dee sight finer-
looking than a dee fool like thee, you son of a bee, dee
me if I haint,” she says.” (Hardy, MC, UBSPD, p.241)

One of the finest examples of social class workers’ speech is found
early in Tess, and the speaker is her father John Durbeyfield. He
speaks thus:

“I be as good as some folks here and there! I’ve got a
great family vault at Kingsbere-sub-Greenhill and
finer skillentons than any man in Wessex!” (Hardy,
Tess, UBSPD, p.37)
Mrs. Durbeyfiled, Tess’s mother, replies in the following way:

“I’ve something to tell ’ee that’s come into my head about that—a grand projick!” whispered his cheerful wife. (Ibid.)

Arabella’s education cannot be identified by her background.

However, Arabella refers to dialect in the following:

‘‘Od damn it all!’ she cried. That ever I should say it!

You’ve over-stuck un! And I telling you all the time—’

(Hardy, Jude, UBSPD, p.79)

Jude’s background is shown more clearly. He is a well-read youth, in that he reads many books and his speech is always in Standard English. Let us study the following interaction:

“Where did you learn it?”

“Nowhere that I know of. They [dimples] used to stay without any trouble when I was in the public-house; but now they won’t.” (Ibid. p.74)

Education or lack of it is a striking factor in many English novels, including those by Dickens and Lawrence. In Hardy, it is best shown through his use of Standard English versus the regional or social dialect. Characters of definite education—such as Sue Bridehead, Jude Fawley, and Bathsheba Everdene—speak in Standard English, as that shows their breeding; the minor characters
are labourers and farmers and have little or no education. Ingham (1970) wrote in “Dialect in the Novel of Hardy and George Eliot” that Hardy had intended a lack of realism, or stylistics. However, some of Hardy’s major characters used dialect in his novels. Michael Henchard, Tess Durbeyfield and Gabriel Oak, to mention a few; but they spoke Standard English in moments when they were called upon to do so. This fits the mould that such characters used the Standard English with other characters of high standing and education, or to demonstrate their own education and standing in the novel. Ingham alleges that Hardy had no intention of reminding us that Gabriel Oak was a rustic when he reverted to ‘ee in his dialogues with Bathsheba. It may be entirely subconscious as such forms of speech are habitual from one’s childhood. But, as she indicates further on, standard and nonstandard language place the speaker at different ends of the socio-educational scale.

In Mayor of Casterbridge, Henchard polishes his speech as the title character in contrast with Abel Whittle, a former farm hand with whom he had been rough. The following selection is extracted from the denouement of the novel, as Henchard walks away from the town to die:

“And I followed en over Grey’s Bridge and he turned and zeed me, and said, ‘You go back!’ But I followed and he turned again and said, ‘Do you hear, sir? Go back!’ But I zeed that he was low and I followed on still.” (Hardy, MC, UBSPD, p.393)
The use of Standard English, even by characters of rural background in these novels, shows class-consciousness synonymous with a distinctive and instinctive desire to climb the social ladder. Hardy wrote of Tess Durbeyfield “she had passed the Standard VI in the National School and had a mistress trained in London.” Tess speaks the dialect with her mother, etc., but ‘ordinary English’ with more distinguished characters. There may be class-consciousness in that Tess desires to be seen outdoors as ‘a woman of distinction.’ e.g., in Chapter 38, she says to her mother:

“I don’t know how to tell ‘ee, Mother!” (Hardy, Tess, UBSPD, p.274)

However, she uses Standard English with others. Most noticeable are her dialogues with Angel Clare:

“I have been hoping, longing, praying, to make you happy! I have thought what joy it will be to do it, what an unworthy wife I shall be if I do not. That’s what I have felt, Angel.”

“I know that.” (Ibid. p.246)

Tess’s rebuke that she is only a peasant by position is striking. Herein, she argues with him about that. It shows her self-awareness and her pride:

“Don’t, Tess; don’t argue. Different societies, different manners. You almost make me say you are an unapprehending peasant-woman, who have never been
initiated into the proportions of social things. You don’t know what you say.”
“I am only a peasant by position, not by nature.” (Ibid. p.249)

Elsewhere we get a glimpse of the education and background of Tess’s friends, Izzy Huett and Marian, who are from similar educational background. In this scene, they are observe a man who is watching Tess:

“Who is that?” said Izz Huett to Marian. She had at first addressed the inquiry to Tess, but the latter could not hear it.
“Somebody’s fancy-man, I s’pose,” said Marian laconically.
“I’ll lay a guinea he’s after Tess.”
“Oh no. ’Tis a ranter pa’son who’s been sniffing after her lately; not a dandy like this.” (Ibid. p.346)

It is observed that “I’ll lay a guinea” is equivalent to the Americanism “I’ll bet you that.” and a guinea was a coin of certain denomination. A dandy is a fellow who is fond of dressing up.

However, without visible reference to dialect as a gauge of socio-educational status, the following passage explains the differences in speech between Hardy’s protagonists and antagonists. First of all the writer mentions the patterns of Arabella Donn, the village
strumpet: ‘the harm you did yourself by dirtying your own nest.’

This he adeptly contrasts with Sue Bridehead’s. Perhaps by the way of influence, either through the times themselves or through reading, since Hardy’s mother presented him with so many texts, Hardy modelled Sue’s speech after Percy Shelley:

‘Everybody is getting to feel as we do. We are a little beforehand [ahead of the times], that’s all. In fifty, a hundred, years the descendents of these two will act and feel worse than we. They will see weltering humanity still more vividly than we do now, as

Shapes like our own selves hideously multiplied,

And will be afraid to reproduce them.’ (Hardy, Jude, UBSPD, p.351)

Elliot continues to contrast other major characters against each other. He explains that Clym Yeobright speaks in short sentences; but in other places in the text he speaks in full sentences. An example of both:

“About six months. At the end of that time I shall have finished my reading—yes, we will do it, and this heart-aching will be over. We shall, of course, live in absolute seclusion, and our married life will only begin to outward view when we take the house in Budmouth, where I have already addressed a letter on this matter. Would your grandfather allow you?” (Hardy, RN, UBSPD, p.211)
Note that the greater part of his speech is long sentences. However, the clarity and standard of his diction belies a well-educated man, as Sue’s speech above belies her education. Tess begins to reflect Angel Clare in her diction, Elliott avers, while Richard Phillotson reverts to dialect under stress.

4.2.4 Gender Factor
The next factor is gender, which differentiates the dialect of women from men. In pursuing the theme of the five major novels of Thomas Hardy, the researcher examines the difference of gender in *Far From the Madding Crowd*. Study the following linguistic interaction:

‘I’ve been through it, Liddy, and it is over. I shan’t mind it again, for they will all have grown accustomed to seeing me there; but this morning it was as bad as being married—eyes everywhere!’

‘I knewed it would be,’ Liddy said. ‘Men be such a terrible class of society to look at a body.’

‘But there was one man who had more sense than to waste his time upon me.’ The information was put in this form that Liddy might not for a moment suppose her mistress was at all piqued. ‘A very good-looking man,’ she continued, ‘upright; about forty, I should think. Do you know at all who he could be?’ ........
Liddy looked. ‘That! That’s Farmer Boldwood—of course ’tis—the man you couldn’t see the other day when he called.’

‘Oh, Farmer Boldwood,’ murmured Bathsheba, and looked at him as he outstripped them. The farmer had never turned his head once, but with eyes fixed on the most advanced point along the road, passed as unconsciously and abstractedly as if Bathsheba and her charms were thin air.

‘He’s an interesting man—don’t you think so?’ she remarked. (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, pp.93-94)

The above linguistic interaction shows clearly the way women speak of the opposite sex in the society of Hardy’s countryside. Below is the dialogue between Boldwood and Frank Troy, to illustrate Hardy’s approach to manly conversations:

‘I like Fanny best,’ said Troy; ‘and if as you say, Miss Everdene is out of my reach, why I have all to gain by accepting your money, and marrying Fan. But she’s only a servant.’

‘Never mind—do you agree to my arrangement?’

‘I do.’

‘Ah!’ said Boldwood, in a more elastic voice. “O Troy, if you like her best, why then do you step in here and injure my happiness?’
'I like Fanny best now,' said Troy. "But Bathsh—Miss Everdene inflamed me, and displaced Fanny for a time. It is over now." (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, p.217)

Sex and love are equally the important topics for both sexes, but of course women speak of it differently from men. In how men and women ask the questions to each other and respond to them in Hardy’s novels is demonstrated as follows:

*Gabriel Oak to Bathsheba Everdene: ‘I shall do one thing in this life-one thing certain—that is, love you, and long for you, and keep wanting you till I die.’ (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, p.39)*

*William Boldwood to Bathsheba: ‘I wish you knew what is in me of devotion to you; but it is impossible, that. In bare human mercy to a lonely man, don’t throw me off now!’ (Ibid. p.192)*

*Bathsheba, about Francis Troy: O, I love him to very distraction and misery and agony. Don’t be frightened at me, though perhaps I am enough to frighten any innocent woman.’ (Ibid. p.188)*

*Francis Troy about Fanny Robin, to Bathsheba: This woman is more to me, dead as she is, than ever you were, or are or can be...But never mind, darling...in the sight of Heaven you are my very, very wife!’ (Ibid. p.281)*
Whereas the first confessions of love are the words of men overcome with normal passion for a young, vivacious woman, Troy’s confession shows preference for another, despite her death, and disdain for Bathsheba, who lives, while trying to atone for it: ‘But never mind, darling…’ It is a distinctive admission that Troy really could not return Bathsheba’s affection—which was misguided. Thomasin and Mrs. Yeobright of The Return of the Native demonstrate how women of Thomasin’s age speak. Mrs. Yeobright wants Thomasin to set an example, which Thomasin disagrees with:

“To thoroughly fill the air with the past misfortune, so that other girls may take warning and keep clear of it.”

Thomasin lowered her face to the apples again. “I am a warning to others, just as thieves and drunkards and gamblers are,” she said in a low voice. “What a class to belong to! Do I really belong to them? ‘Tis absurd! Yet why, Aunt, does everybody keep on making me think that I do, by the way that they behave towards me? Why don’t people judge me by my acts? Now look at me as I kneel here, picking up these apples—do I look like a lost woman? … I wish all good women were as good as I!” she added vehemently.

“Strangers don’t see you as I do, said Mrs. Yeobright; “They judge from false reports. Well, it is a silly job and I am partly to blame.” (Hardy, RN, UBSPD, p.117)
Therefore, we may see that even then women converse differently and about different matters than they would with men. In the above conversation, Thomasin, whose age is indeterminate, is worried about her character or her public image. When Bathsheba Everdene is with other women, or when Arabella or Tess talk with their friends, the tone and subject are also different. Below, Tess and her friends talk about a man:

“Ha-ha! The cunning northern birds knew this was coming,” said Marian. “Depend upon’t, they keep just in front o’ all the way from the North Star. Your husband, my dear, is, I make no doubt, having scorching weather all this time. Lord, if he could only see his pretty wife now! Not that this weather hurts your beauty at all—in fact, it rather does it good.”

“You mustn’t talk about him to me, Marian,” said Tess severely. (Hardy, Tess, UBSPD, p.307)

In comparison is Izzy and Marian’s dialogue from Tess, which shows how women talked about men. Surprisingly, only the language has changed. The manner of conversation, usually gossip, has remained:

“Who is that?” said Izz Huett to Marian. She had at first addressed the inquiry to Tess, but the latter could not hear it.

“Somebody’s fancy-man, I s’pose,” said Marian laconically.
“I’ll lay a guinea he’s after Tess.”

“Oh no. ’Tis a ranter pa’son who’s been sniffing after her lately; not a dandy like this.” (Hardy, Tess, UBSPD, p.346)

In Jude, Arabella encounters Anny her old friend after deceiving Jude into marrying her, and they gossip about it in very girlish manner:

‘So it turned out a good plan you see!’ remarked the girl to the wife. ‘I knew it would be with such as him. He’s a dear good fellow, and you ought to be proud of un.’

‘I am,’ said Mrs. Fawley quietly.

‘And when do you expect---?’

‘Ssh! Not at all.’

‘What!’

‘I was mistaken.’

“O Arabella, Arabella; you be a deep one! Mistaken! Well, that’s clever—it’s a real stroke of genius! It is a thing I never thought o’, wi’ all my experience! I never thought beyond bringing about the real thing—not that one could sham it!’

‘Don’t you be too quick to cry sham! ’Twasn’t sham. I didn’t know.’ (Hardy, Jude, UBSPD, p.73)
The above selected conversational pieces help to illustrate how sex/gender of the speaker affects content and manner of speech. It would be worthwhile to quote Arabella Donn’s speech, which indicates her gender as well as her other noticeable traits. In distinctly feminine manner, and that which may be distinctly her own too, Arabella lures Jude into marriage with her:

“Yes! And what shall I do if you desert me!”

“O Arabella—how can you say that, my dear! You know I wouldn’t desert you!”

“I have next to no wages as yet, you know; or perhaps I should have thought of this before....But, of course, if that’s the case, we must marry! (Hardy, Jude, UBSPD, p.69)

Though both Jude and Arabella speak emotionally, readers are sure that Arabella is playing with Jude’s emotion. She is more emotional than he is. Contrast to this, note the manner in which Jude speaks with Sue, his cousin. He persuades her to marry him:

‘Jude—I don’t like it here! I wish we hadn’t come! The place gives me the horrors: it seems so unnatural as the climax of our love! I wish it had been at church, if it had to be at all. It is not so vulgar there!’

‘Dear little girl,’ said Jude. ‘How troubled and pale you look!’

‘It must be performed here now, I suppose?’

‘No—perhaps not necessarily.’
He spoke to the clerk, and came back. ‘No—we need not marry here or anywhere, unless we like, even now,’ he said. ‘we can be married in a church, if not with the same certificate with another he’ll give us, I think. Anyhow, let us go out till you are calmer, dear, and I too, and talk it over.’ (Ibid. p.348)

Jude reacts to Sue’s emotional speech in a calm and more affectionate manner than he has responded to Arabella. At the onset of the above dialogue with Arabella, he is determined to leave her but her speech makes him declare that he would not.

4.2.5 Ethnic Factor

After discussing the other social aspects of language in Hardy’s novels, one of the significant aspects to be discussed is Ethnicity in Hardy’s characters and its effect on speech, the emphatically ‘foreign elements’ in Mayor are Donald Farfrae, a young Scot who saves the corn harvest, and Lucetta. Lucetta confides that she is Jerseyan and part French; Eustacia Vye, in Return of the Native, who Hardy claimed had Italian origin and Arabella Donn, [Jude the Obscure] described as being brown-skinned. Although her first husband is Australian, the Australians were either aboriginal [which her husband was not] or British. The British settlers of Australia were originally convicts. Hardy portrayed the speech habits of such characters as he saw fit. Farfrae identifies himself:
'My name is Donald Farfrae. It is true that I am in the corren trade—but I have replied to an advairrtisement, and arranged to see no one. I am on my way to Bristol—from there to the other side of the warrld.’ (Hardy, MC, UBSPD, p.60)

The underlined words signify Hardy’s attempt at Scottish accent in the novel. Farfrae explains a little more about his renovation process:

‘I don’t know that I have any objection,’ he said. “I’m going to another country, and curing bad corn is not the line I’ll take up there. Yes, I’ll tell ye the whole of it—you’ll make more out of it heere than I will in a foreign country. Just look heere a minute, sir. I can show ye a sample in my carpet-bag.’(Ibid. p.61)

An outstanding sample of ethnic use of language and dialect, particularly by Farfrae, is given with his various songs in the novel. Witness his first item:

It’s hame, and it’s hame, hame fain would I be,
O hame, hame , hame, to my ain countree!
There’s an eye that ever weeps, and a fair face will be fain,
As I pass through Annan Water with my bonnie bands again;
When the flower is in the bud, and the leaf upon the tree,
The lark shall sing me hame to my ain countree! (Ibid. p.66)

The similar style is given again later in this chapter, with the following item:

As I came in by my bower door,
As day was waxin’ wearie,
Oh wha came tripping down the stair
But bonnie Peg my dearie. (Ibid. p.72)

In Hardy’s preface to the novel, he remarked that Farfrae’s character can be perceived as Scotsman to outsiders and not to his own people. This resulted from a criticism of his [Farfrae’s] speech by a Scotsman: ‘Objections have been raised to the Scotch language of Mr. Farfrae, the second character; and one of his fellow-countrymen went so far as to declare that men beyond the Tweed (bonnie Scotland) did not and never could say ‘warrld’, ‘cannet’, ‘advairrtisement’ and so on.’

As customary of Hardy, he explained in the next paragraph of his preface:
‘It must be remembered that the Scotchman of the tale is represented not as he would appear to other Scotchmen, but as he would appear to people of outer regions [Britain, primarily].
Moreover, no attempt is made herein to reproduce his speech phonetically, any more than that of the Wessex speakers.’ At the end of his preface, Hardy has remarked, ‘I trust that Farfrae may be allowed to pass, if not as a Scotchman to Scotchmen, as a Scotchman to Southerners.’

Lucetta, a newcomer to Casterbridge, and later Farfrae’s wife, however, does not identify herself by speech except in referring to her place of origin:

‘Bath is where my people really belong to, though my ancestors in Jersey were as good as anybody in England. They were the Le Sueurs, an old family who have done great things in their time.’ (Ibid. p.185)

Elizabeth-Jane asks her if she speaks French and Italian. Lucetta replies that French is not frequently used:

‘Well, for that matter, in my native isle speaking French does not go for much. It is rather the other way.’ (Ibid. p.184)

In fact-finding, the researcher has learned through the Oxford Dictionary that Bath is so called because the Ancient Romans built saunas in the area. Its Roman name was Aquae Sulis. Jersey is an island in the English Channel and may have had Norman or French settlers, since Lucetta’s ancestors were called Le Sueur. In Chapter 22, Hardy refers to Lucetta by two names: Lucette Le Sueur and
Lucetta Templeman. The former is both Lucetta’s real name and French. As there are few regional characteristics in the characters’ dialogues, we shall proceed to the next point.

In Thomas Hardy’s English, Elliott noted that Hardy had a knack for creating or compounding new catch phrases for his novels:

'Hardy’s real strength lies in loading the rift of every descriptive compound with ore, embellishing, explanatory, defining, figurative, ironic. To this end he employs a variety of morphological means, combining different parts of speech with one another in order to exploit a wide range of semantic possibilities.'

Elliott continues to list some exceptional phrases from Hardy’s prose as well as poetry, but as earlier mentioned that Joseph Poorgrass, a noted rustic from Far From the Madding Crowd, is best suited to use these phrases, as he coined the following: come-by-chance children (orphans?). Though he was very adept at using words from the dialect in his novels and poems, Hardy was not content with that much and proved equally adept at coining phrases too. He is duly accredited for it. “Indeed, his verbal inventiveness is without doubt one of the most distinctive features of his language.” Hardy had an incredible vocabulary, including words compounded with the prefix out-: outskelton, outheave (D 3.3.3) outleant and so on. Hardy’s ‘The Darkling Thrush’ featured some remarkable phrases such as spectre-gray, fervourless, and blast-
beruffled. Other equally remarkable coinages include in-, as in ‘Where such inbe’ in ‘The Two Houses’ and inscroll in ‘A Sign Seeker’, subtrude (to thrust or steal in stealthily), dis-, as in discompose (HE 47) and in ‘a long line of disillusive centuries’ (RN 3.1). Other coinages using common prefixes include remutinied (JO 1.3), ensphered (HE 34), upclosing (‘Panthera’), and the noun under-whistle in the opening chapter of Under the Greenwood Tree. The most commonly used prefix for Hardy was un-, not uncharacteristic of his vision of things, as in unhale, unhope, unworth, and in the memorable line in ‘Tess’s Lament’ ‘I’d have my life unbe’. Many of Hardy’s compounds, especially nouns and adjectives, add a strongly visual or aural element to his language. One recognises the pictorial quality in words like frizzle-headed in the description of that ‘frizzle-headed brawny damsel’ driving Durbeyfield’s chaise in the second chapter of Tess of the d’Urbervilles’, or in Tess’s own ‘lashshadowed eyes’ (46), or in that telling epithet mouldy-minded in the reference by the Spirit of the Years to ‘Europe’s mouldy-minded oligarchs’ in The Dynasts (2.6.7). 19 Both as novelist and as poet, Hardy created a distinctive language which combined the old and the new, colourful local speech and Standard English, idiosyncratic grammar and syntax with accepted Victorian usage, into a unique blend, which may indeed cause an occasional grin, but which did enable him to arrive at numberless decisive ways of putting things. The following is a selection of dialectic words used in the various novels. The source for each term and reference to speaker are given below:
In *Far From the Madding Crowd* Pennyways speaks about Francis Troy:

“He wadn’ (wasn’t) at home. I went there first, too. (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, p.336)
‘He’s a cheat, and that in the eye of the law is ayless a rogue, and that is ayless a lammocken (slouching) vagabond; and that’s a punishable situation.’ (Ibid. p.337)

‘Ayless’ is unexplained. Joseph Poorgrass, on Fanny Robin:

‘I should be inclined to think it was from general neshness of constitution. She was such a limber maid that ’a could stand no hardship, even when I knowed her, and ’a went like a candle-snoff, so ’tis said.’ (Ibid. p.259)

Liddy Smallbury tells Bathsheba Everdene, about Fanny Robin:

‘She was such a childlike, nesh young thing that her spirit couldn’t appear to anyone if it tried, I’m quite sure.’ (Ibid. p.273)

Susan Tall, Laban’s wife, to Gabriel Oak:

‘Come along to bed, do, you draw-latching rogue – keeping a body awake like this!’ (Ibid. p.232)

Susan Tall, to Bathsheba, about her husband, Laban:
'O Lord, not he, ma’am! A simple tool. Well enough, but a poor Gawkhammer mortal,’ the wife replied. (Ibid. p.82)

Gabriel Oak on William Boldwood:

‘I cannot understand Farmer Boldwood being such a fool at his time of life as to ho and hanker after thik woman in the way ’a do.’ (Ibid. p.345)

[Note: hanker is used to mean desire or hunger.]

‘Just flashed her haughty eyes upon my poor scram (shram) body.’ (Ibid. p.337)

Pennyways to Francis Troy:

‘Sergeant, I was no more to her than a morsel of scroff in the fuel-house!’ (Ibid. p.338)

Gabriel Oak to the other workers, at the wedding with Bathsheba:

‘Come in, Souls, and have something to eat and drink wi’ me and my wife.’ (Ibid. p.373)

Pennyways to Francis Troy:

‘Then Gabe brought her some of the new cider, and she must needs go drinking it through a strawmote, and not in a natural way at all.’ (Ibid. p.338)

‘You stun-poll! What will ye say next?’ said Coggan. (Ibid. p.210)
‘Dear, what a thirtover place this world is!’ continued Mrs Coggan. (Ibid. p.77)

Over the snowy down or ewe-lease on Weatherbury Upper Farm. (Ibid. p.101)

Gabriel Oak, to Mrs. Hurst, Bathsheba’s aunt, after enquiry:

‘So I’ll take myself off home-along, Mrs Hurst.’

(Ibid. p.36)

Gabriel Oak to Bathsheba:

If wild heat had to do wi’ it, making ye long to overcome the awkwardness about your husband’s vanishing, it mid be wrong; but a cold-hearted agreement to oblige a man seems different, somehow. The real sin, ma’am, in my mind, lies in thinking of ever wedding wi’ a man you don’t love honest and true’. (Ibid. p.331)

In The Return of the Native, there is a typical example of the local Egdon dialect found. Timothy Fairway to Grandfer Cantle:

‘A fair stave, Grandfer Cantle; but I am afeard ’tis too much for the mouldy weasand of such a old man as you,’ he said to the wrinkled reveller. ‘Dostn’t wish th’ wast three sixes again, Grandfer, as you was when you first learnt to sing it?’

‘Hey?’ said Grandfer Gantle, stopping in his dance.
‘Dostn’t wish wast young again, I say? There’s a hole in thy poor bellows nowadays seemingly.’ (Hardy, RN, UBSPD, p.25)

Shadwater Weir had at its foot a large circular pool, fifty feet in diameter, into which the water flowed through ten huge hatches, raised and lowered by a winch and cogs in the ordinary manner. (Ibid. p.369)

Christian Cantle:

‘Well, if you don’t mind, we’ll have the beaker, and pass’en round; ’tis better then heling (to pour) it out in dribbles.’ (Ibid. p.53)

Grandfer Cantle:

‘I’m as dry as a kex with biding up here in the wind, and I haven’t seen the colour of drink since nammet-time to-day.’ (Ibid. p.34)

Timothy Fairway:

‘Lord’s sake, I thought, whatever fiery mommet (Mammet= a guy, an effigy) is this come to trouble us?’ (Ibid. p.38)

Johnny Nunsuch, Susan Nunsuch’s son, to his mother:

‘I was picking blackhearts (to go harting), and went further than I meant.’ (Ibid. p.322)
Timothy Fairway:

‘Well, what a fess (proud, conceited) little bonfire that one is, out by Cap’n Vye’s!’ (Ibid. p.56)

Christian Cantle:

“Yes, I do think we’d better get home-along, neighbours? The heth isn’t haunted,….what was that?” (Ibid. p.36)

Sam to Timothy Fairway:

‘And what ghastly gallicrow (a scarecrow) might the poor fellow have been like, Master Fairway?’ asked the turf-cutter. (Ibid. p.30)

Christian Cantle, to Mrs. Yeobright:

‘Egdon Heth is a bad place to get lost in, and the winds do huffle (bluster) queerer tonight than ever I heard ’em afore.’ (Ibid. p.39)

She went to the ‘linhay’ (lean-to building) or lean-to shed, which formed the root-store of their dwelling and abutted on the fuel-house. (Ibid. p.128)

‘I’ll crack thy numskull for thee, you mandy (saucy, insolent) chap!’ said Mrs. Nunsuch. (Ibid. pp.36-37)
Humphrey says:

‘You see, after kicking up such a nuuny-watch and forbidding the banns ’twould have made Mis’ess Yeobright seem foolish-like to have a banging wedding in the same parish all as if she’d never gainsaid it.’ (Ibid. p.26)

‘What a nunnywatch we were in, to be sure, when we heard they weren’t married at all.’ (Ibid. p.114)

Diggory Venn, to Timothy Fairways:

“I’ve left it in the bottom, about half a mile back. I stepped on in front to make sure of the way, as ’tis night-time, and I han’t been here for so long.” (Ibid. p.38)

Mrs. Yeobright, to Johnny Nunsuch:

‘What have made you so down? Have you seen a ooser?’ (Ibid. p.287)

Christian Cantle:

‘I don’t think Fifth-of-Novembers ought to be kept up by night except in towns. It should be by day in outstep, ill-accounted places like this!’ (Ibid. p.36)

Sam, a turf-cutter:
'And then, when they got to church door he’d throw down the clarinet, mount the gallery, snatch up the bass-viol, and rozum away as if he’d never played anything but a bass-viol.' (Ibid. p.53)

Grandfer Cantle:

'And even as 'tis we all look a little acammish beside him.' (Ibid. p.145)

Sam, to Humphrey:

'We who have stayed at home shall seem no more than scroff in his eyes.' (Ibid. p.114)

Timothy Fairway:

She [Susan Nunsuch] helplessly danced round with him, her feet playing like drumsticks among the sparks. ‘My ankles were’all in a fever before, from walking through that prickly furze, and now you must make ’em worse with these vlankers!’ (Ibid. p.37)

Diggory Venn, to Eustacia Vye:

'He is a man who notices the looks of women, and you could twist him to your will like a withywind, if you only had the mind.' (Ibid. p.96)

Timothy Fairway, to Christian Cantle:
‘Christian, maul down the victuals from corner-cupboard if canst reach, man, and I’ll draw a drap o’ sommat to wet it with. (Ibid. p.399)

Sam, to Clym Yeobright:

‘We were wondering what could keep you home here mollyhorning about when you have made such a world-wide name for yourself in the nick-nack trade – now, that’s the truth o’i.’ (Ibid. pp.174-175)

Christian Cantle, to Clym Yeobright:

‘Only Mr Wildeve is twanky (twanking) because ‘tisn’t a boy – that’s what they say in the kitchen.’ (Ibid. p.315)

Grandfer Cantle, to Timothy Fairways:

‘Yes, this morning at six o’clock they went up the country to do the job, and neither vell nor mark have been seen of ‘em since.’ (Ibid. p.26)

In The Mayor of Casterbridge:

‘Henchard crossed the shaded avenue on the walls, slid down the green rampart, and stood amongst the stubble. The ‘stitches’ or shocks rose like tents about the yellow expanse. (Hardy, MC, UBSPD, p.233)
Town people to Lucetta, on Henchard:

‘Oh, please, ma’am, ’tis this larry (Walbank associates larry with nunnywatch) about Mr. Henchard. A woman has proved that before he became a gentleman he sold his wife for five guineas in a booth at a fair.’ (Ibid. p.243)

Abel Whittle to Elizabeth-Jane:

‘For what’s all the world if yer mind is always in a larry, Miss Henchet?’ (Ibid. p.265)

Elizabeth-Jane to Henchard:

‘I’ve been strolling in the Walks and churchyard, father, till I feel quite leery (Leer).’ (Ibid. p.165)

Unidentified townspeople:

‘A poor twanking woman like her - ’tis a godsend for her, and hardly a pair of jumps or night-rail to her name.’ (Ibid. pp.106-107)

‘I don’t care a curse what the world be’, said Henchard. ‘Hymns, ballets, or rantipole rubbish; the Rogue’s March or the cherubim’s warble – ’tis all the same to me if ’tis good harmony.’ (Ibid. p.277)

Unidentified character to Farfrae:
‘If ye’d been minding your business instead of zwailling along in such a gawk-hammer way, you would have zeed me!’ retorted the wroth representative of Henchard. (Ibid. p.230)

The stay lace vendor:

‘I glory in the women’s sperrit. I’d ha’ done it myself—od send if I would’t, if a husband had behaved so to me! I’d go, and ’a might call, call till his keacorn was raw; but I’d never come back- no, not till the great trumpet, would I!’ (Ibid. p.22)

The glazier to Farfrae:

‘When you take away from among us the fools and the rogues, and the lammigers, and the wanton hussies, and the slatterns, and such like, there’s cust few left to ornament a song with in Casterbridge, or the country round.’ (Ibid. p.67)

‘What can we two poor lammigers do against such a multitude!’ expostulated Stubberd. (Ibid. p.333)

‘A man must be a headstrong stunpool to think that folk would go up to that bleak place to-day.’ (Ibid. p.131)

Buzzford says:

‘She’s akin to that hontish fellow Henchard.’ (Ibid. p.318)
'Don’t be a no’thern (Northern) simpleton!’ said Henchard drily. (Ibid. p.237)

Solomon Longways says:

‘...I don’t see noo harm in it. To respect the dead is sound doxology; and I wouldn’t sell skellintons – least-wise respectable skellintons – to be varnished for ’natomies, except I were out o’ work. But money is scarce, and throts get dry. Why should death rob life o’ four-pence? I say there was no reason in it.’ (Ibid. pp.147-148)

Henchard, on Farfrae says:

‘A fellow of his age going to be Mayor, indeed! ... But ’tis her money that floats en upward. Ha-ha – how cust odd it is. Here be I, his former master, working for him as man, and he the man standing as master.’ (Ibid. p.274)

In ‘Tess of the d’Urbervilles’ Mrs. Durbeyfield speaks in the dialect:

Mrs. Durbeyfield habitually spoke the dialect; her daughter, who had passed the Sixth Standard in the National School under a London-trained mistress, spoke two languages; the dialect at home, more or less; ordinary English abroad and to persons of quality. (Hardy, Tess, UBSPD, pp.31-32)
John Durbeyfield, Tess’s father:

‘He’ll adorn it better than a poor lammichen feller like myself can.’ (Ibid. p.62)

‘That wer all a part of the larry!’ (Ibid. p.32)

Crick, the dairyman:

‘And ’a knowed that nobody would come that way for hours, and he so leery (leer) and tire that ’a didn’t know what to do.’ (Ibid. p.126)

Tess:

‘Had it anything to do with father’s making such a mommet of himself in thik carriage this afternoon?’ (Ibid. p.32)

‘What a mommet of a maid!’ said the next man who met her to a companion. (Ibid. p.298)

It was not till ‘nammet’-time, about three o’clock, that Tess raised her eyes and gave a momentary glance round. (Ibid. p.352)

Angel Clare to Tess, on Marian and Izzy:

‘Just when we was packing your few traps and your Mis’ess’s night-rail and dressing things into the cart.’ (Ibid. p.240)
Marian, to Izzy on Tess:

‘O no. ’Tis a ranter (Rantipole) pa’son who’s been sniffing after her lately, not a dandy like this.’ (Ibid. p.346)

Joan Durbeyfield, Tess’s mother:

‘See how I’ve got to teave and slave, and your poor weak father with his heart clogged like a dripping-pan.’ (Ibid. p.97)

‘Y’ll be fess enough, my poppet, when th’st know!’ (Ibid. p.31)

Jonathan Kail:

‘We’ve all been gallied at the dairy at what might ha’ been a most terrible affliction.’ (Ibid. p.239)

John Durbeyfield, Tess’s father:

‘How they’ll squint and glane, and say, “This is yer mighty match is it!” ’ (Ibid. p.276)

Joan Durbeyfield, Tess’s mother:

‘I’ve heard what I’ve heard, good-now.’ (Ibid. p.47)

Crick, the dairyman:

‘But as nott cows will keep it back as well as the horned ones.’ (Ibid. p.125)
Joan Durbeyfield, Tess’s mother:

‘The poor man – he felt so rafted after his uplifting by the pa’son news that he went up to Rolliver’s half an hour ago.’ (Ibid. p.33)

‘Mr Clare’, said the dairyman emplatically, ‘is one of the most rebell’est rozums you ever knowed – not a bit like the rest of his family.’ (Ibid. pp.143-144)

Beck Knibbs:

‘I’d ha’ knocked him down wi’ the rolling-pin – a scram little feller like he! Any woman could do it.’ (Ibid. p.197)

When she came close and looked in she beheld indistinct forms racing up and down to the figure of the dance, the silence of their footfalls arising from their being overshoe in ‘scroff’ – that is to say, the powdery residuum from the storage of peat and other products, the stirring of which by their turbulent feet created the nebulosity that involved the scene. (Ibid. p.77)

One of her leather gloves, which she had taken off to eat her skimmer-cake, lay in her lap. (Ibid. p.350)

Tess, to Marian:

‘I have been living on in a thirtover, lackaday way and have not seen what it may lead to!’ (Ibid. p.312)
The labourers – or ‘work-folk’, as they used to call themselves immemorially till the other word was introduced from without – who wish to remain no longer in old places are removing to the new farms. (Ibid. pp.371-372)

And others, older, in the brown-rough ‘wropper’ or over-all – the old-established and most appropriate dress of the field-woman, which the young ones were abandoning. (Ibid. pp.103-104)

Their forms standing enshrouded in Hessian ‘wroppers’ – sleeved brown pinafores, tied behind to the bottom, to keep their gowns from blowing about. (Ibid. p.303)

‘ ’Tis melancholy work facing and footing it to one of your own sort, and no clipsing and colling at all.’ (Ibid. p.28)

Tess, to Marian:

‘No, no, no! I merely did it not to be clipsed or colled, Marian.’ (Ibid. p.300)

Mrs. Durbeyfield, to Tess:

‘I thought if I spoke of his fond feeling and what they might lead to, you would be hontish wi’ him and lose your chance’, she murmured. (Ibid. p.98)
The four breakfasted by the thin light, and the ‘house-ridding’ was taken in hand. (Ibid. p.379)

A stretch of a hundred odd acres in one patch, on the highest ground of the farm, rising above stony lanchets or lynchets – the outcrop of siliceous veins in the chalk formation, composed of myriads of loose, white flints in bulbous, cusped, and phallic shapes. (Ibid. p.303)

Mrs. Durbeyfield, to Tess:

‘No doubt a mampus of volk of our own rank will be down here in their carriages as soon as ’tis known.’ (Ibid. p.32)

‘Bless thy simplicity, Tess’, said her companions. ‘He’s got his market-nitch. Haw-haw!’ (Ibid. p.25)

The harts that had been hunted here, the witches that had been priched and ducked, the green-spangled fairies that ‘whichered’ at you as you passed- the place teemed with beliefs in them still, and they formed an impish multitude now. (Ibid. p.365)

John Durbeyfield, Tess’s father, to Parson Tringham:

‘Well, I have heard once or twice, ’tis true, that my family had .............. . I’ve got a wold silver spoon, and a wold (old) graven seal at home, ........where do we d’Urbervilles live?’ (Ibid. p.19)
John Durbeyfield, Tess’s father, to Tess:

‘Now take up that basket and goo on to Marlott, and when you’ve come to.....to me immed’ately to carry me hwome (home). ....... as I’ve news to tell her.’ (Ibid. p.21)

Tess whispers to her little brother ‘do you put on your hat – you bain’t (ain’t) afraid?-and go up to Rolliver’s, and see what has gone wi’ Father and Mother.’ (Ibid. p.35)

Izzy Huett:

‘Her mind can no more be heaved from that one place where it do bide than a stooded wagon from the hole he’s in.’ (Ibid. pp.346-347)

Every one placing her sheaf on end against those of the rest, till a shock, or ‘stitch’ as it was here called, of ten or a dozen was formed. (Ibid. p. 105)

Eliza-Louise (Liza-Lu), Tess’s little sister:

‘Tis wrong for a man of such a high family as his to slave and drave at common labouring work.’ (Ibid. p.364)

Marian:

‘His having won her once makes all the difference in the world. ’Twould be a thousand pities if he were to tole her away again.’ (Ibid. p.385)
Mrs. Durbeyfield, to Tess:

‘You couldn’t expect her to throw her arms round ’ee, an’ to kiss and coll ’ee all at once.’ (Ibid. p.57)

In 'Jude the Obscure' Drusilla Fawley, to Jude:

‘There! don’t ye look so deedy!’ (Hardy, Jude, UBSPD, p.18)

Arabella Donn, to Jude:

‘That you’ll never be told’, said she deedily. (Ibid. p.46)

She rolled round her face, remained a moment looking deedily aslant at him. (Ibid. p.65)

Mrs. Edlin, to Sue:

‘Not that ornamental night-rails can be much use to a’ould’ooman like I.’ (Ibid. p.449)

Richard Phillotson:

‘She was a pupil-teacher under me, as you know, and I took advantage of her inexperience, and toled her out for walks.’ (Ibid. p.284)

‘ ’Tis well for ’ee to stand there and glane!’ said Arabella. ‘Owing to your being late the meat is blooded and half spoiled!’ (Ibid. p.81)
George Gillingham, Phillotson’s schoolmate:

‘She’ll get over it, good-now?’ (Ibid. p.284)

Drusilla Fawley, to Jude:

‘But, O no – poor or’nary child – there never was any sprawl on thy side of the family, and never will be!’
(Ibid. p.18)

Mrs. Edlin, to Sue:

‘I be old and low, and it takes me a long while to un-ray. I han’t unlaced my jumps yet.’ (Ibid. p.487)

Elliott gave Hardy a sense of circumspection:

‘Hardy’s use of dialectic features, whether lexical, grammatical, or phonological, is studiously selective, ‘deliberately and carefully impressionistic’ Patricia Ingham calls it; nor is it confined as strictly to Dorset as Barnes’s is.’

4.3 Linguistic Features in the Selected Novels of Thomas Hardy and their Sociological Relation

Chapman (1990) comments in The Language of Thomas Hardy that English by the mid 1800s had become standardized. ‘By the middle of the nineteenth century English had long been fixed in grammatical structure and in the conventions of an agreed spelling.’
As mentioned earlier, in Chapter I, Hardy’s most noted source for Dorset dialect in his novels was his friend and neighbour William Barnes (1801-1886). Together with fellow countryman William Morris, Barnes led the philology movement which introduced dialectic compounds as a substitute for Standard English loan words, like *wort-lore* instead of ‘botany.’ Hardy was affected enough by his influence to compose his own list of compounds.

Many critics have tried (and failed?) to analyse Thomas Hardy’s use of English in his works. It is hardly a simple undertaking. After all, Hardy’s language cannot be “summed up in a few succinct sentences”. Hardy neither emulated Swift or Hazlitt, nor imitated Carlyle or Morris, or even his contemporary Charles Dickens. One could therefore conclude that Hardy formulated his own style, which is a freedom enjoyed by many writers.

While many critics both believe in ‘inconsistency’ in Hardy and puzzle over its nature, Hardy’s creative power in his characterization still regarded language soundly. As he was writing in the late Victorian period, after the equally renowned Romantics, Hardy’s literature reflected the Romantic attitude of substance or content against form. Towards the end of both his life and his career, Hardy became President of a society called English Association (1906) and later, in 1922, he called attention to weaknesses (deficiencies) in older Grammar texts.
More recent critics of English literature have condoned Hardy’s language whereas his so-called ‘awkwardness’ had once been condemned. They read such moments as authentic renderings of rural working class speech in contrast with a purer literary language. Although harsher in criticism, both Archer and Leavis seemed closer to the truth about Hardy’s style. Hardy’s language acts on many different literary and historical planes indeed; it includes classes of language whose interactions are far too systematic to be simply “authentic”. Elliott charts these linguistic features in Thomas Hardy’s English (1984) proving Hardy’s lexical irregularities to fall into patterns with specific literary purpose. A selection of examples extracted from Hardy’s English has been given earlier in this chapter. Elaborating on the findings of Elliott in a more theoretical bent, Dennis Taylor says that Hardy’s Literary Language and Victorian Philosophy turns against critical tradition to show how Hardy’s language is contextualised by its past and future, so that “awkwardness reflects those points where language is changing and where language is seeking new possibilities of precision.”

Elliott summarised Hardy’s inventiveness in two parts: the former was his creating new words, as mentioned above; the latter was his invigorating old usages. He compares Hardy with William Shakespeare but mentions in the same breath that Hardy was ‘disturbed by critical condemnation of neologisms and archaic or dialectical usages.’ Worth mentioning is Robert Graves’ record of dialogue with Hardy at Max Gate, before Hardy’s demise:
He regarded professional critics as parasites, no less noxious than autograph-hunters, wished the world rid of them, and also regretted having listened to them as a young man; on their advice he has cut out from his early poems dialect-words which possess no ordinary English equivalents. And still the critics were plaguing him.\textsuperscript{25}

There are a few key phrases in the above passage which the Researcher would like to bring attention to: Hardy considered ‘professional critics’ as parasites, in the same ilk as autograph hunters, much as they are today. Hardy noticed the same in his time, as the last two sentences above have shown.

‘…on their advice he has cut out from his early poems dialect words which possess no ordinary English equivalents. And still the critics were plaguing him.’

To ‘plague’ someone means to disturb him/her beyond normal measure or necessity and carries with it the connotation of ‘incessant.’ The above passage shows clearly Hardy’s contempt and concern for criticism of his use of dialect, which should be deemed literary realism. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) mentions a thousand citations from Thomas Hardy, showing how his usage has finally entered the English language. His word formations follow
the patterns of old Anglo-Saxon times, which Scott used in his novels too.

Chapman waxes critical of Hardy’s characterization by insinuating that deviant from standard expectations, but goes further to say they ‘are controlled to give emphasis in particular situations.’

4.3.1 Phonological Features

Hardy’s concern appears to be with pronunciation rather than stress or intonation, and these are very difficult to express without explanations. As regards the phonology of his novels, Hardy’s removal of consonants in many of his words may seem negative or unpleasant, but, like a good but bitter medicine, it is important. The extraction of consonants occurs mostly in the middle of words, such as the following: *ath’art* for ‘athwart’, *miss’ess* for ‘mistress’, *pu’pit* for ‘pulpit’. It can also be final as *aroun* for ‘around’, *wi*’ for ‘with’; and less often final as initial as *’ithout* for ‘without’.

When Hardy removes a ‘medial’ consonant, he is exhibiting to us how the word would be pronounced in Southern speech, as his characters lived in the southwest of Britain; and readers and critics alike should view it in this context. For emphasis it perhaps shortens the vowels as *nothen* for ‘northern’ and, a frequency form, *p’ason* for ‘parson’. In South-western English, a traditional feature of the voicing of some consonants gives *v* of *f* and *z* for *s*. Like Shakespeare uses it in *King Lear* when Edgar pretended to be a
rustic, he says to Oswald that ‘let poor volk pass’. As Hardy writes consonant forms i.e. vlee, vrom, vooot, and zilver, zummer, zunday. (IV, V, p.236) and Timothy Fairway that ‘And zid myself as the next poor stunpoll to get into the same mess.’ (RN, p.30) or Solomon Longways that ‘…and I wouldn’t speak wrongfu’lly for a zilver zixpence at such a time.’ (MC, p.147)

The change of vowel sounds shows some regular characteristics. A common one is the movement of /i/ to /e/ giving ‘spirit’ as sperrit. The long vowel /i:/ becomes a diphthong, close to /ei/ but a little more open, as craters for ‘creatures’, /oo/ to /əú/ go for ‘goo’ as John Durbeyfield ‘Now take up that basket and goo on to Marlott, and when you’ve come to….’ (Tess, p.21) or Solomon Longways ‘…I don’t see noo harm in it.’ (MC, p.147); Gabriel Oak refuses the offer of a ‘clane cup’ (FMC, p.60) and is assured that the grit on a piece of bacon which has been dropped is ‘clane dirt’ (Ibid. p.61). An extra vowel is sometimes inserted in the spelling to show that a long vowel is being given longer duration, as ‘tunes’ becomes tuens and ‘cakes’ keakes, and almost separating into two syllables. Barnes has used the dieresis for this effect, writing meake, gay. A variant which seems to have endured in Dorset was standard at an earlier time. Phonological shortening is ‘gie’ instead of ‘give’, e.g., ‘If he marry her, she’ll gie up farming.’ (FMC, p.187) or “But we’ll gie ’em another song? said Grandfer Cantle. (RN, p.56) and ‘hae’ instead of ‘have’ e.g., “No, because I shall hae the crooked sixpence.” (Ibid. p.66)
One markedly unusual phonological entry in Hardy’s English is an intrusive consonant, most frequently /w/, as in ‘hwome’ and ‘wold’. This entry appeared in the speech of various characters, in Tess of the D’Urbervilles. e.g., “Why, Tess Durbeyfield, if there isn’t thy father riding hwome in a carriage!” (Tess, p.25) and “I’ve got a wold silver spoon and a wold graven seal at home too;” (Ibid. p.19)

Another very distinctive example of phonological variation in Hardy’s novels is the following, which reflects his unusual spelling to show regional pronunciation:

“I never heerd a skillful old married feller of twenty years’ standing pipe ‘my wife’ in a more used note than ’a did,” said Jacob Smallbury. “It might have been a little more true to nater if’t had been spoken a little chillier, but that wasn’t to be expected just now.” “That improvement will come wi’ time,” said Jan. (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, p.373)

Walbank gives us a quant glossary of Dorset English as conceived of by Thomas Hardy. Hardy explained to the Spectator, a magazine, that he preserved the local idiom along with terms unaccompanied by synonyms in use. e.g., diment for diamond, arrant for errand or errant, criddled for curdled, etc. To this list he thoughtfully adds specific terms of reference, as for cider-making and copse-work: pummy, wring-down for cider and gad and rendlewood for copses.
In point of fact, Hardy’s interests in the usage of dialect don’t lie in his specific indicators, of which these are only a few, but rather in his allocation of dialect features to characters depending on their position and contextual situation.²⁷

4.3.2 Morphological Features

Elliott has compiled a thorough glossary of ‘Hardian’ dialectical usage equally worth noticing. He follows it with a section on Grammar and other linguistic aspects in Hardy’s language. In the unit on Grammar, Elliott brings to our attention that Hardy’s usage comes, indeed, from old sources—OE through ME, which must have flourished or been in use in Hardy’s region at that time. Elliott was referring to nouns mostly, but his point is worth repeating here.

In the case of nouns, a few points deserve notice. Thus, we find the continuation, from Old English (OE) through southern Middle English (ME) into Hardy’s Wessex.’ [parentheses are researcher’s.]²⁸

Elliott refers again to unusual plurals such as –n, decidedly a southern or south Western derivative of ME.

On adjectives and adjectival comparisons, Elliott remarked that they retained ‘the older synthetic method which was gradually replaced in Middle English by the use of ‘more’ and ‘most’. This replacement is accepted as correct usage in modern Standard
English. Hardy’s rustics engaged in double comparatives and superlatives [and even today, less educated speakers still do it]: e.g., Grandfer Cantle says *most gallantest*. (RN), Tess says *propserer* (Tess). From adjectives, we turn to *adverbs*. Elliott writes that Hardy’s narrative style indulged in equally curious adverbials: ‘written largelier’, ‘ascending whitely’ and ‘more yellowly.’

Of special notice are Hardy’s *pronouns*. Elliott informs us in this unit that they are inherited from Old Norse (Northern European or Scandinavian) and that from most likely Germanic. Scholars in English Language have remarked for years that English is a composite language descending from Latin and Greek on one side and from Germanic or Norse on the other. For example, Grammer Oliver (WD) says ‘*ch woll*’ [Ger.: *Ich woll= I will*]. The oblique third person masculine singular comes from *hine* (OE). The same applied to the third person plural, in which the additive prefix *th-*: southern forms of OE. [*hie, heom, heora*]. When *th-* is added, we get the pronouns for third person plural still used today: *they, them, their*. Hardy takes the process a step further by dropping the *th-* prefix in the standardised forms: them becomes ‘*em*, for example.

Many speakers in Hardy’s novels contract the third person singular [nd occasionally the first person singular] to ‘a’. Elliott writes ‘The singular forms show similar diversity and indifference to strict rules of grammar. They are, moreover, frequently reduced to a single weakly stressed or unstressed schwa sound /ə/, as in ‘Father’s so old
that ’a can’t mind his age, can ye, father?’ (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, p.68) Elliott writes that this sound was represented by ‘a, as shown above.

In almost the same manner that Hardy protested in his dialogue with Graves, abovementioned, Elliott speaks of the inconsistency in the use of other pronouns in Hardy’s books: ‘Tis nothing to I’ (TM) ‘Tis hard for she’ but he identifies the source of Hardy’s pronouns ‘en, ‘un as the Old English above mentioned [hine]. Furthermore, he reports about Hardy’s ‘aberration’ of the second person as originating in a fluctuation of usage among southern dialectic speakers. A critical commentary in Mayor of Casterbridge is given:

‘Bide where you be,’ he echoed sharply. ‘Good God, are you only fit to carry wash to a pig-trough, that ye use such words as those?’ (Hardy, MC, UBSPD, p.158)

In much the same way that Tess used Standard English with such persons, other speakers in Hardy’s novels used Standard English but used thou among themselves. One should recall that ‘thee’ and ‘thou’ are old usage and regarded in Standard English as an archaism. They persist in areas where education is scarce, such as in Hardy’s Wessex. The Return of the Native is an example where old and modern forms are used side-by-side in the language:

'Tis a sad thing for ye, Christian. How’st know the women won’t hae thee?’
'I've asked 'em.'

'Sure I should never have thought you had the face.'
(Hardy, RN, UBSPD, p.31)

"Had it anything to do with Father's making such a mommet of himself in thik carriage this afternoon? Why did 'ea? I felt inclined to sink into the ground with shame!" (Hardy, Tess, UBSPD, p.32)

Ye and thee have been accounted for. Know'st is a contraction of older usage for second person, as in ‘thou dost know’, with the above being the interrogative form. [Knowest thou..?] The obliques in Hardy are as follows: Ye, you and ‘ee. Hardy frequently makes his characters use the latter, which ‘occasionally functions as nominative case’:

‘Don’t 'ee, sir—please don’t 'ee!’ (Hardy, Jude, UBSPD, p.16)

Hardy is believed to have blurred the distinction between preterit and past participles of certain verbs by adding the suffix of the latter to the infinitive, as in builded, feeled, etc. Beside that, the OE prefix of ge- [which persists in and must have been derived from Germanic] to verb forms is also current in Hardy’s language, but is altered to be a-: gebuilded to a-builbed, gecome to a-come, etc. In addition, Elliott supposes that Hardy’s second influence is Barnes, the dialectic poet. One example of Hardy’s dialect in treatment of the article, that is the frequent use of a’ instead of ‘an’: ‘’Tis a’
awkward gift for a man, poor soul,’...(FMC, p.62) or ‘‘tis a’ old foolish thing they do….’(MC, p.310)

4.3.3 Syntactic Features
On the question of structure, it is said that southwestern dialects in Britain used the additive ‘do’ before the main verb. Jacob Smallbury says: ‘Ye don’t ought to count.’ Tess says ‘That’s where my misery do lie.’ and used ‘do’ instead of ‘does’ in the third person singular form, that is: “I’ve not asked her. She don’t know there is any such lady ...” (Tess, p.38) and “But Joan Durbeyfield must mind that she don’t get green …”(Ibid.). Likewise, ‘be’ is added or used instead of the conjugated forms: ‘I be plain Jack Durbeyfield.’ (Tess, p.18), ‘Who be you, then, John Durbeyfield, to order me about and call me ‘boy’?’ (Ibid. p.20) or ‘... I be no age at all to speak of?’ (FMC, p.69) and “That wer all a part of the larry!...” (Tess, p.32)

4.4 Comparative Study of Major and Minor Characters
The researcher has considered it fit to keep a separate section herein for the minor characters, as they are all indubitably rustics in Hardy’s fiction.

4.4.1 The Rustics of Hardy
Hardy’s characters are divided into three types, the first of which are of course the protagonists—e.g., Clym Yeobright, Jude Fawley, Michael Henchard, etc. The other two types are the minor
characters. These include the characters who keep contacts with the protagonists and play a part in their daily lives and the rustic players who provide Hardy’s ‘comic relief’. Such characters include Damon Wildeve, Mrs. Yeobright, Donald Farfrae, etc. This third category includes characters like Christian Cantle, Jacob Smallbury and so on.29

Dutt (1990) attributes Hardy’s rustic supporting characters as the chorus of Greek drama, in works like Far From the Madding Crowd, Return of the Native, etc. Hardy seems to have followed the Greek tradition and that of William Shakespeare.

These rustics, in addition to giving some background information, have choric function also as in Greek tragedies, where the chorus makes significant comments on the action. Much of what they say is prophetic. They are like Shakespeare’s fools who, in reality, are not, but, on the contrary are wiser than we can imagine.30

However, Tess is much different from other novels in that there are fewer minor characters. Dutt divides the rustics into three types: narrow-minded moralists who make Tess’s family leave their home in Marlott but without any conceivable cause; unpolished drunkards who visit Rolliver’s regularly and who have counterparts in Trantridge. Hardy refers to mythology as spiritual images to highlight them. Third and last is the Talbothays group. Dutt explains that they live the most ideal life. Yet Hardy warns that we
should not take them as the ‘pitiable dummy known as Hodge’. They are descendants of earlier characters, with whom we are unfamiliar. Concerning the language or dialect used by his rustics, Hardy wrote the following letter to The Athenaeum, on November 30th, 1878.

An author may be said to fairly convey the spirit of intelligent peasant talk if he retains the idiom, compass and characteristic expressions although he may not encumber the page with obsolete pronunciations of the purely English words and with mispronunciations of those derived from Latin and Greek.

In contradiction—or perhaps contradistinction—to Dutt’s view is Millgate. In his chapter on Far From the Madding Crowd, Millgate challenges this view of the workpeople as a chorus like Aristophanes’ frogs or other Greek chorus, and even so of Shakespeare. He contrasts the characters of Far From the Madding Crowd with the lower class people of Mayor of Casterbridge, who cause ruin to Lucetta with their skimmity ride. Millgate points out:

"Although it seems natural to speak of them as a kind of chorus, they discharge that particular function a good deal less obtrusively than do the lower-class characters in a more deliberately structured novel like The Mayor of Casterbridge. And they are perhaps less derivatively Shakespearean—despite the obvious echo of Silence and Shallow in the Malter’s questions about
Norcombe—than a first glance might suggest. They seem, indeed, to have owed a great deal to people Hardy had actually encountered, and in their speech he aimed at “scrupulously preserving the local idiom.”

The following is a selection of examples of rustic speech and dialogue:

‘Chapel-folk be more hand-in-glove with them above than we,’ said Joseph [Poorgrass] thoughtfully.

‘Yes,’ said [Jan] Coggan. ‘We know very well that if anybody do go to heaven, they will. They’ve worked hard for it, and they deserve to have it, such as ’tis. I bain’t such a fool as to pretend that we who stick to the Church [of England] have the chance as they, because we know we have not. But I hate a feller who’ll change his old ancient doctrines for the sake of going to heaven.’ (Hardy, FMC, UBSPD, p.268)

‘Why, afore I went a soldier in the Bang-up Locals (as we was called), in the year four,’ chimed Grandfer Cantle brightly,’ I didn’t know no more what the world was like than the commonest man among ye. And now, jown it all, I won’t say what I bain’t fit for, hey?’ (Hardy, RN, UBSPD, p.29)

In comparison is Olly, the besom-maker:
'And yet how people do strive after it and get it! The class of folk that couldn’t use to make a round O to save their bones from the pit can write their names now without a sputter of the pen, oftentimes without a single blot - what do I say?- why, almost without a desk to lean their stomachs and elbows upon.’ (Ibid.)

‘For my part I don’t see why men who have got wives and don’t want ’em, shouldn’t get rid of ’em as these gipsy fellows do their old horses,’ said the man in the tent. ‘Why shouldn’t they put ’em up and sell ’em by auction to men who are in need of such articles? Hey? Why, begad, I’d sell mine this minute if anyone would buy her!’

There’s them that would do that,’ some of the guests replied, looking at the woman, who was by no means ill-favoured. (Hardy, MC, UBSPD, p.16)

‘Gad, then, I won’t quite ha’e it,’ said Solomon Longways. ‘I say it to-day, and ’tis a Sunday morning, and I wouldn’t speak wrongfully for zilver sixpence at such a time. I don’t see noo harm in it. To respect the dead is sound doxology; and I wouldn’t sell skellintons – least-wise respectable skellintons – to be varnished for ’natomies, except I were out o’ work. But money is scarce, and throts get dry. Why should death rob life o’
four-pence? I say there was no reason in it.’ (Ibid. pp.147-148)

The rustics of *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* include Tess’s parents, their landlady and Tess’s fellow washer girls Izzy Huett and Marian. The following are excerpts from the novel to highlight this point:

“’Tisn’t a city, the place I mean; leastwise ’twaddn’ when I was there—’twas a little one-eyed, blinking sort o’ place.”

“...Under the church of that there parish lie my ancestors—hundred of ’em—in coats of mail and jewels, in gr’t lead coffins weighing tons and tons.”

(Hardy, *Tess*, UBSPD, p.21)

[It observed that Americans still use this phrase: that there, this here…]

[The word skilllentons is used instead of skeletons for the first time here.]

“No take up that basket and goo on to Marlott, and when you’ve come to The Pure Drop Inn, tell ’em to send a horse and carriage to me immed’ately to carry me hwome. And in the bottom o’ the carriage they be to put a noggin o’ rum in a small bottle and chalk it up to my account.” (Ibid.)
“I be as good as some folks here and there! I’ve got a
great family vault at Kingsbere-sub-Greenhill and
finer skillentons than any man in Wessex!”
“I’ve something to tell ’ee that’s come into my head
about that—a grand projick!” whispered his cheerful
wife.
“Hush! Don’t ’ee sing so loud, my good man,” said the
landlady; “in case any member of the Gover’ment
should be passing, and take away my licends.” (Ibid.
p.37)
“Who is that?” said Izz Huett to Marian. She had at
first addressed the inquiry to Tess, but the latter could
not hear it.
“Somebody’s fancy-man, I s’pose,” said Marian
laconically.
“I’ll lay a guinea he’s after Tess.”
“Oh no. ’Tis a ranter pa’son who’s been sniffing after
her lately; not a dandy like this.” (Ibid. p.346)
4.5 Conclusion

The present chapter is devoted to the use of language and dialect by the characters in Thomas Hardy’s novels. As the researcher has explained earlier in this thesis, Hardy’s characters come from a region of England where the standard language is scarcely used and the regional dialect is more prevalent. This is shown through Hardy’s tools of expression, such as unusual spelling and grammar, which has been classified as ‘morphological’ or ‘syntactic’ features of the study. In this chapter, the researcher has given as many examples as were evident in the novels for each factor and linguistic feature.
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