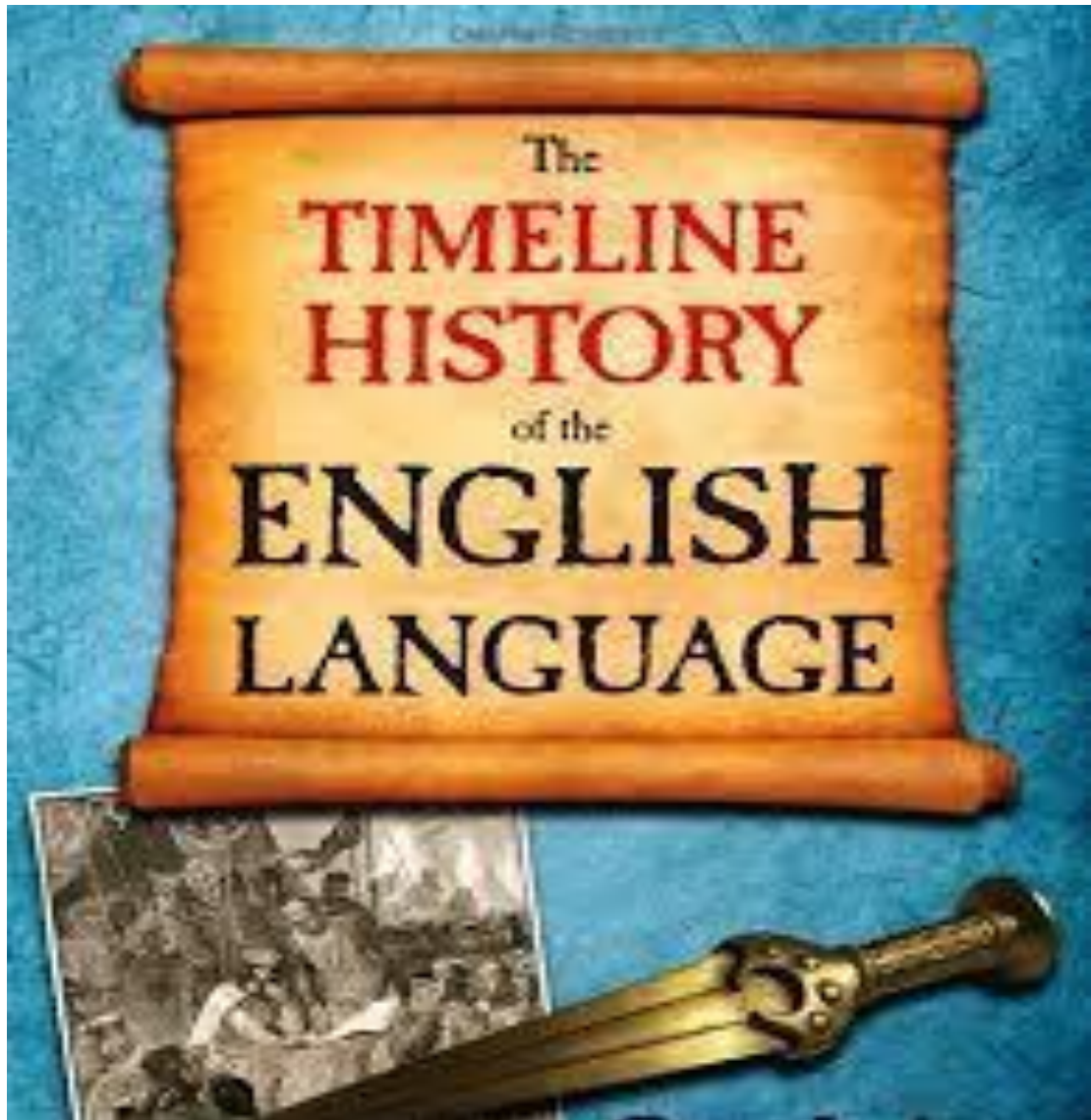


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FOREWORD

History of the English Language is a comprehensive exploration of the linguistic and cultural development of English and is intended for the third-year students - *Translation and Interpretation*. The purpose of the support is to systematize, develop and deepen the knowledge of the students on the history of the English language and form their *communicative competence*. The didactic support provides students with a balanced and up-to-date overview of the history of the language. As English learners, we must know the evolution of this language over the past fifteen hundred years or more. This support consists of eleven themes that offers an overview of the History of the English Language from its origin to the present: the early development of the English Language and major historical events that had been made changes in its course; the changes that have taken place in English through Foreign invasions in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, besides it discusses the contribution of major writers to enrich this language; the evolution of standard English and the significance of English in this globalized world where technology reigns. Moreover, we have given a list of books for reference that will give you a thorough understanding of the origin of the English language, its growth and maturity.

We wish you a happy and fruitful learning experience!

PREFACE

English did not exist two thousand years ago. Now it is in wide use, but we are not quite sure of its future and the same goes for all languages: they appear, they are used for a time, and they may disappear. There are huge differences between them because some are just used for a few generations while others exist for millennia. Some languages are spoken by only a handful of people, others are used by hundreds of millions.

Languages arise and vanish, languages have different destinies, languages depend on history. Thus, history is affected by languages because languages are a part of history.



I. FROM GERMANIC TO MODERN ENGLISH

The English language emerged as a *separate, identifiable unit* much earlier than the Romance languages. One reason for this is the situation in England after the fall of the Roman Empire. The Romans conquered Britain in the first century AD and held it for 300 years, yet Latin did not become the spoken language, as it did in present-day France, Spain, and Portugal. People in Britain retained their language, which belonged to the Celtic group of Indo-European languages. That language is nowadays sometimes called British, and sometimes Brythonic; the modern language Welsh is a descendant of it, and so was the Cornish language (in Cornwall) that ceased to be spoken as a native language around 1800.

Around the year 400, the Roman troops left Britain. The British were left to fend for themselves. This was no easy task in the turbulent fifth century. Sure enough, the island was soon invaded from two directions. In the north, which had never been held by the Romans, the Irish, who spoke a quite different Celtic language, occupied the western coastland and later much more. The descendant of the Irish language there is now usually called Scots Gaelic. In the north there were also Picts, a little-known people who had a language of their own.

But the most dramatic invasion came from the east. Germanic groups from the southern and eastern coast of the North Sea looked for opportunities in different parts of the disintegrating empire. They found very little resistance in the island. Actually, the first Germans are said to have come in three ships in the year 449, invited by the Britons to help them against the Irish invaders from the north and west.

More Germans followed; most of them belonged to two groups named Angles and Saxons. They rapidly expanded over most of the island, forming a large number of small independent kingdoms. After a century and a half, around the year 600, they dominated most of England. The Britons were pushed back to Wales and Cornwall, and the Scots from Ireland held Scotland.

What is very remarkable is that the language shifted over the whole conquered area. The Germans were able to impose their language in less than 300 years where the Romans could not impose theirs. Probably because they came in larger numbers and wanted to farm the land themselves. The new states kept no traditions from *Romans or Britons*: they were just

Germanic kingdoms.

The situation in the island is summed up at the beginning of the *Peterborough Chronicle* (which is one version of the *Anglo- Saxon Chronicle*), a text probably written in the tenth century:

*Brittene igland is ehta hund mila lang & twa hund
brad, & her sind on pis iglande fif gebeode: Englisc &
Brittisc... & Scyttisc & Pyhtisc & Boc Leden. A
word-for-word translation into modern English.
Britain's island is eight hundred miles long and two
hundred broad, and there are on this island five
languages: English and British... and Scottish and
Pictish and Book Latin.*

Although the old text may not be easy to decipher without the translation, it can be rendered word for word in modern English, and most of the words are obviously related, sometimes identical. It is clearly an old form of English, and the language is called "Englisc" by the author.

The Germans were not held together by any common bond, but were grouped into a large number of small, independent states. We know about their ways of life and about the different states from a number of Latin and Greek sources. The most important one is a small book about the Germans by the Roman historian Tacitus, written in AD 98. The author is best known in England for his biography of Agricola, his father-in-law, who spent several years as a general in Britain.

The Angles are mentioned in passing by *Tacitus*, together with a number of now forgotten neighbours. He talks about "*Reudigni . . . et Aviones et Anglii et Varini et Eudoses et Suardones et Nuitones*" as peoples who lived in present-day Schleswig and Mecklenburg, by the coast of the North Sea and the south-western Baltic. There is nothing remarkable about the **3** individual groups, he says, but they have in common a cult of Nerthus, Mother Earth.

If Tacitus is right, and there is no real reason for doubt, the Angles at this time were a quite insignificant band, living in a fairly small area beside six other similar groups. The number of Angles must have been very modest, hardly more than a few thousand people.

The Saxons are not even mentioned by Tacitus, but appear in other sources about a century later. Towards the fourth century, they gained some notoriety as raiders along the coast of Roman Gaul, from the Rhine as far down as the Loire.

English words have been borrowed from many other languages. For example, shopping and le weekend (French), el futbol (Spanish), der Manager and das Ticket (German), lo sport (Italian), teiburu (table) and sokkusu (socks) (Japanese). Some countries have tried to stop this by passing laws against the public use of English (for example, France in 1975, and Poland in 1997,



So, the Angles and Saxons were small Germanic groups originally living along the North Sea coast beside their Germanic neighbours. What about their language, or languages?

Tacitus and other Roman authors say little about the language of the Germans. Still, there is good evidence to prove that the Germans at this time all spoke in a fairly similar way, although of course there were dialectal differences over the vast area. Germans at this time occupied the better part of present-day Germany, the Netherlands, and southern Scandinavia. Nowadays, the hypothetical common language is often

called Germanic or Proto-Germanic.

The English language is spoken today in parts of Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and in some of the islands of the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans. It is spoken as a first language by 320-370 million people. It is also used as a second language by about the same number of people, and as a foreign language by millions more. English is probably used in some way by about a quarter of all the people in the world. Because so many people, in so many places, speak or use English it is often

In the past, people have tried to create a world language. Johann Schleyer invented Volapuk in 1880. Volapuk had about a million followers by 1889, but died out quite quickly. Esperanto, invented in 1887 by Ludwig Zamenhof, has been more successful, but only has about 2 million speakers.



called a 'world language'. Who uses English, and why is it such a widely spoken language? In other countries like Britain and America, English is the first language of most people: in other words, it is the first language people learn as children and they communicate in English all the time. In other countries, like India, Nigeria, Singapore and Papua New Guinea, large numbers of people use English as a second language. They have their own first language, but because English is one of the official languages, they use it in education, business, government and broadcasting. Finally, in many countries English is taught in schools as a foreign language, but it is not an official language.

English is also used for many different kinds of international communication. Politics and business are often carried out in English. For example, ASEAN, the political group of nine south-eastern Asian nations, uses English as its working language. Most medical and scientific studies are written in English. English is the language of much of the world's pop music and films. On the Internet and in the computer industry, English is used much more than other languages. The 'languages' of international sea and air traffic control, known as 'Seaspeak' and 'Airspeak', use English. They use a limited number of English words and sentences to make communication clearer and simpler. (For example, in Seaspeak instead of *Sorry, what was that?* or *What did you say?*, you say *Say again.*) Much of the world's news is broadcast in English or provided by English language broadcasting companies or news agencies.

The spread of English around the world began with the British settlement of North



America, the Caribbean, Australia and Asia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and continued in the nineteenth century when the British controlled parts of Africa and the South Pacific. English also became important internationally because in the nineteenth century Britain was one of the world's leading industrial nations. Many industrial inventions came from Britain, so learning how to use them involved learning English.

In the twentieth century, the use of English spread with the growth in international business. Because of the strength of the American economy many people wanted to do business with American companies, and in order to do this they had to speak English. Air travel also developed,

making more international business possible.

Faster ways of international communication became more widely used, such as the telephone, fax machines, and more recently the computer. When multinational companies and organizations developed, English was often chosen as the working language. For example, English is the working language of the European Central Bank, although the bank is in Germany. Business on the Internet, such as banking, shopping and making travel arrangements, is also carried out mainly in English. But who were the first English speakers? In the next theme we go back to the beginning of the history of the English language.

In America some Spanish speakers speak 'Spanglish'; in Malaysia some people speak 'Malenglish'; in the Philippines 'Taglish' is spoken. These languages mix English with other languages (Spanish, Malay and Tagalog).



1. When did the English language emerge?
2. When did the Romans conquer Britain?
3. What language did the people in Britain retain?
4. How is nowadays the language belonging to the Celtic group called?
5. Whom was Britain invaded after the Roman troops left it?
6. What is the spread of English today?
7. Which were the faster ways of international communication in the 20th century?
8. What was the situation on the island described in a text written in the 10th century?
9. What was the name of the old form of English?
10. What Roman historian wrote a book about the Germans?



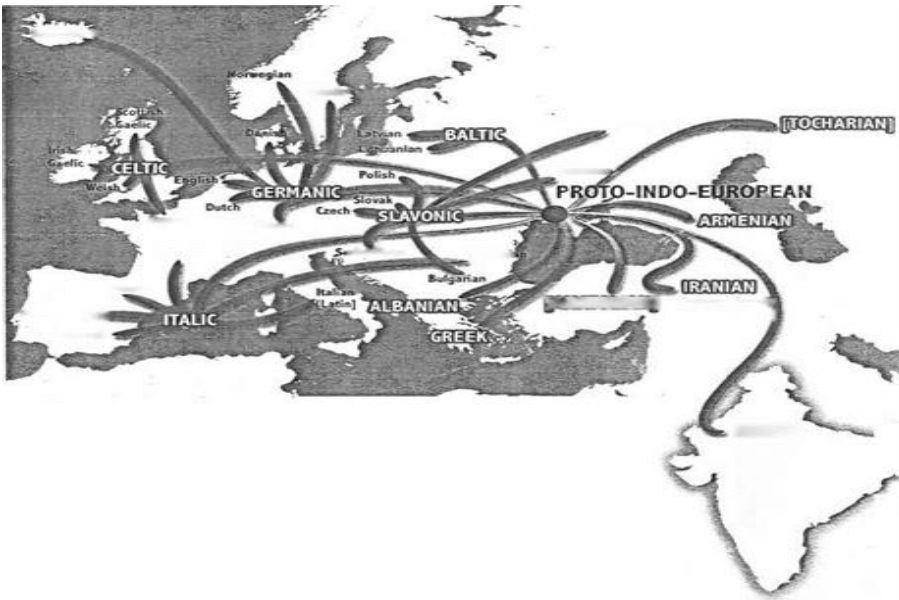
II. THE BEGINNINGS OF ENGLISH

Our understanding of the history of English began at the end of the eighteenth century when Sir William Jones, a British judge who lived in India, began to study Sanskrit. This is the ancient language of India, and at the time was used in Indian law. Like others before him, Jones noticed many similarities between Sanskrit, Latin, Greek and other European languages. For example:

SANSKRIT	LATIN	GREEK	ENGLISH
Pitr	pater	Pater	<i>Father</i>
Matar	mater	Matr	<i>mother</i>
Bhratr	frater	phrater	<i>brother</i>
Asti	est	Esti	<i>is</i>
Trayah	tres	Treis	<i>three</i>
Sapta	septem	hepta	<i>seven</i>
Ashta	octo	Okto	<i>Eight</i>

People had thought that Latin, Greek and all European languages came from Sanskrit, but Jones disagreed. He believed that Sanskrit, Greek and Latin all came from a ‘common source’, which had perhaps disappeared. His idea caused a lot of interest and other people began to study these three languages. Their work supported his view. We now know that Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, English and many other languages all belong to one enormous ‘family’ of related languages called the Indo-European family.

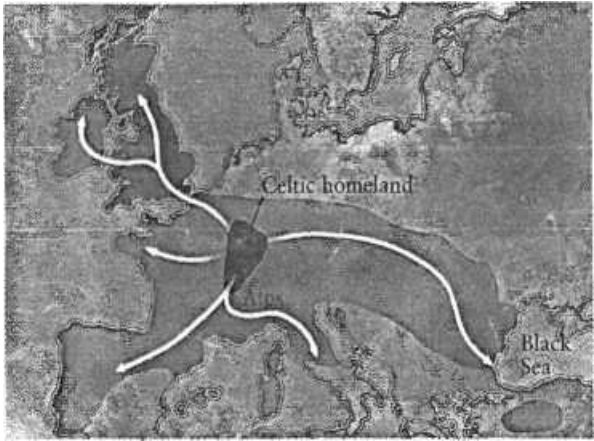
The common source - the language from which all these languages developed - is now known as Proto-Indo-European. It is thought that a group of people called the Kurgans spoke this language, or dialects of it, and lived in what is now southern Russia from some time after 5000 BC. In about 3500 BC the Kurgans probably began to spread west across Europe and east across Asia. As groups of Kurgans travelled further and further away from each other. They began to develop stronger differences in their dialects. With the passing of time, these dialects became different languages. When some of them (the Greek, Anatolian and Indo-Iranian languages) appear in written form in about 2000 to 1000 BC they are clearly separate languages.



The main languages of the Indo-European family

By studying languages as they are spoken today, we can see some similarities which suggest that they probably come from Proto-Indo-European. For example, there are similar words in European and Indo-Iranian languages for members of the family (*mother, father*), animals (*dog, sheep, horse*), parts of the body (*eye, ear*), the weather (*rain, snow*), and for tools and weapons. From these and other shared words we can imagine something of the life of the Kurgans; they were partly agricultural, made clothes from wool and used wheels.

More than 2,000 million people, about half the human race, speak an Indo-European language as their first language. The speaker of Hindi in India, the speaker of Portuguese in Brazil and the speaker of English in Australia all express themselves in an Indo-European language.



The Celts were the first group of Indo-European speakers to move across Europe. Towards the end of the fifth century BC, they began to spread out from their homeland north of the Alps in central Europe. They reached the Black Sea, south-west Spain and central Italy the whole of Britain, and Ireland. As the Celts spread out, different dialects of their language developed. The group that settled in southern England and Wales spoke a kind of Celtic called Brythonic; those who settled in Scotland and Ireland spoke Goidelic (Gaelic).

Unfortunately for the Celts in Britain, other people wanted to take advantage of Britain's natural wealth in agriculture and metals. In AD 43 the Romans invaded Britain. They

remained there for almost four hundred years, and almost all of what is now England came under their control. They introduced a new way of life and a new language. British Celts in the upper classes and the towns became used to life with laws and police, roads and towns. Some learnt to speak and write Latin.

However, from the middle of the third century AD, the Romans grew weaker and weaker as the Germanic tribes of northern Europe attacked more and more Roman lands, including Britain. In **AD 410** the Romans finally left Britain. Disorganized and no longer protected by the Roman army, the country was an easy prize.

In the middle of the fifth century AD, people from the Germanic tribes, the Saxons', the Angles and the Jutes, arrived in southern and eastern Britain from what are now Germany and Denmark. They drove the British Celts into the north and west of Britain, and slowly organized themselves into seven kingdoms in what is now England and south-east Scotland. Almost all of these invaders spoke dialects of a language they called **Englisc** (pronounced /inglij/). They called the British Celts *wealas* meaning *foreigners*. From this comes the word Welsh. By the end of the fifth century, with more and more of the country' inhabited by people from these Germanic tribes, the Anglo-Saxons, the English language began to develop.

A Celtic shield



1. When did the history of the English language begin?
2. What did Sir William Jones study?
3. What is the source language of the Indo-European family called?
4. What are the main languages of the Indo –European family?
5. Which was the first group of speakers to move across Europe?
6. Who introduced a new way of life in England?

7. What tribes did the English language begin to develop from?
8. Where did the Kurgans live?
9. What did their spread to different parts lead to?
- 10.** What was the common source language that kept the Germanic tribes together?



III. THE INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

The three language groups – *GERMANIC*, *SLAVIC* AND *ROMANCE* are not unrelated to each other. They resemble each other in several ways, although the similarities are not so obvious as they are within each group.

As we have already seen in the case of Germanic languages, old forms of languages may

INFO

William Jones was a language genius and an English judge in Bengal in India. Took up Sanskrit as a hobby.

- *1786: Sir William Jones first lectured on the similarities among three of the oldest languages he knew: – Latin, – Greek – Sanskrit*
- *He theorized that Latin, Greek and Sanskrit must have had a common ancestor that no longer existed.*

be more similar to each other than the present-day forms. At Table 1 is a list of the words for father and mother from a few old languages of Europe and one old language of India, Sanskrit.

An English scholar in the eighteenth century who devoted himself to Sanskrit studies, Sir **WILLIAM JONES**, noted many such similarities and even more striking parallels in grammar. In a famous lecture in Calcutta in **1786** he proposed that Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, the Germanic languages, and the Celtic languages, to which Irish belongs, had a common origin.

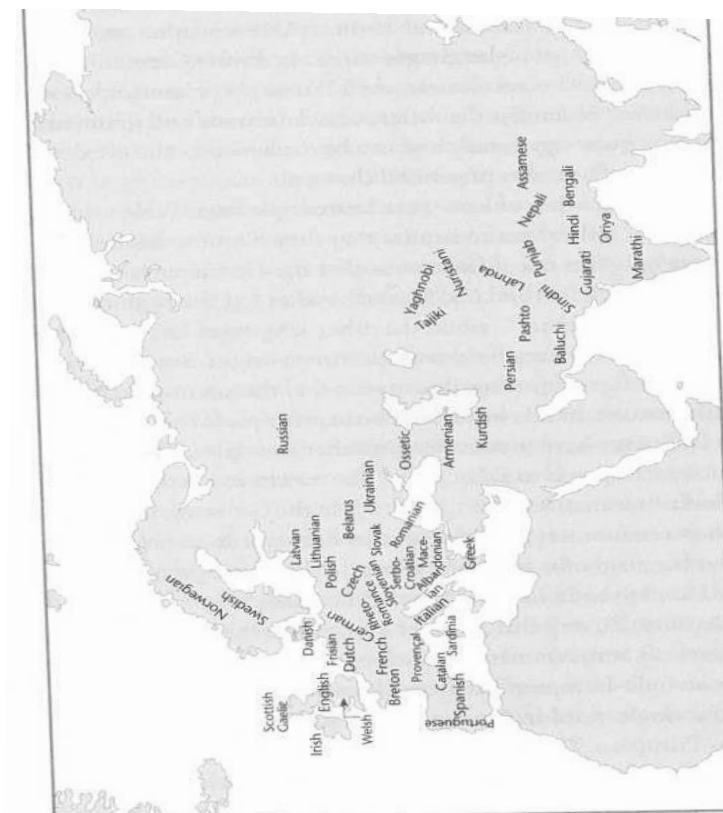
Table 1. Similar words in six old languages: **FATHER, MOTHER**

1.	LATIN	PATER	MATER
2.	ANCIENT GREEK	PATER	METER
3.	OLD ENGLISH	FADER	MODOR
4.	OLD NORSE	FADIR	MODIR
5.	OLD IRISH	ATHIR	MATHIR
6.	SANSKRIT	PITAR	MATAR

This more or less marked the beginning of historical linguistics. In the following century a large number of scholars proved beyond reasonable doubt that Jones was right, and

expanded his original idea to a detailed theory of the relations between many dozens of languages in twelve or thirteen subgroups. The whole group is now generally referred to as the Indo-European languages.

In short, the Indo-European language group consists of the Germanic and Slavic languages, the Italic languages (including Latin, Romance, and a few extinct languages), quite a few other European languages such as Greek, Baltic languages, Celtic languages, Albanian, a number of Iranian languages including Persian (Farsi), and several important languages of



India, such as Sanskrit and Hindi. Several Indo-European languages are preserved only in ancient texts, and some have already been mentioned; one may add, among others, Hittite, which was used in present-day Turkey.

The proofs that all these languages are related have been found by comparing the languages preserved in the oldest texts, such as Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, with each other and with reconstructed proto-languages such as Proto-Germanic and Proto-Slavic. The results are clear. First,

there are important similarities. Secondly, the differences in sounds and grammars are often quite systematic and can be explained as the effects of a fairly small number of general changes.

To illustrate this, one may use an example from Table 1. The words for "father" are so similar that they ought to have a common origin. But one difference is that the Germanic languages, that is Old English and Old Norse, have an / at the beginning of the word for father, while the other languages have a *f*. This may seem to weaken the idea of a common origin. But if the matter is investigated further, it turns out that this correspondence is found not only in this word, but also in principle for all words that the languages have in common. Another example is English *fish*, which corresponds to Latin *piscis*. The conclusion is that original Indo-European *p*- has changed into *f*- in the Germanic languages. This is a common type of

change that has been observed in many other languages.

So, what first seemed to be an irregular deviation was found to be an instance of a regular change.

Because of many changes over a long time, there are very great differences between many of the languages. A speaker of English uses an Indo-European language, but will hardly be able to recognize a single word in Persian or Hindi, although those too are Indo-European. The reason is that the languages have been separated for a very long time and have developed along quite disparate paths. Still, it is certain that they do belong together. So, the Indo-European languages are really related to each other. They are believed to originate from a common protolanguage, usually called Proto-Indo-European.

The Saxons invaded the south of England, and formed three kingdoms along the coast of the Channel: *Essex*, *Sussex*, and *Wessex*. The Angles dominated in the area north of the Thames, with the kingdoms **East Anglia**, **Middle Anglia**, **Mercia**, and **Northumbria**; the latter stretched all the way north to the Firth of Forth.

Did they come with separate Anglian and Saxon languages, or with an Anglo-Saxon language? Probably neither. There can hardly be any question of talking about two separate languages, for sources indicate that there were no great differences between the speech in the south and in the north, and that people could readily understand each other all over the area. On the other hand, Angles and Saxons were in no way united before their arrival in England. And there were other invaders too. Kent and the Isle of Wight were taken by the Jutes (presumably from Jutland, although that has been questioned), and modern scholars tend to

believe that there were many Frisians among the newcomers.

So, the Germanic language imported to England was not the particular property of any one ethnic group. It was the language; spoken along a considerable stretch of the North Sea coast, probably with appreciable dialectal variations: it was part of a larger continuous sweep of dialects that extended farther south, and east, and



north along the peninsula of Jutland.

Thus, where the immigrants came from, they were surrounded by people who spoke more or less like themselves, and language was hardly an important criterion for deciding to which group one belonged. But this was different in the island where they arrived.

The people who were already there spoke British, or Scottish, or Pictish, three languages that were quite different from each other, and did not resemble Germanic languages at all. The newcomers formed a new language group, with another culture and other political aspirations as well. The internal dialectal differences within the group meant little compared to the large similarities. The invaders were no doubt regarded as one group by the speakers of other languages. No doubt they also saw themselves as a body in many contexts, in contrast to the Britons. On the other hand, they were not politically united but lived in a number of small, independent kingdoms.



1. Were the old forms of Germanic languages more similar to each other than the present ones?
2. What century did W. Jones begin Sanskrit studies?
3. What did the results of the investigation mark?
4. What method was used to prove that languages are related?
5. Were the languages of the Angles and Saxons two separate ones?
6. What other tribes besides Angles and Saxons arrive in England?
7. Did the British, Scottish or Pictish languages resemble the Germanic ones?
8. What is one striking difference between Old English and Old Norse?
9. Can an English speaker recognize a word in Persian or Hindi? Why not?
10. What are the advantages of the comparative historical method?



IV. OLD ENGLISH

The dialects of **ENGLISC** spoken by the first **Anglo-Saxons** became what we now call Old English - the language spoken in England from the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons at the end of the fifth century until the Norman Conquest in 1066.



There were four main dialects of Old English: West Saxon, Kentish, Mercian, and Northumbrian. The map shows the regions where these dialects were spoken. The dialects had small differences in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Old English was almost completely Germanic. The dialects



had very few Celtic words: only about twenty. This is probably because the Anglo-Saxons came to Britain in large numbers and with great force. However, they borrowed some Celtic words for parts of the countryside which were new to them: for example, the words *crag* and *tor* meaning a *high rock*. The names of some English cities, *London* and *Leeds* for example, are Celtic, and the word *dubris*, which meant *water*, became **Dover**. Different Celtic words for *river* or *water* also survive in the river names *Avon*, *Esk* and *Ouse*, and *Thames* is also Celtic, meaning dark river.

Most of Old English literature is in the West Saxon dialect, but Modern English developed from the Mercian dialect which was spoken in and around London.

In 597, St Augustine and a group of monks arrived in Kent. They had come from Rome to teach the Anglo-Saxons about Christianity and were welcomed by King Aethelbert and Queen Bertha in Canterbury. Christianity was able to spread slowly and peacefully over the rest of England. The monks built churches and taught literature and science as well as Christianity.

As a result of the spread of Christianity, the Anglo-Saxons borrowed a number of Latin words from the

Roman Christians: about 450 appear in Old English literature. Some were connected to the Church and education: for example, *munuc* (monk), and *scol* (school). Others were words for things in the house: *fenester* (window) and *cest* (chest). Some verbs from Latin were *spendan* (to spend), *sealtian* (to dance), and *tyrnan* (to turn).

At first the monks wrote only in Latin, but then they began to write in Old English. This was unusual - people in other northern European countries did not begin writing in their own languages until much later. Learning spread and flowered among the Anglo-Saxons, and by the eighth century England was a centre of learning in western Europe.

The greatest piece of literature in Old English is a long poem called *Beowulf*, which was probably created in the middle of the eighth century, although it was not actually written down until about 250 years later. It is about 3,000 lines long, and tells the story of a brave man from Scandinavia called *Beowulf*. He fights and kills a terrible creature called *Grendel*, then kills *Grendel's* mother, who is just as terrible. It is a poem about life and death, bravery and defeat, war and peace. Here is a short piece describing *Beowulf's* fight with *Grendel*, the devil:

... wars to fore-mihtig
feond on fepe. Hwaepre he his folme
forlet
to lif-wrape last weardian,
earn ond eaxle ...
(... *the devil pulled free*
with enormous force. But, in order to save
his life, he left behind his hand,
his arm and his shoulder...)



Although about eighty-five per cent of the Old English vocabulary has been replaced in Modern English with words from Latin or Greek, the hundred most common words in Modern English all come from the language used at this time. These Old English words are for very basic things and ideas: *mann* (*person*), *wif* (*wife*), *cild* (*child*), *hus* (*house*), *mete* (*food*), *drincan* (*drink*), *etan* (*eat*), *slepan* (*sleep*), *aefter* (*after*), and, *we*, *on*, *is*, and many more.

Like other Indo-European languages, Old English created new words by combining old words. For example: heahbeorg, (*high hill*), meant *mountain-*, boccraft, (*book-skill*), meant *literature-*, sunnandaeg, (*sun's day*), meant *Sunday*. Poets combined words very frequently to make many beautiful descriptions. For example, an expression for *body* was *bone- house*, and one for the *sea* was the *water's back*.

Old English also created new words by adding letters before or after the main word. For example: gan (*to go*) became ingan (*to go in*), togan (*to go into*), upgan (*to go up*) and utgan (*to go out*). The word blod (*blood*) became blodig (*bloody*), and blind became blindlice (*blindly*).

The words in a sentence in Old English appeared in a different order from those in Modern English. In Modern English, *the girl helped the boy*, and *the boy helped the girl* have different meanings which are communicated by the word order. In Old English these meanings were communicated by the endings of each word, which changed according to the job it did in the sentence.

Nouns also changed their endings for the plural: for example guma (*man*) became guman, stan (*stone*) became stanes, and giefu (*gift*) became giefe. Nouns had three genders, and adjectives and articles changed according to the gender of the noun. However, many of the possible changes to the endings did not happen in practice. For example, of the eight possible variations of sunne (*sun*), five endings were the same. There were more personal pronouns than in Modern English. For example, there was hine (*him*), him (*to him*), hi (*her*) and hire (*to her*). Him also meant *to it* and *to them*. There were also the pronouns wit meaning *we two* and git meaning *you two*.

Verb endings changed, too. The past tense of most verbs was made by adding *-ed* to the

■ *In the sixth century Latin writers called the Saxons Angli. From this came the Old English word Engle.*

Later, around 1000, the country was called Englalund from which we get England.

■ *The Angles who settled in Northumbria spoke the dialect of Old English we call Northumbrian. Later, Northumbria was divided between England and Scotland.*

In Scotland, the Northumbrian dialect came to be known as Scots.

■ *Some of the words the Saxons used to name places are: burh (a large village), feld (field), ham (village), ing (people), mere (pool), stoc (summer field), ton (house, farm) and wic (house, farm, a group of buildings).*

basic part of the present tense, as in Modern English. Other verbs made the past tense by changing a vowel, *sing-sang*, for example. In Old English there were many more of these irregular verbs than there are today.

The next great influence on the language came with a new group of invaders: the Vikings, or ‘Danes’ as the Anglo-Saxons called them. They came from Denmark and Norway, and from 787 made many small attacks on England. In 850, a large Viking army took London and Canterbury, and most of eastern England was controlled by the Vikings. Fighting continued until 878, when King Alfred (the Anglo-Saxon king of Wessex, 871-899) won an important battle. He made an agreement with the Vikings to divide England into two: the northern and eastern part, known as the Danelaw, was to be controlled by the Vikings, and the rest of England was to be controlled by King Alfred.

King Alfred wanted to bring back the centres of learning that had disappeared. To do this, he decided to make English, not Latin, the language of education and literature. So at the age of forty he learnt Latin and began translating books into English. He also started a history of England in English: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. This was a diary of events, written by monks in different parts of the country. It started in AD 1, with the birth of Christ. It was the first book of its kind in western Europe.

In the Danelaw, the Vikings and the English managed to communicate because their languages were quite similar. One effect of this was that Old English became simpler. Old English and Old Norse (the language of the Vikings) had many different endings for words, which were hard for people to learn, so they were dropped. Plural endings became simpler as the -s ending was more widely used, and many verbs which changed their vowel to make the past tense now began to take the -ed ending instead.

Another result was that many words from Old Norse (ON) entered and enriched Old English (OE). Some of them replaced the Old English words. For example, *syster* (ON) replaced *sweostor* (OE) for *sister*. In some cases, both the Old Norse and Old English



Only 3 out of every 100 words in Old English were borrowed from a non-Germanic language. Today 70 out of every 100 words in English have been borrowed.

words for the same idea were used. For example, there was wish (OE) and want (ON), and sick (OE) and ill (ON). Sometimes an Old Norse word survived in a dialect. For example, today some Scots say kirk (ON) where the English say church. About nine hundred Old Norse words became part of Old English, and they include many modern words beginning with sk-; skin, skirt and sky, for example. Others are: bag, cake, die, egg, get, give, husband, leg, neck, same, take, window. They are ordinary words, which shows that the speakers of the two languages shared their day-to-day lives. Old Norse are replaced Old English sindon and the Old Norse verb ending -s for the third person singular in the present tense began to be used, as well as the Old English verb ending -th, especially in northern dialects. The Old Norse they, their and them slowly replaced the Old English hi, hir(e) and hem in the following centuries.

The presence of the Vikings can also be seen in the modern place names of England. More than 1,500 places in northern England have Scandinavian names: Over six hundred end in -by, which means farm or town-, for example, Whitby. Others end in -thorp(e) (small village), -toft (piece of land)-, for example, Scunthorpe and Blacktoft.

Invasions from the Vikings and battles between them and the English continued in the tenth century. From 1016 to 1041 England had Danish kings, who were followed by an English king, Edward. When Edward died in January 1066, one of his relations, Harold, was chosen to be the next

king. However, another of Edward's distant relations challenged Harold - William of Normandy, a Frenchman with a strong army. William decided to invade England.

- *Some English weekdays are named after Viking gods: **Tuesday** was *Tiw's* day (the god of war), *Wednesday* was *Woden's* day (the chief god), *Thursday* was *Thor's* day (the god of the sky) and *Friday* was *Frig's* day (the goddess of love).*
- *English family names ending in son come from the Scandinavians. For example, Johnson, Davidson, Robertson.*



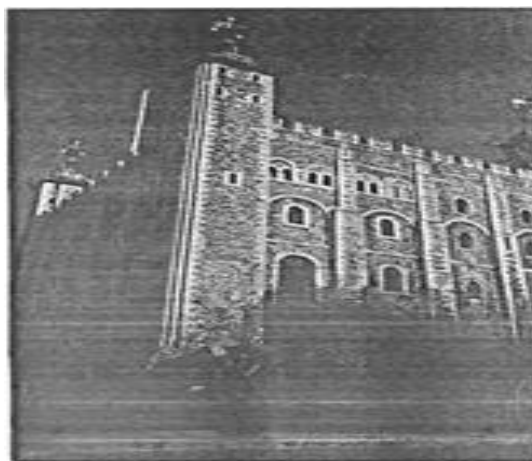
1. How did the term Old English appear?
2. How many dialects existed in the period of Old English?
3. What are the characteristic features of Old English?
4. What was the mission of St. Augustine and a group of monks to Kent?
5. Did the monks write only in Latin?
6. Which was the greatest piece of Literature in Old English?
7. In what way were new words created in Old English?
8. What was the influence of the Vikings on the English language?
9. How did king Alfred bring back the centres of learning to England?
10. Were there many words borrowed into Old English from Old Norse?



V. THE NORMANS IN ENGLAND

At the Battle of Hastings on 14 October 1066, **King Harold** was killed and his army defeated by the Norman invaders. This was the beginning of the Norman Conquest - an event which would completely change the history of the English language.

On Christmas Day 1066, William of Normandy was made king of England in London, and over the next four years he completed his conquest of England and Wales. He had enormous castles built, from which Norman soldiers controlled the towns and countryside. He took huge areas of land from rich English families and gave them to his Norman supporters. Each of these new landowners had his own group of soldiers, and each gave land to his own supporters, so that there was usually one Norman family in each English village. Norman officials replaced English ones in the government and one by one, Normans filled important positions in the Church.



Norman French immediately became the language of the governing classes and remained so for the next two hundred years. French - and Latin - were used in government, the Church, the law and literature. Very little was written in English, although English monks did continue writing *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* until 1154.

The Normans - or Northmen - were also connected to the Vikings. These Vikings had come to France in the ninth and tenth centuries and had adopted French as their language. They did not leave any Old Norse words in French - only some place names in Normandy.

The use of French continued in England during the twelfth century, partly because many of the Norman kings and landowners also had land in Normandy and other parts of France and they spent some of their time there. The speakers of French were not limited only to those of Norman or French blood. English people who wanted to be important in society learnt French. However, slowly, English became more widely used by the Normans. Marriages between the Normans and the English were

common, and the children of these marriages often spoke English, instead of French, as their first language. In 1177, one English writer reported that the two nations were so mixed that among 'free men' it was impossible to tell who was English and who was Norman.

In the thirteenth century the position of the two languages in England changed. In 1204 King John lost Normandy to the king of France, and during the next fifty years all the great land-owning families in England had to give up their lands in France. Ties with France grew looser, and feelings of competition between England and France developed.

The upper classes continued to speak French as a second language, and it was still used in government, the law, and public business generally. However, French started to lose its social importance in England, partly because the Norman French spoken in England was not considered 'good' by speakers of Parisian French in France. Slowly the upper classes began to feel prouder of their English than of their French.

Most ordinary people could not speak French at all and continued to speak only English. At the end of the thirteenth century, one poet wrote:

*Lewede men cune Ffrench non
Among an hondryd vnnepri on.
(Common men know no French
Among a hundred scarcely one.)*

The continuing competition between England and France resulted in the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453). During this time national feeling grew and the English language was seen more and more as an important part of being English.

A great event in the fourteenth century was the illness known as the ***Black Death***.

Between 1348 and 1350, about thirty per cent of the people in England died. This had several results. One was that many churchmen, monks, and school teachers were replaced by less educated men, who spoke



only English. In 1362, English was used for the first time at the opening of Parliament. Also,

the position of the ordinary people changed. Because there were fewer of them, they felt more independent. Some of them were able to rent more land, and others demanded higher wages for their work. As they became more important, the social importance of their language, English, grew.

English was used more and more in government, as fewer and fewer people could understand French. In the fifteenth century English completely replaced French in the home, in education and in government. It also replaced Latin as the language of written communication, so that after 1450 most letters were in English. English had survived - but it had changed enormously.



1. When did the Norman Conquest occur?
2. Who became king of England in 1066?
3. For what period of time did the Norman French remain the governing language?
4. Why did some people learn French?
5. What were the consequences of the Black death illness?
6. In what way did the Normans start using English wider?
7. How did the position of French and English change in the 13th century?
8. Was Norman French as good as Parisian French? Why not?
9. What did the competition between England and France bring to?
10. Which spheres of life did English replace French in the 15th century?



VI. MIDDLE ENGLISH

In the four hundred years that followed the *Norman Conquest*, the English language changed more than in any other time in its history. Thousands of words from French came into the language, and many Old English ones left. At the same time *Middle English* changed grammatically, mainly by becoming simpler.

One way the grammar grew simpler was by losing some of the different endings for nouns, adjectives and pronouns. For example, by the fifteenth century the plural noun ending **-(e)s** was accepted everywhere in England, although some plurals with **-en** survived (children is one of them). Other noun endings that have survived are the **-’s** and **-s’**: for example, the boy’s book or the boys’ books. Adjectives and nouns also lost their grammatical gender, and **the** became the only form of the definite article.

The main change to verbs was to the past tense. More of the Old English verbs that changed vowels for the past now began to end in **-ed**. For example, the Old English past tense of *climb* was *clomb*, but the word climbed also began to appear in the thirteenth century. In the fourteenth century, most of the thousands of verbs that had entered the language from French also formed the past tense with **-ed**. Sometimes, however, the change went the other way, so *knowed* became *knew*, and *teared* became *tore*. There are still about 250 ‘irregular’ past tense verbs in English, but this is only about half the number of those in Old English.

The continuous tenses (I am running, for example) began to be used in Middle English, although they did not become common until later.

When the different noun endings disappeared, people had to put words in a particular order to express meaning. The most common order they used, which had also been used in Old English, was subject-verb-object. They also used prepositions, like *in*, *by*, *with* and *from*, instead of noun endings. For example, the expression *dages* and *nihtes* became *by day* and *by night* in Middle English.

All these grammatical changes were possible because from 1066 until the end of the twelfth century very little was written in English. The official papers of the government and the Church were written in Latin or French. Without the limitations of a written language, people were able to change their spoken language very easily.

■ *In the fourteenth century, as villages grew larger, English people began to use family names. Sometimes these included the father's name (Johnson). Others showed where a person lived (Rivers, Hill), or his town (Burton, Milton), his country (French, Holland), or his work (Cook, Fisher). A person's family name might change five or six times during his lifetime.*

If English grammar was much simpler by the end of the fifteenth century, its vocabulary was much richer. Between 1100 and 1500, about 10,000 French words were taken into English, three-quarters of which are still in use. French words came into every part of life: for example, *chair, city, crime, fashion, fruit, gentle, government, literature, medicine, music, palace, river, table, travel*. Sometimes the French (F) words replaced Old English (OE) words: for example, *people* (from the French *peuple*) replaced *leod* (OE). But sometimes both the French and the Old English words survived, with small differences in meanings: for example, *ask* (OE) and *demand* (F), *wedding* (OE) and *marriage* (F), *king* (OE) and *sovereign* (F). Sometimes French words were used for life in the upper classes, and Old English ones for life in the lower classes. For example, the words for the animals in the fields were Old English (*cows, sheep and pigs*) but the words for the meat on the table were French (*beef, mutton, and pork*).

New English words were created from some of the new French words almost immediately. For example, the English *-ly* and *-ful* endings were added to French words to *make gently, beautiful and peaceful*. At the same time several thousand words also entered English from Latin. They came from books about law, medicine, science, literature or Christianity. These books often used words which could not be translated into English. One translator wrote: ... “*there ys many words in Latyn that we have not propre English accordynge thereto.*” (... there are many Latin words that we do not have English words for.)

The first translation of the Bible from Latin to English was made by John Wyclif and his followers between 1380 and 1384. Many Latin words came into English through this translation.

So translators often took the Latin word and made it into an English one. Some words which came from Latin at this time were: *admit, history, impossible, necessary and picture*.

All these changes to the grammar and vocabulary did not happen at the same time everywhere. In fact, because English was not used as the language of government, the Old English dialects continued to develop differently from each other. The main dialects in Middle English were similar to those of Old English, but they used different words, word endings and pronunciations. Understanding people from different areas, even those which were quite close, was difficult. There is a famous description by William Caxton, who later brought the printing machine to England, of a conversation in Kent between a farmer's wife and some sailors from London (about eighty kilometres away). The sailors asked for some *eggys* but she did not know this word because in her dialect *eggs* were *eyren*. Thinking that they must be speaking a foreign language, she told them she "*coude speke no frenshe*" (*she couldn't speak French*)!

When people wrote, they used the words and pronunciations of their dialects. For example, the sound /x/ in the middle of words was spelt *-gh-* in the south and *-ch* in the north, so *night* (pronounced /nixt/ at that time) could be spelt as *night* or *nicht*. Sometimes a spelling from one dialect has survived, together with the pronunciation from another. For example *busy* is the spelling from one dialect, but the pronunciation /bizi/ is from another.



From the thirteenth century, English was used more and more in official papers, and also in literature. The greatest writer of this time was Geoffrey Chaucer (1343/4-1400). Chaucer, who lived in London, was both a poet and an important government official. He wrote in the East Midlands dialect (spoken by people living in the Oxford, London, Cambridge triangle) and used many words from French. His best-known work, *The Canterbury Tales*, is about a group of ordinary people who journey to Canterbury together, telling each other stories on the way. Chaucer amusingly describes a colourful and varied group of

characters. There is the Wife (woman) of Bath, the Cook, the Clerk (a student at Oxford), the Man of Law, the Shipman, the Monk and many others. In their stories and conversations, Chaucer gives us plenty of details about their lives, including their language. For example, he makes fun of the French spoken in England:

And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,

After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.

(And she spoke French extremely beautifully, with an accent from Stratford-at-Bow because the French of Paris was unknown to her.)

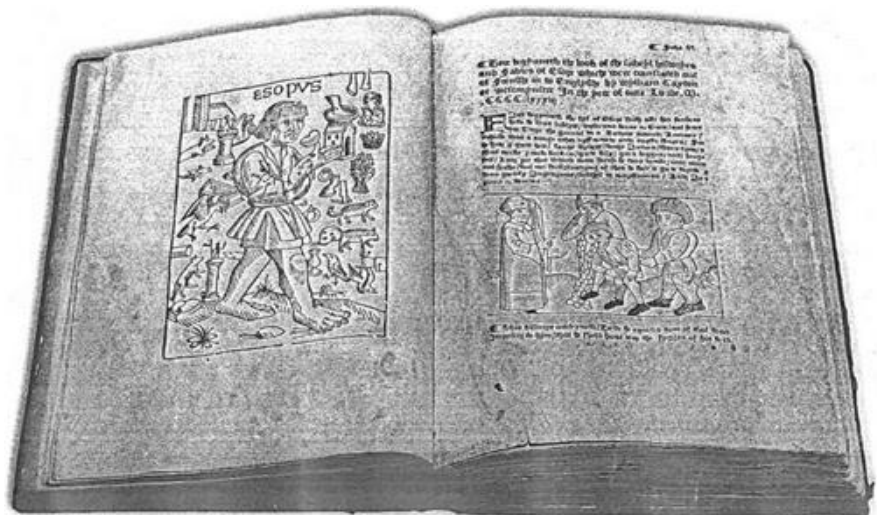
Later that century an invention was brought to England which had an enormous effect on the language. This was the printing machine, which William Caxton brought to London in 1476. Suddenly it was possible to produce thousands of copies of books. But what words and spellings should be used? Caxton wrote:

And that comyn englysshe that is spoken in one shyre varyeth from a nother... Certaynly it is harde to playse ever)' man by cause of... chaunge of langage.

(And the common English that is spoken in one region varies from another... Certainly it is hard to please every man because of... the change in the language.)

On the whole, Caxton and other printers used the East Midlands dialect, mainly because it was spoken in London and used by government officials. The printers did not make their decisions in a particularly organized or orderly way, and variations in spelling continued into the eighteenth century. However, the variations they chose influenced the final spellings that developed. Some words are still spelt in the way that they were pronounced in Caxton's time. For example, the **k** in **knee** and the **l** in **would** were pronounced at this time.

By the end of the fifteenth century English was starting to be read by thousands of people. In the next century it was read by many more, and used by the great star of English literature - William Shakespeare.





1. How did English grammar become simpler?
2. What was the main change to verbs?
3. What did people have to do to express meaning correctly after the disappearance of noun endings?
4. In what way did the vocabulary become richer?
5. What were the ways of creating new English words?
6. How did Latin words come into English?
7. Who was the greatest English writer of the 20th century?
8. What dialect did Geoffrey Chaucer write his best known work in? Name his best known work.
9. What did the printing machine contribute to?
10. Who brought the printing machine to England?



VII. EARLY MODERN ENGLISH

Towards the end of Middle English, a sudden and distinct change in pronunciation (the Great Vowel Shift) started, with vowels being pronounced shorter and shorter. From the 16th century the British had contact with many peoples from around the world.

This, and the *Renaissance of Classical learning*, meant that many new words and phrases entered the language. The invention of printing also meant that there was now a common language in print. Books became cheaper and more people learned to read. Printing also brought standardization to English. Spelling and grammar became fixed, and the dialect of London, where most publishing houses were, became the standard. In 1604 the first English dictionary was published.

The sixteenth century was full of changes in Europe. The Protestant churches developed, Europeans began to explore the Americas, Asia and Africa, and creativity and learning in all areas flowered. In England, the English language grew enormously in order to express a huge number of new ideas.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century Latin was the language of learning in all Europe, and it was seen as richer than English and the other spoken European languages. However, with the growth of education, the invention of printing and the new interest in learning, this began to change. More and more people wanted to read books by Roman and Greek writers, and in England they wanted to read them in English. So these books were translated, and other books about learning were written in English. Using English meant that a writer could reach a larger audience, as one sixteenth-century printer explained to a writer who preferred Latin: *Though, sir, your book be wise and full of learning, yet... it will not be so saleable.*

■ *From 1500, English began to replace the Celtic languages of Britain: Welsh in Wales, Gaelic in Scotland and Ireland, Cornish in Cornwall.*

■ *Between 1500 and 1640 about 20,000 different books were printed in England. Before this there had been only about 35,000 different books in the whole of Europe.*



However, the acceptance of English as a language of learning was not complete until the end of the seventeenth century. For example, in 1687, Sir Isaac Newton wrote his *Principia* in Latin, but fifteen years later he wrote *Opticks* in English.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, writers in English borrowed about 30,000 words from about fifty languages, mainly to describe new things and ideas, and many of them are still used today. This huge growth of vocabulary was the main change in English at this time.

The new words came mainly from Latin; for example, *desperate*, *expensive*, *explain*, *fact*. Other important sources for new words were French, Italian, Greek, Spanish and Portuguese. And as the European exploration of the world widened, so words came into English from America, Africa and Asia. For example, *chocolate* and *tomato* came from Mexico, *banana* from Africa, *coffee* from Turkey, and *caravan* from Persia.

Not everyone agreed with the practice of borrowing, particularly of Latin words. Some thought that all the strange words were hard to understand and unnecessary. English could express everything quite well without all the new words. The writers were only showing how much Latin they knew. One man, Sir John Cheke, wrote in 1557:

I am of this opinion that our tung shold be written ceane ... unmixt... with borowing of other tungs.

(I think we should write English without using words from other languages.)

But the borrowing continued, and the new words that survived slowly lost their strangeness. New words were also added to English in other ways. People were adventurous with language: they used verbs as nouns (*laugh* and *scratch*), or nouns as verbs, or made adjectives from nouns (*shady* from *shade*). They put two words together (*chairman*), or they added parts of words: *un-* to *comfortable*, for example.

The age of **Queen Elizabeth I (Queen of England 1558-1603)** was one of a great flowering of literature.

There were the poets Spenser and Sidney, and the writers of plays Marlowe, Jonson, and, of course, **William Shakespeare**.

Shakespeare (1564-1616) is considered the greatest writer of plays. In them – and in his poems - he explored the complications of human nature and expressed his understanding of them in extraordinarily rich language. He had the largest vocabulary of any English writer and was a great inventor of words and expressions. He created about two thousand words, and a huge number of expressions which are now part of everyday English. For example, he invented: *it's early days* (*it is too soon to know what will happen*); *in my mind's eye* (*in my imagination*); *tongue-tied* (*unable to speak because you are shy*)-, *the long and the short of it* (*all that needs to be said about something*). His success and fame during his lifetime meant that his plays had an enormous effect on English.

When **Elizabeth I** died in 1603, she had no children, so her cousin, James VI of Scotland, became King James I of England, Wales and Scotland. In 1604, he ordered a translation of the Bible into English.

The King James Bible, completed in 1611, was not the first translation of the Bible into English, but it became the most widely used and was read in churches everywhere in England, Scotland and Wales for the next three hundred years. The King James Bible had an important influence on the English language. The translators did not invent new words, like Shakespeare. Instead, they used old ones, even ones that were out of date, and they did not use a huge variety: only 8,000 different words, compared with Shakespeare's 20,000. They aimed to make the language sound poetic and musical when it was read aloud, and on the whole they succeeded. It was read at church and in the home, and taught at school. Its language became part of everyday English, with expressions like: *the apple of somebody's eye* (a person who is loved very much by somebody); *by the skin of your teeth* (you only

■ *From 1300 to 1600 Scots literature also flowered. But when King James VI became James I of England, Wales and Scotland in 1603, he moved to London. The Scottish upper classes began to use southern English, and because the King James Bible was used in Scotland, southern English was heard there. Over the next century, the Scots began to use English more for writing, although they continued to speak Scots.*

■ *The Elizabethans pronounced the letters -er- as /a-/, for example, serve as /so:v/. This pronunciation remains in names such as Derby and Berkshire (pronounced /da:bi/ and /ba:kja/).*

just manage to do something); *the salt of the earth* (a very honest person); *the straight and narrow* (an honest way of living). Its poetry influenced many English writers in the centuries that followed.

As well as taking in a huge number of new words, English developed in other ways too. People began to use **do** with a main verb. For example, you could say *I know not* or *I do not know*. You could say *I know* or *I do know*. And you could say *know you?* or *do you know?* In the seventeenth century, it became more common to use **do** with a main verb in questions and negative sentences, and to leave it out of the positive sentences. Another verb change was the ending of the third person singular in the present tense. By 1700 the *-th-* ending was no longer used and all verbs took *-s*; for example *loveth* was now *loves*.

Pronouns also changed a little. In 1500 the word *ye* was used as well as *you*, but by 1700 it had disappeared. And a new adjective appeared: *its* replaced *his* to talk about things without gender. (*The chair's leg was now its leg not his leg.*)

Changes in pronunciation were continually taking place. From the middle of the fifteenth century the long vowels /a:/, /i:/ and /u:/ began to change. For example, in Chaucer's time the word *life* (*lyf*) was pronounced /li:f/ and this became /leif/ and then /laif/ by the eighteenth century. Similar changes occurred to *house*, which was /hu:s/ in Chaucer's time. After two changes, it finally arrived at its modern pronunciation /haus/.

Sounds in some other words disappeared: the /k/ or /w/ at the beginning of words were lost, for example *knee* and *write* were now pronounced as they are today. The pronunciation of /t/ in *castle* and the /l/ in *would* disappeared. But the spellings of all these words did not change and so they do not match their modern pronunciations.

The big growth in vocabulary and the flowering of literature happened when England was politically quite peaceful. However, in the middle of the seventeenth century this peace was destroyed, and the changes that followed had some interesting effects on the language.

Charles I, James I's son, was not a popular king, and in 1642 civil war broke out between those who supported him and those who did not. Charles I was killed in 1649, and England, Wales and Scotland remained without a king until 1660, when Charles II (Charles I's son) returned to England. Charles II died in 1685 and his brother, James II, became king. But James II was so unpopular that in 1688 he left England and he was replaced by his daughter and her husband, Mary and William of Orange.

All these political events made people dislike change and wish for order and regularity

in their lives, and some people also wanted more regularity in their language. The great growth in new words between 1530 and 1660 (the fastest in the history of the language) had left people uncertain. What was happening to the language? If so many foreign and newly-formed words kept on being added to it, would it remain English?

In 1635 the Academie Frankaise was created to control changes in the French language. Some people in England also wanted to create an official organization to control the English language. One of these people was the author Jonathan Swift, who wanted to ‘fix’ the language by making grammar rules, forbidding some words, making others correct, and deciding on spelling.

The idea never succeeded, partly because other people realized that change in a language were unavoidable. But it did make people think about the need for everyone to use the same spelling and grammar. As a result, different spelling guides, dictionaries and grammar books began to appear.

Although printing had introduced some regularity in spelling, in the sixteenth century spelling remained very varied, even for personal names. For example, there are six known examples of Shakespeare’s name that he wrote himself, and in each one he spelt his name

One of the habits that Swift hated was that of shortening words. In the seventeenth century people often shortened words; for example, extraordinary was shortened to extra. And we still do this today- telephone is shortened to phone, for example. In the late seventeenth century, capital letters were used for all or most nouns, but in the next century this was seen as unnecessary.

differently. People invented their own spellings, which usually showed their own pronunciation. Other variations were introduced to show that words came from Latin. For example, the **c** was added in **scissors** to follow the Latin spelling, *cisorium*. In the end, this freedom to change spellings led to confusion.

In the seventeenth century, the appearance of the first English dictionaries slowly brought about more regularity in spelling. During the eighteenth century, ways of spelling that differed from these dictionaries were seen to be incorrect and a sign of stupidity or bad education. Even today, many people do not like making spelling mistakes, and often use the spell-check tool on their computers.

Dictionaries were not unknown in the seventeenth century, but they were Latin-English ones. The first

English-English dictionary, which appeared in 1604, was a collection of about three thousand “hard English words”. Similar collections followed, and in the eighteenth century dictionary writers began trying to include more everyday words, not just difficult ones.

In 1755 **Samuel Johnson** produced *A Dictionary of the English Language*, and it was an immediate success. Johnson’s choice of words was wide, and he showed how each word was used by giving examples from literature. The dictionary was not *perfect*: sometimes Johnson’s explanations were harder to understand than the words themselves, some expressed his personal opinions, and some words were not included because he didn’t like them. Also he could not fit in all his examples, so there were not as many examples for the words at the end of the dictionary as there were for those at the beginning. However, it remained the most important English dictionary in Britain for more than a century.

Guidance with vocabulary and spelling came from dictionaries; guidance with grammar came from various ‘grammars’. These grammar books first appeared in the seventeenth century, and in the eighteenth century a huge

Johnson worked on his dictionary for nine years, with the help of six others. He filled about eighty large notebooks with his explanations and examples.

number of them were produced. Many of them told the reader how to write and speak ‘correctly’, which really meant how to use language in the same way as in serious pieces of literature. They were widely used because people wanted to be seen as educated, and so be socially acceptable.

The grammarians writing these books considered the grammar of much ordinary spoken language and of regional dialects (especially Scots) to be wrong and believed that the grammar of English should be the same as that of Latin. For example, they thought that a sentence should not end with a preposition because in Latin it did not. For

In Scotland the educated classes began to think of Scots as less socially acceptable than English. They avoided words and expressions that were not in southern English. Scots was still spoken by country people, and was still used in songs. It was given a voice by the poet Robert Burns (1759-96). He wrote part of Auld Lang Syne - a song which is sung all over the English-speaking world.

example, it would be correct to say *I like the town in which I live*, but not *I like the town which I live in*.

Although some people continue to believe that there is only one ‘correct’ grammar of English, many others believe that all varieties of English are ‘correct’. Some grammarians write grammar books very differently today, too; they write descriptions of how English is actually used, instead of telling us how we should speak or write.



1. What changes in Europe are characteristic of the 16th century?
2. When was English accepted as the language of learning?
3. What languages did writers of English borrow words from and how many?
4. Why did the pronunciation of words differ? Did people use different dialects while writing?
5. Why did not everyone accept the practice of borrowing, especially from Latin?
6. When did the flowering of the English Literature begin?
7. In what language did W. Shakespeare express the understanding of human nature, rich or poor?
8. Who became king of England, Wales and Scotland after Queen Elizabeth I died?
9. What was King James’s Bible influence on the English Language?
10. What were the main changes in the English language contributing to correct speaking?



VIII. CHARACTERISTICS OF LATE MODERN ENGLISH

If speakers of English from **1800** were able to speak to those from **2023**, they would notice a few differences in grammar and pronunciation, but not very many. The main difficulty for the nineteenth-century speakers would be in understanding the huge number of new words.

The discoveries and inventions in all areas of science in the last two hundred years have led to new words for machines, materials, plants, animals, stars, diseases and medicines, and new expressions for scientific ideas. The spread of English around the world, and easier and faster communication, have resulted in the creation of thousands of other new words. About 100,000 new words have entered the language in the last hundred years - more than ever before.

Here are some examples of these new words, with the date when each word first appeared in writing. Most new words (about two-thirds) have been made by combining two old words: fingerprint (1859), airport (1919), street-wise (1965). The recent development in computers has introduced many of this type: online (1950), user-friendly (1977) and download (1980). Some new words have been made from Latin and Greek; for example, photograph, helicopter (1872), aeroplane (1874), and video (1958). Others are old words that have been given new meanings. For example, pilot (1907) was first used to refer to a person who directs the path of ships, and cassette (1960) used to mean a small box. About five percent of new words have come from foreign languages.

For example, *disco* (1964) has come from French and *pizza* (1935) from Italian. And a few words have developed from the names of things we buy: for example, *coke* (1909) from *Coca-Cola*, and *Walkman* (1981) from *Sony Walkman*.

Beginnings or endings have been added to make new words: *disinformation* (1955) is false information, *touchy-feely* (1972) describes people who express their feelings by touching others. Sometimes both a beginning and an ending have been added: for example, *unputdownable* (1947) describes a book which is so interesting that you cannot stop reading it. Some words have been shortened: *photo* (1860) for *photograph-*, *plane* (1908) for *aeroplane-*, *telly* (1940) and *TV* (1948) for *television*. Some words first appeared as slang before they joined the main language; for example, *boss* (1923) was an American slang word

meaning *manager* in the seventeenth century. (For more on slang). Some words have combined sounds from two other words: for example, *smog* (1905), used to describe the bad air in cities, is made from *smoke* and *fog*. Only a few new words have not been created from other words. Two examples are *nylon* (1938) to describe a man-made material, and *flip-flop* (1970), a type of shoe that makes a noise as you walk.

The growth in vocabulary is clear when we look at the making of the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This dictionary includes all English words since 1150 (even those that are no longer used). It shows, with examples, when each word was first used in writing and how the meaning of a word has changed over the centuries.

Finding all this information was a huge job, although no one realized at the beginning exactly how huge. **James Murray**, a forty-two-year-old Scot, was appointed as the director of work on the dictionary in 1879, and the aim was to finish the job in ten years. He organized an enormous reading programme: hundreds of ordinary people sent him examples of how words were used. After five years, the first part of the dictionary was produced, but it only covered the letters A-ANT. Everyone realized that this was going to take a lot longer than ten years to finish. In fact, it took another forty-four. Sadly, Murray did not live to see its completion: he died in 1915, working on the letter U. However, he knew that he had helped to create a dictionary which would provide an accurate history of the development of the English language.

The *first OED* was completed in 1928 and had a total of 414,800 words; over ten times the 41,000 words in Johnson's dictionary of 1755. Of course, Johnson's dictionary did not include every word in use, but the comparison is still interesting. The second OED, produced in 1989, explains the meanings of 615,100 words. It includes more scientific words and words from North America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the Caribbean, India and Pakistan. However, the OED does not include many spoken words, slang words or words from non-British kinds of English. Some people think that there are probably a million different words and expressions in English today.

A third *OED* was planned for 2010, with the first changes to Murray's work since 1879: earlier and later examples of words will be added, as well as more details on each word's history.

The spread of new words in the twentieth century was made possible by newspapers,

radio, television, films, pop music and the Internet. These ways of communication can reach huge numbers of people. Television and radio have also influenced pronunciation.

In the 1920s the **BBC** chose a particular accent for its presenters. This was the educated accent of the upper classes of south-east England. It became known as 'Received Pronunciation' ('RP'), or '*the King's English*'. The use of **RP** on radio and television meant that more people heard it and connected it with social importance. It was not acceptable to use strong regional accents on television or radio, or in professions such as teaching or politics. However, in the 1960s social differences began to break down, and regional accents became more acceptable everywhere. And as the number of radio and television programmes grew, more presenters with different accents had to be employed.

Today RP is no longer a particularly important accent and people in Britain are now used to hearing all kinds of accents on radio and television. Different pronunciations, words and expressions can now travel faster and further. Some of these new words and expressions come from American English.

A traveller in Europe too years ago could expect to find people speaking a foreign language only in international hotels and tourist resorts and among a quite small group of well-educated people. The foreign language they might be acquainted with varied from country to country. In Central and Eastern Europe, from Romania to Sweden, people would know some German. In Italy and Portugal, French was understood in many places, and in countries around the North Sea, such as Norway and the Netherlands, there was a fair chance of finding someone speaking English.

Nowadays, a stranger in a European country stands a very good chance of meeting someone who has mastered a foreign language to some extent wherever a need for communication may arise. Furthermore, among younger people at least, the language is English in the great majority of cases.

During the last 100 years, then, there have been two great changes. In the first place, many more people have learnt an internationally useful foreign language, in Europe and in many other parts of the world. In the second place, there was a choice among several languages a century ago, but now the foreign language (or the first foreign language) that is learnt is almost always English. Those two things of course are related to a certain extent, but they really have very different causes.

To begin with the increase in the learning of languages; this has to do with the fact that

both school education and international contacts are more important in the lives of most people nowadays than they were 100 years ago. When industrial societies emerged in Europe, and a little later in other parts of the world, one of the consequences was an increasing demand for education. General elementary education for all children became a reality in many countries during the nineteenth century, and during the twentieth century almost all countries have been able to offer their children a few years of school. In the most affluent countries many or most attend school for ten or twelve years, and a third or more may go on to some kind of college or university. All this means that there are ample opportunities to include language instruction in the curricula in many countries.

Contacts across linguistic as well as national borders are much more frequent now than 100 years ago. At that time, most Europeans still lived in the countryside and worked on farms. Most of the others were industrial workers. Only a tiny percentage had any reason ever to use a foreign language in their profession. Few people travelled abroad, except for those who emigrated to America, but that was mostly a one-way trip. It is true that there were substantial linguistic minorities in almost all European countries, but in most cases the minorities lived in fairly restricted areas. Minority-language speakers had to learn the majority language, but majority-language speakers did not learn a minority language. Thus, most people knew only one language.

Nowadays most Europeans live in cities, and more people are employed in the service and communication sectors than in industrial production, not to speak of agriculture. This means many more casual encounters, including with people from other countries. Most people have been abroad, some for long periods. Many have to use one or more foreign languages in their work. In their leisure time, all except English-speaking people hear a foreign language—English—almost daily in pop music, in TV news reports, and in many other contexts. Everyday life in most European countries is not monolingual but multilingual.

The same is true for many, probably most countries all over the world. Everywhere people move into cities, and almost everywhere education is longer than it used to be and includes at least one foreign language. Generally, contacts between countries and between linguistic areas are increasing, and more people migrate from one country to another. The consequences vary, depending on the local circumstances, but almost everywhere the net result is that more people learn at least one foreign language and fewer remain monolingual.

The exceptions are found in the countries where the majority language is so large and

dominating that all contacts can be handled in that language. To a great extent this is true for Chinese in China and Spanish in Latin America, as well as a number of other large languages. The ones who are least liable to need a foreign language are majority speakers of English in the United States, Britain, and several other countries. As a matter of fact, though, language contacts are becoming more frequent even there. The United States now has a significant Spanish-speaking minority that did not exist thirty years ago. Britain has had considerable immigration from many countries, and contacts within the European Union are more extensive than earlier. From the sixteenth century onwards, a few languages of Europe have gradually become the most important ones for communications between language groups, as conquests, business, and colonization promoted them in large parts of the world.

Britain turned out to be the most successful imperial power. At the beginning of the twentieth century, it wielded political power in India, in large parts of Africa south of the Sahara, in Canada, in Australia, in several trading centres in East Asia, and in a large number of smaller possessions elsewhere. The English language was strong in all these areas. At that time, English was an important European language, but hardly the leading one, and was also used more for international contacts in the rest of the world than any other language.

After the two world wars, Germany was crushed and France was much weakened. But Britain also had spent most of its resources, and the time of the empire was gone. The political and economic lead was taken by the United States, an English-speaking country outside Europe.

The English language was boosted all over Europe through the Marshall Plan, the presence of American troops, and so on. At the same time the new leading power took advantage of the fact that its language, English, already had a strong presence in all the countries that belonged or had belonged to the British Empire. The combination furthered the spread of English in an unprecedented way.

In the diplomatic world, English gradually succeeded French in the course of the twentieth century. At the foundation of the United Nations in 1945, not only French, but a total of five languages, of which four were European ones, became officially recognized: English, French, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese (Arabic has been added later). The headquarters is in New York. In practice, English has become the most important language within the organization.

There are reasons other than the political ones for the success of English. The United

States assumed its leading position after 1945 not only because of military strength, but also as a consequence of its very strong economy. It was based on industrial and technological progress. As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, America took the lead in a number of key industries. A couple of them have meant very much for international contacts: telecommunications and aviation. In both areas the United States got an edge, and to a large extent they retain their advantage. Civil aviation was first developed there, and the language of this large international line of business has been English from the start. The same is true for telephones, radio, and television.

The film industry is a special case. The fact that Hollywood took the lead had no great linguistic significance in the silent film era, but it became very important when sound-film was invented. The American film and television industries now convey an enormous amount of spoken English to people all over the world, especially in small and/or poor countries where dubbing is too expensive.

Popular vocal music, which constitutes another branch of the media business, also contributes to the spread of English. Singers and songwriters such as John Lennon or Bob Dylan may have reached larger audiences all over the world than any performers before them. This is not only because of their artistic qualities but also a consequence of the fact that English has been the main language in the world of commercial music since the American invention of the phonograph.

The traditional means of electronic communication, the telephone, can be used by speakers of any language. However, when international telephone calls became a reality in everyday life, which was in the 1960s in most industrialized countries, large numbers of people wanted to use this opportunity for immediate contacts in their business. But in order to talk people must use a common language, and this meant in practice that speakers of many other languages had to learn English well. More recently introduced media, especially e-mail and other data services via the Internet can be used, in principle, for all written languages (which excludes all the small languages without a written norm). In practice, the international contacts are mostly in English, and that language is also an indispensable tool for the millions of technicians, programmers, and others who maintain the net, service the computers, and so on.

In the field of science, the United States became significant as early as before the First World War, and in the course of the twentieth century it took the lead in most fields. Britain

also performed strongly in some areas. A result of this has been that in practice English has become the language of all published works of primary importance in one area after another. During the last few decades, and especially after the demise of the Soviet Union, English has attained such dominance that it is almost the language of science. There is no real precedent to that. Latin had a similar position up to a couple of centuries ago, but after all it was used mainly in Europe.

Another important area in which English has conquered is the world of finance. Money transactions and stock markets provide a living for many people and are important for many more. The largest international centres for those activities are New York and London, and no one in the business can well afford not to understand the language used in those places.

It would be very easy to list several other areas that already use mainly English, or are moving in that direction. As English is becoming necessary in more fields, more people have to learn the language, and when so many know it already it is becoming even easier to introduce it in yet another area. At this point in time the advance of English seems irresistible. There is one important area, though, where English is not very prominent. It has no strong link to any of the great religions of the world. It is true that much missionary work is done by people from the United States and Britain, but it is a matter of spreading Protestant Christianity of various shades, all subscribing to the idea that the religious message is to be transmitted in people's native language. Therefore, the missionaries do not in principle propagate the English language, even if their activities may sometimes have that effect. English is in no way connected with a faith, as Arabic is linked to Muslim religion or Latin became a vehicle of Christianity.

It should also be noted that the actual number of speakers of English as a first language is not extremely high. The latest estimate is 341 million people; this is similar to the figures for Spanish (358 million) and Hindi (366 million), and very much below that for Mandarin Chinese, a language spoken by around 874 million people. The figures are to be regarded as crude estimates, but they show the relations between those languages quite clearly. English is different from the others in that more people speak it as a second language or as a foreign language, but the total number of these is just unknown. Guesses range from 200 million to perhaps 1,000 million people. In any case, the total number of people who know some English is almost certainly lower than the number of native speakers of Mandarin Chinese.

To sum up, English has become the leading international language because of three

rather different developments. First, the language acquired a strong position in large parts of the world as Britain built and maintained its empire from the seventeenth through to the early twentieth century. Secondly, the United States gained a leading position in technology, economy, and politics in the first part of the twentieth century, and still retains this status. Thirdly, industry, communications, and international relations "developed in such a way in the twentieth century that a common language was much more in demand than before. English was there to fill the need, while the other European languages had been pushed aside for different reasons.



1. What did inventions and discoveries lead to in Modern English?
2. What ways were used for making new words in English?
3. What were beginnings and endings added to words for?
4. Who was James Murray? When did James Murray, the author of the dictionary begin work at it?
5. When was the first OED completed?
6. What years did BBC choose a particular accent to work with?
7. Where did guidance with vocabulary, spelling and grammar come from?
8. Is school education and international contacts more important today than 100 years ago?
9. What are the reasons other than political ones for the success of English?
10. Why is English the dominant language of science?



IX. ENGLISH IN AMERICA

England and America are two countries separated by the same language, wrote George Bernard Shaw in 1942. Is this true today? Do Americans speak a different kind of English from the British? If so, why? And why do they speak English at all?

To answer the last question we must go back to the year 1607, when a group of English people sailed across the Atlantic and reached what is now called Virginia. They called their settlement Jamestown, after King James I. They were not the first English people in America: in the sixteenth century fishermen had often spent the summer on the east coast of America, and in 1585 and 1587 people had tried to settle on the island of Roanoke, in what is now North Carolina. They were not the first Europeans to settle in America either: the Spanish had lived in Florida since 1565. But the people of Jamestown were the first successful English settlers and they were followed by other adventurers who also settled in Virginia.

Then in 1620 more English settlers landed north of Virginia, in what became Massachusetts. These were the people from the ship the Mayflower, who came to create a particular kind of Christian life. Others followed, and by 1640 about 25,000 English people were living in the area of America now called New England.

At this time, sailors from Britain and other European countries were taking Africans to America and selling them as slaves. The first twenty African slaves were brought to America in 1619. The voyage across the ocean was very long, and the Africans had to live in terrible conditions. Many of them died during the voyage. This inhuman business was officially ended in America in 1808, but people were allowed to own slaves until the end of the American Civil War in 1865. By that time there were more than four million Africans living in America.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries more and more people arrived in America. English settlers created new Christian towns in Pennsylvania, and other settlers arrived from France, Germany, the Caribbean and northern Ireland. The people from northern Ireland were called the Scots-Irish (because their families had moved to Ireland from Scotland) and by the year of American independence (1776), about one in seven settlers in America was Scots-Irish. They were tough people, who went inland into Pennsylvania and Appalachia, lived in very difficult conditions, and fought the American Indians for land. By the end of the eighteenth century, about four million Europeans lived in America.

■ *The early settlers from the Mayflower were surprised to find American Indians who spoke 'broken English'. They had learnt it from the fishermen who used to stay on the coast each summer.*

■ *Some American place names are from names given them by French settlers (Des Moines, St Louis, Illinois), and others are Spanish (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Fe). New York was first called New Amsterdam, until the British took it in 1664, and the names Brooklyn (from Breukelyn), Harlem (Haarlem) and the Bronx (Bronck's) are reminders of its Dutch beginnings.*

In the nineteenth century, large numbers of people left Ireland, Germany, Italy, and other European countries for America. Many were Jews from Central and Eastern Europe. By 1900, there were 75 million people living in America. In the later part of the twentieth century people from Asia and Spanish-speaking countries also arrived, and by 2000 there were more than 280 million people in America.

American English developed from the languages used by these different people. The first English settlers created new words for the animals, birds and plants that were new to them. Sometimes they created new words from other English words, such as *backwoods* (a forest with few people), *bluegrass* (a kind of grass), and *catfish* (a kind of fish). They also named thousands of places and rivers using words from the languages of the American Indians; for example, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Potomac. Occasionally they borrowed words from Spanish, French and Dutch settlers. Some words began to have new meanings, and to replace older words, for example *bill* came to mean

a piece of paper money, and replaced note.

Some words from the English of the seventeenth century live on in American English although they are no longer used in British English. For example, *fall* meaning *autumn*, *mad* meaning angry, *platter* for dish and *gotten* as the past participle of *got* (as in *Your dinner has gotten cold.*).

Modern American English pronunciation also shows the influence of the first settlers. They pronounced the **a** in *grass* /æ/, as in *hat*, because the long /a:/ only began to be used in England in the eighteenth century. This short /æ/ is part of American pronunciation today. Americans also pronounce **r** at the end of words (for example *car*) and before a consonant

(for example hard) as the early settlers did. As the settlers moved west, they invented many west colourful expressions, which are now part of British English too; for example, to face the music (to accept the unpleasant results of your actions), to kick the bucket (to die), to keep one's shirt on (to not get angry); and hot under the collar (angry). Some expressions show the influence of the railroad: to go off the rails (to behave strangely), and to reach the end of the line (to be unable to do any more with something).

American English has borrowed only a few words from all the different languages spoken by American settlers. The main reason for this is social. Newcomers were anxious to become American, and they and their children learned English to do so. However, some words and expressions from other languages have found their way into American English. For example, check (a bill for food or drinks), and kindergarten (a place where very young children play and learn) have come from German; pasta, spaghetti and other words for food have come from Italian; from Yiddish, the language of the East European Jews, there are schmuck (a stupid person), and shlep (to pull, or a long, tiring journey).

African-Americans developed their own varieties of English which are all known today as African-American English. They influenced American English, especially in the twentieth century when large numbers of African-Americans left the South and moved north. Some words that they brought to American English are jazz; cool (originally used by jazz musicians and now widely used to mean fashionable, generally very good); hip meaning very modern and fashionable; and dude, another word for man.

At the time of independence in 1776, Americans began to take an interest in their language. They wanted to be separate from Britain in every way, and to feel proud of their country and way of life. Someone who felt particularly proud of American English was a teacher called Noah Webster (1758-1843). In 1783 Webster wrote a speller, a grammar and a reader for American schools. The speller was later sold as *The American Spelling Book*, and was hugely successful, selling more than eighty million copies in the following one hundred years. With the money from its sales, Webster was able to write dictionaries. In these, he wanted to show that American English was as good as British English, and that Americans did not have to copy the British. His first dictionary appeared in 1806, followed by the famous *An American Dictionary of the English Language* in 1828. This was longer than Johnson's dictionary (it explained about 70,000 words) and so gave American English the same importance as British English in the minds of Americans.

Sixty years earlier, Benjamin Franklin had suggested many changes to English spelling, and his ideas influenced Webster. In both his dictionaries Webster suggested new spellings, and many of these are now the accepted American spellings; for example, center, color, and traveled. Webster also influenced American pronunciation by insisting that each part of a word must be clearly pronounced; for example, **se-cre-ta-ry** not **se-cre-t'ry**.

So, what are the differences between American and British English today? As well as differences in pronunciation, there are some small differences in grammar and spelling. But the main difference is in vocabulary. Thousands of words are used differently. For example, the bottom floor of a building is called the first floor in American English, and the ground floor in British English. You can walk on the sidewalk in America and the pavement in Britain.

There are also different expressions in American and British English. For example, the American expressions to drop the ball (to make a mistake), to be in the chips (to suddenly have a lot of money) and to go south (to become less valuable) are not used in British English. Similarly, many British expressions are not part of American English.

Some British people dislike the influence of American English, but this has not stopped thousands of American words entering British English and becoming completely accepted: for example, supermarket (1933), teenager (1941) and fast food (1951).

Although there are clear differences between the British and American varieties of English, the huge popularity of television, pop music and films has helped people on both sides of the Atlantic to understand each other's English more easily.



1. Do Americans speak a different kind of English from the British? Why do they speak English?
2. When did a group of English people cross the Atlantic and make a settlement? How did they call it?
3. What kind of life did the people from the Mayflower ship create?
4. When were the first African slaves brought to America? What kind of transport was used for this purpose?
5. What was the number of people living in America by 1900? What countries did they come

from?

6. How did American English develop? Did they use English words for the creation of new words or did they invent their own ones?
7. What was the influence of the first settlers on the English pronunciation? What are the differences in American and British English pronunciation?
8. What are the varieties of English developed by the African Americans?
9. Who was Noah Webster? What did he write?
10. What did B. Franklin suggest concerning Webster dictionary?



X. VARIETIES OF ENGLISH

All over the world, people speaking English as a first or second

language use different vocabulary, grammar and accents in a large number of varieties of English. A variety of English is any kind of English spoken by a particular group of people. In each English-speaking country one variety of English is used nationally for official purposes.

This is the 'Standard English' of that country. It is taught in schools and broadcast on radio and television. The same grammar, vocabulary and spelling rules are used by everyone, although the country's Standard English may be spoken with different accents. Standard English is different in different countries. For example, Standard Australian English is different from Standard British English.

In England, as well as Standard British English, there are many regional and social dialects. The most noticeable differences between them are those of pronunciation. A well-known

difference is the *a* in words like *grass*. In the south this is pronounced as /gra:s/, and in the north as /graes/. The *u* in words like *up* is pronounced /ʌ/ in the south, and /ʊ/ in the north. In some parts of the north *happy* is pronounced as /hæpi/ or /hæpe/, and in the north-east *night* is pronounced as /ni:t/.

One dialect, called Estuary English, has become popular among young people, and is now spoken in much of southeast and central England. In it, some words are pronounced in a similar way to Cockney - the dialect of East London. The /t/ in the middle and at the end of words disappears; so letter becomes /leə/, and what /wo/. This dialect has become popular because of the influence of radio and television, and it is seen as modern and fashionable. There are also differences in grammar between the dialects. Many dialects from the

1. *D'inna fash yoursel. (Don't upset yourself. Scotland)*

2. *They work hard, isn't it (They work hard, don't they? Wales)*

3. *I am after seeing him (I've just seen him. Ireland)*

4. *Why' all come here! (Come here everyone! southern states of America)*

5. *It's a beaut! (It's wonderful! Australia)*

6. *She sing real good (She sings very well. Jamaica)*

7. *I am not knowing. (I don't know. India)*

countryside use grammatical forms which Standard English has lost; for example, *He ain't comin'* (He's coming), *thee and thou* for you singular, *I ain't going* (I'm not going), or *He ain't come* (He hasn't come).

Outside England, in Scotland, Wales, Northern

In the sixteenth century Cockney was the language of ordinary Londoners, but slowly in the eighteenth century it became the language of just the working class. Its pronunciation is quite different from Standard British English: bath becomes /bɑ:f/, brother becomes /brʌvə/, and hand is /ænd/.

Ireland and the Irish Republic, there are other varieties of English. Scots is very different from Standard British English - more so than any other British variety. There are many differences in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. Some Scots vocabulary is also used in northern English dialects (for example, *bairn* for child and *lass* for girl), but a huge number of words (20,000 are listed in one book) are used only in Scots.

The English spoken in Wales also has its own character. There is a special intonation, which is similar to that used in Welsh; there are some words and expressions which have been borrowed from Welsh; sometimes word order is changed to give something more meaning; for example, *Happy she was!* (She was very happy!).

In Northern Ireland the main influence on English has been Scots, as large numbers of Protestant settlers came to Ireland from Scotland in the sixteenth century. In the Republic of Ireland, the main influences have been the dialects from the west of England and Gaelic. Gaelic is still spoken in the west of Ireland and its influence can be heard most strongly in the dialects in this part of the country. The Irish English spoken on radio and television is closer to Standard British English.

Some Irish English dialects show the Gaelic influence: for example, *Is it cold you are?* (Are you cold?)-, the use of *-een* to mean a small thing, for example *girleen* for a small girl; *He's after doing that* (He's just done that), and *Will I shut the door?* (Shall I shut the door?). Questions are often answered without yes or no, so the answer to *Were you born in Dublin?* might be *Indeed I was*, or *I was not*.

From the seventeenth century, regional varieties of English were taken to North America, the Caribbean, Australia, New Zealand, Africa and Asia, and their influences can still be heard in the varieties of English in these countries. For example, in some dialects of

American English there are many similarities to Irish English in pronunciation and some in grammar. *Youse*, which means *you* plural, and anymore in positive sentences like, They live here anymore (They live here now) are both from Irish English.

The three main regional dialects of American English are Northern, Midland and Southern. These reflect the movement of settlers to the west. Settlers from New England moved along past the Great Lakes; those from the middle of the east coast moved through the middle of the country, and those in the south went along the coast to the south. Because the Midland dialect is spoken over the largest area, and perhaps by two-thirds of the people, this dialect is the best known outside America, and is sometimes called 'General American'.

African-American English was born of slavery between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, when millions of people from West Africa were brought to America and the Caribbean as slaves to work on large farms growing sugar. The British slave buyers and African slaves communicated on the slave ships in

pidgin English. When the Africans arrived in America and the Caribbean they continued to use pidgin English with both their slave owners and with each other, as they often spoke different African languages. Later, this pidgin English developed into a creole when the slaves' children and grandchildren started to use it as a first language. African-American English probably developed from this creole. Today African- American English has some

English pidgins and creoles are spoken mainly in the Caribbean, West Africa and the West Pacific, and have many similarities. For example, nouns and verbs are simpler: two book, and she sing. Words are often repeated: for example, sma:smal for very small in Jamaican creole.

grammatical differences from American English; for example, she come (she's coming), you crazy (you are crazy), he be going to work (he is going to work) and twenty cent (twenty cents) French, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese creoles also had a big influence on the English of the Caribbean. (Other influences have been local American Indian languages, and Hindi spoken by settlers from India.) In the Caribbean today there are a large number of creoles, as well as local varieties of Standard English. The vocabulary of each creole differs, but the grammar and pronunciation is similar. For example, there is *de* for the, *ting* for thing, and *ax* for ask.

Here is part of a poem in Jamaican creole by Louise Bennett. It is called 'Noh Lickle

Twang!’ (‘Not Even a Little Accent!’). In it, the poet complains that her son has come back from America without an American accent:

Ef you want please him meek him tink Yuh bring back someting new.

Yuh always call him ‘Pa’ dis evenin’

Wen him come sey ‘Poo’.

(If you want to please him [your father] make him think

You’ve brought back something new.

You always call him ‘Pa’; this evening

When he comes say ‘Poo’.)

Australian English has developed from a number of varieties of English. Most of the 130,000 prisoners sent to Australia between 1788 and 1840, and the ‘free settlers’ who joined them, came from the south and east of England, Scotland and Ireland. The vowels in Australian English sound similar to those in Cockney (for example, today sounds similar to RP to die), and some Australian expressions are from British, Irish and American English. Some words for plants and animals, and many place names, have come from Aboriginal languages. Others are inventions of the Australians: g’day (hello); crook (ill); sheila (girl, woman); to be as full as a boot (to be very drunk); first in, best dressed (the first people to do something will have an advantage); and couldn’t lie straight in bed (very dishonest).

New Zealand English and South African English have some similarities to Australian English in their pronunciation because all three countries were settled by English speakers at about the same time. Each variety has small pronunciation differences, though, and its own vocabulary. In New Zealand English there are words from Maori, and in South African English there are words from Afrikaans and African languages.

Other countries were also governed by the British in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: India, Hong Kong, Singapore, Nigeria, Kenya, Papua New Guinea. Others were governed by America: the Philippines and Puerto Rico. In many of these countries English is an official language, although it is not most people’s first language. The local languages influence the pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and use of English. For example, in Indian and Nigerian English, words like and and of are pronounced as strongly as other words in the sentence. In India the continuous form is used with verbs like understand and like: I am liking, he is understanding. In Nigerian English sorry can mean I’m sorry for you, not I’m sorry for hurting you.

There is now more literature in these varieties of English as writers feel that they can use their own variety of English to express themselves and write about their own experiences in life. The Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe wrote in 1964: ‘I feel that English will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English . . . [changed] to suit its new surroundings.’



1. What is a variety of English? Is it used by a group of people in an English speaking-country?
2. What are the regional and social dialects in England?
3. What varieties of English are there in Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic?
4. To what other countries were regional varieties taken from the 17th century?
5. What are the 3 main regional dialects of American English?
6. Into what language did the slave buyers and African slaves communicate?
7. What did the pidgin English language develop into?
8. Are there a large number of Creoles and local varieties of Standard English in the Caribbean today?
9. What English varieties did Australian English develop from?
10. What similarities does New Zealand English and South African English have to Australian English?

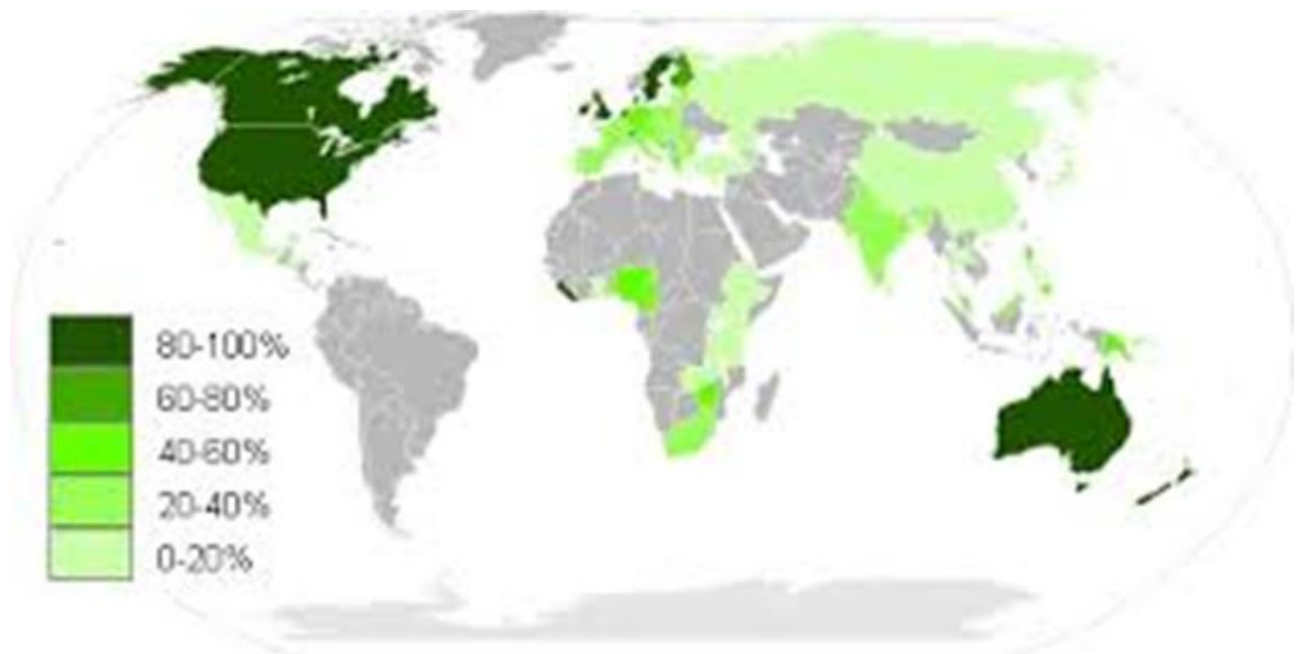


XI. THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH

The Jamaican poet **Derek Walcott** knows that English still has a great influence on countries that were part of the British Empire; the British journalist **Andrew Marr** recognizes that English does not belong just to the British or Americans, but to the whole world. English continues to influence speakers of other languages all over the world, and to be influenced by those languages. But will it remain in this extraordinary position for much longer?

One guess is that the number of people who can use English well will continue to grow - to over half the people in the world by 2050, some believe - and that English will remain a world language. In this view, America will probably remain the most important country in the world and so English will continue as the world language. The growing use of the Internet, which was developed in America, and satellite television will mean that more people use and understand English. Better communications between more countries will result in more international business, with English as its language. More higher education can be provided as distance learning to students all over the world, with courses given in English.

However, there are people who think that the position of English is not so certain. Asia



- China, in particular - may become wealthier than America. Even if it does not, English may not remain a world language. Although English is the main language used on the Internet, non-English speaking users already outnumber English-speaking users.

Businesses and organizations will have to provide information and services in a number

of languages for them. Similarly, satellite television companies will probably provide programmes in local languages as well as English. Although international business may increase, some of it may be in the same region, and other shared languages may be used instead of English. Some countries may dislike the spread of English, and try to keep it out of education and government. For example, in 1999 Microsoft agreed to provide the Windows 98 program in Icelandic after opposition from the Icelandic government to English programs being used in schools.

If English does remain a world language, how will it change? Will it break up into lots of different languages, in the same way that Latin developed into French, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian and Italian? Or will the different varieties disappear and only one kind of English survive?

It seems likely that as English continues to be used internationally more and more, the need for a standard grammar and vocabulary, standard spelling and some standard pronunciation will remain. Perhaps a new kind of 'World Standard English' will develop from all the regional varieties, or perhaps American English will become this standard.

On the other hand, speakers of all the regional varieties of English will continue to create their own words, expressions, pronunciation and grammar. The varieties of English may become more and more different from the World Standard kind of English, although they may not become separate languages.

The next chapter in the history of English is hard to see accurately - the world around us is changing so fast. Will we recognize the English of today in the next century? Who will use it, and how? These are interesting questions for all users of English, wherever they are.

Predictions about a distant future should be met with scepticism; it is hard enough to know what is going to happen next week. This is about what may happen to the languages of the world. As developments in this area are comparatively slow it is necessary to look quite far ahead if one wants to see significant changes.

Of course, it is not possible to foresee what is actually going to take place. Still there is a point in bringing up the issue. There are connections between society and language: certain features in society will tend to favor certain types of linguistic developments. If that is so, it is indeed possible to make predictions about what will happen to languages if societies develop in a certain way. For that reason, all predictions are conditional: if history goes in this direction, then languages will be affected.

The first prediction is easy and depressing. If the human species becomes extinct, human languages will vanish at the same time, and there is nothing more to be said. If someone 200 years ago had tried to predict the language situation in our time, the chances of a correct result would have been extremely small. The present political conditions could not possibly have been foreseen. No one could reasonably have guessed, for example, that the British colonies on the east coast of North America that had recently declared themselves independent would develop into a leading world power within 150 years. Also, there was no reason to believe that the world's population would become seven or eight times larger in 200 years; nothing like that had ever happened before. Again, no one could really have conjectured that this giant population would also live much longer, on average.

The situation is in no way easier now. For that reason, let us try to say what might happen to languages under certain specified conditions. The people continue living under social and economic conditions that are more or less similar to the ones that obtain now, and that the trends that can be observed at present are not reversed. This means, among other things, that states will still exist, and that many of them will be nation states.

What speaks against this large-scale extinction is the fact that most people actually wish very strongly that their native tongue should be preserved. In some cases, mostly in Europe, much is being done to preserve and revitalize a language. An example is Welsh, the Celtic language spoken in Wales. If most countries that have many languages now become more similar to Britain in terms of economy and general education there may possibly be similar developments on a large scale. So far, however, there are few signs that this is going to happen. Also, it remains uncertain how much such measures mean for the long-term survival of a language.

Languages that are now spoken by several million people, that are established as written languages, and that have some position in education, or are at least recognized as existing languages in a country, will hardly disappear in 200 years.

This is of course even truer for languages that are supported by political power. If nation states continue to exist more or less as now their national languages will almost certainly remain. It is in the nature of nation states to favour one language. Some states, especially in Africa, may actually become more like nation states in that they will strongly support one language and suppress a number of others.

However, even many national languages are used less now than they were a couple of

generations ago in certain functions. English is employed much more now than earlier in countries such as Sweden or the Netherlands, especially in the media and in certain areas of working life.

Whether English will retain its position is a completely different matter. Several concurrent forces caused its unprecedented success in the twentieth century. An important one was the political and economic power of the United States. One of the lessons of history is that such matters change. Two centuries may be time enough for several states to rise to superpowers and then fall back again. Of course, it is also possible that the United States will keep the lead, or that the next leader will also be an English-speaking country, but neither alternative seems particularly probable. In a longer perspective, a new international language may of course take over all international functions from English.

If that happens, it will probably require considerable time. One of the reasons for the strength of English is that it is used as the language of instruction in many former colonies. This has been so for generations, and a change would require several decades. As well, many other countries would have to change curricula in order to introduce another first foreign language, and that is a slow process.

Much that is written in English is not translated into any other language, especially within research and technology, but in many other areas too. For that reason, it would be necessary for scientists and for many others to learn both English and a new international language during a long transition period.

English is used as a native language in many parts of the world. Already, the spoken geographical variants of the language are fairly dissimilar. They will become more divergent because of the nature of language change, unless contacts between continents become much closer than they are now. In 200 years, it may be quite difficult for people from different continents to understand each other. If the common written language is preserved everywhere it will also be even further removed from all the different pronunciations than it is at present. The consequences of this are not easy to predict, but it may become more problematic to use English as an international language if there are great variations within the language.

In conclusion, many small languages will disappear, that one or a few languages will be used in international contexts, that English is not necessarily one of those languages, and that the remaining large or fairly large languages will exist more or less like now.



1. Does English belong only to the British and the Americans? Whom else does it belong to?
2. What helps English continue to be a world language?
3. How can higher education be provided to students all over the world? What is the language of instruction?
4. What other country may become wealthier than America that will promote the English language?
5. How will English change if it does remain a world English?
6. What will happen to different varieties of English in case that only one kind of English survives?
7. What will English, continuing to be used internationally need to improve in all aspects?
8. Will the new kind of World Standard English be developed from all regional varieties?
9. What will the speakers of all regional varieties of English create?
10. What about the varieties of English compared to the World Standard kind of English, will they differ more and more?

EXERCISES

1. Checking your understanding

WRITE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS.

1. English was important in the nineteenth century because Britain was rich. Why is English important today?
2. Explain how English, Russian, Spanish, Gujarati and Farsi all belong to the same family of languages.
3. Who brought English to Britain?
4. Some words from Old English are still used in Modern English. What kinds of words are they?
5. What happened to the grammar of Old English as a result of the Viking invasion of England?

2. ARE THESE SENTENCES TRUE (T) OR FALSE (F)?

1. French remained a socially important language in England until the end of the fifteenth century.
2. English has words from French and Old English that mean almost the same thing.
3. The first English printers influenced English by deciding which spellings to use.
4. Everyone welcomed the words from other languages that came into English from 1500 to 1700.
5. The translators of the King James Bible created thousands of new words and expressions.

3. WRITE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS.

1. Why did some people in the seventeenth century want to control English?
2. What has been the greatest change in English in the last two centuries?
3. How did radio and television influence the language in the twentieth century?
4. People from many countries settled in America, but they all learnt to speak English. Why?
5. How did Noah Webster influence the spelling of American English?

4. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)

1. The Standard English of each English-speaking country is the same.
2. A creole is a pidgin language that has become the first language of a group of

people.

3. Countries where English is spoken as a second language have their own varieties of English.
4. Slang words rarely become part of a country's Standard English.
5. Regional varieties of English will disappear in the future.

5. Working with language

Put the parts of this summary in the right order. Then join the parts together to make five sentences with correct capital letters and punctuation.

1. ... after a time the monks began to write in English, not Latin, . . .
2. ... as the English and Vikings lived closely together ...
3. ... and he was welcomed by the king and queen .. .
4. ... very few Celtic words survived in Old English . . .
5. ... Old English was next influenced by the Vikings .. .
6. ... St Augustine came to England in order to teach Christianity . . .
7. ... because there were so many Anglo-Saxon invaders ...
8. .. who invaded England in the ninth century . . .
9. . many English words for ordinary things come from the Vikings ...
10. ... which led to a growth in learning in England . . .

6. USE THESE WORDS TO JOIN THE PARTS OF THE SENTENCES INTO FIVE SENTENCES: THAT, SO THAT, UNTIL, WHEN, AS WELL AS.

1. Words came into English from America, Africa and Asia ...
2. English grew enormously in the sixteenth century ...
3. There was such an interest in learning .. .
4. English owes many expressions to Shakespeare ...
5. English was not accepted as a language of learning.
... a ... it could express lots of new ideas.
b ... about 1800.
c ... European explorers returned from these places,
d ... to the King James Bible.
e ... more books were translated from Latin and Greek into English.

7. CHOOSE THE BEST LINKING WORDS AND COMPLETE THESE SENTENCES WITH INFORMATION.

1. The settlement of America by English-speaking people began in 1607 when/in order to ...
2. The people on the Mayflower went to America in order to/since . . .
3. The conditions on the slave ships were so terrible because/that. ..
4. Americans began to take an interest in their language but/after ...
5. The British and Americans can understand each other although/so ...

8. FINISH THE SENTENCES:

1. English did not exist yet... years ago.
2. History is affected by languages and languages are a part of
3. The English language is sometimes called British and sometimes....
4. After the Romans left Britain the British were left to ... themselves.
5. Britain's island is miles long and ... broad.
6. The Angles are mentioned in passing by....
7. The Saxons invaded the South of England and formed 3 kingdoms along the Channel....
8. The Angles dominated in the North of the Thames with the kingdoms...
9. The British, Scottish and Pictish languages did not resemble the ... ones.
10. The Germans were not held by a common bond but formed... states.

ACTIVITIES

1. It is 1351 in England. Write in your diary about the effects of the Black Death on you.
2. Imagine you are a newspaper reporter and that you have interviewed Jonathan Swift about his wish to stop the English language changing. Write a report of your interview.
3. You are a British person visiting America for the first time. Write a postcard to a friend telling them about American English. Do you understand everyone, and do they understand you?

PROJECT WORK

1. In groups, discuss whether it would be good if English became the ‘world language’, spoken by everyone either as a first or a second language.
2. What language or languages are spoken in your country? Find out the history of these languages and write about them. Is their history similar to or different from the history of English?

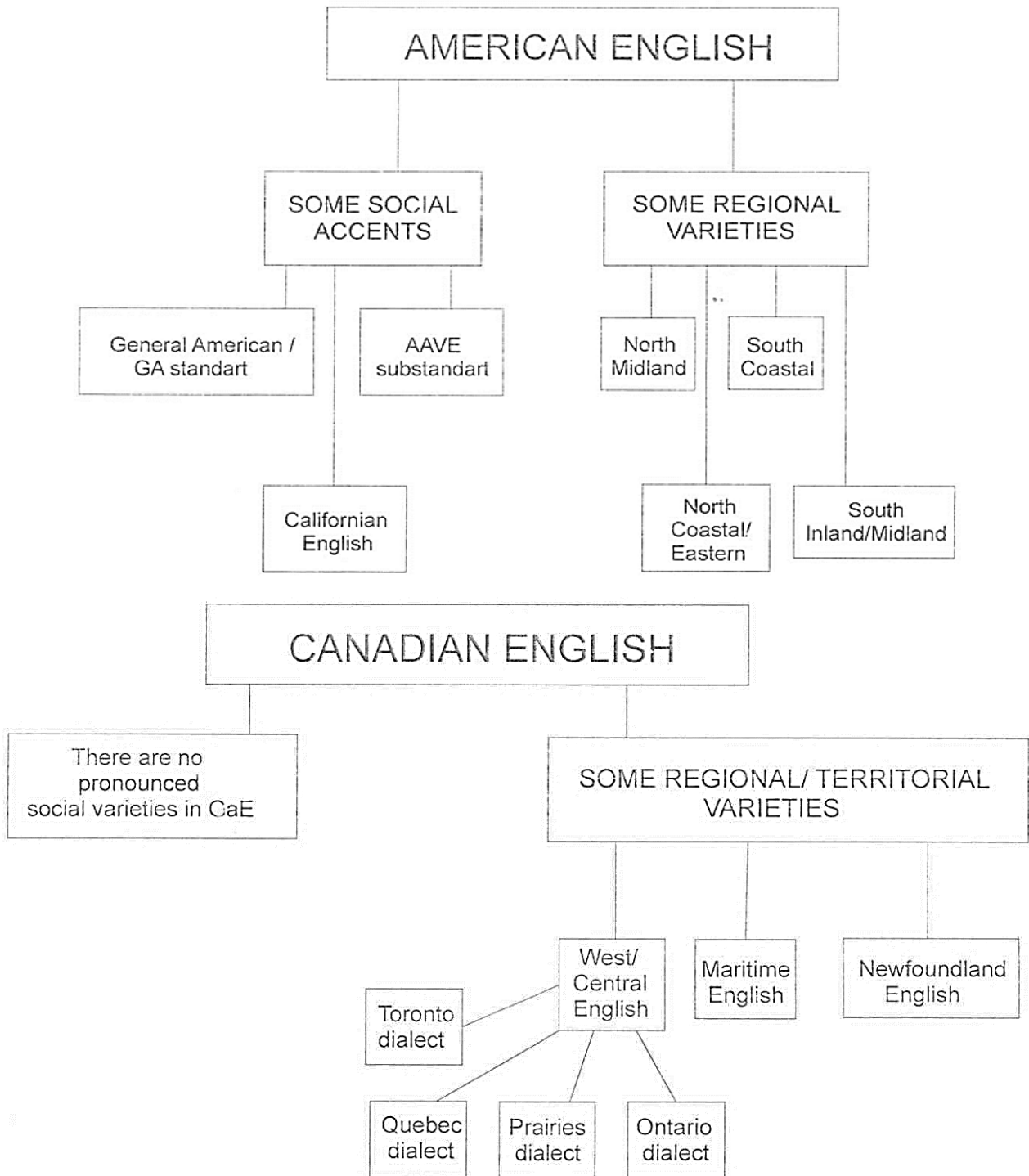
CHECKING KNOWLEDGE: COMPLETE THE CHART.

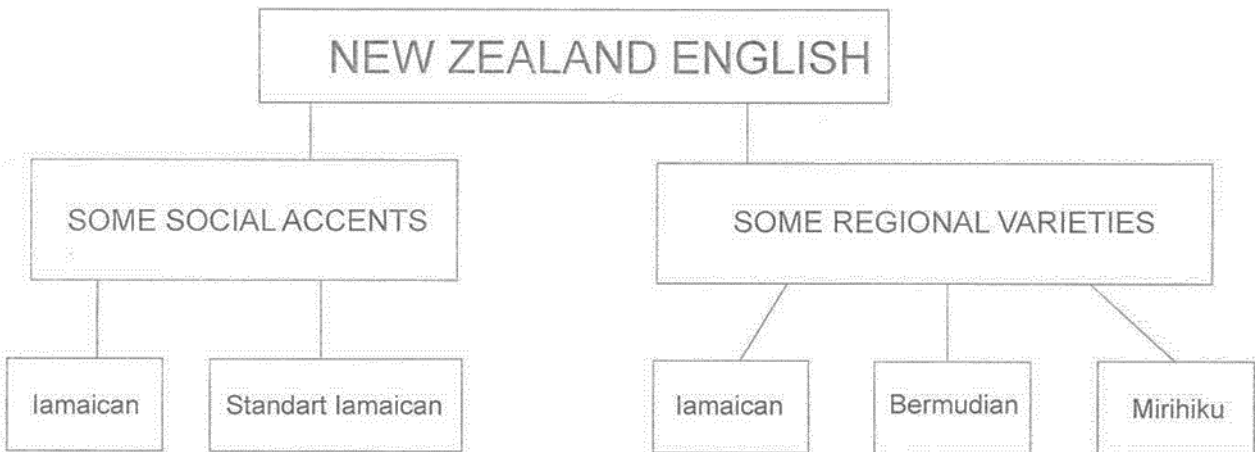
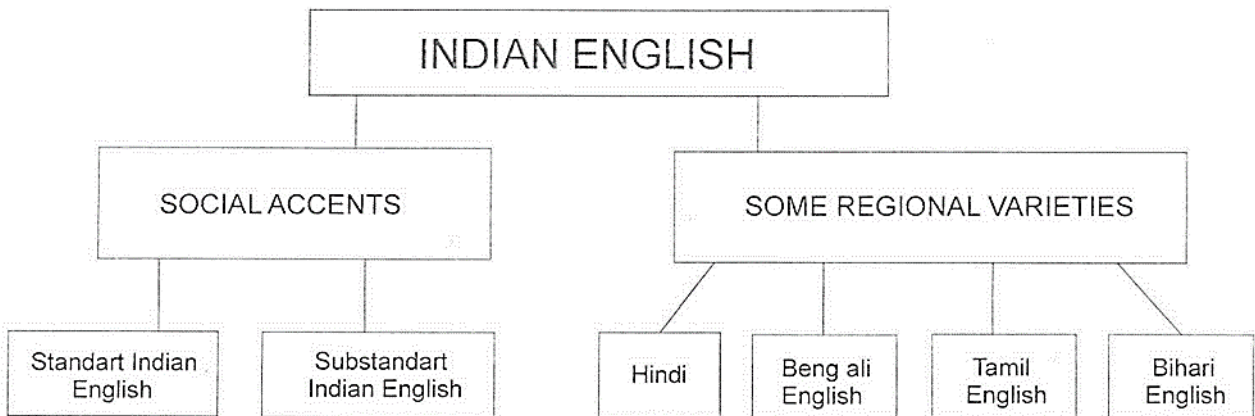
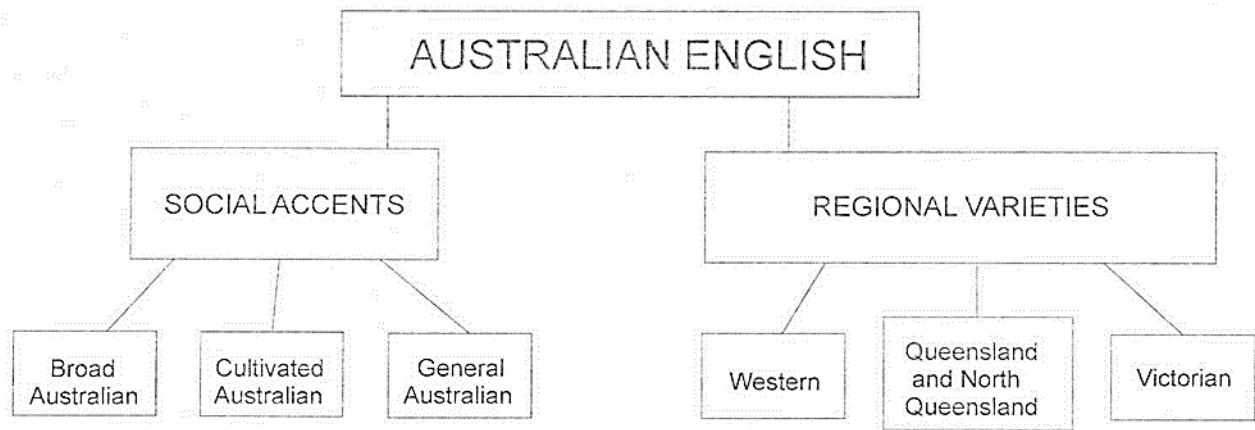
A brief chronology of English		
?	Roman invasion of Britain by Julius Caesar	Local inhabitants speak Celtic
AD 43	?	
436	Roman withdrawal from Britain complete	
449	?	
450-480	Earliest known Old English inscriptions	?
?	William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, invades and conquers England	
c1150	Earliest surviving manuscripts in Middle English	Middle English
1348	?	
1362	English replaces French as the language of law. English is used in Parliament for the first time	
c1388	?	
?	The Great Vowel Shift begins	
1476	William Caxton establishes the first English printing press	?

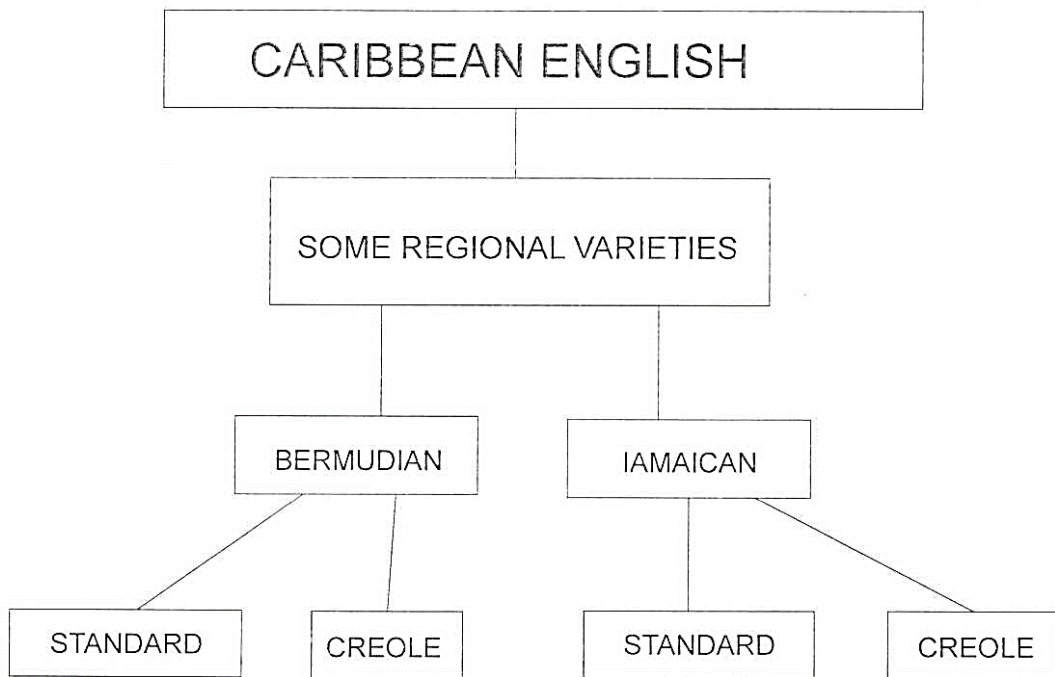
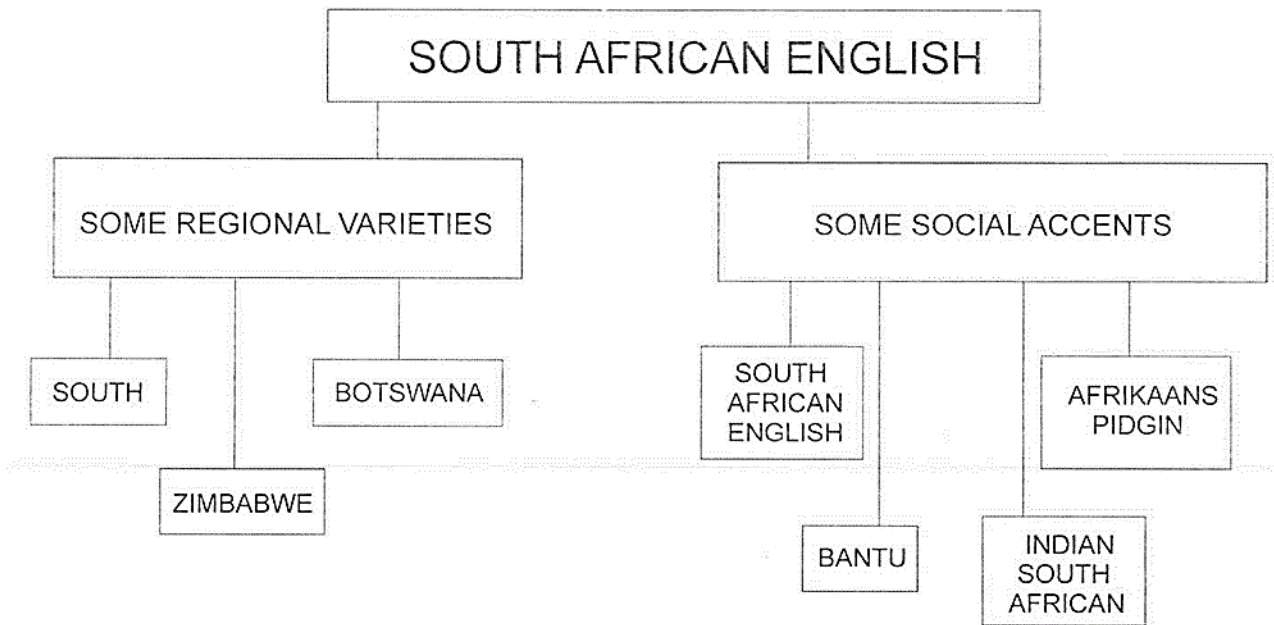
1564	?	
1604	<i>Table Alphabeticall</i> , the first English dictionary, is published	
1607	The first permanent English settlement in the New World (Jamestown) is established	
1616	?	
1623	Shakespeare's First Folio is published	
1702	The first daily English-language newspaper, <i>The Daily Courant</i> , is published in London	
1755	?	
?	Thomas Jefferson writes the American Declaration of Independence	
1782	?	
?	Webster publishes his American English dictionary	
1922	The British Broadcasting Corporation is founded	Late Modern English
1928	?	

**THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE IN TABLES**

We hope that these tables will help you learn the material better!

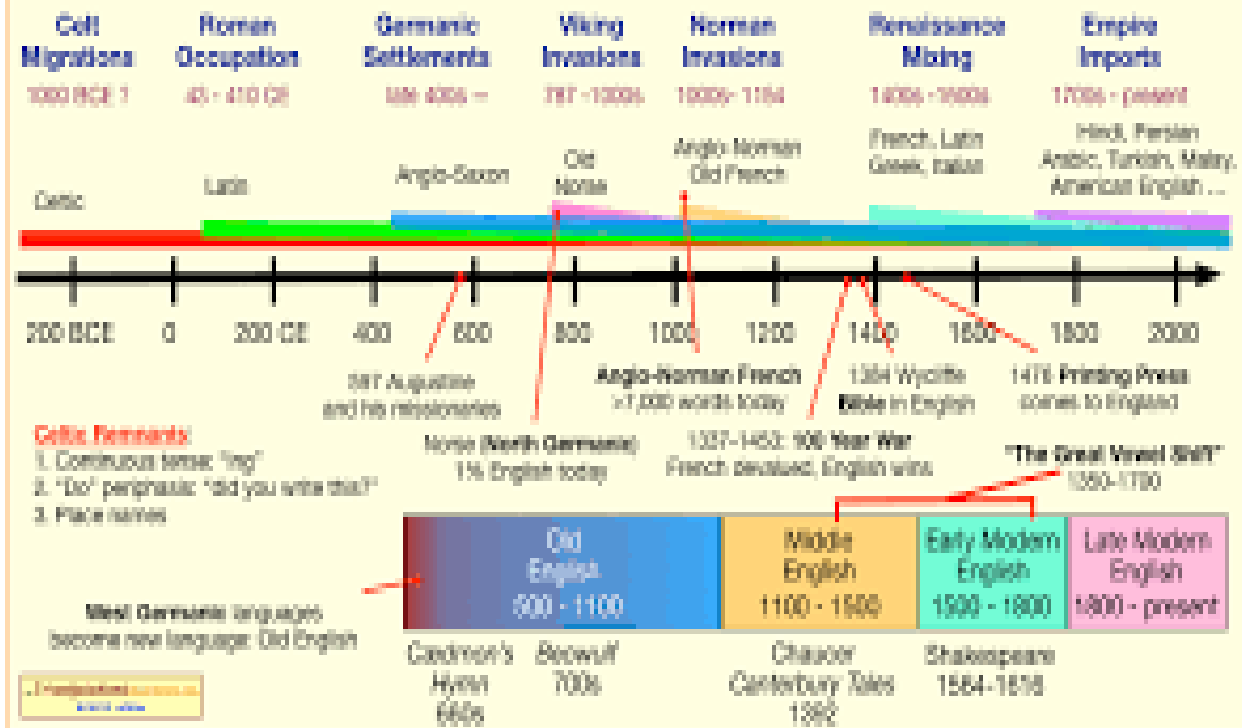


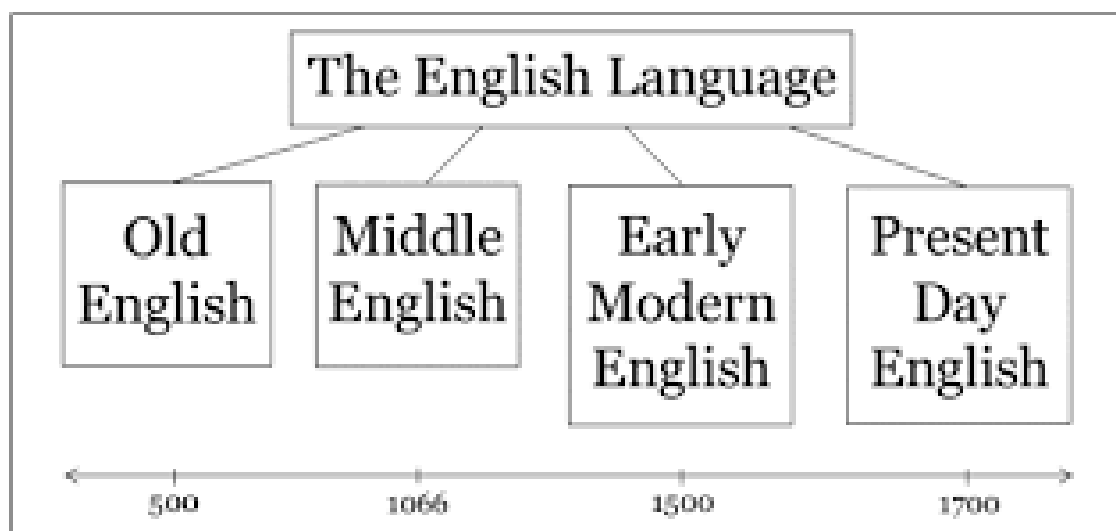
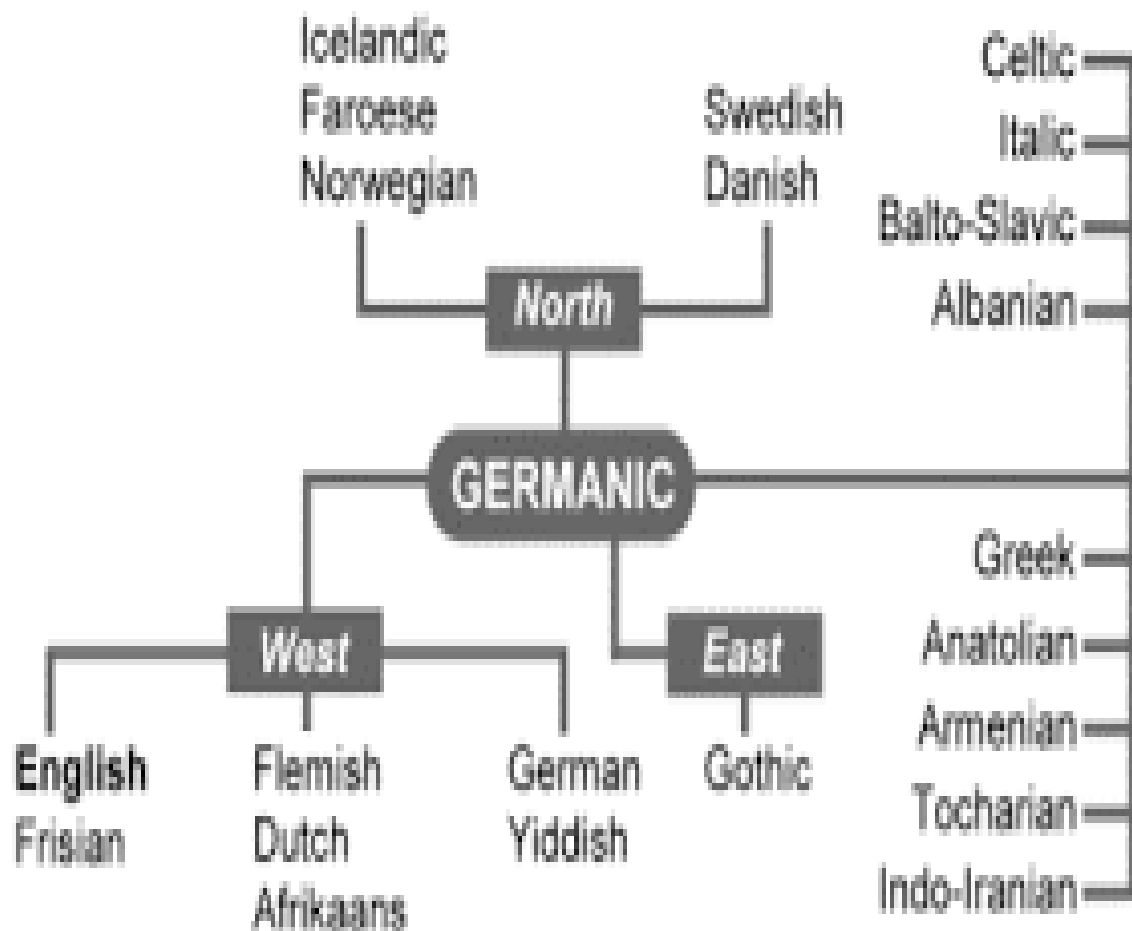




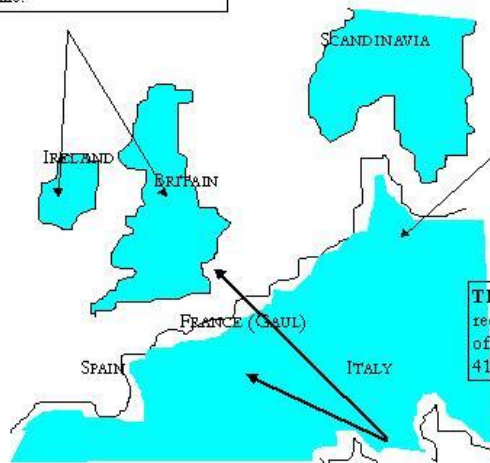


The History of the English Language



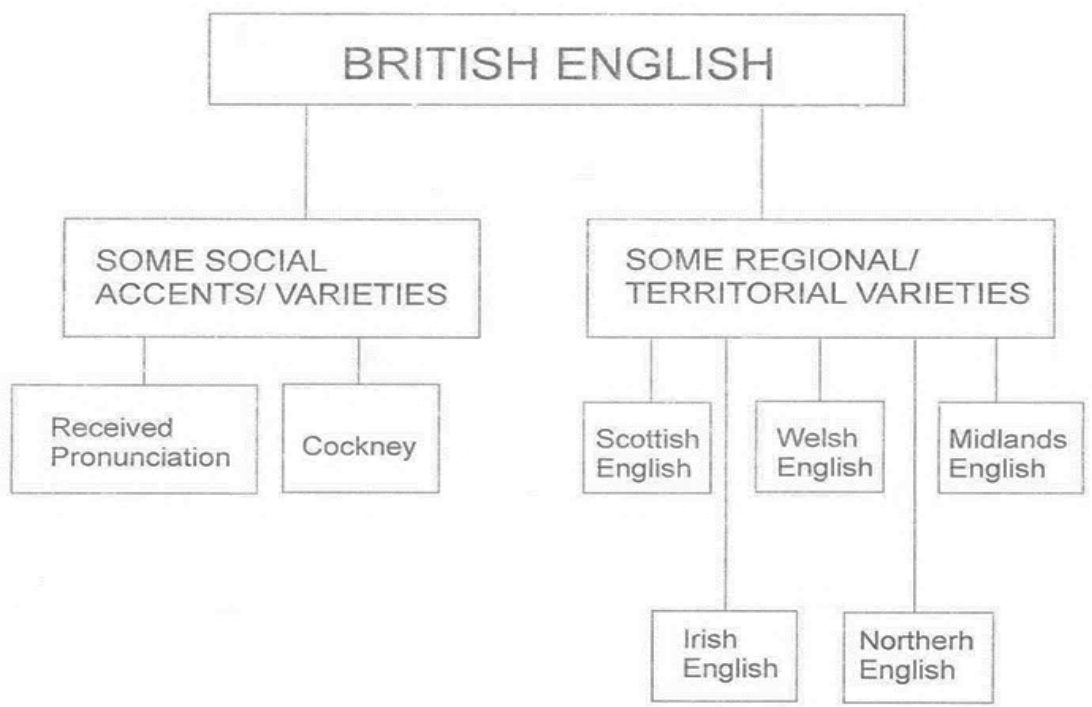
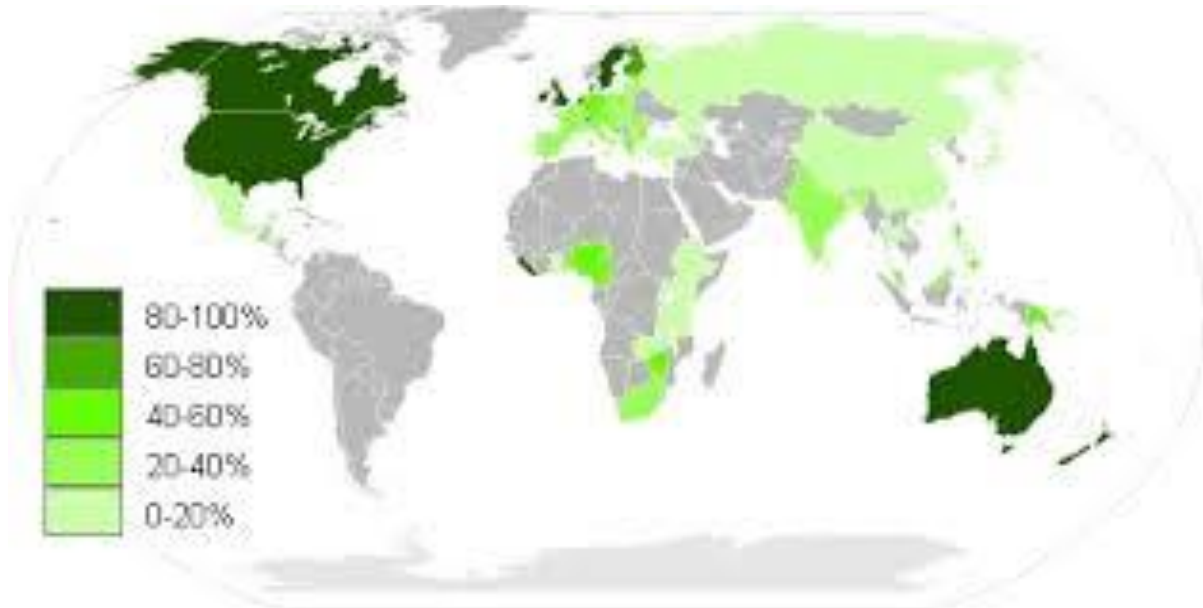


In Britain, Ireland and Northern France, **Celtic tribes** had settled there for a while.



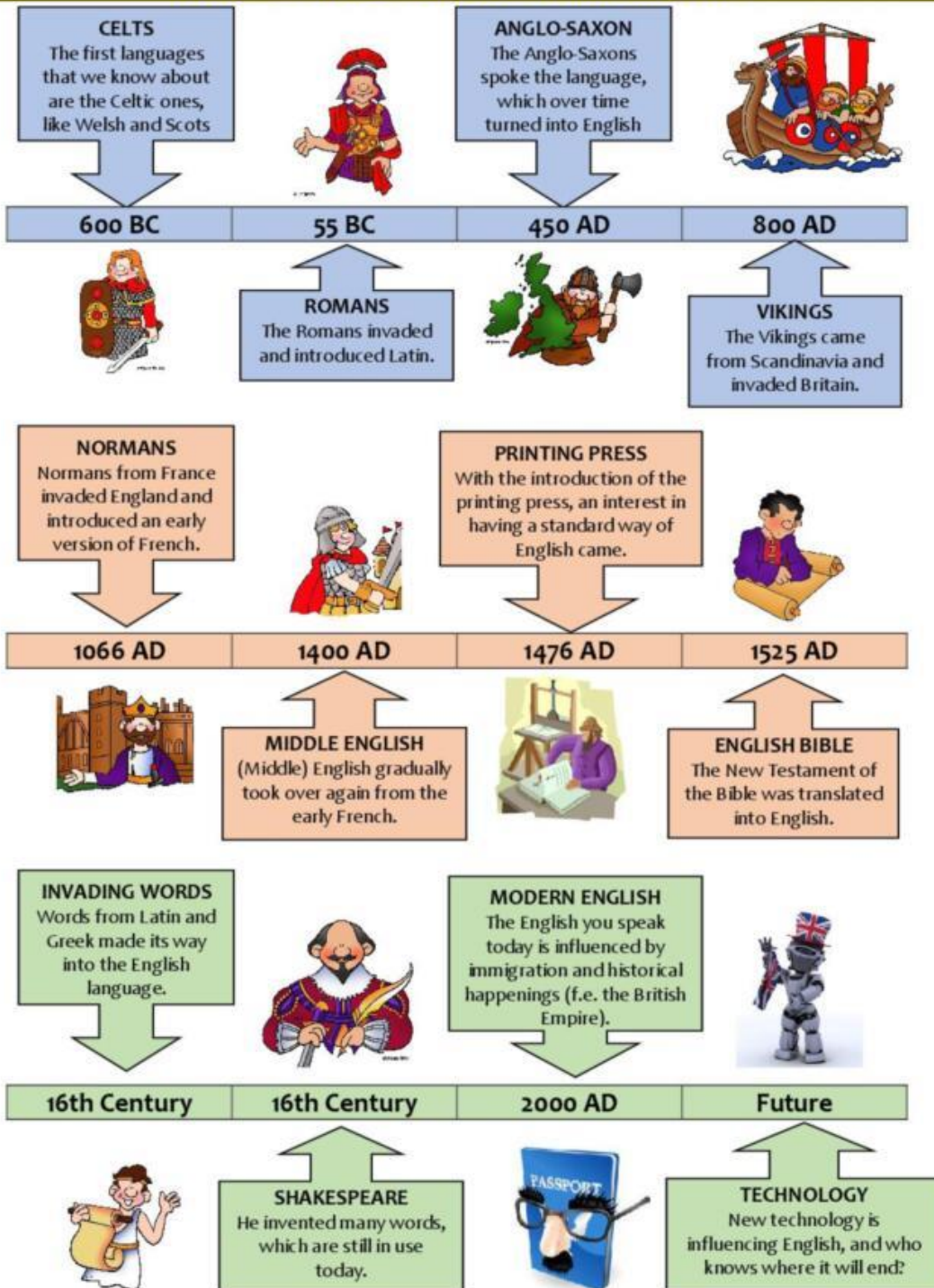
Germanic tribes settled around this area in Europe.

The Romans were a force to be reckoned with, and Britain was part of the Roman Empire until AD 410.



The History of the English Language

Where did the English we speak today come from?



CURIOSITIES AND FUN FACTS ABOUT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1. Changes to English Language • “s” now the common ending for plurals, but Shakespeare did use old plurals – foe, foen – knee, kneen – flea, flean – eye, eyen • Adjectives no longer have endings that reflect gender, number and case • Present Tense of Verbs changed – giveth, gives hath, has – saith, says, marketh, marks.
2. Vain Attempts to Fix English in 1750, grammar and vocabulary were more fluid with more choices than today. Many features of the language not yet settled
 - Can we fix the crazy spelling?
 - Can we create a definitive English Grammar, like the Latin grammars?
 - Should there be an English Academy to control the language and keep it “pure”? – Can we refine English: use the good parts and remove the bad stuff? – Can you freeze the correct language so it doesn’t drift away?
 - Can we make people speak correctly? 4/4/2019 132 USA in 1790
3. The **first English dictionary** was written in **1755**.
4. It is estimated that **4,000 words a year are added to the dictionary**. The recent funny entries are ‘Hangry’ (feeling irritable or irrationally angry as a result of being hungry), ‘YOLO’ (the acronym meaning ‘you only live once’) and ‘cheeseball’ (someone or something lacking taste, style, or originality; or the breaded and deep fried cheese appetiser).
5. A **pangram** is a sentence that uses every letter in the alphabet. For example, “*The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog*”.
6. **Crutch words** refer to the words that we use a lot, but that don’t add any value to the sentence, such as these words that are often used to begin a sentence: ‘actually’, ‘honestly’ and ‘basically’.
7. The **letter ‘E’** is most commonly used in the English language; 1 out of 8 of all the letters written in English is ‘e’.

ENJOY!

8. '**Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis**' is the longest word in the English language, it has 45 letters and it is a type of lung disease, caused by inhaling ash and sand dust.
9. Apparently, the English language is **one of the happiest languages in the world**. And did you know the word 'happy' is used 3 times more often than the word 'sad'?
10. There was **no word for the colour orange** until about 450 years ago. Also orange, purple and silver are all words (and colours) that don't rhyme.
11. *Shakespeare invented over 17,000 words*, by changing nouns into verbs, changing verbs into adjectives, connecting words that had never been used together, adding prefixes and suffixes and creating original words. Lonely, elbow, luggage and fashionable are some examples of the words Shakespeare invented.
12. "Go!" is the shortest grammatically correct sentence in *English*. Find out some of the **longest words** in the English language.
13. The original name for *butterfly* was *flutterby*.
14. About *4,000 words* are added to the dictionary each year.
15. The two most common words in English are **I** and **you**.
16. 11% of the entire English language is just the letter **E**.
17. The most common adjective used in English is "good".
18. The most commonly used noun is "**time**".
19. The word "set" has the highest number of definitions.
20. The English language contains a lot of contronyms – words that can have **contradictory meanings** depending on context.
21. **90%** of English text consists of just **1000** words.
22. There are **24** different dialects of English in the US.
23. What is known as **British accent** came to use in and around London around the time of the American Revolution.
24. **Shakespeare** invented many words, such as birthplace, blushing, undress, torture and many more.
25. The word "**Goodbye**" originally comes from an Old English phrase meaning "**god be with you**".
26. Etymologically, **Great Britain** means "**great land of the tattooed**".

27. There are seven ways to spell the sound 'ee' in English. This sentence contains all of them: "He believed Caesar could see people seizing the seas".
28. Many **English words** have changed their meaning over time – for example, "awful" used to mean 'inspiring wonder' and was a short version of "full of awe", whereas 'nice' used to mean "silly".
29. The first English dictionary was written in 1755.
30. The oldest English word that is still in use is "**town**".

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