



## THE IMPORTANCE OF GEOFFREY CHAUCER IN ENGLISH LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS

Qodirova Mohida Rustamjon qizi

English teacher of boarding school

Namangan region

**Annotation.** This article gives information about Geoffrey Chaucer who is considered to be a great poet and writer in the English literature and his contribution to the linguistics and literature of English and world science.

**Keywords:** literature, rhyming couplets

Chaucer wrote in continental accentual-syllabic metre, a style which had developed in English literature since around the 12th century as an alternative to the alliterative Anglo-Saxon metre. Chaucer is known for metrical innovation, inventing the rhyme royal, and he was one of the first English poets to use the five-stress line, a decasyllabic cousin to the iambic pentametre, in his work, with only a few anonymous short works using it before him. The arrangement of these five-stress lines into rhyming couplets, first seen in his *The Legend of Good Women*, was used in much of his later work and became one of the standard poetic forms in English. His early influence as a satirist is also important, with the common humorous device, the funny accent of a regional dialect, apparently making its first appearance in *The Reeve's Tale*.

The poetry of Chaucer, along with other writers of the era, is credited with helping to standardise the London Dialect of the Middle English language from a combination of the Kentish and Midlands dialects. This is probably overstated; the influence of the court, chancery and bureaucracy – of which Chaucer was a part – remains a more probable influence on the development of Standard English.

Modern English is somewhat distanced from the language of Chaucer's poems owing to the effect of the Great Vowel Shift some time after his death. This change in the pronunciation of English, still not fully understood, makes the reading of Chaucer difficult for the modern audience.



The status of the final -e in Chaucer's verse is uncertain: it seems likely that during the period of Chaucer's writing the final -e was dropping out of colloquial English and that its use was somewhat irregular. It may have been a vestige of the Old English dative singular suffix -e attached to most nouns. Chaucer's versification suggests that the final -e is sometimes to be vocalised, and sometimes to be silent; however, this remains a point on which there is disagreement. When it is vocalised, most scholars pronounce it as a schwa.

Apart from the irregular spelling, much of the vocabulary is recognisable to the modern reader. Chaucer is also recorded in the Oxford English Dictionary as the first author to use many common English words in his writings. These words were probably frequently used in the language at the time but Chaucer, with his ear for common speech, is the earliest extant manuscript source. Acceptable, alkali, altercation, amble, angrily, annex, annoyance, approaching, arbitration, armless, army, arrogant, arsenic, arc, artillery and aspect are just some of almost two thousand English words first attested in Chaucer.

Now we analyze Chaucer's short poem Fortune, which is believed to have been written in the 1390s, is also thought to refer to Lancaster. "Chaucer as narrator" openly defies Fortune, proclaiming that he has learned who his enemies are through her tyranny and deceit, and declares "my suffisaunce" (15) and that "over himself hath the maystrye" (14).

Fortune, in turn, does not understand Chaucer's harsh words to her for she believes that she has been kind to him, claims that he does not know what she has in store for him in the future, but most importantly, "And eek thou hast thy beste frend alyve" (32, 40, 48). Chaucer retorts, "My frend maystow nat reven, blind goddesse" (50) and orders her to take away those who merely pretend to be his friends.

Fortune turns her attention to three princes whom she implores to relieve Chaucer of his pain and "Preyeth his beste frend of his noblesse/That to som beter estat he may atteyne" (78–79). The three princes are believed to represent the dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester, and a portion of line 76 ("as three of you or tweyne") is thought to refer to the ordinance of 1390 which specified that no royal gift could be authorised without the consent of at least two of the three dukes.

Most conspicuous in this short poem is the number of references to Chaucer's "beste frend". Fortune states three times in her response to the plaintiff, "And also, you still have



your best friend alive" (32, 40, 48); she also refers to his "beste frend" in the envoy when appealing to his "noblesse" to help Chaucer to a higher estate. The narrator makes a fifth reference when he rails at Fortune that she shall not take his friend from him.

## REFERENCES

1. "Geoffrey Chaucer in Context". Cambridge University Press. 2019. Retrieved 20 April 2020.
2. "Chaucer". Cambridge University Press. 2011. Retrieved 20 April 2020.
3. Robert DeMaria, Jr., Heesok Chang, Samantha Zacher, eds, *A Companion to British Literature, Volume 2: Early Modern Literature, 1450–1660*, John Wiley & Sons, 2013, p. 41.
4. Butterfield, Ardis. "Chaucer and the idea of Englishness". *History Extra*. Retrieved 22 May 2022. The extraordinary dominance of English now as a world language has made it hard to appreciate that its status in the medieval period was very low. Not only was English just one of three languages used in England before the 15th century, it was not the major one. For although it was of course the most widely used spoken language, English fell far short of Latin and French as a written language. [Chaucer's] decision to write exclusively in English was indeed unusual [...] He made English successful because he made it urban and international.
5. Simpson, James (27 April 2023). "Literary Traditions – Continuity and Change". *The Oxford History of Poetry in English: Volume 3. Medieval Poetry: 1400–1500*. Oxford University Press. p. 28. ISBN 978-0-19-883968-2.
6. Lerer, Seth (1 January 2006). *The Yale Companion to Chaucer*. Yale University Press. p. 60. ISBN 978-0-300-12597-9.
7. Echard, Sian; Rouse, Robert (2017). *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain, 4 Volume Set*. John Wiley & Sons. p. 425. ISBN 9781118396988. Retrieved 11 September 2021.
8. Derek Brewer (1992). *Chaucer and His World*. Boydell & Brewer Ltd. pp. 18–19. ISBN 978-0-85991-366-9.