



ENG204

The English Language *Yesterday & Today*

Course Manual

Dele Adeyanju

The English Language: Yesterday and Today

ENG204



University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre
Open and Distance Learning Course Series Development
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Vice-Chancellor's Message

The Distance Learning Centre is building on a solid tradition of over two decades of service in the provision of External Studies Programme and now Distance Learning Education in Nigeria and beyond. The Distance Learning mode to which we are committed is providing access to many deserving Nigerians in having access to higher education especially those who by the nature of their engagement do not have the luxury of full time education. Recently, it is contributing in no small measure to providing places for teeming Nigerian youths who for one reason or the other could not get admission into the conventional universities.

These course materials have been written by writers specially trained in ODL course delivery. The writers have made great efforts to provide up to date information, knowledge and skills in the different disciplines and ensure that the materials are user-friendly.

In addition to provision of course materials in print and e-format, a lot of Information Technology input has also gone into the deployment of course materials. Most of them can be downloaded from the DLC website and are available in audio format which you can also download into your mobile phones, IPod, MP3 among other devices to allow you listen to the audio study sessions. Some of the study session materials have been scripted and are being broadcast on the university's Diamond Radio FM 101.1, while others have been delivered and captured in audio-visual format in a classroom environment for use by our students. Detailed information on availability and access is available on the website. We will continue in our efforts to provide and review course materials for our courses.

However, for you to take advantage of these formats, you will need to improve on your I.T. skills and develop requisite distance learning Culture. It is well known that, for efficient and effective provision of Distance learning education, availability of appropriate and relevant course materials is a *sine qua non*. So also, is the availability of multiple plat form for the convenience of our students. It is in fulfilment of this, that series of course materials are being written to enable our students study at their own pace and convenience.

It is our hope that you will put these course materials to the best use.



Prof. Abel Idowu Olayinka

Vice-Chancellor

Foreword

As part of its vision of providing education for “Liberty and Development” for Nigerians and the International Community, the University of Ibadan, Distance Learning Centre has recently embarked on a vigorous repositioning agenda which aimed at embracing a holistic and all encompassing approach to the delivery of its Open Distance Learning (ODL) programmes. Thus we are committed to global best practices in distance learning provision. Apart from providing an efficient administrative and academic support for our students, we are committed to providing educational resource materials for the use of our students. We are convinced that, without an up-to-date, learner-friendly and distance learning compliant course materials, there cannot be any basis to lay claim to being a provider of distance learning education. Indeed, availability of appropriate course materials in multiple formats is the hub of any distance learning provision worldwide.

In view of the above, we are vigorously pursuing as a matter of priority, the provision of credible, learner-friendly and interactive course materials for all our courses. We commissioned the authoring of, and review of course materials to teams of experts and their outputs were subjected to rigorous peer review to ensure standard. The approach not only emphasizes cognitive knowledge, but also skills and humane values which are at the core of education, even in an ICT age.

The development of the materials which is on-going also had input from experienced editors and illustrators who have ensured that they are accurate, current and learner-friendly. They are specially written with distance learners in mind. This is very important because, distance learning involves non-residential students who can often feel isolated from the community of learners.

It is important to note that, for a distance learner to excel there is the need to source and read relevant materials apart from this course material. Therefore, adequate supplementary reading materials as well as other information sources are suggested in the course materials.

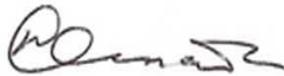
Apart from the responsibility for you to read this course material with others, you are also advised to seek assistance from your course facilitators especially academic advisors during your study even before the interactive session which is by design for revision. Your academic advisors will assist you using convenient technology including Google Hang Out, You Tube, Talk Fusion, etc. but you have to take advantage of these. It is also going to be of immense advantage if you complete assignments as at when due so as to have necessary feedbacks as a guide.

The implication of the above is that, a distance learner has a responsibility to develop requisite distance learning culture which includes diligent and disciplined self-study, seeking available administrative and academic support and acquisition of basic information technology skills. This is why you are encouraged to develop your computer skills by availing yourself the opportunity of training that the Centre’s provide and put these into use.

In conclusion, it is envisaged that the course materials would also be useful for the regular students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria who are faced with a dearth of high quality textbooks. We are therefore, delighted to present these titles to both our distance learning students and the university's regular students. We are confident that the materials will be an invaluable resource to all.

We would like to thank all our authors, reviewers and production staff for the high quality of work.

Best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bayo Okunade', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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About this course manual

The English Language: Yesterday and Today ENG204 has been produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre. All course manuals produced by University of Ibadan Distance Learning Centre are structured in the same way, as outlined below.

How this course manual is structured

The course overview

The course overview gives you a general introduction to the course. Information contained in the course overview will help you determine:

- If the course is suitable for you.
- What you will already need to know.
- What you can expect from the course.
- How much time you will need to invest to complete the course.

The overview also provides guidance on:

- Study skills.
- Where to get help.
- Course assignments and assessments.
- Margin icons.

We strongly recommend that you read the overview *carefully* before starting your study.

The course content

The course is broken down into Study Sessions. Each Study Session comprises:

- An introduction to the Study Session content.
- Study Session outcomes.
- Core content of the Study Session with a variety of learning activities.
- A Study Session summary.
- Assignments and/or assessments, as applicable.
- Bibliography

Your comments

After completing *The English Language: Yesterday and Today* we would appreciate it if you would take a few moments to give us your feedback on any aspect of this course. Your feedback might include comments on:

- Course content and structure.
- Course reading materials and resources.
- Course assignments.
- Course assessments.
- Course duration.
- Course support (assigned tutors, technical help, etc.)

Your constructive feedback will help us to improve and enhance this course.

Course Overview

Welcome to The English Language: Yesterday and Today ENG204

It is incontrovertible that language is one of the most dynamic social phenomena that the human race lives with and employs every day. It changes both in time and in space. Living things generally grow, develop and reproduce their kinds. Language is not an exception, as it has the capacity to change from one era to another and from one place to another.

Course outcomes

Upon completion of The English Language: Yesterday and Today ENG204, you will be able to:



Outcomes

- *fully describe and*

In this course, we shall examine the dynamic nature of language with particular reference to the English Language. The English Language which belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European family of languages emerged more or less as a fusion of various linguistic entities in the British isles, during the reign of Alfred, the Great (BC 871-899). Before its emergence, the Celtic language (spoken by the original inhabitant of the isles), Latin (introduced after Roman invasion), and the various dialects of the Germanic tribes (the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes) which came as a result of the Anglo-Saxon invasion, were the only known languages in the British isles. However, these various languages and dialects became collectively known as Englisc, and later English at the time of Alfred, the Great.

The language has since, undergone numerous changes in the course of its development from one era to another and from one region of the world to another. Thus, we have phases in the development of English such as Old English, Middle English, Early Modern English, (the English Language Yesterday) and Late Modern English (the English of today).

In addition to treating the various stages of the development of the language, we will also look at the various invasions experienced by the British Isles and the linguistic influences of those invasions. Other major topics covered by the course include the contribution of William Shakespeare, the Holy Bible and William Caxton's printing technology to

the development of English. Also, we will look at the age of the Dictionary in the development of English, the spread of English across cultures, the varieties of English as well as English as the World's lingua franca.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

Explain the linguistic features of Old English, Middle English and Early Modern English;

Appraise the linguistic influences of the Roman invasion, the Anglo-Saxon invasion, the Scandinavian invasion and the Norman conquest;

Identify and explain major regional dialects of English; and

Justify the claim that English is fast becoming the lingua franca of the world.

Timeframe



How long?

This is a 15 week course. It requires a formal study time of 45 hours. The formal study times are scheduled around online discussions / chats with your course facilitator / academic advisor to facilitate your learning. Kindly see course calendar on your course website for scheduled dates. You will still require independent/personal study time particularly in studying your course materials.

How to be successful in this course



As an open and distance learner your approach to learning will be different to that from your school days, where you had onsite education. You will now choose what you want to study, you will have professional and/or personal motivation for doing so and you will most likely be fitting your study activities around other professional or domestic responsibilities.

Essentially you will be taking control of your learning environment. As a consequence, you will need to consider performance issues related to time management, goal setting, stress management, etc. Perhaps you will also need to reacquaint yourself in areas such as essay planning, coping with exams and using the web as a learning resource.

We recommend that you take time now—before starting your self-study—to familiarize yourself with these issues. There are a number of excellent resources on the web. A few suggested links are:

- <http://www.dlc.ui.edu.ng/resources/studyskill.pdf>

This is a resource of the UIDLC pilot course module. You will find sections on building study skills, time scheduling, basic concentration techniques, control of the study environment, note taking, how to read essays for analysis and memory skills (“remembering”).

- http://www.ivywise.com/newsletter_march13_how_to_self_study.html

This site provides how to master self-studying, with bias to emerging technologies.

- <http://www.howtostudy.org/resources.php>

Another “How to study” web site with useful links to time management, efficient reading, questioning/listening/observing skills, getting the most out of doing (“hands-on” learning), memory building, tips for staying motivated, developing a learning plan.

The above links are our suggestions to start you on your way. At the time of writing these web links were active. If you want to look for more, go to www.google.com and type “self-study basics”, “self-study tips”, “self-study skills” or similar phrases.

Need help?



As earlier noted, this course manual complements and supplements ENG204at UI Mobile Class as an online course.

You may contact any of the following units for information, learning resources and library services.

Distance Learning Centre (DLC)

University of Ibadan, Nigeria
Tel: (+234) 08077593551 – 55
(Student Support Officers)
Email: ssu@dlc.ui.edu.ng

Head Office

Morohundiya Complex, Ibadan-Ilorin Expressway, Idi-Ose, Ibadan.

Information Centre

20 Awolowo Road, Bodija, Ibadan.

Lagos Office

Speedwriting House, No. 16 Ajanaku Street, Off Salvation Bus Stop, Awuse Estate, Opebi, Ikeja, Lagos.

For technical issues (computer problems, web access, and etcetera), please send mail to webmaster@dlc.ui.edu.ng.

Academic Support



Help

A course facilitator is commissioned for this course. You have also been assigned an academic advisor to provide learning support. The contacts of your course facilitator and academic advisor for this course are available at onlineacademicsupport@dlc.ui.edu.ng

Activities



Activities

This manual features “Activities”, which may present material that is NOT extensively covered in the Study Sessions. You will be provided with answers to every activity question. Therefore, your emphasis when working the activities should be on understanding your answers. It is more important that you understand why every answer is correct.

There are different forms of activities in this manual, ranging from reading activities, case studies, discussion activities. The use of activities is particularly based on learning outcomes and nature of content. Some Study Sessions comes with discussion topics. You may discuss the Study Sessions at respective discussion boards on course website.

You may see dates for active discussion with tutor on course schedule. This course schedule is available on the course website.

Assignment



Assignment

This manual also comes with tutor marked assignments (TMA). Assignments are expected to be turned-in on course website. You may also receive TMAs as part of online class activities. Feedbacks to TMAs will be provided by your tutor in not more than 2-week expected duration.

Schedule dates for submitting assignments and engaging in course / class activities is available on the course website. Kindly visit your course website often for updates.

Assessments



Assessments

There are two basic forms of self assessment in this course: in-text questions (ITQs) and self assessment questions (SAQs). Feedbacks to the ITQs are placed immediately after the questions, while the feedbacks to SAQs are at the back of manual.

Bibliography



Reading

For those interested in learning more on this subject, we provide you with a list of additional resources at the end of each Study Session; these may be books, articles or websites.

Getting around this course manual

Margin icons

While working through this course manual you will notice the frequent use of margin icons. These icons serve to “signpost” a particular piece of text, a new task or change in activity; they have been included to help you to find your way around this course manual.

A complete icon set is shown below. We suggest that you familiarize yourself with the icons and their meaning before starting your study.

			
Activity	Assessment	Assignment	Case study
			
Discussion	Group Activity	Help	Outcomes
			
Note	Reflection	Reading	Study skills
			
Summary	Terminology	Time	Tip

Study Session 1

Dynamic Nature of Language

Introduction

Language undoubtedly remains the most prominent characteristic that distinguishes man from other creatures. What remains a mystery to many however is the dynamic nature of language. This Session is designed to intimate you with the dynamic nature of language in time and space.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

1.1 explain the changing nature of language.

1.1 Dimensions of Language Change

A phenomenon that has remained a mystery to most people is the dynamic nature of **language**. Among the resources available to man to realize his potentials, language is incontrovertibly prominent. Language is also crucially germane to the actualization of whatever goal that is set either by individuals or a society. One is however surprised to see the systematic manner in which any language varies in use among individuals, regions, of the same nation, different nations etc. The same is true of changes a language undergoes from one period to another. The dimensions of change in language are numerous. At times changes in language are internally motivated while at times, they are externally motivated. Writing on English as a changing language, Singh (2005:5) asserts:

Studies of language change can (and do)... address issues such as the differentiation between internally and externally motivated change (that is, change that occurs and proceeds because of factors either intrinsic to the language system or present in the external social context), or focus on determining the factors that actuate change in the first instance, and facilitate the transmission and retention of some features and the discarding of others.

Singh avers further that change can be measured also in sociolinguistic terms by considering variables such as age, gender, ethnicity and attitudes to it. Thus, we have internally motivated changes in language such as witnessed in the course of history when, for instance, certain linguistic features (e.g. sound system) begin to change without external influence. Old English period is for instance referred to as a period of full inflection

while the middle English period is called a period of levelled inflection owing to the disappearance of most of the inflections that characterized English during the Old English period. The inflections that initially became weak and finally dropped brought about changes in the sound system of the language. Externally motivated changes on the other hand are caused by external factors such as contact with another language, socio-contextual/sociolinguistic variables such as gender, age, occupation, education, social status, region etc., and nativisation/domestication of a language that is not indigenous to a place.



Tip

Linguistic change takes place at different levels of analysis. Notable changes that have affected English over the years and may continue to affect it are sound change, lexical change, semantic change, morphological change, and syntactic change.

The changes that take place in language is too gradual to be readily noticed by people, but over a long period, such changes somehow produce another version or variety of the same language that is completely different from what could be said to be the "original" or former variety.

1.1.1 Sound Change

Singh (2005:6) affirming the claims of McMahon (1994:14) says:

Sound change can actually be viewed as an umbrella term for a wide variety of changes. Its processes may affect single sound segments (vowels or consonants), combinations of sounds such as consonant clusters and diphthongs, prosodic features such as rhythm, stress and intonation, as well as underlie large-scale sound shifts.

This implies that sound change refers to any change at the level of phonology. This level of linguistic analysis has two broad sub-divisions – segmental phonology and suprasegmental phonology. Under segmental phonology, we have sound segments known as vowels and consonants. There are pure vowels such as /e/, /u/, /ʌ/, and triphthongs such as consonants, on the other hand could exist as single segments or combination of segments known as consonant clusters. Examples of consonants are /k/, /b/, /s/. At the supragmental level, we have prosodic features that are super-imposed on sound segments. Such features are stress, intonation, rhythm etc. A change in any of the above features (segmental or suprasegmental) invariably affect the sound system of a language at one point or the other. Speaking about sound change that affect the pronunciation of certain words, Singh (2005:6) avers:

...texts indicate that medial/v/ in OE efen/efn 'even' was same times replaced by nasal/m/ through assimilation to final nasal /n/, resulting in spellings such as emn.

Singh (Ibid:7) also observes that at times sound segments could be sporadically deleted in pronunciation through aphaeresis (when an initial segment is lost, e.g., the loss of the word initial /k/ in 'kneel' and /g/ in 'gnome'). Also through apocope, when a final vowel is lost as in Modern

English ‘name’ /neim/ pronounced /na:mƏ/ in middle English. Loss of sound also occurs through syncope when medial vowels disappear as in “monecas” in Old English becoming monks in modern English. The same is true when in the process of haplology, a whole syllable is deleted as in Old English “Englaland” becoming “England” in Modern English. Also, according to Singh (ibid) sporadic change through metathesis when adjacent segments are re-ordered, as in Old English “brid” and “acsian” becoming “bird” and “ask” respectively in Modern English.

1.1.2 Lexical Change

Lexical change is one of the notable features of the flux of language. This takes place through several processes such as word loss, compounding, derivation, clipping, blending, borrowing etc. Writing about word loss in English for example, Singh (ibid:10) avers:

English has lost words such as deodand (‘something devoted to God’), blowen (‘prostitute’), smicker (‘to look amorously or wantonly’) and loitersacke (‘a lazy person’). It goes without saying that many of the words we use in Modern English will very likely follow the same route of obsolescence in the future. While some words fall completely out of use, others sometimes become resurrected and popularized by speakers who apply them to new domains often with change in meaning.

Compounding (another process of lexical change) occurred in Old English primarily with native English words but as words were later borrowed from other languages, compounding occurred with ‘foreign’ elements (words that are not native to English). Compounding in such instances create formations that were either hybrid (combining words from different languages) or completely non-native to English. Thus we have formations such as submarine (Latin sub ‘under’ + Latin ‘marin’ ‘sea’); telephone (Greek tele ‘far’ + Greek phone – ‘voice’); gentleman (French ‘gentil’ + English ‘man’); bluegreen (Old French bleu + English green).



What makes language a living phenomenon?

Derivation through affixation also remains another source of new words in English. Through the process of derivation, for instance, the root word ‘wise’ produces otherwise, clockwise, health wise, money wise, personality wise etc.

Clipping (another source of new words is a process whereby a word is extracted from a longer one and given the same meaning. Examples are photo (from photograph); phone (from telephone); bra (from brassiere); fridge (from refrigerator); flu (from influenza) etc. Such extractions are treated as autonomous words and not abbreviations.

Blending (another source of word formation) is more or less a combination of clipping and compounding, e.g. brunch (breakfast +

lunch); smog (smoke + fog), motel (motor + hotel), electrocute (electricity + execute); bollywood (Bombay + Hollywood).

Acronyms and initialisms also constitute sources of new words e.g. AIDS (Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome); SARS (Severe Respiratory Syndrome) etc.

1.1.3 Semantic Change

Change in meaning occurs in time and in space; i.e., over a period of time and from place to place. At times semantic change occurs relatively quickly while at times its occurrence is not noticeable within one's life time. The word 'gay' for example, some decades ago implied 'bright' or 'cheerful' but it is now being commonly used to imply 'homosexual'. The word 'aggravate' which traditionally means 'to make worse' is now being used by many speakers to mean 'to irritate' or 'to annoy'. Change in meaning is also a product of domestication of a language in a relatively new environment. The English Language, for instance has been domesticated in Nigeria and as such, expressions such as father, brother, sister, through the process of semantic extension have additional meanings to what they have in the L₁ context. The word, 'father' for instance, in addition to its meaning as a biological male parent as used in the L₁ context, also means in Nigeria, an elderly male relation that is old enough to have one as a child. There are also expressions in the L₁ setting whose meanings are completely different when used in the L₂ context. The expressions "trouble shooter" which means someone who quells troubles in British Standard English for instance, means someone who makes trouble in Nigerian English usage. The same applies to the word "mistress" which means a woman with whom one has an extra-marital affair (in British English) which means a female school teacher especially in rural areas in Nigeria.

1.1.4 Morphological Change

Morphological change essentially means change in word structure. However, as Singh (ibid:24) opines:

Since words are ultimately made up of sounds and in themselves made up of utterances, a language's morphology is integrated with its phonology and syntax and can be affected by changes they undergo.

In other words, the structure of words, the sound system and syntax of a language are so interwoven that whatever affects one would invariably somehow affect the others. That is why the pronunciation of certain words brings about changes in the word structure (morphology) of such words from regular to irregular forms in some cases and from singular to plural forms in other cases.

Consider the following changes in the plural morpheme which distinguishes the listed words from their singular forms, for example:

- | | |
|----------|-------|
| a) foot | feet |
| b) tooth | teeth |

- c) goose geese
- d) sing sang
- e) ring rang

1.1.5 Syntactic Change

One major factor responsible for syntactic change is change in word order. For example in the present day English, the following expressions which have the SVO (Subject-Verb-Object) word order were during the early Modern English rendered differently resulting in VSO word order:

(You)	follow	me	→	Follow	thou	me
S	V	O		V	S	O



Discussion Activity 1.1

Explain why a language used in country 'A' wears another look when used in country 'B'.

Post your response on Study Session I forum page on course website.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we saw how language is a dynamic phenomenon. This dynamism is promoted by sound change, lexical change, semantic change, morphological change, and syntactic change. These changes take place from one period in history to another, and from place to place.

Assessment



Assessment

SAQ 1.1 (tests Learning Outcome 1.1)

- I. What do you understand by the dynamic nature of language?
- II. Identify the factors that promote changes in language
- III. Explain the processes of phonological change
- IV. Explain with illustrations what you understand by lexical change
- V. How can the morphology of a language be affected by the changes undergone by its phonology and syntax?

Bibliography



Reading

Barber, Charles (1999) *The English Language: A Historical Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Baugh, A.C. & Cable, T. (1978) *A History of the English Language*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul

Singh, Ishtla (2005) *The History of English: A Student's Guide*. London: Hodder Arnold

Study Session 2

Concept of Language Families

Introduction

The relationship existing among human families is somehow similar to that which exists among language families. Just as an individual is able to trace his roots through the family relationship, i.e., the genealogy, it is also possible to trace the origin and roots of a language. In this Study Session therefore, we will make efforts to acquaint you with the specific details of the Indo-European family to which English belongs.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 2.1 analyze the genetic relationship existing among languages.
- 2.2 state the factors responsible for loss of mutual intelligibility.
- 2.3 distinguish between a language and its dialects.
- 2.4 explain the process through which a dialect changes to a language.
- 2.5 identify the family to which English belongs and other languages in that family.

2.1 Mutual Intelligibility

As discussed in Study Session One, language is a dynamic phenomenon. The fact that a language used over a large area has different varieties is incontrovertible. Changes in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary etc. from one region to another are common place among the component units or groups using the same language. In some cases, such changes are mild while in other cases they are quite significant. The degree of linguistic changes among different groups of speakers determine the degree of mutual intelligibility, and the degree of mutual intelligibility invariably determines whether a particular speech form is a dialect of a particular language or a distinct language of its own. If for instance, we have Groups A & B and there is a reasonable degree of mutual intelligibility among speakers of Group 'A' and speakers of Group 'B', we consider both groups of speakers as using the same language. However, once mutual intelligibility is lost among speakers of the two groups, they can no longer be said to be speaking the same language, but different languages. In Nigeria, for example, the three major indigenous languages are Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, each of which has several dialects. Using Yoruba as an illustration, Oyo dialect on which the orthography of the language is mainly based, stands out and is generally accepted as the standard dialect while we have other dialects, notably Ekiti (spoken in

Ekiti and parts of Kwara State), Ijesa (spoken in parts of Osun State), Igbomina (spoken in parts of Kwara and Osun States), Okun (spoken in parts of Kogi, Kwara, Ondo and Ekiti States) etc. Speakers of the above dialects enjoy at least, a measure of mutual intelligibility with one another and are therefore... regarded as dialects of Yoruba.

Also, the Hausa language used in the core north of the country displays several mutually intelligible varieties just as Igbo in the South East has several mutually intelligible varieties. Such varieties of Hausa and Igbo that are mutually intelligible are not distinct languages but different dialects of Hausa and Igbo respectively.

Owing to its global spread, the English Language has a lot of varieties as L₁, L₂ and FL (i.e. first language, second language and foreign language). In the United Kingdom where English is used as an L₁ for instance, we have the R.P (Received Pronunciation) used across regional boundaries; Scottish English (used in Scotland); Irish English used in Ireland; Welsh English (used in Wales), and English English (used in England). We also have regional dialects of English in different countries of the world. So language as mutual intelligibility exists among different groups of speakers of the language, we regard them as speaking one and the same language with dialectal variations.

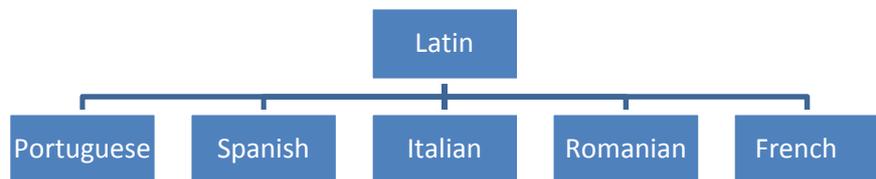
2.2 Loss of Mutual Intelligibility and Emergence of a New Language

The degree of variation that is noticeable among dialects of the same language varies from place to place. In some cases such linguistic changes are prominent while in others, they are mild as earlier mentioned. Mutual intelligibility is the factor that puts different regional dialects in the same family; that is, dialects of the same language are to a reasonable degree, mutually intelligible. In other words, if speakers of two speech forms (A and B) for instance, can freely interact in their respective dialects without the need of an interpreter and without inhibitions to communication, then there is mutual intelligibility. A and B are said to be mutually intelligible. However, mutual intelligibility could be lost as a result of loss of contact owing to any of the following factors:

- a) Large scale migration that hinders contact of a speech community with its kit and kin for a long period of time;
- b) Administrative restriction preventing speakers of Dialect 'A' to freely mix with those of Dialect 'B' over a long period of time.
- c) A natural barrier such as an ocean which cuts off a group of speakers from a similar group that shares mutual intelligibility with it.
- d) Absence of a common ground of interaction by two groups of speakers for too long.

Once mutual intelligibility is lost, between two speakers belonging to different speech forms, the two speech forms cannot be said to be dialects of the same language but distinct languages. When a former dialect

develops into a full-fledged language in this way, we say they are related; that is, they belong to the same family. Such is the case with Latin whose matured daughter languages include Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish and French. It is pertinent to note that these daughter languages of Latin have become the national languages of their respective countries – Italy, Spain, Portugal, Romania, and France (Barber, 1993:52). In addition to the above daughter languages of Latin that have become national languages of different countries, we also have some daughter languages of Latin that are spoken by some large groups of people but yet to become national languages. Examples are Romansh (spoken in parts of Switzerland and Italy), Provenca (spoken in Catalonia and the Balearic Isles), and Sardinian (spoken in Southern Sardinia). All languages that spring out from Latin are technically referred to as Romance languages represented by a family tree as follows:



Latin itself emerged from a parent language called Proto-Indo-European. Her sister languages in the Proto-Indo-European family include Greek, Hellenic, Celtic and Germanic.

2.3 Indo-European Languages

We have so far, discussed the relationship that exist among languages of the same family i.e., how a dialect develops into a full-fledged language and how a daughter language emerges from a parent language. Since English is our focus of interest in this course, it is imperative to determine the language family to which English belongs. Generally, resemblances among a group of languages might provide a limit that such languages are related. However, as Barber (1993:58) avers, “resemblances alone do not prove relationship... The resemblances must be systematic”. European languages for instance look alike as attested to by English words, father, sing, live, stone which translate respectively to vater, singen, leben and stein in German. Further resemblances among languages of the same family are noticeable in the following data provided by Barber (1993:58).

Table 1.1 Similarities in English, German and Swedish

English	German	Swedish
stone	stein	sten
bone	bein	ben
oak	eiche	ek
hom	heim	hem
rope	reif	rep
goat	geiss	get
one	ein	en

In the above data, we observe that the words do not only look alike across languages, but that there are regular correspondences. As pointed out by Barber (ibid):

Words with English / Θ u/ have German ei and Swedish e. Such correspondences arise when related languages are produced by divergent development, because, as we have seen, the changes in pronunciation in any one language or dialect follow regular sound laws.

English belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European languages. The Indo-European family comprises the foremost linguistic family of the world in view of geographical spread and population. This language family ranks next to none in view of the numerical strength and geographical distribution of its members. The language family has two major groups – the eastern group and the western group. Other major languages or groups of languages that belong to the Western group of the Germanic family are Celtic, Germanic, Greek and Italic. English is a Germanic language with Gothic, German, Dutch, Flemish, Frisian, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian and Icelandic as close relatives.



Tip

GERMANIC BRANCH OF INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

Germanic group of languages includes English and its close relatives. This group (Germanic) has three major classes – East Germanic, North Germanic and West Germanic. The Chief language of East Germanic is Gothic while the North Germanic languages include Danish, Swedish, Norwegian and Icelandic. West Germanic languages consist of two groups: High German (the standard language of present day Germany), and Low German (consisting of Dutch, Flemish, Frisian, and English).

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we saw that language families are similar to human families. English is a member of the West Germanic branch of the Indo-European family. Loss of mutual intelligibility between dialects leads to the emergence of a new language.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. In what way do language families look similar to human languages?
- II. Loss of mutual intelligibility invariably leads to the emergence of a new language. Discuss.
- III. Which language family does English belong to? What are its sister languages in that family?
- IV. In what way can two or more languages be said to be related?
- V. What is the difference between a language and a dialect?
- VI. What are the branches of the Indo-European family?
- VII. Which languages are referred to as Romance languages?
- VIII. What are the sister languages of English in the West Germanic family?
- IX. How does a dialect develop into a language?

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Study Session 3

Roman Invasion of Britain

Introduction

From ancient times till now, it has always been customary for each country to establish and maintain security forces that are responsible for defending her territorial integrity. This is to forestall the possibility of encroachment and invasion. In spite of this, powerful nations especially in olden days had from time to time invaded and subjugated weak ones in the quest of territorial expansion and demonstration of military superiority. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines invasion as "the act of an army entering another country by force in order to take control of it". Major invasions experienced by Britain include the Roman invasion, the Anglo-Saxon invasion, the Scandinavian invasion and the Norman Conquest. Each of these invasions exerted tremendous socio-political and sociolinguistic influences on the territory. This Study Session is aimed at getting you acquainted with the first known major invasion that Britain experienced (the Roman invasion). The session gives the details of the said invasion and the linguistic effects of that invasion.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 3.1 discuss the attempts by Romans to invade England.
- 3.2 articulate the linguistic influences of the invasion.
- 3.3 explain the circumstances that led to the termination of the invasion.

3.1 Overview of Roman Invasion

In 55 BC England came under a serious attack and attempted invasion masterminded by Julius Caesar, the leader of the Roman forces. This attempt however failed as the Celtic people (the original inhabitants of British Isles) successfully defended their country and kept the invaders at bay. However in 43 AD, Emperor Claudius brought the Roman legions to attempt another invasion on Britain. This was a successful attempt as the Roman forces fought, conquered and completely subjugated Britain. Britain then became a colonial territory of Rome and as such, Roman government sent its troops, as an army of occupation to the conquered territory. This was to checkmate the invasion of external attacks especially from the Picts and Scots which had constituted a continual threat to the island.

The indigenous language of the Britons was the Celtic language but during the Roman invasion and occupation of the territory, Latin, the language of the Roman overlords became the official language and language of nobility. By virtue of its status as official language, Latin invariably became the language of prestige and upward social mobility in Britain. Although the masses continued to use the Celtic language, those who wanted to be relevant in the scheme of things in the polity had to learn and use Latin.

After many years of Roman occupation and colonial rule over Britain, the termination of the Roman invasion took place in rather dramatic circumstances. In 410AD, Rome was under a serious threat of external attack. The strength of its military at home did not appear sufficient to ward off the threat. In order to confidently deal with the situation and guarantee her own security and protection of her territorial integrity, she had to recall her troops from Britain and other parts of the world to come and provide security at home. Thus, the Roman soldiers in Britain were withdrawn as their services were seriously needed at home. This invariably led to the termination of the Roman invasion of the British Isles.

3.2 Linguistic Effects of Roman Invasion

The Roman invasion led to the introduction of Latin in Britain and the subsequent transformation of the island to a bilingual society. The co-existence of Latin with the Celtic language thus invariably resulted in the linguistic implications of bilingualism such as biculturalism, borrowing, interference, code-mixing and code-switching etc. Early loan words from Latin which later became part of the vocabulary of Old English (when English evolved in Britain) included lexical items of Christianity such as:

i.	cirica	church
ii.	deofol	devil
iii.	apostol	apostle
iv.	biscop	bishop

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we noted that after an initial failed attempt by Julius Caesar of Rome, Emperor Claudius successfully led the Roman forces to invade and subjugate the British isle in 55 BC. Latin became the language of nobility while the masses continued to use the Celtic language. In 410 AD the Roman troops were withdrawn from Britain as a result of external threats to Rome.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. When did Rome make the first known attempt to invade Britain and what was the outcome of that attempt?
- II. Can you think of the goal a powerful nation intends to achieve by invading and subjugating a weak one?
- III. Has invasion or colonialism anything to do with the indigenous language of the conquered people?
- IV. What are the four major invasions that Britain experienced?
- V. Explain the history, features and linguistic effects of the Roman invasion of Britain.
- VI. What circumstances led to the termination of the Roman invasion?
- VII. The Roman invasion of Britain was a blessing in disguise. Comment

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Study Session 4

Anglo Saxon Invasion of Britain

Introduction

The next major invasion that Britain experienced after the Roman invasion was carried out by three Germanic tribes from the North-West Europe. The three Germanic tribes were the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes and the invasion is popularly known as the Anglo-Saxon invasion. In this Study Session, we will see how Anglo-Saxon invasion is very crucial in the linguistic history of Britain, as it changed the territory to a multilingual society and later produced a fusion of the various linguistic forms into one entity called English.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 4.1 state the factors that precipitated the Anglo-Saxon invasion.
- 4.2 differentiate between the invasion and the Roman invasion.
- 4.3 identify the seven kingdoms created after the settlement of the invaders.
- 4.4 enumerate the linguistic influences of the invasion.

Hint

In this session, you will be acquainted with the circumstances that led to the Anglo-Saxon invasion, the features as well as the linguistic effects of the invasion.

4.1 Overview of Anglo-Saxon Invasion of England

In 410AD, the Roman troops that served as an army of occupation during the Roman invasion in English were withdrawn because their services were seriously needed at home as Rome itself was under threat of external attack. As a result of this withdrawal, the security situation in England became porous and the island became vulnerable to external attacks especially from the Picts and Scots who had always constituted a threat to the people. England was then rife with fear that if no urgent protective step was taken, the island might be completely overrun by external forces. In order to avert this, Vortigean, the leader of the Celtic people requested for military assistance from the Jutes, one of the Germanic tribes from North-West Europe. This specific request was that the Jutes should confront the Picts and Scots and drive them away from England. In other words, the Jutes were requested to checkmate the incessant attacks of the Picts and Scots and keep the England secured. The Jutes acceded to the request and launched an attack on the Picts and

Scots. They (the Jutes) succeed in that venture and so, the Picts and Scots were defeated and driven away from the island. This development brought a great relief to the Celtic people who were apparently impressed by the effective handling of their “enemies” by the Jutes. As a reward for their successful military campaigns against the Picts and Scots, and probably as a strategy for further accessing their military expertise at the time of need, the Celtic people gave the island of Thanet to the Jutes for settlement. The Jutes accepted the offer and settled in the island of Thanet. Unfortunately, the Celtic people did not perceive that the Jutes were poised to execute their own private agenda that ran contrary to the interest of the British isles. Soon after their settlement in the island of Thanet, the Jutes collaborated with their fellow Germanic tribes (the Angles, and the Saxons) in an effort to jointly launch a large-scale invasion that would enable them to dispossess the Celtic people of the entire British isles. In their opinion, the land was fertile and the inhabitants (the Celts) were cowardly. With such enticing words from the Jutes, the three Germanic tribes ruthlessly invaded and took over the rulership of England. It was an invasion that “caused a revolution in the linguistic landscape of Britain” (Adeyanju 2004:63).

4.2 Comparison of Roman and Anglo Saxon Invasions

Unlike the Roman invasion during which England was administered as a colonial territory, the Anglo-Saxon invaders came not just rule but to disposes the people of what rightly belonged to them. They came and forcefully settled en mas in the choice places of the island while the original inhabitants (the Celts) became subservient to them. When they came to England, the Anglo-Saxons initially lived independent isolated life but later they came together to set up a powerful administrative structure under the influence of a power leader. Seven Kingdoms were established. The names of those seven kingdoms were Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglea, Kent, Essex, Wessex and Sussex. There were regroupings at various times. Northumbria had authority over a number of these Kingdoms and led the other Kingdoms in literature and learning in the 7th century. A century later, this leadership passed on to Mercia. In the 9th century, however, Wessex took over the leadership in political supremacy as well as in literature and learning. By the time of Alfred the Great (871 – 899), the Wessex political power extended beyond the seven Kingdoms to Wales.

4.3 Linguistic Effects of Anglo Saxon Invasion

The Celtic speaking people of Britain could be said to be homogenous in view of their cultural and linguistic heritage before the devastating effects of invasions experienced by them. The homogeneity was first affected by the Roman invasion which came with Latin and changed the island to a bilingual territory. A further devastating blow was dealt to that homogeneity by the Anglo-Saxon invasion during which Britain had five

different linguistic entities as follows: Celtic, Latin and the three dialects spoken by the three Germanic tribes that masterminded the Anglo-Saxon invasion. The above scenario notwithstanding, it is pertinent to note that the invading groups spoke dialects that were mutually intelligible. Communication therefore, was not a major problem among the people, though the island had become a multilingual territory.

After many years of co-existence among the various linguistic entities, the homogeneity that was lost during the Anglo-Saxon invasion was somewhat restored under the dynamic leadership of Alfred the Great (871 – 899). It was Alfred the Great who ensured that the various linguistic entities in the island became collectively known as Englisc, and later, English. Thus, the five linguistic forms having enjoyed a reasonable degree of mutual intelligibility became more or less fused with the vocabulary largely dominated by the Anglo-Saxon speech form. The emergence of Old English dated to this period.

Study Session Summary



Summary

The Anglo-Saxon invasion was precipitated by the Celtic people's request for military assistance from the Jutes after the withdrawal of the Roman troops from England. The invasion whose masterminds were the Germanic tribes of the Jutes, Angles and Saxons changed the British isles to a multilingual setting and later produced the fusion of the various linguistic forms used into a single entity called English.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. What was the original language of the inhabitants of the British isle and how was the territory transformed to a multilingual setting?
- II. State the remote and immediate factors that led to the Anglo-Saxon invasion.
- III. In what manner did English emerge as a language?
- IV. What were the circumstances that precipitated the Anglo-Saxon invasion?
- V. Who were the people that masterminded the invasion?
- VI. Identify the similarities and differences between the Anglo-Saxon invasion and Roman invasion.
- VII. What are the linguistic effects of the Anglo-Saxon invasion?

Study Session 5

The Scandinavian Invasion

Introduction

The Scandinavian invasion masterminded mainly by Denmark and Norway took place between 787 and 1042 in three phases. During the Scandinavian invasion, England experienced initially what could be described as robbery attacks by armed bandits probably as a result of the porous security situation of the borders and coastal towns. The incessant attacks by armed bandits later metamorphosed into a large scale invasion involving the deployment of hundreds of war ships in an attack on England. We will therefore be explicating the details of the three phases of the Scandinavian invasion and the linguistic effects of the invasion.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 5.1 explain the three phases of the invasion, and the principal actors of each phase.
- 5.2 identify some Scandinavian loan words that have become part of the vocabulary of English.

5.1 Overview of Scandinavian Invasion

The Scandinavian invasion and settlement in England which took place in three phases began in 787 and ended in 1042. It was an invasion that started like a child's play involving armed bandits whose interest was just to cart away valuables probably meant to guarantee their economic security. However as time went on, the invasion escalated to such a magnitude that the inhabitants of England probably never thought of. Two Scandinavian countries (Denmark and Norway) were involved in the invasion. With the use of hundreds of war ships, series of attacks were launched on England. Initially, only the Eastern part of England was conquered and controlled by the invaders but later the entire country came under the firm control of the Scandinavian forces. The details of what happened under each of the three phases of the invasion are discussed below.

5.1.1 First Wave of Raids (787 – 850)

The first wave of raids was masterminded by armed bandits who attacked and carted away valuables such as jewelry, expensive robes as well as

slaves. The targets of the bandits were coastal towns and monasteries. The more or less unlimited access that the armed bandits gained to England was incontrovertibly caused by the porous security situation of its borders and coastal towns. Thus, with little or no resistance, the bandits made a fortune through the items stolen from England. In their operations, the armed bandits attacked and sacked notable monasteries. Jarrow and Lindisfarne (very important monasteries) were attacked and sacked in 793 and 794 respectively, for instance. The incessant attacks of the armed bandits on England went a long way to worsen the already porous security situation of the country. This probably motivated the Danish war lords to embark on a large-scale invasion of the island.

5.1.2 Second Wave of Raids (850 – 878)

This stage of Scandinavian invasion was marked by the arrival of 350 Danish ships in England in the year 850. The aggressive invaders were determined to take possession of the British Isles and as such enormous resources were deployed to prosecute the invasion. After ravaging parts of England, the invaders succeeded in capturing Canterbury and London. This sent a signal to most other parts of the country about what might be their lot in the prevailing military circumstances. The invaders were however defeated by a West Saxon army. The valiant performances of the West Saxon army brought a relief to the country. The relief was however short-lived as the invaders renewed their attacks, and in 866, a large Danish army was deployed to plunder East Angles. The operation of the invaders was very devastating. York was captured in 867 and in 869, Edmund, the Angles King died while resisting the invaders. The aggressive invaders continued their military campaigns against England until they were in full control of the Eastern part of the country.

Having taken control of the Eastern part of England, the invaders were poised to take over the entire country. They now turned their attention to the West. The attack on Wessex commenced shortly before Alfred, the Great (871 – 899) got to power as King of England. The battle for supremacy between the invaders and West Saxon army was fierce and somewhat prolonged. There was a period of seven years of resistance during which temporary victories for Wessex were invariably succeeded by fresh defeats in the hands of the invaders. This implies that the West Saxon army fought gallantly to defend the territorial integrity of their fatherland while the invaders also remained dogged in their attempt to take over the entire country. However, West Saxon under the leadership of Alfred, the Great won an overwhelming victory in 878 resulting in the treaty of Wedmore. Alfred the Great, reputed for his military expertise and prowess visibly brought to bear his military ingenuity in ensuring that the invaders limited their operations to Eastern England. The treaty of Wedmore which resulted as a result of this development was signed by Alfred (for the English) and Guthrum (for the Danes). Under the treaty the Eastern part of England was to be subject to Danish Law while the western part was to remain under English Law. Also under the treaty, the pagan Danes agreed to become Christians; perhaps for a better observance of the treaty. Their leader Guthrum, was then baptized.

5.1.3 Third Wave of Raids 878 – 1042

The treaty of Wedmore was supposed to facilitate peaceful co-existence among the English and the Danes. Unfortunately, however, the treaty did not put a permanent end to hostilities between the two groups. This was because neither of the warring groups was committed to the terms of the treaty. “Guthrum was inclined to break faith and there were fresh invasion from outside” (Baugh & Cable, 1978:93). The successors of Alfred, the Great were also determined to recover the Eastern part of England from the invaders. The English forces therefore carried out series of attacks that put the Danes on the defensive until the victory of 937 which subdued the Danes and put a large part of Eastern England under English rule. The English forces were almost recovering the Eastern part of England when a new and formidable succession of invasions was launched. This time around, the attack was not just by Denmark. It was with the collaboration of Norway.

In 991, a fleet of ninety-three ships under Olaf Tryggvason of Norway invaded England. The invaders were however bribed to refrain from plundering the country. Three years later (994) Olaf Tryggvason, King of Norway, with the collaboration of Svein, King of Denmark, attacked London. Again the invaders were bribed to the tune of £48000. The monetary gratification brought only a temporary relief to England. Twenty years later (1014), Svein, King of Denmark with the support of his son, Cnut, seized the English throne and drove Athelred, the English King, into exile. The sudden death of Svein the same year then paved the way for his son, Cnut to rule England. For another twenty-five years, a Danish line of Kings ruled England.



- A) Who were the Scandinavians?
- B) Why were they in England?
- C) Did they succeed in their mission to England?

5.2 Linguistic Effects of the Invasion

A major influence of the Scandinavian invasion is that it increased the linguistic repertoire of the British Isles as the invaders came to England with their language, Old Norse. Thus Old English and Old Norse (related languages of Germanic origin) co-existed and influenced each other. More than 1,400 Scandinavian place-names exist till today in English. Examples are names ending with “by”, such as Grimby, Whitby, Derby, Rugby, Theresby, etc. All these names contain the Danish word, “by”, meaning farm. There are also names containing the Danish word “Thorpe” (village) in examples such as Althorpe, Bishopthorpe, gawthorpe, Linthorpe etc. Also names like Applethwaite, Braithwaite, Cowperthwaite, Langthwaite, Satterthwaite betray their Scandinavian origin. The Danish word, “thwaite” means isolated piece of land.

Study Session Summary



Summary

We have learnt that the Scandinavian invasion was masterminded by Denmark and Norway between 787 and 1042. The invasion was in three phases. While the first phase was in form of robbery attacks by armed bandits, the second phase was characterized by the use of 350 Danish war ships in an attack on England in the year 850. During the third phase of the invasion, a fleet of 93 ships from Norway invaded England, thus joining Denmark in attacking England.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. What are the salient features of the three phases of the Scandinavian invasion?
- II. At what stage did Norway join its forces with Denmark in the attack on England and what was the outcome of that collaboration?
- III. What are the linguistic effects of the Scandinavian invasion?
- IV. Enumerate some Scandinavian loan-words still in use today in the English speaking world.

Study Session 6

The Norman Conquest

Introduction

We recall that in the last lecture, during the third phase of the Scandinavian invasion, Althelred, King of Britain, was driven to exile by the Danes who took over the throne. In this lecture, we shall look at the Norman Conquest which marks a significant milestone, not only in the imperial history but also in the linguistic history of England. The conquest was such a significant landmark because it introduced entirely new nobility. Most of the native English nobles were executed or humiliated as traitors and their positions were given to the Normans or other followers of William, the conqueror. In this Study Session, we will explore the Norman Conquest which brought about a displacement of the nobility as well as the official language of England.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 6.1 explain the origin of Normandy.
- 6.2 appraise the circumstances that led to the loss of Normandy and the Conquest of England.
- 6.3 account for the influx of French words into the vocabulary of English.

6.1 Overview of Norman Conquest

Normandy, a district located on the northern coast of France derived its name from the bands of Northmen who settled there in the ninth and tenth centuries when similar bands were also settling in the north and east of England (Baugh & Cable 1978:107). This means the Normans were Scandinavian Vikings who carried out seaborne raids of North Western Europe between 8th and 11th centuries AD. They usually went in long ships raiding coastal regions, attacking countries of their target and settling in such countries. On getting to France, the Vikings, with the force of their arms, won recognition from the King of France (Charles, the simple). Since it was rather impossible for France to drive away the north men from its land, she had to accommodate them and give them a place to dwell. It was that place that was called Normandy, i.e., the dwelling place of the Normen. According to Barber (1999:134)

The rulers of Normandy had originally been Scandinavian Vikings, who occupied parts of northern France and were eventually recognized by the

French crown: in 912, Rollo became the first Duke of Normandy, and accepted the King of France as his overlord.



Tip

The Norman Conquest entrenched the use of French as the language of nobility and official language of England for two hundred years.

Having lost contact with their ancestral home for too long, the Normans adopt French culture, customs and language as their own. A notable characteristic of Normans is their easy adaptability to the customs of the people among whom they found themselves. It was therefore easy for them to imbibe the French custom and culture. In fact, they lost their mother tongue and took up French as their language.

This lends credence to Barber's (1999:134) claim that:

By the middle of the 11th century... the Normans had long lost their Scandinavian speech: they spoke French, and were essentially French in culture.

Before the Norman Conquest, England had maintained fairly close relations with Normandy. King Athelred of England who was sent on exile by the Scandinavian forces was married to a Norman wife. When he was removed and driven to exile, he took refuge in Normandy with his brother-in-law, the Duke of Normandy. His son, Edward, the confessor who was brought up in Normandy by a Norman mother imbibed French customs and civilization. In fact he was almost more French than English when in 1042, the Danes had lost the throne and he (Edward) was restored to the throne from which his father was sent on exile. When Edward got to the English throne, he brought in a lot of his Norman friends and gave them notable positions in government. In the words of Baugh and Cable (1978:108) "a strong French atmosphere pervaded the English Court during the twenty-four years of his reign".

6.2 The Death of Edward the Confessor and the Crisis of Succession

One of the immediate factors that precipitated the attack and subsequent conquest of the Normans was the crisis of succession to the throne of England after the death of Edward, the confessor. A well established tradition in England was that after the demise of a monarch, his child succeeded him. But Edward, the confessor died childless in January, 1066, thus leading to a vacuum. In order to fill this vacuum, Harold, the earl of West Saxon Eardom was elected King. The tradition was thus unavoidably broken. This was challenged by William, the duke of Normandy who was a second cousin to the late King. William who was believed to have received a tacit support from King Edward to ascend the throne after him realized that in the prevailing circumstances, his dream of becoming the King of England could only come true by force. He nevertheless remained determined to have his ambition fulfilled as he mustered all the resources within his reach to fight for the throne. In

September 1066, William with his army landed pevensey to commence a military operation with the English forces. It was a formidable force that was sufficiently equipped to deal with England and take over its throne. In the battle that was fought at Hastings, the English forces fought gallantly to defend themselves, but King Harold was pierced in the eye by a Norman arrow. As he died instantly, the English troops fled in all directions for safety. As recalled by Barber (1999:135):

The Normans demonstrated their superiority in military techniques, for they had the new heavy cavalry that had been developed on the continent by the Franks, while the Anglo-Saxons still fought on foot behind a wall or round shields.

On the Christmas day of 1066, William the conqueror was crowned King of England. This invariably boosted the fortunes of the Normans and of course, the French language. It is pertinent to note however that William's acceptance as King of England was not immediately forthcoming. As recalled by Ishtla Singh (2005:106):

In the early years of his reign, William faced significant opposition to which he retaliated forcefully, burning and plundering portions of the country, stationing armed troops across the countryside and executing members of the Old Anglo-Saxon nobility involved in plots of treason. He also rewarded his supporters and retainers, Norman and otherwise, with properties, estates and offices of the English nobility (many of whom had been killed at Hastings).

Thus, a new nobility made up essentially or Normans took charge of the reins of power during the time of William, the conqueror, and his sons. The displacement of the English nobility by the Norman overlords was such a drastic exercise that as at 1072 only one of the twelve earls was an English man and he was executed four years later. Similar to what obtained in government/secular realm, the church also experienced a drastic change in its leadership as a result of the Norman Conquest. The two archbishops in England were Normans. Among the Bishops, Wulfstan of Worcester was the only Englishman. The linguistic impact of this conquest was enormous as the scenario presented above facilitated the ascendance of French as the language of the ruling class.

The ruling class continued to use French since they did not understand English. They made no deliberate effort to learn English as there was no motivation for them to do so. For 200 years after the conquest, French remained the official language in England. Through intermarriage and association with the ruling class, many English people found it advantageous to learn and use French. The language of the common people however, remained English.

This lends credence to the claim of Ishtla Singh (2005:107) that

...English was ousted from public and official roles, and the cultivation of one of its varieties as a literary standard – a process which had begun with West Saxon under Alfred –

was halted. English would not make a comeback for about two hundred years.

6.3 Effects of Norman Conquest on the Linguistics and Imperialism of England

The influx of French words in the vocabulary of English was mainly as a result of the co-existence of English and French for two hundred years. This had a far reaching effect on English to the point that when English later regained its status as official Language of England, it was no more what it used to be.



Tip

The Norman Conquest entrenched the use of French as the language of nobility and official language of England for two hundred years.

Study Session Summary



Summary

The Norman Conquest of 1066 was a significant Landmark in the history of English as it replaced the English nobility with Norman nobility. French, the language of the invaders also displaced English as official language for 200 years.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. How did the crisis of succession in England precipitate the battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest of 1066?
- II. The displacement of the English nobility by the Norman overlords was a strategy employed by William to consolidate himself in power. Discuss
- III. What are the linguistic effects of the Norman Conquest?
- IV. What makes the Norman Conquest a significant landmark in the history of England?
- V. Explain the origin of the people referred to as Norman French.
- VI. Who was William, the conqueror, and what was his relationship with Althelred?
- VII. How did the Norman Conquest affect the nobility of England?
- VIII. What factors enhanced the preference of French to English during the Norman Conquest?

Study Session 7

The Re-Establishment of English (1200-1500)

Introduction

In this Study Session, you will be acquainted with the circumstances in which the English Language regained its lost status as official language of England. The session will provide insight into the factors that contributed to the re-establishment of English after its displacement for two hundred years by French as the official language of England.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:
7.1 explain the factors that promoted the re-establishment of English.

7.1 English Language: Regain of Functional Status

As noted in the previous Session, King John loss Normandy to the English crown in 1204. The era of divided allegiance was over. As if that was not enough, the King of France announced by a decree of 1204 – 1205 that he had confiscated the lands of several nobles who had their abode in England. When families who had estates in both countries were compelled to give up one, most of them preferred to retain their larger holdings in England while giving up what they had in Normandy. Such families which had given up what they had in Normandi then began to pay full allegiance to England. The linguistic effect of this is significant, as allegiance to England gradually translated to allegiance to the English Language.

The reaction against foreigners which engendered national feelings was another factor which favoured the re-establishment of English. The coalition of anti-foreign forces under the leadership of Simon de Montfort embarked vigorously on a campaign tagged “England for the English”. This campaign, as expected, inspired national consciousness in the people. The outcome of this apposition was the Barons’ war (1258 – 1265) during which time the foreigners were driven out of England twice.

Another strong factor that promoted the ascendance of English was the development of a positive attitude to English vis-à-vis French, to the point that by around 1300, the mother tongue of the children of the

nobility was in most cases, English. Since the French speaking Normans now saw themselves as English people, having given up their French estates and citizenship, it was unreasonable for them not to embrace the English Language. The emergence of a positive attitude to English at this time is expressed by Baugh and Cable (1978:137) in the following words:

It is interesting to note the appearance at this time of an attitude that becomes more noticeable later, the attitude that the proper language for Englishmen to know and use is English.

Another factor which caused a decline in the prestige of French and which favoured the ascendancy of English was the growing idea that Anglo-French was not “good” French. Out of the four major dialects of French that existed during the middle ages, i.e., Norman, Picard (spoken in the north-east) Burgundia (in the east), and the central French of Paris, the norman French used in England (which of course, must have been influenced by its contact with English) ranked lowest in terms of prestige.

Another important factor that boosted the prestige of English was the rise of the middle class. As Baugh & Cable (1978:141) rightly claim, “the importance of a language is largely determined by the importance of the people who speak it”. Towards the end of the Middle English period, a shortage of manpower to run the Economy of England brought about an improvement in the conditions of service of the labouring classes. The shortage of workers was precipitated by an outbreak of epidemics which between 1348 and 1349, ravaged most parts of England leading to a high death toll that largely affected workers – a phenomenon commonly referred to as “The Black Death”.

The effects of so great a calamity were naturally serious, and in one direction at least are fully demonstrable. As in most epidemics, the rich suffered less than the poor. The poor man could not shut himself up in his castle or break himself off to a secluded manor. The mortality was accordingly greatest among the lower orders and the result was a serious shortage of labour. This is evident in the immediate rise in wages...

The changes in the socio-economic fortunes of the members of the middle class as explained above also invariably affected their language. English thus began to regain its relevance and prestige.

The functional status of English especially in official domains became gradually entrenched from the beginning of the fourteenth century. Unlike in the past, much of the literature of England now began to be kept in English. In 1349, English became the language of the Grammar school. In 1362, parliament was opened for the first time in English. This formally marked the recognition of English as the official language of England. In the same year English became the language of the judiciary.

Study Session Summary



After two hundred years of the use of French as official language of England, a wind of change began to blow. The Norman overlords that displaced the English nobles after the Norman conquest of 1066 were

Summary

confronted with the challenge of giving up their estates either in England or France – a situation that forced many of them to drop their allegiance to France. Coupled with this was the rise of the middle class which engendered national consciousness among native English speakers. French gradually declined in prestige and status while English gradually regained its lost glory as official language.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. For how many years did French displace English as the official language of England?
- II. When did English regain its lost status and under what circumstances?
- III. What factors promoted the re-establishment of English?
- IV. Name some notable characters that featured in the story of the re-establishment of English.
- V. How did the rise of the middle class better the lot of English?
- VI. What factors precipitated the decline of French and the re-establishment of English as official language?
- VII. When was the parliament of England opened for the first time in English after centuries of French domination?
- VIII. What role did Language attitude play in the re-establishment of English?

Study Session 8

Old English (449AD – 100)

Introduction

Language, as a dynamic phenomenon, changes in time and space. In the course of history, the English language has undergone a lot of changes. Four periods could be identified. These are Old English period (449 AD – 1100); Middle English period (1100 – 1500); Early Modern English period (1500 – 1700); and Late Modern English period (1700 to date).



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 8.1 identify the dialects of Old English and where they were spoken.
- 8.2 enumerate and explain the linguistic characteristics of Old English.
- 8.3 explain the morphology of Old English.

8.1 Dialects of Old English

Hint

The focus of this section is Old English and its linguistic characteristics with reference to orthography, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation.

The Old English period (449 AD – 1100) was a period of full inflections as claimed by most scholars because the significance of word endings was much more pronounced during the period than any other period in the development of English. This period is described as a period of full inflections because as Baugh and Cable (1978:50) claim, “during most of this period the endings of the noun, the adjective and the verb are preserved more or less unimpaired”. Several linguistic entities exert diverse degrees of influence on Old English. But by far, the language of the Anglo-Saxon invaders exerted more influence on Old English than the Celtic language and Latin that were on ground before the Anglo-Saxon invasion. This was so because, as Barber (1999:101) rightly claims:

The Anglo-Saxon conquest was not just the arrival of a ruling minority, but the settlement of a whole people. Their language remained the dominant one...

Four major dialects of Old English could be identified. These are Northumbrian, Mercian, West-Saxon and Kentish. Two of these were Anglean: Northumbrian spoken in the northern part of River Humber, and Mercian, spoken in the Midlands between Rivers Humber and Thames.

Kentish was the dialect of Jutes in the South Eastern part of the island, while West Saxon was spoken south of the Thames.

Of all these dialects, West Saxon enjoyed preeminence, and through it, we have the great bulk of Old English writing. Why did West Saxon enjoy such prominence above the other dialects as to more or less be the sole custodian of Old English texts? In the 9th century, the centre of culture, civilization and influence shifted first from Northumbria to Mercia, and then to Wessex, the home of West Saxon. Alfred, the Great, who ruled between 871 and 899 was not only a great military leader; he was equally a champion of learning.

8.2 Characteristics of Old English

Before stating some specific characteristics of Old English, we consider it useful to reproduce the text of the Lord's prayer in the King James' version of the Holy Bible (Mathew Chapter 6):

...Faeder Ure pee art on heofonum, si pin nama gehalgod. To becume pin rin rice. Gewurpe Jin willa on eorJan sula on heofonum. Ume gedaeghwamlican half syle u to daeg. And forgyf us ure gyitas, swa we forgyfat urum gyltendum. And ne gelaed pu us on cost nunge, ac alys us of yfele... soblice.

The above text looks strange at a first glance because of the differences in orthography (spelling system) between Old English and Modern English. A careful study however shows that it is not an entirely different language after all. It is just that over the centuries, the language has experienced a lot of changes that have largely affected its outlook.

8.2.1 Orthography

The spelling system of Old English differs from what obtains in Modern English as the symbols used in the former did not always correspond with those used in the latter. For example, the character, a spells the sound 'a' in 'hat' while the characters, b and d represent 'th' in Modern English as in the word wip (with) or Ja (then). Also, Old English represented what is now spelt 'sh' as 'sc' as in sceap (sheep) or sceotan (shoot), etc.

8.2.2 Pronunciation

There is a considerable difference in vowel quality between Old English and Modern English as seen in the following data:

S/no	Old English	Modern English
1.	stan	stone
2.	halig	holy
3.	gan	go
4.	ban	bone
5.	rap	rope
6.	half	loaf
7.	bat	boat
8.	fot	foot
9.	cene	keen
10.	metan	meet
11.	fyr	fire
12.	riht	right
13.	hu	how
14.	hlud	had
15.	heafod	head

The disparity in spelling between Old English and Modern English is more conspicuous than the disparity in pronunciation. As Baugh and Cable (1978:54) opine:

...a number of words which were in all probability pronounced by King Alfred almost as they are by us present a strange appearance in the written or printed text. Such words as folc (folk), scip (ship), baec (back), porn (thorn), boed (bath), paet (that) are examples in poin.

8.2.3 Vocabulary

The vocabulary of Old English is almost homogenously Anglo-Saxon; though, there are borrowings from Latin, which was the official language before the Anglo-Saxon invasion. Only about 400 – 500 Latin words are found in Old English manuscripts. They comprise mainly words of Christian religious institutions, which came in with the introduction of Christianity as seen in the following data:

S/no	Old English	Modern English
1.	Biscop	Bishop
2.	Cirica	Church
3.	Deofol	Devil
4.	Apostol	Apostle

8.3 Old English Morphology

8.3.1 Nouns

Old English was highly inflected to show case and gender. Old English narrowed the numerous cases that are present in Indo-European family to four: nominative (usually for subject), genitive (for possessives), dative (for indirect objects) and accusative (for direct objects). Each noun carried a grammatical gender. Grammatical gender is unconnected to the

natural sex of nouns. For instance, *hund* (dog), *hunger* (hunger), *wifmann* (woman) and *stan* (stone) were masculine, *mil* (milk), *wist* (feast) were feminine and *wif* (woman, wife), *manncynn* (mankind) and *scip* (ship) were neuter. The inflections of noun are shown in the tables below:

Table 8.1

	Masculine (Fox)	Feminine (Learning)	Neuter (Animal)
Singular			
Nominative	Fox	Lar	Deor
Accusative	Fox	lar- e	Deor
Genitive	Fox- es	lar- e	deor- es
Dative	Fox- e	lar- e	deor- e

Table 8.2

	Masculine (Fox)	Feminine (Learning)	Neuter (Animal)
Plural			
Nom/ Acc	fox-as	lar- a	Deor
Genitive	fox- a	lar- a	deor-a
Dative	fox- um	lar- um	deor- um

8.3.2 Adjectives

An important feature of the Germanic languages is the development of two fold declension of the adjectives. Declension refers to the forms (paradigms) of nouns, pronouns or adjectives depending on their grammatical and semantic roles in sentences. One is the strong declension used when the adjective was not accompanied by a definite article or similar words (such as a demonstrative or possessive pronoun). The other, the weak declension, was used when the adjective was preceded by such a word. Thus, we have in Old English, *god mann* (good man) (the strong declension) and *se goda mann* (the good mann) (weak declension). Old English declensions are presented in the tables below:

STRONG DECLENSION

		Masc.	Fem	Neuter
Singular	Nom.	<i>god</i>	<i>god</i>	<i>god</i>
	Gen.	god- es	god- re	god- es
	Dat.	god- um	god- re	god- um
	Acc.	god- ne	god- e	god
	Inst.	god- e		god- e
		Masc.	Fem	Neuter
Plural	Nom.	god- e	god- a	god
	Gen.	god- ra	god- ra	god- ra
	Dat.	god- um	god- um	god- um
	Acc.	god- e	god- a	god

WEAK DECLENSION

		Masc.	Fem	Neuter
Singular	Nom.	god- a	god- e	god- e
	Gen.	god- an	god- an	god- an
	Dat.	god- an	god- an	god- an
	Acc.	god- an	god- an	god- e

The plural is for all genders.

Plural	Nom.	<i>god- an</i>
	Gen.	god- ena or god- ra
	Dat.	god- um
	Acc.	god- an

8.3.3 The Definite Article

The definite article is not left out of this full inflection that characterized Old English. The completeness of the definite article is presented below:

Table 8.3

	Singular			Plural All genders
	Masc.	Fem.	Neut.	
Nom.	Se	seo	ocet	da
Gen.	daes	daere	daes	dara
Dat.	daem	daere	daem	daem
Acc.	done	da	daet	da

While the meaning of *se*, *seo*, *daet* is “the”, the word is really demonstrative pronoun and survives in the modern day demonstrative pronoun “that”.

8.3.4 Verbs

Old English verbs were inflected for person, number and tense in the indicative mood and for number and tense in the subjunctive mood. In its verbal system, Old English took from proto-Germanic, two types of verbs (traditionally called present and past tense). The two ways of indicating past tense are: (1) the addition of a suffix and (2) by modifying their root vowel which is otherwise known as sound gradation. They were then referred to as weak and strong (regular and irregular as we now have in Modern English). The strong verbs can be grouped in seven general classes as illustrated below:

Infinitive	Past Sing.	Past Plural	Past Participle	Modern Version
Ridan	rad	ridon	geriden	ride
Freosan	freas	fruron	gefroren	freeze
Drincan	dranc	druncon	gedruncon	drink
Beran	baer	baeron	geboren	bear
Licgan	laeg	lagon	gelegen	lie
Standan	stod	stodon	gestanden	stand
Feallan	feoll	feollon	gefeallen	fall

Old English retained the person- distinctions in the indicative singular as in:

Ic helpe	I help
<i>pu hilpst</i>	you (singular) help
<i>He/he/hit hilpp</i>	he/she/it helps

In the plural, it made no person- distinctions: *we/ ge/hie helpap* (we/ you/ they help). In the present subjunctive there was one form for the singular, *helpe* and one for the plural, *helpen*. There were also imperative forms

(that is one for giving commands): singular, *help* and plural, *helpap*. In the past tense there was a distinctive form for the second- person singular, *pu hulpe* ‘you (sing) helped’ as against first and third- person, *ic/heo healp* ‘I/she helped. In the plural form, there was no distinction of persons but one form, *hulpon* was used. In the past tense subjunctive, there was one form for the singular, *hulpe* and one for the plural, *hulpen*. There was also a past participle, *holpen* and present participle, *helpend*.

8.4 Old English Syntax

Because of its inflectional system, Old English had greater freedom of word order. In Old English for instance, we can say: *se cyning haefde micel gepeaht* (the king held a great council) and as a stylistic variant of this, we can say: *micel gepeaht haefde se cyning*. The second word order cannot be used in Modern English because to say: *A great council held the king* is unacceptable. It is not that Old English lacked rules and preferences about word order; it favoured three structures- SVO, VSO and SOV. Word order was therefore more flexible in Old English than Modern English.

Negation was achieved in Old English by the use of the particle *ne*. Multiple negation was common, that is, *ne* could occur several times in the same sentences. Such repetitions made the negation more emphatic rather than one negator cancelling the other. Neither in questions nor in negative sentences did Old English make use of auxiliary ‘do’. For example, where we say ‘why do you go?’ and ‘I do not go’ in Modern English, Old English had ‘*Hwy gap ge?*’ and ‘*ic ne ga*’. The structure of the noun phrase is quite similar to that of Modern English, the normal pattern being determiner- adjective- noun. Exceptions to this pattern are provided by the forms *eall* (all), *begen* (both) and adjectives ending in –*ward*. Such adjectives preceded determiners as in *eal pes middangearrd* (entire/all this earth).

8.5 Vocabulary Of Old English

The English language at this period showed great flexibility, a capacity of blending old words to new uses. By means of prefixes and suffixes, a single root was made to yield a variety of derivatives. Thus, in Old English, adjectives could be formed from nouns by means of such suffixes as in –*ig*, –*leas* and –*ful* giving words like *blodig* (bloody), *freondleas* (friendless) and *pancful* (thankful).

There was large number of prefixes, many which could be added to verbs. For instance, the prefix *for-* is added to words like *hergian* (to harry or ravage) and *baernan* (to burn) to form the past participle of the verbs. Hence, there were *forhergian* and *forbaernan*. There were about a dozen prefixes that occurred with great frequency such as: *a-*, *be-*, *for-*, *fore-*, *ge-*, *mis-*, *of-*, *ofer-*, *on-*, *to-*, *un-*, *under-*, and *wip*. Thus with the help of these, Old English could make new verbs like *settan* (to set), new verbs like *asettan* (place), *besettan* (appoint), *forsettan* (obstruct), *foresettan* (place before) *ofsettan* (afflict), *onsettan* (oppress), *tosettan* (dispose), *unsettan* (put down) and *wipsettan* (resist).

Apart from using affixation, Old English formed new words by joining two or more free morphemes, a process called compounding. Compounding was very prominent in Old English. Let us consider these lines of Beowulf (a work of art written in the Old English period).

Hwaet we Gar- Dena in gaerdagum

peodcyninga prym gefrunon

Hu da aepelingas Ellen fremedon

In this excerpt, we have compounds such as ‘*gar- Dena*’ (spear Danes), ‘*gaer- dagum*’ (yore days), *peod- cyninga* (nation kings). Other compounds include: *hronrad* (whale road) now reduced to sea, *banhus* (bone house) now body, *leohtfaet* (lamp vessel), *daegreds* (9day- red), *earhring* (earring).

Study Session Summary



Summary

Old English was in use between 449 AD and 1100. It was a period of full inflection. Major dialects of Old English were Northumbria, Mercia, West Saxon, and Kentis. Its characteristic features could be seen at the levels of orthography, pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. Identify the four major dialects of Old English and the areas where they were spoken.
- II. Which of the dialects enjoyed a pre-eminence on others and why?
- III. Explain the linguistic characteristics of Old English with particular reference to orthography, pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax.

Study Session 9

Middle English (1100-1500)

Introduction

The Middle English period marks another significant milestone in the development of English in view of the fundamental changes recorded during the era. This Study Session is designed to acquaint you with major changes in English that made the language quite different from what obtained in the Old English era



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 9.1 distinguish between the characteristics of Old English and Middle English.
- 9.2 explain the decay of inflectional endings that took place during the Middle English period.
- 9.3 account for the predominance of French loan words in the vocabulary of English.

9.1 Distinctions between Old and Middle English

The Middle English period, usually described as a period of leveled inflections, was between 1100 and 1500. This period is called a period of leveled inflections because most inflectional endings that characterized Old English had disappeared. In the words of Lorimer et al (1994: xiii):

The main difference between Old English and Middle English was the great reduction in inflectional endings. This development resulted chiefly from a change in the way words were accented. In the Old English period, a general or distributed stress existed, spread over the word as a whole, thus preserving the full inflectional endings. In the Middle English period, the stress shifted to the first syllable, weakening and obscuring the later syllables.

One of the factors that led to the great change during the Middle English period was the change in the ruling class, brought about by the complete overthrow of the English social and political system during the Scandinavian rule and during the Norman Conquest. During the period, a lot of changes came into the language not only as a result of its contact with French (the new official language) but also due to the fact that uneducated usages were not held in check. Old standards of correctness were somewhat jettisoned and the language followed the free impulses of the people.

Characteristics of Middle English

Before trying to pinpoint specific characteristics of Middle English, it is expedient to reproduce the following lines of Chaucer's Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* written in Middle English:

A Knyght then was and that a worthy man that fro the tyme
that he first bigan to ridden out, he loved chivalrie, Frouthe
and honour, freedom and courteisie (Lorimer et al, 1994:
xiii).

Changes in the Sound System and Grammar

As a result of the shift in word accent, the final syllables of words tended to become weak, and eventually dropped. Thus, the –um of the dative plural of nouns and adjectives became –un, –on, –an, or –en, which later became weakened as –e and finally dropped. Generally, unstressed vowels at the end of syllables disappeared. The development of word order compensated for the loss of inflections.

As the vowel endings leveled, the classification of nouns disappeared. So did grammatical gender in favour of the natural gender of Modern English. With the loss of grammatical gender in the noun went the loss of agreement in inflection between the noun and its adjective (Lorimer et al, 1994: xiii).

Changes in Vocabulary

The displacement of English by French as the language of the ruling class brought about great changes in the vocabulary of English. Many French words were borrowed into English. In fact, the vocabulary of English became more or less dominated by words of French origin. Many of the French loan words reflected things in which French influence was strong, such as government, law, religion and military affairs. Thus, we have examples of such words of French origin as reign, court, revenue, clergy, faith and sergeant. We also have lexical items of French origin creeping into the vocabulary of English from the fields of architecture, literature, science, fashion, dress and social life. Examples of such words include sculpture, palace, pillar, romance, tragedy, surgeon, anatomy, clock, tournament, etc. Also, words dealing with table and food preparation borrowed from French to English are words, such as appetite, beef, veal, pork, pastry, broil, boil, etc.

We must note however that grammatical or form words, such as prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliaries, pronouns as well as many ordinary nouns, verbs and adjectives were not supplanted by borrowings. Such items remained English.

Apart from French, Latin also continued to serve as another source of borrowing into the vocabulary of English during the Middle English period. A potent instrument for this was the translation of the Holy Bible into English by Wycliffe. The vocabulary of English became rich in synonyms as a result of borrowings from both French and Latin. For

example, the Old English word, 'ask' has a synonym, 'inquire' from French and another synonym, 'interrogate' from Latin.

Study Session Summary



Summary

Middle English period (1100 – 1500) was a period of leveled inflection. Some of the inflections in Old English had disappeared during the Middle English era. During this period, there were changes in the sound system, grammar and vocabulary.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. Which period is regarded as the Middle English period in the development of English?
- II. Why is the Middle English period referred to as a period of leveled inflections?
- III. Distinguish between the vocabulary of Old English and that of Middle English.
- IV. Account for the differences in vocabulary and grammar between Old English and Middle English.
- V. The Scandinavian rule and the Norman Conquest did not only seriously affect the political and social life of English people, it also affected their linguistic heritage. Discuss.
- VI. Borrowings from both French and Latin during the Middle English era enriched the vocabulary of English. How?

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Study Session 10

Early Modern English (1500-1700)

Introduction

During the Early Modern English period, the language developed many features that still characterize it today. Such features are found in the works of William Shakespeare and the King James' Version of the Holy Bible – major sources of early Modern English literature. The changes that gave early Modern English its outlook came as a result of factors such as linguistic changes, the introduction of the printing press, the Renaissance. In this Study Session, we will highlight the changes that brought about the Early Modern English and the features of English during this period as exemplified by the works of William Shakespeare and the authorized (King James's) version of the Holy Bible.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 10.1 explain the differences between Chaucer's English and Shakespeare's English.
- 10.2 account for the factors that gave the Early Modern English its outlook.
- 10.3 enumerate the features of Early Modern English as represented by the works of William Shakespeare and the King James' Version of the

10.1 Influences on English Language (1500-1700)

Two major sources of Early Modern English texts are the works of William Shakespeare and the King James's Version of the Holy Bible. Those texts were produced during the Early Modern English period. The following factors exerted influences on the language leading to some of the features that characterize it till today.

Linguistic Changes

One of the linguistic changes that made Shakespeare's English different from Chaucer's English was the loss of an unstressed vowel at the end of some words. Words such as *space*, *grace* and *large* were, for instance, pronounced as two syllables by Chaucer but as one syllable by Shakespeare. Another linguistic change was the Great Vowel Shift which affected most of the long vowels and words in which they occurred. The Great Vowel Shift, as Lorimer et al (1994) put it was "the systematic shifting of some half a dozen tense vowels and diphthongs in stressed

syllables”. In Middle English, for instance, the word ‘mine’ had the vowel of modern ‘we’, while ‘we’ was pronounced like ‘way’.

Changes brought about by the Printing Press

The introduction of printing technology by William Caxton brought about great changes in the development of English. William Caxton was neither a linguist nor a literary scholar. He was a merchant who had lived in Belgium for thirty years. He, however, got interested in printing and publishing. In 1476, he introduced the printing technology to England, but was initially confronted with certain linguistic problems. Such problems include:

- a) whether or not to use foreign loan words in his translation or replace them with native English words;
- b) the variety of English to be adopted given the great differences in regional dialects that existed;
- c) the literary style to be used as a model: Chaucer’s style or Thomas Malory’s or something derived from the Latin authors;
- d) the spelling and punctuation system to be adopted considering the enormous scribal variations of the previous countries; and
- e) whether or not to modify the language of the native writers to make it more widely understood.

Caxton realized that, if his publications were to attract good patronage, the language used must be understood nation-wide. He therefore finally decided to base his publications on the dialect of London and its environs. This was a major step towards the standardization of the language. Within one hundred years, there was a remarkable uniformity in the appearance of printed texts.

Effects of the Renaissance

The vocabulary of English was greatly expanded through borrowings from several languages during the Renaissance. The Renaissance was the period lasting from the time of Caxton (1476) till around 1650. It was a period characterized by renewed interest in the classical languages and literatures as well as science, medicine and the arts. The Renaissance could in fact be referred to as a period of explosion of knowledge as new ideas and inventions that the world had not known came into being. This had far reaching implications for the development of English.

The focus of interest during the Renaissance was the vocabulary. As new concepts, techniques and inventions were emerging in Europe, the English language lacked the appropriate words to describe them accurately. Writers therefore began to borrow words from Latin, Greek, French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. Later, there was a period of world-wide exploration during which words came into English from more than fifty languages, including languages of America, India and Africa.



Tip

While the printing technology introduced to England by William Caxton in 1476 was a landmark in the development of English as writers now had their works published; the Renaissance was a period of explosion of knowledge, which witnessed large scale borrowing of lexical items from many languages

into English.

Call for Dictionary

In the 16th century, thousands of new words were introduced into the English language as a result of contact with other languages and the effects of the Renaissance. This led to a growing concern in some quarters that there was a dire need for the compilation of a dictionary to serve as a sort of control or reference point for the English language.



- 1) Pinpoint specific features that portray the language as 'unruly'.
- 2) Highlight some of the suggestions made towards arresting the unruly trend of the language.
- 3) Identify notable scholars that called for the compilation of a dictionary.

The development of English assumed more or less an unruly state when in the 16th and 17th centuries, thousands of new words from several other languages were introduced into the language. To worsen matters for the language, there were no norms of spelling, punctuation and abbreviation. Each speaker or writer used the language according to his instinct. For example, the following abbreviations and contractions became fashionable at a time: *ult* for *ultimate*; *rep* for *reputation*; *disturb'd* for *disturbed*; *rebuk'd* for *rebuked*, etc. Many people spelt words as they spoke regardless of tradition, while some writers added extra letters to words claiming erroneously that such letters were there in Latin, e.g. the *s* in 'island', the *c* in 'scissors'. During the period, it was not uncommon for an author to spell the same word differently on the same page.

This development prompted notable scholars of the time to call for urgent measures to put the language under control. Richard Mulcaster in 1582 considered it a praiseworthy exercise for a diligent person to compile all words used in English into a dictionary. Jonathan Swift (1712) was concerned that good writers would be discouraged if they realized that their works would only be understood and appreciated by a generation and became inaccessible to future generations as a result of the changes that would have taken place in the language. John Hart attempted to reform the spelling in 1574, while Bishop John Wilkins (1614 – 72) tried to develop a logical alternative that would possibly do away with irregularities and inconsistencies in English. Several other scholars were of the opinion that the development of English should be committed to an academy since the same method had succeeded in producing a dictionary for the Italian language in 1612 and the French language in 1694. This idea was proposed by people, such as John Dryden and Daniel Defoe, and supported by Jonathan Swift.



Tip

The large-scale borrowing of lexical items into English during the Renaissance led to a growing concern in some quarters that there was a dire need for the compilation of a dictionary of English. Scholars like Richard Mulcaster and Jonathan Swift championed the call.

The Age of the Dictionary

The confusion and lack of control that characterized the development of English during the Renaissance informed the call for the compilation of a dictionary as seen in the last lecture. A number of scholars responded to that call and so, within another couple of decades, lexicographers began to compile dictionaries or at least, what looked like dictionaries. Since that time, different kinds of dictionary have been emerging. This is what is referred to as the age of the dictionary in the development of English.

The call for a dictionary of English by notable scholars led to the emergence of lexicographers such as Nathaniel Bailey, Robert Cawdrew, Samuel Johnson, etc. whose scholarly efforts assisted greatly in the codification of the language. In 1721, Nathaniel Bailey published his *Universal Etymological English Dictionary*. This, however, was not the first attempt made to solve the problem of new words that were not understood by many people. The first dictionary of hard words was published by Robert Cawdrew in 1604. The dictionary contained 3000 'hard unusual English words' borrowed from Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, etc. it contained such words as 'aberration' (the state or act of going astray or wondering away from what is right) 'acquisition' (getting, purchasing) 'paucity' (small amount), etc. Samuel Johnson's English Dictionary published in 1755 proved more successful than others because it conferred stability on the language, at least at the levels of orthography and meaning. The laudable project took Johnson several years to compile. It contained the definitions of over 40,000 words. This major work could be said to have set the pace for subsequent lexicographers to exert an unparalleled influence on the development of English. Many other dictionaries have since emerged.

10.2 Features of Early Modern English

1. Many irregular verbs are found in their older forms, e.g., digged (dug), gat (got); tare (tore); clave (cleft).
2. Older word orders were still in use e.g. 'follow thou me', cakes unleavened; etc.
3. The third person singular of the present tense of verbs is always *eth* in the King James' Version of the Bible, while it is alternated with *-s* in Shakespeare's works depending on the needs of the poetic metre, e.g. "caves" and "cometh".
4. The distinction between 'ye' and 'you' (second person pronouns) is preserved in the King James' Version of the Bible as can be seen in such examples as "ye cannot serve God and Mammon" and "Therefore say unto you". Originally, 'ye' was the subject form and 'you' was the object.
5. Adjectives occur in double superlative form e.g. "the most straightest", "the most highest".
6. Several prepositions are used differently from what obtains in the present day English e.g. "the zeal of (for) thine house", "tempted of (by) Satan".
7. Many idioms came into English through Shakespeare's works and the King James' Version of the Holy Bible.

Shakespeare's Idioms

1. a foregone conclusion (Othello III, IV)
2. in my mind's eye (Hamlet I, II)
3. its Greek to me (Julius Caesar I, II)

Idioms from the Holy Bible

1. fishers of men (Mathew 4:19)
2. ye are the salt of the earth (Mathew 5:13)
3. ... the eye of a needle (Mark 10:25)

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we saw that the Early Modern English period (1500 – 1700) witnessed most of the features that characterize it today. While Chaucer's English reflected the Middle English period, Shakespeare's English reflected Early Modern English.

Also, the large-scale borrowing of lexical items into English during the Renaissance led to a growing concern in some quarters that there was a dire need for the compilation of a dictionary of English.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. Explain the differences between Chaucer's English and Shakespeare's English;
- II. account for the factors that gave the Early Modern English its outlook; and
- III. enumerate the features of Early Modern English as represented by the works of William Shakespeare and the King James' Version of the Holy Bible.
- IV. Enumerate the features of Early Modern English.
 - V. What factors made Shakespeare's English different from Chaucer's English?
- VI. Enumerate some idioms that came into English through Shakespeare's work and some that came through the Holy Bible.
- VII. Why was the vocabulary the focus of interest during the Renaissance?
- VIII. The introduction of printing technology to England in 1476 by William Caxton was a landmark in the history of English. Discuss.
- IX. What were the linguistic problems that confronted Caxton at the initial stage of his introduction of printing technology to England and how did he solve the problems?
- X. What challenge did the Renaissance pose to the English language.

- XI. How was the language able to cope with that challenge?
- XII. Explain the problem of vocabulary and orthography that characterized the development of English in the 16th century.
- XIII. What was the concern expressed by Richard Mulcaster and Jonathan Swift about the dynamic trend of English?
- XIV. The call for a dictionary in the 16th century was a timely one as it provoked scholars to document the words used in English. Discuss.
- XV. identify the early lexicographers;
- XVI. state the titles of the early dictionaries and when they were published; and
- XVII. state the extent to which the efforts of the early lexicographers succeeded in providing a control for the language.
- XVIII. What role did the dictionary play in the history of English?
- XIX. Why is it difficult to control the number of words used in a language?
- XX. What was the difference between Samuel Johnson's dictionary and that of Robert Cawdrew?

Study Session 11

Varieties of English: Dialects, Sociolects and Idiolects

Introduction

As mentioned in the introductory part of this course, language is a dynamic phenomenon – it changes in time and space. The fact that it changes in time has been demonstrated in most of the previous Study Sessions covered in this course. In the present session, we intend to examine how the English language changes in space by taking a look at some regional dialects of the language. In addition, we intend to examine varieties of English based on social status (sociolects) and varieties peculiar to individuals (idiolects).



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 11.1 point out major varieties of English.
- 11.2 distinguish between a language and a dialect.
- 11.3 explain what you understand by the terms ‘sociolect’ and ‘idiolect’.

11.1 Major Varieties of English Language

The spread of English beyond its traditional base (where it is used as a mother tongue) to many other countries of the world has led to the emergence of many regional varieties of the language. Thus, we have countries referred to by Kachru (1985) as members of the inner circle. We also have English as a second language (L₂) in countries, such as Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia, India, Singapore, etc. (Kachru’s outer circle). These are countries where English has been domesticated and superimposed on the indigenous languages of the local peoples. English as a foreign language is used in countries such as Netherland, Saudi Arabia, France, etc. (Kachru’s expanding circle). Each of these circles has distinct varieties (regional dialects) of English. Thus, we have British English, American English, Canadian English, etc. in countries where English is used as L₁. It is pertinent to note that there are varieties within a variety; so, British English, for instance, has varieties such as Irish English, Scottish English, Welsh English and English English. These examples also have their respective sub-varieties. The same trend is also

true of other major varieties such as American English, Australian English etc.

Furthermore, in parts of the world where English serves as a second language (L_2), we have major varieties such as Nigerian English, Ghanaian English, Zambian English, Indian English, etc. each of which has its set of sub-varieties. Nigerian English, for instance, has sub-varieties, such as Yoruba English, Igbo English, Hausa English, etc.

Regional dialects are determined by geographical location. As Quirk and Greenbaum (1987:2) put it, “geographical dispersion is in fact that classic basis for linguistic variation...” A dialect could therefore be defined as a variety of a language used in a geographical area with features that distinguish it from other forms of the language. The following data illustrate three national varieties of English – British English (BrE), American English (AmE) and Nigerian English (NigE):

	BrE	AmE	NigE
1.	petrol	gas	fuel
2.	films	movies	videos
3.	well-off	well-to-do	well-rich
4.	catalogue	catalog	catalogue
5.	programme	program	program/programme
6.	was published	got published	became published
7.	fill in	fill out	fill

Sociolects on the other hand, are varieties of a language determined by the social status of the users. In any society, we have the rich and the poor, as well as the educated and the illiterate. The social standing of each of these classes of people affects their use of language. Thus, there are features of English usage peculiar to people of high socio-economic status just as there are features peculiar to the underprivileged.

Every individual on the surface of the earth has features of linguistic usage peculiar to him. The totality of such features is referred to as the individual’s idiolect.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we learnt that regional dialects are determined by geographical location. Major regional varieties of English include British English, American English, Nigerian English, Indian English etc. Sociolects are determined by social status e.g. the rich versus the poor, the educated versus the illiterate. An idiolect is the totality of the features of linguistic usage peculiar to an individual.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. Give examples of countries where English is used as L₁, L₂ and F_L.
- II. What do you understand by the expression, 'regional dialects of English'?
- III. Give examples of regional dialects of English.
- IV. Distinguish between a sociolect and an idiolect.
- V. In what sense, does a language change in space?
- VI. Mention some major varieties of English.
- VII. What is an idiolect?

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Study Session 12

Varieties in English: Style and Register

Introduction

In addition to regional dialects, sociolects and idiolects considered in the last lecture, there are also varieties of language (English) based on style and register. This further underscores the fact that the term variety is context-dependent. In this Study Session, we shall examine different dialects or varieties of English based on the style of writers (speakers) and the field of discourse.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 12.1 explain what brings about different styles used by different writers (speakers).
- 12.2 differentiate between concepts, style and register.
- 12.3 illustrate the styles used by different writers and the registers of different fields of human endeavour.

12.1 Variation in Styles of Writers

Variation in language is not limited to region and social status; it also depends on occupation and style of each writer. Lorimer et al (1995:984) defines style as “the distinguishing way in which something is done, said, written, made, executed, etc”. Varieties of language, according to attitude, are at times referred to as stylistic. This has to do with “the choice of linguistic form that proceeds from our attitude to the hearer (or reader), to the subject matter or to the purpose of our communication” (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1987). In other words, different styles are informed by different attitudes exhibited by the writer/speaker to the reader/hearer, to the subject matter or to the purpose of discourse. Thus, we have (in the words of Quirk and Greenbaum” still, formal, cold, impersonal” style on one hand, and “relaxed, informal, warm, friendly” style on the other hand.

12.2 Register of Words

The term, register, refers to the variety of word usages or language use peculiar to the field of discourse. Thus, we have the registers of medicine, law, banking, engineering, footballing etc. In the register of medicine, for instance, we have expressions, such as drug, patient, injection, prescription, case note etc as notable lexical items, while in the register

of law, we have such lexical items, as sentence, discharged and acquitted, adjourn, counsel, plaintiff, accused, etc. The register of banking/finance exhibits such lexical items as pay-in-slip, withdrawal form, account, balance, strong-room, etc.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we noted that different writers or speakers use different styles depending on their attitude to the reader(s) hearer(s), subject matter or purpose of communication. Register is the variety of language peculiar to a field of discourse, e.g. Medicine, Engineering, Law etc.

Assessment



Assessment

- I. What is style?
- II. What is register?
- III. Provide lexical items illustrating the registers of three different professions/occupations.
- IV. Explain what you understand by varieties according to attitude.
- V. Define the term, 'register'.
- VI. With copious examples from the fields of law, medicine and banking/finance, examine the registers of different fields of discourse.

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Study Session 13

English Language Today: Its Spread and Use across Cultures

Introduction

The English language today remains the most widely used language in the world. Its spread and use across cultures beyond its L₁ setting confirms its acceptability in many nations as a second language (L₂) or foreign language (FL). In many sociolinguistic environments, the language has been domesticated and used as an effective tool for the expression of cultural norms. This lecture is designed to acquaint you with the extent of the spread and use of English across cultures today.



Learning Outcomes

When you have studied this session, you should be able to:

- 13.1 give an estimate of the number of speakers of English in the world.
- 13.2 identify major factors responsible for the implantation of English in many countries.
- 13.3 account for the domestication of English in many countries.

13.1 English Speakers

The world has about 50,000 living languages used either locally, nationally or internationally. According to Crystal (1985), English is by far the most widely spread as about 377 million people use it as native speakers and 250 million use it as a second language (L₂). Apart from these, English is also used in many countries as a foreign language as stated in a previous lecture. It ranks first among the internationally used languages in the world. The figures quoted above are by no means static; they have been appreciating steadily. In the words of Barber (1999:236):

The world-wide expansion of English means that it is now one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with well over four hundred million native speakers, and roughly the same number who speak it as a second language. The method of its spread, however, also means that there are now many varieties of English, and that it is used for many different purposes in varying social contexts.

We could also add that we have a sizeable population of English speakers in well over one hundred countries. At present, not less than one sixth of the population of the world use English as a medium of communication.

13.2 Use of English across National Boundaries

Several factors account for the spread and use of English across cultures and national boundaries. Prominent among such factors are colonialism, commerce, religion as well as science and technology. In this era of internet, English remains a most prominent tool for reducing the world to a global village. Besides, American civilization has influenced world politics, and her economy has also helped in promoting the spread of English across cultures and national boundaries.

In many countries, especially where it is used as L₂, English has been domesticated to serve as an effective tool for cultural expression. Writers from different socio-cultural backgrounds employ the language to disseminate their cultural values to the outside world. In Nigeria, for example, some domesticated (nativized) expressions include “bush meat” (game) to “take in” (to become pregnant), to “put to bed” (to give birth to a child), “long-leg” (undue influence), “to wet flowers” (to water flowers), etc.

Study Session Summary



Summary

In this Study Session, we observed that English remains the most widely used language in the world today. In many countries, it is used as L₁ or L₂ or FL. It has become the undisputed medium of expressing the cultures of many ethnic nationalities.

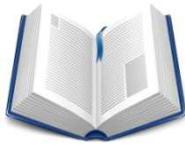
Assessment



Assessment

- I. Identify some of the factors responsible for the spread of English across cultures and national boundaries.
- II. Give an estimate of the number of L₁ speakers and also L₂ speakers of English in the whole world.
- III. What do you understand by the term “domestication of English”?
- IV. Explain the factors responsible for the spread and use of English across cultures.
- V. English is used in many countries as a medium of cultural expression. Discuss.
- VI. Give an estimate of the number of speakers of English we have in the world?

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