A History of the English Language
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Preface and Acknowledgements

There are a number of well-known histories of the English Language (Baugh & Cable, Pyles & Algeo, Barber, and Fennell). The justification for yet another book on the history of English comes from having taught a course on this topic at the undergraduate and graduate levels for over 10 years and not finding any of the books completely satisfactory. The present book is more grammatical and typological in focus, i.e. language-internal, although this can of course not be a course on Old and Middle English or on historical linguistics and therefore only parts of the grammar are covered. I have used the change from synthetic to analytic as a leitmotiv.

A lot of emphasis is placed on linguistic (phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic) analysis of Old, Middle, and early Modern English texts. This means students will learn how to approach older texts and to work with these. Most examples and texts will be authentic and the use of facsimile editions is encouraged. Incorporating these texts in this book, rather than in an (optional) workbook, makes it easier to see working with texts as an integral part of a class on the history of English. I have provided possible answers to the text questions and the other exercises. In my classes, we usually go over the texts and exercises and the answers provide a review. Having the answers in the back makes the book usable for self-study as well.

The book differs from Fennell in that there will be less emphasis on sociolinguistic theories, though many descriptions will be given of, for instance, h-deletion, prescriptive forces, and pronoun shift. External history is dealt with in Appendix III (where a timeline of historical events is provided), in chapter 1 (in general), chapter 5 (for Old and Middle English), chapter 7 (for Early Modern English), chapters 8 and 9 (for the modern period). There are sections on literacy, the re-emergence of English, the printing process, authorship debates, and world Englishes. Throughout most of the book, I use the term English in its general sense, including all varieties, but sometimes use British or American if this makes the point clearer.

There are many smaller differences in emphasis that distinguish this book from other histories. In chapter 1, I divert from the usual chronological order by going into the history of English a little before discussing phonetics, grammar, and Indo-European. This is done to justify chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2 first explains the need for a phonetic alphabet and all the phonetic terminology before actually giving it. In chapter 3, there is information on language prehistory based on Cavalli-Sforza's and Greenberg's work, not found
in most textbooks. This is an area students (and the general public) are interested in. Most other textbooks start with Indo-European. The chapters on Old, Middle, and Early Modern English are relatively standard, but each chapter includes many examples and has additional texts at the end. The texts are chosen because they represent the typical ‘canon’ and also because audio versions exist on the web in most cases.

Chapters 8 and 9 examine English after 1700, the different Englishes around the world, and the role English as an international language, with some emphasis given to the plight of endangered languages as an example of drastic change leading to elimination. The organization in these chapters differs from other textbooks, in that I have tried to group linguistic phenomena together rather than varieties. I have only looked at spoken and written English because ASL, BSL, and other signed varieties require a different expertise than mine. Chapter 10 provides a brief introduction to some theories of language, language change and acquisition.

Another difference between this book and other history of English books is the incorporation of electronic resources in the textbook and exercises. Recent years have seen a wealth of electronic resources for historical linguistics research, more so perhaps than in any other humanities field. The OED online is invaluable; the Old and Middle English corpora so helpful; websites with Old and Middle English audio files are abundant, as are sites focusing on the history and providing detailed maps; and pictures of manuscript facsimiles are very easily accessible. No earlier textbook incorporates these. I will attempt to do so with a particular focus on using the OED (and even without online access, this should be possible). For the printed version, I will only include URLs that can be expected to remain up, e.g. university sites. The associated website (www.historyofenglish.net/) contains many more links, and these links will be updated regularly. The ones in the book that will ‘fail to open’ after a while will be listed on that website too. The website has a glossary, too.

As mentioned, I will focus on internal changes, in particular on the change from synthetic to analytic. I also discuss the influence of external factors on internal changes. The book is not theoretical in orientation. I do not discuss sociolinguistic theories, or theoretical issues in historical linguistics, except for mentioning e.g. grammaticalization in the context of the change from synthetic to analytic and in chapter 10. The book can be used at the advanced undergraduate and beginning graduate levels. It is designed for a semester, but, depending on what other courses the particular institution offers, it can be used for a shorter course, e.g. by leaving out chapters 3, 8, or 9.

The book has many idiosyncrasies due to the author being a non-native speaker, having taught English and linguistics in the Netherlands, Canada, and the United States. Electronic texts provided by the Oxford Text Archive, the Gutenberg Project, and the Dictionary of Old English project have been extremely valuable; the concordance program used is MonoConc. I would most like to thank Johanna Wood for extremely constructive preliminary discussions, for thinking through many issues of content and organization with me, and for extensive comments on the writing and examples. Viktorija Todorovska is the best (copy-)editor I know; she is someone who understands the issues and has such
a grasp of the English language in all its forms. Tim Gades was wonderful in developing the website that accompanies this book; he was creative and knowledgeable. Some of the research was conducted while I was a fellow at the Centre for Advanced Study in Oslo in the fall of 2004. I would like to thank the fellows then present for extensive conversations, in particular Henning Andersen, John Ole Askedal, Tolli Eythorsson, Jan Terje Faarlund, Dag Haug, and Kjartan Ottoson. Arizona State University provided a 'Quality of Undergraduate Education Grant'. I am very grateful to Olga Fischer for going through the chapters very carefully and for giving me so many good suggestions which I hope I have incorporated. For other comments and lots of assistance, I would like to thank Harry Bracken, Chen Chen Sun, and Shane Drews. I would also like to thank several anonymous reviewers and Mariana Bahtchevanova, James Berry, Jean Brink, Anne Coe, Jade Corn, Nancy Hawkes, Lisa Genuit, Dhira Mahoney, Nicteha Martinez, Brenda McTighe, Donka Minkova, Elizabeth Moreau, Laura Parsons, Amy Shinabarger, Lynn Sims, and many others. Using this book before it was published was very helpful and Emily Hsu, Kristen LaRue, Tyler May, Victor Parraguinaldo, John Ryan, and Olena Tsurska really helped discussing this text in a small seminar. As usual, everyone at Benjamins has been wonderful; I would like to single out Kees Vaes for special thanks.

Apache Junction, May 2006

Figure 0.1. Why study HEL? ©2003 Jan Eliot. Reprinted with permission of Universal Press Syndicate. All rights reserved.
# Abbreviations

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>ACC</td>
<td>accusative (case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV</td>
<td>adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL</td>
<td>American Sign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCE</td>
<td>before common era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNC</td>
<td>British National Corpus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>before present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSL</td>
<td>British Sign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>circa, i.e. around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>common era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CED</td>
<td><em>Chronological English Dictionary</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cf.</td>
<td>short for ‘see’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEL</td>
<td><em>Cambridge History of the English Language</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSE</td>
<td>Corpus of Spoken (Professional American) English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Canterbury Tales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV</td>
<td>consonant-vowel sequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>dative (case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECL</td>
<td>declarative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>short for ‘for example’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIL</td>
<td>English as an International Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELF</td>
<td>English as a Lingua Franca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EModE</td>
<td>Early Modern English</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
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<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>feminine</td>
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<td>F1</td>
<td>First Folio</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAM</td>
<td>familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>genitive (case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GVS</td>
<td>Great Vowel Shift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>Helsinki Corpus (see primary sources)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICE</td>
<td>International Corpus of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.e.</td>
<td>short for ‘namely’, from Latin <em>id est</em></td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>IE</td>
<td>Indo-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INF</td>
<td>infinitival ending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KJV</td>
<td>King James Version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LALME</td>
<td>Linguistic Atlas of Late Middle English</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>locative</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>masculine</td>
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<td>ME</td>
<td>Middle English</td>
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<td>ModE</td>
<td>Modern English</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>neuter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OE</td>
<td>Old English</td>
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<tr>
<td>OED</td>
<td>Oxford English Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Old Norse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAST</td>
<td>past tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Peterborough Chronicle (see Thorpe 1871)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL</td>
<td>polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>First Quarto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[X]</td>
<td>the last consonant in <em>loch</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Universal Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>first person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>third person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* reconstructed word, or ungrammatical sentence, or wildcard in a computer search
~ nasalized sound
: long vowel
> becomes
< derives from
‘..’ encloses gloss
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Chapter 1

The English Language

Language is a fundamental human faculty used for creative expression, face-to-face communication, scientific inquiry, and many other purposes. Most humans are born with the ability to acquire language automatically and effortlessly if provided the right input by their environment. It is estimated that there are 6,000 to 7,000 languages in the world. We differentiate among languages based on whether they are mutually understandable, but this distinction gets murky and many linguists consider a language to be a “dialect with an army (or navy),” i.e. a political construct. The number of languages is decreasing rapidly as some languages disappear and a few others — English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Hindi — become more widespread as a result of globalization.

The focus of this book is the English language. The word ‘English’ has a number of widely different meanings. For instance, it describes the people from a particular part of Great Britain. It also refers to a particular language, the English language, and is used very broadly in this sense. English is Germanic in origin but roughly half of its words derive from contacts with French and Latin. As we will see, English has expanded from having a few speakers in one area to having many speakers in many geographic areas.

One way to define English is through its origins and history and we will do so in this book, briefly in Section 1 and in more detail later on. We find Celtic and Roman presence in Britain before the coming of the Germanic tribes who brought with them what is to become English. Later, we also see Scandinavian, French, and Latin influences.

Another way to define English is to compare it to other languages and earlier stages. In Section 2, we will apply this approach and compare Modern English to Old English and other languages. We will keep this approach in mind since we will see English changing from one type of language to another in fewer than 1,500 years. Finally, Section 3 of this chapter will examine some reasons for language change — linguistic (or internal) and socio-historical (or external). This too will be relevant throughout the remainder of the book.

1. The origins and history of English

As mentioned earlier, the meaning of ‘English’ can be defined through its origin and history. The British Isles have been inhabited by different people for at least 50,000 years, but
we know very little about the languages spoken until the coming of the Celts around 3,000 years ago (see http://britannia.com/history/pretime.html for an early timeline). Celtic languages were spoken all over Europe and there were many tribes. One of these tribes may have been given a name such as pritaini ‘painted’ from which the names Britain and British may derive. In Britain, the Celtic languages survive to the present in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, but they are not considered English. Irish English and Scottish English are varieties of English influenced by the Celtic languages. Just as the Celts displaced or mixed with the people inhabiting Britain before them, they and the languages they spoke were later displaced and pushed further west. Nowadays, some of these languages are being revitalized (e.g. Gaelic in Scotland and Ireland).

As is well-known, the Roman Empire ruled much of Europe until 476, when it collapsed (the troops were withdrawn from Britain around 410). Because of the political power of the Roman Empire, Latin was spoken in parts of Britain and the European continent and it exerted a strong influence on Celtic and Germanic languages. Words such as wall, kitchen, wine, mile and street were borrowed from Latin into Germanic (and through Germanic into English) during this time. The settlements and roads of the Romans were extensive and remained important even after they left the island in 410. The Latin influence continues through medieval and renaissance times, not through actual migrations but through the Catholic Church and intellectual developments such as Humanism and the Renaissance.

English officially starts when the Germanic tribes and their languages reach the British Isles, in 449. One account tells of Hengist and Horsa being invited by the Celtic king Vortigern to help fight the northern Picts and later turning against Vortigern. (The terms

Figure 1.1. Map of Germanic migrations starting 1,500 years ago (from Millward 1996: 78)
‘reach’ and ‘migrate’ will be used in this book since scholars disagree about the degree of violence in these migrations.) There are of course earlier contacts between the continent and Britain. For instance, during the Roman occupation, many speakers of Germanic dialects served in the Roman army; there were many trade contacts as well. Slavery was also widespread in Europe, and it provided another means of contact between Celtic and Germanic speakers and Roman culture. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, one version of which was completed in 1154, tells the history of England from the time of Julius Caesar to 1154 (available in Modern English at www.omacl.org/Anglo). As the map above shows, several Germanic tribes — the Frisians, the Angles, the Saxons, and possibly the Jutes — occupied the British Isles. The word ‘English’ derives from one of these tribes — the Angles.

The Germanic tribes (e.g. the Franks, Goths, Angles, Saxons, Vandals, and Lombards) were different culturally, but it is not clear how distinct their languages were. They may have spoken a North Sea Germanic.

What started as a Germanic dialect spoken in a small part of England is now a language spoken by over a billion people in many parts of the world (as a first or second language). Even though it is a Germanic language, English has adopted a large number of words from other languages. We will examine the influence of other languages on English in Section 3, but it is estimated that half of the vocabulary of English comes from French and Latin. To get an idea for the level of borrowing, please look at the text below, where the loanwords are in bold, and the words of unclear origin in italics.

```
Involuntary Conversions, Preemptive Counterattacks, and Incomplete Successes: The World of Doublespeak

There are no potholes in the streets of Tucson, Arizona, just “pavement deficiencies.” The administration didn’t propose any new taxes, just “revenue enhancement through new user’s fees.” Those aren’t bums on the street, just “non-goal oriented members of society.” There are no more poor people, just “fiscal underachievers.” There was no robbery of an automatic teller machine, just an “unauthorized withdrawal.” The patient didn’t die because of medical malpractice, it was just a “diagnostic misadventure of a high magnitude.” The U.S. Army doesn’t kill the enemy anymore, it just “services the target.” And the doublespeak goes on.
```

Figure 1.2. Text marked for loanwords, adapted from Lutz’s Doublespeak (1990: 1)

As you can see, the most frequent words — the, a(n), did, it and of — are ‘native’, as are the plural -s and third person singular -s. Mostly, they are the shorter, more general words. The above text is a bit extreme in the number of French and Latin loanwords; almost half of the words are borrowings and many of them are euphemisms. Euphemisms make things seem better than they are: filing a property irregularity report means having to tell an airline that it lost your bags (the phrase was actually used by British Airways in 2004 and possibly later). French and Latin loanwords are also used in English to add formality to language. As we will see, some people prefer ‘native’ words or more archaic speech for this purpose (see e.g. Newman 1964 for special language in ceremonial Zuni).
Table 1.1. Percentages of English Word Origins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>Other Germanic</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2. The first, second, and third 1,000 most frequent words and their origins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Old English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>Scandinavian</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.1, taken from Roberts (1965), shows the origin of the 10,000 most frequent English words, and Table 1.2, from Williams (1975: 67), shows the origin of the first, second, and third thousand most common words. We will come back to loanwords and text types in Chapter 5.

The language we currently refer to as English is the partial result of the borrowings discussed above and it can be defined as the collection of words that were selected to appear in a dictionary. The collections of different dictionaries differ in number considerably: some contain 60,000, others 600,000 words. Most native speakers of English are said to have a vocabulary of 40,000 to 60,000 words (see Bloom 2002). (It is debatable whether pairs such as read and reader are two words or one, and that affects the numbers.) The Oxford English Dictionary (hence OED) is undoubtedly the best resource on the English language and its history. Many libraries nowadays have access to the OED online. We will use it often later on in this book.

However, even if we knew all the words in the OED (and many are archaic), we still would not ‘know’ the English language. We need rules to put the words together into sentences, i.e. a grammar. Grammar generates a language: the structure of the sounds (phonetics and phonology), words (morphology), sentences (syntax) and the rules for understanding the meaning (semantics) and appropriate use (pragmatics). The goal of this book is to describe the structure of English and how its words and structures have emerged and changed over the last 1,500 years. In the next section, we briefly examine the structure of English by comparing Modern English and earlier stages of English; this examination of the structure of English will be revisited in more detail later.

2. Modern English compared to earlier English and other languages

Even though we lack the technical vocabulary to discuss in detail differences among languages — that vocabulary will come in Chapter 2 — we will examine some of the major differences on three levels: sounds, words, and sentences. Listen to, at www.wwnorton.com/nael/noa/audio.htm, for example, or read the first sentence of the famous Caedmon’s Hymn, from a manuscript dated 737, and compare it with a word-by-word gloss and the
Modern English translation. Glosses for Old English (OE), are usually done as in (1).

What do you observe?

(1) Nu scylun hergan hefaenricaes uard
    now should praise-INF heaven-kingdom-gen guardian
    ‘Now we should praise the guardian of the heavenly kingdom’.

You might notice that there is no letter v in hefaen ‘heaven’ and that the u in uard ‘guard’ is pronounced differently — like w and unlike the present day u in guard or tune. It is not completely clear how the Old English sc and g are pronounced: sk and g or sh and y. With respect to the words and sentences, we notice the lack of grammatical words such as of, the, and we. The Old English sentence in (1) contains five words, whereas the Modern English one has twice as many. The additional words in Modern English fulfill a grammatical function performed by endings such as -es in Old English. As is obvious, quite a number of changes have occurred. First, we will look at the sounds of Modern English.

Modern English has 13 or 14 different vowels: bit, beet, bait, bet, bat, but, bye, boy, boat, boot, bout, bath, and bore all contain different vowel sounds. Languages such as Inuit and Navajo have four vowels and Hawaiian and Spanish have five. However, English has no tone — as Chinese and Navajo do — and no nasalized or lengthened vowels, as Navajo does. Thus, each language has a unique system.

English has at least 25 consonants. Other languages have different numbers: Polish has 35, Hawaiian eight, and Finnish 13 (not counting the ones used only in loanwords). The most unusual English consonant is perhaps the one spelled as th, which, as we will see, represents two different sounds. Many other languages, and many varieties of English, do not have this sound. When speakers of such languages first learn a variety of English where th does occur, they often pronounce th as d in that, as t in thing, as f in mouth, or as v in mother. In New York City English, for instance, that is often pronounced [dæt].

Substituting d, t, f, or v for th does not happen randomly, as we will see in Chapter 2.

English syllable structure is complex: there are English words such as strikes and splits, with three consonants at the beginning of the syllable/word and two at the end. Czech has more elaborate structures as in zmrzlina ‘ice-cream’ as does Croatian in cvrst ‘hard’. Japanese, Korean, Navajo, and Hawaiian do not have consonant clusters and use special strategies for adapting loanwords from English. For instance, strike will sound like suturaike in Japanese, with the cluster broken up. Spanish speakers will adapt an initial sk-sound, as in school, to eskool. Across the world’s languages, perhaps the most common syllable pattern is consonant-vowel (or CV) and that is what languages like Japanese have. Even in English, CV seems preferred, as in Figure 1.3.

To make sense, sounds need to be combined into words and words into sentences. One of the major functions of language is to indicate who does what to whom (and where, when, how, and why that occurs). Languages differ in how they mark these functions — through endings on the verbs and nouns or through word order and grammatical words (prepositions and pronouns). Languages such as Chinese have almost no endings and use word order and grammatical words to mark the functions of the different elements.
in a sentence. On the other hand, many languages of the Americas have multiple prefixes on the verb and the verb can represent an entire sentence. For instance, Navajo *nanishté* has three prefixes and a stem (*na-ni-sh-té*), and it means ‘around-you-I-carried’; English would translate that as ‘I am carrying you around’, using five words.

Modern English is more like Chinese than like Navajo, since no marking on the verb (or the noun) is required to understand a sentence like (2). Even if the case of the pronouns is ‘wrong’, as in (3), we understand that *her* is the subject because it is in the position of a subject:

(2) That dog loves me.

(3) Her gave Mary and I a cake.

Old English is more like Navajo in that it has a number of endings; the difference is that in Old English the endings are mainly on the nouns, while in Navajo they are on the verbs. The endings in Old English express what word order and prepositions do in Modern English. This is one of the major changes that occurred between Old and Modern English, a change from synthetic to analytic, and we will discuss it throughout this book.

One last issue to introduce is that of varieties within a single language. Linguists often distinguish among varieties of region, social class, and register, or level of formality. The branch of linguistics that is particularly interested in varieties is called sociolinguistics. What is often referred to as the standard language is the language of one social or regional group and is typically taught in schools, spoken (and written) by journalists. It is a formal variety or style or register. Formal styles use more loanwords, as shown in Figure 1.2 above. As we will see, throughout the history of English, standard varieties were established in a somewhat arbitrary fashion. For now, we introduce a few terms. Later, in Chapters 8 and 9, we will provide additional examples.
Varieties and styles overlap: regional speech is colloquial, and varieties due to register (e.g. computer jargon) can be related to social class. Slang, for example, can be used in colloquial speech as well as in regional and social varieties. The terms introduced above can also be used to discuss Australian or Kenyan English, for example, or varieties spoken by non-native speakers, such as Chinese English, as we will discuss in Chapter 9.

3. External and Internal Change

The question of language change is really a question of why varieties develop within a language. For instance, Canadian and South African English have developed their own identities even though they are still ‘English’ in their grammars. In this section, we discuss politically, geographically, and socially motivated change — known as external change — and linguistically motivated change, or internal change. External and internal change are sometimes ascribed to ‘chance’ and ‘necessity’, respectively (Lightfoot 1979: 405). Many times internal and external change interact.

**External** changes are brought about by language contact (between speakers of different languages), or innovations by speakers, or issues of political or social identity. Oceans may facilitate contact whereas mountain ranges may stop it. External changes are unpredictable since it is impossible to foresee who will migrate where, or what fashion will catch on. They are sometimes the easiest to trace as, for instance, in examining when loanwords first appear in a language. Appendix III at the end of the book provides a chronology of historical events, and at the end of this section a list of external changes will be provided. First, we consider a definition of internal change and factors that stop change.

**Internal** changes occur when, for instance, speakers stop using endings (or inflections) and start to rely on words such as of, for, the, and have. They are more predictable. Internal reasons have to do with children analyzing the language they hear in a slightly different way from the generation before them (and building their grammars accordingly). These can be cases of changing a vowel or a consonant: Old English ham changing to home and skip to ship. Internal change also occurs when the category of a word is reanalyzed as, for instance, when prepositions start being used to introduce sentences, i.e. as complementizers. Like is a preposition in She swims like a fish but is extended to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.3. Some terms for styles and varieties of English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Styles:</strong> formal style, usually taught in schools and used by journalists/editors; it has grammars and dictionaries; often referred to as the standard colloquial, informal style, often used in speech, with slang as one kind of colloquial speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Varieties:</strong> regional, variety typical for a region, also called dialect social, variety typical for a social group, e.g. African American, men, upper class, also called sociolect register, variety typical for an occupation or situation, e.g. computer engineers, church, chess or baseball game, also called jargon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Varieties and styles overlap: regional speech is colloquial, and varieties due to register (e.g. computer jargon) can be related to social class. Slang, for example, can be used in colloquial speech as well as in regional and social varieties. The terms introduced above can also be used to discuss Australian or Kenyan English, for example, or varieties spoken by non-native speakers, such as Chinese English, as we will discuss in Chapter 9.
introduce sentences in *She did like I said*. This is an internal change, as is the loss of case marking on *who* and stranding the preposition in *Who did you talk to*.

There are, however, factors that inhibit internal change, namely prescriptive rules. These rules typically have to be explicitly taught in school and include ‘don’t split infinitives’ and ‘don’t end sentences with a preposition’. They are based on a prestigious language such as Latin or on logic or on attempts to conserve an older stage of the language. Split infinitives, such as *to boldly go*, have occurred in the English language since the 14th century, but prescriptive forces still prevent many writers from using them. In cases such as these, native speakers seem to enjoy being able to cite a rule only to ignore it in their own language. The use of the ‘proper’ case endings, such as *whom*, and the third person -s are also strongly encouraged. If these prescriptive rules were not reinforced in schools and writing programs, however, they might not persist. As to external change, generally, there has been little opposition to incorporating new words into English, (but see Chapter 7 for the inkhorn debate), unlike in French. Perhaps French speakers do not oppose loan-words, such as *hotdog*, *e-mail*, and *computer*, but the French Academy establishes French equivalents, *chien chaud*, *courier électronique*, and *ordinateur*.

Often the changes caused by external factors lead to changes in the actual grammar or sound system. As we will see in later chapters, the influx of French and other loan words led to the incorporation of *v* and *z* into the English sound system. The opposite occurs as well. Internal changes, such as the frequent use of *like* by certain age groups or Canadian *eh*, can in turn become markers of identity, as Figure 1.4 shows. If a factor such as identity helps a change, we consider that an external reason.

![Figure 1.4. ‘Eh’ as a marker of identity. ©2005 Jan Eliot. Reprinted with permission of Universal Press Syndicate. All rights reserved.](image)

Figure 1.5 presents a timeline of the major external changes in English in the last 2,000 years. The dotted lines indicate the influences on English before and after Germanic was officially introduced to Britain around 450. The straight line represents Germanic before 450 and English after 450. In a later chapter, a timeline will be given for internal changes after we have discussed those.

As Figure 1.5 shows, in 55 BCE, Julius Caesar came to Britain and in 43 Emperor Claudius led an army of 40,000 and eventually subdued the people of what is now
Chapter 1. The English Language

England, excluding those in Scotland and Wales. The words borrowed at this time are similar to those borrowed by other languages that came into contact with Roman civilization, and a few of them have been mentioned above, e.g. *wine* and *street*. Celtic, however, remained spoken during this time, as shown by the dotted line. It provided many geographical names, such as *Kent*, *Avon*, *Dover*, and *loch*, and possibly influenced the different regions in grammar and pronunciation. When the Germanic tribes began to settle in Britain around 450, the Germanic dialects eventually pushed out the Celtic languages to the periphery (e.g. to Wales). In the 6th century, the conversion to Christianity introduced Latin words, such as *abbot*, *altar*, and *hymn*, into English, sometimes through Celtic since many missionaries came from Ireland.

Between the 8th and 10th centuries, the Scandinavians raided and plundered Britain. They also started extensive settlements. Scandinavian may be the most important of the external influences on English grammar and vocabulary. Words such as *egg*, *keel*, *odd*, *bask*, *call*, *crave*, *scream*, and *thrive* are borrowed from it. The disappearance of Old English endings might also be the result of the Scandinavian influence on the grammar. Scandinavian words are often not seen as ‘foreign’ since they are very similar to words of English origin and are often ‘everyday’ words. The latter shows the Scandinavian and English lived in close contact.

In 1066, William of Normandy arrived and defeated Harold during the Battle of Hastings (see Appendix A of Chapter 4 for a contemporary account of this defeat). As a result, French became the language of the nobility and the court and much new vocabulary was introduced, as shown in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 above. The borrowed words include many political and cultural terms, such as *government*, *authority*, and *judge*, in contrast to the ‘everyday’ vocabulary borrowed from Scandinavian. We will revisit loanwords in Chapter 5.

The external history after 1066 is described in Chapters 5, and 7 to 10. The main events are perhaps the Renaissance love for Greek and Latin terms, the post–1700 spread of English to the colonies — resulting in new words being adopted and varieties being formed — and the changes in the technology from the 19th century to the present.

Table 1.4 lists the major periods that English is usually divided in.
Table 1.4. Periods of English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old English (OE)</td>
<td>450–1150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle English (ME)</td>
<td>1150–1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Modern (EMod)</td>
<td>1500–1700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern (ModE)</td>
<td>1700–now</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Except for the beginning, which is arbitrary, the division is a mixture of external and internal factors. Internally, there is a difference between Old and Middle English in that Old English has numerous endings whereas Middle English uses more grammatical words. However, many people argue that external changes — such as the Norman conquest of 1066 — may be seen as a direct cause of the transition from Old to Middle English (see www.verbix.com/languages/oldenglish.shtml#periods for a different division).

Most who study the history of English agree that Old English does not abruptly change around 1150 but develops into Middle English over a period of time. The reason 1150 is chosen here is that texts are written (e.g. the last part of the Peterborough version of the *Anglo Saxon Chronicle*) that are definitely ‘modern’ in having lost many of the endings and in starting to make use of grammatical words. The year 1500 is chosen as the end of the Middle English period because by then most grammatical changes have taken place and the Great Vowel Shift is under way. An external reason for this date is that book production changes dramatically. The Early Modern period is difficult to date exactly. It depends on whether we take political events such as the Restoration (of the British monarchy) in 1660, or the Declaration of (US) Independence in 1776, or some other external date to be important. The year 1700 has been chosen because the Great Vowel Shift is nearly complete (more on this in Chapters 2 and 7), spelling is more or less standardized, and English speakers start to spread the language around the world.

This section provided a brief overview of how political and historical events can have strong influences on language. This is one cause of language change, also known as external change. The other cause of change — known as internal — is not directly triggered by an outside event.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter, we explored defining English. It can be defined as the language of a group of Germanic tribes after they arrived in Britain. It can also be defined as the grammar and words a speaker knows and uses to construct English sentences. We also discussed the fact that the structure of Modern English is significantly different from that of Old English and other languages in that English has lost many endings and acquired grammatical words. The reasons for the changes are many but can be divided into two categories: internal and external. Internal causes have to do with linguistic reasons; for example, it is easier to say *an apple* than *a apple*. External causes have to do with social, economic, geographical, political, and historical reasons such as migrations and trade contacts.
Keywords

English, British, Germanic, an internalized grammar, characteristics of English (vowels, consonants, syllable structure, grammar), Old English, Middle English, Early Modern English, Modern English, internal and external change, prescriptive rules, the influence of borrowing from other languages.

Topics for class discussion and exercises

1. Use www.ethnologue.com to find out what languages are spoken in France, the United States, Canada, or a country of your own choice.

2. What are some instances of recent changes in English? Discuss whether they are internal or external changes.

3. How can we stop or encourage language change? Think of an actual example.

4. Is there a word in the text of Figure 1.2 whose status (as loan or not) you find surprising? If so, which one(s)? Look up this/these word/s in the OED.

5. Look at four ‘weird’ words (http://www.quinion.com/words/weirdwords/index.htm) and decide who first used them and when they come into English by consulting the OED.

6. How would you go about figuring out how many words you know (actively)?

7. Describe very briefly how English differs from another language you speak or know something about.

8. Look at the sentence below from the beginning of Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. The Æ and æ represent the short a, as in cat, the ð a th, as in then, and the 7 is short for ‘and’. Guess, on the basis of the word-by-word gloss, which Modern English words are later loanwords. Check the OED to see if you are right:

**Old English**

Ærest me wæs fultumiend 7 lærow se arwurða abbad Albinus, se wæs wide gefaren 7 gelaered, 7 wæs betst gelaered on Angelcynne.

**Word-by-word gloss**

Earliest me was assistant and teacher the honorable abbot Albinus who was widely traveled and learned, and was best scholar in England.

**Modern English**

‘My first assistant and teacher was the venerable abbot Albinus, a man who had traveled much and studied, and was the best scholar in England.’ (from Miller 1890)
Chapter 2

English Spelling, Sounds, and Grammar

In Old and especially in Middle English, variable spellings are common, even within the writings of one scribe. After 1500, the first English dictionaries and word lists start appearing, but the English spelling system remains irregular. The main reason for this is that changes occurred in the spoken language which were not reflected in the spelling because by then the spelling had been standardized. In addition, over time English — or rather its speakers — borrowed many words from other languages. As a result, English spelling does not represent the way words sound: Plato could also be spelled play-dough, at least in American English. To indicate the pronunciation of words, we therefore need a phonetic alphabet.

Section 1 of this chapter offers examples of spelling irregularities and Section 2 describes some of the reasons behind them. Section 3 introduces the phonetic alphabet, which represents spoken language as accurately as possible, and Section 4 provides background information on phonetics, which helps explain many of the changes that have occurred in English. Section 5 discusses morphology and syntax since they are relevant to the linguistic changes discussed later in the book.

1. English spelling

George Bernard Shaw, the well-known Irish writer, pointed out that fish could just as well be spelled ghoti. The gh could sound like the last sound in enough, the o like the first vowel in women, and the ti like the middle part of nation. He considered the English spelling system inadequate and in need of reform. The following quote from the Preface to Shaw’s Pygmalion indicates his views on English spelling:

The English have no respect for their language, and will not teach their children to speak it. They cannot spell it because they had nothing to spell it with but an old foreign alphabet of which only the consonants — and not all of them — have any agreed speech value. Consequently no man can teach himself what it should sound like from reading it.
When Shaw died in 1950, he left money to devise a new writing system for English. Even though such an alphabet was invented and a book was published using it, it never caught on (the alphabet can be seen at www.shawalphabet.com).

The vowels in bold in (1) provide examples of irregular spelling. They are all spelled differently but sound the same. The phonetic symbol we will use for the sound they have in common is [i]:

(1) she, Harry, believe, Caesar, see, people, seize, seas, amoeba, key, machine, suite, and quay.

There are also many ways to spell what we will represent as [u], as shown in (2):

(2) to, too, two, through, threw, clue, Sioux, suit, flu, lieu, Pooh, Lou, and shoe.

Sometimes the opposite occurs: what is spelled the same sounds very different, as demonstrated by the sounds spelled as ou in the words in (3):

(3) tough, previous, ought, through, dough, and out.

As you will notice, most variation occurs in vowels. This is also the case in varieties of English spoken in different parts of the world. The French philosopher Voltaire is quoted as saying that vowels count for nothing (and consonants for very little). For some speakers, there is no distinction in sound between pin and pen, for others between Mary and marry. However, some consonants also show a variety of spellings. For instance, the k sound of keep is spelled ck after short vowels (lack, sick, Rick, deck), k after long vowels (week, soak, shake) and before front vowels (keep, kin, kettle), and c before back vowels (cool, could, cold, cup). (We’ll learn what front and back vowels are in Section 4). The same k sound is spelled differently in borrowed words such as psychology and choral.

There are many jokes and poems about spelling irregularities, such as the poem below from an unknown source:

I take it you already know
Of tough and bough and cough and dough?
Some may stumble but not you,
On hiccough, thorough, slough, and through?
So now you are ready perhaps
to learn of less familiar traps?
Beware of heard, a dreadful word
that looks like beard and sounds like bird,
and dead is said like bed, not bead or deed.
Watch out for meat, great, and threat that
rhyme with suite, straight, and debt.

Figure 2.1. Some spelling irregularities
As we have seen, in English the correspondence between sound and symbol is not straightforward. Therefore, we need a **phonetic alphabet**, and one is provided in Section 3. However, first we will look at how English spelling became irregular.

### 2. Why English spelling is irregular

The English spelling system has been around for centuries. During this time, it has absorbed words from many other languages and has been used for many varieties of spoken English. The result is that the symbols do not accurately represent the sounds. Also, unlike in Modern German and Dutch, for instance, there has never been a **spelling reform** in English. In later Old English, there is a standard for West-Saxon Old English for the manuscripts produced at Winchester by Ælfric and others. The Middle English period shows much variety, but after 1400, some standards arise, as we will see later in this section. After 1500, there are advocates for spelling reform: John Hart (*Orthographie* 1569), William Bullokar (*Booke at Large* 1580), and Richard Mulcaster (*Elementarie* 1582). We will revisit these attempts in Chapter 7. Even today, some groups advocate spelling reform (see [http://www.spellingsociety.org](http://www.spellingsociety.org) and references at [www.barnsdle.demon.co.uk/spell](http://www.barnsdle.demon.co.uk/spell)).

The arguments against spelling reforms are many. One is that pronunciation varies so much in the English spoken around the world that it would be hard to come up with one spelling system. A practical problem would be that the various governments and newspaper and book editors in areas where English is an official language would have to agree. Alternatively, several different spellings could be ‘allowed’. In that case, however, we would have multiple systems, and English speakers from India, for instance, might no longer be able to read what speakers in the United States write.

As has been mentioned already, the main reason English spelling is irregular is that many sound changes have occurred since it was (unofficially) standardized. First, we will discuss **standardization** and then we will address the sound changes. In Old and Middle English, scribes used a modified Roman alphabet to transcribe their own speech or to copy from other manuscripts. There is often a lot of variation within the writings of one scribe as well as between different scribes from the same area: *sealm, selm, salm, spalme, spalme* and many others are listed in the OED for ‘psalm’. Examine, for instance, the variations of the word *shirt* in the OED (by looking it up and clicking the ‘spelling’ button). The 2006 version of the OED lists 23 different spellings throughout the history of English! Despite the variation, a standard was established since scribes often copied earlier manuscripts and many indeed copied the symbols indicative of an earlier pronunciation.

In *The Emergence of Standard English*, John Fisher describes how a standard may have arisen at the court in London. Scribes working at the Chancery began writing in English (rather than Latin) in 1420 and, by the 1430s, a standard had evolved. The Chancery produced a huge number of documents, and this was connected to the rise of London as a major center for trade and politics. Chancery English is characterized by relatively free spelling, but some rules evolve (a) *gh* at the end of *high* even though the consonant is
no longer pronounced, (b) *th* endings for third person verbs, as in *he doth* ‘he does’ even though many varieties already have *he does*, (c) past tense (*e*)d endings and not *t* even though many sound like *t*, and (d) *such* and *which* for *su(l)ch* and (*h*)*wi(l)ch*, respectively (there are many other variations).

Chancery English may be the beginning of a written standard, one that does not necessarily represent spoken English. Smith (1996), Hope (2000), and Wright (2000) — among others — have looked at migration patterns into London and argued that the Midlands (the area North of London) was crucial. All medieval cities needed immigration to maintain their population levels and the Midlands was characterized by population growth and the rise of a middle class. It also generated scientific and religious texts such as Wycliffite sermons and texts. Thus, the Midlands and London were important to the development of an unofficial standard, where ‘unofficial’ refers to the fact that English has never had an Academy or any other body regulating it.

A major boost to the standard comes after the introduction of the printing press in 1476. William Caxton introduced the printing press in London, physically close to the Chancery, even though he himself came from Kent and had spent much time abroad. Standardization is automatically established when a document, book, or pamphlet is reproduced the same way many times. Caxton relied on the writings of scribes rather than inventing a new system and was not interested in standardizing spelling himself. One of his first books, Malory’s *Morte d’Arthur*, was published in 1485, but based on an older manuscript. The printed result contains a lot of variation (*duke* and *duk*, *when* and *whanne*, *hir* and *hir* for ‘her’); it is also possible that words no longer sounded the way Caxton printed them. Spelling variations such as these stay around for a long time; Shakespeare’s First Folio of 1623 contains many of them (*heart* and *hart*, *doe* and *doe*).

Other important developments towards standardization were the publication of the first English dictionaries around 1600 (see Chapter 7) and the King James Bible in 1611. Even though between the 1430s and the 1480s, a standard began to evolve, English spelling is irregular because beginning around 1400, and continuing until after 1600, perhaps the most ‘disruptive’ of all changes — the Great Vowel Shift (GVS) — occurs. See http://alpha.furman.edu/~mmenzer/gvs for a representation of the GVS, which started around the time standardization was taking place. The GVS involves long vowels — such as those pronounced as *a, e, i, u, o* — becoming *e, i, a, o, u* respectively. For instance, before 1400 *name* was pronounced the way it would if you pronounced it in Spanish, Dutch, German, or French. In present day English, the *a* of *name* sounds more like the first vowel in Spanish words such as *edición* ‘edition’ or French *école* ‘school’. We will come back to the GVS below and in Chapter 7.

Other factors that contributed to the irregularity of English spelling are etymological respellings and the incorporation of words from other languages with changed pronunciation but keeping the original spelling. An instance of an etymological respelling is the English word for *debt*. It is borrowed from French and occurs for the first time in 1300 as *dete*, *dette*, and *dett*, without a *b*. Because the Latin forms have *bs* in the same word, the *b* is introduced by writers wishing to sound learned. The OED says that it was “artificially
spelt debt, after which debt has become the English spelling since the 16th c.” The same happens with doubt, borrowed as doute, and fault, borrowed as faute, as well as receipt and indict, borrowed as receyt and endyte, respectively. The Old English word igland ‘island’ is mistakenly considered to be like the French word isle and therefore the s is introduced into the Modern English island. Johnson’s dictionary of 1755 has the following inconsistent spellings: deceit and conceit versus receipt and fancy versus phantom. Spenser (the author of the Fairy Queen) is supposedly responsible for respelling delite as delight so it would form an ‘eye-rhyme’ with light and night.

Instances of loan words incorporated into English in terms of the sounds, but not the spelling are listed in (4):

(4) Phoenix, suite, xylophone, quota, chagrin, gnomic, euphemism, debris, glacier

These words are pronounced as if they were English words and some with an attempt to pronounce them as French or another foreign language. They could easily be spelled feeniks, sweet, zylofone, kwota, shagrin, nomick, ufemism, daybree, and glaysher. Other languages have borrowed words and changed the spelling: Dutch borrowed cadeau ‘present’ from French but now sometimes spells it kado. Also, in the Dutch edition of Harry Potter phoenix becomes feniks. In Norwegian, the word for centre/center is senter, with a spelling that is closer to its pronunciation. Sometimes, it is not the word that is borrowed but the letter combination. For instance, the French combination qu replaced Old English cw and cwene became queen. This is due to the influence of the Anglo-Norman scribes. Even today, in mice, the s-sound is represented by the French c, whereas in mouse, the Old English s continues to be used. The ou also comes from French and the OED has Old English mus spelled as mouse for the first time in 1350, before the Great Vowel Shift takes place.

Spelling pronunciation is a phenomenon where speakers pronounce words as they are spelled. For instance, pronouncing the [t] in often and the [l] in salmon are hyper-corrections that regularize spelling. It also happens in the incorporation of loans, e.g. pronouncing the [l] in tortilla, rather than the expected [j]. The latter sometimes occurs for external reasons (see Hill 1993).

As we have seen in this section, English spelling is irregular. We therefore need to have a way to represent spoken English; we will explore this in the next section.

3. The Phonetic Alphabet

The symbols for the vowels are given in Table 2.1. In the text, the pronunciation of the sounds will be provided in square brackets, according to convention. There is a great deal of variation in the way speakers pronounce certain vowels, especially [a] and [ɔ]; hence, the exact number of vowels is debatable. The reason for the organization of the table will become clear in Section 4. The table also provides an English word in which the sound is used (there is an actual pronunciation at http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics).
Some speakers pronounce a [j] sound after long vowels such as [i] and [e] as in [sij] for see, [lejt] for late. It is up to you to decide how to represent these, depending on how you pronounce them or hear them pronounced. For other ways in which these sounds can be represented, try the site of the International Phonetic Association (http://www2.arts.gla.ac.uk/IPA/ipa.html or http://hctv.humnet.ucla.edu/departments/linguistics/VowelsandConsonants).

Table 2.2 lists the symbols for English consonants and provides words starting with those consonants. (In Chapter 4, we will see that the ‘3’-like symbol is also used to spell the [j] sound in Old English.)

Table 2.1. Phonetic Symbols for English Vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>teeth</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>make</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>bat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ï</td>
<td>miss</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ (schwa)</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>bat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>bet</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>putt</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>bat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>book</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>too</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>moat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>too</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2. Phonetic Symbols for English Consonants (*no word starts with [ŋ] or [ʃ] or [’]; see therefore the consonant in bold)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>pet</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>bet</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>ten</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>den</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>cat</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>get</td>
<td>η</td>
<td>sing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>for</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>very</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>sorry</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>zoo</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>th</td>
<td>thigh</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>that</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋ</td>
<td>shoe</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>rouge*</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>wit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tf</td>
<td>chirp</td>
<td>dʒ</td>
<td>judge</td>
<td>(w)</td>
<td>where (for some speakers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>(’)</td>
<td>bottle* (some speakers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consonants are less likely to change, but — as we will see — Old English lacks a few of the Modern English consonants; for example, it does not have [ʒ], typically found in loans from French, such as rouge and pleasure.
4. Phonetics and sound change

As we will see, sound change is regular, unlike the resulting spelling system. To understand that it is regular (and that e.g. an [m] does not change to a [k]), we need some background on how to describe sounds — phonetics. English vowels can be described using three features: (1) whether the tongue is high or low, (2) whether the tongue is front or back, and (3) the duration of the sound. Explore the height differences by pronouncing [i], [e], and [æ]. You should feel your tongue moving down as you proceed from one sound to the next. The same downward movement should happen if you pronounce [u], [o], and [a]. The difference between front and back vowels can be felt by pronouncing [i], [e], and [æ] versus [u], [o], and [a]. The former are pronounced with the tongue in the front of the mouth, the latter with the tongue in the back.

The third feature, length, can be observed, for instance, when comparing [I] with [i] and [u] with [u]. There is a slight difference in height and frontness between long and short pairs, which we will not examine. In English, [i, e, a, æ, o, ɒ, ʊ, ʌ, ə] are long vowels and [ɪ, ɛ, ɑ, æ, o, ɒ, ʌ, ə] short. Using the features listed above, [e] can be described as a mid, front, long vowel, and [o] as a mid, back long vowel. Most consider [æ, aw, æj] diphthongs, two sounds in one.

In languages such as Old English, a fourth feature, round, is relevant for categorizing vowels. Front vowels such as [i] and [e] are produced with the lips in a spread position, whereas back vowels such as [u] and [o] are made with rounded lips. Make these sounds to feel the difference. In addition to these vowels, some languages have rounded front vowels (e.g. [y] in Old English mys ‘mice’, German Küche ‘kitchen’ and French tu ‘you’) or unrounded back vowels (e.g. [u] in Vietnamese).

Figure 2.2 presents the vowels for languages with five vowels (mentioned in Chapter 1, Section 2) and Figure 2.3 the vowels for a language like English. These diagrams are shown as if we were looking at the left side of someone’s mouth and could see the tongue’s position through the cheek.

How is this division relevant to language change? In Section 2, we mentioned that the Great Vowel Shift (GVS) is responsible for many of the irregularities in the spelling system. Based on work by Karl Luick, many linguists have analyzed this shift, e.g. Jespersen (1909, Chapter 8) and Chomsky and Halle (1968, Chapter 6). We will describe the shift
using relatively simple linguistic terminology. When $[a]$ becomes $[e]$, we say that it raises (and fronts), when $[e]$ becomes $[i]$, it raises; the same happens when $[o]$ becomes $[u]$. Thus, the GVS involves raising the long vowels. The two vowels that are ‘pushed out of the system’ are $[u]$ and $[i]$. They become diphthongs — $[aw]$ and $[aj]$, respectively. Figure 2.4 represents this raising in very general terms but see Chapter 7 for more detail.

![Figure 2.4](image)

**Figure 2.4.** The main direction of the GVS

Since the GVS only affected **long vowels**, English has pairs such as *serene-serenity, profound-profundity, and divine-divinity*. The second vowel in the first word is long; the same vowel in the second word is short. The long vowels have shifted to $[i]$, $[aw]$, $[aj]$, and $[i]$ respectively, but the short ones have remained more or less the same. Thus, the second vowel in *serenity* is not pronounced as $[i]$ but as $[ɛ]$:

(5) **sane/sanity, vain/vanity, grain/granary, humane/humanity, clean/cleanliness, malign/malignant, crime/criminal, sign/signify.**

Sound changes did not just happen in the past. Various changes are still happening today. For instance, Labov (1994) and Wolfram (1991) describe the Northern Cities Shift, the Southern Vowel Shift, and Canadian Raising. The Northern Cities Shift can be heard in Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Rochester, and Syracuse. It has occurred since the 1950s and involves short vowels, e.g. the $[a]$ of *father* and *Chicago* becoming $[æ]$, and the $[æ]$ raising in turn. The Southern Vowel Shift has the back vowels fronting and the front vowels shifting position. Canadian Raising involves the raising of the first part of $[aj]$, as in *ice*, to $[ai]$ and $[aw]$ in *house* to $[aw]$. The change occurs only before voiceless consonants, and the result is that the vowels in *ice* and *eyes* are different. Notice that, for reasons not understood, the vowel changes typically start as raising or fronting.

In Section 1, we examined a spelling irregularity involving $[k]$. This irregularity can be explained using the front-back distinction in vowels. Words that are originally English use a $c$ before a back vowel ($cool$, *could*, *copper*) and a $k$ before a front vowel ($king$, *kitchen*, *keep*). Length is also relevant: after a long vowel (or a consonant), the spelling of $[k]$ is $k$ ($wake$, *week*, *snake*, *work*, *wink*) and after a short vowel, it is $c(k)$ ($sick$, *Nick*, *sack*$). Let’s describe consonants using the three features typical of them. While vowels let the air through completely, with consonants the air is constricted in a particular place in
the mouth. For instance, in pronouncing [p] and [b], the air is constricted by the lips; in producing a [θ] and [ð] it is constricted by the tongue and teeth. The air is also restricted in a particular manner, e.g. complete or partial constriction as in [p] and [f], respectively. Another difference between vowels and consonants is that all vowels are voiced, but that is not true of all consonants. Therefore, the features relevant to consonants are: (a) manner of articulation, (b) place of articulation, and (c) voicing.

The airflow can be restricted through a complete closure, as in [p, b, t, d, k, g]; the resulting sounds are called stops. Fricative sounds such as [f, v, s, z, ʃ,ʒ] let the air through. Affricates, [tʃ, dʒ] in English, are mixtures of a stop and a fricative. Nasals and liquids have a lot in common with vowels in that they are voiced and can be syllables on their own. Nasals are formed by letting the air out through the nasal cavity. Liquid is a cover term for [l] and [r], sounds that are perhaps the hardest to define and the most variable across languages. Glides, such as [w, j], are vowel-like and immediately precede or follow vowels.

**Place** of articulation refers to the place where the air is constricted: the lips for labial [p, b, m, f, v], the teeth for dental [θ, ð], the ridge behind the upper teeth for alveolar [t, d, n, s, z, ʃ, r], the front of the palate for alveo-palatal [ʃ, z, ʃ, ʒ, dʒ], the palate for [j], the back of the palate for velar [k, g, ɳ], and the glottis for glottal [’, h]. The places are shown in Figure 2.5.

![Figure 2.5. Places of articulation](image)

Most consonants come in pairs of a **voiced** and a **voiceless** sound. Voiced sounds are made when the vocal folds in the larynx vibrate. For instance, [f] and [s] are voiceless, and [v] and [z] are voiced. Try feeling this by putting your finger on the middle of your throat and alternating between saying sssss and zzzzzz. The pairs are indicated as sets in Table 2.3 (except for the liquids which are both voiced).
To simplify matters, in Table 2.3, the labio-dentals [f] and [v] are listed as labials, and the palatal glide [j] as alveo-palatal. The liquids can be further divided according to manner: [l] is lateral and [r] is retroflex (in English).

How are manner, voice, and place of articulation relevant in language change and variation? The manner in which a sound is produced changes when stops become fricatives, as shown in Latin pater corresponding to English father. This change is part of Grimm’s Law which we will come back to in the next chapter. Stops often become fricatives between two vowels, as in Latin faba ‘bean’ to Portuguese fave. In these cases, one sound assimilates to become more like another; this particular kind of assimilation is referred to as frication and it happens because fricatives are more like vowels in letting some air through. Nasalization of vowels (often indicated by a [~] above the vowel) is common when they precede nasal consonants, e.g. for some speakers of English, the vowels in fake and fame are different. It is another instance of manner assimilation on the part of the vowel.

Voiceless consonants surrounded by vowels can also assimilate and become voiced: the [t] in the words in (6) starts to sound more like a [d] in American English (and then it is called a ‘flap’):

(6) literature, spaghet*ti, but*ter, bott*le

British English has an alveolar stop [t] or a glottal stop [ʔ] in butter and bottle. Devoicing occurs as well, as described by Grimm’s Law: Latin ager corresponds to English acre, with voiced [g] changing to voiceless [k].

As for assimilation for place of articulation, in English fast speech, the nasals assimilate, i.e. adapt in place to a following stop: in Paris is pronounced [Ipærɪs] and in Canada [ɪŋkænədə]. A frequent assimilation for place of articulation is palatalization — velar consonants such as [k] and [g] becoming palatalized to [tʃ] and [ʃ], respectively (usually because of the presence of a front vowel). In Old English, the c stands for [k], and later English ch stands for [tʃ]. Palatalization happens frequently in Old English words: cirice > church; cinne > chin (in Dutch still kin); ceop > cheap (originally from good cheap ‘a good bargain’, notice the k in the German kaufen ‘buy’); ceorl > churl (in Dutch still kerel).
Other processes that occur to facilitate pronunciation are dissimilation, deletion, insertion (or epenthesis), metathesis, and l/r shift. **Dissimilation** occurs when there are too many sounds of the same kind in a row. For instance, in *fifths*, many speakers make the middle fricative [θ] into a stop. They can also apply **deletion** to *fifths* and pronounce it like [fifs]. **Insertion or epenthesis** helps make consonant clusters easier to pronounce: [milk] becomes [milk] in many dialects. Many of these processes occur when languages borrow words that do not fit their phonetic system. Languages such as Japanese have a strict Consonant-Vowel syllable pattern and borrow English words by inserting vowels into consonant clusters.

**Metathesis**, a process that switches sounds, also changes consonant clusters. For instance, the initial [spæ] cluster in *spaghetti* is often switched to [pas], as in [pasgeti]. Other instances are *precise* becoming [parsajs] and *prescription* becoming [parskripʃan]. In Old English, words such as *acs(ian)*, *gars*, *cerse*, *hros*, and *irn(an)* all metathesize when they become Modern English *ask*, *grass*, *cress*, *horse*, and *run*. Other related words where one has undergone metathesis but not the other one are *third/three*, *nutrition/nurture*, *promiscuous/mix*. A final change to be mentioned is the **l/r switch**: from *peregrinus* to *pilgrim*, *pruna* to *plum*, and *arbor* to *arbol*. The reason for this switch is that [l] and [r] are both liquids and are very unstable over time. This is also shown by their many variants. For instance, Dutch is said to have 13 different [r] sounds in different varieties of Dutch and [l] sounds are variable as well, witness the ‘dark’ [l] in Scottish English, an [l] pronounced very far back in the mouth.

5. **Some grammatical terminology**

This section provides some terminology and context for how words and sentences are built, the purview of **morphology** and **syntax**, respectively. This knowledge will become relevant when we start examining Old English in Chapter 4: English changed from a **synthetic** language, with many endings on nouns and verbs indicating grammatical functions such as subject and object, to a mostly **analytic** language with almost no endings.

In English, words can be formed by means of prefixes, such as *pre-* and *anti-* , or suffixes, such as *-ness* and the plural *-s*. First, we will look at the prefixes and suffixes that add to the meanings of words (and can change their categories). These word-building rules have not changed much in character since Old English and involve **derivational** prefixes and suffixes. There are also other ways to construct new words, such as compounding and shortening. Examples of some English word formations are given in (7):

(7) mark-ed-ness, human-ity, friend-ship, product-iv-ity, comput-er, double-speak, nanny state, green-house-effect, PC, yuppy

The first five words involve derivational markings and their affixes are indicated; *double-speak, nanny state* (i.e. ‘too much government’), and *greenhouse effect* are compounds; *PC* is short for ‘politically correct’; and *yuppy* is short for ‘young urban professional’.
There are many other word formation rules and we will discuss these in later chapters as they become relevant. As mentioned, derivational endings are present in Old, Middle, and Modern English more or less to the same extent.

Words can also be marked as being the subject or object of a sentence, for plural and possession by means of inflectional markers, more commonly known as grammatical endings. The endings that mark these functions have changed considerably over time, however. As mentioned, indicating the functions of subject and object is essential; otherwise, we would not know what the sentences of a language mean. There are two basic strategies for representing the functions of subject and objects: (a) by means of word order and grammatical words such as of and by and (b) by means of markers on verbs (agreement) or on nouns (case). Languages using (a) are called analytic and languages using (b) synthetic. Synthetic languages indicate subjects either by a marking on the subject, called nominative case, or by marking the person and number of the subject on the verb, called agreement. Old English, a synthetic language, has both of these, but Modern English, an analytic language, has limited case and agreement. In (8), the subject is marked by being a nominative *she* rather than an accusative *her*, and the verb is marked by a third person singular agreement marker *-s*:

(8) She walks regularly.

It is more common, however, for Modern English nouns and verbs not to be marked for case and agreement, as in (9a). The word order has to be strictly observed, however, and (9b) is ungrammatical (indicated by *):

(9) a. Rabbits eat mallow without hesitation.

   b. *Mallow without hesitation rabbits eat.

In many languages, objects are signaled by a special case marking — *him, me, us*; sometimes, there is a marking on the verb as well. In Old English, there are cases other than nominative and accusative, namely genitive and dative. This will become relevant in Chapter 4; here we will examine only the background to cases and a few other grammar points.

In Old English, objects get accusative, dative, or genitive case. In the glosses, these are ACC, DAT, and GEN, respectively. The nominative will be abbreviated as NOM. Nowadays, the dative of Old English is often replaced by the prepositions *to* or *for* and the genitive is replaced by the preposition *of*. The made-up Old English sentence in (10) would be translated as (11) in Modern English, with the ending *-e* on *cyninge* 'king' replaced by the preposition *to*:

(10) *bæt folc geaf cyninge aþas*

that people-NOM gave king-DAT oaths-ACC

(11) The people gave oaths to the king.
In Old English, the main functions of the **nominative** (NOM) are subject — *se cyning* in (12) — and subject predicate, *se cyning* in (13):

(12) *Se cyning* for ofer Humbre muþan  
the-NOM king-NOM went over Humbre mouth  
‘The king went across the mouth of the Humber’. (adapted from Chron 867)

(13) ðæt is *se cyning*  
that is the-NOM king-NOM  
‘that is the king’. (adapted from Alfred)

The main functions of the **genitive** (GEN) are (a) to express possession, *engles* in (14), replaced by *of* in Modern English; (b) to indicate objects after certain verbs, where only part of the object is involved, as in (15); and (c) to indicate measure or number, as in (16):

(14) *mid engles fingrum awritene*  
with angel-GEN finger-DAT.P written  
‘written by the fingers of an angel’. (*Wulfstan Homilies*)

(15) Ic gyrnde þara fisca  
*I wanted some of that fish.’ (adapted from the *Blickling Homilies*)

(16) 7 þær forwearþ cxx scipa æt Swanawic  
and there perished 120 scips-GEN at Swanwick  
‘and 120 ships perished at Swanwick.’ (*Chronicle A*, for the year 877)

By the way, what Modern English words do you think *stede* and *gyrne* are related to?

The **dative** (DAT) case is used for the object of most prepositions, as in (17), the indirect object, *cyninge* in (10), the regular object with certain verbs, as in (18), and to express means or manner, as in (19):

(17) *Her on pëysum geare for se micla here*  
now in this-DAT year-DAT went the great army  
‘In this year, the great army went’. (*PC* for the year 892)

(18) δæt heafod sceal wisian þæm fotum  
the head shall guide the-DAT feet-DAT  
‘The head shall guide the feet.’ (*Pastoral Care* 131.22)

(19) *sweorde ne meahte on δam aglæcean wunde gewyrcean*  
sword-DAT not might on that creature wounds make  
‘with a sword he could not inflict wounds on that creature’ (*Beowulf* 2904–5).

The **accusative** (ACC) is often used as object, *apas* in (10), and object of a preposition, *ofer* in (12) and *geond ‘through’* in (20), when the preposition indicates movement:
We will use these cases a lot more in the chapter on Old English.

Verbs in Old English also have endings to indicate which noun is the subject of the sentence. This is called verbal agreement and the endings are considered inflectional endings. As mentioned earlier, we will use the word ‘ending’ rather than ‘inflection’. We will leave Old English verbal endings until Chapter 4, however, since they are more straightforward than case endings.

Languages — or their speakers, to be more precise — perceive words as belonging to certain categories. The main lexical categories are Noun (e.g. table), Verb (e.g. see), Adjective (e.g. yellow), Adverb (e.g. quickly), and Preposition (e.g. to). These categories are called lexical because they carry meaning (they have synonyms and antonyms). There are also grammatical categories: Determiner (e.g. the, a, and those), Auxiliary (e.g. might), Coordinator (e.g. and), and Complementizer (e.g. because). These categories are called grammatical since they determine the syntactic relationships in a sentence. Prepositions and adverbs do a little of both. The distinction between lexical and grammatical categories is important because the change from Old to Modern English involves an increase in the number of grammatical categories, as mentioned in Section 2 of Chapter 1, a process often referred to as grammaticalization.

When languages borrow new words, those words are usually nouns, verbs, and adjectives, i.e. lexical categories. Relatively recent examples are the nouns pizza, angst, patio, pita and cholla. Therefore, the difference between lexical and grammatical categories is often rendered in terms of open vs. closed categories, the lexical categories being open (new words can be added), the grammatical ones being closed (new words are not easily added). Prepositions are an in-between category and are borrowed very infrequently.

6. Conclusion

This chapter provided background information on the spelling, sounds, and grammatical terminology of English. Because the spelling is irregular, we need a phonetic alphabet. We also need to know something about how English sounds are produced since that allows us to explain and describe language change. Syntax and morphology have also been introduced, and the Old English case system explained briefly; we will go into this more in Chapter 4.
Keywords

Irregular spelling; standardization; Great Vowel Shift; phonetics; manner, place, and voicing of consonants; height, frontness, and length of vowels; assimilation; dissimilation; epenthesis; metathesis; morphology; syntax; lexical and grammatical categories; analytic and synthetic; derivational and inflectional endings; nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative case; agreement for number and person; lexical and grammatical categories.

Exercises

Spelling

1. Look at texts A and B below in which certain sounds have been left out. Which words do you recognize and which text is easier to read? What implications does that have for possible spelling reforms?

   Text A  Th Mn M Hv Wtr
   Scntsts thnk th hv dtctd wtr n th Mn. Sddnl, vsns f ppl lvng n lnr clns tht stp ff t rfl n th w t Mrs r lss fr-ftchd. ftr tw yrs f crfl nlss, scntsts sd ystrd tht rdr sgnls frm n mcrrn spcfrt ndctd th mn ws nt bn-dr. Th spcrrft's rdr sgntrs sggstd th prsnc f wtr c n th prmnntl clrd shdws f dp bsn nr th lnr sth pl.

   Text B  e oo ay ae ae
   iei i ey ae eee ae o ee oo. uey, iio o eoe ii i ua ooie a o o o eue o e ay o a ae e a-ee. Ae o ea o aeu aayi, iei ai eeasy a aa ia o a Aeia aea iiae e oo a o oe-y. e aea aa iuae uee e eee o ae ie i e eaey o ao o a ee ai ea e ua ou oe.

2. Which words do you think are most commonly misspelled? Look in the OED to see if these words have had different spellings over the centuries (see also www.barnsdle.demon.co.uk/spell/error.html for some common ‘errors’).

3. Discuss arguments for and against spelling reform.

Phonetics

4. Please write the symbol for a:
   
   voiced bilabial stop: [ ]  voiceless dental fricative: [ ]  high back long vowel: [ ]
   
   voiced alveolar affricate: [ ]  velar nasal: [ ]  low front short vowel: [ ]

5. What feature (voice, manner, place) distinguishes:
   
   [b] and [m]:  [k] and [g]:
   
   [p] and [f]:  [d] and [g]:
6. Circle the sound that does not fit in the sets of sounds:
   a. t d z k s
   b. g k b d
   c. æ a i e

7. Please describe the following sounds in terms of voice, place, and manner:
   [e] [k] [n] [f] [d]

Changes

8. How could you best describe the change that occurs between:
   a. Old English hlaf and loaf?
   b. German brennen and English burn?
   c. Old English thurgh and Modern English through?
   d. Early Latin impossibilis and Late Latin impossibilis?
   e. Old English heofod and Modern English head?

Grammar

9. Using the Old English text and its translation below (from King Alfred’s version of Orosius), try to identify a few subjects, objects, indirect objects, and prepositional objects (dative and accusative). What Modern English words might bude and þeah be related to? Note that, as in Chapter 1, the æ represents the short a, as in cat, and the ð and þ both represent th.

Text C

Old English
Ohtere sæde his hlaforde, Ælfrede cyninge, þæt he ealra Norðmonna norþmest bude. He cwæð þæt he bude on þæm lande norþweardum wiþ þa Westsæ. He sæde þeah þæt þæt land sie swiþe lang norþ þonan; ac hit is eal weste, buton on feawum stowum styc-cemælum wiciað Finnas.

Word-by-word
Ohtere-NOM said-S his lord-DAT Alfred-DAT king-DAT that he all-GEN Norsemen-GEN northmost lived-S. He said-S that he lived-S on that-DAT land-DAT northward along the Westsea. He said-S however that that land-NOM is very far north from-there, but it is all waste, except-for few-DAT places-DAT here-and-there live-P Finns-NOM (i.e. Sami).

Free translation
Ohtere said to his lord, King Alfred, that he of all Norsemen northmost lived. He said that he lived in that land northward along the Westsea (sea to the west of Norway). He said, however, that that land is very far north from there, but that it is all a wasteland except in a few places where Sami live (nomadically) here and there.
Chapter 3

Before Old English

In Chapters 1 and 2, we briefly explained that English originated around 450, when Germanic tribes first settled in Britain. The Germanic dialects that became English have their origins in another language (or a set of languages). Germanic belongs to the Indo-European group of languages, which is related to yet other families of languages.

In this chapter, we will discuss the ancestors of English. In Section 1, we take a step back and examine the origins of humans and when they first might have acquired language, probably 50,000 or more years ago. We also consider how people and languages spread. Section 2 examines the earliest writings, from about 5,000 years ago. Changes can be observed between these writings and later ones. Some observations regarding these changes led to the formulation of linguistic laws in the 19th century, as discussed in Section 3. Section 4 shows that Old English inherits its synthetic character from older languages; Section 5 reviews a number of methods for reconstructing an earlier stage of a language when we have no access to written material; and Section 6 addresses some broader questions.

1. Origins of language

Scholars are uncertain when humans first started using language and how it spread. In this section, we will examine early archeological evidence, genetic findings, and linguistic reconstruction in an attempt to shed some light on these questions.

In 1856, human remains were found in Europe with a cranial structure so different as to suggest early humans, called Neanderthals, might not have had language abilities. This evidence posed a serious challenge to pre-Darwinian thinking. Later, remains were found in Asia and the Middle East as well, and pre-Neanderthals were discovered. Based on DNA evidence, Neanderthals are now classified as having split off from homo erectus ‘upright man’ around half a million years ago. Neanderthals may not have had language, but they made music, cared for the sick, and buried their dead (see http://sapphire.indstate.edu/~ramanank/language.html).

Present-day humans — homo sapiens ‘knowing man’ — also descend from homo erectus. Both homo erectus and homo sapiens originated in Africa but started migrating quite early. Homo erectus originated 2 million years ago and homo sapiens is argued (based
on DNA tests) to have split off 500,000 years ago, long before language originated. As for early *homo sapiens*, its skull does not resemble that of present-day humans; that of later *homo sapiens*, however, does. This resemblance started developing around 100,000 BP at the point when the culture of *homo sapiens* became diverse. That is why language is assumed to have appeared between 150,000 and 50,000 BP. Anthropological and archeological research is divided regarding the contact that may have existed between early humans in Africa and those elsewhere. The Out-of-Africa Replacement Model argues there was none and that each wave of peoples replaced earlier populations. The Multiregional Continuity Model argues that there was gene-flow after *homo erectus* left Africa and that *homo sapiens* may have emerged in different regions. For some background on this debate, see [http://www.actionbioscience.org/evolution/johanson.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/evolution/johanson.html).

Apart from learning about human ancestors and the beginnings of language, we also want to know where language started and how it spread. Geneticists have examined relationships in the genetic material of people from different continents, archeologists have studied early habitation sites, and anthropologists have looked at physical characteristics such as teeth. Figure 3.1 represents some of the genetic relationships. The genetic similarities and differences between the various populations suggest that humans migrated from Africa to Australia and Oceania, then to Asia, then to Europe and America. This implies greatest affinity between the people of Asia and those of the Americas, indicating that the Americas were settled by Asian (Siberian) peoples.

Using this information, a map of the migrations can be constructed, as in Figure 3.2.

Hypotheses about genetic relationships, as in Figure 3.1, also predict relationships between languages. It is assumed that language originated in one place, i.e. that it is monogenetic rather than polygenetic. However, it may be necessary to keep the Multiregional Continuity Model, mentioned above, in mind as well.

If humans already had language by the time they started migrating from Africa, Figure 3.1 predicts that the languages of Asia are closest to those of the Americas, and the languages of Africa and Australia the most distinct since they developed independently of each other over a longer period of time. Linguistic work confirms this prediction. For instance, Greenberg, Ruhlen, and others have linked the genetic tree in Figure 3.1 to a tree of linguistic relationships between most of the world’s languages, Figure 3.3. This grouping
is controversial, as will be discussed later. If a language is not attested in early writings, we call it a proto-language; all the languages/families below are proto-languages.

**Figure 3.3.** Linguistic relationships (Ruhlen 1994: 192)

The connection of the branches indicates which languages are most closely related. The Afroasiatic languages include North African and Semitic languages: Arabic, Hebrew, and Berber. They are argued to be related to Dravidian, which includes languages such as Tamil, Malayalam, and Brahui. Dravidian is the name for a group of languages that was at one point spoken in Northern India but that was later pushed to the South of India (and to Sri Lanka). If you consider this migration, the assumption that the Dravidian and Afroasiatic families are related is not far-fetched.

Eurasian incorporates many language families from Indo-European to Altaic. It includes English, Italian, Bulgarian, Japanese, Korean and Inuit. Together with Afroasiatic and Dravidian, Eurasian forms a well-known super-family — Nostratic — an idea advocated by Illich-Svitych, Dolgopolsky, Shevoroshkin, and others.

The next most closely related family is Amerindian. This is a large (and controversial) language family; Greenberg suggests that it includes most of the languages of the Americas — Hopi, Nahuatl, and Quechua. In this scenario, Na-Dene (e.g. Apache and Navajo) is grouped with Sino-Tibetan and North Caucasian into Eurasian. The only language
families not accounted for are the three African language families — with the exception of Afroasiatic — the Australian families, and some Pacific ones. These may be the oldest.

The linguistic representation in Figure 3.3 mirrors the genetic one in Figure 3.1 only up to the split between Asia and Europe. As mentioned, it leaves out three African language families as well as the Polynesian and Australian languages. If Figure 3.1 is correct, Australian and Polynesian languages are the first to split off and are therefore most distantly related to the Eurasian languages.

There is a lively debate on how much to include in Eurasian and Nostratic (e.g. Greenberg 2000) and whether this kind of reconstruction is possible at all. One linguistic argument against such a reconstruction is that reconstruction going more than 6,000 years back is not possible because most words will have been replaced in such a long period (e.g. Kaufman 1990; Ringe 2002). Another argument is that genetic and linguistic similarity need not go hand-in-hand. Thus, languages can be replaced without the relevant genes being transmitted and vice versa. For instance, the language of the Sami in Northern Scandinavia is in the same family as that of the Finns but the genes of the two peoples are different. The most significant debate about reconstructions such as the one in Figure 3.3 is probably the one surrounding the existence of Amerind(ian). The assumption that Na-Dene and Eskimo-Aleut are language families of the Americas is mostly accepted but the one that Amerind is one family is not. The alternative to Amerind is to posit 200 separate language families.

In short, genetic and linguistic reconstructions indicate that certain people and languages are more closely related since they separate at later points. Some researchers (Cavalli-Sforza, Greenberg, and Ruhlen) argue that genetic and linguistic relationships go hand-in-hand; others (Ringe and Kaufman) criticize such an approach. The debate about the origin of language has always been full of speculation so much so that the Linguistic Society of Paris banned discussions on this topic in 1866. Recently, however, more work has appeared outlining what the proto-language might have looked like. Many (e.g. Bickerton 1990) think it was very analytic. In the next section, we turn to more tangible evidence of linguistic relationship — written records.

2. Earliest writings

In this section, we discuss older writing systems and writing systems in general. Early writings provide evidence of linguistic change, which will be discussed further in Sections 3 and 4.

There is a large gap between 50,000 years ago, when humans probably started using language, and the time from which we have historical evidence for language in the form of writing. The Harappan/Indus Valley writing dates back 5,500 years, Egyptian 5,300 years, and Mesopotamian cuneiform is over 5,100 years old. These civilizations may have had contact with each other. The Chinese characters date back 3,500 years and Mesoamerican (Mayan) writing is 2,500 years old. While the origin of language seems monogenetic,
writing systems develop independently in at least Mesoamerica, greater Mesopotamia, and China.

First, we will survey the types of writing systems. Writing probably evolves from drawings on wood or stone (petroglyphs) that tell a story. Later, the simplified symbol comes to represent one word or idea. Egyptian records use three kinds of writing: logographic, syllabic, and phonetic. The symbols in Figure 3.4, for instance, are based on actual images. This system, where one word is expressed in one symbol, is called logographic.

The second type of writing is syllabic — the symbol represents the pronunciation of a syllable. For instance, in Egyptian, the symbol for ‘basket’ represents the sounds [nεb]; it also stands for ‘every’ since that too is pronounced [nεb].

The third type of writing system is phonetic, or alphabetic, where one symbol represents one sound. This system is very common in African, Semitic and Indo-European languages. Thus, Swahili, Arabic, Hebrew, and Russian all use a phonetic writing system. In early Europe, a phonetic writing system known as runic developed, as we will see in the next chapter. In principle, Modern English is phonetic, but as we discussed in Chapter 2, in practice, that is not the case.

Some languages use a combination of writing systems: Egyptian uses three systems and Japanese four, each for conveying different kinds of information. English is also starting to include some syllabic symbols: an example is CUL8R for ‘see you later’. Good information on writing systems can be found at http://omniglot.com and at http://ancientscripts.com.

Deciphering the writing systems of Old Egyptian (over 5,000 years old), belonging to the Afro-Asiatic language family and Old Indian (2,250 years old), Old Persian (2,500 years old), and Hittite (3,500 years), all belonging to Indo-European, resulted in theories about the relationships among languages. It also provided, and continues to provide, insight into linguistic change. The discovery of Sanskrit was especially important for formulating laws for sound changes, as will be shown in Section 3. In Section 4, we will see that syntactic and morphological changes between Sanskrit and Modern Hindi/Urdu, its descendant, involve a transformation from synthetic into analytic, the same transformation that happens in the history of English. The change from Old Egyptian to Coptic involves a cyclical shift from synthetic to analytic to synthetic (see Hodge 1970). In Chapter 10, we will consider if a similar development is occurring in Modern English: after becoming an analytic language, Modern English shows synthetic characteristics again.
In conclusion, ancient writings allow us to understand long-term linguistic change. Knowledge of earlier stages also gives rise to speculation about why language changes and what the original language is. In the remainder of this chapter, we will discuss in more detail what the discovery of languages such as Sanskrit did for linguistics: we will start with sounds in Section 3, grammar in Section 4, and move to broader implications in Section 6.

3. Indo-European to Germanic: Sound changes

Sir William Jones, a British judge in late-eighteenth-century India, made the larger scholarly community aware of correspondences between Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit. These correspondences had been written about by others, such as Comenius and Scalinger in the 17th century, and by contemporaries of Jones, but the scholarly community seems to have been readier to accept them in Jones’ day, as we will see in Section 6.

Words such as tres and treis in Table 3.1 have a common ancestor and are called cognates. Sometimes cognates are hard to recognize because their sounds or meanings have shifted in one language but not in another. To find linguistic relations, we usually take words such as pronouns, numerals, and kinship terms as comparison material since they are supposed to have changed the least. This kind of comparison work is known as the Comparative Method. If we look at Table 3.1 and try to group the languages into families, we can see how linguists establish connections between them.

Table 3.1. European and Middle Eastern Languages (from Ruhlen)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Two</th>
<th>Three</th>
<th>Me</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>Not</th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Tooth</th>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Foot</th>
<th>Mouse</th>
<th>He Carries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>ʔʊm-</td>
<td>ʔalä-</td>
<td>-ni</td>
<td>-ka</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>lā</td>
<td>ʔumm-</td>
<td>abū</td>
<td>sinn</td>
<td>lubb</td>
<td>rī-</td>
<td>fār</td>
<td>yah-mul-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>ʔin-</td>
<td>ʔalo-</td>
<td>-ni</td>
<td>-ka</td>
<td>mi</td>
<td>lo</td>
<td>ʔem</td>
<td>aʔ</td>
<td>šen</td>
<td>leʔ</td>
<td>regei</td>
<td>ṭak-bor</td>
<td>nostē</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>duvā</td>
<td>trāyas</td>
<td>mām</td>
<td>tūvām</td>
<td>kās</td>
<td>nā</td>
<td>mātār-</td>
<td>pītar-</td>
<td>dant-</td>
<td>hrō-</td>
<td>pād</td>
<td>mūs-</td>
<td>bhārati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>duva</td>
<td>šrāyo</td>
<td>mām</td>
<td>tūvām</td>
<td>ēlī</td>
<td>nāē-</td>
<td>mātār-</td>
<td>pītar-</td>
<td>dantān-</td>
<td>zarad</td>
<td>pāśya</td>
<td>bāmītī</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>duo</td>
<td>tres</td>
<td>eme</td>
<td>sū</td>
<td>tīs</td>
<td>ou(k)</td>
<td>mātēr</td>
<td>pater</td>
<td>odōn</td>
<td>kardiā</td>
<td>pod-</td>
<td>mūs</td>
<td>phērei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>duo</td>
<td>tres</td>
<td>mē</td>
<td>tū</td>
<td>kwīs</td>
<td>ne-</td>
<td>mātēr</td>
<td>pater</td>
<td>dent-</td>
<td>kord-</td>
<td>ped-</td>
<td>mūs</td>
<td>fert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>twal</td>
<td>ʾīrēs</td>
<td>mēk</td>
<td>ūm</td>
<td>hvās</td>
<td>nī</td>
<td>ʾālēt</td>
<td>fāṣar</td>
<td>tunūs</td>
<td>hašrō</td>
<td>ʾōt</td>
<td>bašrō</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>dō</td>
<td>tri</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>tū</td>
<td>kīa</td>
<td>nī-</td>
<td>mātīr</td>
<td>aḥīr</td>
<td>dēt</td>
<td>krid-</td>
<td>tvāg</td>
<td>lux</td>
<td>berīd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>lik</td>
<td>ʾēṣ</td>
<td>ben-i</td>
<td>sen</td>
<td>kim</td>
<td>deyīl</td>
<td>annē</td>
<td>baba</td>
<td>diʕ</td>
<td>kalp</td>
<td>ayak</td>
<td>sītan</td>
<td>taliyōr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can probably see that languages C to H have a great deal in common; A and B also possibly have a great deal in common; I, however, is different. This turns out to be correct: A and B are Arabic and Hebrew, members of the Semitic family; C is Sanskrit, D Avestan, E Greek, F Latin, G Gothic, H Celtic, all members of the Indo-European family; I is Turkish, a member of the Altaic family. For more on the actual languages, see www.ethnologue.com/web.asp. The term cognate is used more generally.
Figure 3.6. The branches of Indo-European, reproduced with permission from Jade Corn.
Jones' work made it possible for scholars such as Rask and Grimm to formulate sound laws and postulate what the predecessor of Latin and Greek might have been. Grimm's Law, for example, is one of the results of such work as is the grouping of certain languages into an Indo-European family (one of the sub-families of Eurasiatic in Figure 3.3). The branches of *Indo-European* are given in Figure 3.6. This representation is simplified in that no relationship between the main branches is indicated. It makes a distinction between older and more recent stages of the different branches. Note that for practical reasons not all languages and dialects are included.

The oldest *Indo-European* may have been spoken 6,000 years ago, but it is unclear if it was in fact at one point one language (that is why we call it proto-Indo European) and whether it was spoken in one region, a 'homeland'. A great deal of debate surrounds the possible *Indo-European* homeland. Renfrew (1987) argues that it is Anatolia and Gimbutas (1985) that it is North of the Caspian Sea. Sometimes, these arguments are political or ideological. As Mallory (1989: 143) puts it, "[o]ne does not ask 'where is the *Indo-European* homeland?' but rather 'where do they put it now?'". The way the languages in each branch develop has to do with what non-*Indo-European* language(s) they come into contact with: for example, Germanic may have come into contact with Finno-Ugric (Prokosch 1939) and Celtic with Basque.

Some of the phonetic changes taking place in *Indo-European* languages are accounted for by *Grimm's Law*, a simplified version of which is provided in Figure 3.7. The figure shows the correspondence between a Sanskrit sound and an English, Dutch, or other Germanic sound.

![Grimm's Law](image)

**Figure 3.7.** Grimm’s Law, or the First Consonant Shift

Examples of this shift are Latin *ped*, which corresponds to English *foot*; Latin *tenuis*, which parallels *thin*; and Latin *centum*, which corresponds to *hundred*. If you remember the phonetics information from Chapter 2, you will notice that [p, t, k] are voiceless stops...
and they become voiceless fricatives, \([f, \theta, h]\); the change is frication. This accounts for
the first set of three. The other sounds can be grouped similarly. The second set, \([b, d, g]\),
are voiced stops changing into voiceless stops. Examples of this devoicing are Latin \textit{turba}
‘crowd’ corresponding to Old English \textit{thorp} ‘town’, Latin \textit{decem} to English \textit{ten}, and Latin
\textit{ager} to English \textit{acre}. Some of these correspondences are trickier to spot because other
changes have occurred as well. For instance, there is metathesis in the spelling of \textit{acre} and
deletion of the middle consonant in \textit{decem}. What happens to the \([k]\) sound in \textit{decem}?

The third set of changes involves the aspirated voiced stops \([bh, dh, gh]\), fairly com-
mmon in Sanskrit, evolving into voiced stops, i.e. losing aspiration. For example, \textit{bhrata}
corresponds to \textit{brother}, \textit{dhwer} to \textit{door}, and \textit{ghosti} to \textit{guest}. These can all be found by look-
ing up the etymology of the English word in the OED. In Latin and Greek, the aspirated
stops from Sanskrit are voiceless fricatives: \textit{ghosti} is \textit{hostis} ‘guest’ and \textit{bhrater} is \textit{frater}. The
exact correspondences are: Sanskrit \textit{bh} with Latin \textit{f} and Greek \textit{ph}; Sanskrit \textit{dh} with Latin
\textit{f} and Greek \textit{th}; and Sanskrit \textit{gh} with Latin \textit{h} and Greek \textit{ch}. These correspondences are
provided in Figure 3.8.

Like the GVS discussed in Chapter 2, Grimm’s Law can be considered a chain reac-
tion: aspirated voiced stops become regular voiced stops, voiced stops in turn become
voiceless stops, and voiceless stops become fricatives. This could be characterized as a
push-chain or a drag-chain. Aitchison (2001: 184) provides the following figure.
Examples of this change taking place at the beginning of words are provided in (1) (except for $b > p$ which is hard to find word-initially). Sanskrit is the first form given (except for *kanab* which is Old Persian), Latin the second, and English the third. It is important to remember that the change takes place only once in a word: *dhwer* corresponds to *door* but the latter does not change to *toor*:

(1) bhrater-frater-brother  
dhwer-foris-door  
ghordho-hortus-yard (< Old English *geard*)  
pitr-pater-father  
tu-tu-thou  
krnga-cornu-horn  
kanab-cannabis-hemp (< Old English *henep*)

danta-dentis-tooth  
jna-gnoscere-know/ken

Thus, Grimm’s Law distinguishes Germanic languages from languages such as Latin and Greek and modern Romance languages such as French and Spanish. The latter are closer to Latin, and keep *père* and *padre*, respectively, for ‘father’. The change probably took place a little over 2,000 years ago. Within Germanic, many changes have taken place that help differentiate languages such as English, German, and Swedish. The different branches of Germanic are provided in Figure 3.6 above.

A change often thought to set (High) German apart is the **Second Consonant Shift**, which involves the voiceless stops [p, t, k]. The change is supposed to have taken place 1,500 years ago and distinguishes High German from Low German, Dutch, the Scandinavian languages, and English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Germanic</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>k</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>pf, f or p</td>
<td>ts, s or t</td>
<td>X or k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.10.** The Second Consonant Shift (X sounds like the *ch* in *loch*)

To illustrate this change, Dutch and English words will be used in Table 3.2 to show how German has changed. As you can see from these examples, labial and alveolar stops become affricates at the beginning of a word (but the velar [k] becomes [kX] only in certain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2. Examples of the Second Consonant Shift</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dutch — English &gt; German</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>stop to affricate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>stop to fricative</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>stop remains</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k   (restricted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sk.. &gt; sk.. (but later changes hide this)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the middle of a word between two vowels. They and remain stops after [s]. There are other rules, see for instance Bynon (1977: 174–80).

The Second Consonant Shift spread in waves. The map in Figure 3.11 is taken from Bynon (1977: 176) and shows how change can be gradual. The words shown are ik/ich ‘I’, maken/machen ‘make’, dorp/dorf ‘village’, dat/das ‘that’, and appel/apfel ‘apple’. The North of Germany did not undergo the change to the same extent as the South. On this map, there are a few East–West lines, or isoglosses, separating varieties of German that have undergone the change completely (the southernmost) from the ones where the change has affected some words but not others (the middle) from the ones that have not undergone the change at all (the northern). Note the difference between dorp in Cologne and dorf in Frankfurt in the pronunciation of ‘village’, for instance.

4. Indo-European to Germanic: Changes in morphology and syntax

In the previous chapter, we discussed the importance of inflectional endings in Old English. The complexity of the endings on nouns and verbs is something the older Germanic languages, Old English included, inherit from Indo-European; there are changes specific to Germanic, however, as we will see. In this section, we will examine how a language such as Sanskrit changes. Kiparsky (e.g. 1995) has worked on Indo-European, as well as many on other areas in historical linguistics, so you might consult his work for more information.
Sanskrit nouns have endings representing **eight different cases**: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, instrumental, ablative, locative, and vocative. For instance, in Sanskrit, location is expressed by the -m ending in (2):

(2) **Ayodhya-yam vasa-ti**  
Ayodhya-LOC lives-3S  
‘He lives in Ayodhya.’

Old English has nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative (and an almost non-existent instrumental). It uses prepositions rather than the locative, ablative, and instrumental: *in* would be used for locative and *from* and *through* for ablative and instrumental case. The endings in (2) depend on the noun class, as is the case in Old English. *Ayodhya* is a feminine noun; other noun classes have different endings.

Sanskrit verbs have endings for the person and number of the subject, -ti in (2). Notice in (2) that the pronominal subject is not needed since it is expressed through the -ti ending on *vasati*. In (1) of Chapter 1, we saw that in Old English the pronoun may be left out as well. Old English is therefore similar to Sanskrit in having agreement on the verb and not requiring an overt pronoun.

Apart from the eight cases, there are many other differences between Indo European and Germanic. The development of weak verbs (i.e. those ending in -ed in the past) and that of weak and strong adjectives (see Chapter 4) make Germanic quite different. We used Sanskrit as a representative for Indo European. In general, older Germanic languages are more analytic than Sanskrit. However, Hittite, an Indo European language spoken over 3,500 years ago and older than Sanskrit, has a grammatical structure that is simpler in many respects (no dual number and no feminine gender). This may mean that the complex endings in Sanskrit are a later development, not present in the original (proto-)Indo European.

To end the section, we will examine how the Sanskrit in (3) corresponds to its grammatical descendant, Hindi/Urdu, in (4). Approximate pronunciation is provided rather than the script:

(3) **nagarat vanam gacchati**  
city-ABL forest-ACC goes-3S  
‘He goes from the city to the forest.’

(4) **Wo šehr se jangl ko jata hē**  
he city from forest to go-M be-3S  
‘He goes from the city to the forest.’

In (3), there are case **endings** on the nouns and agreement on the verb. The case endings are lost on ‘city’ and ‘forest’ in (4), but an **abundance of grammatical words** — *wo ‘he’, se ‘from’, ko ‘to’, and hē ‘is’* — appears. Note that Hindi/Urdu has replaced many of its lexical words as well!
In conclusion, Indo-European languages differ in their syntax and morphology from Germanic ones, even though they all share a common ancestor. Latin and Greek have endings on nouns and verbs similar to Sanskrit, and some of you will know these (e.g. the accusative -m) or recognize some of them in Modern German and Old English. Thus, the inflectional endings of Old English are due to its Indo European and synthetic origins.

5. Reconstruction methods

In this section, we will briefly discuss how to reconstruct the sound system of a language when we have spoken or written evidence and when we do not (and when we reconstruct a proto-language). Reconstructing the morphology and syntax is more controversial and will not be attempted (see Lightfoot 1980 and, for an opposite view, see Lehmann 1993).

Grimm’s Law could be formulated because there are written records for Sanskrit, Latin, Greek, and Hittite. There are also methods of reconstructing languages for which we have no written records. One is the **Comparative Method** we observed at work in Section 3, without giving it a name. Linguists often compare related languages. For instance, compare French, Italian, Portuguese, Catalan, and Spanish in (5). Suppose we did not know the parent language. How could we reconstruct it?

(5) French  Italian  Portuguese  Catalan  Spanish
    cheval  cavallo  cavalo  cavall  caballo
    meaning 'horse'

(6) a. [k] → [ʃ]  (French)
    b. [v] → [b], between two vowels  (Spanish)
    c. ending/double consonant disappears  (French, Italian, and Catalan)

Rules a and c make sense since both palatalization and loss of endings and of double consonants occur frequently. Rule b, however, does not make sense since typically stops become fricatives between vowels and not the other way around. Therefore, instead of *cavallo, we reconstruct *caballo. We keep rules a and c, but change b into a frication rule (stops to fricatives). Even though the rule has to apply in two languages, it is preferable linguistically:

(7) redone (6b) [b] → [v], between two vowels  (French, Italian, Portuguese, and Catalan)

Note that in many Spanish varieties, the b is changing to a fricative as well, and that makes (7) more plausible.
To make sure the reconstruction of *caballo is correct, we need to examine other words with the same voiced stops. If a fair number of such words show the same correspondences, the reconstruction is probably accurate (see further: www.utexas.edu/depts/classics/documents/PIE.html).

Let’s look at the reconstruction of a word for a parent language that we do not know and cannot check. The words in a hypothetical family such as Nostratic (see Figure 3.3) have been reconstructed on the basis of families for which there is evidence, such as Indo European and Dravidian. Some words that have been suggested as being part of Nostratic are listed in (8). Again, since these forms are reconstructed, they are marked with an *:

(8) *tik ‘finger’, *bar/ber ‘seed, grain’, *gadi ‘young goat’, and *wete ‘water’

These words have been reconstructed on the basis of Afroasiatic, Indo-European, and Dravidian languages. Take the word for ‘seed, grain’: Hebrew has bar ‘grain’ and Somali bur ‘wheat’ (both are Afroasiatic), Old English (Indo-European) bere ‘barley’, and Tamil (Dravidian) paral ‘seed’. Recalling the phonetic features discussed in Chapter 2, we can see that all these words are clearly related: Old English and Tamil could have added endings and, since [b] and [p] are both bilabial stops, having a [b] lose its voicing to become [p] in Tamil is a regular change. The reason *bar/ber is reconstructed, rather than *paral, is probably due to the fact that more families have [b] than [p] and endings are often added (e.g. prepositions can become attached to nouns).

This kind of a methodology for reconstructions has been criticized extensively. With the spread of agriculture and other technical advances, words could have been borrowed and their similarities might not be proof of linguistic relationships; they could be coincidental.

6. Politics and reconstruction

In this section, we will briefly examine some political issues related to linguistic reconstruction. Each culture constructs a certain identity, sometimes based on true events, sometimes not. Language plays a major role in this construction of identity.

Let’s start with a few instances where linguistic and other facts do not match the histories constructed by the people in question. The most notorious example is that of Europe during World War II: a myth of Germanic superiority was created that justified terrible atrocities. Some ideas were inspired by the Aryan Myth (as Poliakov 1974 calls it). Poliakov (1974) and Bernal (1987; 1991) argue that the reason Indo-European studies became popular in the early 19th century was a racist, anti-Semitic and anti-African sentiment. Said (1978; 1993) links the Indo European interest to colonialism and imperialism, a need to come to terms with the colonialized ‘other’.

There are other examples of ideology influencing ethnic identity. The Harappan (or Indus Valley) culture flourished in Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro from 2500 to 1600 BCE. It was an advanced culture, with irrigation, large cities, trade, and a writing system.
A number of groups would therefore like to claim it as their ancestral group. One theory has it that this culture is early Dravidian and that, as Indo-Europeans (known as Aryan or Indian) migrated to what is now Pakistan and Northern India, the Dravidians were pushed to the South and one small group to the Northwest (the Brahui speakers). Some authors, however, claim that these cultures are Aryan, not Dravidian (e.g. Feuerstein et al. 1995) and that the myth about Harappa was started by the British in the 19th century to minimize growing Indian nationalism.

Another example involves East Asia. To many linguists, it is clear that Japanese and Korean are related in grammar and vocabulary. This fact is not popular with either the Japanese or the Korean population, however. Up to 1946, according to e.g. Diamond (1998), it was taught in Japan that the Japanese originated in Japan. That is why money and resources were and are available for exploring archeological sites. In 2000, an archeologist was caught placing stone artifacts that would have changed our view of the cognitive abilities of early humans (500,000 BP). It would have made that early Japanese population special. Such a reanalysis of Japan and its culture would have been welcomed in many circles. Another debated issue is the origin of the Ainu, now living in Northern Japan, who are presumably descendants of the indigenous population. If they are, they should be accorded a better social status.

7. Conclusion

This chapter provides a brief account of when we think language started (at least 50,000 years ago) and how it spread. Once people migrated, their language often changed; this resulted in the different language families present in the world. Of the earliest language, we know nothing. The earliest writing is from 5,000 years ago and helps us understand some of the changes. We also examined changes in the sounds, morphology, and syntax between Indo-European and Germanic. When there are no written records, linguists have methods for reconstructing words in a hypothetical, i.e. proto, language. As a last point, we discussed some broader issues related to language, its origins and its changes.
Keywords

Eurasian, Nostratic, Indo-European (IE), Germanic, Comparative Method, Grimm’s Law, frication, devoicing, losing aspiration, Second Consonant Shift, inflection, logographic, syllabic, phonetic writing systems, proto-language.

Exercises

1. Ruhlen provides the following chart of words in certain Native American languages, using the Comparative Method. Try to find the languages that go together. How many families do you find?

Table 3.3. Words in Native American Languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>U/M/My</th>
<th>(Give)</th>
<th>Hand</th>
<th>Left</th>
<th>Knee</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Brother</th>
<th>Sister</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Bird</th>
<th>Throat</th>
<th>Swallow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>-ma</td>
<td>-t</td>
<td>?474a</td>
<td>sîlîq</td>
<td>4ya</td>
<td>an43q</td>
<td>pandy</td>
<td>ats43y</td>
<td>îmiq</td>
<td>qay3v</td>
<td>aya</td>
<td>piki-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>ëi</td>
<td>nan</td>
<td>lag</td>
<td>s’at’</td>
<td>guhd</td>
<td>grî’ya onay(e)</td>
<td>tsk</td>
<td>?4tî</td>
<td>tû</td>
<td>4âš</td>
<td>ket</td>
<td>qa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>ne</td>
<td>ke</td>
<td>maxo</td>
<td>wa</td>
<td>kes</td>
<td>kete-k’</td>
<td>t’an’a</td>
<td>?4tîn</td>
<td>tûne</td>
<td>pinûkîn oka?</td>
<td>4ès’</td>
<td>mûlîk’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>na?</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>makan</td>
<td>kets</td>
<td>ikat</td>
<td>t’anat</td>
<td>t’în</td>
<td>tûne</td>
<td>pinûkîn oka?</td>
<td>4ès’</td>
<td>mûlîk’</td>
<td>wâr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>mane</td>
<td>kasek p’urâkî’</td>
<td>tanpam</td>
<td>t’înisi</td>
<td>at’ôn</td>
<td>pane</td>
<td>aqa</td>
<td>lik</td>
<td>milqê</td>
<td>wàn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>ne?</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>maka</td>
<td>kû’ê</td>
<td>tana</td>
<td>?4dîno</td>
<td>t’ut’îna</td>
<td>pan</td>
<td>g’à</td>
<td>tsikē</td>
<td>kutu</td>
<td>ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>man</td>
<td>kuts</td>
<td>ikuset</td>
<td>tukta</td>
<td>t’ûnu</td>
<td>pûna</td>
<td>aûka</td>
<td>ô’sîka</td>
<td>mûrîk</td>
<td>wàn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>maki</td>
<td>mwenik</td>
<td>tula</td>
<td>tayna</td>
<td>den</td>
<td>thain</td>
<td>epan</td>
<td>yaku</td>
<td>rîkî’t</td>
<td>mûlq’a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>hi</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>muka</td>
<td>kompe</td>
<td>kat’</td>
<td>maki</td>
<td>ten</td>
<td>ton</td>
<td>aeôn</td>
<td>ëkôs</td>
<td>ësaa</td>
<td>uasneu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>mëçän</td>
<td>kute</td>
<td>ikkêti</td>
<td>t’ân</td>
<td>tîngwa</td>
<td>atunësas</td>
<td>penawa</td>
<td>ako</td>
<td>ëkî</td>
<td>mûrkî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>awe</td>
<td>ama</td>
<td>emëkun</td>
<td>poe</td>
<td>kudo</td>
<td>tane</td>
<td>ënû</td>
<td>tona</td>
<td>ëhôto</td>
<td>tûna</td>
<td>sîkî</td>
<td>ëmûkî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>mi</td>
<td>moken</td>
<td>kët’eg</td>
<td>tawvin</td>
<td>ân</td>
<td>tona</td>
<td>the</td>
<td>nene</td>
<td>uaka</td>
<td>jikî’dî</td>
<td>wî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>nu</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>mako</td>
<td>kec’</td>
<td>gete</td>
<td>kra</td>
<td>cîn</td>
<td>atomkî</td>
<td>parf</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>t’îpe</td>
<td>kot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Read Turner’s (1989) article and see how that evidence corresponds to Cavalli-Sforza and Greenberg’s work.

3. Using Grimm’s Law, which of the Sanskrit words can be matched to Old English (use connecting lines). Note that the þ represents [θ]:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit:</th>
<th>Old English:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bhar</td>
<td>þu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pitar</td>
<td>þrie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pada</td>
<td>beran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trayas</td>
<td>fæder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tvam</td>
<td>fot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Match the Latin words below to the Modern English ones and explain the changes that take place between Latin and Modern English:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>Modern English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>noctis</td>
<td>tooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gelu</td>
<td>night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cannabis</td>
<td>kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dentis</td>
<td>glacial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gens</td>
<td>hemp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Use the comparative method to reconstruct the proto-form of ‘hundred’. Be careful to consider the pronunciation, not the spelling:

French cent [sâ]; Italian cento [tʃɛnto]; Spanish ciento [siento]; Latin centum [kɛntum]

6. How would you describe the changes in the Second Consonant Shift (use terms such as voicing and frication)?

7. The American Heritage Dictionary has a list of Indo European roots (you could use www.bartleby.com/61/IEroots.html). Try looking up some of the Indo European words discussed in this chapter and see if you can identify some of the changes.

8. Dolgopolsky (1998: 48) reconstructs Nostratic *gadi ‘kid, young goat’ on the basis of a number of languages, and the OED reconstructs Indo European *ghaid. Latin has haedus with the same meaning. Explain how the Latin haedus corresponds to Old Norse geit and eventually Modern English goat.
Chapter 4

Old English

450–1150

As discussed in Chapter 1, the English language had its start around 449, when Germanic tribes came to England and settled there. Eventually they would push some of the native inhabitants westwards, but initially they co-existed with them and even adopted some customs and possibly some linguistic features. During this period, there were Latin influences on English through missionaries from Rome as well as French influences after the Norman invasion in 1066.

The existing evidence about the nature of Old English comes from a collection of texts from a variety of regions: some are preserved on stone and wood monuments, others in manuscript form. The evidence indicates that Old English differs from Modern English in spelling, phonetics, morphology, and syntax.

This chapter will focus on the characteristics of Old English. In Section 1, we will examine some of the written sources in Old English, look at some special spelling symbols, and try to read the runic alphabet that was sometimes used. In Section 2, we will consider (and listen to) the sounds of Old English. In Sections 3, 4, and 5, we will discuss some Old English grammar. Its most salient feature is the system of endings. Old English vocabulary is very interesting and creative, as we will see in Section 6. Dialects will be discussed briefly in Section 7 and the chapter will conclude with several well-known Old English texts to be read and analyzed.

1. Sources and spelling

We can learn a great deal about Old English culture by reading Old English recipes, charms, riddles, descriptions of saints' lives, and epics such as *Beowulf*. Most remaining texts in Old English are religious, legal, medical, or literary in nature.

Old English texts are divided along geographic lines into Northumbrian, Mercian, West-Saxon, and Kentish, as we will discuss in Section 7; they can also be categorized in terms of whether they were written in early or late Old English and whether they are poetry or prose. Most evidence of older Old English comes from northern poetic texts such
as version I of Caedmon's Hymn (Appendix B). Most evidence of later Old English comes from southern prose texts such as Alfred's Orosius (Appendix C) or the works of Ælfric. For some manuscripts — Beowulf, for example — a dialect and date of composition cannot be firmly established. These factors make it hard to compare dialect, genre, and age. A partial list of works in Old English is provided in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Some works in Old English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beowulf</td>
<td>Mixed dialect Northumbrian/West Saxon; manuscript from c.1000 but based on earlier version.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindisfarne Gospels</td>
<td>Northumbrian interlinear gloss; c.950.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushworth Glosses</td>
<td>Interlinear gloss; c.970. Matthew is Mercian; Mark, Luke and John are Northumbrian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Junius Manuscript</td>
<td>Written between the 7th and 10th centuries (some argue partly by the Caedmon poet); compiled towards the late 10th; contains Genesis, Exodus, Christ and Satan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregory's Pastoral Care</td>
<td>Early West Saxon, late 9th century, ascribed to King Alfred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boethius and Orosius</td>
<td>Early West-Saxon, ascribed to King Alfred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homilies, by Ælfric</td>
<td>West Saxon, circa 1000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle</td>
<td>Many versions, one composed in Peterborough that continues to 1154.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scribes who copied and illustrated the manuscripts worked mainly in monasteries. The manuscripts are often exquisite works of art. For images of some manuscripts, go to www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/lindisfarne/ttp.html; http://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/Gallery/Library/L01.html; and www.snake.net/people/paul/kells.

The originals were written on vellum, very expensive thin leather. Books were therefore owned by a monastery, a church, or a wealthy person and were typically versions of the Bible, prayer books, school books, manuals of various kinds, and music. Facsimile editions, such as the one in Figure 4.1, enable us to see what the text looked like. This is important since these works are often modernized by editors when they appear in anthologies and scholarly editions. There is a word-by-word gloss at the end of Section 4.

Other Old English texts are available in transliterated form (i.e. not as facsimiles) at www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth/library/oe/oe.html. There are also corpora (with selections of texts) such as the Helsinki Corpus (or HC). The Dictionary of Old English project from the University of Toronto makes available (for a fee) the 2,000 or so Old English texts we have left and contains three million Old English words. It is available electronically at libraries that subscribe to the Dictionary of Old English Corpus (http://www.doe.utoronto.ca).

Most Old English texts, especially manuscripts such as Beowulf, use a modified Roman alphabet. This alphabet was introduced by Irish missionaries and the letter shapes are not identical to those of Modern English. For instance, there is an æ (called ash), a runic letter þ (called thorn), and a ð (called eth). The last two are used interchangeably. Originally, a w was written as one u or two u symbols (hence the term double u), but it
is also written using a runic $p$ (and called wynn or wen). Capital letters are often absent as are most punctuation marks. Abbreviations are frequently used, e.g. $7$ stands for and (see Appendix A) as does $\&$, to save space and effort. As you can see in Figure 4.1, not much space is wasted. Try to find some of the special symbols in Figure 4.1 by using the summary in Table 4.2.

Both hwæt and we in the first line of Figure 4.1 contain wynns. An ash occurs in hwæt (line 1), a thorn in þeod (line 2), and an eth in ða (line 3). The $c$ symbol in cyninga (line 2) represents the [k] sound. The $3$ in daȝum (line 2) is more complex. It originates from an Irish letter called the yogh and normally represents a [j] but, before back vowels, it represents a voiced velar fricative ([j]), a sound that Modern English lacks. This symbol can also be seen in lines 2 and 3. The $y$ in cyninga (line 2) is a vowel represented in the phonetic alphabet as [y]; it probably sounded like the $u$ in French or the $ü$ in German, an
[i] pronounced with rounded lips. Some texts put length markers on the vowels, but we will not do that.

In addition to manuscripts, Old English is preserved in carvings on wood and stone from the 7th century, as shown in Figure 4.2. These inscriptions use the **runic alphabet**. We will look at an example but will not actually use this alphabet in reading Old English texts. The runic alphabet, or futhorc, was in use through large areas of Europe and is probably an adaptation by Gothic speakers of the Etruscan alphabet. A key can be found in Figure 4.3 (see also www.omniglot.com/writing/runic.htm); you can see that the first six letters give you the word *futhorc*. Try to decipher the letters in Figure 4.2.

![Runic Inscription, the Overchurch runes](image)

Using the alphabet, we can see that the inscription in Figure 4.2 reads as in (1):

(1) *folcæarærdonbecbiddaþfoteæþelmun*

The words are not spelled separately, which makes them harder to read. Are there any modern English words you recognize in (1)? We will come back to this sentence in Section 3. For now, a word-by-word gloss and free translation are provided in (2):

(2) People reared beacon pray for Aethelmund
    ‘People put up a sign and pray for Aethelmund.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>name</th>
<th>sound</th>
<th>word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>ash</td>
<td>[æ]</td>
<td><em>hwæt</em> ‘what’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þ</td>
<td>thorn</td>
<td>[th or ð]</td>
<td><em>þat</em> ‘that’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>eth</td>
<td>[th or ð]</td>
<td><em>ðat</em> ‘that’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʒ</td>
<td>yogh</td>
<td>[j]</td>
<td><em>manij</em> ‘many’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>wynn or wen</td>
<td>[w]</td>
<td><em>we</em> ‘we’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u(u)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>[w]</td>
<td><em>werc</em> ‘work’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>[y]</td>
<td><em>syððan</em> ‘since’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ৎ or &amp;</td>
<td>–/ampersand</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>‘and’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4. Old English: 450–1150

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Next we turn to some linguistic characteristics of Old English — first sounds, then grammar. From this point on, we will use the modified alphabet, not the runes.

2. Old English Sounds

In this section, we will discuss four sound changes that took place in Old English: voicing and palatalization affect consonants; breaking and fronting (or umlaut) affect vowels. Many more processes affect vowels, but it is impossible to examine them all. We will also mention that the effects of the GVS have to be reversed in order to pronounce Old English more accurately. Alliteration, a poetic device that links sentences through the use of words starting with the same sound (probably to remember them better), will also be brought up.

When discussing the first line of Caedmon’s Hymn in Chapter 1, repeated here as (3), we noticed that the v of heaven is written as an f in hefaen. How does it sound in the version you have available (at www.wwnorton.com/nael/noa/audio.htm)?

\[(3) \quad \text{Nu scylun hergan hefaenricaes uard}\]

Since the spelling of Old English is closer to the actual pronunciation than that of Modern English, it is possible that the scribe said [f]; however, it might also have been its voiced counterpart [v] since that is expected between vowels (see Chapter 2). Linguists think that Old English, like other languages, has voicing as a phonetic process, as shown in Table 4.3.

Figure 4.3. Runic alphabet
Table 4.3. Fricative voicing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fricative</th>
<th>Voicing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[f]</td>
<td>[v], between two voiced sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[s]</td>
<td>[z], between two voiced sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[θ]</td>
<td>[ð], between two voiced sounds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remnants of this phenomenon can be seen in the pronunciation of *wife*, *half*, *knife*, and *leaf* with an *f* in word-final position but a *v* in the plural — *wives*, *halves*, *knives*, and *leaves* — between two vowels.

Thus, Old English only has *v*, *z* and *ð* between two vowels or between a vowel and a voiced consonant. Final voiced fricatives, as in *(to) love, to house* [hawz], and *(to) bathe* [bejð], are the result of later deletion of the final vowel. If we look up the origin of words with an initial [z] or [v] in the OED, we see that most are loans. The loans from French or Latin are listed in (4), and the loans from Greek or other languages that start with a [z] in (5):

(4) very, veal, vase, virtue, voice, vote, vehement, village, vacant, vaccine, veil, vacuum, vain, value, vanish, variety, varnish, veer, venture, verb, vex, view, vile, villain, visible, vital, vocal, vulture, vulnerable

(5) zoo, zodiac, zebra, zenith, zinc, zombi, zone

The influx of new words, which begins in the Old English period — with Latin used in the church and before that during the Roman occupation — is given a real boost after 1066, when many new words appear either from French or from Latin via French. Words starting with [z] are introduced a little later, in the 16th and 17th centuries, when Greek influence becomes prominent. The influx of new words is due to an external cause — contact with other languages. The loans have a profound influence on the sound system of English: several sounds are added to what we call the phoneme inventory, thus causing an internal change. Internal factors helped stabilize the voiced fricative, e.g. the loss of a word-final vowel. Millward (1996: 147–8) discusses other factors contributing to this, such as the voicing of fricatives in some dialects.

A second sound change in Old English is palatalization, which occurs in many other languages as well. Starting in early Old English, the velars [k], [sk], and [g] are fronted, as shown in Table 4.4, in particular before a front vowel (the velar sounds are not fronted before back vowels, as in *cool*).

Table 4.4. Palatalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Voicing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sc</td>
<td>[sk] &gt; [ʃ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>[k] &gt; [tʃ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>[g] &gt; [ʒ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, Germanic *skirt* becomes Old English *shirt*, *skatter* → *shatter*, *kirk* → *church*, and *egg* → *eye*. *Skirt* and *egg* still exist in Modern English because other Germanic languages did not undergo palatalization; thus, when Scandinavian came into contact with English, the
latter borrowed the non-palatalized versions. Some of these words come to co-exist (skirt and shirt), while in other cases one of the two forms ‘wins’. We will discuss this further in Chapter 5.

There are two other rules that will be pointed out whenever relevant — breaking and vowel fronting. They are complex and interact with numerous other rules. **Breaking** occurs when the front vowels æ, e and i become diphthongs, i.e. are broken into two sounds, before certain consonants, as in shown in Table 4.5, where the changes in spelling are indicated.

**Table 4.5. Breaking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i</th>
<th>&gt;</th>
<th>io/eo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>eo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>ea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of breaking are ald and half becoming eald and healf, werc becoming weorc, and Picts becoming Peohtas. This rule applies when the vowel is followed by an l or r and another consonant or when the vowel is followed by an h (Campbell 1959: 56). It is an assimilatory change in that the second half of the diphthong is a back vowel and the change occurs before consonants that are further back. Breaking is supposed to have taken place in Old English around the 7th century, especially in the South (in West Saxon), as you will see in version II of Caedmon’s Hymn in Appendix B. Some other words that undergo breaking are bearn ‘child’, heard ‘hard’, pealm ‘palm’, eahta ‘eight’, and meaht ‘might’. As you can see from the Modern English spelling, some of these words are now spelled the way they were before breaking occurred.

The **fronting** rule, also called i-umlaut, describes what happens when a back or low vowel such as o or u or a precedes an i. In Germanic, before English separates, the form for singular mouse is *mus and plural mice is *musi. The fronting of u to y occurs in the plural, before the plural -i, resulting in *mysi.

**Table 4.6. Fronting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>u</th>
<th>&gt;</th>
<th>y, later i before [i]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>e before [i]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>æ before [i]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The i-ending (having caused the fronting) subsequently disappears and the cause of the fronting becomes hidden. The non-fronted and fronted forms thus now form singular and plural pairs in (6a) and intransitive and transitive pairs in (6b):

(6) a. mouse – mice, louse – lice, goose – geese, foot – feet, tooth – teeth

   b. fall – fell, sit – set

A similar fronting and raising occurs in the pairs man – men, stank – stench, long – length, doom – deem, whole – heal, food – feed. Note that the current pronunciations of the words in (10a) are not established until after the Great Vowel Shift.
When pronouncing Old English, we need to remember that the **Great Vowel Shift has not taken place yet**. This means that vowels are not pronounced the way they are in Modern English but in a lower position. Thus, *name, meet, mine, book, now* are pronounced [nama], [met], [min], [bok], and [nu], respectively. As mentioned, the *g* or *ʒ* needs attention as well. In Old English, it is usually pronounced as [j], e.g. at the end of a word (*dæg*) and before a front vowel, but as a voiced fricative [ɣ] before back vowels. The latter is a sound English no longer has. The *h* in words such as *niht, leoht, cniht*, ‘night, light and knight’ respectively, is represented phonetically as [X], a voiceless velar fricative. The sound is still present in Modern English in the final sound of *loch*. Some people argue that after Old English front vowels, it was a palatal fricative. It is not clear how much this is based on Modern High German where such a distinction does occur.

Listen to all of *Caedmon’s Hymn* at www.wwnorton.com/nael/noa/audio.htm. There are a number of versions of this text (see Appendix B); notice if the one in (7) corresponds to the one read:

(7)  **Caedmon’s Hymn – Northumbrian**

Nu scylun hergan hefaenricaes uard  
metudas maecti end his modgidanc  
uerc uuldurfadur sue he uundra gehuaes  3  
eci dryctin or astelidæ  
he aerist scop aelda barnum  
tha middungeard moncynnes uard  
eci dryctin æfter tiadæ  
firum foldu frea allmectig  9

Think about some of the issues we have discussed: how are the vowels in *hrofe, he, frea,* and *firum foldu* pronounced? Are there words you know: *fadur, hrofe, haleg, moncynnes* and *allmectig*? Could *barnum* be *bearnum*? What can you say about the spelling of *uerc* and *uundra*? Don’t worry about the meaning of the entire Hymn yet; it is provided in Appendix B, and we will go over it at the end of the chapter a little. For more on the pronunciation of Old English, see www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/eduweb/engl401/lessons/pronunc1.htm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Manner:</th>
<th>stop</th>
<th>fricative</th>
<th>affricate</th>
<th>nasal</th>
<th>liquid</th>
<th>glide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>labial</td>
<td>p/b</td>
<td>f/v</td>
<td>m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alveolar</td>
<td>t/d</td>
<td>s/z</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td>l,r</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alveo-palatal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>t;/dʒ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>velar</td>
<td>k/g</td>
<td>X/ɣ</td>
<td>η</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A final point about sounds is **alliteration**, involving word-initial consonants that are similar. This is mainly relevant to poetic texts. The Old English rules are relatively simple, unlike those of Middle English. In (7), a line such as *metuðæs maecti end his modgidanc* is representative. It consists of two halves; the first half can have two alliterating consonants, but the second half line typically only has its first stressed syllable alliterating with the consonants in the first (the [m] is the alliterating sound). A very similar pattern occurs in another line of (7) *uerc uuldurfadur sue he uundra gehuaes*. Which sound alliterates?

The Old English consonants and vowels are provided in Table 4.7 and Figure 4.4 (the four diphthongs are not listed). Note that sounds such as [v, z, ð] only occur in restricted environments since they are assimilated in voiced environments. The velar nasal [ŋ] is also the result of assimilation and occurs only before a [k] and [g] in words like *singan* ‘to sing’. Compare these sounds with those of Modern English using Table 2.3 and Figure 2.3.

This section discussed four sound changes in Old English: voicing, palatalization, breaking, and fronting. It also provided some information on the pronunciation of Old English and the inventory of sounds.

### 3. Old English Grammar

Excellent resources on Old English grammar are Campbell (1959), Quirk & Wrenn (1958), and Traugott (1992), and also [http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/research/rawl/IOE](http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/research/rawl/IOE). The emphasis in this chapter will be on showing that Old English is a synthetic language, using a lot of word endings or inflections to indicate grammatical functions. Section 4 discusses the endings on Old English words — the morphology — and Section 5 touches upon a few points on how to build Old English sentences — the syntax. Chapter 2 provided the basic information about the nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative cases and we’ll now use that knowledge.

Section 4 provides lists of pronouns, demonstratives, some verbs, some nouns, and adjectives. It is not necessary to memorize these; being able to recognize a few will suffice. For example, the *-as* ending is a plural on some masculine nouns (nominative and accusative) and becomes the Modern English plural *-s*. The *-e* ending is a dative singular, *-un* the dative plural. Present tense verbs have a second person singular *-st* ending, and a third person *-th* ending, the infinitive ends in *-an*, and the past plural is often *-(d)on*.

With this knowledge, let’s look at a simple sentence, adapted from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (PC) from 874. Which words do you recognize?

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**Figure 4.4.** Old English vowels (all can be long or short, adapted from Minkova 2005a)
First, notice the -e and -as endings. The -e ending is used for dative case (for which we now use the preposition to) on both ælfrede 'Alfred' and cyninge 'king.' It means something was given to King Alfred. The -as ending shows that aðas 'oaths' and gislas 'hostages' are plural (accusative here). Sealde 'give' is broader in Old English than in Modern English where sell means 'give in exchange for money'.

Modern English has lost the endings but gained words such as to. To exists in Old English with a very specific locational meaning, but later becomes an (indirect) object marker. This process is called grammaticalization since the grammatical function is more important. In Old English, the verb occurs often at the end of the sentence, as in (8), whereas in Modern English it is in the middle, separating the subject and the object.

Equipped with this information, let's examine the runic transcription we discussed earlier, repeated here as (9):

(9) folcæarærdonbecbiddaþfoteæþelmun

A couple of endings that stand out: -don and -aþ, the former being the plural past tense and the latter the plural present tense. If we separate the words, you might find some words you recognize:

(10) folcæ arærdon bec biddaþ fote æþelmun

Folc corresponds to people, as mentioned earlier. Some other words can be guessed: arærdon matches Modern English reared; bec is similar to beacon, and biddaþ is similar to bid. The remaining words, fote and æþelmun, are trickier. Æþelmun is a name and there is probably a ‘typo’ in fote and it may be fore ‘for’ instead.

Comparing the many endings and few words of Old and Modern English, we see that the main change between the two stages is that of a language with free word order and many endings but no ‘small’ words such as the or to becoming a language with strict word order, few endings and many ‘small’ words. This change, involving the grammaticalization of prepositions to replace case endings, is formulated in (11):

(11) Synthetic > Analytic
    Case/Inflections > Word Order/Prepositions

We will discuss the actual syntax of Old English in Section 5; first, we examine endings in more detail.

4. Old English Morphology

This section will provide some paradigms for Old English. A paradigm is a list of forms, e.g. a list of all the cases of a pronoun. Use these paradigms as a reference and focus only on the most obvious parts.
The paradigm for pronouns is given in Table 4.8. Individual texts vary a great deal in orthography. For instance, hiene, hine, hyne are masculine singular accusatives, and hie, hi, and heo are third person plural nominative and accusative pronouns. There is a rare dual number (used for two people). Since the instrumental case is almost extinct in Old English, that form is left out. Note that þ and ð can be used interchangeably as the first consonant of second person pronouns (even though only þ is used in Table 4.8) as well as of demonstratives (Table 4.9) and verbal endings (Tables 4.14 and 4.15).

Instances of some pronouns in Beowulf are given in (12) through (15). In (12), ðec is an accusative because it is the object of oferswyðan ‘overpower’. Incidentally, notice that the object precedes the verb. Tables 4.14 and 4.15 show that the third person ending on verbs is -(e)ð or -(e)þ; this ending in (12) shows that third person deaþ ‘death’ is the subject, not second person Ḟec ‘you’ (ðec would also be unlikely since it has accusative case):

(12) þæt ðec dryhtguma deað oferswyðed
that you-ACC mighty-ruler death overpower-3S
‘that death overpowers you, mighty ruler’ (Beowulf 1768).

In (13), there are three instances of the first person singular nominative ic. There is also a plural second person nominative ge, which stays around at least until 1600 as yee or ye:

(13) Ic eom Hroðgares ar ond ombiht
I am Hrothgar-GEN messenger and officer
Ne seah ic elpeodige þus manige men modiglicran
never saw I foreign-warriors so many men more-courageous
Wen ic þæt ge ... Hroðgar sohton
hope I that you ... Hrothgar seek-PST (Beowulf 335–8).

Also observe the verbs in (13): eom is similar to Modern English am, and seah to saw; sohton has the plural past ending -on, and you can see how it becomes Modern English
sought by losing this ending and by the \( h \) becoming silent. Note that Modern English spelling keeps the \( h \) even though it is no longer pronounced.

The word *ombhiht* in the first line of (13) is possibly a loan into Early Germanic from Latin or Celtic, and is later (in the 15th century) reborrowed as *ambassador*. The word *ombudsman* may be a cognate in Swedish, borrowed into Modern English from Swedish in the 20th century. Other words and endings you might recognize are the genitive -*es* on *Hrothgar* and the words for *thus, many, and, that* and *men*. These words stayed in the language and were never replaced by loans. Modern translations of (13) are provided in (14a), (14b), and (14c):

(14)  

a. ‘I am Hrothgar’s herald and officer. I have never seen so impressive or large an assembly of strangers. […] must have brought you to Hrothgar’.  
   (Heaney 2000)  

b. ‘I am Hrothgar’s counselor and friend. How far have you traveled crossed the wave-rolls to come to this door? My wits tell me you are welcome callers’. (Rebsamen 1991)  

c. ‘I am Hrothgar’s herald and officer. I have not seen strangers — so many men — more bold. I think that it is for […] that you have sought Hrothgar’.  
   (Donaldson 1966)

You can see a great deal of variation between the different translations. Not only are *herald and officer* in (14a) and (14c) rendered as *counselor and friend* in (14b), (13) as a whole is almost unrecognizable in (14b). However, (14b) has poetic terms such as *waverolls* and alliterating sounds such as *wits* and *welcome* that the other two versions lack.

The nominative feminine pronoun *hio* ‘she’ is present in (15). *Hio* is a variant of *heo*.

This sentence also shows that *Beowulf* has an -*e* ending, indicating that Beowulf is the one to whom the meadcup was brought — dative case:

(15)  

\[ \text{þæt hio Beowulf...} \text{... medoful ætbær} \]  
‘that she brought Beowulf the meadcup’ (*Beowulf* 623–4)

Like Modern English, Old English third person pronouns show masculine, feminine, and neuter gender. Unlike Modern English, Old English also marks grammatical gender on demonstratives, adjectives, and nouns. The grammatical gender of the noun determines the gender of the demonstrative and the adjective. Thus, the masculine forms of the demonstrative and adjective are used before masculine nouns such as *cyning* ‘king’; the feminine forms are used before feminine nouns such as *lufu* ‘love’; and the neuter forms are used before neuter nouns such as *godspel* ‘gospel’. The grammatical gender need not correspond to the natural gender of a noun: *wif* ‘woman’ and *cild* ‘child’ are neuter.

**Reflexive pronouns**, such as *myself* and *himself*, do not occur in Old English, except in later texts. Instead, the regular pronoun is used, as in (16):
Chapter 4. Old English: 450–1150

(16) Ic on earde bad | ... ne me swor fela

I on earth was-around ... not me-DAT swore wrong

‘I was around on earth ... I never perjured myself’ (Beowulf 2736–8)

In Old English, the adjective self is typically used as an emphatic, as in (17), not as a reflexive:

(17) æþele cempa self mid gesiðum

noble fighter-NOM self-NOM with follower-DAT.P

‘The noble fighter himself with his followers’ (Beowulf 1312–3)

Self-marked reflexives first occur with the third person in later Old English. There is much variation, as the two versions of the same text, (18a) and (18b), show; (18a) is from the Lindisfarne Gospels and (18b) from the Rushworth Gospels. In (18a), the regular pronoun him is used, while in (18b), the pronoun and adjective self are used:

(18) a. Lindisfarne Glosses – Northumbrian

hælend wiste smeawunga hiora  cueð him

healer knew thoughts their (and) said them
eghuelc ric todaeled bið wið him forleten bið l gewoested bið

each kingdom divided be against it left is and destroyed is

l tosliten bið 7 eghuelc burug l hus todaeled l tosliten

and destroyed is and every city and house divided and cut-up

wið him ne stondas

against it not stands

‘And Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.’ (Matthew 12.25)

b. Rushworth Glosses – Mercian

se helend þa witende þohtas heora cweþ to heom

the healer then knowing thoughts their said to them

æghwilc rice gedealed wið him seolfum awoested bið

each kingdom divided against it self destroyed will-be

7 æghwilc cæstre opþa hus gedealed wið him seolfum ne stondeþ

and each castle or house divided against it self not stands.

(from Skeat’s 1881–7 edition)

With second and first person, reflexives do not appear until Middle English.

These sentences illustrate other interesting differences: demonstrative se is used in (18b) but not in (18a) and a preposition is used before the indirect object him in (18b) but not in (18a). These differences indicate that (18b) is a later text, as was also likely from the presence of reflexive pronouns. There are also dialect differences between these versions, as we will see in Section 7.
The paradigm for demonstratives is presented in Table 4.9. Demonstratives are often translated by using the Modern English article the even though they are quite different. Unlike Modern English articles, demonstratives are not generally required, as (15) and (17) show, and carry more information (e.g. location). The indefinite article a(n) is not used, but sometimes the numeral an ‘one’ or the adjective sum ‘some’ are. Again, be aware that the þ and ð are both used as the first consonant of the demonstrative, as well as the s in the nominative masculine and feminine.

An example of the demonstrative ða is shown in (19). It agrees with the plural nominative æþelingas. Notice also the -as plural nominative ending on the noun and the -don past ending on the verb:

\[
(19) \text{hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon}
\]
\[
\text{how that-NOM.P nobles-NOM.P courage did}
\]
\[
\text{‘how the nobles performed heroic acts’ (Beowulf 3)}
\]

In Old English, demonstratives are often used where Modern English uses relatives, as in (20). Relative pronouns connect one sentence to another. In (20), þone is an accusative ‘that’; in Modern English it would be that or who(m):

\[
(20) \text{geong in geardum þone God sende folce to frofre}
\]
\[
\text{young in yards that-ACC God sent people to consolation}
\]
\[
\text{‘A young one in the yards who God sent to the people’ (Beowulf 13–4).}
\]

Notice also Old English words such as folc and frofer, later replaced by French loans, and the g in geong and geardum, which later becomes a palatalized [j]. The -e and -um endings should be familiar by now. Both (19) and (20) are taken from Figure 4.1. Try to find these lines in the facsimile. Other relatives involve a demonstrative and an optional þe or just þe, as in (21):

\[
(21) \text{Unferþ maþelode, Ecglafes bearn, þe at fotum set}
\]
\[
\text{Unferth speak-PST Ecgla-GEN child who at feet sat}
\]
\[
\text{‘Unferth spoke, the child of Eglaf, who sat at the feet’ (Beowulf, 499–500)}
\]

Are there other endings you recognize?

Nouns have endings for number, case, and gender. We already commented on the plural -as, as in (19), the dative singular -e, folce in (20), and the dative plural -um, in (20) and (21). Endings such as those on the noun stan ‘stone’ are the most common noun endings since most nouns belong to that class. This class is called the a-stem and stan is
a masculine noun of that class. There are other genders and noun classes: *word* is neuter (and belongs to the same *a*-noun class), *lufu* ‘love’ is feminine (*o*-noun class), and *sunu* ‘son’ is masculine (*u*-noun class). In Indo European, the noun actually ends in *a*, *o*, or *u* (or some other ending), but this is no longer visible in Old English. The paradigms, showing a few of the different noun classes, are provided in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10. Some Old English strong noun endings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>stàn (M) ‘stone’</th>
<th>wórđ (N) ‘word’</th>
<th>lufu (F) ‘love’</th>
<th>sunu (M) ‘son’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>stan</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>lufu</td>
<td>sunu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>stanes</td>
<td>wordes</td>
<td>lufe</td>
<td>suna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>stane</td>
<td>worde</td>
<td>lufe</td>
<td>suna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>stan</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>lufe</td>
<td>sunu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The endings of this class of nouns, called the vowel stems or strong nouns, differ from another class that also comes to English from Indo-European, namely the consonantal stems or weak nouns. Weak nouns can be masculine, feminine, and (less often) neuter. I have provided the masculine and feminine forms in Table 4.11; their characteristic *-an* ending is shared, but note the *-um* for the dative plural.

**Table 4.11. Some Old English weak noun endings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>gùmà (M) ‘man’</th>
<th>fólde (F) ‘earth’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>gùmà</td>
<td>folde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>gùman</td>
<td>foldan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>gùman</td>
<td>foldan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>gùman</td>
<td>foldan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Try to create a few paradigms, using the words in Table 4.12. For instance, take *folc* and notice that its endings will be like those of *word*. The singular will therefore be *folc, folces, folce, folc* and the plural *folc, folca, folcum, folc*. You could even add the demonstrative taken from Table 4.9. Demonstratives are not sensitive to word classes, just to gender, case, and number.
Table 4.12. Old English noun classes

| Like | stan: ap 'oath', coss 'kiss', cyning 'king', dom 'judgement', hlaf 'loaf', hund 'dog', peof 'thief', weall 'wall', weg 'way', and wer 'man' |
| Like word: bearn 'child', deor 'animal', folc 'people', gear 'year', land 'land', sceap 'sheep', sweord 'sword', weorc 'work', and wif 'woman' |
| Like lufu: faru 'journey', giefu 'gift', racu 'narrative', sceadu 'shade', and scolu 'troop' |
| Like sunu: lagu 'lake', medu 'mead', and wudu 'wood' |
| Like guma: eaxora 'son', mona 'moon', naca 'boat', nama 'name', and wita 'prophet' |
| Like folde: hruse 'earth', sunshine 'sun', and hacele 'cloak'. |

The plural ending of *stanas* later becomes the general English plural -(es), and the Old English genitive -(es) becomes the possessive in *the dog’s bone*. *Word* has the same endings as *stan*, except in the nominative and accusative plural. We can still see the result of this lack of an ending in the plural of *deer* and *sheep* — *deer* and *sheep*. Note that even though *lufu ‘love’* is feminine and *sunu ‘son’* is masculine (and of a different class), they are very similar in endings.

Remember that the natural gender need not correspond to the grammatical gender or noun class. Thus, *wif ‘woman’* is neuter in grammatical but not natural gender. To see other noun classes, consult an Old English Grammar (e.g. by Quirk & Wrenn 1958); look up the gender of the noun in a dictionary, such as the one by Clark-Hall or the more extensive Bosworth & Toller (on the web at: http://beowulf.engl.uky.edu/~kiernan/ BT/ Bosworth-Toller.htm).

The ending of the adjective is very intricate in Old English. As in other Germanic languages, such as German, Dutch, and Swedish, its form depends on whether a demonstrative is present. This is different in the other Indo-European languages. If no demonstrative precedes the adjective in Germanic, the adjective gets a more distinctive (strong) ending to ‘make up’ for this lack; if the adjective is preceded by a demonstrative, it gets a less varied (weak) ending. The strong and weak endings are also referred to as indefinite and definite in some Old English grammars. Both strong and weak endings are listed in Table 4.13. Notice the similarities in the plural endings, even in the strong ones.

Table 4.13. The forms of the adjective ‘good’ in Old English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Weak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>god</td>
<td>god</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>godes</td>
<td>godre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>godum</td>
<td>godre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>godne</td>
<td>gode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>gode</td>
<td>goda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>godra</td>
<td>godra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>godum</td>
<td>godum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>gode</td>
<td>goda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thus, þæm godan cyninge and godum cyninge, meaning ‘to the good king’, can both be used as datives. (*Cyning gets the same endings as stan*).

Adjectives are used in comparative and superlative constructions. In Old English, the pattern for hard and narrow is heard, headra, heardost and nearu, nearora, nearwost respectively. These are inflected forms, typical of a synthetic language. The analytic forms with more and most are rare in Old English. Some adjectives use suppletive forms, as in Modern English: good and yfel ‘evil’ have god, betra, betst and yfel, wyrsa, wyrst (bad appears only in Middle English).

Adverbs tell us about the place, time, reason, and manner of an action; they modify the verb. They can also be used to modify the sentence. Adverbs in Modern English are mostly formed by adding an -ly ending to an adjective. This is not the case in Old English where they are formed by several different endings: -e as in (22) and -lice (which later becomes -ly):

(22) heofodwoþe hlude cirme
    voice-DAT loud-ADV cry-out-1S
    ‘I cry out loudly with my voice’ (from Riddle 8, line 3, see Appendix D)

The endings on verbs depend on the tense (past and present), the person and number (of the subject), and the mood (imperative and subjunctive). They are divided into strong and weak, but these terms are used differently than when describing adjectives. Strong verbs change their stem vowels in the past tense and the past participle. There are still quite a number of strong verbs in Modern English: sing, sang, sung; drive, drove, driven; etc. Weak verbs get a regular -ed inflection: talk, talked, talked and plant, planted, planted.

The strong verbs are listed in Table 4.14. Focus on the present and past tense, not on the subjunctive and imperative moods, used for wishes and commands, respectively.

**Table 4.14.** An Old English strong verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indicative</th>
<th>Subjunctive</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ic</td>
<td>ic drife</td>
<td>ic drife</td>
<td>ic drife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu</td>
<td>drifest</td>
<td>þu drife</td>
<td>drif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>drif(e)ð</td>
<td>he/o drife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/ge/hi</td>
<td>drifað</td>
<td>we/ge/hi drifen drifað</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ic</td>
<td>draf</td>
<td>ic draf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu</td>
<td>drife</td>
<td>þu draf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>draf</td>
<td>he/o draf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/ge/hi</td>
<td>drifon</td>
<td>we/ge/hi drifen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past Participle</strong></td>
<td>(ge)drifen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The stem vowels in the present are long, but short in most of the past forms. This is not indicated in the paradigms. However, we can see the evidence for this in the contemporary pronunciation of drive [draiv] and driven [drɪvən] since the long [ij] shifted to [aj] during the Great Vowel Shift but the short [i] remained [i].
The present and past for two weak verbs are provided in Table 4.15 (for the indicative mood). The subjunctive and imperative moods are only provided for fremman ‘do’; those of herian ‘praise’ are very similar. Notice the -d- in the past tense, a precursor to Modern English -ed.

Table 4.15. Old English weak verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Indicative</th>
<th>Subjunctive</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ic fremme ‘do’</td>
<td>ic herie ‘praise’</td>
<td>ic fremme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu frem(e)st</td>
<td>þu herest</td>
<td>þu fremme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/þeo/hit frem(e)þ</td>
<td>he/þeo/hit hereþ</td>
<td>he/þeo/hit fremme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/ge/hi fremmaþ</td>
<td>we/ge/hi heriaþ</td>
<td>we/ge/hi fremmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ic fremede</td>
<td>ic fremede</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu fremedest</td>
<td>þu fremede</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/þeo/hit fremede</td>
<td>he/þeo/hit fremde</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/ge/hi fremedon</td>
<td>we/ge/hi fremeden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Participle (ge)fremed and (ge)hered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of verbal endings were given in (10), (12), and (19), repeated here as (23), (24), and (25), respectively. Notice that the third person present tense endings can have either (e)ð or (e)þ:

(23) folcæ arær don bec biddþ fote æþelmun
(24) þæt þec dryhtguma deaþ oferswiþ eþ
(25) hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon

The -don endings in (23) and (25) represent past plural, -þ in (23) present plural, and -þ in (24) present singular third person. As you can see, the weak and strong verbs only differ in the past and subjunctive.

Since the subjunctive ending is no longer common in Modern English, it might be good to look at an example in Old English:

(26) Ic wille … þæt þu forgyte þæt ic þe nu secge
I want that you-s forget-SUBJ that I you-s now say
‘I want you to forget what I am telling you now’ (Byrhtferth’s Manual 154.14, from Visser 841)

Verbs such as willan ‘to want’ in (26) express a wish, an unreal situation, and therefore need to be followed by a verb in the subjunctive. The verb forgitan ‘forget’ in (26) would have had an -st ending in the indicative since its subject is second person singular þu. Because it is subjunctive, however, it has a simpler ending. In Middle English, the subjunctive is generally replaced by modal auxiliaries, such as should, or by an infinitival form. Like modal auxiliaries, infinitives express unrealized action and are analytic ways of expressing what the subjunctive does in a synthetic manner.
There are also some **irregular verbs** that survive into Modern English such as *to be*, for which the Old English paradigm is given in Table 4.16 (see also Quirk & Wrenn 1958: 54–5).

**Table 4.16. The forms of the verb *to be***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indicative</th>
<th>Subjunctive</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present</strong></td>
<td>ic</td>
<td>eom/beo</td>
<td>ic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>þu</td>
<td>eart/bist</td>
<td>þu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>is/bip</td>
<td>he/o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we/ge/hi</td>
<td>sind(on)/beo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past</strong></td>
<td>ic</td>
<td>was</td>
<td>ic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>þu</td>
<td>ware</td>
<td>þu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>was</td>
<td>he/o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we/ge/hi</td>
<td>waeron</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future</strong></td>
<td>ic</td>
<td>beo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>þu</td>
<td>bist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>biþ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we/ge/hi</td>
<td>beoþ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbs like *to be* show **suppletion**; their forms are unrelated to each other in sound and are hence irregular. Even in Modern English, there are completely different forms in the paradigm: *be*, *is/am*, *was*. Gamkrelidze & Ivanov (1994), among other Indo-Europeanists, relate this to paradigm mixing at an early stage in Indo-European. There are many other cases. For instance, you might wonder how *go* and *went* are related. They are not, but somehow *went*, meaning ‘go and return’, crept into the *go*-paradigm and is now the past (suppletive) form.

**Auxiliaries** are not frequent in Old English. Modern English modal auxiliaries such as *can, could, will,* and *would* are regular verbs in Old English; see *wille* ‘want’ in (26). The same is true of *have* and *be*; they mostly function as main verbs in Old English. Between Old and Modern English, these verbs grammaticalize, i.e. they lose their meaning but gain grammatical function. Infinitives in Old English have an ending and an optional *to*, very closely connected to the infinitival verb. Hence, split infinitives (much maligned in Modern English) never occur. They start occurring when the infinitival *to* becomes an analytic marker of non-finiteness, in the late 14th century.

We have already examined many sentences from *Beowulf*. Let’s now look at the first page more carefully (see also Figure 4.1). In (27), a word-by-word and a somewhat literal translation are provided. Line breaks — indicated by | | | are placed where they are usually assumed to have been in Old English. Try to identify as many endings (the more common ones are given in the gloss) and as many words as you can. A few endings are indicated in bold:
(27) **Beowulf**

hwæt we gardena in geardagum | þeodcyninga þrym gefrunon
indeed we spear-danes-gen in yore-days-dat kings-gen glory hear-pst
hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon
how those nobles-nom courage did
‘Indeed, we have heard of the courageous deeds of the Danes (and) their kings in earlier times, how the noble ones accomplished courageous deeds’.

Oft Scyld Scefing sceapena þreatum | monegum mægbum
often Scyld Scefing shadows-gen crowd-dat many-dat family-dat
meodsetla ofteah egsode eorlas syððan ærest wearð | mead-benches away-took scared brave-men since early became
feasceaf funden
poor found
‘Often Scyld Scefing took away mead-benches from the crowd of warriors, from many people, after he had once been discovered poor’.

he þæs frofre gebad | weox under wolcnum weorðmyndum
he that-gen consolation-gen waited | grew under clouds-dat honor-dat
þah oðþæt him æghwylc þara ymbsittendra | ofer
accepted/grew until him every that-gen sitting-around-gen | across
hronrade hyran scolde | gomban gyldan þæt wæs god cyning
sea obey should | tribute pay that was good king
‘He was consoled for that; grew up; his honor grew until everyone of the neighboring people on the other side of the sea had to obey him; had to pay tribute. That was a good king’.

ðæm eafera wes æfter cenned | geong in geardum þone god sende
that-dat son was later born young in yards-dat that-acc god sent
folce to frofre fyrenðearfe ongeat | þe hie ær drugon
people to consolation fire-need-acc.F saw that they before carried
aldorlease | lange hwile
leaderless | long while.
‘Later, a son was born to him, sent by God for the consolation of the people. He saw the burning need that they had endured for a long time being without a leader’.

Him þæs liffrear | wuldres wealdend woroldare forgeaf
him that-gen life-lord | world-gen lord world-honor gave.

**Beowulf** was breme blæd wide sprang | Scyldes eafera Scedelandum in
Beowulf was famous glory wide jumped | Scyld-gen son Scedeland-dat in
‘The lord of life, the ruler of the world, gave him worldly honor for that.
Beowulf, son of the Scyld, was famous; his glory spread wide in the land of the Danes’.
Swa sceal geong guma gode gewyrcean | fromum feohgiftum
so shall young man good perform | vigorous-DAT bounty-giving-DAT
on ñæder bearme þæt hine on ylde eft gewunigen |
on father possession-DAT that him-ACC in old-age again stand-by
wilgesiþas þonne wig cume | leode gealsten
familiar-companions-NOM then war comes people follow/help
‘Such should a young man accomplish with good deeds and bountiful gifts,
while still living among his father’s possessions, so that later in life, when war
comes, his companions, the people, will help him.’
(from Klaeber’s 1922 edition)

You probably recognize quite a few endings and we will discuss the ones in bold in the
beginning of the passage. The -um on dagum ‘days’ indicates a plural; it is dative due to
being the object of in. The -as ending on æþelingas shows that it is a nominative (plural)
subject. The -on endings on gefunon ‘heard’ and fremedon ‘did’ show past tense. Sceapena
preatum ‘the crowd of shadows’ and monegum mægþum ‘many families’ go together
because they are the people from whom the mead-benches are taken. They are all in the
dative plural, except the genitive sceapena since it modifies preatum. In Modern English,
we use prepositions in all of these cases, from for the dative and of for the genitive.
The last ending that is in bold is the genitive plural -a on gardena and þeodcyninga. This is the
usual genitive plural; special is the -ena on sceadena. Check Table 4.10 for this ending.

The following site provides a glossary of words in Beowulf: www.heorot.dk/beo-
intro-rede.html. You might also listen to the audio version at www.engl.virginia.edu/OE/
htm) has an interesting translation that starts as: “Quiet! Our story speaks of the Spear-
Danes their greatest kings’ accomplishments how in former times lived fearless men”.

This section has reviewed some of the paradigms of Old English and when the differ-
ent forms are used. Next, we will examine word order and other related matters.

5. Old English Syntax

The most significant change between Old and Modern English is given in (11) — the shift
from many to a few endings and the introduction of grammatical words such as prepo-
sitions. As mentioned, Old English can be described as synthetic, whereas Modern English
is analytic. The endings were discussed in the previous section. We also mentioned some
syntax, such as the lack of prepositions in (8). In this section, we will examine other syn-
thetic characteristics, such as free word order, omission of subject pronouns, and the lack
of auxiliaries. We also look at the frequent use of coordinate structures, the use of adverbs
as discourse markers, and the placing of the negation ne or n- before the verb.
We will start with the relatively **free word order**. There are a few rules. Usually pronouns occur near the beginning of the sentence, as in (8) and (12), repeated here as (28) and (29):

\[(28) \text{ he ælfrede cyninge aðas swor } \& \text{ gislas sealde.} \]

\[(29) \text{ þæt ðec dryhtguma deaþ oferswiþeþ.} \]

The verb often occurs at the end, as in (28) and (29), especially in subordinate or embedded sentences. Note that (28) contains two sentences and two verbs (*swor* and *sealde*). The verb can also occur in second position, as in (30). This occurs mostly in main clauses:

\[(30) \text{ Þy ilcan geare for se here ofer sæ} \]

And in the same year the army went over the sea’ (Chronicle A, for the year 880)

The way to calculate what is called **verb-second** is to ignore the initial ‘and’, and not to count actual words but the constituents or phrases. In (30), *þy ilcan geare* ‘in the same year’ forms a unit and is therefore counted as one position. Once one takes that into account, the verb *for* is in second position. Old English is, in this respect, very similar to German and Dutch.

There are two kinds of questions: *yes/no* and *wh*-questions. Respective examples are given in (31) with the verb first and in (32) with the verb following the question-word:

\[(31) \text{ gehyrest pu eadwacer} \]

‘Do you hear, Eadwacer?’ (from *Wulf and Eadwacer*)

\[(32) \text{ hwæt gehyrest pu} \]

‘What do you hear?’ (made up example)

Subject pronouns are somewhat more optional in Old than in Modern English. Examples are provided in (33) and (34), and in the first line of Caedmon’s Hymn in (7) above. Examples of left-out subjects continue to appear up to the Early Middle English period:

\[(33) \text{ peah ðe hordwelan heolde lange} \]

‘though he held the treasure long’ (*Beowulf* 2344)

\[(34) \text{ swylec her ær beforan sæde} \]

‘which he had said here before’ (*Alfred’s Orosius* 27.14)
Pleonastic (or dummy or grammatical) subjects, such as *there* and *it*, are frequent in Modern English but do not occur in Old English. There is also a construction that is called impersonal since there need not be a nominative subject. This is shown in (35):

(35) *Hu lomp eow on lade, leofa Biowulf*  
how happened you-DAT on trip, dear Beowulf  
‘How was your trip, dear Beowulf’? (Beowulf 1987)

As you can see from (31) and (32), the auxiliary verb *do* is not used in questions (or with negation). The auxiliaries *be* and *have* occur but are infrequent. (36) provides an example where Modern English would have an auxiliary *have* (note also the lack of the preposition *of*):

(36) *we … þrym gefrunon*  
we … glory heard  
‘We have heard of the glory’. (Beowulf 1–2)

Past action is indicated through affixes, such as the -*on* suffix for the past plural, and also through the (aspectual) prefix *ge-*, as in (36). This *ge-* prefix still occurs in languages such as Dutch and German, but disappears gradually throughout the Middle English period (going from *ge-* to *i/y* to nothing).

Sentences can be connected in a number of ways. Old English often uses no connection or coordination with *and*, indicated in the manuscript by the symbol 7, as in (37). Modern English might use subordination in such sentences instead: ‘when he was killed, B took the throne’:

(37) *Anglo Saxon Chronicle (A-version), anno 755*  
7 þy ilcan geare mon ofslog Æþelbald Miercna cyning on Seccandune  
and the same year man killed Æþelbald Mercian king at Seckington  
7 his lic līp on Hreapadune 7 Beornræd feng to rice 7 …  
and his body lies in Repton and Beornræd ascended the throne and…  
‘And the same year when Æþelbald, the Mercian king, was killed at Seckington, with his body buried in Repton, Beornræd took the throne; and …’ (from Thorpe’s 1861 edition)

If you read the entry of the *Chronicle* provided in Appendix A, you will notice the frequent use of *and*. Another way to connect sentences is through relative clauses, as in (20), or as in the rather complex (38):

(38) *Alfred Pastoral Care – West Saxon*  
Hwa is nu ðære ðe gesceadwis sie  
who is now there that wise is  
& to ðæm gleaw sie ðæt he swelces hwæt tocnewan cunne  
and to that wise is that he such what distinguish can
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ðætte nyte ðætte on gimma gecynde
that not-know that in of-gems family

\[\text{carb unc u lus bið dio[r]a ðonne iacinctus?} \]
carbuncular is more-costly than iacinctus?

‘For who is there, who is wise and experienced enough to distinguish such things, who does not know that in the class of gems the carbuncle is more precious than the jacinth.’ (Pastoral Care 411.25–8, from Sweet’s 1871 edition)

Adverbs in Old English, as in present-day English, can be used to express the mood of the speaker and are then considered discourse markers. Examples of such discourse markers, also known as mood particles, are provided in (39) and (40):

(39) ac hi þah ledað to deðe on ende
but they though lead to death in end
‘but they lead to death, however, in the end’ (Lambeth Homilies 119, from 1175)

(40) Swa eac nu mæg ealc mon deofel ofercumen
so also now may every man devil overcome
‘This way everyone can overcome the devil’ (Bodley Homilies, p. 98)

These are often hard to translate into Modern English since some are replaced by forms such as well, however, and fortunately placed at the beginning or the end of the sentence (and receive ‘comma intonation’).

A last point about Old English grammar is that the negative adverb often immediately precedes the verb, as in (41), and is sometimes weakened to a prefix. In addition, multiple negatives occur, as in (42), from King Alfred’s Pastoral Care. Note that nan wuht means ‘no creature/thing’ and grammaticalizes to not in later periods:

(41) hleôpren e ne mipe
sound not conceal
‘I don’t conceal sound.’ (Riddle 8, line 4, see Appendix D)

(42) forþæmpe hie hiora nan wuht ongietan ne meahton
because they of-them no thing understand not could
‘because they couldn’t understand anything of them’ (Pastoral Care, 4/12 Cotton)

Let’s look at another text keeping the morphology and syntax in mind. In the exercises to Chapter 2, we looked at the beginning of this text, Alfred’s version of Orosius. This beginning is repeated as (43) where only the word-by-word gloss is provided:

(43) Alfred – Orosius – West Saxon
Ohtere sæde his hlaforde, Ælfrede cyninge, þæt he ealra Norðmonna
Ohtere said his lord Alfred king that he of-all northmen
norpnest bude.
northmost lived
He cwæð þæt he bude on þæm lande norþweardum wif þa Westsæ.  
he said that he lived in that land northward along the Westsea

He sæde þeah þæt land sie swiþe lang norþ þonan  
he said though that land is so long north thence

ac hit is eal weste, buton on feawum stowum styccemælum wiciad  
but it is all waste except on few places here-and-there live

Finnas  
Finns (now Sami)

on huntoðe on wintra and on sumera on fiscaþe be þære sæ.  
on hunting in winter and in summer on fishing by that sea  
(from Bately’s 1980 edition, pp. 13–4)

As for the morphology, you may remember the -e ending on hlaforde (and on Ælfrede cyninge) as a dative. In Modern English, we would use the preposition to instead. There are a few other recognizable datives, e.g. þæm lande and feawum stowum styccemælum. The -as on Finnas in line 4 is a nominative plural. As to verbal endings, there are a few past tense verbs such as sæde and a present tense plural wiciad. There are also some subjunctive forms, e.g. sie in line 3 (see Table 4.16).

As to the syntax, in the first sentence, the verb sæde is in second position, and bude is in final position. This fits with sæde being the verb of the main clause and bude the verb in the embedded clause. Look where the verbs are in the other sentences! It is interesting that so many pronouns are present and demonstratives such as þæt.

We will continue with the next part of the same text:

(44) Alfred continued

He sæde þæt he æt sumum cirre wolde fandian hu longe þæt land  
he said that he at some turn wanted explore how long that land

norþryhte læge  
north lay

ofþe hwæðer ænig mon be norðan þæm westenne bude.  
or whether any man to north that waste lived

þa for he norþryhte be þæm lande let him ealne weg þæt  
then went he north by that land [he] kept himself all way that

waste land on þæt steorbord  
waste land on that starboard

ond þa widsæ on þæt bæcbord þrie dagas.  
and that wide-sea on that port-side three days.

In (44), there is a possible subject left out in the third line: let him ealne... ‘he kept himself all ..’. The word order has most main clause verbs in second position, sæde ‘said’ and for ‘went’, but wolde, læge, and bude appear at the end of the clause since these clauses are subordinate.
The third part of the excerpt is given in (45):

(45) **Alfred continued**

\[ \paces \ \was \ \he \ \swa \ \feor \ \norp \]  
Then was he as far north

\[ \swa \ \pa \ \hwælhuntan \ \firrest \ \faraþ. \ \pa \ \for \ \he \ \þagiet \ \norpryhte \]  
as the whale-hunters most-far go. Then travelled he then-yet north

\[ \swa \ \feor \ \swa \ \he \ \meahte \ \on \ \pæm \ \oprum \ \prim \ \dagas \ \gesiglan. \]  
as far as he could in the next three days to sail.

\[ \pa \ \beag \ \ðæt \ \land \ \þær \ \eastryhte \ \oppe \ \seo \ \sæ \ \in \ \on \ \þæt \ \lond \]  
then bent that land there eastwards or that sea in on that land

\[ \he \ \nyssé \ \hwæðer \ \buton \ \he \ \wisë \ \ðæt \ \he \ \ðær \ \bad \ \westanwindes. \]  
he not-knew which but that he knew that he there waited (for a) westwind

In (45), there is some interesting and by now familiar morphology, e.g. \textit{firrest}, the superlative form of the adjective, and \textit{faraþ}, the third person present ending, and \textit{nyssé}, a contraction of \textit{ne} and \textit{wisse}. As to the syntax, the lines show a lot of demonstratives and pronouns. The last line has an indefinite article missing, compared to Modern English. The sentences are not very embedded, \textit{pa} is used frequently, and the finite verb mostly appears in second position, e.g. \textit{was}, \textit{for}, \textit{meahte}, \textit{nyssé}, and \textit{wisse}.

Table 4.17 provides a summary of the morphological and syntactic features of Old English. Except for (k), all the features characterize a synthetic language.

### Table 4.17. Synthetic and other characteristics of Old English

**Morphology:**

a. An elaborate pronominal system as a result of case, see Table 4.8  
b. No real articles, only demonstratives, see Table 4.9  
c. Nouns have endings depending on whether they are subjects or objects, see Table 4.10, and they can be masculine, feminine, or neuter in gender  
d. Adjectives agree with the nouns they modify in case, number, and gender, and are either weak or strong, see Table 4.12  
e. Verbs are marked depending on whether they are weak or strong, see Tables 4.13 and 4.14

**Syntax:**

f. Omission of subject pronoun, prepositions, and articles  
g. Relatively free word order (even though the verb and pronoun have more fixed positions)  
h. Limited use of auxiliaries: \textit{He ær com} ‘He had come before’  
i. Adverbs with \textit{-e} or \textit{-lic} endings  
j. Frequent use of coordination  
k. Negation before the verb: \textit{Ic ne dyde} ‘I did not’; or multiple words, as in (42)
6. The Old English Lexicon

The most striking characteristic of Old English vocabulary is how Germanic it is. *Folc* in (23) translates as *people* (a French loan); of course, *folks* is still used in Modern English with a slightly different meaning. It is sometimes said that of the 30,000 words in Old English, 3% are non-Germanic (see Minkova 2005a). Since Old English, 80% of the original vocabulary may have been lost. The *Thesaurus of Old English* (edited by Roberts & Kay in 2000) and Baugh & Cable (2002) provide many examples of a very different vocabulary. (Incidentally, the word *vocabulary* is a French/Latin word replacing the Germanic *wordhoard*). For instance, for mental faculties, there are Modern English nouns, as in (46):

(46) a. spirit, consideration, expectation, attention, reflection, deliberation
    b. soul, heart, mood, mind, (ghost), thought

The words in (46a) are loans from French and Latin, the ones in (46b) derive from Old English. You will notice that the loans are often longer, more precise, and limited in meaning. Old English often forms new words through compounding (more so than Modern English). To get a sense for this, consider some words for mental functions: nouns as in (47), verbs as in (48), and adjectives as in (49).


(48) onlyhtan ‘to illumine’, oncnawan ‘understand’


To a Modern English speaker, many of these words sound colorful. What words would *cuþ, ær, caru* be related to? Try to guess which Modern English equivalents in (47) to (49) are loans. Names can be compounds as well: *Hrothgar* ‘angry spear’, *Unferth* ‘no spirit’, and *Æthelstan* ‘noble stone’. Construct one yourself. There are Modern English to Old English dictionaries such as Stephen Pollington’s *Wordcraft*.

Some words connected to speech and grammar (from the Old English Thesaurus where so many more are listed) are given in Table 4.18. One of the riddles in Appendix D uses a few of these:
Table 4.18. Words relating to speech and grammar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE</th>
<th>gloss</th>
<th>OE</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stefn</td>
<td>‘voice, sound’</td>
<td>woþ</td>
<td>‘sound’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hleopor</td>
<td>‘noise, song’</td>
<td>cwiss</td>
<td>‘speech’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gemæpel</td>
<td>‘speech’</td>
<td>(ge)reord</td>
<td>‘voice’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge)spræc</td>
<td>‘speech’</td>
<td>maþelere</td>
<td>‘speaker’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wordlof</td>
<td>‘praise’</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>‘word, message, order’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hream</td>
<td>‘scream’</td>
<td>spell</td>
<td>‘observation’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cwide</td>
<td>‘words’</td>
<td>wise</td>
<td>‘idiom’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wordnoter</td>
<td>‘eloquent’</td>
<td>felaspræc/oferspræc</td>
<td>‘loquacity’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wordful</td>
<td>‘loquacious’</td>
<td>wordfæst</td>
<td>‘truth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bealcan</td>
<td>‘utter’</td>
<td>dolspræc</td>
<td>‘silly chatter’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twispræce</td>
<td>‘bilingual’</td>
<td>læden</td>
<td>‘foreign language’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stæfwritere</td>
<td>‘grammarian’</td>
<td>lædenlar</td>
<td>‘knowledge of Latin’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cræftspræc</td>
<td>‘technical words’</td>
<td>wordcræft</td>
<td>‘eloquence’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clipiende stæf</td>
<td>‘vowel’</td>
<td>selfswegend</td>
<td>‘vowel’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>healfclypigende</td>
<td>‘glide’</td>
<td>biword</td>
<td>‘adverb’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nama</td>
<td>‘noun’</td>
<td>stefn</td>
<td>‘relative’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geendung</td>
<td>‘case’</td>
<td>wregendlic</td>
<td>‘accusative’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manigfeald</td>
<td>‘plural’</td>
<td>wif</td>
<td>‘feminine’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fullfremed</td>
<td>‘perfect aspect’</td>
<td>miscwened</td>
<td>‘ungrammatical’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellspræc</td>
<td>‘powerful speech’</td>
<td>scopgereord</td>
<td>‘poetic language’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fese</td>
<td>‘verse’</td>
<td>bocgesamnung</td>
<td>‘library’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lif</td>
<td>‘biography’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is an online thesaurus you might want to try: http://libra.englang.arts.gla.ac.uk/oethesaurus.

As you can see, many Old English words also use prefixes such as ge- and ofer-, suffixes such as -ung, and compounds with -lic. Many of these still occur in Modern English but some have a broader meaning in Old English: wiþceosan means ‘reject’, literally ‘choose against’, and wiþcweþan means ‘deny’, literally ‘speak against’. In Modern English, withstand, withdraw and withhold still occur, but most of the time we use phrasal verbs instead: look up rather than uplook.

Words change in meaning (semantics) in many ways. They can generalize or widen but they can also specialize or narrow. Examples of narrowing are mood (discussed above), deer (older meaning is ‘animal’), hound (older meaning is ‘dog’), and meat (older meaning is ‘food’). Examples of widening are barn (older meaning is ‘place to store barley’) and tail (older meaning is ‘hairy part on the back side of a horse’). There is also metaphorical extension: crane is a bird but becomes used for a mechanical device that looks like the bird.
Some linguists also speak of ameliorization if the meaning becomes 'better' and pejorization if it becomes 'worse'. These two are terms are difficult to use. For instance, is the meaning 'happy' better than 'silly'? The meaning of the word *silly* did indeed change from 'blessed' to 'silly'. However, a word does not really change for the better or worse. Instead, we might say a word has **shifted** in meaning. Other examples are *toilet* (older meaning is 'cloth'), *clown* 'rural person', *to botch* (older meaning is 'to repair'), and *lewd* (older meaning is 'non religious order'). Williams (1975) provides many more examples. The speakers' need to create euphemisms for matters they do not enjoy discussing often results in a shift of meaning. The three semantic changes are summarized in Table 4.19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic change</th>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ModE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>narrowing</td>
<td>deer 'animal'</td>
<td>&gt; deer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>widening</td>
<td>aunt 'father's sister'</td>
<td>&gt; aunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metaphorical extension</td>
<td>grasp 'motion'</td>
<td>&gt; grasp 'to understand'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift</td>
<td>to botch 'to repair'</td>
<td>&gt; to botch (up)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sometimes, the way words look changes for reasons of meaning. When a word's spelling is adapted to fit its meaning, we speak of **folk etymology**. Instances are *female* (from French *femelle* 'little woman', not related to *male*), *coldslaw* (from Dutch *koolsla* 'cabbage salad', not related to *cold*), *hangnail* (from *angnail* 'painful nail', not related to *hanging*), and *wormwood* (from *wermod* 'man-courage').

The world wide words website (www.worldwidewords.org/genindex-go.htm) lists many such shifts and folk etymologies; note the ones for *lewd* and *wormwood* as well as *haggard*.

### 7. Old English Dialects

There is no agreement on how many Old English dialects can be distinguished. Often, four dialects are set apart: Northumbrian, Mercian, West-Saxon, and Kentish, as shown in Figure 4.5.

A map by Matthew White, available at www.georgetown.edu/faculty/ballc/oe/oe-map.html, shows three main dialect regions: Northumbria (roughly above the Humber River), Mercia (below the Humber and above the Thames), and Wessex (below the Thames). Some argue that there are seven varieties of Old English since there were seven kingdoms at one point: Northumberland, Mercia, East Anglia, Essex (above London), Sussex (below London), Wessex (further west than Sussex), and Kent. However, relatively temporary political divisions need not equal linguistic boundaries.

When we get to Middle English, we will see clear differences between dialects, but in Old English there is not much evidence of dialect distinctions. Breaking of front vowels into diphthongs occurs more often in West Saxon than in Mercian, so *healf* 'half' and
bearn ‘child’ would be the southern forms, half and barn the northern. In the two versions of Caedmon’s Hymn in Appendix B, this difference is very obvious. Another difference is that the short a in man, land, and hand, i.e. before a nasal, corresponds to a short o in the north: mon, lond and hond. This is not borne out in the versions of Caedmon’s Hymn since mon occurs in both.

Scribal differences include the use of u(u) and d in the North for w and þ/ð in the South. This is obvious in Caedmon’s Hymn: compare uerc with weorc and modgidanc with modeþonc in Appendix B. It can also be observed in (18). The Northumbrian sentence in (18a) has eghuelc ‘every’, whereas the Mercian version of the same sentence in (18b) has æghwilc. There are other dialect differences in (18) that will become obvious in Chapter 6, e.g. stondas versus stondeþ ‘stands’.

One issue related to the discussion of Old English dialects is that there are only a few texts from the different areas that can be compared. Even the different versions of Caedmon’s Hymn are from different time periods. The texts are also different in style: we have a lot of interlinear translations from the North and much prose from the South. There are also texts that are not clearly from one area, such as Beowulf. Some of the divisions are marked in Table 4.1.

8. Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the grammar of Old English. Old English is a synthetic language, with elaborate case and agreement paradigms. Its vocabulary is Germanic. As we will see in the next chapter, this vocabulary changes considerably during and after the Old English period.
Keywords

Synthetic and analytic; paradigm; case and agreement (see also Chapter 2); runes; facsimiles; sound changes (voicing, palatalization, fronting, and breaking); alliteration; compounds; widening, narrowing, and shift.

The texts (or parts of texts) appended to this chapter include well-known pieces of Old English prose and poetry. They have been chosen because there are audio versions available on the web or facsimiles on the internet and in paper copies. Various glosses and glossing styles are included depending on the difficulty of the text, a gloss for the entire text (Appendix A and B), no gloss (Appendix C), a word-for-word gloss (Appendix D and E) and an interlinear gloss (Appendix F). Different readers prefer different styles.

Exercises

1. Which of the following Old English words do you think are related to Modern English words. Use lines to show the relationship (sawol corresponds to soul):

   OE    ModE
   heafod   body
   sawolhus   hallowed/blessed
   segl   sick
   seoce   chosen
   halgode   head
   gecuron   sail
   ti3ul   tile

2 a. What type of phonological change happens when:
   OE forst becomes ModE frost?
   OE handwyrst becomes ModE wrist?
   b. How might make/match, bake/batch, wake/watch, and speak/speech be related through sound change?

3. How would you translate (a) to (f)? Sinc means ‘treasure’ in (e):
   a. þa æþelingas ferdon ofer sæ into Normandig. (made up)
   b. wæs Romaburh abrocen fram Gotum. (from Bede I, 42)
   c. se cyning gehyrde þæt se ealdorbisceop wolde mid his freondum & mid his wytum gesprec & geþeaht habben. (adapted from Bede I, 134)
   d. Eadwine wæs on þam gefeohte ofslegen. (adapted from Bede I, 152)
   e. Nu se wyrm ligeð since bereafod. (Beowulf 2745)
   f. [He] hiene selfne ofslog. (Alfred’s Orosius 166.23)
4. Consider Tables 4.10 to 4.12:
   a. If *fisc* and *hund* ‘dog’ are in the same class as *stan*, i.e. get the same endings, how would you say ‘of the (one) fish,’ ‘to the (one) fish,’ ‘the dogs’ (subject), and ‘for the dogs’ in Old English?
   b. How would you say ‘the sheep’ (plural subject)?
   c. Are there any weak nouns in the passage from *Beowulf* in (27)?

5. Look at the changes in meaning in the list below and describe these changes using widening, narrowing, and shift. The older meanings are taken from the OED and you might look there to see how some of these drastic changes come about:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>older meaning</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accident</td>
<td>occurrence, incident</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doom</td>
<td>judge</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scent</td>
<td>faculty of smell (e.g. in dogs)</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divest</td>
<td>remove one’s clothes</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>starve</td>
<td>die</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admonish</td>
<td>to give warning advice</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aunt</td>
<td>father’s sister</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not all of these words occur in Old English, can you make a guess as to which ones are later borrowings?

6. Keeping Section 6 in mind, how would you explain that in Modern Swedish and Norwegian, the word for food is *mat*?

7. Read the first two sentences of the Old English text in Appendix A aloud. What words do you recognize in this text? List or circle them. See if you can find them in the facsimile.

8. Appendix B provides the two versions of *Caedmon’s Hymn* mentioned a number of times. Identify some of the differences in orthography, sound, morphology, choice of vocabulary, and syntax in a systematic way (even if they have been noted in the chapter).

9. Try to get a sense of the story in Appendix C by skimming it. Underline some of the words you do not know and look up some in an Old English dictionary (e.g. on www.ling.upenn.edu/~kurisuto/germanic/oe_bright_glossary.html).

10. In Appendix D, can you guess what words *hlude*, *mongum*, and *æfen* in Riddle 8 correspond to in Modern English? What processes of sound change do they undergo?

    Look up what German *schweigen* or Dutch *zwijgen* mean and relate them to *swigað* in line 1 of Riddle 7. Do you recognize *mec* in line 5? Why is *ofer* in line 6 spelled the way it is?

11. Comment on the word order of the texts in Appendices E and F.
12. *Garlic, marshal, nostril* and *Mildred* are originally compounds. Try to find the original meanings, preferably in the OED. Hints: *garlic* is related to *leek*, *marshall* to *mare*, *nostril* to *nose*, and *Mildred* to *mild*.

13. Download an Old English text from http://www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth/library/oe/oe.html and save it as a .txt file. Then, open it in your word processing program and try to find some of the endings from Tables 4.10 and 4.13. Since your program will find e.g. *-as* in any word, you will need to restrict the list. See Chapter 10 for alternatives.

**Appendix A**

*Anglo Saxon Chronicle – Peterborough Version*

The Old English text, a translation, and facsimile of part of the *Peterborough Chronicle* (abbreviated PC) are given for the year 1066, the year of the Battle of Hastings. This version was written at Peterborough, in the Danelaw area, and its last part extends into Middle English. (There is a translation of the entire chronicle at: http://omacl.org/Anglo/) Notice that the medieval year was organized differently from the present day one. The entry starts quietly enough:

*Old English:*

An. M.LXVI. On þyssum geare man halgode þet mynster æt Westmynstre on Cyldamaesse dæg 7 se cyng Eadward forðferde on Twelfts mæsse æfen 7 hine mann bebyrgede on Twelftan mæssedæg innan þære niwa halgodre circean on Westmyntre 7 Harold eorl feng to Englalanes cynerice swa se cyng hit geuðe 7 eac men hine þærto gecuron 7 wæs gebletsod to cyne on Twelftan mæssedæg 7 þa ylcan geare þe he cyng was he for ut mid sciphere togeanes Willelme … 7 þa hwile com Willelm eorl upp æt Hestingan on Sce Michaeles mæssedæg 7 Harold com norðan 7 him wið gefeaht ear þan þe his here com eall 7 þær he feoll 7 his twægen gebroðra Gyrð 7 Leofwine and Willelm þis land geeode 7 com to Westmynstre 7 Ealdred arceb hine to cyne gehalgode 7 menn guldon him gyld 7 gislas sealdon 7 syððan heora land bohtan.

*Modern English:*

1066 In this year the monastery at Westminster was hallowed on Childermas day (28 December). And king Eadward died on Twelfth-mass eve (5 January) and he was buried on Twelfth-mass day, in the newly hallowed church at Westminster. And earl Harold succeeded to the Kingdom of England, as the king had granted it to him and men had also chosen him thereto and he was blessed as king on Twelfth-mass day. And in the same year that he was king he went out with a naval force against William … And the while count William landed at Hastings, on St. Michael’s mass-day and Harold came from the north and fought against him before his army had all come and there he fell and his two brothers Gyrth and Leofwine and William subdued this land, and came to Westminster and archbishop Ealdred hallowed
him king and men paid him tribute and gave him hostages and afterwards bought their land (from Thorpe 1861).

**Figure 4.6.** Facsimile of the *Peterborough Chronicle*, fol 57b, reproduced with permission The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. The passage starts in line 3.
Appendix B

Two versions of Caedmon’s Hymn

Version I is the Northumbrian version, probably from the 8th century, and Version II is the West-Saxon one, from c.1000. Version III is a word-by-word translation. The story of Cædmon is told by Bede (731) but the date of composition is probably 665 (from Bede IV, 24, edition by Miller 1890). Both Bede and Cædmon are from Northumbria. Cædmon is a ‘simple’ herdsman who has a dream in which a man asks him to sing, resulting in the Hymn. After this event, the abbess of Streoneshealh (Whitby) asks him to join the (co-ed) monastery. The text just before the Hymn is available from http://www.engl.virginia.edu/OE/anthology/caedmon.html. As mentioned above, there is also an audio version at www.wwnorton.com/nael/noa/audio.htm or at www.courses.rochester.edu/higley/ENG201/caedmon.html.

I
Nu scylun hergan hefaenricaes uard
metudæs maecti end his modgidanc
uerc uuldurfadur sue he uundra gehuaes 3
eci dryctin or astelidæ
he aerist scop aelda barnum
heben til hrofe haleg scepen 6
tha middungeard moncynnes uard
eci dryctin æfter tiadæ
firum foldu frea allmectig 9

II
Nu we sculan herian heofonrices weard
Metodes mihte and his modeþonc
weorc wuldorfæder swa he wundra gehwæs 3
ece dryhten ord onstealde
He ærest gesceop eorðan bearum
heofon to hrofe halig scyppend 6
ða middangeard moncynnes weard
ece dryhten æfter teode
firum foldan frea ælmihtig 9

III
Now (we) shall praise heaven-kingdom’s guardian
Lord’s might and his thought
work wonderfather as he wonder’s things 3
eternal lord beginning established
he first created men’s/earth’s children-DAT
heaven as roof holy creator 6
then middle-earth mankind’s guardian
eternal lord after created
men-DAT earth god almighty 9
Appendix C

Orosius

Orosius wrote a history of ‘world’ events in Latin in the 5th century and this was translated and ‘improved’ upon possibly by King Alfred (see www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page25.asp). The version of the part on the Amazons given below is based on Bately (1980: 28–31).

Ær þæm þe Romeburg getimbred wære iiii hunde wintrum 7 hundeahtatigum, Uesoges, Egypta cyning, wæs winnende of suðdæle Asiam, oð him se mæsta dæl wearð underbieded. 7 he Uesoges, Egypta cyning, wæs sìþpan mid firde farende on Scibpie on ða norðdælas, 7 his ærendracan beforan asende to þære ðeode, 7 him untweogendlice secgan het þæt hie [oðer] sceolden, oþþe ðæt lond æt him alesan, oþþe he hie wolde mid gefeohte fordon 7 forherigan. Hie him þa gesceadwislice ondwyrdon, 7 cwædon þæt hit gemalic wære 7 unryhtlic þæt swa oferwlenced cyning sceolde winnan on swa earm folc swa hie wæron. Heton him þeh þæt ondwyrde secgan, þæt him leofre wære wið hiene to feohtanne þonne gafol to gieldanne. Hie þæt gelaesan swa, 7 sona þone cyning gefliemdon mid his folce, 7 him æfterfolgiende wæron, 7 ealle ægypte awestan buton þæm fenlondum anum. 7 þa hie hamweard wendon be westan þære ie Eufrate, ealle Asiam hie genieddon þæt hie him gafol guldon, 7 þær wæron fiftene gear þæt lond herigende 7 westende, oð heora wiþ him sendon ærendracan æfter, 7 him sædon þæt hie oðer dyden, oþþe ham comen oþþe hie him woldon oðða wera ceosan. Hi þa þæt long forleton, 7 him hamweard ferdon.

On þære ilcan tide wurdon twegen æþelingas afliemde of Scibpian, Plenius 7 Scolopetius wæron hatene, 7 geforan þæt lond, 7 gebudon betuh Capadotiam 7 Pontum neah þære læssan Asian, 7 þær winningde wæron, oð hie him þær eard genamon. 7 hie ðæt æfter hrædlice tide from þæm londleodum þurh seara ofslægene wurdon. þa wurdon hiora wiþ swa sarige on hiora mode, 7 swa swiðlice gedrefed, ægþær ge þara æþelinga wif weaþ þæs lærdlice tide from þæm londleodum þurh seara ofslæge wæron. þæt hie wæpna naman, to þon ðæt hie heora weras wrecan þohten. 7 hie þæt hrædlice æfter þæm ofslogan ealle þæt wæpnedmen þæt hie him on neaweste wæron. For þon hie dydon swa þe hie woldon þætte ða opere wif wæren emsarige him, þæt hie sìþpan on him fultum hæfden, ðæt hie ma mehten heora weras wrecan. Hi þa þa wiþ ealle togaðere gecirdon, 7 on ðæt folc winningde wæron, 7 þa wæpnedmen sleande, oð hie þaes londes hæfden micel on hiora onwalde. þa under þæm gewinne hie genamon friþ wið þæt wæpnedmen. Sìþpan wæs hiera þeaw þæt hie ælce geare ymbe twelv monað tosommen ferdon, 7 þær þonne bearne striendon. Eft þonne þa wiþ heora bearn cendon, þonne fendo hit þæt maedcild, 7 slocon þa hysecild. 7 þær maedcildum hie fortendun þæt wiþre brest foran þæt hit weaxan ne sceolde, þæt hie hæfdan þy strengan scyte. For þon hie mon hæt on Crecisc [Amazanas], þæt is on Englisc fortende.

Heora twa wæron heora cwena, Marsepia 7 Lampida wæron hatene. Hie heora here on tu todældon; ðoper æt ham beon heora lond to healdanne, oðer ut faran to winanne. Hie sìþpan geeodon Europe 7 Asian þone mæstan dæl, 7 getimbredon Effesum þa burg, 7 monege
oðere on ðære læssan Asiam; sīþpan hieres þone mæstan dæl ham sendon mid hiora herehype, þone ðeperne dæl þær leton þæt lond to healdonne. þær weard Marsepia sio cwen ofslagen, micel þæs hieres þe mid hiere beæftan wæs. ðær weard hire dohtor cwen Sinope. Seo ilce cwen Sinope toeacan hieres hwætscipe þiere monigfealdum dugþum hierliche geendade on mægðhade.

On þæm dagum wæs swa micel ege from dam wifmonnum, þætte Europe ne Asiam ne ealle þæ neahþeoda ne mehton æppencan ne acræftan hu hi him wiðstondan mehten, ær þon hie gecuron Ercol þone ent þæt he he sceolde mid eallum Creca cræftum beswican. þæah ne dorste he geneðan þæt he he mid firde gefore, ær he ongan mid Creca scipum þe mon dulmunus hætt, þæt mon sægð þæt on an scip mæge an þusend manna; þa nihtes hi on bestæl, þæt swiþe forslog ðæt fordyde; hwæðere ne mehte þæs londes benæman. On þæm dagum þær wæron twa cwena, þæt wæron gesweostor, Anthiopa þæt wæron gefangen. æfter hiere feng to þæm rice Pentesilia, sio on þæm Trojaniscan gefeohwe swiþe mære geweard.

Hit is scondlic, cweð Orosius, ymb swelc to sprecanne hwelc hit þa wæs, þa swa earme wif þæs elðeodge hæfdon gegan þone cræftgestan dæl þa hwatestan men ealles bises middangeardes, þæt wæs Asiam þæt wæs Europe, þa hit forneah mid ealle aweston, ealda ceastra þæt eald þær hire byrig to wearpon. æfter þæm hie dydon þæt hie dydon ægþer ge cyninga ricu settan ge niwu ceastra timbredon, ealle þa worold on hiora agen gewill onwendende wæron folneah ceastra on þæm hie dydon ægþer ge ðæt hie mid ealle ceastra mid ealle byrig to wearpon. ac siþpan Crist geboren wæs, æt ealles middangeardes is sibb þæt hie mid ealle cæra mid feo of þæt hie mid ðæt hie mid ealle ceastra mid ealle byrig to wearpon.
Appendix D

Riddles

The Exeter Book contains several riddles, poems such as The Seafarer, Wulf and Eadwacer (see Appendix E), Deor, The Wanderer (see Appendix F), and religious poems. The language of Riddle 8 is not difficult and some of the endings are provided in the gloss. Review Section 6 above before tackling it. Riddle 7 is more difficult Old English, but fun. Try to guess the answers (given in Appendix I, question 10). First, a facsimile of the manuscript is given and then the transcription, and translations:

Figure 4.7. A facsimile of Riddles 7 and 8, reprinted with kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter
Riddle eight


Mackie’s (1934) translation: I speak from my mouth with many voices sing with modulated notes, often change my speech, call out loudly keep to my custom, do not refrain from sound. An old evening poet, I bring to men bliss in the cities. When I cry out in a voice of varying pitch, they sit quiet in their dwellings listening. Say what I am called, who, like a woman jester, loudly mimic the habits of a buffoon, and announce with my voice many welcome things to men.

Riddle seven

Word-by-word translation: clothes my are-silent then I earth tread or then dwelling occupy or sea float sometimes me raises over men’s dwellings ornament mine and this high air and me then wide cloud strong over people bears treasures my sound loud and sing clear sing then I resting not am water and earth going creature

Mackie’s (1934) translation: My clothing is silent, when I tread on the ground, or live in the dwellings, or swim on the waters. Sometimes my trappings and this high air raise me above the abodes of men, and the strong wind then bears me far over the people. My garments loudly sound and make melody, sing clearly, when, a wandering living creature I do not touch water or land.

Appendix E

Wulf and Eadwacer

This poem, also from the Exeter Book, is very difficult. This has resulted in many very different translations, one of which will be given together with the beginning of another. The Old English version is followed by a word-by-word one (where some indicate endings). An audio is available at www.public.asu.edu/~gelderens/AUDIO.htm, and a glossary and background to the poem is available at www.wmich.edu/medieval/research/rawl/wulf. Figure 4.7 is a facsimile.
Leodum is minum swylce him mon lac gife
willað hy hine aþecgan gif he on þreat cymeð
ungelic is us
wulf is on iege ic on oþerre
fæst is þæt egland fenne biworpen
sindon wælreowe weras þær on ige
willað hy hine aþecgan gif he on þreat cymeð
ungelic is us
wulfes ic mines widlastum wenum dogode
þonne hit wæs renig weder ond ic reotugu sæt
þonne mec se beaducafa bogum bilegde
waes me wyn to þon wæs me hwæpre eac lað
wulf min wulf wena me þine
seoco gedydon þine seldcymas
murnende mod nalles meteliste
gehyrest þu eadwacer uncerne ear[g]ne hwelp
bireð wulf to wuda
þæt mon eaþe tosliteþ þætte næfre gesomnad wæs
uncer giedd geador (from Mackie 1934)

people-DAT is my-DAT such him man warning/gift give-SUBJ
will-3P they him receive if he in danger come-3S
different is us-DAT
wulf is on island I on other
closely is that island fen(=swamp) surrounded
are fierce men there on island
will-3P they receive him if he in danger come-3S
different is us
wulf-GEN I my-GEN far-wandering hopes suffered
then it was rainy weather and I red-eyed sat
then me the warrior-bold arms-DAT laid-on
was my joy to that was me however also loath
wulf my wulf hopes me your
sick made your seldom-appearing
mourning heart not food-wanting
hear-2S you Eadwacer our-ACC wretched-ACC whelp
bear-3S wulf to wood
that man easily tear-apart-3S that never together was
our song together
Mackie (1934: 87) has the following rendition:

It is to my people as if one were to make them gifts.
They will destroy him if he comes to their troop.
Our lots are different.
Wulf is on an island, I on another.
That island is a fastness surrounded by a fen.
Savage men are there on the island.
They will destroy him if he comes to their troop.
Our lots are different.
I suffered from far-wandering hopes of my Wulf.
It was rainy weather and I sat weeping
when the man brave in battle gave me shelter.
I was so far glad but it was also hateful to me.
Wulf, my Wulf, it was my hopes of thee,
thy constant absence and my mourning heart,
that made me sick — not from lack of food.
Dost thou hear Eadwacer? Our wretched cub
Wulf will bear to the forest.
What never was united is easily torn asunder-
our song together.

Alexander (1966) starts as follows:

The men of my tribe would treat him as game
if he comes to the camp they will kill him outright
Our fate is forked.
Figure 4.8. A facsimile of *Wulf and Eadwacer*, reprinted with kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter
Appendix F

The Wanderer

This poem is also from the Exeter Book. A nice online edition is available at www.aimsdata.com/tim/anhaga/WandererMain.htm. It has been transcribed as it appears in the manuscript, but the entire poem is not given. The audio is available at www.wwnorton.com/nael/noa/audio.htm and a facsimile is provided in Figure 4.9:

\[
\text{Oft him anhaga are gebideð m etudes miltse þeahþe}
\]
\[
\text{he mod cearig geond lagu lade longe sceolde hreran}
\]
\[
\text{mid hondum hrim cealde sæ wadan wræc lastas wyrd}
\]
\[
\text{bið ful ared . Swa cwæð eard stapa earfēpa gemyndig}
\]
\[
\text{ana uhtna gehwylce mine ceare cwipan nisnu cwic|ra}
\]


Often the solitary dweller waits for favour.
the mercy of the creator, although he, troubles in heart,
has for a long time, across the sea-ways, had
to stir with his hands the ice-cold sea,
travel the paths of an exile; fate is fully determined.
Thus spoke the wanderer, mindful of troubles,
of cruel battles, of the fall of kinsmen.
Often, alone at each dawn, I have had
to lament my sorrow; now there is noone alive
to whom I dare openly reveal my thoughts.
Figure 4.9. Facsimile of the *Wanderer*, reprinted with kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter
Chapter 5

From Old to Middle English

In this chapter, we explore the most dramatic change in the English language — the transition from Old to Middle English. This transition involves external and internal changes: a substantial portion of the (Germanic) Old English vocabulary is replaced by French and Latin words and the endings on nouns, verbs, and adjectives disappear. The latter is possibly the result of contact with Scandinavian and Celtic languages during the Old English period. This chapter investigates the changes between Old and Middle English caused by direct external influence; Chapter 6 describes the language internal changes.

In Chapter 1, we briefly discussed the influence of different languages on English; here we consider this topic in more detail. Each of the languages discussed influenced English during a specific time (French at the end of the Old English and the beginning of the Middle English period) and in a unique way (influence on the vocabulary vs. influence on the grammar, for example). In Section 1, we discuss the Celtic influence on (Old) Germanic, Old English, and later English. Section 2 explores the Latin influence up to the end of the Middle English period (we will discuss subsequent periods later). Section 3 presents evidence for extensive Scandinavian influence during the Old English period. In Section 4, the influx of French words after 1066 is discussed. Section 5 considers Dutch and Flemish influences and compares the influence of the different languages. In Section 6, we examine the results of all the borrowing. Section 7 briefly assesses the scholarly views on the impact of loans on English.

1. Celtic loans

Celtic is the name of a group of Indo-European languages spoken by people who lived throughout Europe, including the British Isles. Even though the Roman Empire had control of many Celtic and some Germanic areas, Latin was not the only language spoken. Even after Julius Caesar invaded the British Isles in 50 BCE (see http://www.yorksj.ac.uk/dialect/celtset.htm), Celtic continued to be spoken there. After 450 CE, Germanic speakers settled, but Celtic still continued to be spoken.

The Celtic languages influence English in three phases. The first phase involves loans into Germanic (and other languages) on the continent. The second one covers adoptions into Old English (both before and after the introduction of Christianity). The third phase
involves the influence of the Celtic languages after the Old English period. We will discuss the first two phases in more detail; the third phase is mentioned here for general information only, since it does not relate to Old English.

Regarding the first phase, there is a great deal of archeological evidence of Celtic presence in Europe. There is Celtic influence on Latin and Germanic on the continent: Latin may have borrowed *carrus* ‘wagon’, *lancia* ‘lance’, and names such as *Rhine, Danube, Armagnac*, and *Cognac*. These words end up in Germanic as well, but we do not know if they come via Latin or directly from Celtic. Words such as *dun* ‘hill’ are present in both Celtic and Germanic and may have been borrowed from Celtic into Germanic. This makes the situation very complex. For instance, a word such as *beak*, first attested in English in the 13th century, has its origin in Old Celtic *bacc* (* indicates it is a reconstructed word); it comes into English via French which borrowed it from Celtic in what is now France. Look up the origin of *gown* in the OED; it is similarly complex.

Evidence of contacts between Old English and Celtic during the second phase is provided by certain words: *walh* means ‘foreigner’ in Old English (or ‘serf’) and there are many places named *Waldon, Walden, Walton* and, of course, *Wales*. These would have been places where the Celts lived (see Gelling 1978: 93–5). During this phase, the borrowings from Celtic by Latin and Germanic speakers in Britain are mostly place names. In Celtic, many of these are common nouns: *afon* is ‘river’ and *dwr* is ‘water’; when adopted, however, they become proper nouns — the rivers named *Avon* and the place names *Dover* and *Dorchester*. Similarly, *Cardiff, Belfast, Kent, Thames*, and *London* all derive from Celtic. These borrowings show occasional awareness of the syntax of Celtic. For instance, the name for *Dover* is originally *Dofras* in Old English since the original Celtic *Dubris* had also been plural. Landscape terms are borrowed frequently as well: *cairn* ‘heap of stones’, *glen* ‘valley’, *lach* ‘lake’, *torr* ‘rock’ or ‘peak’, *dolmen* ‘rock’, *bar* ‘top’, *bre* ‘hill’, *llyn* ‘lake’, and *cumb* ‘deep valley’. There must have been others such as *puck* ‘an evil spirit’, which first appears in Old English, from Celtic *puca* (the game *poker* and the name *Puck* in Shakespeare’s *Mid Summer Night’s Dream* may derive from *puck*). Some of these borrowings, such as *luh* ‘lake’, are only found in Northumbrian; others, such as *cumb* ‘valley’, are more common in West Saxon. During the 7th century, the northern part of England is christianized (see http://www.isle-of-iona.com) by Irish missionaries, who introduce some Celtic into Old English. Words such as *dry* ‘magician’ come from *druid* (Old English *drycræft* is magic); *anchor* ‘hermit’, *story, cross*, and *curse* probably enter through Irish during this period as well.

There is currently a lively debate about how much invisible influence Celtic may have had during this second period. See, for instance, *The Celtic Roots of English* which appeared in 2002, and White (2002) in it. The characteristics of the English of the North, some of which we ascribe to Scandinavian contact, have also been ascribed to contact with Celtic. Western English is considered to have been influenced by Celtic as well in syntax and morphology, but this is an area that has only recently gotten more attention.
There is a third, more recent, period of Celtic influence, covering the loans after the Germanic and Old English periods. By using the OED’s advanced search and searching for Celtic etymologies, we find more loans, even though the phrase ‘Celtic origin is out of the question’ appears frequently, as in the case of basket, bachelor, and baron. Some clear borrowings are clan, first appearing in 1425 according to the OED; bard in 1450; plaid in 1512; slogan in 1513; shamrock in 1571; leprechaun in 1604; galore in 1675; and whisky in 1715. Vassal first appears in Middle English through French but is of Celtic origin. Banshee comes from Irish more recently (first listed in the OED in 1771). Table 5.1 lists the Modern English forms of a few words borrowed from Celtic into English.

Table 5.1. Some loans from Celtic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>before 450</th>
<th>450–1400</th>
<th>1400 &gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dun</td>
<td>cairn</td>
<td>story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beak</td>
<td>glen</td>
<td>cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>car</td>
<td>loch</td>
<td>curse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lance</td>
<td>dolmen</td>
<td>anchor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>druid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of these loans are nouns, but Celtic adjectives have been incorporated as well, mainly as parts of place names: mor/maur ‘great’ in Glenmore ‘the great glen’ and Kilmore ‘the great church’. Celtic verbs and prepositions are not borrowed into English, as far as we know, but the use of prepositions to express an ongoing action (e.g. I am on-hunting) may be due to contact with Celtic. As we will see in Chapter 9, Celtic has influenced the grammar of some varieties of Modern English.

2. Latin loans

As the political influence of Rome grew, so did the importance of Latin, and it spread through most of Europe, Britain included. Latin later also became the language of the Roman Catholic Church. As to how Latin arrived in the British Isles, there is an anecdote about Pope Gregory meeting some ‘Angles’ at the slave market in Rome — slavery being wide-spread — and getting the idea to convert the Angles in Britain. To this end, he sent missionaries led by Augustine. The missionaries first appeared in the south of England in 597 and were welcomed by King Æthelbert of Kent (see Bede’s account at www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/bede1.html).

The influence of Latin on Old English is usually divided into several periods (see Campbell 1959): the influence on Germanic on the continent and in Britain, the influence on Old English before the Middle English period, and the influence during the Renaissance. Possibly 170 words are borrowed on the continent, over 100 in Britain before the Romans left Britain in 410, 150 after the introduction of Christianity, and thousands in
the Renaissance period, as we will see in Chapter 7 (see Serjeantson 1935: 271–81). In the current chapter, we will focus on the earlier periods.

Two sound changes that were mentioned in Chapter 4 occurred in the 7th century — vowel fronting and breaking. It is therefore possible to tell when certain words were borrowed into English. The Latin word *uncia* becomes *ynce* ‘inch’ through fronting of the back vowel *u* to *y*. Since the 7th century sound change was applied to it, we know that it was borrowed earlier, i.e. during the continental period. In contrast, *falsus* keeps its *a* unbroken to become *fals*, so it must have been borrowed after the period in which the breaking rule was active. We also know from Chapter 3 that Grimm’s Law separates Latin from (Germanic and) Old English. For instance, Latin [*p, t, k*] become Old English [*f, θ, h*]. *Cycene* ‘kitchen’ is from Latin *coquina*, and it must have been introduced after Grimm’s Law, since the initial [*k*] did not become [*h*]. Most of the time, we date loan words by looking them up in the OED, but the OED may in fact not list the earliest instance. We can now also examine the electronic set of Old English texts to determine the date of loan words.

Latin is also a source of loan translations: *unicornus* ‘one-horn’ is translated into Old English *anhorn* ‘one-horn’, but speakers return to the Latin loan in Modern English and borrow *unicorn*. Two other such reversions are the Old English loan translations *prines* ‘three-ness’ and *daelnimend* ‘part-taking’, translated from the Latin *trinitas* ‘the state of being threefold’ and *participium* ‘part-taking’. After Old English, *trinity* and *participle* appear as direct borrowing from Latin (possibly through Old French).

Place names such as *Manchester, Winchester, Colchester, Rochester* and *Lancaster* incorporate Latin *castra* ‘camp, walled town’. This word was *caster* in Old English but then palatalized to *chester*, especially in the South. Many of these are combinations of a Celtic or pre-Celtic root with *-caster* or *-chester*, e.g. *Lancaster* derives from the Celtic name for the river running through it *Lune*. Other Latin-influenced place names are: *Portsmouth* incorporating *portus* ‘port; gate’ and *Stratford* based on *strata* ‘street’.

Most of the loans into Old Germanic, Old English, and Middle English are incorporated by changing the Latin word to sound like a Germanic or English one. After the Middle English period, loans are often introduced into the language without modifying the Latin sounds (except for a few consonants). Early loans also come to us from ‘Vulgar Latin’, a spoken variety of Latin, whereas later loans derive from Classical Latin (see Campbell 1959: 214). Many times, the same word is borrowed twice. For instance, *magister* is borrowed in Old English and becomes *master* in Middle English; it is then borrowed again as *magister* around 1450 (1459 according to the OED). The same is true of *prune*. Old English probably adapted the Latin *pruna* to *plum*, and Middle English borrowed (via French) the word *prune*; now we have both words with slight meaning differences.

The words borrowed from Latin before 450 and during Old English are commercial, military, religious, and cultural terms, as the small selection of Old English forms (with their modern glosses) in Table 5.2 shows, and they are nouns, verbs, and adjectives.

Most of these early loans are inflected as if they were Old or Middle English words. Their sound is also adapted and no longer recognizable as Latin. They are incorporated
as English words. For instance, all borrowed verbs become weak verbs and the gender of the Latin nouns is sometimes kept but sometimes changed to masculine (Campbell 1959: 208). In Chapter 7, we will discuss the post-Middle English loans from Latin, which are quite different in nature.

3. Scandinavian influence

In the 8th century, people in present-day Sweden, Norway, and Denmark began to leave their homes and settle in other parts of Europe. Swedes spread eastward towards Russia, Norwegians went to Iceland and the western parts of the British Isles, and Danes went to France (Normandy) and Eastern England. The Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, and Icelandic languages of that period are referred to here as Scandinavian or Old Norse (ON). These languages were closely related but there were some differences; their speakers also settled in different parts of the British Isles thus influencing different dialects of English. Wakelin (1972: 20) provides the map in Figure 5.1 (see also http://www.yorksj.ac.uk/dialect/Scanset.htm or http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/grumps/vikings.html#map2).

It is important to note that Old English and the Scandinavian languages have many (very basic) words in common: man, wife, folk, winter, and summer. This might have made communication between the two groups easy. When examining the influence of the invasions and settlements by the Scandinavians, we notice that both the vocabulary and the grammar of Old English are affected. Old English and Scandinavian are similar but a number of changes that had taken place in Old English had not happened in Old Norse and vice versa. This makes it possible for Old English to borrow the same words twice in a different form.

One change that sets Old English apart from Old Norse is palatalization, discussed in Chapter 4 (Section 2). Scandinavian words did not undergo palatalization, which made it possible to ‘recycle’ them, i.e. have the palatalized Old English word and then borrow the non-palatalized one. As a result, Modern English has both shirt and skirt; ship and skipper;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.2. Some early loans from Latin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>candel ‘candle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circul ‘circle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>synoð ‘synod’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fefer ‘fever’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preost ‘priest’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pipor ‘pepper’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wall ‘wall’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stræt ‘street’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turnian ‘to turn’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sicor ‘secure’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predician ‘to preach’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and *shatter* and *scatter*. We can now return to the question posed in Chapter 4 as to why non-palatalized *skirt* and *egg* are still around in Modern English. In most cases, one word ‘wins’: in the case of *egg*, *sky*, *skin*, and *skill*, the Scandinavian form ends up being used, and in the case of *shall* and *fish*, the Old English one. In the case of *shirt/skirt*, however, both forms are used, but with more specialized, narrower meanings.

There are Scandinavian loans that cause a **meaning shift** in the original (see Jespersen 1938: 64–5). For instance, *gift* originally meant ‘payment for a wife’ but the Old Norse had shifted (even though *gifta sig* in Swedish still means ‘to marry’) and caused the change in the modern meaning; *dream* means ‘joy’ in Old English, but becomes ‘vision in sleep’ in Middle English; *plow* means ‘measure of land’ in Old English but becomes *plow* in Modern English. Other shifts in meaning due to new Scandinavian words can be seen in the following pairs which originally had similar meanings (the English word is the second one in the pair): *die* and *starve*; *skill* and *craft*; *skin* and *hide*; and *ill* and *sick*. In Modern English, some of these have a narrower meaning. Words are also lost: Old
English weorpan, irre, and niman are lost and replaced by Scandinavian cast, anger, and take, respectively.

The influence of Scandinavian on the vocabulary of English is substantial, and a selection is provided in Figure 5.4 in Modern English form (partly taken from an OED etymology search using [a. ON] meaning ‘adopted from Old Norse’).

Table 5.4. Some loans from Scandinavian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Scandinavian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anger, bait, brink, call, carp, clamber, egg, get, give, guess, ill, kilt, meek, mistake, nag, odd, ransack, rift, rot, ripple, rugged, scold (via skald ‘poet’), scrape, seem, scrub, sister, skill, sky, snub, take, till, want, wand, weak, window, wrong.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that a number of them are verbs and adjectives, unlike the typical Celtic loan. Some estimate the number of Scandinavian loans to be 1,000 (Minkova 2005ab). For information on the division of the Scandinavian influence into several periods, see Serjeantson (1935).

It is possible to see the Scandinavian influence by looking at a map and counting Scandinavian place names. Some estimate the number of loans to be higher than 1,400.

As mentioned above, the northwest is mainly influenced by Norwegians and the northeast by Danes. During the time of King Alfred, the Danes wanted to spread to the South as well, which led to clashes and the division of England into a ‘Danelaw’ (in 878 after the Battle of Ethandun) and an Anglo-Saxon part. The map in Figure 5.1 shows the linguistic dividing line between the Danes and the Anglo-Saxons. Place names ending in -by ‘abode, village’, such as Rugby, Derby and Whitby, are common for Scandinavian settlements; -toft ‘homestead’ and -thorpe ‘village’ are Danish; -thwaite ‘field’ is Norwegian. Place names are also sometimes Scandinavianized: the palatalized Ashford becomes Askeford with a non-palatalized [k] (see Townend 2002).

In contrast, common Old English place names end in -borough ‘fortified place’ and -ham, -ing, -stow, -sted, -(h)all, wic, and -ton, all meaning ‘place’ or ‘village’. Table 5.5 lists these endings.

Table 5.5. Place names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>Danish</th>
<th>Old English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-by, -thwaite</td>
<td>-by, -thwaite</td>
<td>-by, -toft, -thorpe</td>
<td>-borough, -ham, -ing, -stow, -sted, -hall, -wic, -ton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some place names are provided in (1). Explore what they mean and think of other place names. If you can, look on the map of England to see where these places are located:

(1) Applethwaite, Althorpe, Eastoft, Nottingham, Buckingham, Hamstead, Stanstead, Brighton, and Reading.

Unlike Celtic and Latin, Scandinavian affected Old English grammar, not just its vocabulary. For instance, the appearance of the third person plural they, them, and their is due to Scandinavian contact. In Old English, the third person pronouns are hi, hie, hiera, hem, etc. (see Table 4.8 of Chapter 4); they are replaced in Middle English by they, their, and them with an initial th-. This shift starts in the north (as we can see from northern texts) and slowly spreads to the south. Grammatical words such as pronouns and prepositions are typically very stable in language history and this development is therefore unexpected. It shows that the influence of Scandinavian was quite strong.

**Endings on verbs, nouns, and adjectives** also start to simplify in the north, as shown in Table 5.6 for present tense verbs. This is most likely due to contact with Scandinavian.

### Table 5.6. Leveling of present tense verbal inflections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ME Northern</th>
<th>ME Midlands</th>
<th>ME Southern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ic nerie</td>
<td>ic nerie</td>
<td>ic nerie</td>
<td>ic nerie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu nerie</td>
<td>þu neries</td>
<td>þu neries(t)</td>
<td>þu neriest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/o nereð</td>
<td>s/he neries</td>
<td>he nerieþ/es</td>
<td>s/he nereð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we neriað</td>
<td>we neries</td>
<td>we neren/es</td>
<td>we nerieþ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ge neriað</td>
<td>ge neries</td>
<td>ge neren/es</td>
<td>ge nerieþ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hie neriað</td>
<td>thei neries</td>
<td>hie neren/es</td>
<td>hie nerieþ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In London, -s is not used until the 15th century, but in Northumbria, it starts being used in the 10th century. Chaucer has -þ, except where he portrays northerners, as in (2), where fares has an -s:

(2) Alain spake first: “All hail Simond in faith.
    How fares thy faire doughter and thy wif?”
    (Chaucer, *The Reeve’s Tale* 102–112)

As we will see in Chapter 6, the form spake is northern as well.

Other influences on the grammar consist of the introduction of till, as in (3), the infinitival marker at, as in (4), and the present participle ending in -and, as in (5): Old English has -end or -ind, and Modern English has -ing:

(3) *til hi iafen up here castles*
    ‘till they gave up their castles’ (*PC*, anno 1137).

(4) *þis ilk bok is es translate …*
    *For the commun at understand*
Chapter 5. From Old to Middle English

‘This book has been translated for the common people to understand’ (Cursor Mundi, 232; 236).

(5) Contemplatyfe lyfe es mykel inwarde, and forþi it es lastandar and sykerar
‘The contemplative life is much inward and therefore it is more-lasting and more-secure’ (Richard Rolle).

Note the lack of palatalization in mykel ‘much’ in (5), showing that the text is northern. In short, Scandinavian influence is strong on all levels.

4. French influence

In Chapter 1, we briefly mentioned the Battle of Hastings and in Appendix A of Chapter 4, the year 1066 is described from a contemporary point of view. Here we focus on the linguistic impact of French on English. Borrowing from French into Old and Middle English occurs in two phases: 1066–1250 and 1250–1500. In the first phase, fewer than 1,000 words are borrowed (Jespersen 1938: 87; Baugh & Cable 2002: 168). Words such as baron, servant, messenger, and story are borrowed at this time.

In the second phase, French speakers adopt English. As we know from contemporary situations (e.g. Spanish-speaking, German, and Dutch immigrants in the US), it is difficult for immigrants to keep their native language alive beyond the second or third generation. During this second period, the influence of French on Middle English is strongest because the French speakers are adding French words to the English they are acquiring. Some estimate the total number of loans in this period to be 10,000. The words borrowed are nouns, verbs, adjectives, and a few adverbs.

Some words borrowed from or via French between 1066 and 1500 are listed in Table 5.7; they are terms used in (a) government, (b) law, (c) learning, (d) art and fashion, (e) food, and (f) religion (see Baugh & Cable 2002: 169–173; Nielsen 2005: 101–5 for many more).

Table 5.7. French loans

| a. government, royal, state, authority, prince, duke, duchess, tax, marshal, mayor, governor, warden, treasurer |
| b. judge, jury, felon, bail, estate, evidence, verdict, punish, crime |
| c. study, anatomy, geometry, grammar, logic, medicine, square |
| d. art, sculpture, music, painting, color, figure, image, poet, title, preface, fashion, dress, lace, garment, veil, button, couch, chair, cushion |
| e. dinner, supper, feast, appetite, taste, salmon, mackerel, beef, veal, mutton, pork, pastry, lemon, orange, raisin, date |
| f. temptation, damnation, salvation, confess, convert, ordain, baptism, communion, mercy, sanctity, charity, solemn, divine, devout |
Less specialized words are also borrowed at this time: nouns such as *action*, *adventure*, *age*, *coward*, *damage*, *scandal*, *tavern*, and *vision*; adjectives such as *able*, *abundant*, *active*, *certain*, *common*, *firm*, *frank*, *proper*, *safe*, and *sudden*; and verbs such as *advise*, *aim*, *allow*, *apply*, *arrive*, *close*, *enjoy*, *enter*, *form*, *join*, *marry*, *move*, *praise*, *prefer*, *refuse*, *save*, *serve*, and *wait* (see Baugh & Cable 2002).

As mentioned earlier, prefixes and suffixes that build words are called derivational. These are not borrowed directly but as parts of French (and Latin) words, such as the ones listed in (6):

(6) majority, inferiority, envious, glorious, religious, advantageous, hideous, dangerous, labor (or labour), rigor (or rigour), honor (or honour)

Many of the prefixes and suffixes avoid originally English words, except as jokes, as shown in (7):

(7) happi-ous, between-ity, woman-ity, youthfull-ity (the last three from the OED)

There are, however, some hybrids — French (or Latin, i.e. Romance) prefixes and suffixes attached to English words and vice versa. These occur after a word with a prefix or suffix has been borrowed. Examples of hybrids are given in (8) and (9): *en-dear-ment*, for example, is from the English root *dear* with a Romance prefix *-en* (note that French *en-* derives from Latin *in*-) and a Romance suffix *-ment*:

(8) hindrance, endearment, disbelief, rekindle, overrate, overvalue, rudely, oddity

(9) immenseness, martyrdom, apprenticeship, useless, quarrelsome, grateful
(all taken from Morris 1882: 40)

Since hybrids are rare, Dalton-Puffer (1996: 222) comes to the conclusion that the influence of French on the morphology was not very deep.

Note that the *-o(u)r* suffix, borrowed from French, originally derives from the Latin words *labor-* and *honor-*. The first time they appear in Middle English, they are spelled *labur* and *honour/honir*. British English adopts *-our* and American English *-or*. French settles on *-eur* and words such as *grandeur*, *amateur*, *connoisseur*, *chauffeur*, and *masseur* are thus later borrowings.

The influence of French on the grammar of English is not profound. However, the relative *wh-*pronoun may be the result of French influence. Old English has relatives with a demonstrative, such as *se(o) þe*, or with *þe* or *þat*. In Middle English, *þat* becomes the most common one. However, probably because French has the same forms for interrogatives and relatives, e.g. *qui*, certain English styles, especially in letters such as (10), adopt *wh-*pronouns as relatives too:

(10) *be the grace of God, who haue yow in kepyng*
You might ask if the French of the 12th and 13th centuries that influenced English is similar to present-day French. The answer is that it is not. This makes it possible for a loan from the 12th century to be unrecognizable in the 15th and borrowed again. There are two reasons the French of William the Conqueror was different. First, it was Norman French, different from that of Paris, which later became standard French. Second, it was Old French, which is quite different from Modern French.

Norman French retains a [k] sound before [a], as the initial sound in cachier shows. This word is borrowed from Norman French into English as catch. The [k] palatalizes to [tʃ] in Parisian or Central French, as the initial sound of the borrowed chase shows. Thus, catch and chase derive from the same word but are borrowed at different times. In English, the first instance of catch appears in 1250 and of chase in 1314, so the Norman variant is first. The word for cattle is catel in Norman French (with an initial [k]), but chatel in Parisian French (palatalized). In this case, the latter occurs earlier in English: chat(t)el meaning ‘property of goods’ is first used in 1225, whereas cattle with that same meaning is first used in the late 13th century. A similar set is lance/launch.

Like [k], [g] in Norman French does not palatalize (before certain vowels), hence words such as gaol; however, in other varieties of French it does palatalize, resulting in spellings such as jaiole. This is where the jail/gaol difference in English comes from. Notice also the difference between English garden and Modern French jardin. This is evidence that English borrowed the Norman word.

Central French has [g] where Norman French has [w]. The [w] is the original and mostly borrowed from Germanic (Nielsen 2005: 106): warranty and reward are borrowed in 1225 and 1315, respectively, but Parisian guarantee and regard in 1679 and 1380, respectively (according to the OED). Other such pairs are warden and guardian, wardrobe and garderobe.

Another difference between Norman and Central French during the medieval period is the change in the latter from ei [e] to oi [ɔi]. Pairs showing this difference are veil-voile and display-deploy. The first member of the set is borrowed earlier than the second.

Old French differs from Modern French in a number of ways. For instance, the s in Old French words such as hostel, feste, beste, hospital, and forest is dropped in Modern French; all that is left is a marker on the preceding vowel: hôtel, fête, bête, hôpital, and forêt. This makes it possible for English to first borrow hostel and later hotel and have two slightly different words. Readers who know French will notice other differences: English judge, change, chair, and gentle are pronounced with initial affricates whereas the related words have fricatives in Modern French.

The earlier a word is borrowed into English, the less recognizable it is as a loan. Later French loans, after 1800, are fairly recognizable as ‘foreign’ and some uses sound pedantic because of this. Instances of unincorporated loans are chaise longue, savoir faire, joie de vivre, and façon de parler. There are, however, some later loans that are fully adapted: tourism, restaurant, resume, and ambulance; if we did not have the OED, we might think they were borrowed earlier than they actually are.
5. Other languages

There are, even in this early period, other languages that influence English. There is trade (and wars) with the rest of Europe, resulting in contact with Dutch, German, Italian, and Spanish. Early on, Jewish settlers from France and Germany came to England but were expelled in 1290. In the later Middle Ages, Spain rules large parts of Europe and persecutes certain religious groups (during the reigns of Henry V and Philip II); this results in moves to England, which was not part of the Spanish Empire.

In cities such as Norwich in East Anglia, a third of the population was foreign, mainly Dutch and Flemish, attracted by the wool trade. Fifteenth century borrowings from Dutch are given in (11a), while sixteenth through eighteenth century ones are listed in (11b), all according to the OED:

(11) a. hop(s) (1440), pickle (1440), deck (1466), buoy (1466), freight (1463), dock (1486 in its nautical use)
   b. splice (1524), dollar (1553), yacht (1557), furlough (1625), easel (1634),
      brandy (1652), sketch (1668), smuggle (1687), gin (1714)

There may have been some influence on the grammar as well, as Trudgill (1974; 1999) points out. The overall influence is minimal, however.

Table 5.8 summarizes the impact of the different languages on Old and Middle English.

Table 5.8. Influence of different languages on OE and ME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Morphology</th>
<th>Syntax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Celtic</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>possibly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>somewhat</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavian</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>very much</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch/Flemish</td>
<td>minimal</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having provided examples of outside influences on Old and Middle English, we will turn to examining the results of the borrowings in Section 6.

6. The result: a lexicon of multiple origins

As mentioned in Chapter 1, speakers of English can choose between pavement deficiencies and potholes, between perspire and sweat, and between stench and aroma to describe the same concepts. Sometimes, we have three possibilities, as in fast, firm and secure. This chapter has shown in some detail how we came to have multiple vocabulary items. We discussed Celtic, Scandinavian, Latin, and French influences. Loans from Celtic, Latin before the Renaissance, and Scandinavian have a more incorporated ‘feel’ to them.
Stockwell & Minkova (2001) provide excellent further background to the origins of our words and morphemes. The multiple words make English difficult to learn, but also make it varied and versatile. We will also look at some other ways to make English (as well as other languages) obscure.

In Chapter 1, we looked at a text in which almost half the words are borrowed from French and Latin. Non-academic texts, such as fiction or poetry, have fewer loans. Try to guess which words in (12) are borrowed and estimate the percentage. Do the same with the poems in (13) and discuss the difference in the effect. There are some clues, for instance, words starting in *ph*- are typically borrowed from Greek (often through Latin), very long words are often Renaissance loans, words with an initial *v*- or *z*- are borrowed, as are words with the vowel *oi*:

(12) The phrase and the day and the scene harmonised in a chord. Words. Was it their colours? He allowed them to glow and fade, hue after hue: sunrise gold, the russet and green of apple orchards, azure of waves, the greyfringed fleece of clouds. No, it was not their colours: it was the poise and balance of the period itself. Did he then love the rhythmic rise and fall of words better than their associations of legend and colour? Or was it that, being as weak of sight as he was shy of mind, he drew less pleasure from the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language many coloured and richly storied than from the contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions mirrored perfectly in a lucid supple periodic prose? From: James Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

(13) a. A word is dead
    When it is said,
    Some say.
    I say it just
    Begins to live
    That day.

    b. Fire and Ice
    Some say the world will end in fire,
    Some say in ice.
    From what I’ve tasted of desire
    I hold with those who favor fire.
    But if it had to perish twice,
    I think I know enough of hate
    To say that for destruction ice
    Is also great
    And would suffice.

Poems by Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost

As you can see if you tabulate the results (or check the numbers in Appendix 1), for poetry the percentages are very low (often around 10% or less). In prose, that percentage is a little higher, and in academic texts, it is highest (one of my academic texts ended up 45% Latinate).

By using loan words, we can not only make our writing sound more formal but we can also confuse our readers and listeners. Francis Bacon described this in 1605 in his *The
Advancement of Learning as “for men began to hunt more after words than matter.” George Orwell puts it as follows in his often cited essay “Politics and the English Language” (1947):

(14) Modern English, especially written English, is full of bad habits which spread by imitation and which can be avoided if one is willing to take the necessary trouble. If one gets rid of these habits one can think more clearly, and to think clearly is a necessary first step towards political regeneration: so that the fight against bad English is not frivolous and is not the exclusive concern of professional writers.

Orwell then quotes five passages he considers ‘bad’ writing, each for a different reason:

(15) (1) I am not, indeed, sure, whether it is not true to say that the Milton who once seemed not unlike a seventeenth-century Shelley had not become, out of an experience ever more bitter in each year, more alien [sic] to the founder of that Jesuit sect which nothing could induce him to tolerate. Professor Harold Laski (essay in Freedom of Expression)
(2) Above all, we cannot play ducks and drakes with a native battery of idioms which prescribes such egregious collocations of vocables as the basic put up with for tolerate or put at a loss for bewilder. Professor Lancelot Hogben (Interglossa)
(3) On the one side we have the free personality: by definition it is not neurotic, for it has neither conflict nor dream. Its desires, such as they are, are transparent, for they are just what institutional approval keeps in the forefront of consciousness; another institutional pattern would alter their number and intensity; there is little in them that is natural, irreducible, or culturally dangerous. But on the other side, the social bond itself is nothing but the mutual reflection of these self-secure integrities. Recall the definition of love. Is not this the very picture of a small academic? Where is there a place in this hall of mirrors for either personality or fraternity? Essay on psychology in Politics (New York)
(4) All the ‘best people’ from the gentlemen’s clubs, and all the frantic fascist captains, united in common hatred of Socialism and bestial horror of the rising tide of the mass revolutionary movement, have turned to acts of provocation, to foul incendiarism, to medieval legends of poisoned wells, to legalize their own destruction of proletarian organizations, and rouse the agitated petty-bourgeoisie to chauvinistic fervor on behalf of the fight against the revolutionary way out of the crisis. Communist pamphlet.
(5) If a new spirit is to be infused into this old country, there is one thorny and contentious reform which must be tackled, and that is the humanization and galvanization of the B.B.C. Timidity here will bespeak cancer and atrophy of the soul. The heart of Britain may be sound and of strong beat, for instance, but the British lion’s roar at present is like that of Bottom in Shakespeare’s Midsummer Night’s Dream — as gentle as any sucking dove. A virile new Britain cannot
continue indefinitely to be traduced in the eyes or rather ears, of the world by the effete languors of Langham Place, brazenly masquerading as 'standard English.' When the Voice of Britain is heard at nine o'clock, better far and infinitely less ludicrous to hear aitches honestly dropped than the present priggish, inflated, inhibited, school-ma'amish arch braying of blameless bashful mewing maidens! Letter in Tribune.

He concludes by providing suggestions; a few of those relevant to vocabulary are listed in (16):

(16) Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
Never use a long word where a short one will do.
If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.

Note the number of loans in (14), however (e.g. especially, habit, imitation, avoided, necessary and trouble). Orwell does not worry about splitting infinitives, as in to boldly go, or stranding prepositions, as in who did I talk to, being instances of ‘bad’ English. Instead, he expresses concerns very similar to those of Noam Chomsky in his political writings. We need to make sure we continue to think for ourselves and not let the media and government deceive us by using words such as pavement deficiencies and surgical strikes. Chomsky calls this Orwell's problem: how come we know so little given that we have so much evidence? The answer is that we let ourselves be deceived.

Some people argue even more radically that we should go back to simple words. The 19th century (British) poet G.M. Hopkins is famous for opposing Latinate vocabulary:

It makes one weep to think what English might have been; for in spite of all that Shakespeare and Milton have done with the compound I cannot doubt that no beauty in a language can make up for want of purity. In fact I am learning Anglosaxon and it is a vastly superior thing to what we have now (from Bailey 1991: 246).

Charles Ogden suggests in his 1930 Basic English that we can get by with 850 basic words. He even established an institute to teach basic English and use it as an international language (http://ogden.basic-english.com/words.html). Most of Ogden’s basic words derive from Old English. He attempts to get rid of the abundant vocabulary so characteristic of English. As we will see in the next chapter, the debate about ‘native’ vs. invented/borrowed words becomes very lively after the 1500s.

You might ask if native speakers intuitively know whether words are native or not. The answer is yes and no. Unlike in Japanese, where a special script (katakana) is used for foreign/borrowed words (and for Japanese people who have lived abroad), there are no special markers in English. Most people know that certain words are more formal than others. The formal ones are often Latin and French loans, the informal ones of Germanic origin. There are also syntactic and morphological differences. For instance, words deriving from Old English, such as give and tell, behave very differently syntactically from words deriving from French, such as donate and relate. The sentences in (17) illustrate that:
(17) a. She gave a hint to him.
   b. *She donated a hint to him.
   c. She gave him a book.
   d. *She donated the charity some money.

Not only is *donate* more restricted in meaning than *give*, as (17b) shows, *donate* cannot have two nominal objects, as (17d) illustrates, even with `donatable' objects such as *some money*.

There are at least two other phenomena that are sensitive to word origin. First, as mentioned above, many prefixes and suffixes maintain a preference for being attached to a word whose origin is similar to theirs. Secondly, subjunctives in Modern English most often occur after French loans (see Bahtchevanova 2005), as in (18) and (19), with the French loan in bold:

(18) It is *important* that she go there.
(19) They *suggested* he not do that.

These examples show that we have some sense for the difference, but that sense is not absolute.

Section 6 has shown what the effects of all the borrowings are on Modern English. We will now briefly discuss the nature of the influence.

7. Implications for the status of Middle English

In this section, we will examine two issues. First, we will discuss the claim, made by a number of scholars, that Middle English is a *creole*. Secondly, we will discuss a model for measuring the influence of one language on another.

In Chapter 9, we will study pidgins and creoles in more detail. A pidgin is a language that comes into being when speakers of different languages need to communicate. It is fairly limited in grammar and vocabulary. A creole is a fully functional language acquired by children. It originates in situations of extreme language contact, as on slave plantations. There is a debate as to whether or not a pidgin is a necessary first step to the formation of a creole, see e.g. Mufwene (2001) who argues it is not. A number of scholars argue that Middle English is a creole: Domingue (1975), Bailey & Maroldt (1977), and more recently McWhorter (2002). The argument is that, due to French-English contact, a pidgin must have arisen that then developed into a creole with typical creole characteristics: SVO word order and lack of verbal and nominal endings. We will see in the next chapter that Middle English does have these properties. However, it can also be argued that the rapid changes in Middle English are due to the many contacts with other languages but that a pidgin never arose.
Many scholars have proposed ways of measuring the influence of one language on another. As Weinreich (1965: 63) puts it, there is no “easy way of measuring” this. It is, however, common to assume that words are borrowed first, then sounds, and then grammar. Thomason & Kaufman (1988: 74 ff) provide a scale for measuring the effects on a language resulting from contact with another language; their scale is used often even though it might not be the most logical one and has been criticized. We will use this scale, provided in adapted form in Table 5.9, to assess the influence of each of the languages discussed in Sections 1 to 4.

Table 5.9. Thomason & Kaufman’s (1988) scale of influence (adapted and enhanced)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Casual contact: Non-basic content words are borrowed. For instance, ballet, sauerkraut, kosher, and taco.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Slightly more intense contact: Grammatical words (coordinators, complementizers, and adverbial particles) and new sounds in loanwords. For instance, a Mayan language borrowing porke from Spanish porque ‘because.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>More intense contact: Grammatical words (prepositions), derivational affixes (e.g. -ity) may occur on ‘native’ words, pronouns, numerals; phoneme inventory could be affected.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Strong pressure: New distinctive features, new syllable structure, word order changes, borrowed inflectional affixes and cases.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Very strong pressure: radical changes to the typology, such as the change from prefixing to suffixing, different agreement systems. For instance, the introduction of vowel harmony in dialects of Greek under Turkish influence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The influence of Celtic and Latin on English does not seem to extend past level 1. However, as mentioned earlier, Celtic may be more important to the syntax of English than we give generally it credit for. From Latin, English has borrowed the (very specialized) prepositions via and per, but nothing else suggests level 2 or 3 influence. Scandinavian influence is different. Prepositions and pronouns are borrowed. Also, verb inflections start to level in English, possibly as a result of Scandinavian influence, since areas with Scandinavian influence have more leveling, as shown in Table 5.6. This might suggest level 3 influence.

The French influence is extensive, but consists mainly of new words. Due to the influx of words starting with v, French does influence the sound system of English (its phoneme inventory); therefore, the strength of its influence is 3. Thomason & Kaufman put both French and Scandinavian influence on the border between levels 2 and 3 (1988: 265).

Thus, the external influence does not go very deep. Nevertheless, as we will see in the next chapter, the grammar of Middle English changes substantially: the word order becomes more fixed and endings disappear. We will assume the reasons for this to be internal.
8. Conclusion

This chapter explored the influence of Celtic, Latin, Scandinavian, French, and other languages on Old and Middle English. Each of these languages has a unique relationship with English, noticeable in the kinds of words borrowed and in how the grammar is affected. French has an enormous influence on late Old and Middle English vocabulary, which makes Middle English look very different from Old English. Scandinavian influences the grammar, and we will see some possible consequences of that in the next chapter. We also talked about some of the issues related to the expanded vocabulary and discussed a scale to measure the levels of contact.
Key concepts

Celtic, Latin, Scandinavian and French influence, Norman French, common nouns changing
to proper nouns, loans adapting, dating of loans, multiple vocabularies, hybrids, scale of influ-
ence, creole, the status of Middle English.

Exercises and review questions

1. Provide some instances of Celtic influence on English. Review Section 1 of this chapter.

2. Discuss some effects of Scandinavian loanwords on English. Again, this can be a review.
   Can you guess from these words what kind of contact the speakers of the two languages
   might have had?

3. If the words arc and palm existed in Old English, can you conclude anything about when
   these words come into English?

4. Find some (derivational) affixes and check their origin in the OED. Can you think of any
   hybrids involving these affixes?

5. Take a paragraph of your own writing and make it more formal by replacing words such
   as talk, answer, begin, friendly, and stop with converse, respond, commence, amiable,
   and prevent. Be careful since the formal words are narrower in meaning and might not fit.

6. Download a Middle English text from http://etext.virginia.edu/mideng.browse.html and
   identify 10 words you think may be loans. Look them up in the OED. What does the origin
   of these loans tell you about the text?

7. How would you characterize Judith Butler’s English in the sentence below (see Wall Street
   Journal article by Dennis Dutton on 5 February 1999) for which she received the Bad Writ-
   ing Award in 1999. Would Orwell’s suggestions help? If so, which ones?

   The move from a structuralist account in which capital is understood to structure social
   relations in relatively homologous ways to a view of hegemony in which power relations
   are subject to repetition, convergence, and rearticulation brought the question of
   temporality into the thinking of structure, and marked a shift from a form of Althusserian
   theory that takes structural totalities as theoretical objects to one in which the insights
   into the contingent possibility of structure inaugurate a renewed conception of
   hegemony as bound up with the contingent sites and strategies of the rearticulation of
   power.
Chapter 6

Middle English

1150–1500

The previous chapter examined the influence of other languages on English, i.e. its external history. This chapter focuses on internal changes. Middle English is usually considered to begin around 1150, when the synthetic character of Old English starts to change. For instance, in Middle English, a number of case endings simplify and become -e. This change occurs at different times in different parts of Britain: in the North and East, it proceeds faster than in the South and West, probably due to Scandinavian influence. The many loans we discussed in the previous chapter and the loss of endings make Middle English look ‘modern’.

Several different points can be considered as the end of Middle English: 1400, when the Great Vowel Shift starts; 1476, when printing is introduced; or 1485, when Henry VII comes to the throne. Here, we will consider the year 1500, when the most radical morphological and syntactic changes are complete, as the end of Middle English.

The organization of this chapter is similar to that of Chapter 4: Sections 1 and 2 discuss the sources, writing system, and sounds of Middle English, and Sections 3 and 4 examine its morphology and syntax (its grammar). Since Chapter 5 provided information about Old and Middle English vocabulary, Section 5 of this chapter is about general word formation, not loans, and Section 6 examines dialects. The chapter also provides texts for analysis.

1. Texts and Spelling

In this section, we will examine the types of Middle English texts available to us and the writing system of Middle English. First, however, we need to discuss the sociolinguistic context.

It is often said that only after 1300 does English reemerge as a language used for literature, the court, and the church (Baugh & Cable 2002: Chapter 6). Several historical dates are relevant to this reemergence: 1244, when it becomes illegal to hold land in both France and England; 1258, when Henry III uses both English and French for an official
proclamation and English gradually gains influence; 1349, when English is first used at Oxford University; and 1362, when Edward III opens Parliament in English.

As Table 6.1 shows, several texts in English date from before 1300. One version of the *Cursor Mundi* dates from around 1300 and in the prologue makes a case for writing in English. Try to read the excerpt in (1), keeping in mind that *ilk* means ‘very, same’, *lede* ‘people’, *at* ‘to’, *ilka* ‘each’, *sted* ‘place’, *quat* ‘what’, and *laud* ‘lay’:

(1)  
*Cursor Mundi* – Northern version – 1300

þis ilk bok es translate
Into Inglis tong to rede
For the love of Inglis lede
Inglis lede of Ingland
For the commun at understand 5
Frankis rimes here I redd
Comunlik in ilka sted
Mast es it wroght for Frankis man
Quat is for him na Frankis can?
In Ingland the nacion 10
Es Inglis man þar in commun
þe speche þat man wit mast may spede
Mast þarwit to speke war nede
Selden was for ani chance
Praised Inglis tong in France 15
Give we ilkan þare langage
Me think we do þam non outrage
To laud and Inglis man I spell
þat understandes þat I tell

As (1) shows, in the Early Middle English period, English is not seen as a prestigious language and its use needs to be defended. After 1300, this changes, and many texts on different topics are written in English.

As with Old English, the Middle English texts available are varied: songs, travel accounts, recipes, medicinal handbooks, saints’ lives, sermons, philosophical and scientific works, romances, and fiction. There are several plays, such as the Wakefield and York Cycles; government documents prepared at the Chancery; anonymous lyrics; works of the Gawain poet, John Wycliff, Margery of Kempe, and Julian of Norwich; William Langland’s *Piers Plowman*; Geoffrey Chaucer’s extensive writings; and letters written by members of prominent families. We have the Paston Letters (1420s–1503) and the letters of the Cely (1472–1488) and Stonor (1290–1483) families, which show a dialectally consistent transition between Middle and Early Modern English. Table 6.1 provides a partial list of Middle English works; it lists areas of origin and approximate dates.
Table 6.1. Some works in Middle English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Region and Century</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The History of the Holy Rood Tree</td>
<td>West-Saxon, 12th century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ormulum</td>
<td>East Midlands, 12th century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine Group (e.g. Katerine, Margarete, Juliene, Hali Meidhad and Sawles Warde, but also</td>
<td>various manuscripts; e.g. Bodley 34: South West Midlands, early 13th century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancrene Wisse and some other texts:</td>
<td>various manuscripts; e.g. Bodley 34: South West Midlands, early 13th century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layamon’s Brut: Caligula and Otho manuscripts, now both considered to be from the second half</td>
<td>(N) Worcestershire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cursor Mundi: various manuscripts; e.g. Cotton Ms: northern, 1300.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gawain and the Green Knight, St. Erkenwald, Pearl, Cleanness, and Patience: assumed to be by the</td>
<td>Gawain Poet, NW Midlands, mid 14th century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langland’s Piers Plowman: West Midlands, late 14th century.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morte d’Arthur: East Midlands, late 14th century.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaucer’s the Canterbury Tales, Boethius, and Astrolabe: Southern, late 14th century.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wycliff and followers: Midlands, late 14th century.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chancery Documents: Southern, 14th and 15th century.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of these texts can be found in the original at http://etext.virginia.edu/mideng. browse.html, www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth/library/me/me.html, or www.luminarium.org. Examples are provided in Appendices A to F.

Some Middle English works provide an idea of daily life in the towns and castles, churches and monasteries (see Heer 1974). There was poverty and feudalism and life for most people was “short, nasty, and brutish” as Thomas Hobbes later said about human-kind in general. You might want to explore some medieval history on your own.

Most Middle English texts are available as manuscripts (see the Auchinleck Manuscript at www.nls.uk/auchinleck from c1340); they are written on vellum before paper becomes available sometime in the 12th century. Figure 6.1 is a facsimile of an early Middle English manuscript, the 13th century Layamon’s Brut.

Unfortunately, the manuscript in Figure 6.1 is not clear. Try to read the first few lines, using the transcript in Appendix A. Notice that Old English ash æ, yogh ȝ, thorn þ, and eth ð still occur. The use of ð indicates the text is early. Unlike in Old English, the w in line 2 of this text resembles the current one.

During Middle English, the æ and ð spellings are replaced relatively early by a and th/p, respectively. In late Middle English, þ is replaced by the th used in French sources; before it is replaced, however, it starts to look like y, hence the writing of the as ye in ye olde shoppe. See, for instance, the facsimile of Cursor Mundi in Figure 6.2.

Each Middle English text is somewhat unique. For instance, v and w are introduced, but their use is different from text to text: vppen ‘up’ and wiues ‘wives’ in Layamon (Figure 6.1 and Appendix A) and vertu ‘virtue’ in Chaucer (Appendix D). The t in words such as Artur, Antony, and Katerine changes to th, such as Arthur in Gawain (Appendix C), which remains to this day. This respelling is a result of the Renaissance realization that
Latin has *th* in those words even though Middle English and French do not. Notice the difference between French *auteur* and English *author*.

At the end of the Middle English period, books start to get printed. Printing will be discussed in the next chapter since its effect is felt mainly in the Early Modern English period. Figure 6.3 shows an early printed page from Caxton’s 1485 edition of Malory’s *Morte*
d’Arthur. Which letters do you recognize as being different from either Old or Modern English? For instance, does Caxton still use the thorn? Also pay attention to capitalization and punctuation, both very different from Modern English.

Table 6.2 summarizes the changes in spelling during the Middle English period. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the cw in cwene and cwic changes to qu and the u in mus changes to ou, even before the sound changes from [u] to [aw]. Both of these changes are probably due to loans such as question and mountain and by the influence of French scribes on the spelling. The ȝ (and y) are apparently introduced by French scribes to replace h and palatalized g in Laȝamon, Ernleȝe (lines 1 and 3 of Appendix A), niȝt, kniȝt, andȝe. Other changes are the introduction of k alongside c (see Chapter 2 for where each occurs) and the switch from hw in hwat to wh in what, as in Chaucer. Figures 6.1 to 6.3 exemplify some of these changes.
Figure 6.3. A page from Caxton's *Morte d'Arthur*
Another new spelling device in Late Middle English is the use of double vowels, e.g. Old English *boc* becomes *book*; and *bete* *beet(e)*. Having provided background on Middle English texts and spelling, we will now examine their sounds.

2. Middle English Sounds

The main trend in Middle English is **consonant deletion**, as in the case of [g], [h], [w], and [l], and **vowel shifting**, especially in non-northern texts. We will examine a number of sound changes and conclude this section with inventories of Middle English sounds.

First, listen to some later Middle English, e.g. Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* at http://www.unc.edu/depts/chaucer/zatta/prol.html or another site. The text is provided in Appendix D. Later Middle English is understandable with some effort. You might notice that the GVS has not occurred yet. For instance, in *April, soote, bathed,* and *seeke*, the vowel is pronounced as if it were French or Spanish. Vowels also have more ‘color’ and do not become reduced (to schwa) as regularly as in Modern English; listen to the pronunciation of *inspired, corages, pilgrimages,* and *melodye.* In addition, in Chaucer’s *knight,* all consonants are pronounced, including [kn] and [X], so the word sounds like [kniXt].

There are many sound changes between Old and Middle English; we will only discuss some of them. We will start with g/ʒ (pronounced as either [ŋ] or [j] in Old English). The g/ʒ first becomes a [w] or [j] and merges with the preceding vowels to become a diphthong, as in (a) of Table 6.3. The words *foweles* in line 9 of Chaucer’s *Prologue* (Appendix D) and *plow* in line 20 of *Piers* (Appendix B) show this change. As (b) of Table 6.3 shows, g also changes after [l] and [r].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cw</td>
<td>qu</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>ch, c, and k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hw</td>
<td>wh/w/qu</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>ou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þ/ð</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>ʒ/gh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2. Some Old to Middle English spelling changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cw</td>
<td>qu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hw</td>
<td>wh/w/qu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þ/ð</td>
<td>th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sc</td>
<td>sh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another new spelling device in Late Middle English is the use of double vowels, e.g. Old English *boc* becomes *book*; and *bete* *beet(e)*. Having provided background on Middle English texts and spelling, we will now examine their sounds.

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Table 6.3. Changes in g/ʒ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>boga &gt; bow</td>
<td>ploga &gt; plow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dæg &gt; day</td>
<td>fugol &gt; fowl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sejel &gt; sail</td>
<td>fæger &gt; fair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nægel &gt; nail</td>
<td>dragan &gt; draw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>halgian &gt; hallow</td>
<td>morgen &gt; morrow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3. Changes in g/ʒ
In the next chapters, we will examine \( h \)-dropping in some detail. It starts in Middle English, as in the Early Middle English (2) and in the Late Middle English (3). Later, this deletion becomes stigmatized:

(2) \( Ich \ abbe i \ min \ castlen \ seoue \ busend \ kempen \)

‘I have in my castles seven thousand fighters.’ (Layamon line 233)

(3) \( but \ ze \ wolden \ glade \ at \ an \ our \ in \ his \ li3t \)

‘but you would be happy for an hour in his light.’ (Wycliff, NT, from HC)

The loss of [\( h \)] begins in consonant clusters such as \( hlaf 'loaf' \), \( hruad 'rather' \), \( hnute 'nut' \), and \( hnaco 'naked' \) and gradually the version without \( h \) becomes the norm. This may be due to French influence.

The glide \([w]\) is frequently deleted between a consonant such as [s] or [t] and a (back) vowel, as Table 6.4 shows. In Modern English spelling — but not pronunciation — \( w \) turns up again in some words. In Middle English, the situation is not settled: there is \( so \) in line 10 of \( Piers \) (Appendix B) and \( swich 'such' \) in line 2 of Chaucer (Appendix D).

**Table 6.4.** Gradual deletion of \([w]\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>ModE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>swa [sw]</td>
<td>&gt; so</td>
<td>&gt; so [s]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twa [tw]</td>
<td>&gt; to</td>
<td>&gt; two [t]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sweord [sw]</td>
<td>&gt; sword</td>
<td>&gt; sword [s]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sweostor [sw]</td>
<td>&gt; suster</td>
<td>&gt; sister [s]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an(d)swar [sw]</td>
<td>&gt; answere</td>
<td>&gt; answer [s]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Place names, such as \( Norwich, Greenwich, \) and \( Warwick, \) generally lack the \([w]\) in pronunciation, but in others, such as \( Ipswich, \) the \([w]\) has been reintroduced through spelling pronunciation.

Frequently, nasals delete, as in (a) of Table 6.5, or assimilate in place, as in (b). Liquids are also deleted, as in (c), or metathesized, as in (d).

**Table 6.5.** Changes in nasals and liquids

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ModE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. hwilum</td>
<td>&gt; while</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from</td>
<td>&gt; fro/fra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Mantchestre</td>
<td>&gt; Manchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. swilce</td>
<td>&gt; such</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ilke/ælce</td>
<td>&gt; each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. beorht</td>
<td>&gt; bright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gærs</td>
<td>&gt; grass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the liquid \([l]\) still occurs in northern texts such as (1) above in words such as \( ilke 'each' \).
Vowels change in length throughout the history of English. Short vowels become long and long ones short. Before a nasal or liquid and a voiced stop, Old English short vowels lengthen, e.g. the vowel in lamb, comb, mild lengthens. Then sometimes, shortening occurs only in some forms and hence we have the wind and to wind. Cases where lengthening does not occur include children and that’s why we have the contrast in vowel length between children and child since in the latter the lengthening did occur.

Changes in vowel height also occur. In non-northern texts, the long a sounds in na, mast, ham, and ane become o in Middle English in both spelling and pronunciation, resulting in Modern English no, most, home, and one. In northern texts, this change does not take place. However, the short a in man and land is often an o in the North but not in the South.

Other sound changes are very regional as well. For instance, palatalization does not occur in the North either and thus, we have non-palatalized forms like Frankis, kirk, and egg where southern texts might have French, church, and eye ‘egg’. Many of the northern forms still survive in the North in the modern period, as we will see in a later chapter. Based on long a and palatalization, can you tell what region the text in (1) is from? We will come back to these and other dialect differences in Section 6; see Table 6.12 for a preview.

Table 6.6 provides the inventory of Middle English consonants. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the influx of French words with a [v] causes this sound to become a regular English sound, not one occurring only in voiced environments (through assimilation) as in Old English. There are also many loans with [z], especially in the Renaissance period. The velar nasal [ŋ] is still only used before other velars. The sound that is missing, in comparison with Modern English, is [ʒ], and the sound that is present in Middle but not Modern English is [X].

Table 6.6. Middle English consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place:</th>
<th>Manner:</th>
<th>stop</th>
<th>fricative</th>
<th>affricate</th>
<th>nasal</th>
<th>liquid</th>
<th>glide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>labial</td>
<td>p/b</td>
<td>f/v</td>
<td></td>
<td>m</td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dental</td>
<td>θ/ð</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>l, r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alveolar</td>
<td>t/d</td>
<td>s/z</td>
<td>t/f/dʒ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alveo-palatal</td>
<td>k/g</td>
<td>h/X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Old English, the vowels have long and short variants. In Middle English, the short vowels change their height and are not just short variants of the long vowels. This is represented in Figure 6.4. Where short and long vowels have the same position, the long vowel is differentiated by a colon. Some [a:] sounds change to [o] (or [ow]), as noted above, and the round front vowel, spelled y, as in hydan ‘to hide’, ultimately becomes an unrounded [i]. The [ɔ] sound, as in joy, comes in through borrowings from French (ME joie, cloistre, and joinen).
Figure 6.4. Middle English vowels

In earlier texts such as Layamon, *Piers Plowman*, and Gawain (Appendices A to C), a poetic device is used that is called **alliteration**, as in (4), where the [s] and [f] alliterate in lines 1 and 2, respectively. Which sounds alliterate in lines 2 to 6?

(4) **Piers Plowman – West Midlands – Late C14**
In a somer seson . whan soft was the sonne
I shope me in shroudes . as I a shepe were  2
In habite as an heremite . vnholy of workes
Went wyde in this world . wondres to here  4
Ac on a May mornynge . on Maluerne hulles
Me byfel a ferly . of fairy me thouête  6
‘In a summer season, when the sun was mild, I put clothes on as if I were a sheep. In the habit of a hermit, unholy of works. [I] went wide in this world to hear wonders. And on a May morning, in the Malvern Hills, a marvellous thing happened to me through magic, I thought’.

If you listen to *Piers Plowman’s* description of deadly sins at www.english.vt.edu/~baugh/Medieval/envy.htm or *Introduction to Gawain* at www.english.vt.edu/~baugh/Medieval/SGGK2.htm), the alliteration stands out.

This section provided a list of Middle English sound changes. The list is not exhaustive, but it does give an idea of the shifts taking place. Table 6.6 and Figure 6.4 give an idea of the end result.

3. **Middle English Morphology**

In this section, we will examine Middle English pronouns and endings on nouns, adjectives, and verbs. The trend is towards a loss of endings.

The Middle English **pronouns** undergo many changes. First, the Old English third person plural pronouns with an initial *h-* are gradually replaced by ones with an initial *th-.* The change starts in the North with the nominative. As examples of early and later use, compare sentences (5a) and (5b), and look at (5c) for northern use:

(5) a. *wat heo ihoten weoren; & wonene heo comen*
   ‘what they were called and from-where they came.’ (Layamon, 8, Appendix A)
b. *That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke*
   ‘which helped them when they were ill’. (*CT Prologue*, 18, Appendix D)

c. *Ran and ouertok þam þare*
   ‘[He] ran and overtook them there’. (*Cursor Mundi*, 4900)

In the earlier Layamon, the *h*-initial pronoun *heo* is the norm, as in (5a), both for the nominative (shown in (5a)) and the accusative (not shown). In (5b), from the later Chaucer, the nominative plural is already *they*, even though the accusative/dative is still *hem*. In the early northern (5c), even the accusative is *them*. LALME provides the map in Figure 6.5 for the accusative forms, showing the South was the last to change.

![Figure 6.5](image)

**Figure 6.5.** The Late Middle English spread of *them* and *hem*

Secondly, a special feminine singular *sho/she* is introduced. This change too starts in the North. Sentence (6a) shows the early *heo/ha* whereas (6b) shows the new form:

(6) a. *Ah þah ha gung were ha heold …*  
   ‘but though she was young, she kept’ (*Katherine*, d’Ardenne p. 18).

b. *In al denemark nis wimman | So fayr so sche*  
   ‘In all of Denmark there is no woman as fair as she’ (*Havelok* 1720–1).

A third point to note is that the second person pronouns are used differently in Middle English than in Old and Modern English. In Old English, *thou* and *thee* are singular and *ye* and *you* plural. In Middle English, the singular becomes the familiar form, similar to
French *tu*, and the plural becomes the polite form, similar to French *vous*. The forms of *thou* and *ye* in the *Canterbury Tales* provides a marvelous mirror of social relationships during that time, as we will see in Exercise 1. The host uses *thou* to address the (drunken) miller but not the knight, prioress, or clerk. In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, King Arthur generally uses *thou*, whereas Gawain uses *ye* to King Arthur. Later, around 1600, *ye* is lost, *thou* and *thee* are used less frequently, and *you* (from Old English *eow*) becomes the common form. This development can be observed in Shakespeare’s plays as well.

Other differences are (a) all duals are lost early on, and (b) the accusative forms *mec*, *þec*, *usic*, *eowic*, *hie*, and *hine* disappear early. Only the accusative *hine* survives into Early Middle English, as you can see, for example, in Appendix A, lines 33 and 34. The result for Late Middle English is summarized in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7. Late Middle English pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>ic</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>min</td>
<td>ure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT/ACC</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>our</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>thou</td>
<td>ye(e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>thi(n)</td>
<td>your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT/ACC</td>
<td>thee</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>she/he</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>her/his</td>
<td>their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT/ACC</td>
<td>her/him</td>
<td>them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the forms in Table 6.7 have variant spellings: *thai*, *thei*, *thaim* for third person plural (the OED gives 19 variants spellings); and *she*, *sho(e)*, *shy*, and *sha* for third person feminine singular (the OED lists over 30 variants).

As mentioned in Chapter 4, special reflexive pronouns are not common in Old English. Third person ones start to occur in Late Old English and second and first person ones appear in Middle English, as in (7). Middle English also still uses regular pronouns, as shown in (8):

(7) *þat þou wylt þyn awen nye nyme to þyseluen*
    that you want your own harm bring upon yourself
    ‘that you want to take all your trouble on yourself’ (*Gawain* 2141)

(8) *For I zelde me zederly*
    ‘Because I surrender myself promptly’ (*Gawain* 1215)

As we will see in the next chapter, the use of both the new reflexives with *self* and the old ones without *self* continues for some time. The actual change involves the Old English adjective *self* being reanalyzed by learners of Middle English as a noun with a possessive *my* or *thy*. The third person has an accusative pronoun *him* before *self* because it changed
when *self* was still an adjective modifying a pronoun. The first and second person reflexives were formed when *self* was a noun, so *my, thy, our, and your* are possessives.

In demonstratives, relatives, adjectives, and nouns, we see a major reduction of forms and endings. If you have access to the electronic Middle English Compendium in your library, search for endings such as -um. You will find very few, mainly names such as *Iulium* and *Antigonum* (in Layamon) and direct loans such as *solstitial* ‘solstice’ (in Chaucer); you will not find these endings as case endings. The case endings of demonstratives, adjectives, and nouns simplify in this period and the number of different forms decreases.

In Late Middle English, definite and indefinite articles, *the* and *one/a*, become frequent as do two demonstratives indicating number — *this/these* and *that/those*. As expected, these demonstratives and articles lack case distinctions, as shown in Table 6.8. In Modern English, the indefinite *a* is used before words starting with a consonant and *an* before words starting with a vowel (e.g. *a table* but *an object*). This is not yet the case in Middle English, as the first line of Appendix A shows: *an preost* ‘a priest’, not *a preost*. In the North, *an* is reduced to *a* before consonants early (1200), but in the South it lingers until the middle of the 14th century.

Old English demonstratives can function as relatives. This ceases to be the case in Middle English and *that* becomes the relative marker, as in (9), from a slightly later version of Layamon:

(9) *after þan flode. þat fram God com. þat al ere acwelde.*

‘after the flood which came from God (and) which killed all (creatures) here’ (Layamon’s Otho 10–11)

As mentioned in Chapter 5, it has been suggested that the relative pronoun *who(m)* appears in later Middle English in imitation of French *qui* ‘who’. The *wh*-pronoun can also occur together with the regular complementizer, as (10) shows for *which*:

(10) *the est orisonte, which that is clepid comounly the ascendent*

‘The eastern horizon, which is commonly called the ascendant’ (Chaucer *Astrolabe* 669.17–8)

**Nouns** still have a genitive singular ending -es (e.g. *Leouenaðes sone* in Appendix A, line 2) but very little else. In the plural, the Old English nominative and accusative -as simplify to -es for all cases in Middle English (e.g. *shoures* in Appendix D, line 1). In Early Middle English, there are some dative nominal endings in -e, especially after prepositions, as in (11) from Layamon. The absence of the article before *Drihtene* makes it clear that this is an early Middle English text:

(11) *þe from Drihtene com*

‘which came from the Lord’ (Layamon line 10)
Table 6.8 presents the combinations of the definite article *the* and the noun *sonne* ‘sun’ in all cases and numbers in Late Middle English, as in Chaucer.

**Table 6.8.** Late Middle English articles and nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>the sonne</td>
<td>the sonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>the sonnes</td>
<td>the sonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT/ACC</td>
<td>the sonne</td>
<td>the sonnes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adjectives**, like demonstratives and nouns, have lost most endings by Late Middle English. This starts in the North and the East Midlands. The last remnant of an ending is the -*e* in *this goode man*, or the supposedly archaic *ye olde shoppe*.

All the changes we have discussed — the loss of case, gender, and number on nouns, adjectives, demonstratives, and pronouns — are changes from synthetic to analytic. Adjectives can occur in the comparative (synthetic *nicer* or analytic *more interesting*) and superlative (synthetic *nicest* or analytic *most interesting*) and the shift towards an analytic language is expected to result in more *more* and *most* forms. In Middle English, these analytic forms are indeed on the increase. However, as we will also notice with the loss of strong verbs, this trend does not continue, most likely for external reasons. In Modern English, the analytic form is only used in longer words, unlike in Middle English (see Mustanoja 1960: 279). Chaucer has *moost sweete* and *moost wise* as well as *moost feithful* and *moost precious* and in the Early Modern period there are three possibilities — *sweeter*, *more sweet*, and *more sweeter*.

In Old English, **adverbs** are formed by endings such as -*e* or -*lice*. In Middle English, -*e* is lost and -*lic* reduces to -*ly*, as in (12) from Chaucer:

(12) He made the peple *pitously* to syng<sup>e</sup>  
‘He made the people sing compassionately’ (CT, The Friar’s Tale 1316)

In Modern English, a few adverbs lose the -*ly* ending, as we will note in Chapter 8. Note that *pitously* in (12) is used differently from *piteously* in Modern English, as in *piteously poor*. This is a shift from a regular to a degree adverb, one that *very* and *really* have undergone as well.

As we saw in Chapter 4, **verbs** have a complicated set of endings depending on the person and number of the subject and when the action takes place. In Middle English, these endings simplify starting in the North, as shown in Table 5.6. The results for Late Middle English are shown in Table 6.9. This reduction of forms continues into the Early Modern English period.

Table 6.9 uses a strong verb, as can be seen from the stem vowel change between present *find(e)* and past *fond(e)*. It lists a subjunctive, which is quickly disappearing and being replaced by modals or infinitives. A weak verb such as *luve(n)* ‘love’ would have the same endings in the present as a strong one, but its past would be *ic/he luvede, þu luvedest*; the past plural would be *luvede(n)*.
In Middle English, some verbs can be either strong or weak. For instance, *walked* is weak and *welk* is strong and they co-occur in the same text, as (13) and (14) show, which are both from Chaucer:

(13) as that I *welk* alone.

(14) in the feeldes *walked* we.

Verb that are currently weak such as *laughed* and *helped* could be strong *loughe/lawghe* and *holp(en)* respectively (see (5) above).

For internal reasons, strong verbs are on the way out, since the language is moving toward increased regularity (as perceived by language learners). This (internal) change is stopped in the Middle English period. According to Baugh and Cable, “[n]early a third of the strong verbs in Old English seem to have died out early in the Middle English period. […] more than a hundred … were lost at the beginning of the Middle English period” (2002: 163). Baugh and Cable also claim that “it was natural that many speakers should wrongly apply the pattern of weak verbs to some which should have been strong.” This can also be seen from the fact that children make most strong verbs weak (*singed* rather than *sang*), which is the expected direction of change. Sixty-eight strong verbs remain in Modern English and the reason not all strong verbs have been lost, according to Baugh and Cable, is that the “impulse seems to have been checked, possibly by the steady rise of English in the social scale” (2002: 164). If their assumption is correct, that would be an external reason for the continuation of strong verbal forms.

As a last point in this section, we will look at the past participle. In Old English, it has a *ge-* prefix (as in Modern German and Dutch). This prefix is frequent in the *Peterborough Chronicle* before 1130, as in (15a), but virtually disappears after 1130 in that text, as (15b) shows.

(15) a. *Headda abbot heafde ær gewriton hu Wulfhere …*
   ‘Headda the abbot had before written how Wulfhere …’ (*PC*, 350, written before a960)

   b. *hefde numen Fulkes eorles gingre dohter*
   had taken Fulk’s earl younger daughter
   ‘had taken the younger daughter of Fulk, the count’ (*PC*, 1124)

### Table 6.9. Late Middle English present and past tense verb agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present indicative</th>
<th>Subjunctive</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ic find(e)</td>
<td>S find(e)</td>
<td>S find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 thou findes(t)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 he findeþ/he findes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P we, ye(e), thei findeþ/en</td>
<td>P find(en)</td>
<td>P findeþ/es</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S fond(e)</td>
<td>S founde</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P found(en)</td>
<td>P founde(n)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past participle</td>
<td>(y)founden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Peterborough Chronicle is from an area in the former Danelaw, northeast of London. The disappearance of ge- is further advanced in these areas (see Mustanoja 1960: 446). In a few cases, we see a complete loss of ge-, as in numen in (15b). In most other Middle English texts, the prefix on the verb first changes from ge- to y/i-, as in (16) from Chaucer, or is lost:

(16) *Hath in the ram his halve cours yronne*
    
    has in the Ram her half course run
    
    ‘has half run her cours in (the sign of) the Ram’ (*CT, Prologue* 8)

The prefix later disappears completely. Check whether Gawain has a prefix in Appendix C.

In this section, we examined the morphology of ME words, specifically pronouns, nouns, and verbs. We turn to syntax next.

4. Middle English Syntax

In this section, we will examine Middle English word order and the increase in subject pronouns, auxiliaries, and sentence connectors (complementizers and relatives). We will also discuss the use of certain adverbs.

The word order in Middle English is still relatively free, compared to Modern English. However, with the grammaticalization of prepositions, demonstratives, and some verbs — which become indicators of case, definiteness, and tense — a stricter order is established. For instance, articles can only occur before nouns and auxiliaries before verbs. Let us examine a few sentences that are technically from Late Old English, but their syntax really makes them Early Middle English. Both are taken from the Peterborough Chronicle:

(17) *Dis gære for þe king Stephne ofer sæ to Normandi*
    
    this year went the king Stephen over sea to Normandy
    
    ‘In this year King Stephen went over the sea to Normandy’ (*PC*, 1137)

(18) *Hi hadden him manred maked and athes sworn*
    
    they had him homage made and oaths sworn
    
    ‘They had done homage to him and sworn oaths’ (*PC*, 1137)

In (17), the verb for ‘went’ comes after the adverbial *Dis gære* and before the subject *þe king Stephne*. This means that the finite verb is in second position, as it generally was in Old English; in Modern English that order is reversed and the subject has to precede the verb. In (18), the finite verb *hadden* occurs in second position, but the objects *him*, *manred* ‘homage’, and *athes* ‘oaths’ precede the non-finite verbs *maked* and *sworen*. This OV order combined with having the verb in second position remains possible until Late Middle English. Check the Chaucer text (Appendix D) for examples.
There are a few other points to note about these sentences. Since (17) and (18) are from Late Old/Early Middle English, there are no articles before *sæ* (even though there is an ‘extra’ one before *king*). The third person plural is still *hi* in (18), rather than *they*, but the plural ending on the noun *athes* is already *-es*, rather than the Old English *-as* of Chapter 4. The past participles in (18) lack the prefix *ge*-.

The word order in the *noun phrase* might indicate French influence. French often places the adjective after the noun and marks it for number. This order is shown in (19), and can be found in Appendix D as well:

(19) *in othere places delitables*  
‘in other delightful places’ (*CT, Franklin’s Tale 899*)

The word order in *wh*-questions is very similar to that of Old English and differs from Modern English only in that full (finite) verbs can be fronted, as in (20):

(20) *Who looketh* lightly now but palamoun? (*CT, Knight’s Tale 1870*)

How would you say (20) in present-day English?

Yes/no questions are occasionally introduced by *whether*, reduced to *wher* in (21), a remnant of Old English. Most of the time, the word order is like Modern English except that the main verb can be in sentence-initial position, as in (22), rather than just the auxiliary:

(21) *Wher is nat this the sone of a smyth, or carpenter?*  
‘Is this not the son of a smith or carpenter?’ (Wycliff, Matthew 13. 55, from the OED)

(22) *Wostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe*  
‘Know-you nat well the old scholar’s saying?’ (*CT, The Knight’s Tale 1163*)

In Early Middle English, *subject pronouns* are not yet obligatory, as (23) shows:

(23) *Katerine – South West Midlands – Early 13C*  
þeos meiden lette lutel of þ he seide. ant smirkinde smeðeliche  
‘This maiden thought little of what he said and smiling smoothly’  
ȝef him þullich onswere. al ich iseo þine sahen sottliche isette.  
‘gave him a smooth answer. I see all your savings are foolishly put out’  
*cleoprest þeo þing godes þe nowðer sturien ne mahen*  
‘Call [you] those things good that neither stir nor have power.’  
(Bodley version, from d’Ardenne’s 1977 edition, p. 24)

Later, probably a little after 1250, they become obligatory, e.g. *hi* in (18) (see van Gelderen 2000: 125–147).

There is also a transition to *nominative subjects*. Sentences (24a) and (24b) are from different versions of Layamon’s *Brut*. The former is from an earlier version and the subject is dative; the latter is from a later version and the subject is nominative:
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[24] a. þer-fore him ofte scomede. 7 his heorte gromede
then therefore him-DAT often shamed and his heart angered
‘therefore he often felt ashamed and enraged’ (Caligula 6868)

b. þar-fore he ofte samede. and his heorte gramede
‘Therefore he-NOM often felt shame and his heart was troubled.’

Pleonastic subjects become more common as well, as in (25) from Chaucer. This shows the language is in a more analytic stage. There is grammaticalizing from a locative adverb to a placeholder for the subject:

(25) With hym ther was his sone, a yong squire. (CT, Prologue 79)

In Early Middle English, the pleonastic subject is still optional, however, as in (26). The Modern English gloss would include the pleonastic ‘there’ (as in Allen’s 1992 translation):

(26) An preost wes on leoden; La Ša mon wes ihoten
A priest was among people, Layamon was named
‘There was a priest around, whose name was Layamon’ (Layamon 1)

We now turn to auxiliaries and sentence connectors. In Old and Middle English, auxiliaries are less frequent than in Modern English, as (27) shows. Modern English would have an additional auxiliary here, ‘What are you doing’:

(27) What, how! What do ye, maister Nicholay?
How may ye slepen al the longe day?
(Chaucer, Miller’s Tale 71.3437–8)

Modern English tense and aspect are expressed through auxiliaries such as be and have. In (28), the auxiliary be and the -ing on the main verb express that the action is (or was) in progress; have indicates that the action started sometime in the past and continues up to now:

(28) We have been practicing. (from the BNC)

Even though they are not as frequent, there are Middle English constructions, such as (29), where an auxiliary and the preposition on/an express that the action is ongoing. The first auxiliary do appears around 1400, namely in Chaucer’s (30):

(29) þa cheorles wenden to þan wuden. & warliche heom hudden.
alle bute tweien. toward þan kinge heo weoren beien.
and iuunden þene king. þær he wes an slæting
‘The freemen went into the wood and took cover warily except for two [who]
went towards the king where he was on hunting’ (Layamon’s Brut Caligula 6137–9)

(30) His yonge sone, that three yeer was of age
Un-to him seyde, fader, why do ye wepe? (CT, The Monk’s Tale, 441–2)
The changes in the use of *do* are interesting. In (30), *do* is used as in Modern English, for support in questions (and negatives); this use of *do* begins around the time of (30). In Middle and Early Modern English *do* was also more often used in regular affirmatives (e.g. *I did see him*) and might have expressed progressive aspect.

Related to the change in the status of verbs — many grammaticalize to become auxiliaries — is the change in the status of the **infinitive marker** *to*. Many linguists consider this *to* a non-finite auxiliary, indicating that the action of the verb following it is either in the future or is unreal. When it becomes an actual non-finite marker (in addition to a preposition), it becomes more independent, and split infinitives start to appear in Early Middle English, as in (31) to (33):

(31) *fo[r] to londes seche*  
for to countries seek  
‘to seek countries’ (*Layamon Brut* Otho, 6915)

(32) *for to hine finde*  
for to him find  
‘in order to find him’ (Otho, 8490)

(33) *Blessid be þou lord off hevyn ... Synfull men for to þus lede in paradice*  
‘Blessed are you, heavenly lord, to thus lead sinful men in paradise’ (*Cursor Mundi* Ld MS 18443)

There are also examples of split infinitives in Later Middle English, as in (34) and (35):

(34) *Y say to ſou, to nat swere on al manere*  
‘I say to you to not curse in all ways’ (*Wycliff, Matthew* 5, 34)

(35) *Poul seiþ, þu þat prechist to not steyl, stelist*  
‘Paul says, you that preach to not steal steals’ (*Apology for the Lollards* 57)

In Later Middle English, e.g. Chaucer, sequences of auxiliaries, as in (36), start to appear; the end of the 14th century marks a significant increase in auxiliaries:

(36) *If I so ofte myghte have ywedded bee* (*CT, Wife of Bath Prologue*, 7)

In Early Middle English, the connection between sentences is similar to that of Old English: sentences are less frequently embedded in each other than in Modern English. For instance, the already quoted (37a) is from the beginning of Laymon (Appendix A); Modern English would have (37b) or (37c):

(37) a. An preost wes on leoden; Laʒamon wes ihoten.  
b. A priest was living among the people and his name was Layamon.  
c. A priest, who was named Layamon, was living among the people.
In (a), there is no connection between the two sentences; in (b), *and* connects the sentences through coordination; and in (c), one of the sentences is embedded into the other by means of a relative pronoun *who*, also called subordination. We can see the change from less to more connection take place in Middle English. For instance, in the more archaic (Caligula) version of Layamon’s *Brut* (38a), the two sentences are not formally connected, shown by the two instances of *þenne*. In the less archaic (Otho) version, the two are embedded, as (38b) shows, since one *þenne* has become a *wan* ‘when’:

(38) a. *þenne he þe treoweðe alre best on. þenne bi-swikes tu heom*  
Then he you trusts all best on. Then betray you him (Layamon, Caligula 1705)

b. *Wan hii þe troueþ alre best. þan þou heom bi-swikest*  
When he you trusts of-all best. Then you him betray (Otho 1705)  
‘When he trusts you the best, (then) you betray him’.

A real increase in sentence complementizers such as *till* and *for* can be seen in the last part of the *Peterborough Chronicle*. Roughly after 1130, examples such as (39) and (40) appear:

(39) *for þæt ilc gær warth þe king ded*  
‘because that same year was the king dead’ (PC, for the year 1135)

(40) *þar he nam þe biscop Roger of Sereberi & Alexander biscop of Lincol & te Canceler Roger hise neues. & dide ælle in prisun. til hi iafen up here castles*  
‘There he [= king Stephen] took bishop Roger of Salisbury and bishop Alexander of Lincoln and chancellor Roger, his nephew, and put them all in prison till they gave up their castles’ (PC, for the year 1137)

As a last syntactic point, we will explore the changes in negative adverbs. The Old English negative adverb *ne*, in (41) of Chapter 4, reduces to a weaker word and is reinforced by a strong negative, starting in Old English, as shown of (42) in Chapter 4. In Middle English, reinforcement by a post-verbal adverb such as *nawiht* (‘no creature’) is frequent, as shown in Middle English (41). Subsequently, the post-verbal negative becomes the regular negative *not* or *nat*, especially in late Middle English, as in (42):

(41) *for of al his strengðe ne drede we nawiht*  
because of all his strength not dread we nothing  
*for nis his strengðe noht wurð bute hwer-se he i-findeð eðeliche*  
because not-is his strength not worth except where he finds frailty  
‘Because we do not dread his strength since it is only relevant where he finds frailty’ (Sawles Warde, d’Ardenne 175/9–10)

(42) *He may nat wepe, althogh hym soore smerte*  
‘He may not weep, although he hurts sorely’ (CT Prologue 230)
Multiple negatives, as in (41), are lost in Late ME, but the negative not starts to contract with an auxiliary, e.g. cannot, as early as 1380. The negative weakens and a second negative is introduced again in many varieties of English. This is known as Jespersen’s Cycle after the Danish linguist who first discussed it. It occurs in many languages: in French ne pas is losing ne in colloquial French.

With this knowledge about the sounds and grammar of Middle English, we can examine the beginning lines of Gawain, provided in (43) (see Appendix C for more):

(43) **Gawain – NW Midlands – Mid C14**

*Since the siege and the assault were ceased at Troy*

The battlements broken and burnt to brands and ashes

*The man that the plots of treason there made/framed*

*It was Aeneas the noble and his high kin*

*That afterwards conquered provinces and masters became*

*(from Tolkien & Gordon’s 1925 edition)*

The word order is modern, especially in the main clause: the subject *he sege and he assaut* precedes the auxiliary *watz* and the verb *sesed*, which in turn precede the adverbial *at Troye* in the first line. In the second line, *brent* precedes *to brondeʒ and askez*, and *tried* precedes *for his tricherie* in line 4. In contrast, in the relative clause in line 3 the verb *wroʒt* follows the object *he trammes of tresoun*, a remnant of the older order. The verb *become* also follows its object in line 6 since it is part of a relative clause.

Definite articles are frequent and reduced to an invariant form *þe*. The endings on the nouns are restricted to plural -eʒ, -ez, or es, but there may be a dative -e on *erþe*. The relative pronoun in line 3 is the Middle English *þat*.

The spelling shows much evidence of this being a (Late) Middle English text: 洳 and Ʒ occur, but æ and ð do not. The Ʒ in *borʒ* may show palatalization and the pronunciation of *sege* and *sesed* (if you can listen to it) includes the pre-GVS [e]. There are many loans from French: *sege, assaut, tresoun, tricherie, depreced, and patrounes* are all introduced from French in the Middle English period roughly with the spelling that occurs in Gawain. Later, alternations are made — etymological respellings by inserting the l in *assault* around 1530. The word *try* in its modern, legal sense is based on French, but this particular sense developed in Anglo-French. Tulk ‘man’ and *trammes ‘plots’ in line 3 are Northernisms, possibly from Scandinavian.

Table 6.10 provides a summary of the characteristics of Middle English.
Table 6.10. Characteristics of Middle English

Morphology:
- a. Pronouns change (e.g. second person is simplified)
- b. Case endings on nouns and adjectives disappear gradually
- c. Agreement on verbs simplifies
- d. Strong verbs become weak; subjunctives are expressed through modals

Syntax:
- e. Word order changes to SVO
- f. Subject pronouns are needed
- g. Pleonastic (or dummy) subjects are introduced (= grammaticalization)
- h. Auxiliaries and articles are introduced (= grammaticalization)
- i. Embeddings increase (= grammaticalization)
- j. Multiple negatives occur

Additional references on Middle English grammar are Mustanoja’s (1960) *A Middle English Syntax*, Fischer’s (1992) contribution to the *Cambridge History of the English Language* Middle English volume, and Denison’s (1993) *English Historical Syntax*. In the next section, we will rely on Dalton-Puffer’s (1996) work on Middle English prefixes and suffixes; see also Nevalainen (1999).

5. Middle English Word Formation

As shown in the previous chapter, very noticeable changes in Middle English appear in the lexicon as thousands of loans are introduced into the language. In this chapter, we will discuss some ways words are formed, the role of Latinate affixes, and some changes in word meaning.

Compounds are frequent in Old English and remain so to the present. Many Old English compounds have disappeared and new ones have been created. It is my impression from reading Middle English texts, however, that compounding is not as frequent in Middle English as it in Old or Early Modern English. This may be due to the wealth of loans in Middle English. Compare, for instance, the Old English Riddles (Appendix D of Chapter 4) to Chaucer (Appendix D of this chapter). We could also explore the new compounds in Middle English by year using the advanced search in the OED. If you search for 1320, you get the compounds in (44) among others. Note that it is not clear what all of them mean:

(44) barehead, blindwharved, church-hawe, dunghill, foot-hot, glow-worm, love-drink, polecat, shoulder-bone.

In Old English, the following derivational suffixes are used to create abstract nouns: -dom, -hede (-hade, etc.), -lac (-lec, etc.), -ness, -ship, and -ung (-ing, etc.). Many of them remain active in Middle English: freedom, liklihede, worship, and makyng (all from Chaucer). Several Romance suffixes with the same function as the Old English ones are also introduced:
-acy, -age, -al, -aunce (-ence, etc.), -(a)cioun (-ation, etc.), -(e)rie, -ite, and -ment. It is interesting to note that in Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales, there are only 45 instances of -dom, as in kingdom and crisitendom, but 389 instances of -age, as in pilgrimage, avantage, and visage. The French suffix is not only more frequent, but also shows greater variety.

Some Old English suffixes, such as -er(e), -end, -el, and -ling, form agent nouns: worshiper, allwaldend, and fosterling. The Romance innovations -ant, -ard, -arie, -erel, -esse, -ist, -istre, and -our are used in servant, niggard, secretary, ministré, and conquerour.

Old English suffixes that form adjectives are -ed, -en, -fold, -ful, -ig (-y, etc.), -less, -ly (-lich, etc.), -som (-sum, etc), -ward, and -wise: thousandfold, blisful, homeward, and otherwise. The Romance ones, -able, -al, -ive, and -ous, are found in mesurable, moral, and jalous. We will not examine the verbal suffixes (and prefixes) that enter via French and Latin (but see Dalton-Puffer). Some Germanic and Romance suffixes are listed in Table 6.11 with near synonymous examples.

Table 6.11. Some synonymous Germanic and Romance suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Germanic</th>
<th>Latin/French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-dom/-hood (freedom; likelihood)</td>
<td>-ite (liberty; probability)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-hood (boyhood)</td>
<td>-ence (adolescence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ful (sinful)</td>
<td>-al (not moral)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ing (beginning)</td>
<td>-ment (commencement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ship (worship)</td>
<td>-ation (adoration)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Meaning changes continue to take place, also after Middle English where it was perhaps accelerated by the many loans. As Table 6.11 shows, beginning and commencement are synonyms in Middle English. When commencement first comes into the language in 1250, it means ‘time of beginning’ and this meaning remains a minor one. By 1387, commencement is attested as meaning ‘taking the degree of Master or Doctor’. Commencement Day is first attested in 1606, and nowadays the academic use of commencement is the prevalent one.

When French and Latin words enter the language, they are often in competition with ‘native’ words. Typically, however, borrowed words narrow, as in the case of commencement, adolescence, and adoration. The majority of words have shifted their meanings and you can track that using the OED. A well-known shift is that of silly, mentioned in the previous chapter; in Appendix A (line 4) it is used with the older meaning of ‘happy, blissful’.

6. Middle English Dialects

In Chapter 4, we briefly discussed Old English dialects. Dialectal differences are more obvious for Middle English since we have more texts available from the different areas. The differences are also obvious because a Middle English standard had not arisen yet
(unlike in Later Old English) so that pronunciation differences are often clear from the spelling of words. In this section, we will examine a few of the features that characterize the different areas. Figure 6.6 offers a simplified version of the map found on www.hf.ntnu.no/engelsk/staff/johannesson/!oe/texts/imed/intro/dialchar.html.

Many dialect differences are obvious because the sound changes in Old and Middle English did not have the same impact in all areas. For instance, palatalization of the velar stops [k] and [g] is a southern phenomenon as is the voicing of initial fricatives in words such as vather and the change of long a to o. The fronting of the fricative [j] to [s], on the other hand, is typical of the North. Thus, more sound change seems to occur in non-northern areas. Changes in the morphology are the opposite: the loss of endings starts in the North as does the replacement of third person pronouns and the marking on the non-finite forms, such as participles and infinitives. The main characteristics of Middle English dialects are provided in Table 6.12, where the East and West Midlands are combined. The East Midlands varieties pattern more with the North and the West Midlands ones more with the South. Not all changes predict geographical origin as well as others, so be careful to use as many of these together as you can.

An atlas relevant to Middle English dialects, A Linguistic Atlas of Late Middle English (LALME), covers texts from the 14th and 15th centuries. It provides maps of where hem and them are used, for instance.

Examples of dialect differences are obvious in (1) above, repeated as (45):

(45) **Cursor Mundi – Northern version – 1300**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>þis ilk bok es translate</td>
<td>Into Inglis tong to rede</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the love of Inglis lede</td>
<td>Inglis lede of Ingland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 6.6. Middle English dialects**
### Table 6.12. Middle English dialect characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound and spelling:</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>Midlands</th>
<th>South</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no change:</td>
<td>mixed:</td>
<td>change to:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palatalization of velars</td>
<td>[k] – [g], e.g. frankis</td>
<td>[k] – [g] or [tf] – [j]</td>
<td>[tf] – [j]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fronting of [j]</td>
<td>[s], e.g. sal</td>
<td>[s] or [f]</td>
<td>[f] shal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long [a] &gt; [o]</td>
<td>[a], e.g. ham</td>
<td>mainly [o]</td>
<td>[o], e.g. home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short on-an</td>
<td>on, e.g. mon</td>
<td>on and an</td>
<td>an, e.g. man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voicing of initial fricatives</td>
<td>[f] – [s]</td>
<td>[f] – [s]</td>
<td>[v] – [z]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hw-/qu- spelling</td>
<td>qu-</td>
<td>hw-</td>
<td>hw-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Morphology and syntax:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>third plural pronoun</th>
<th>they/them</th>
<th>they/hem</th>
<th>hi/hem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>feminine third NOM S</td>
<td>she</td>
<td>she/heo</td>
<td>heo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see Table 6.6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbal present tense</td>
<td>-(e)s</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>like OE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see Table 6.9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present participle</td>
<td>-ande</td>
<td>-ende</td>
<td>-ing/inde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past participle</td>
<td>no prefix</td>
<td>y/-/i-</td>
<td>y/-/i-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infinitive marker</td>
<td>to; occasionally at</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preposition till</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>only later</td>
<td>only later</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the commun at understand
Frankis rimes here I redd
Comunlik in ilka sted
Mast es it wroght for Frankis man
Quat is for him na Frankis can?
In Ingland the nacion
Es Inglis man þar in commun
þe speche þat man wit mast may spede
Mast þarwit to speke war nede
Selden was for ani chance
Praised Inglis tong in France
Give we ilkan þare langage
Me think we do þam non outrage
To laud and Inglis man I spell
þat understandes þat I tell.

There are multiple versions of *Cursor Mundi*, the text in (45) is taken from the northern version. In this version, we see words such as *Inglis, Frankis, comunlik, ilkan* ‘each,’ and *mast* ‘most,’ characteristic of a Northern text: [s] rather than [f], [k] rather than [tf], and [a] rather than [o]. The spelling of *quat* ‘what’ confirms that it is northern. The
morphological features provide further evidence: *þam* ‘them’, not *hem*, and a verbal ending on *understandes* in the last line are both northern.

In (46) and (47), two characteristic lines for other dialects are provided. See if you can tell which is northern and which southern:

(46)  
*Éfter þe zeue benes þet byeþ y-conteyned ine holi pater noster ous behoueþ to spekene mid greate reuerence*

After the seven gifts that are contained in (the) holy our father we need to speak with great reverence

(47)  
*Quanne he hauede þis pleinte maked | þer-after stronglike he quaked*

when he had this complaint made thereafter strongly he said

In (46), the voiced initial fricative in *zeue* ‘seven’ indicates southern origin as do the *-þ* ending on the plural verb *byeþ* ‘are’ and the *y*-prefix on the participle. In (47), the spelling of *quanne* ‘when’ indicates northern origins as does the absence of the *y/ge-* prefix on the participle *maked*. Sentence (46) is taken from Dan Michel’s *Ayenbite of Inwit* (‘Remorse of Conscience’), which is from Kent, i.e. the South, from 1340; (47) is from *Havelok*, a Northeast Midlands text from the end of the 13th century.

More lines from *Ayenbite of Inwit* are provided in (48). Note the voiced initial fricative and the verbal and other endings, as in (46), and also the Southern [o] in *zuo* and the *an* in *man*:

(48)  
*Ayenbite of Inwit – Southern – 1340*

*be Peril of Slacnesse*

*Éfterward comp slacnesse þet comp of þe defaute of herte and of kueade wone.*

After that [peril] comes slackness which comes from the fault of courage and of evil habits.

*þat bint zuo þane man þet onneaþe he him yefþ to done wel*  
that binds so the man who hardly troubles himself to do well

*operhuil hit comp of onconnyndehede; and of fole hete.*  
otherwise it comes from ignorance and from fowl heat.

*huerby þe man op let zuo his herte and his body be uestinges*  
whereby the man starves so his heart and his body through fasts

*and be wakinges. and by opre dedes. zuo þet he ualþ ine fyeblesse*  
and through vigils and other deeds so that he falls into feebleness

*and ine zuiche ziknesse: þet he ne may naȝt trauayly ine godes seruice*  
and in such illness that he cannot labor in God’s service

*and to-ualþ ine þa slacnesse þet he ne heþ smak ne deuocion wel to done.*  
and falls into the slackness so that he has no taste nor devotion to do well.

(from Morris’ 1866 edition)

More lines from *Havelok* are given in (49). Typical northern features include the use of *til* and *hondes* (and *aren*); typical southern features are the use of *he* and *him* for the third
person plural, palatalization in *michel*. Note how that even though it is an earlier text than *Ayenbite*, it is much more readable. If the first line translates as ‘All who heard his summons’, and *ferden* as ‘went’, and *hore* as ‘mercy’, can you read the rest?

(49)  

**Havelok** – Northeast Midlands – 1280  
Alle þat the writes herden  
Sorful an sori til him ferden  
He wrungen hondes and wepen sore  
And yerne preyden cristes hore  
þat he wolde turnen him  
v of þat yuel þat was so grim  
þanne he weren comen alle  
Bifor þe king into the halle  
At winchestre þer he lay  
“Welcome” he seyde “be ye ay!  
Ful michel þanke kan y yow  
That ye aren comen to me now!”  
(from Skeat’s 1868 edition)

The lines in (50) are from the beginning of *Sir Orfeo*, from the manuscript that was possibly written around London in the beginning of the 14th century. Paying attention to verbs and participles, how can you tell it is from the South? Note that *wite* means ‘know’, *harping* ‘in song’, *ferli* ‘marvelous’, *wer* ‘war’, and *bourdes* ‘entertainment’:

(50)  

**Sir Orfeo** – South Midlands – 1330–40  
We redeþ oft and findeþ ywrite,  
And þis clerkes wee it wite,  
Layes þat ben in harping  
Ben yfounde of ferli þing.  
Sum beþe of wer and sum of wo,  
And sum of joie and mirþe also,  
And sum of trecherie and of gile,  
Of old aventours þat fel while,  
And sum of bourdes and ribaudy,  
And mani þer beþ of fairy.  
(from Bliss’ 1954 edition)

An edition of *Sir Orfeo* can be found at www.nls.uk/auchinleck/mss/orfeo.html. The full text with notes is available at www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/orfeo.htm.

We will briefly go over the areas of the works listed in Table 6.1 and add a few authors. Well-known southern writers and texts are Chaucer (lC14), Gower (lC14), and the *Owl and the Nightingale* (c1200). West Midlands texts include the *Gawain* texts (C14), some of the manuscripts of the Katerine-group (Bodley 34, c1230), and Layamon’s *Brut* (C13). East Midland texts include *Vices and Virtues* (eC13), the works of Ormulum (C12), Julian
of Norwich (1314) and Margery Kempe (1415), and the letters by the Paston Family (1415). **Northern** writings include the Cotton version of the *Cursor Mundi* (c.1300), Richard Rolle’s work (1314), the *Rule of St Benet* (1415), and the *York Plays* (1415).

### 7. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a description of Middle English between 1150 and 1500. The general trend in this period is towards an analytic language: cases and verbal agreement simplify and grammatical words appear. Sound changes occur, especially in southern areas and become relevant to dialect differentiation. Morphological changes seem to start in the North. Word formation is very creative, as it continues to be, and Germanic and Romance suffixes provide a wealth of almost synonymous words.

In the next chapter, we will see that not much changes in the morphology and syntax after 1500; we can therefore end this chapter with a timeline of some internal changes, anticipating some of the later ones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IE</th>
<th>Germanic</th>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>eModE</th>
<th>ModE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6000 BP</td>
<td>2000 BP</td>
<td>450 CE</td>
<td>1150</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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**Figure 6.7.** Some internal changes
Keywords

Emergence of English after 1300, Middle English spelling, deletion of consonants, pronominal changes, loss of case and agreement, introduction of articles and auxiliaries (grammaticalization), Germanic and Romance suffixes, compounding, meaning change, and dialect characteristics.

The texts in the Appendices are organized in chronological order. The first ones are therefore the most synthetic and hardest to read (if you are a native speaker of Modern English). This has been done to provide a sense for how the language changes; you could, of course, start from the back.

Exercises

1. Look at the excerpt from Chaucer’s The Miller’s Prologue (from Benson’s 1987 edition). How Middle English is this text? To answer the question, you could compare certain aspects (sounds, morphology, syntax, or lexicon) to Old or Modern English. For instance, what is the word order like? Is the verb ever last? If so, what does that show?


Chaucer

Oure Hooste lough and swoor, “So moot I gon,
This gooth aright; unbokeled is the male.
Lat se now who shal telle another tale;
For trewely the game is wel bigonne.
Now telleth ye, sir Monk, if that ye konne,    5
Somwhat to quite with the Knightes tale.”
The Millere, that for dronken was al pale,
So that unnethe upon his hors he sat,
He nolde avalen neither hood ne hat,
Ne abyde no man for his curteisie,          10
But in Pilates voys he gan to crie,
And swoor by armes, and by blood and bones,
I kan a noble tale for the nones,
With which I wol now quite the knyghtes tale.
Oure Hooste saugh that he was dronke of ale,  15
And seyde, “Abyd, Robyn, my leeve brother;
Some bettre man shal telle us first another.
Abyd, and lat us werken thriftily."
By goddes soule, quod he, that wol nat I;
For I wol speke, or elles go my wey.
Oure hoost answerde, tel on, a devel wey!
Thou art a fool; thy wit is overcome."
Now herkneth, quod the millere, alle and some!
But first I make a protestacioun
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my soun;
And therfore if that I mysspeke or seye
Wyte it the ale of southwerk, I you preye.
For I wol telle a legende and a lyf
Bothe of a carpenter and of his wyf,
How that a clerk hath set the wrightes cappe.
The reve answerde and seyde, stynt thy clappe!
Lat be thy lewed dronken harlotrye.
It is a synne and eek a greet folye
To apeyren any man, or hym defame,
And eek to bryngen wyves in swich fame.
Thou mayst ynogh of othere thynges seyn.

2. Find the present tense verb endings in the text of Exercise 1 (e.g. -s, -th). Knowing that the text was written around 1380, what can you conclude about its dialect?

3. Find all the second person pronouns in the Chaucer text in Exercise 1 and comment on their use (e.g. are the polite ones expected?).

4. The below changes between Old and Modern English occurred in Middle English. State what changed:

   | OE       | ModE   |
---|----------|--------|
a. heofon   >   heaven
b. cyssan   >   kiss
c. boga     >   bow
d. fæger    >   fair
e. hnecca   >   neck
f. anlic    >   only

5. What might (a) mean, and what can you say about the verb in Chaucer’s (a). How would you translate (b) into Modern English?

   a. And so byfel that yn his slep hym thoughte
      That in a forest faste he welk to wepe
      (Chaucer, *Troilus & Criseyde*, V 1234–5)
b. *Þer ase þeos þincges beoð þer is riht religiun*
   there as these things are there is right religion  
   *(Ancrene Riwle 12, from OED entry of *thereas*)

6. Provide a smoother translation for the first 13 lines of Layamon in Appendix A and comment on how many endings and determiners there are. Would you say this is Early or Late Middle English? Does the text have obvious dialect features?

7. List some features that make *Piers Plowman*’s English (Appendix B) more like Modern English than Layamon.

8. The text in Appendix C uses 3 for a variety of sounds. List those sounds.

9. Read the beginning of the *Canterbury Tales* (Appendix D) aloud, possibly after listening to it.

10. Take a look at the text in Appendix E. Can you tell what dialect it is?

11. Having examined some varieties of Middle English, list some Northernisms in the Old English of the first version of Appendix B.

12. The *Reeve’s Tale*, part of Chaucer’s *CT*, includes the quote below. Thinking about dialect, what is significant? (*hopur* is ‘hopper’ and *howgates* is ‘how’)
   
   ‘*By God, right by the hopur wil I stande*’
   *Quod John* ‘*and se howgates the corn gas in.*
   *yet saugh I nevere, by my fader kyn,*
   *How that the hopur wagges til and fra’.*

13. Comment on some of the more unusual spellings in Appendix F.
Appendix A

Layamon

As mentioned, Layamon exists in two versions (available from www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth/library/me/me.html). Figure 6.1 shows the first page of the Caligula version, transcribed below. The standard text edition is by Brook & Leslie (1963) and the Chaucer studio (http://english.byu.edu/chaucer) has an audio version at a reasonable price. Allen (1992) has a translation and a very basic translation for the first few lines is given to get started.

An preost wes on leoden; Lașamon wes ihoten. A priest was among people, Layamon was named
he wes Leouenaðes sone; liðe him beo Drihten. He was the son of Liefnoth, let God have mercy on
him
He wonede at Ernle3e; at æðelen are chirechen. He lived at Areley, at a lovely church
vppen Seuarne staþe; sel þar him þuhte. up Severn’s bank. Blissful he thought it
on-fest Radestone; þer he bock radde. 5 close to Redstone. There he book read
Hit com him on mode; & on his mern þonke. it came on his mind a merry thought
þet he wolde of Engle; þa æðelæn tellen. that he wanted of the English nobles tell
wat heo ihoten weoren; & wonene heo comen. what they were called and from-where they came
þa Englene londe; ærest ahten. that England first owned
æfter þan flode; þe from Drihtene com. 10 after the flood which came from God
þe al her a-quelde; quic þat he funde. which killed all which that it found
buten Noe.& Sem; Iaphet & Cham. except Noah and Sem, Japhet and Ham
& heore four wiues; þe mid heom weren on archen. and their four wives who with them were on the Ark
Lașamon gon liðen; wide 3ond þas leode.
& bi-won þa æðela boc; þa he to bisne nom. 15
He nom þa Englisca boc; þa makede Seint Beda.
An-ober he nom on Latin; þe makede Seinte Albin.
& þe feire Austin; þe fulluht broute hider in.
Boc he nom þe þridde; leide þer amidden.
þa makede a Frenchis clerc; 20
Wace wes ihoten; þe wel couþe writen.
& he hoe 3ef þare æðelen; Ælienor
þe wes Henries quene; þes heþes kinges.
Lașamon leide þeos boc; & þa leaf wende.
he heom leoffliche bi-heold. liþe him beo Drihten. 25
Feþeren he nom mid fingren; & fiede on boc-felle.
& þa soþere word; sette to-gadere.
& þa pre boc; þrumde to are.
Nu bidde[ð] Lașamon alcne æðele mon; 30
for þene almiten Godd.
Appendix B

Piers Plowman

The two excerpts from *Piers Plowman* (B-Text) are taken from Skeat’s standard 1886 edition. The date of this version is supposed to be from 1377–79. This English is slightly easier to read for a speaker of Modern English than Layamon. A translation is available on www.luminarium.org/medlit/plowman.htm, which site also has different editions of the Middle English text. The second part can be listened to on www.english.vt.edu/~baugh/Medieval/envy.htm.

I (lines 1–30)

In a somer seson . whan soft was the sonne
I shope me in shroudes . as I a shepe were
In habite as an heremite . vnholy of workes
Went wyde in this world . wondres to here
Ac on a May mornynge . on Maluerne hulles
Me byfel a ferly . of fairy me thouȝte
I was very forwandred . and went me to reste
Vnder a brode banke . bi a bornes side
And as I lay and lened . and loked in the wateres
I slombred in a slepyng . it sweyued so merye
Thanne gan I to meten . a merueilouse sweuene
That I was in a wildernesse . wist I neuer where
As I bihelde in-to the est . an hiegh to the sonne
I seigh a toure on a toft . trielich ymaked
A depe dale binethe . a dongeon there-inne
With depe dyches and derke . and dredful of sight
A faire felde ful of folke . fonde I there bytwene
Of alle maner of men . the mene and the riche
Worchyng and wandryng . as the worlde asketh
Some putten hem to the plow . pleyed ful seide
In settyng and in sowyng . swonken ful harde
And wonnen that wastours . with glotonye destruyeth
And some putten hem to pruyde . apparailed hem ther-after
In contenaunce of clothyng . comen disgised
In prayers and in penance . putten hem manye
Al for loue of owre lorde . lyueden ful streyte
In hope forto haue . heueneriche blisse
As ancres and heremites . that holden hem in here selles
And coueiten nought in contre . to kairen aboute
For no likerous liflode . her lykam to plese

Il (lines 5076–5133)

INUIDIA

Enuye with heuy herte . asked after schrifte
And carefullich mea culpa . he comsed to shewe
He was as pale as a pelet . in the palsye he semed
And clothed in a caurimaury . I couthe it nou3te discreue
In kirtel and kourteby . and a knyf bi his syde
Of a freres frokke . were the forsleues
And as a leke hadde yleye . longe in the sonne
So loked he with lene chekes . lourynge foule
His body was to-bolle for wratthe . that he bote his lippes
And wryngynge he 3ede with the fiste . to wreke hymself he thou3te
With werkes or with wordes . whan he seighe his tyme
Eche a worde that he warpe . was of an addres tonge
Of chydynge and of chalangynge . was his chief lyflode
With bakbitynge and bismer . and beryng of fals witnesse
This was al his curteisye . where that euere he shewed hym
I wolde ben yshryue quod this schrewe . and I for shame durst
I wolde be gladder bi god . that Gybbe had meschaunce
Than thou3e I had this woke ywonne . a weye of Essex chese
I haue a neighbore ney3e me . I haue ennuyed hym ofte
And lowen on hym to lorde . to don hym lese his siluer
And made his frendes ben his foon . thorw my false tonge
His grace and his good happes . greueth me ful sore
Bitwene many and many . I make debate ofte
That bothe lyf and lyme . is lost thorw my speche
And whan I mete him in market . that I moste hate
I hailse hym hendeliche . as I his frende were
For he is dou3tier than I . I dar do non other
Ac hadde I maystrye and my3te . god wote my wille
And whan I come to the kirke . and sholde knele to the rode
And preye for the poeple . as the prest techeth
For pilgrimes and for palmers. for alle the poeple after
Thanne I crye on my knees. that Cryste 3if hem sorwe
That beren awey my bolle. and my broke schete
Awey fro the auter thanne. turne I myn eyghen
And biholde how Eleyne. hath a newe cote
I wisshe thanne it were myne. and al the webbe after
And of mennes lesynge I laughe. that liketh myn herte
And for her wynnynge I wepe. and wallie the tyme
And deme that hij don ille. there I do wel worse
Who-so vndernympheth me here-of. 3I hate hym dedly after
I wolde that vche a wyght. were my knaue
For who-so hath more than I. 3hat angr eth me sore
And thus I lyue louellees. lyke a luther dogge
That al my body bolneth. 3or bitter of my galle
I my3te nou3te eet many 3eres. as a man ou3te
For enuye and yuel wille. is yuel to defye
May no sugre ne swete thinge. asswage my swellynge
Ne no diapenidion. dryue it fro myne herte
Ne noyther schrifte ne shame. but ho-so schrape my mawe
3us redili quod Repentaunce. 3nd radde hym to the beste
Sorwe of synnes. 3is sauacioun of soules
I am sori quod that segge. I am but selde other
And that maketh me thus megre. 3or I ne may me venge
Amonges burgeyses haue I be. dwellynge at Londoun
And gert bakbitinge be a brocoure. 3o blame mennes ware
Whan he solde and I nou3te. thanne was I redy
To lye and to loure on my neighbore. 3nd to lakke his chaffare
I wil amende this 3if I may. thorw my3te of God almy3ty

Appendix C

*Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

The introduction of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is given here in the edition by Tolkien and Gordon (1925). A facsimile appears in Figure 6.8 and you can listen to the introduction on http://athena.english.vt.edu/~baugh/Medieval/SGGK2.htm. A page of resources (with modern translations) can be found at www.luminarium.org/medlit/gawainre.htm and images of the manuscript are available at http://faculty.virginia.edu/engl381ck/three.html. A translation for a portion of the text has been given.
Since the siege and the assault were ceased at Troy, the battlements broken and burnt to brands and ashes, the man that the plots of treason there made/framed was tried for his treachery, the worst on earth. It was Aeneas the noble and his high kin that afterwards conquered provinces and masters became.

Wellnigh of all the wealth in the western regions. From rich Romulus to Rome’s riches quickly. With great arrogance that city he set up first and named it with his own name, which it now has. Tirius started towns in Tuscany. Longbeard lifted up homes in Lombardy. And far past the French water Felix Brutus on many broad banks he puts Britain with joy. Where wars, vengeance, and wonder at times have been wanting and often both bliss and turmoil. Very quickly have changed again.

This king was at Camelot during Christmas. With many gracious lords, the best people worthy of the Round Table all those fine brothers with fine revelry and carefree joy. They went to the court to do carols (dances and singing) for there the feast lasted a full fifteen days with all the meat and mirth that could be such noise and glee glorious to hear. Dear sounds during the day, dancing during the nights all was heaped high in the halls and chambers with lords and ladies as lovely as could be with all the wealth of the world they lived there together.

The most kyd knyżtez vnder Krystes seluen, the best knights under Christ himself. And the loveliest ladies that ever had life and he the noblest king that held court.
For al watz þis fayre folk in her first age, on sille, because this fair folk in their prime, in the hall,  
Pe hapnest vnder heuen, the blessed under heaven  
Kyng hyȝest mon of wylle; the king highest of will  
Hit were now gret nye to neuen it were now great trouble to name  
So hardy a here on hille. a hardier army on a hill.

Figure 6.8. Facsimile of Gawain
The following lines have interesting vocabulary, some inherited from Old English and some Scandinavian: renk ‘man’, gomen ‘man’ (OE guma), leudle3 ‘people-less, i.e. alone’, fole ‘horse’, frythe3 ‘wood’, gate ‘road’, karp ‘speak’, wonde ‘hesitated’, frayned ‘questioned’ (OE fregnan), and freke3 ‘men’ (OE freca):

Gawain lines 691–810

Now ridez þis renk þur3 þe ryalme of Logres,
Sir Gauan, on Godez halue, þa3 hym no gomen þo3t.
Oft leudlez alone he lengez on ny3tez
Þer he fonde no3t hym byfore þe fare þat he lyked.
Hade he no fere bot his fole bi frythez and dounez,
Ne no gome bot God bi gate wyth to karp,
Til þat he ne3ed ful neghe into þe Norþe Walez.
Alle þe iles of Anglesay on lyft half he haldez,
And farez ouer þe fordez by þe forlondez,
Ouer at þe Holy Hede, til he hade eft bonk
In þe wyldrenesse of Wyrale; wonde þer bot lyte
<F 100v>Þat auþer God oþer gome wyth goud hert louied.
And ay he frayned, as he ferde, at frekez þat he met,
If þay hade herde any karp of a kny3t grene,
In any grounde þeraboute, of þe grene chapel;
And al nykked hym wyth nay, þat neuer in her lyue
Þat se3e neuer no segge þat watz of suche hwez
of grene.
Þe kny3t tok gates straunge
In mony a bonk vn bene,
His cher ful oft con chaunge
Þat chapel er he my3t sene.

Mony klyf he ouerclambe in contrayez straunge,
Fer floten fro his frendez fremedly he rydez.
At vche warþe oþer water þer þe wy3e passed
He fonde a foo hym byfore, bot ferly hit were,
And þat so foule and so felle þat fe3t hym byhode.
So mony meruayl bi mount þer þe mon fyndez,
Hit were to tore for to telle of þe tenþe dole.
Sumwhyle wyth wormez he werrez, and with wolues als,
Sumwhyle wyth wodwos, þat woned in þe knarrez,
Boþe wyth bullez and berez, and borez oþerquyle,
And etaynez, þat hym anelede of þe he3e felle;
Nade he ben du3ty and dry3e, and Dry3tyn had serued,
Douteles he hade ben ded and dreped ful ofte.
For werre wrathed hym not so much þat wynter nas wors,
When þe colde cler water fro þe cloudez schadde,
And fres er hit falle myȝt to þe fale erþe;
Ner slayn wyth þe slete he sleped in his yrnes
Mo nyȝtez þen innoghe in naked rokkez,
Þer as claterande fro þe crest þe colde borne rennez,
And henged he þe ouer his hede in hard iissee-ikkles.
Þus in peryl and payne and plytes ful harde
Bi contray cayrez þis knyȝt, tyl Krystmasse euen,
al one;
Þe knyȝt wel þat tyde
To Mary made his mone,
Þat ho hym red to ryde
<F 101r> And wysse hym to sum wone.

Bi a mounte on þe morne meryly he rydes
Into a forest ful dep, þat ferly watz wylde,
Hiȝe hillez on vche a halue, and holtwodez vnnder
Of hore okez ful hoge a hundreth togeder;
Þe hasel and þe haȝborne were harled al samen,
With roȝe raged mosse rayled aywhere,
With mony bryddez vnblȝe vpon bare twyges,
Þat pitsysly þer piped for pyne of þe colde.
Þe gome vpon Gryngolet glydez hem vnnder,
Þurȝ mony misy and myre, mon al hym one,
Carande for his costes, lest he ne keuer schulde
To se þe seruyse of þat syre, þat on þat self nyȝt
Of a burde watz borne oure baret to quelle;
And þerfore sykyng he sayde, ‘I beseche þe, lorde,
And Mary, þat is myldest moder so dere,
Of sum herber þer heȝly I myȝt here masse,
Ande þy matynye to-morne, mekely I ask,
And þerto prestly I pray my pater and aue
and crede.’
He rode in his prayere,
And cryed for his mysdede,
He sayned hym in sypes sere,
And sayde ‘Cros Kryst me spedel’
Appendix D

Chaucer


*Lines 1–42*

Whan that aprill with his shoures soote
The droghte of march hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;  
Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
Tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the ram his halve cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open ye
(so priketh hem nature in hir corages);
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,
To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;
And specially from every shires ende
Of engelond to caunterbury they wende,
The hooly blisful martir for to seke.
Bifil that in that seson on a day,
In southwerk at the tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
To caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At nyght was come into that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,
That toward caunterbury wolden ryde.
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to ryse,
To take oure wey ther as I yow devyse.
But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree,
And eek in what array that they were inne;
And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.

Appendix E

Anonymous lyrics

Both lyrics below are from the 13th century and look southern. The words you might not be familiar with are *awe* ‘ewe’, *sterteth* ‘leaps’, *swik* ‘stop’, *fugheles* ‘birds’, and *necheth* ‘comes near’.

I
Sumer is icumen in
Sumer is icumen in
Lhude sing, cuccu!
Groweth sed and bloweth med
and springth the wude nu.
Sing cuccu!
Awe bletheth after lomb,
hlouth after calve cu;
bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth
murie sing, cuccu!
Cuccu, Cuccu!
Wel singes thu Cuccu,
Ne swik thu naver nu
Sing Cuccu, nu sing Cuccu!

II
Miri it is while sumer ilast
Miri it is while sumer ilast
with fugheles song;
Appendix F

Paston Letters

The Paston family letters from around 1425 provide some insight into the affairs of a (well-to-do) family. The collection contains wills, recipes, and other information. Margaret Paston was probably literate but dictated her letters. The one below is to her husband John in 1443, as it appears in Davis’ (1971) edition.

To my ryght worchepful husbond Jhon Paston, dwellyng in þe Innere Temple at London, in hast.

Ryth worshipful hosbon, I recomande me to yow, desyryng hertely to here of your wilfare, thanckyng God of your a-mendyng of þe grete dysese þat ye have hade; and I thancke yow for þe letter þat ye sent me, for be my trowthe my moder and I were nowth in hertys es fro þe tyme þat we woste of your sekenesse tyl we woste verely of your a-mendyng. My moder hat be-hestyd a-nodyr ymmage of wax of þe weytte of yow to Oyur Lady of Walsyngham, and sche sent iiij nobelys to þe iiij orderys of frerys at Norweche to pray for yow; and I have be-hestyd to gon on pylgreymmays to Walsyngham and to Sent Levenardys for yow. Be my trowth, I had hevy a sesyn as I had fro þe tyme þat I woste of your sekenesse tyl I woste of your a-mendyng, and 3yth myn hert is in no grete esse, ne nowth xal be tyl I wott þat 3e ben very hol.

Your fader and myn was dys day sevenyth at Bekelys for a matyr of the Pryor of Bromholme, and he lay at Gerlyston þat nyth and was þer tyl it was ix of þe croke and þe toder day. And I sentte thedyr for a gounne, and my moder seyde þat I xulde non have dens tyl I had be þer a-3en; and so þei cowde non gete. My fader Garneyss sentte me worde þat he xulde ben here þe nexth weke, and myn emme also, and pleyn hem here wyth herre hawkys; and þei xulde have me hom wyth hem. And, so God help me, I xal exscusse me of myn goyng dedyr yf I may, for I sopose þat I xal redelyer have tydyngys from yow herre dan i xulde have þer.

I xal sende my moder a tokyn þat sche toke me, for I sopose þe tyme is cum þat I xulde sendeth here yf I kepe þe be-hest þat I have made-I sopose I have tolde yow wat it was. I pray yow hertely þat [ye] wol wochesaf to sende me a letter as hastely as 3e may, yf wrytyn be non dysesse to yow, and þat ye wollen wochesaf to sende me worde quowe your sor dott. Yf I mythe have hade my wylle I xulde a seyne yow er dys tyme. I wolde 3e wern at hom, yf it were
your ese and your sor myth ben as wyl lokyth to here as it tys þer 3e ben now, lever dan a new gounne, þow it were of scarlette. I pray yow, yf your sor be hol and so þat 3e may indure to ryde, wan my fader com to London þat 3e wol askyn leve and com hom wan þe hors xul be sentte hom a-3eyn; for I hope 3e xulde be kepte as tenderly herre as 3e ben at London.

I may non leyser have to do wrytyn half a quarter so meche as I xulde seyn to yow yf I myth speke wyth yow. I xal sende yow a-nothyr letter as hastely as I may. I thanke yow þat 3e wolde wochesaffe to remember my gyrdyl, and þat 3e wolde wryte to me at þis tyme, for I sopose þe wrytyng was non esse to yow. All-myth God have yow in hys kepyn and sende yow helth. Wretyn at Oxenede in ryth grete hast on Sent Mihyllys Evyn.

Yourrys, M. Paston

My modyr gretit 3ow wel and sendyt 3ow Goddys blyssyng and here, and sche prayith 3ow, and I pray 3ow also, þat 3e be wel dyetyd of mete and dryngke, for þat is þe grettest helpe þat 3e may haue now to your helthe ward. Your sone faryth wel, blyssyd be God.
Chapter 7

Early Modern English

1500–1700

The Renaissance was an intellectual and cultural development initially inspired by the desire to revive Greek and Latin culture, as indicated by its name, meaning ‘rebirth’. The Renaissance also fostered scientific and scholarly inquiry and a humanistic world view. It started at different times in different parts of Europe; in England, it began a little before 1500. In socio-economic terms, this is a time of migration to large cities as well as large-scale poverty, eviction, and banishment. The 17th century also sees large-scale slave trading from Africa to the Americas, with major consequences for the language, as we will see in Chapter 9.

One characteristic of this period is that *carpe diem* (‘celebrate the day’) replaces the medieval *memento mori* (‘remember that you will die’). The Renaissance is a time of freedom of ideas; for language that means freedom in creating and borrowing words. During the Renaissance, English continues to become more analytic. By 1700, the Great Vowel Shift is more or less complete and spelling relatively uniform; 1700 is therefore considered the end of this period even though that date, like 1500, is somewhat debatable.

In this chapter, we will examine the features of Early Modern English as well as some significant 16th- and 17th-century developments. The organization of the chapter is similar to that of the chapters on Old and Middle English. Section 1 discusses printing and literacy, and lists some Early Modern English sources. Section 2 examines Early Modern English spelling and sounds, and Sections 3 and 4 chronicle language internal changes. Section 5 takes a look at the extensive borrowings from Greek, Latin, and other languages, typical of this period. Section 6 catalogs efforts to standardize spelling and compose dictionaries, and Section 7 examines attitudes towards varieties of Early Modern English. Authorship debates are addressed in Section 8.

1. Printing, Literacy, and Texts

A number of events took place at the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th centuries that make 1500 an appropriate date for the start of Early Modern English: in 1476
Caxton introduced the printing press to England and made texts available to a wider group of people, and in 1492 Columbus reached the ‘new World’. By 1500, the English language was such that native speakers of Modern English generally need no translations to understand it. In this section, we first discuss the process of hand printing at the end of the 15th century and define some important terms. Then we discuss the state of literacy in this period and the number and types of books printed.

A compositor was the person selecting the letters and arranging them in a frame, making a page. Once the frame was filled, ink was rolled over it and a sheet of paper pressed against the letters. This produced a printed page that could be used for a pamphlet. For books, more than one page was printed on a sheet of paper. If two pages were printed on one side and two on the other, the sheet of paper was folded once, for a total of four pages of text. Usually a set of sheets, called a quire, was folded, as shown in Figure 7.1, and bound together with other such sets.

Figure 7.1. A quire of two sheets

To enable the compositor and binder to keep track of the order of the pages, a signature was added to the bottom of the page: A1 marked the front page (recto) of the first quire, A1 reverse the second page (verso), and so on, as shown in Figure 7.1. The second quire started with the signature B. The quires were bound together in a folio. For the order of the pages to be correct, a sheet needed to have A1 (or A) and the reverse of A4 printed on one side, and the reverse of A1 and the front of A4 on the other (Look at Appendix B and see what the signature on that page is). Try folding a sheet once and put signatures in the right places.

Some folio volumes are fairly complex: William Shakespeare’s 1623 First Folio (F1) of 36 plays contains 993 pages and a preface. Each quire is made up of three sheets, 12 pages each; this means there must have been at least 83 quires, excluding the preface. The cost of
an unbound volume was one British pound and 1,000 copies were probably printed (Pollard 1909). Of these, Henry and Emily Folger collected 79 in the early part of the 20th century and these are now kept in the Folger Library in Washington, D.C. F1 must have been successful since a second folio appeared in 1632, a third in 1663, and a fourth in 1685.

Before the First Folio was printed, quarto versions of several of the plays appeared. Q1 was the first quarto edition, Q2 the second, and so on. Hamlet first appeared in a 1603 Q1, but there are other versions: Q2, Q3, and Q4 (see the differences between them at http://ise.uvic.ca). The relationship between the different quarto and folio editions has been studied extensively; see almost any edition of Shakespeare for which version is the ‘good’ copy.

A quarto is in some ways more complicated. It involved printing four pages on one side of a sheet and four on the other and folding the sheet twice. Figure 7.2 provides an example, taken from Gaskell (1972: 89).

![Figure 7.2. Outer and inner sides of a sheet of a quarto](image)

Try folding a sheet of paper twice and see where the page numbers go and where you would have to cut the page. An octavo contained eight pages on one side and eight on the other and was folded once more. Duodecimo editions had 12 pages on each side and sextodecimo editions 16.

Before (and even after) 1476, printed books were imported (from Italy, Germany, France, and the Low Countries). Early printers initially tried to attract those who had bought manuscripts: teachers, lawyers, physicians, people connected to the church, and wealthy readers interested in literature. Literacy, however, was already spreading rapidly in the Middle English period and increasingly cookbooks, almanacs, sheets of music,
and how-to books were printed. We know this from contemporary estimates of literacy: Thomas More, for instance, estimates that 50% of the population may have been literate. Literacy must have increased a great deal since the king was (unsuccessfully) petitioned in the late 14th and again in the 16th century to make it illegal for ‘common’ people to learn to read (Knowles 1997: 73; Lawson & Silver 1973: 83). Despite strong opposition to literacy, which stems from the fact that an educated population was considered dangerous by those in power, literacy continued to spread. This made the selection of books printed more varied and the printing press made book ownership easier. In fewer than 200 years after the introduction of the printing press, between 1476 and 1640, 20,000 titles were printed in English (Baugh & Cable 2002: 201). Throughout Europe, 100,000 titles appeared during the first 100 years of printing (Hirsch 1967). The print run of a book might be 200 or a 100 times that. As for the types of books printed, the estimates are that 45% were theological in nature, 36% literary, 11% legal, and 8.5% scientific (Lenhart 1935). Caxton chose to print texts such as Chaucer and Malory (see Blake 1969) that he thought would appeal to an aristocratic public.

At this time, there were also numerous attempts to print an English version of the Bible. In 1229, the Synod of Toulouse had made it illegal for laymen to read the Bible; hence it was not permitted to translate it into languages such as French, German, and English. In the 1370s, John Wycliff started a reform movement in the church, and in 1382 a translation of the Bible was completed (but banned in England). This reform movement, also referred to as Lollard, is considered responsible for the Peasant Revolt of 1381. William Tyndale made another attempt at translating the Bible in 1525, but the book was banned again (with the help of Thomas More), and Tyndale was strangled and burned near Brussels in 1536.

After Henry VIII managed to lessen the power of the Pope in the 1530s, English Bibles were no longer considered dangerous. Miles Coverdale worked on a version of Tyndale’s Bible that appeared in 1539 in over 20,000 copies. Queen Elizabeth I decreed that a copy of Coverdale’s Great Bible be present in every church. The King James Version, or KJV, named after King James who hired a group of people to work on it soon after he succeeded Elizabeth, appeared in 1611; it is said to have incorporated vast portions of Tyndale’s New Testament. This version became ‘official’ and widespread after 1611 (http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/kjv/browse.html). It leaves out passages that could be construed anti-monarchist as politics and religion were, and still are, connected. The language of the King James Version is archaic, as we will see in Section 3.

In addition to the KJV, which was composed by a number of people, and Shakespeare’s steady output between 1590 and 1616, there are many other important works in the Early Modern English period. Thomas More lived in the early part of the English Renaissance and was known for his Utopia written in Latin in 1515 as well as some other dramatic and humanist works. In 1565, Montaigne was translated by Florio; the Iliad and Odyssey were translated as well. Edmund Spenser published The Faerie Queene in 1596, and Christopher Marlowe wrote Dr. Faustus and Tamburlaine around the same time. Table 7.1 lists the names of some authors from this period.
Table 7.1. Early Modern English authors, in chronological order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1533–1603</td>
<td>Elizabeth I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1552–1618</td>
<td>Walter Ralegh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1554–1606</td>
<td>John Lyly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1561–1626</td>
<td>Francis Bacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1564–1616</td>
<td>William Shakespeare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1570/80–1626</td>
<td>Cyril Tourneur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1572–1631</td>
<td>John Donne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1580–1625</td>
<td>John Webster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1583–1639</td>
<td>Philip Massinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1586–1640</td>
<td>John Ford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1623–1673</td>
<td>Margaret Cavendish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1631–1700</td>
<td>John Dryden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1640–1689</td>
<td>Aphra Behn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1554–1599</td>
<td>Edmund Spenser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1554–1586</td>
<td>Philip Sidney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1558–1594</td>
<td>Thomas Kyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1564–1593</td>
<td>Christopher Marlowe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1570–1632</td>
<td>Thomas Dekker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1572–1637</td>
<td>Ben Jonson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1579–1625</td>
<td>John Fletcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1580–1627</td>
<td>Thomas Middleton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1584–1616</td>
<td>Francis Beaumont</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1608–1674</td>
<td>John Milton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1628–1688</td>
<td>John Bunyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1633–1703</td>
<td>Samuel Pepys</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Early Modern English period, and in particular the 17th century, also produced scientific and philosophical writings, but many of these were in Latin. For instance, William Gilbert (1540–1603) wrote in Latin about magnetism in *De Magnete* (1600); William Harvey (1578–1657) discovered in 1616 how blood circulates but published in Latin as did Francis Bacon (1561–1626) and Isaac Newton (1642–1727), but see Appendix E for a letter in English. There are a few works in English, however: in 1661, Robert Boyle (1627–1691) published *The Sceptical Chymist*, see (57) below, as well as works on theology. Joseph Glanvill’s (1636–1680) *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* of the same year is in English as is John Locke’s 1690 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. There were also linguistic works such as *The ground-work of a new perfect language* (Francis Lodowyck 1652), *Elements of Speech* (William Holder 1669), and work by Alexander Hume (see Appendix C). Some of these will be discussed in Sections 5 and 6.


2. Early Modern English Spelling and Sounds

In this section, we will examine some Early Modern English texts. We will see that Early Modern English spelling displays more variation than Modern English, but is starting to look quite ‘modern’. Sound changes continue to occur, as expected.

Figure 7.3 is a facsimile of a page from Act II (Scene 1) of *Richard II*, taken from the First Folio (1623). The play is also available in earlier quarto versions, the earliest from 1597. In the F1, there is a *u* where Modern English has *v*: *siluer*. We notice some word-
final -e, as in Moate, farre, ransome, and Farme, and a few other minor points such as the double -ll in royall, shamefull, and scandall. Also, [s] is spelled either as s or resembling an f, depending on its position in the word.

Figure 7.3. Facsimile of Richard II
On line 17 in the second column starts a well-known part. It is transcribed in (1):

(1) **Shakespeare – Richard II**

This royall Throne of Kings, this sceptred Isle,  
This earth of Maiesty, this seate of Mars,  
This other Eden, demy paradise,  
This Fortresse built by Nature for her selfe,  
Against infection, and the hand of warre:  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone, set in the siluer sea,  
Which serues it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a Moate defensiue to a house,  
Against the enuy of lesse happier Lands,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this Realme, this England,  
This Nurse, this teeming wombe of Royall Kings,  
Fear’d by their breed, and famous for their birth,  
Renowned for their deeds, as farre from home,  
For Christian seruice, and true Chiualrie,  
As is the sepulcher in stubborne {Iury}  
Of the Worlds ransome, blessed {Maries} Sonne.  
This Land of such deere soules, this deere- deere Land,  
Deere for her reputation through the world,  
Is now Leas’d out (I dye pronouncing it)  
Like to a Tenement or pelting Farme.  
England bound in with the triumphant sea,  
Whose rocky shore beates backe the enuious siedge  
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,  
With Inky blottes, and rotten Parchment bonds.  
That England, that was wont to conquer others,  
Hath made a shamefull conquest of it selfe.  
Ah! would the scandall vanish with my life,  
How happy then were my ensuing death? (II, i)

The passage in (1) happens not to have varied spellings of the same word, even though that is quite common in this period. For instance, in *Richard II*, *dye* (l. 20) is elsewhere also spelled *die* and *farre* (l. 14) *far*. The spelling in this excerpt, as is common for the time, has a *u* where Modern English has *v*.

In Early Modern English, capital letters are used more frequently than in Middle English, where they only occur at the beginning of the line, if at all. Shakespeare does capitalize nouns and sometimes adjectives. The punctuation in the F1 edition is relatively modern, but in many Early Modern English texts it is still stylistic rather than grammatical, a point we will come back to in Section 3. This mainly stylistic use of punctuation is characteristic of a language that is not completely analytic, as we will see.
We have often mentioned the GVS because we have to ‘undo’ it to arrive at the pronunciation of Old and Middle English. The sounds of Early Modern English have undergone the shift. For instance, *isle* in (1) is pronounced [ajl], with the vowel shifted, and in *nature*, the first vowel is pronounced [e], as expected after the GVS.

This shift, however, does not take place overnight and, even as late as 1600, some sounds have not completely raised. If you can, listen to the passage in (1), using a recording trying to reproduce the 16th century sounds, to hear some unshifted vowels. These provide evidence of a more refined version of the GVS than we have seen in Chapter 2, a shift that had one more stage to it, as represented in Figure 7.4.

![Figure 7.4. The GVS](image)

The vowels yet to be shifted can be heard in words such as *seate* and *sea*, pronounced with an [e] where Modern English has [i]. The sound spelled *ea* is pronounced [ε] in Middle English, and it raises to [e] around 1600 and to [i] around 1700. This [e] pronunciation of *seate* in (1) shows the GVS was not complete by Shakespeare’s time. In Shakespeare’s English, *see* and *sea* are therefore pronounced differently: the former has already shifted to [i], in accordance with the GVS, but the latter has not and is pronounced more like [e]. The [o] in *stone* and *moate* in (1) sounds different in Early Modern and Modern English as well; hence, as shown in Table 7.2, a more accurate representation of the shift would have four levels of vowel height.

We now know that the GVS proceeds in stages. The approximate dates of the changes are shown in Table 7.2, adapted from Lass (1999: 72, 85, 96). By 1700, the sound system resembles that of Modern English, as shown in Figure 7.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>1400</th>
<th>1500</th>
<th>1600</th>
<th>1700</th>
<th>ModE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i (ice)</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ej</td>
<td>ej</td>
<td>aj</td>
<td>aj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ee (meet)</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ea (meat/great)</td>
<td>ε</td>
<td>ε</td>
<td>ej</td>
<td>i/ej</td>
<td>i/ej</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a (ace)</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a&gt;ε</td>
<td>ε</td>
<td>ej</td>
<td>ej</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ou (out)</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>ow</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>aw</td>
<td>aw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oo (boot)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oa (boat)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>ow</td>
<td>ow</td>
<td>ow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some sound changes that were part of the GVS were arrested before being complete. Compare, for example, the words in (2) to those in (3); all would be expected to be pronounced with [i]. The more frequent Modern English pronunciation is indeed [i], as in (2), but there are a few [e] pronunciations, as (3) shows:

(2) sea, neat, clean, fear, read, teach, leave, eat, weak, meaning, meat

(3) steak, great, yea, break, Reagan, Yeats

The words in (2) have the expected pronunciation considering the GVS; the words in (3) have an earlier pronunciation, which for unknown reasons is retained up to the present.

Since [e] and [o] change last, the GVS must have started either with the high vowels or the low ones. If high vowels were the first to change ([min] to [majn]), there would be a void in the vowel diagram, and the mid vowels would be pulled up (drag chain). If the low vowels were first ([name] to [nemә]), they would push up the higher ones (push chain).

A lot has been written on the GVS; see Lass (1999) for a review. For the sociolinguistic implications, see Fennell (2001: 159ff.). Dobson (1957) discusses the struggle between the [i] and [e] pronunciations in sea, great, meat, and break. The ‘polite’ pronunciation was the one with [e], similar to the words in (3); ultimately the less polite one won in the majority of cases, as (2) shows. Names often retain the old pronunciation: Reagan and Yeats have the old pronunciation, and Beatty is pronounced both ways.

You might ask how we can determine the pronunciation now that the spelling is more or less fixed. There is rhyming evidence, e.g. raisin and reason rhyme. In his 1633 grammar, Charles Butler published a list of homophones (different words with the same pronunciation) and Richard Hodges provided more in 1643 (see Dobson 1957: 396 ff.). Kökeritz (1953: 400ff.) provided lists of words that rhyme. Apart from rhyming evidence, there are also many grammars. A grammar for Dutch learners of English, for instance, lists ea as pronounced [e] as late as 1646 (Dobson 1957: 379).

As for Early Modern English consonants, some of them are deleted, especially in consonant clusters. For instance, there are puns on knight and night in Shakespeare, an indication that the initial [k] is no longer pronounced. The word-initial [w] ceases to be pronounced, e.g. in wrist and write. Kökeritz (1953: 295) says “[f]rom a modern point of view the Elizabethan pronunciation of the consonants was slipshod, not to say vulgar.” Shakespeare might have made fun of Kökeritz’ view: in (4), extra consonants are put into words such as debt and calf to bring the spelling closer to Latin. This is referred to as etymological respelling. Love’s Labor’s Lost first appeared in a quarto version in 1598, but is given here in the F1 edition:

(4) Shakespeare – Love’s Labor’s Lost

He draweth out the thred of his verbositie, fi-ner
then the staple of his argument. I abhor such pha-naticall
phantasims, such insociable and poynit deuise
companions, such rackers of ortagriphie, as to speake
dout fine, when he should say doubt; det, when he shold
pronounce debt; debt, not det: he clepeth a Calf, Caufe:
halfe, haufe: neighbour {vocatur} nebour; neigh abreuiated
ne: this is abhominable, which he would call abhomi-nable
it insinuateth me of infamie: {ne inteligis domine}, to
make franticke, lunaticke? (V, i, 25)

Wyld (1920: 286–7) provides an excellent summary of the changes involving consonants,
a few of which will be given here. In Early Modern English — and as early as Middle
English — r starts to disappear; this later leads to much sociolinguistic investigation on
prestige variants. The change starts before s in words such as bass and ass (from earlier
bærs and arse). The Cely Letters, where parcel is written as passel, provide examples from
the 15th century. In these letters, r is written in unexpected places such as farther for fa-
ther, indicating that it was not clear to writers when to use it. By 1770, r has disappeared
after vowels in southern English but not in other areas; this gives rise to the well-known
difference between rhotic (with r) and non-rhotic (no r in most positions) dialects (Lass

Another difference between Middle and Early Modern English is that words ending
in -ing are pronounced with [In] in the early period rather than [In] (Kökeritz 1953: 313;
Wyld 1920: 289). The [ŋ] sound occurs in Old and Middle English before a velar stop,
as in sing, but not word-finally. In Early Modern English, this changes and the nasals in
sin and in sing become differentiated, though not in all varieties. There was — and still is
— social pressure to pronounce the [In] rather than [In] (Trudgill 2000: 37), and there is
variety, as Figure 7.5 shows.

Figure 7.5. The pronunciation of velar nasals. Dennis © NAS. Reprinted with permission of
the North American Syndicate.
The pronunciation of initial *h*- is also interesting. As mentioned in the previous chapter, [h] is lost before liquids and nasals (as in *hlaf* to *loaf* and *hnitu* to *nit* ‘louse egg’) and later before glides in most dialects. This last deletion makes it impossible to distinguish between *which* and *witch*. We will come back to the social implications of this change in the next chapter. The loss of *h* before vowels in many dialects, as in *hand*, may be due to French influence since words such as *history* do not have an [h] in French, from which they are borrowed. The absence of initial [h] is stigmatized after the 18th century, which causes the [h] in *history*, *hospital*, and *hymnal* to be pronounced. In some contexts, initial *h* is not pronounced, however: *hour* and *heir*. See also Lass (1987: 95–6) and Chapter 8.

In many varieties of present-day English, [θ] and [ð] are pronounced as [t] and [d], respectively. This must have been common in Early Modern English as well. As Barnet (1998: xx) points out, *debt* and *death* were pronounced similarly enough to be ‘confused’ in the pun in (5) from around 1600:

(5) A man can die but once. We owe God a death

(Shakespeare, 2 Henry 4 III, ii, 243).

Some changes in Early Modern English sounds are summarized in Table 7.3. They will continue to vary between old and new form across the Englishes, however, as we will see in the next two chapters.

**Table 7.3. Some sound changes in Early Modern English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GVS nears completion</strong></td>
<td>[h]</td>
<td>&gt; zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[k] &gt; zero (in initial cluster)</td>
<td>[t]/[ð]</td>
<td>&gt; [t]/[d]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[r] &gt; zero (first before -s)</td>
<td>[w]</td>
<td>&gt; zero (in initial cluster)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[In] &gt;</td>
<td>[In]</td>
<td>(in final position)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the main change between Middle and Early Modern English shown in Table 7.3 is the introduction of the velar nasal [ŋ] as a regular sound. There are two other changes, namely the introduction of the [ʒ], mentioned earlier as due to French loans, and the loss of [X] in words such as *night*.

From the 13th century on, the choice between *a* and *an* and the forms of the possessive (e.g. *my* or *mine*) depend on the word that follows. If that word starts with a vowel (or *h* in earlier English), the form ending in [n] is used: *an eager ayre* and *mine owne eyes* in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Otherwise, *a* or *my* is used: *A most auspitious starre* and *my Magick garment* in the *Tempest*. This system remains more or less in place until the 18th century for possessives and until the present for articles. The presence or absence of [n] facilitates pronunciation.

As a last point in this section, we will briefly consider the stress of words. As Lass (1999: 128–9) points out, the Germanic stress rules characteristic of Old and Middle English change in the Early Modern English period. Germanic stress is typically on the first syllable (certain prefixes excluded); due to the introduction of many multi-syllable French and Latin words that have the stress on the antepenultimate syllable this general
rule changes and the stress is on a later syllable. Thus, words such as *academy*, *acceptable*, *corruptible*, and *abbreviation* would all have the stress on the first syllable according to the Germanic rule, unlike in Modern English; according to contemporary sources, in some words the stress remains on the first syllable until the 18th century. Kökeritz (1953: 332–9) devotes some time to the issue and cites some Shakespearean words with a stress different from that in Modern English: *antique* with the stress on the first syllable. Try pronouncing these words with the stress on the first syllable.

By the end of the Early Modern English period, English pronunciation is more recognizable to Modern English speakers than Old or Middle English because of the completion of the GVS. Even though the GVS is mostly complete by 1700, there are exceptions: Alexander Pope (1688–1744) rhymes *survey* and *sea* and *away* and *tea* (Bolton 1982: 248), which indicates that *sea* and *tea* still have an [e]. The pronunciation of Early Modern English could be discussed in a lot more detail (Dobson 1957; Jespersen 1909; Kökeritz 1953; and Wyld 1920), but we will now turn to its grammar.

### 3. Early Modern English Morphology

Early Modern English is characterized by a further loss of inflections and an increase in the number of prepositions and auxiliaries (grammaticalization), as expected of a language becoming more analytic. The loss of inflections is artificially stopped by prescriptive grammarians, editors, and schoolteachers in the centuries that follow. If that had not happened, we might have lost the third person -s ending and the case endings on personal (*I/me, she/her, etc.*) and relative pronouns (*who/whom*). This has in fact happened in a number of modern varieties.

We will start the discussion of these changes by examining the pronominal paradigm in Table 7.4. Compared to Middle English (Table 6.6), the accusative has merged with the dative; one case, referred to as ACC(usative), is now used for all objects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.4. Early Modern English pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The situation with the second person pronouns is complex; in Table 7.4 the forms that are disappearing are in parentheses. Around 1600, English *thou* and *you* are both used in similar situations, but *you* ‘wins out’ since the plural nominative pronoun *ye(e)* also
disappears. The use of pronouns in the KJV, where the older ye is adhered to, is archaic, as (6) shows:

(6) that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (KJV, Genesis 3)

The changes in second person pronouns are presented in simplified form in Table 7.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE and early ME</th>
<th>late ME (1400)</th>
<th>EModE (1650)</th>
<th>ModE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S NOM þu FAM</td>
<td>NOM thou S NOM you (thou) S you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC/DAT þe(c) ACC</td>
<td>thee ACC you (thee)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P NOM ge POL</td>
<td>NOM yee P NOM you P you (all)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC/DAT eow(ic) ACC</td>
<td>you ACC you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The choice between Early Modern English thou (thee) and yee (you) is often discussed in the sociolinguistic literature (Brown & Levinson 1987). Even in Middle English, the system is never as rigid as the tu-vous distinction in French: vous ‘you’ is used in formal situations and is a marker of politeness. Speaking to friends, a French speaker would use tu ‘thou’. In Early Modern English, sometimes these pronouns follow the older rules, as in the first two lines in (7), where Hamlet uses the respectful you and his mother the familiar thou/thy, but this system breaks down, possibly out of irritation, in the third line:

(7) Queen Thou hast thy Father much offended.
    Hamlet Mother, you haue my Father much offended.
    Queen Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.
    Hamlet Go, go, you question with an idle tongue.

An interesting innovation is the neuter genitive its. In Old and Middle English, the genitive of it is his and this is still occasionally found in Early Modern English, as in (8), typical of the KJV.

(8) and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind (KJV, Genesis 1)

Its must have come into existence as an analogy to yours, hers, etc., and well into the 18th century, both its and it’s are found. Nowadays, it’s is still very frequent in writing of all kinds though frowned upon by prescriptivists. It is mentioned here in connection with possessives, even though it is more a spelling than a grammar issue.

Another development is the occurrence of reflexive pronouns. As mentioned earlier, in Old English, forms such as himself and myself do not exist. They gradually come into existence, but even at the time of the F1 edition of Shakespeare, simple pronouns are used, as (9) and (10) show; my/thy and self are always printed separately, as in (11) and (12), even though himself has become one unit already:

(9) I feele me much to blame (2 Henry 4 II, iv, 390)
A History of the English Language

(10) I take not on me here as a Physician (2 Henry 4 IV, i, 60)

(11) That thou prouok' st thy selfe to cast him vp (2 Henry 4 I, iii, 96)

(12) I dresse my selfe handsome (2 Henry 4 II, iv, 303)

See the beginning of Appendix B for several other reflexive forms.

Case is further disappearing (Algeo & Pyles 2004: 187–8). This is evident from the loss of second person plural ye(e) in favor of a general you, the loss of whom, and the inconsistent use of pronouns. Examples of the inconsistent use of pronouns are provided in (13) to (15), all from Shakespeare. Some of these forms are edited away in later editions (see Section 7):

(13) all debts are cleerd between you and I (Merchant of Venice III, 2, 321)

(14) So sawcy with the hand of she heere (Anthony & Cleopatra III, 13, 98)

(15) you have seene Cassio and she together (Othello IV, 2, 3)

Many others, e.g. Marlowe and Johnson, also show a tendency towards leveling case distinctions.

As to verbal endings, the distinctive second person singular -st ending is lost due to the loss of the second person singular pronoun thou. The third person singular verbal ending changes from -th to -s in the course of the Early Modern English period. Authors vary greatly with respect to which verbal ending they use. In Thomas Elyot's The boke named the Gouernour (1531), there are no 'modern' forms; likewise in Mulcaster's Elementarie (1582), there are 152 instances of hath and 151 of doth, but no instances of has and does. In Spenser's Fairie Qveene (1596), there are a few instances of the new forms: doth appears 660 times and does 169 times (20%); there are 313 instances of hath and 37 of has (11%). Some examples from Shakespeare where the verb has second person singular -st and third person singular -th are shown in (16) and (17):

(16) What thou denyest to men (Timon IV, 3, 537)

(17) whereas the contrarie bringeth blisse (1 Henry 6 V, 5, 64)

Starting around 1600, most verbal endings are left out in writing; the third person verbal ending may no longer have been pronounced -th long before that. Forms in -th rhyme with forms in -s: in 1643, Richard Hodges mentions that boughs and boweth are the same. Shakespeare no longer uses third person -th endings on verbs, except for hath and doth, and even those disappear after 1600 (Taylor 1972; 1976). Lexical verbs, as in (18), mostly have the -s ending: there are 29 instances of appeares and two of appeareth in F1:

(18) it appeares no other thing to mee, then a foule and pestilent congregation of va-pours (Hamlet II, 2, 315)

Figure 7.6 shows the percentage of the less archaic does, and its variant do(e)'s, in relation to the total number of third person singulars. Mulcaster (1582) and Queen Elizabeth
(1590) only use *doth*, never *does*, but Spenser in *The Fairy Queen* (1596) and Donne (1618) do. Shakespeare’s use of *does* is considerable in e.g. *Hamlet* (1600) and *Macbeth* (1610), and John Fletcher’s *Bonduca* (1614) shows no instances of *doth* or *hath*. The data on Queen Elizabeth and John Donne are from Lass (1999: 163–4); the other data are from electronic texts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mulc</th>
<th>QE</th>
<th>Sp</th>
<th>Ham</th>
<th>Tem</th>
<th>Bon</th>
<th>Sp</th>
<th>Donne</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1580</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1590</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1610</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1620</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 7.6.** Percentage of *does/do’s/doe’s* compared to all third person singulars

(Mulc=Mulcaster; QE=Queen Elizabeth; Sp=Spenser; Ham=Hamlet; Tem=Tempest; Bon=Bonduca)

As mentioned, the KJV is more conservative and continues to use *-th* endings on auxiliaries (*hath* and *doth*), as in (19), as well as on lexical verbs, as in (20):

(19) **King James Version** – 1611

> Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, *hath* God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God *hath* said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God *doth* know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (*KJV*, Genesis 3)

(20) The hay *appeareth* and the tender grass *sheweth* itself. (*KJV*, Proverbs 27)

Some writers are also conservative in this respect: in his essays and in *Paradise Lost* (written between the 1640s and the 1660s), Milton always uses *hath* over *has*. In his 1690 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke still uses *hath* even though *has* prevails, and Robert Lowth still uses both *hath* and *has*, *loveth* and *loves* as late as 1762, when his grammar appears.

Another development related to Early Modern English verbs is that the Old and Middle English subjunctive endings are being replaced by modal auxiliaries and infinitival complements, as in (21):

(21) and wishing [for those hands to take off his melancholy bargain]. (1681 Dryden, from Visser 2248)
As Görlach (1991: 113) states, “before 1650 the frequency of the subjunctive varied from one author to the next.” This is an indication that it is seen as a stylistic variant, rather than a part of the grammar.

Verbal agreement in Early Modern English is often ‘wrong’ by prescriptive standards. This lack of clarity on the part of the speaker/writer is in keeping with the move towards an analytic language and the disappearance of agreement (and case). In (22) and (23), has and am are ‘wrong’ and in (24) thee ‘should’ be thou and the verb ‘should’ be plural. As in Modern English, this means that in the grammar of the speaker, the case and agreement distinctions are no longer transparent, especially in coordinated phrases:

(22) let nothing fail of all that thou has spoken (Esther 6)
(23) Both death and I am one. (As You Like It I, 3, 99)
(24) Jack, how agrees the devil and thee about thy soul … (I Henry IV I, ii, 115)

Comparatives and superlatives in Early Modern English can be doubled: most unkind- est, more richer, and worser. A search for more followed by an adjective ending in -er in Shakespeare’s First Folio produces 24 examples and most is followed 7 times by an adjective ending in -est:

(25) This was the most vnkindest cut of all. (Julius Caesar III, II, 181)
(26) for the more better assurance (Midsummer Night’s Dream III, i, 21)
(27) the worsser welcome (Othello I, i, 94)

Note that the spelling of than is different: better then occurs 73 times in F1. Better than/ then he occurs side by side with better than/then him, so these seem in free variation:

(28) that loues thee better then he could (Richard 3 I, ii, 141)
(29) better then him I am (As you like it I, i, 43)

See Appendix B for an instance of then as well. The use of more and most at this time is characteristic of an analytic language. John Hart’s (1569) Orthographie has the no longer usual easilier and more brief, showing there was a lot of variation.

Other noteworthy morphological distinctions concern adverbs and verbs. Adverbs do not consistently end in -ly yet, as (30) and (31) show, and the distinction between strong and weak verbs is different in Early Modern English. For instance, in (32), holp is a strong verb, and in (33) shake is a weak verb (Algeo & Pyles 2004: 189 ff.; Partridge 1973: 121ff.):

(30) and haste thee quick away. (Measure for Measure IV, i, 7)
(31) A man may sit as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuary. (Much Ado about Nothing II, i, 266)
(32) And his great Loue … hath holp him. (Macbeth I, vi, 23)
(33) They shaked their heads. (*KJV, Psalm 109.25, from Partridge 1973: 126*)

A language that loses inflections might have words that in different contexts can be verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, or prepositions. This is the case in Early Modern English: in (34), the nouns grace and vnckle are used as verbs, and in (35), the preposition beneath [bîneð] is used as an adjective:

(34) Grace me no Grace, nor Vnckle me (*Richard 2 II, iii, 78*)

(35) Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hugge (*Timon I, i, 44*)

The technical term for this process that converts one category into another without an affix is conversion.

4. Early Modern English Syntax

The transformation of English into an analytic language continues in the Early Modern English period. As mentioned earlier, in syntactic terms, this transformation leads to an increasingly fixed word order and the introduction of grammatical words. An example of a grammatical word being formed is the directional to becoming a dative case marker. In Middle English, the number of prepositions and determiners increases as prepositions replace cases. Starting in the Early Modern English period, the grammatical words introduced are mainly auxiliaries. The trend towards more embedded sentences that started in Middle English also continues in Early Modern English.

The word order is fairly similar to that of Modern English, as shown in (36), addressed by Queen Elizabeth to her bishops:

(36) Elizabeth I – 1599

Our realm and subjects have been long wanderers, walking astray, whilst they were under the tuition of Romish pastors, who advised them to own a wolf for their head (in lieu of a careful shepherd) whose inventions, heresies and schisms be so numerous, that the flock of Christ have fed on poisonous shrubs for want of wholesome pastures. And whereas you hit us and our subjects in the teeth that the Romish Church first planted the Catholic within our realm, the records and chronicles of our realm testify the contrary; and your own Romish idolatry maketh you liars. (from http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/elizabeth1.html)

Wht-questions are mostly as in Modern English, while some Yes/No questions continue to be formed as in (37):

(37) Whether hadst thou rather be a Faulconbridge, ...

‘Had you rather be a Faulconbridge?’ (*Shakespeare, John I, i, 134*)
Subjects are only left out in a few cases. Would you say (38) and (39) differently?

(38) Nor do we find him forward to be sounded, But with a crafty madness keeps aloof (Shakespeare, Hamlet III, i, 8)

(39) This is my Son belov’d, in him am pleas’d (Milton, Paradise Regained I, 85)

There are still some dative subjects, mostly in archaic expressions such as me thinks.

Auxiliaries are introduced or expanded, but neither simple auxiliaries nor sequences of auxiliaries are as elaborate as in Modern English. The expression of tense, mood, and aspect is perhaps still the most important difference between Early Modern and Modern English (Rissanen 1999; van Gelderen 2004). For instance, Modern English would have the progressives am going and are saying in (40) and (41) and the present perfect form with have in (42), as shown in the gloss:

(40) Whither go you? (Merry Wives of Windsor II, ii, 10)

(41) What say you, Scarlet and John? (Merry Wives of Windsor I, i, 155)

(42) I saw him not these many yeares
   ‘I haven’t seen him for many years.’ (Cymbeline IV, ii, 66, from Hope 2003)

As in French, German, Italian, and Dutch, there is still a difference in Early Modern English between have and be: I haue spoke but We are come to you (both from the same play). Have is used with transitive verbs and be with certain intransitive verbs (e.g. of motion). This difference continues up to the 19th century, but ceases to be relevant in Modern English.

The end of the Middle English period is also when auxiliaries start to be contracted, expected when they grammaticalize to auxiliaries. The Cely letters, in (43), the Paston Letters, in (44), and the late 17th century John Bunyan, in (45), show very interesting reductions after modals, something that continues until Modern English, as in (46), a typical sentence from a university essay:

(43) and so myght Y a done syn I come vnto Calles
   ‘and so might I have done since I came to Calais’ (George Cely 1478).

(44) it xuld a be seyd
   ‘It should have been said’ (Paston Letters, I, #131, a1449).

(45) Chris… I thought you would a come in by violent hand or a took the Kingdom by storm.
   Mer. Alas, to be in my Case, who that so was, could but a done so? …as I, that would not a knocked with all their might (Bunyan, Pilgrim’s Progress ii, 203/191).

(46) That argument should of been made differently.

In questions and negative sentences, do is not obligatory. Shakespeare, for instance, uses both (47) and (48):

(47) That argument should of been made differently.

In questions and negative sentences, do is not obligatory. Shakespeare, for instance, uses both (47) and (48):
(47) **Do you not heare** him? (*Tempest*, Appendix B)

(48) A heauie heart **beares not** a humble tongue. (*Love’s Labor’s Lost* V, ii, 747)

Since *do* is not (yet) obligatory, its use can help determine authorship. Partridge (1964: 148–9) argues that in the parts in Henry VIII attributed to Shakespeare *do* is used much more than in those attributed to John Fletcher. Partridge (1964: 152) also lists other defining characteristics of the two authors. Hope (1994), without mentioning Partridge, argues the same.

In Old and Middle English, negation can be expressed by one or two negatives. This is changing in Early Modern English where *not* or *nothing* typically appear alone in a clause. There are, however, a few cases where single negation is expressed using multiple negative words: *nothing neither*, as in (49):

(49) Nor go neither: …and yet say **nothing neither**. (*Tempest* III, ii, 22)

The use of *relatives* varies by author and Hope (1994) uses this to differentiate between the works of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Johnson, and others. Foster (1989) also uses relatives when trying to expand the Shakespeare canon, as we will see in Section 7. The main difference between Early Modern and Modern English is in the choice of relative pronouns. In (50), *which* is used for a person, and, in (51), *who* is used for a non-human. These are ungrammatical in Modern English, mainly due to prescriptive rules. In (52), *that* is used as a marker of a non-restrictive relative clause, something that is no longer ‘permitted’:

(50) Shall I of surety bear a childe, **which** am old. (*KJV*, Genesis 18.13)

(51) I met a Lyon, *Who* glaz’d vpon me. (*Julius Caesar* I, iii, 20)

(52) Let {Fame}, **that** all hunt after in their liues. (*Love’s Labor’s Lost* I, i, 6)

Hope also shows that there is, in this period, a clear preference for the relative *that* over *who* and *which*, but that the latter spread in more formal writings. Shakespeare starts using the formal forms more in later works. We will see that this trend perseveres in present-day English.

**Preposition stranding**, which occurs when a preposition is left behind after its object moves in a question, as in (53), or a relative clause, is common in Early Modern English. When the object takes the preposition along, as in (54), we have a case of pied piping:

(53) Who did you talk **about**?

(54) **About** who(m) did you talk?

Bullokar in his 1580 grammar comments on preposition stranding but does not condemn it. Early Modern English authors certainly use it: Fletcher in (55) and Shakespeare in (56); two centuries later, however, only **pied piping** is allowed by prescriptive grammarians (Coar 1796):

(55) the dull twins of cold spirits, They sit and smile **at**. (*Bonduca* III, i)
Punctuation and capitalization in Old and Early Middle English are fairly rare. They become more common in Late Middle English, but remain somewhat arbitrary, as the first paragraph in (57) from *The Sceptical Chymist* shows:

(57)  
*The Sceptical Chymist* – 1661 – Robert Boyle  
I am (sayes Carneades) so unwilling to deny Eleutheriu any thing, that though, before the rest of the Company I am resolv’d to make good the part I have undertaken of a Sceptick; yet I shall readily, since you will have it so, lay aside for a while the Person of an Adversary to the Peripateticks and Chymists; and before I acquaint you with my Objections, against their Opinions, acknowledge to you what may be (whether truly or not) tollerably enough added, in favour of a certain number of Principles of mixt Bodies, to that grans and known Argument from the Analysis of compound Bodies, which I may possibly hereafter be able to confute.

In the 17th century, syntactic punctuation is introduced, especially through the work of Ben Jonson. It is one of the changes modern editors make when editing Early Modern English texts for a present-day audience.

When the language gets a strict(er) word order, it is natural for writers to punctuate according to grammatical function, as in Modern English (58). In Modern English, the subject, verb, and object form a core and cannot be separated from each other as in the ungrammatical (59):

(58)  
Yesterday, she saw him, unfortunately.

(59)  
*He, saw her.

Note that Modern English can have a word or words surrounded by commas such as *however* in the core.

With all this knowledge about the language, let’s look at an Early Modern English text from Appendix A, given here as (60):

(60)  
*Elizabeth I – Translation of Boethius*  
What is it, therefore, O man, that hath throwne the down to wo and wayle? Thou hast seene, I beleue, som new vnwonted thing. Thou, yf thou thinkest that toward the fortune be changed, art deceaud. This was euer her manner, this was her nature. She hath euer kept toward the rather her own constancy in her mutabilitie. Such one was she, whan she beguild the, and did deceauve with allurementes of false felicitie. Thou hast vnderstode now, the doutfull face of the blynde Goddesse, which though she hyde her self to others, hath made her self to the manifest. Yf thou allow her vse her fashon, complayne not therof; yf thou hatest her treason, skorne her and cast her of, that so falsely beguilde the;
for she that now is cause of thy woe, the self same ought be of thy quyett. She hath left the, whom no man can be sure that will not leave him.

The verbal forms include *hath, hast, art, thinkest, and hatest*, with third and second person singular endings. The second person singular pronouns *thou, the, and thy* are still present, and the reflexive *her self* is written as two separate words. The spelling, e.g. the use of the letters *u* and *v*, is quite different from Modern English, and the etymological respelling of *doutfull* has not taken place yet.

In conclusion, Early Modern English continues to lose case and verbal inflection. There are very few prescriptive rules, but this changes in the centuries to come. The main developments in this period are summarized in Table 7.6.

Table 7.6. Characteristics of Early Modern English grammar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morphology:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Case endings disappear further</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Pronouns change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Verbal agreement continues to disappear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Nouns are used as verbs and adjectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syntax:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e. Word order becomes fixed and subjects become obligatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Auxiliaries are used more (=grammaticalization) and are contracted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. <em>Do</em> is becoming obligatory in questions and negatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Multiple negation is reduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Punctuation is becoming syntactically motivated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional references on Early Modern English grammar are Abbott (1872), Barber (1997), Görlach (1991), Lass (1999), and Partridge (1969), and Rissanen (1999).

5. The Early Modern English Lexicon

In this section, we will explore the significant increase in vocabulary in the Early Modern English period. English acquires numerous words of Latin origin in this period as it did after the Norman Invasion of 1066. The tension between native and non-native vocabulary becomes important in the *inkhorn debate* (an ink-horn is a container for ink but the term comes to be used for ‘a learned or bookish word’). This debate remains significant to this day although not to the same extent as in countries such as France and Iceland.

The English language as a medium for serious writing has had to reemerge (at least) twice in its history — once around 1300 when its use had to be justified over the use of French (see Section 1 of Chapter 6) and once after 1500 when it was seen as an unsophisticated alternative to Latin. Middle English manuscripts frequently included apologies for using English rather than Latin (see (1) in Chapter 6). By the 1550s, however, English reemerges: while it was ‘barbarous and unrefined’ before, now it is ‘elegant’. The pride
of writers about using English becomes obvious from the words of Richard Mulcaster (1582), provided in (61):

(61) I take this present period of our English tung to be the verie height thereof, bycause I find it so excellentlie well fined, both for the bodie of the tung it self, and for the customarie writing thereof, as either foren workmanship can giue it glosse, or as home wrought hanling can giue it grace.

Mulcaster still sees a need for Latin because of “the knowledge which is registered in” it and for communicating with “the learned of Europe,” but he feels English should be developed as well.

Old and Middle English lack many of the terms that become important in the Renaissance; thus, English ends up borrowing many words from Latin and Greek. Sometimes, the words are borrowed for practical purposes, other times for pedantic ones. Some estimate that between 1500 and 1660 nearly 27,000 new words enter the language (Garner 1982: 151; Wermser 1976: 23), even though Baugh and Cable (2002: 233) put the number of loans at 10,000. Görlach (1991: 136) says that the period between 1530 and 1660 “exhibits the fastest growth of the vocabulary in the history of the English language.”

Half of the neologisms are probably loans, such as the ones in (62), and half are new words (sometimes made up from Latin or Greek models), such as in (63):

(62) anachronism, disability, expectation, folio, delirium, atmosphere, pneumonia

(63) episcopal, blatant, disaccustom, effectful, urban, urge

Creating a new word is called coining a word. John Cheke and Edmund Spenser create new words from old ones: Cheke coins mooned and foresayer and Spenser belt, elfin, dapper, glee, grovel, gloomy, and witless (Baugh & Cable 2002: 230–1).

As seen in Chapter 5, most of the new words are nouns, but there are also verbs and adjectives. The three prepositions that come from Latin, per, plus, and via, appear for the first time relatively late, in 1528, 1668, and 1779, respectively. According to the OED, the coordinator plus is a very late addition, in 1968. Note that of the three, only per is a preposition in Latin; via is a noun meaning ‘road’ and plus is a comparative form of the adjective ‘much’. This shows that grammatical words such as prepositions and coordinators are not typically borrowed into English.

Latin is a highly inflected, synthetic, language. Its nouns are divided into five classes (or declensions) and can be marked for five or six cases in the singular and plural. Latin words therefore always have an ending: visum, datum, forum, and medium are singular nouns and visa, data, fora, and media their plural counterparts. English speakers, however, are not familiar with the Latin grammatical system, so when they borrow Latin words, they adapt them to fit the English grammatical system. Therefore, Latin noun and verb endings are ignored: audio, audit, video, and recipe are verbs in Latin but become nouns in English. This is why we usually say that Latin had no influence on English grammar, only its vocabulary.
The OED’s online Advanced Search allows us to find all the words that first appear in a particular year. *The Chronological English Dictionary* (CED) also provides lists of these, but it is based on an etymological dictionary shorter than the OED. Table 7.7 lists a few new words from the CED.

**Table 7.7.** All of the new words for the year 1505 and some for 1605

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1505</td>
<td>bleat, bloomed, bogle, bounder, brat, brawned, bumbard, choice, chop, harbour, importance, mose, prisage, stud, timber-tree, toque, varnishing, verditer, younker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1605</td>
<td>abhorreny, acoustic, anagrammatical, assassination, bemonster, botch, chemistry, disknow, emancipate, flippant, hot-brain, masterpiece, long-necked, Norwegian, Roman Catholic, resent, syntax, unchild, whimsy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Chronological English Dictionary* lists 19 new words for 1505 and 349 for 1605. The OED online lists 51 and 770 new words for those years, respectively. As you know by now, that is probably a small portion of all the new words; also, the words listed as first appearing in a particular year may have existed for some time already. Not all of the new words survive into Modern English. Some of my favorite rejected words are listed in (64):

(64) *adminiculation* 'aid', *anacephalize* 'to summarize', *eximious* 'excellent', *illecebrous* 'alluring', *ingent* 'immense', and *honoricabilitudinitatibus*.

The last word in (64), from Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labor’s Lost* (V, 1, 44), was meant to make fun of the person uttering it; therefore, it is not surprising it did not survive.

After the 1530s, when the most significant increase in new vocabulary starts, there is a lot of criticism of the use of inkhorn terms, such as those in (64). Elyot introduced the terms *animate, education, obfuscate*, and *persist*, and most speakers of present-day English would have a hard time doing without these words. John Cheke is a fierce opponent of new words and comes up with his own terms, *mooned* for *lunatic* and *foresayer* for *prophet*, as mentioned earlier. In 1557, he wrote what is given as (65) below:

(65) I am of this opinion that our own tung shold be written cleane and pure, unmixt and unmangeled with borrowing of other tunges, wherin if we take not heed by tijm, ever borrowing and never payeng, she shall be fain to keep her house as bankrupt. (Baugh & Cable 2002: 217)

Several decades later, the concern over inkhorn terms has weakened, but it reemerges in the centuries to come under different guises such as Ogden’s basic vocabulary mentioned in Chapter 5.

We might think that the opposition to borrowing Latin and Greek vocabulary would lead to the adoption of regional and archaic terms, but that is not the case. Cooté’s (1596) *The English Schoole-Master* allows dialect words if there are no other alternatives. Bullokar’s and Cawdrey’s word lists include very few dialect words. The first lists of hard words to include dialect more systematically are John Ray’s (1674) *A Collection of English Words*
not Generally Used and Elisha Coles’s (1676) An English Dictionary. The former includes around 1,000 regional words (Görlach 1999a: 502).

In connection with the inkhorn debate, there is also concern about using hybrids, English words with Latin prefixes and Latin words with English prefixes. Some authors such as Shakespeare are not concerned about this. Garner (1983: 231–33) counts 107 hybrids in Shakespeare: *out-villain*, *fore-advise*, *under-honest*, which have English prefixes and Latin words, and *renew*, *ingrateful*, and *trans-shape*, which have Latin prefixes and English words. The KJV, in comparison, has only 7 such hybrids, and they are ‘old’ hybrids, coined in the 13th and 14th centuries. Nevalainen (1999: 378–407) offers numerous examples of the origins and meaning of prefixes and suffixes: *ante*, *pre*, and *fore* (as in *antedate*, *pre-exist*, and *foreshadow*); *anti*, *contra*, and *counter* (as in *anti-monarchy*, *contraband*, and *counterevidence*); and -(i)an, *arian*, ese, *ist*, and -ite (as in *Australian*, *sectarian*, *Chinese*, *linguist*, and *Mennonite*).

Not all new words come from Latin and Greek. French continues to influence the vocabulary of English, as (66) shows, as do other Romance languages. Italian provides the words in (67) and most music terms. Spanish provides the words in (68), many of which are derived from native American languages which the Spanish (and Portuguese) came into contact with in their colonial past (and *anchovy* is from Basque via Spanish):

(66) amateur, avenue, balet, bigot, brochure, camouflage, cheque/check, essay, etiquette, menu, shock, ticket

(67) balcony, granite, grotto, stucco, volcano; allegro, duo, concerto, fugue, madrigal, opera, stanza, violin

(68) barbecue, canoe, cigar, cocoa, maize, potato, sherry, tobacco, tomato

Wermser (1976) presents the data in Table 7.8 (adapted from Görlach 1991: 167). The numbers represent the percentages for the origins of the loanwords. They show that Latin and French sources are the most frequent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Lat</th>
<th>Gk</th>
<th>Fr</th>
<th>It</th>
<th>Spa</th>
<th>Dut</th>
<th>Eur</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1510–1524</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1560–1574</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1610–1624</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1660–1674</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shakespeare is celebrated for his neologisms, puns, and malaprops. For puns, see Eric Partridge’s Shakespeare’s Bawdy (originally published in 1947). Shakespeare is said to have introduced more words into the language than anyone else, but that might be due to the fact that he is the most studied English author; it is possible that a lesser known author introduced more new words. Shakespeare’s vocabulary encompasses words used by noblemen, thieves, lawyers, and soldiers but mostly people from the cities: *fap* ‘drunk’ in *Merry*
Wives of Windsor, and *bung(hole)* ‘pocket’ in *Hamlet*. A malaprop, a term not introduced until much later, involves the erroneous use of a long and difficult word. Shakespeare uses malaprops frequently with certain characters to indicate pomposity or lack of sense, as in (69) and (70) from Schlauch (1965: 226–7):

(69) you are thought heere to be the most senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch. (‘sensible’ is meant, *Much Ado* III, 3, 23)

(70) shee’s as fartuous a ciuill modest wife. (‘virtuous’ is meant, *Merry Wives* II, 2, 100)

Vocabulary is an important marker of social class. Görlach (1999a: 524) quotes the clown in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*, in (71), to illustrate the register differences between synonymous words such as *abandon* and *leaue the societie*:

(71) **Shakespeare – As You Like It**

  He sir, that must marrie this woman: Therefore you Clowne, abandon: which is in the vulgar, leaue the societie: which in the boorish, is companie, of this fe-male: which in the common, is woman: which toge-ther, is, abandon the society of this Female, or Clowne thou perish: or to thy better vnderstanding, dyest; or (to wit) I kill thee, make thee away, translate thy life in-to death, thy libertie into bondage: I will deale in poy-son with thee, or in bastinado, or in Steele: I will bandy with thee in faction, I will ore- run thee with policie: I will kill thee a hundred and fifty wayes, therefore trem-ble and depart. (V 1 47)

In addition to the introduction of many new words, there are also numerous changes in the meaning of existing words during the Early Modern English period. As we have seen, in Old and Middle English, meanings change, sometimes drastically. Between Early Modern and Modern English, such changes continue to take place. For instance, in Early Modern English, *abuse* means ‘deceive’, *accident* ‘anything that happens’, *appeal* ‘accuse’, *competitor* ‘partner’, *conceit* ‘idea’, *cousin* ‘relative’, *tonight* ‘last night’ (from the OED and Barnet’s intro to *The Tempest*). *Gentleman* changes from ‘a man of gentle birth’ (OED 1a) to ‘a man of superior position…or having the habits of life indicative of this’ (OED 4a) to any male with good social skills (Fennell 2001: 162–165).

The Early Modern English period is one of great freedom, not only from grammatical constraints (as shown in Sections 3 and 4), but also when it comes to the creation of words. As we will see in the next chapter, this freedom does not continue and grammar books and dictionaries become prescriptive tools meant to outlaw certain words. This development has its beginnings in the Early Modern English period.
6. Attitudes towards a Standard

Until the 1650s, there is much debate on vocabulary and spelling, and English is technically without a standard, i.e. the language of one social or regional group that is typically taught in schools and used in official circles. The centuries that follow impose many restrictions on linguistic freedoms and the need for an Academy is debated (as we will see in Chapter 8). In this section, we will examine some spelling guides, dictionaries, grammars, and pronunciation guides of the time as well as some attitudes towards languages expressed in them.

As mentioned in earlier chapters, spelling conformity is one of the results of the introduction of the printing press in 1476. The need for spelling regularity is debated in the Early Modern English period. The attempts to establish a standard spelling are numerous: in the 1550s, for instance, Cheke suggests having long vowels in *maad* 'made' but no final -e (Dobson 1957: 44). It is interesting that Cheke does not suggest incorporating the 'damage' done by the GVS, as (72), where [aj] is written as *ii* (as well as *i*), shows:

(72) For your opinion of my gud will unto you as you *wriit*, you can not be deceived: for submitting your doings to *mi* judgement, I thanke you. (from Görlach 1991: 222)

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![Figure 7.7](image-url)  
*Figure 7.7.* Mulcaster’s recommended spelling (1582: 170–1)
Other well-known works of the period are John Hart’s Orthographie (1569), which introduces several new letters, William Bullokar’s Booke at Large (1580) and Bref Grammar (1586), and Richard Mulcaster’s Elementarie (1582). Mulcaster’s Elementarie is perhaps the most extensive but least phonetic. He ends his book with recommended spellings for over 8,000 common words. Many of these spellings are similar to those in Modern English, as Figure 7.7 shows for words such as abandon, about, accept. In these recommendations, there is no inclination to spell words such as abate and abide, whose pronunciations changed due to the GVS, more phonetically.

Notice differences between Early Modern and Modern English in endings such as the ones on abbie ‘abbey’ and abilitie ‘ability’ and the final letters of actuall and aduerbiall. U is still used in place of Modern English [v] and i is used for the affricate [dʒ].
Word lists and dictionaries are natural standardizers for words and spelling patterns, but they appear relatively late. Therefore, they do not help standardize the spelling of Early Modern English. The first word lists/dictionaries to appear are of foreign and difficult words rather than common ones. These lists are different from Mulcaster’s since they provide a definition. Compare, for instance, Figure 7.7 and 7.8. The latter provides the first page of Edmund Cooote’s *The English Schoole-Master* (1596) (www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/ret/coote/ret2.html for the full text) and contains definitions, unlike Mulcaster. Many of Cooote’s words (at least on this page) do not appear in Mulcaster, and some of those that do have different spellings: abhorre, achieve.

Robert Cawdrey adds to Cooote when, in 1604, he publishes a list, the first page of which is presented in Figure 7.9, as well as a page of the preface. Note the reliance on Cooote; such a reliance on previous sources has been characteristic of dictionary (and grammars) ever since.

Figure 7.9. Cawdrey’s first page of hard words

John Bullokar’s *An English Expositor* (1616) and Henry Cockeram’s *The English Dic- tionarie* (1623) follow. A chronological list of word list/dictionary compilers for the Early Modern English period appears in Table 7.9.

Cockeram’s dictionary is in three parts, the first of which explains difficult words (ranging from acercecomick ‘one whose hair was never cut’ to collocuplicate ‘to enrich’ to abandon, actress and abrupt. The second part does the opposite and goes from simple
to learned words, whereas the third provides encyclopedic information (see James Murray’s *The Evolution of English Lexicography* from 1900: http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/11694).

This concern with words and word lists helps standardize spelling. Thus, towards the end of the 17th century, the spelling system is pretty much settled, as (73), from Pepys’ Diary, shows.

(73) All the morning at home about business. At noon to the Temple, where I staid and looked over a book or two at Playford’s, and then to the Theatre, where I saw a piece of ‘The Silent Woman,’ which pleased me. (from 25 May 1661, taken from www.pepysdiary.com/archive)

At this time, there are many popular spelling books such as Richard Hodges’ *The English Primrose* (1644) and *Most Plain Directions for True-Writing* (1653). The spelling books and dictionaries demonstrate a concern with a standard, consistent spelling. Some differences exist between Early Modern and Modern English spelling — such as *generall* and *musick*, for example — but the basic system is in place, certainly by 1700.

From Middle English, we know that a certain pronunciation or word choice could mark a speaker as being from the North or the South. It is unclear how stigmatized those differences were. For some people in the Early Modern English period, correct pronunciation was a concern, however, as evident from the excerpt in (74):

(74) [for youth] that they speke none englisshe but that whiche is cleane polite perfectly and articulately pronounced omittinge no lettre or sillable as folisshe women often times do of a wantonness (Elyot, *The Governour*).

However much Elyot and others worried about pronunciation, pronunciation guides did not become frequent until much later (Jones’ famous *Pronouncing Dictionary* appears in 1917).

Grammars are not very prescriptive in the 16th century: they take usage into account and do not provide the arbitrary rules based on Latin grammar that we currently still have. For instance, in 1653, John Wallis wrote a grammar of English in Latin, written for foreigners, but he did not feel genders and cases should be introduced since there was “no basis in the language itself” (Kemp 1972: 105, 113). He also realized, as shown in (75) that English had become analytic:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>number of entries</th>
<th>definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mulcaster 1582</td>
<td>8143</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coote 1596</td>
<td>1357</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cawdrey 1604</td>
<td>2511 (4886 by 1617)</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullokar 1616</td>
<td>4156</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cockeram 1623</td>
<td>9952</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(75) For this reason I decided to employ a completely new method, which has its basis not, as is customary, in the structure of the Latin language but in the characteristic structure of our own… The whole syntax of the noun depends almost entirely on the use of prepositions, and the conjugation of verbs is easily managed with the help of auxiliaries, so that what usually causes a great deal of difficulty in other languages, gives us no trouble at all. (Kemp 1972: 111)

Thus, correct spelling and vocabulary seem more of a concern than correct grammar. Neither dictionaries nor grammars express grammatical value judgments. That changes. As we will discuss in the section on editions, 17th century editors start correcting grammar.

7. Regional and Register Varieties

In this section, we will first examine some examples of regional terms in written sources and then move on to different registers.

As discussed in Chapter 6, Middle English texts provide evidence of regional (or dialect) differences. In the Early Modern English period, the language is moving towards a standard, and differences in writing — though not in speech — become less obvious as a result. Thus, many of the features we identified in Middle English remain in the spoken language to this day and are transported to the colonies of Britain.

Görlach (1999a: 506) explains that Early Modern English writers, when they choose to use dialect, do so “due to a conscious decision to aim for a special effect.” Spenser fits that description since he often uses archaisms and regionalisms to portray ‘rustic’ people, as in (76) and (77) from The Shepheardes Calender (1579). He provides glosses for ‘rustic’ words, as in (78):

(76) Is not thilke the mery moneth of May,  
    When loue lads masken in fresh aray?  
    How falles it then, we no merrier bene,  
    Ylike as others, girt in gawdy greene?

(77) when the Welkin shone faire, Y cladde in clothing of seely sheepe

(78) Welkin] skie  
    Steuen] Noyse

Many of the forms (thilke ‘such’, the plural masken, the prefix on ycladde) are older forms as are many of the words in the glosses.

Shakespeare uses dialect for special purposes as well, but not abundantly: tarre ‘provoke’ is from the region he is from (Warwickshire) and appears three times in F1. In (79), from the F1 version of King Lear (IV, vi, 235–49), a southwestern pronunciation is used to conceal Edgar’s identity through words such as pezant ‘peasant’, vurther ‘further’, zo ‘so’, zir ‘sir’, and volke ‘folk’:

(79) tarre pro-vok[

(80) Welkin] skie  
    Steuen] Noyse

Many of the forms (thilke ‘such’, the plural masken, the prefix on ycladde) are older forms as are many of the words in the glosses.

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(79) **Shakespeare – King Lear**

{Stew} Wherefore, bold Pezant,
Dar’st thou support a publish’d Traitor? Hence,
Least that th’ infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arme.
{Edg}. Chill not let go Zir,
Without vurther ’casion.
{Stew}. Let go Slaue, or thou dy’st.
{Edg}. Good Gentleman goe your gate, and let poore
volke passe: #and ’chud #ha’ bin zwaggerd out of my life,
’twould not #ha’ bin zo long as ’tis, by a vortnight. Nay,
come not neere th’ old man: keepe out che vor’ ye, or Ile
try whither your Costard, or my Ballow be the harder;
chill be plaine with you.
{Stew}. Out Dunghill.
{Edg}. Chill picke your teeth Zir: come, no matter vor your foynes.

In *Henry V*, Welsh, Irish, and Scots are used (see Brook 1976: Chapter 9): in (80) (from III, ii, 109–52), the most noticeable Scots words are *sall* for *shall* and *tway* for *two*. The spelling of *gud* ’good’ probably indicates the Scottish special [u]:

(80) **Shakespeare – Henry V**

{Scot}. It sall be vary gud, gud feith, gud Captens bath,
and I sall quit you with gud leue, as I may pick occasion
that sall I mary.
{Irish}.> It is no time to discourse, so Chrish saue me:
...
{Scot}.> By the Mes, ere theise eyes of mine take them-selues
to slomer, ayle #de gud servuice, or Ile ligge i’th’
grund for it; ay, or goe to death: and Ile pay’t as valo-rously
as I may, that sal I suerly do, that is the breff and
the long: mary, I wad full faine heard some question
tween you tway.
{Welch}.> Captaine {Mackmorrice}, I thinke, looke you,
vnder your correction, there is not many of your Na-tion.
{Irish}.> Of my Nation? What ish my Nation? Ish a
Villaine, and a Basterd, and a Knaue, and a Rascall. What
ish my Nation? Who talkes of my Nation?
{Welch}.> Looke you, if you take the matter otherwise
then is meant, Captaine {Mackmorrice}, peraduenture I
shall think you doe not vse me with that affabilitie, as in
discretion you ought to vse me, looke you, being as good
a man as your selfe, both in the disciplines of Warre, and
in the derivation of my Birth, and in other particula-rities.

{Irish}.> I do not know you so good a man as my selfe: so Chrish saue me, I will cut off your Head.
{Gower}.> Gentlemen both, you will mistake each other.
{Scot}.> #A, that’s a faoule fault. <D {A Parley}.>
{Gower}.> The Towne sounds a Parley.
{Welch}.> Captaine {Mackmorrice}, when there is more better opportunitie to be required, looke you, I will be so bold as to tell you, I know the disciplines of Warre: and there is an end. {Exit}.

Register variations, which are usually reflected only in vocabulary, are used by certain occupations or on special occasions and called jargon. Specialized jargon dictionaries appear in the 17th century: John Smith’s (1641) *The Sea-Mans Grammar and Dictionary* and Henry Manwaring’s (1644) *The Sea-mans Dictionary*. These are special kinds of ‘hard word’ dictionaries and the latter is more of an encyclopedia. There is no social stigma attached to specialized vocabulary, or jargon, unlike the stigma attached to slang. In Modern English, specialized computer words are called jargon, whereas gang speech is often called slang, or cant (if it is meant to deceive ‘the other’).

Slang and cant are often seen as styles, but the terms are complex and used differently by different linguists. Some slang words of this period are *doxy* ‘vagrant woman’, *prig* ‘thief’, and the name *Nym*, used by Shakespeare, which refers to the Old English *niman* ‘to take’ and might be a pun. After the breakdown of feudalism and the rise of the middle classes, poverty is on the rise, resulting in vagrancy and a fear of the poor. This may be related to the increased interest in slang. Coleman (2004) provides a history of dictionaries of slang and cant. The earliest is a glossary of 114 terms in Thomas Harman’s (1567) *Caveat or Warening for Commen Cursetors*. Longer lists soon follow: Robert Greene’s 1592 and Richard Head’s in 1673; the latter produces two lists, one from cant to English and the other from English to cant. As Coleman (2004: 75) points out, the latter is more popular, indicating the appeal of cant words for the general reader.

Thus, regional and register varieties are relevant in this period, as in all others.

8. Editorial and Authorship Issues

In this section, we will look at two topics that have attracted much interest: editorial issues and ways of determining authorship.

When examining the language of a period, we depend on authentic sources and editions, not on editions ‘cleaned up’ by editors. When available, facsimiles of manuscripts or reliable electronic or other editions should be used. Since changes in pronunciation and meaning make even certain Early Modern English meanings obscure, editors occasionally add notes, as in the Arden and Signet Classic editions.
It is useful to keep in mind how many of the texts were produced. A playwright might write a play (with or without someone else's help) and try to sell it to a company. The company might not want the play published. Often, pirated copies or copies made for one particular actor, and containing mainly the lines relevant to that role, were distributed (http://etext.virginia.edu/bsuva/promptbook). All this is relevant when choosing an edition. Some copies were hand-written by the author: for example, the Q2 edition of *Hamlet* (1604) is supposedly based on Shakespeare's own manuscript (note, however, that there are no existing manuscripts written by Shakespeare).

Early editors and publishers attempt to 'clean up' the grammar, content, style, and vocabulary of Shakespeare and other authors. Black and Shaaber (1966) chronicle some of the changes between the First (1623) and Second Folio (1632). Examples are given in (81) to (83):

(81) a. Who I made Lord of me (F1)
     b. Whom I made Lord of me (F2, *Comedy of Errors* V, i, 137)

(82) a. To who, my Lord? (F1)
     b. To whom my Lord? (F2, *3 Henry 6 II*, ii, 112)

(83) a. Contempt and beggery hangs vpon thy backe! (F1)
     b. Contempt and beggery hang on thy backe! (F2, *Romeo & Juliet* V, i, 71)

The first century of the Modern English period sees many editions and alterations of Shakespeare's texts. In some cases, when a compositor obviously misread something, for example, the changes are justified. However, Alexander Pope's (1723–5) edition leaves out many original passages and Lewis Theobald's (1726) *Shakespeare Restored* tries to rectify some of the many editorial errors committed by Pope. William Warburton's (1747) edition is again based on Pope. Samuel Johnson too is involved with a 1765 edition. Electronic copies of the folios and quartos can be found at http://ise.uvic.ca/Library/facsimile/bookplay and those of subsequent editions at pages.unibas.ch/shine/linksearlyeditors.htm.

As far as authorship debates are concerned, we will address some of the methods for establishing authorship and show how this was done for some Early Modern English writers. While some researchers try to enlarge the canon (Foster 1989 and Wells & Taylor 1986), others show that some of the work is collaborative, thus reducing the canon (Vickers 2002). The most common methods of determining authorship are studying (a) utterance length, (b) grammatical words, (c) special/uncommon words, (d) Latinate words, (e) contractions, and (f) syntactic patterns. We will study examples of each of these methods.

In a classic study, Mosteller and Wallace (1964) applied a number of methods, mainly (a) to (c), to a few disputed *Federalist Papers* to determine whether Hamilton or Madison was the author. First, they looked at works that are undeniably Hamilton's or Madison's and determined the average sentence length. Unfortunately, Hamilton and Madison have similar styles with 34.55 and 34.59 words per sentence, respectively. This sentence length is characteristic of what we now call the 'convoluted style' of the 18th century. Then,
they looked at the frequency of the article *the* and of short words; this did not produce conclusive results either. Finally, they found that Hamilton uses *while* and Madison *whilst* and that the percentage of grammatical words such as *by, from, and to* helps determine the author. This example shows that there is no one cut-and-dried method and each situation requires a unique set of criteria.

Wells and Taylor (1986) rely on (b) by using the standard deviation of ten grammatical words (*but, by, for, no, not, so, that, the, to, and with*) in the core Shakespeare canon. The canon is defined in advance and the typical numbers of grammatical words are then calculated. Unfortunately, there are so many issues with the presentation and calculation of their data (Merriam 1989; Smith 1991), that they are of little use. Some of their results are interesting but surprising. Thus *King Lear* does not belong to the core since 3 out of 10 grammatical words fall outside the range. My checking of the same grammatical words in Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* shows that 9 out of 10 grammatical words fall within the range and is therefore very similar in this respect to Shakespeare.

Pierce (1909) examined the collaboration of John Webster and Thomas Dekker by calculating the percentage of Latinate words in their vocabularies. Later, he did the same for Dekker and John Ford and showed that Dekker uses Latinate vocabulary sparingly compared to the other two writers. Shakespeare’s vocabulary was examined statistically in the 1930s and 40s by Albert Hart and later by Eliot Slater. Slater (1988) reviewed a lot of Hart’s work on common and rare words and built on it, trying to link the anonymous play *The Reign of King Edward III* to Shakespeare. Vickers (2002: 78) also used the frequency of Latinate words to show that Shakespeare is not the author of the 1612 *A Funerall Elegye*. His table, comparing the *Elegye* to three Shakespearean plays, is reproduced here as Table 7.10. The first column provides the number of lines examined, the second lists the total number of Latinisms, and the third calculates the average number of Latinisms per line. The fourth column lists the total number of long words, typical for Latinate words.

**Table 7.10.** Latinate and polysyllabic words in different works (adapted from Vickers 2002: 78).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of lines</th>
<th>Latinisms</th>
<th>Latinisms per line</th>
<th>4–5 syllable words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elegye</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cymbeline</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter’s Tale</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempest</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this table shows, the *Elegye* uses many more Latinate words than the three plays commonly attributed to Shakespeare; according to Vickers, this rules out Shakespeare as the author of the *Elegye*.

Having looked at the length and vocabulary (points (a) to (d) above), we now turn to *contractions*. Partridge (1964: 150) shows that after 1600 contractions such as *’em, for them*, become common: “Jonson, being a strict grammarian,” wrote *’hem* because that
form is like the Old English, but someone like Fletcher uses the contracted form abundantly, as shown in (84):

(84)  Hear how I salute ’em. (Bonduca III, 1)

Shakespeare, on the other hand, does not use contractions much, as Table 7.11, which compares Fletcher’s Bonduca and Woman’s Prize with Shakespeare’s Cymbeline, Winter’s Tale, and The Tempest, shows.

Table 7.11. Contraction in two plays by Fletcher and three by Shakespeare (based on Partridge 1964: 151).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bonduca</th>
<th>Woman’s Prize</th>
<th>Cymbeline</th>
<th>Winter’s Tale</th>
<th>Tempest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>them</td>
<td>6 (=7%)</td>
<td>4 (=6%)</td>
<td>64 (=96%)</td>
<td>37 (=82%)</td>
<td>38 (=75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>’em</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.11 shows that Bonduca and Woman’s Prize have a higher percentage of contracted forms.

Fletcher is Shakespeare’s supposed collaborator in Two Noble Kinsmen and Henry VIII; therefore, it is interesting to compare the percentages of contractions in these two plays with the percentages in Table 7.11.

Table 7.12. Contraction showing possible collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Two Noble Kinsmen</th>
<th>Henry VIII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>them</td>
<td>29 (=39%)</td>
<td>27 (=47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>’em</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of contractions in these plays is between the number characteristic of Fletcher and that characteristic of Shakespeare and might indicate collaborative work. Partridge (1964: 152) specifies which parts might have been written by whom on the basis of many other linguistic forms.

There are also many syntactic ‘fingerprints’ in texts. The use of who for non-humans has been mentioned. The use of relative pronouns in general has been used to make claims about authorship. The frequency of the analytic comparative and superlative more and most relative to the synthetic ones ending in -er and -est or the environment in which a and an appear can also be examined. As briefly mentioned in Section 4, the use of do in negatives and questions helps distinguish between the works of Shakespeare and those of Fletcher (see Hope 1994). The use of has and hath was discussed as a way to distinguish pre-1600 from post-1600 texts; they could be used for authorship as well, if a particular author, e.g. Milton or Jonson, is fond of them. For more on this, go to http://shakespeareauthorship.com.
Finally, we will examine the role of compositors in spelling practices. It has been argued that the role of the original author is minimal and that spelling differences reveal nothing. We will show that this is not the case and that spelling on occasion is indicative of an author or period (and sometimes of the compositor). Hinman (1963) shows that some compositors can be distinguished by their spelling. The use of broken letters unique to the box of a compositor is external evidence indicating which compositor worked on which page and a compositor’s preference for particular spellings is internal evidence.

In Section 4, *has* and *hath* were used to distinguish texts chronologically: *hath* is prevalent before 1600 and *has* after 1600. Table 7.13 shows that different compositors show variation within their own work with respect to *ha’s, has,* and *hath*. This probably means that the variation was in the original manuscript they were working from. Table 7.13 lists some verbal forms for each compositor of Shakespeare’s F1 *Hamlet*.

**Table 7.13.** Compositors and the spelling of *has* in *Hamlet*

| Compositor B (e.g. nn4v-nn5v; oo5v): | *ha’s, has,* and *hath* |
| Compositor I (e.g. nn6-nn6v; oo1v-oo2): | *ha’s,* and *hath* |
| Compositor E (e.g. pp5-pp5v): | *ha’s, has,* and *hath.* |

The pages that each compositor is responsible for are indicated by signatures in brackets. Table 7.13 shows that *has* is used by compositors B and E (even though it occurs only twice in the play). *Ha’s* is more frequent (there are 13 instances), and it is used by compositors B, I, and E. *Hath* is used frequently by all three compositors. Since all compositors use similar forms, the original author’s choice was most likely kept by the compositor.

Authorship debates are fun and are frequently discussed in the media. In many cases, careful study can help determine authorship, but we need to be careful.

### 9. Conclusion

In this chapter, we examined some characteristics of Early Modern English. By now, it should be clear that, syntactically, this stage is remarkably modern. If we do not understand some of the texts, the reasons may be stylistic and semantic.

There are a few differences between the sounds of Early Modern and Modern English such as the pronunciation of the vowels in *moat, seat,* and *beneath.* Our knowledge about this comes from rhymes and contemporary grammars. The morphology and grammar still show a number of differences, and vocabulary use is a lot more innovative than in other periods. The introduction of dictionaries during this time period encourages more uniformity, however.
Chapter 7. Early Modern English: 1500–1700

Keywords

Renaissance, folio, quarto, literacy, GVS, sea/great difference, etymological respelling, pronominal changes, changes in case and verbal agreement, change towards an analytic language, dramatic numbers of loans, orthographies, grammars, dictionaries, varieties, editorial emendations, determining authorship.

The texts in the Appendices are chosen to reflect different genres (plays, prose, and letters), gender, and times (16th to late 17th century) and they are in chronological order.

Exercises

1. Compare Queen's Elizabeth's version of Boethius in Appendix A to the earlier rendition by Chaucer or to the Modern English one. List some of her Early Modern English features in spelling, morphology, syntax, and the lexicon.

2. Comment on some of the orthography, punctuation, and spelling of the text in B. Also notice the signature.

3. How did the words in (a) to (c) change in pronunciation during the Early Modern English period? What sound change occurred in (d)?
   a. knave
   b. wrong
   c. bright
   d. burst > bust

4. What do the phrases below indicate about the grammar of Early Modern English:
   b. I am my selfe indifferent honest (from Shakespeare's Hamlet).

5. Find several Modern English words that have one of the prefixes mal-, mis-, and pseudo- and try to formulate a rule for their use. What is the origin of these prefixes?

6. There seems to be a relationship between sure and secure; construe and construct; poor and pauper; and ray and radius. What might be the reason there are such pairs?

7. Take one of the Early Modern English texts of Appendix D or E and comment on its morphology (e.g. pronominal forms or verbal endings), syntax (e.g. word order and auxiliaries), lexicon, and orthography, spelling, or punctuation.

8. Use the OED and see who first used premeditated, assassination, obscene, and catastrophe.
9. The rulers and major political events of this period are: Henry VIII (1509–47), Edward IV (1547–53), Mary I (1553–58), Elizabeth I (1558–1603), James I (1603–25), Charles I (1625–49), Cromwell (1653–1658), Charles II (1660–85), James II (1685–88), and Mary & William (1688–1702). Pick a year during one of these reigns and check what new words appear. Make use of the Advanced Search option in the electronic OED or the CED. Do the new words give you a clue about the political climate of the reign?

10. Comment on the text in Appendix C in terms of spelling and the inclusion of regionalisms.

11. Which of the six authorship criteria discussed in Section 7 do you think might be most reliable? Outline a plan for a possible authorship study.

Appendix A

Elizabeth’s Translation of Boethius compared to others

Elizabeth I was born in 1533, became Queen of England in 1558, and died in 1603. She promoted the arts, sciences, and humanities. Below is her translation of a part of Boethius whose Consolation of Philosophy has been translated many times: by Alfred in Old English, Chaucer in Middle English, and Elizabeth in Early Modern English. See www.luminarium.org/renlit for Elizabeth’s full text and http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/boethius/boethius.html for the Latin version and a Modern English translation, and http://www.yorku.ca/inpar/Boethius_Fox.pdf for another translation. The versions below are given in chronological order.

Old English – Alfred

Eala Mod, hwæt bewearp þe on ðas care 7 on þas gnornunga? Wenst þu þ hit hwæt niwes sie oþþe hvaethwugu ungewunelices þ þe on becumen is, swelce oþþer monnum ær þæt ilce ne eglede? Gif þu þonne wenst þ hit on þe gelong sie þ ða woruldsælða on ðe swa onwenda sint, þonne eart ðu on gedwolan, ac swylce hiora þeawas sint; hi beheoldon on þe hiora agen gecynd, 7 on hiora wandlunga hy gecyðdon hiora unfaæstrædnesse. Swylce hi wæron rihte ða hi de mæst geolectan swilce hi nu sindon, þeawas sint; hi beheoldon on þa leasan sælða. Nu þu wast hwelce þeawas þa woruldsælða habbað 7 hi hu hwearfiað. Gif þu þonne heora þegen beon wilt 7 þe heora þeawas liciað, to hwon myrnst þu swa swiðe? Hwi ne hwearfost þu eac mid him? Gif þu þonne heora untriowa onscunige, oferhoga hi þonne 7 adrif hi fram þe; hi spanað þe to þinre unðearefe. ða iðcan þe þe gewydan nu þas gnornunga forðæm þe þu hi hæfdest, þa iðcan þe væren on stinesse gif þu hi na ne underfenge. ða iðcan þe habbað nu heora agnes ðonces forlæten, nales ðines, ða de næfre nanne mon buton sorge ne forlætað. (Sedgefield ed 1899: 15–6)
Middle English – Chaucer

What eyleth the, man? What is it that hath cast the into moornynge and into wepynge? I trow that thou hast seyn some newe thyng and unkouth. Thou wenest that Fortune be chaunged ayens the; but thou wenest wrong (yif thou that wene): alwey tho ben hir maneres. Sche hath rather kept, as to the-ward, hir propre stablenesse in the chaungynge of hirself. Ryght swiche was sche whan sche flateryd the and desseyved the with unleful lykinges of false welefulnesse. Thou hast now knowen and ateynt the doutous or double visage of thilke blynde goddesse Fortune. Sche, that yit covereth and wympleth hir to other folk, hath schewyd hir every del to the. Yif thou approvest here (and thynkest that sche is good), use hir maneris and pleyne the nat; and yif thou agrisest hir false trecherie, despise and cast away hir that pleyeth so harmfully. For sche, that is now cause of so michel sorwe to the, sholde ben cause to the of pees and of joye. Sche hath forsaken the, forsothe, the whiche that never man mai ben siker that sche ne schal forsaken hym. (from Benson 1987, 408, Boece book II, prose 1)

Early Modern English – Elizabeth I

What is it, therefore, O man, that hath throwne the down to wo and wayle? Thou hast seene, I beleue, som new vnwonted thing. Thou, yf thou thinkest that toward the fortune be changed, art deceaud. This was euer her manner, this was her nature. She hath euer kept toward the rather her own constancy in her mutabilitie. Such one was she, whan she beguild the, and did deceauve with allurementes of false felicitie. Thou hast vnderstode now, the doutfull face of the blynde Goddesse, which though she hyde her self to others, hath made her self to the manifest. Yf thou allow her vse her fashon, complayne not therof; yf thou hatest her treason, skorne her and cast her of, that so falsely beguilde the; for she that now is cause of thy woe, the self same ought be of thy quyett. She hath left the, whom no man can be sure that will not leave him.

Appendix B

Shakespeare’s The Tempest

The First Folio edition is the first edition that contains many plays, see Section 1 above too. The Tempest is the first play in the First Folio edition (see the signature) even though it is a later play (namely 1610) than Hamlet (1600), for example.
THE TEMPEST.

A Hiatus primus. Scena prima.

A tempestuous sea of Thunder and Lightning heard: Enter a Shipmaster, and a Bate citizens.

Mast. Oke, what's the matter? What cheer?

Bot. Here Master: What cheer?

Mast. Good: Speak to the Mariners: fall too, yarely, or we are lost: our feloes is ground, the force, behold. Exit.

Enter Marinus.

Bot. Heigh my heart! cheerly, cheerly heart! yarely: the in the toppest: Tend to the Masters whistle: Be well thou burn thy winde, if room enough.

Enter Alonzo, Sebastian, Antonio, Ferdinand, Gonzalo, and others.


Ant. What is the Master, Bozo?

Bot. Do you not heart this? you must our labour, to keep your cabinets, you must off the formers.

Gen. Nay, good be patient.

Bot. When the seas are highest, what care the resters for the name of King? in Cabinet, stable, and noble.

Gen. Good, yez remember you must thow fast aboard.

Bot. Not that I more sorry for my selfe: ye are a Commission, if you can command these Elements to stedency, and where we are to the prince we will not hand a rope more, and you your abilities. If you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make your fastes, reside in your cabinet for the matches of the hour, if it be so. Cheerly good hearts you of our way. Exit.

Gen. I have great comfort from this fall, which thinks he hath no danger to make upon them, his complexion is perfect. [Fairweather good Forte to his hanging, make the rope of his defile our cable, for our ownes doth little advantage. He be not born to bee hang'd, our case is miserable.

Enter Bate subjects, Antonio and Gonzalo.

Bot. Downe with the top, fast yarely, lower, lower, bring her to trie with Maines court. A Place

Actus third. Enter Sebastian, Antonio & Gonzalo.

upon this howling: they are lower then the weather, or our office yet againe: What do you hear that we give one and drowned, have you a mind to sink?

Sebat. A poise of your cheeks, you howling: blissful:

Bot. Worketh you then.

Ant. Hang, and hang you unless insolent Neptune, we are left afraid to be drowned, then thou art.

Gen. He warrant him for drowning, though the Ship were no stronger then a Nuss-fish, and is lees as an unstanch'd wench.

Bot. Lay her a hold, a hold, let her to courses off to Sea againe, lay her off.

Exit Marinus met.

Mast. All lost, no prayers, no prayers, all lost.

Bot. What must our mouths be cold!

Gen. The King, and Prince, as prayers, let's assist them, for our case is as theirs.

Sebat. I am out of patience.

Ant. We are more chested of our lives by drunksards, this wide-shape-rascal, would should he mightly eye drowning the watching of ten Tides.

Gen. Howe be hang'd yet, though every drop of water (weares against it, and gaze at widde to glute him. A confused man within.

Mercy on us.

We split, we split, Farewell my wife, and children, Farewell brother: we split, we split, we split.

Ant. Let's fell into with King

Sebat. Let's take sentence of him,

Gen. Now would I give a thousand furlongs of Sea, for an Acre of beaten ground. Long heart, Browne firr, any things the wish above be done, but I would see a dry death.

Exit.

Scena Secunda.

Enter Prospero, and Miranda.

Mir. If by your Art (say decent father) you have, I put this wild woman in this E皇家seas chest. The sky by the waves would prove down thinking pitch, But that the Sea, mounting to the wainke breaks.

Dashes the fire out. Oh I have suffered With those that I saw suffer: A house revisit A
OF SUM IDIOMES IN OUR ORTHOGRAPHIE.

Cap. 8.

[195]

In our tongue we have sum particles quhilk can not be symbolized with roman symbols, nor rightlie pronounced but be our own, for we in many places see absorb l and n behynd a consonant, quher they can not move without a vocal intervening, that the ear can hardilie judge quhither their intervenes a vocal or noe.

2. In this case sum, to avoid the pronunciation of the vocal before the l and n, wryte it behind; as little, mitle, martine, etcine. Quhilk houbet it incurs in an-other inconvenience of pronouncing the vocal behind the l or n, yet I dar not presume to reprove, [200] because it passeth my wit how to avoid both inconveniences, And therfore this I leave to the will of the wryter.

3. Sum of our men hes taken up sum unual formes of sym-
OF RULES FROM THE LATIN.

Cap. 7 (sic).

1. Heer, seeing we borrow milke from the latin, it is reason that (sic. 18 s.) we either follow them in symbolizing their's, or deduce from them the groundes of our orthographie.

2. Imprimis, then, quhatsoever we derive from them written with 'c we should alse wryte with c, howbeit it sound as an s to the ignorant; As conceave, receave, perceave, from conceprio, recipio; Concern, discern, from concerno, discerno; accesse, success, recese, from accedo, succedo, recedo, with manie moe, quhilk I commend to the attention of the wryter.

3. Also quhat they wryte with s we should alse wryte with s; As servant, from servus; sense, from sensus; session from sessio; passion, from passio.

4. Neither is the c joined with s here to be omitted; As (sic. 18 s.) science and conscience, from scientia, conscientia; ascend and descend, from ascendo, descend; resced and absced, from rescindo and abscondo.

4 (sic). This difference of c and s is the more attentivelie to be marked for that words of one sound and diverse signification are many tyme distinguished be these symbols; As, the kinges secreete council, and the faithful council of a frende; concert in musick, and consent of myndes; to duel in a cel, and to sel a horse; a decet weed, and descent of a noble house. These two last differres alsece in accent.

5. Lykways, that we derive from latin verbales in tio, sould also be wryte with t; as oration, visitation, education, vocation, proclamation, admonition, etc.

6. Wordes derived from the (sic. 17 s.) latin in tia and tiium we wryte with ce; as justice, from justitia; Intelligence, from intel-
ligentia; vice, from vitium; service, from servitium. In al quhilk, houbeit the e behind the c be idle, yet use hes made it tolerable to noot the breaking of the c, for al tongues bear with sum slippes that can not abyde the tuich stone of true orthographie.

7. C is alsoe written in our wordes deryved from x in latin; As peace, from pac; fornace, from fornax; matrice, from matrix; nurce, from nutrix, quhilk the south calles nurse, not without a salt both in sound and symbol; be this we wryte felicitie, audacitie, tenacitie, etc.

8. Lykways we sould keep the vouales of the original, quherin the north warres the (sic. 17 s.) south; from retineo, the north retine, the south retain; from foras, the north foran, the south forain; from regnum, the north regne, the south raigne; from cor, the north corage, the south courage; from devoro, the north devore, the south devour; from vox, the north voice, the south voice; from devoese, the north devote, the south devote; from guerrum, the north were, the south war; from gigas, gigantis, the north gyant, the south giaunt; from mons, montis, the north mont, the south mount. Of this I cold reckon armyes, but wil not presume to judge farther then the compasse of my owne cap, for howbeit we keep nearer the original, yet al tongues have their idiom in borrowing from the latin, or other foran tongues.
Appendix D

Dorothy Osborne's Letters

Dorothy Osborne (1627–1695) and William Temple come from ‘gentle’ but impoverished families. When they fall in love, their families are not happy. Her letters to him before their marriage are published as *The Love Letters of Dorothy Osborne* (edited by Edward Parry in 1901) and available at http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/osborne/letters/letters.html.

SIR, -There is nothing moves my charity like gratitude; and when a beggar's thankful for a small relief, I always repent it was not more. But seriously, this place will not afford much towards the enlarging of a letter, and I am grown so dull with living in't (for I am not willing to confess that I was always so) as to need all helps. Yet you shall see I will endeavour to satisfy you, upon condition you will tell me why you quarrelled so at your last letter. I cannot guess at it, unless it were that you repented you told me so much of your story, which I am not apt to believe neither, because it would not become our friendship, a great part of it consisting (as I have been taught) in a mutual confidence. And to let you see that I believe it so, I will give you an account of myself, and begin my story, as you did yours, from our parting at Goring House.

I came down hither not half so well pleased as I went up, with an engagement upon me that I had little hope of ever shaking off, for I had made use of all the liberty my friends would allow me to preserve my own, and ‘twould not do; he was so weary of his, that he would part with't upon any terms. As my last refuge I got my brother to go down with him to see his house, who, when he came back, made the relation I wished. He said the seat was as ill as so good a country would permit, and the house so ruined for want of living in't, as it would ask a good proportion of time and money to make it fit for a woman to confine herself to. This (though it were not much) I was willing to take hold of, and made it considerable enough to break the engagement. I had no quarrel to his person or his fortune, but was in love with neither, and much out of love with a thing called marriage; and have since thanked God I was so, for 'tis not long since one of my brothers writ me word of him that he was killed in a duel, though since I hear that 'twas the other that was killed, and he is fled upon 't, which does not mend the matter much. Both made me glad I had 'scaped him, and sorry for his misfortune, which in earnest was the least return his many civilities to me could deserve.

Presently, after this was at an end, my mother died, and I was left at liberty to mourn her loss awhile. At length my aunt (with whom I was when you last saw me) commanded me to wait on her at London; and when I came, she told me how much I was in her care, how well she loved me for my mother's sake, and something for my own, and drew out a long set speech which ended in a good motion (as she called it); and truly I saw no harm in't, for by what I had heard of the gentleman I guessed he expected a better fortune than mine. And it proved so. Yet he protested he liked me so well, that he was very angry my father would not be persuad-ed to give a £1,000 more with me; and I him so ill, that I vowed if I had £1,000 less I should
have thought it too much for him. And so we parted. Since, he has made a story with a new mistress that is worth your knowing, but too long for a letter. I’ll keep it for you.

After this, some friends that had observed a gravity in my face which might become an elderly man’s wife (as they term’d it) and a mother-in-law, proposed a widower to me, that had four daughters, all old enough to be my sisters; but he had a great estate, was as fine a gentleman as ever England bred, and the very pattern of wisdom. I that knew how much I wanted it, thought this the safest place for me to engage in, and was mightily pleased to think I had met with one at last that had wit enough for himself and me too. But shall I tell you what I thought when I knew him (you will say nothing on’t): ‘twas the vainest, impertinent, self-conceited learned coxcomb that ever yet I saw; to say more were to spoil his marriage, which I hear he is towards with a daughter of my Lord of Coleraine’s; but for his sake I shall take heed of a fine gentleman as long as I live.

Before I had quite ended with him, coming to town about that and some other occasions of my own, I fell in Sir Thomas’s way; and what humour took him I cannot imagine, but he made very formal addresses to me, and engaged his mother and my brother to appear in’t. This bred a story pleasanter than any I have told you yet, but so long a one that I must reserve it till we meet, or make it a letter of itself. Only by this you may see ‘twas not for nothing he commended me, though to speak seriously, it was because it was to you. Otherwise I might have missed of his praises for we have hardly been cousins since the breaking up of that business.

The next thing I desired to be rid on was a scurvy spleen that I had ever been subject to, and to that purpose was advised to drink the waters. There I spent the latter end of the summer, and at my coming home found that a gentleman (who has some estate in this country) had been treating with my brother, and it yet goes on fair and softly. I do not know him so well as to give you much of his character: ‘tis a modest, melancholy, reserved man, whose head is so taken up with little philosophical studies, that I admire how I found a room there. ‘Twas sure by chance; and unless he is pleased with that part of my humour which other people think worst, ‘tis very possible the next new experiment may crowd me out again. Thus you have all my late adventures, and almost as much as this paper will hold. The rest shall be employed in telling you how sorry I am you have got such a cold. I am the more sensible of your trouble by my own, for I have newly got one myself. But I will send you that which used to cure me. ‘Tis like the rest of my medicines: if it do no good, ‘twill be sure to do no harm, and ‘twill be no great trouble to you to eat a little on’t now and then; for the taste, as it is not excellent, so ‘tis not very ill. One thing more I must tell you, which is that you are not to take it ill that I mistook your age by my computation of your journey through this country; for I was persuaded t’other day that I could not be less than thirty years old by one that believed it himself, because he was sure it was a great while since he had heard of such a one in the world.
Appendix E

Isaac Newton on Optics

Isaac Newton (1642-1727) wrote letters in English, and a part of one such a letter is given here.

PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSACTIONS.

February 19, 16$\frac{1}{2}$.

The CONTENTS.

A Letter of Mr. Isaac Newton, Mathematick Professor in the University of Cambridge, containing his New Theory about Light and Colors: Where Light is declared to be not Similar or Homogeneous, but consisting of diverse rays, some of which are more refrangible than others; And Colors are affirmed to be not Qualifications of Light, derived from Refractions of natural Bodies, (as 'tis generally believed,) but Original and Conjoint properties, which in diverse rays are divers: Where several Observations and Experiments are alleged to prove the said Theory. An Account of some Books: I. A Description of the EAST-INDIAN COASTS, MALABAR, COROMANDEL, CETHON, &c. in Dutch, by Phil. Baldaus. II. Antonii le Grand INSTITUTIO PHILOSOPHIAE, secundum principia Renati Des-Cartes; novâ methodo adornata & explicata. III. An Essay to the Advancement of MUSICK; by Thomas Salmon M.A. Advertisement about Theron Smyrnæus, An Index for the Tracts of the Year 1671.

A Letter of Mr. Isaac Newton, Professor of the Mathematicks in the University of Cambridge, containing his New Theory about Light and Colors: sent by the Author to the Publisher from Cambridge, Febr. 6. 16$\frac{1}{2}$, in order to be communicated to the Royal Society.

SIR,

I perform my late promise to you, I shall without further ceremony acquaint you, that in the beginning of the Year 1666 (at which time I applied myself to the grinding of Optick glasses of other figures than Spherical,) I procured me a Triangular glass-Prism, to try therewith the celebrated Phænomena of Colours,
( 3076 )

Colours. And in order there to having darkened my chamber, and made a small hole in my window-shuts, to let in a convenient quantity of the Sun's light, I placed my Prisme at his entrance, that it might be thereby refracted to the opposite wall. It was at first a very pleasing divertissement, to view the vivid and intense colours produced thereby; but after a while applying my self to consider them more circumstantly, I became surprized to see them in an oblong form; which, according to the received laws of Refraction, I expected should have been circular.

They were terminated at the sides with straight lines, but at the ends, the decay of light was so gradual, that it was difficult to determine justly, what was their figure; yet they seemed semicircular.

Comparing the length of this coloured Spectrum with its breadth, I found it about five times greater; a disproportion so extravagant, that it excited me to a more then ordinary curiosity of examining, from whence it might proceed. I could scarce think, that the various Thickness of the glass, or the termination with shadow or darknes, could have any Influence on light to produce such an effect; yet I thought it not amiss, first to examine those circumstances, and so tried, what would happen by transmitting light through parts of the glass of divers thicknesses, or through holes in the window of divers bignesses, or by setting the Prisme without so, that the light might pass through it, and be refracted before it was terminated by the hole: But I found none of those circumstances material. The fashion of the colours was in all these cases the same.

Then I suspected, whether by any unevenness in the glass, or other contingent irregularity, these colours might be thus dilated. And to try this, I took another Prisme like the former, and so placed it, that the light, passing through them both, might be refracted contrary ways, and so by the latter returned into that course, from which the former had diverted it. For, by this means I thought, the regular effects of the first Prisme would be destroyed by the second Prisme, but the irregular ones more augmented, by the multiplicity of refractions. The event was, that the light, which by the first Prisme was diffused into an oblong form, was by the second reduced into an orbicular one with as much regularity, as when it did not at all pass through them. So that, what ever was the cause of that length, it was not any contingent irregularity.
NEWTON'S THEORY ABOUT LIGHT & COLORS

I then proceeded to examine more critically, what might be effected by the difference of the incidence of Rays coming from divers parts of the Sun; and to that end, measured the several lines and angles, belonging to the Image. Its distance from the hole or Prisme was 22 foot; its utmost length 13½ inches; its breadth 2½ the diameter of the hole ½ of an inch; the angle, with the Rays tending towards the middle of the image, made with those lines, in which they would have proceeded without refraction, was 44 deg. 56'. And the vertical Angle of the Prisme, 63 deg. 12'. Also the Refractions on both sides the Prisme, that is, of the Incident, and Emergent Rays, were as near, as I could make them, equal, and consequently about 54 deg. 4'. And the Rays fell perpendicularly upon the wall. Now subducting the diameter of the hole from the length and breadth of the Image, there remains 13 Inches the length, and 2½ the breadth, comprehended by those Rays, which passed through the center of the said hole, and consequently the angle of the hole, which that breadth subtended, was about 31', answerable to the Sun's Diameter; but the angle, which its length subtended, was more then five such diameters, namely 2 deg. 49'.

Having made these observations, I first computed from them the refractive power of that glass, and found it measured by the ratio of the sines, 20 to 31. And then, by that ratio, I computed the Refractions of two Rays flowing from opposite parts of the Sun's disc, so as to differ 31' in their obliquity of Incidence, and found, that the emergent Rays should have comprehended an angle of about 31', as they did, before they were incident.

But because this computation was founded on the Hypothesis of the proportionality of the sines of Incidence, and Refraction, which though by my own Experience I could not imagine to be so erroneous, as to make that Angle but 31', which in reality was 2 deg. 49' yet my curiosity caused me again to take my Prisme. And having placed it at my window, as before, I observed, that by turning it a little about its axis to and fro, so as to vary its obliquity to the light, more then an angle of 4 or 5 degrees, the Colours were not thereby sensibly translated from their place on the wall, and consequently by that variation of Incidence, the quantity of Refraction was not sensibly varied. By this Experiment therefore, as well as by the former computation, it was evident, that the difference of the Incidence of Rays, flowing from divers parts...
parts of the Sun, could not make them after decussation diverge at a sensibly greater angle, than that at which they before converged; which being, at most, but about 31 or 32 minutes, there still remained some other cause to be found out, from whence it could be 2 degr. 49'.

Then I began to suspect, whether the Rays, after their trajectory, on through the Prism, did not move in curve lines, and according to their more or less curvity tend to divers parts of the wall. And it increased my suspicion, when I remembred that I had often seen a Tennis ball, struck with an oblique Racket, describe such a curve line. For, a circular as well as a progressive motion being communicated to it by that stroke, its parts on that side, where the motions conspire, must press and beat the contiguous Air more violently than on the other, and there excite a reluctancy and reaction of the Air proportionably greater. And for the same reason, if the Rays of light should possibly be globular bodies, and by their oblique passage out of one medium into another acquire a circulating motion, they ought to feel the greater resistance from the ambient Æther, on that side, where the motions conspire, and thence be continually bowed to the other. But notwithstanding this plausible ground of suspicion, when I came to examine it, I could observe no such curvity in them. And besides (which was enough for my purpose) I observed, that the difference 'twixt the length of the Image, and diameter of the hole, through which the light was transmitted, was proportionable to their distance.
Chapter 8

Modern English

1700–the present

This chapter outlines the changes that occur in English from the 18th century on. For practical purposes, the chapter only discusses general tendencies, and the examples come from relatively standard British and American English. Chapter 9 will focus on the changes that take place in English in the different geographical areas where it is spoken.

After 1700, there are fewer major language internal changes than in the previous periods. However, there are many external developments as a result of colonialism: English branches out into American, Australian, African (e.g. Kenyan English), and Asian (e.g. South Asian English, Singapore English), with numerous varieties within each of these broad categories (e.g. South African Indian English and New York Puerto Rican English). The closer we get to Modern English, the better we can investigate the details of language use, such as differences due to the gender, age, region, and socio-economic status of the speakers, and there are many sociolinguistic studies devoted to these aspects. This chapter focuses on the overall changes in the sounds and grammar of English.

Section 1 sketches some of the social, scientific, and political changes that influence the language and the types of texts produced in this period. Section 2 explores sound and spelling changes as well as the stigmatization of certain sound changes. Section 3 discusses the grammar, and Section 4 explores the sources of new vocabulary. Section 5 examines prescriptivism, the role of dictionaries, the status of dialects, and the further development of a standard. Section 6 focuses on the regional and register varieties of English, continuing where Section 2 left off.

1. External History and Sources

In social and political terms, the second part of the 17th century marks the beginning of a very volatile period in the history of Britain. The Civil War starts in 1642, the republican Commonwealth led by Cromwell is proclaimed in 1649, and the monarchy is restored in 1660 (the Restoration). While the Renaissance was characterized by freedom, this period is characterized by a search for stability, correctness, and standardization. The period
between 1650 and 1800 also leads to what is later called the Age of Reason and to the
Enlightenment.

The Enlightenment is an 18th century movement characterized by reliance on sci-
ence and reason and concern for humanity. It may be considered responsible for certain
social and political changes towards the end of the 18th century: American Independence
(1776), the French Revolution (1789), and the abolition of slave trade by the British
Parliament (1807). However, Romanticism, a 19th century movement with an emphasis
on nations and peoples may also have stimulated those changes. Romanticism is a philo-
sophical and literary movement at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th cen-
tury that emphasizes a subjective approach to topics such as nature, mysticism, dreams,
and emotions. In many respects, it is a reaction to the rational ideas of the Enlightenment
even though it also builds on them.

As to texts, a multitude becomes available after 1700. As mentioned in Chapter 4,
there are around 2,000 Old English texts with a total of 3 million words; these texts can
be categorized into historical and literary genres. Modern English is much more varied
than Old English: there are many varieties of spoken English, newspaper articles, ad-
vertisements, e-mail, formal writing genres, etc. Therefore, this section mentions only a
few of the sources available. Online sources for this period are available at: http://www.
andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/18th/etext.html, http://www.gutenberg.lib.md.us/index/

The early part of this period, especially the Enlightenment, produces a number of en-
cyclopedias, philosophical and scientific works, grammars, and dictionaries. For instance,
in the 17th century, 34 grammars were produced in Britain; in the 18th century, that
number became 235 (Michael 1970). Some important works of this time are the English
translation of Pierre Bayle’s 1710 Critical and Historical Dictionary, the 1721 dictionary
by Nathan Bailey, and the 1727–8 work by Ephraim Chambers Cyclopeadia or Universal

Table 8.1. Some (late) 17th and 18th century writers in Britain and the US, in chronological
order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1643–1727</td>
<td>Isaac Newton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1672–1719</td>
<td>Joseph Addison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1685–1753</td>
<td>George Berkeley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1706–1790</td>
<td>Benjamin Franklin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723–1790</td>
<td>Adam Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1737–1809</td>
<td>Thomas Paine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1754–1784</td>
<td>Phyllis Wheatley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1759–1796</td>
<td>Robert Burns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771–1855</td>
<td>Dorothy Wordsworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772–1834</td>
<td>Samuel Taylor Coleridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788–1824</td>
<td>George Byron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792–1822</td>
<td>Percy Bysshe Shelley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797–1851</td>
<td>Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1667–1745</td>
<td>Jonathan Swift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1672–1729</td>
<td>Richard Steele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1688–1744</td>
<td>Alexander Pope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1711–1776</td>
<td>David Hume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733–1804</td>
<td>Joseph Priestley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1743–1826</td>
<td>Thomas Jefferson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757–1827</td>
<td>William Blake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770–1850</td>
<td>William Wordsworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771–1832</td>
<td>Walter Scott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775–1817</td>
<td>Jane Austen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789–1851</td>
<td>James Fenimore Cooper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795–1821</td>
<td>John Keats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dictionary. Some British and American names are provided in Table 8.1; some clearly belong to the Enlightenment or Romanticism, but others are more difficult to classify.

The 19th century is characterized by the Industrial Revolution which transforms a (mainly) agricultural society into an industrial one and can be said to start in limited ways after 1700. It is characterized by an increased use of machines and factories as well as urbanization. English Imperialism is at its height during the reign of Victoria (1819–1901). We will see that both Industrialism and Imperialism lead to many linguistic changes. Some British and American writers from the late 18th and 19th centuries are given in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2. Some 19th century writers in Britain and the US, in chronological order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ralph Emerson</td>
<td>1803–1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</td>
<td>1806–1861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Darwin</td>
<td>1809–1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet Beecher Stowe</td>
<td>1811–1896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Dickens</td>
<td>1812–1870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte Brontë</td>
<td>1816–1849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Eliot</td>
<td>1819–1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Brontë</td>
<td>1820–1849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisa Alcott</td>
<td>1832–1888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Twain</td>
<td>1835–1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudyard Kipling</td>
<td>1865–1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathaniel Hawthorne</td>
<td>1804–1864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfred Tennyson</td>
<td>1808–1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Gaskell</td>
<td>1810–1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Browning</td>
<td>1812–1889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Brontë</td>
<td>1818–1848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herman Melville</td>
<td>1819–1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Dickenson</td>
<td>1830–1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis Carroll</td>
<td>1832–1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Hardy</td>
<td>1840–1928</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 20th century is characterized by revolutions in art (e.g. Cubism, Surrealism, (Abstract) Expressionism, Minimalism, and Performance Art), two world wars, and many technological and medical advances as well as changes in political and social ideas (the anti-communism of the 1950s, the civil liberties movement of the 1960s, and the anti-Vietnam movement of the 1970s in the United States). These changes lead to the introduction of many new words.

The writers of this period are too numerous to mention: T.S. Eliot (1880–1965), Jean Rhys (1890–1979), Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961), Ralph Ellison (1914–1994), James Baldwin (1924–1987), Alice Walker (1944–), Isaac Bashevis Singer (1904–1991), Bapsi Sidhwa (1938–), Linton Kwesi Johnson (1952–), Sherman Alexie (1966–), Joy Harjo (1951–), and many others. Especially in the 20th century, it becomes harder to classify writers as American, British, or Kenyan, since many have chosen (or have had) to relocate. There are American writers who move to Europe (T.S. Eliot and Ernest Hemingway), writers born in Trinidad and Jamaica who move to England (Jean Rhys and Linton Kwesi Johnson, respectively), and South Asians who move to the US (Bapsi Sidhwa). There are African American writers (Ralph Ellison; Alice Walker), Americans who write in Yiddish and are translated into English (I. B. Singer), and Native Americans writing in English (Sherman Alexie; Joy Harjo). Chapter 9 will provide a list of writers outside the traditional British/American domain.
Newspapers and the internet are good sources of linguistic data. Corpora, such as the 100-million word British National Corpus, or BNC (http://thetis.bl.uk), the 2-million word Corpus of Spoken Professional American English, or CSE (www.athel.com), the International Corpus of English, or ICE (www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice/sounds.htm), and the American National Corpus in development, are helpful resources on the state of the language. They are collections of texts from different genres and regions of the world. We will use some of them in the sections to follow.

2. Modern English Spelling and Sounds

As we discussed in the previous chapter, around 1700 English becomes more recognizable for speakers of Modern English. The spelling is relatively stable and changes such as the GVS are nearing completion in many varieties.

There are still variant spellings even in formal writing, however: honor and honour, vnitie and unity, iournal and journal, and magic and magick. Webster’s spelling books and dictionary published in the 1800s list forms that sometimes differ from the British ones. Between Webster’s very traditional 1783 speller and the innovative 1828 dictionary, Webster changes his mind (apparently under the influence of Benjamin Franklin). By the 1850s, spelling is standardized on both sides of the Atlantic, but there are numerous attempts at spelling reform by the editors of the Chicago Tribune, Mark Twain, George Bernard Shaw, and others.

Currently, spelling is relatively standardized (except in e-mail and electronic messages), and it would be difficult to get a letter such as the one in (1) published anywhere:

(1) We instinktivly shrink from eny chaenj in whot iz familyar; and whot kan be mor familyar dhan dhe form ov wurdz dhat we hav seen and riten mor tiemz dhan we kan posibly estimaet? We taek up a book printed in Amerika, and “honor” and “center” jar upon us every tiem we kum akros dhem; nae, eeven to see “forever” in plaes of “for ever” atrakts our atenshon in an unplezant wae (from http://www.e-speec.com/new.htm).

The fragment in (1) is called New Spelling. It was suggested by a British and American spelling society and was almost accepted as the standard by the British Parliament in 1949. At the moment, there do not seem to be many serious attempts at spelling reform. In fact, spelling may be getting more codified due to spell checkers on our computers.

Correct pronunciation also becomes a major concern in the Modern English period. As George Bernard Shaw put it in the Preface to Pygmalion in 1916, “it is impossible for an Englishman to open his mouth without making some other Englishman despise him”. To this day, regional differences in pronunciation are used to determine where a speaker of English comes from, and these regional variants are almost always stigmatized if uttered outside the ‘right’ context.

In addition to regional varieties, there are other issues related to pronunciation that
intrigue prescriptive grammarians; one of those issues is initial [h]. After World War II, the prescriptive rules concerning pronunciation become less rigid. It is also true that many of the regional variants lose some of their distinctive features, which leads Trudgill (1999) to talk about traditional, i.e. mostly rural, and modern dialects. This section therefore incorporates regional and social factors relevant to sound change.

In Britain, one regional variety that is not strongly stigmatized is the northern pronunciation of the final gh/ch [X] in night and loch, where the Old English sound is retained. The retention of pre-GVS [u] in cow and house is also northern, as is the retention of pre-palatalized [k] in Scottish kirk. Many of the dialect features of Middle English, such as the pronunciation of ham and the spelling of sal and quha, are maintained in Modern English dialects. You can listen to Scottish English at www.clan-cameron.org/audio.html. Southern dialects in Britain have also retained some of their Middle English characteristics such as the voiced initial fricative in vurther ‘further’ and zea ‘sea’. These appear in Henry Fielding’s Tom Jones (1749) as veather ‘father’, vind ‘find’, and zee ‘sea’. Fielding was from Somerset in the Southwest. The north–south differences in British English are summarized in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3. Some regional differences in Britain going back to earlier varieties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE retained (in the North)</th>
<th>ME dialect features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[X] not deleted</td>
<td>sal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[u] not [aw]</td>
<td>father/seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a rare [k] not [tʃ]</td>
<td>hame</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can hear other varieties at www.evolpub.com/Americandialects/EngDialLnx.html. Some changes that first appear in regional varieties later spread and gradually become stigmatized. These include making the interdental fricatives into stops, as in African American English, Irish English, and Newfoundland English where three and tree sound the same. This use of [t] and [d] is a social rather than a regional variant. Another example is the use of glottal stops; it starts in the North of England and in Scotland where a [t] is replaced with a glottal stop between two vowels. It quickly spreads in the 19th century and later becomes non-prestige. Initially, only words such as bottle are affected, but the change gradually spreads to syllable-final [p, t, k] so like and light sound the same.

Table 8.4 lists some pronunciation variants that have become social class markers, especially in British English (see also Wyld 1920). Cross-linguistically some sounds are

Table 8.4. Variation in Modern English with one variant stigmatized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[h] or no [h] in hope</th>
<th>[n] or [ŋ] in going</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[r] or no [r] in fourth</td>
<td>no [θ] and [ð] in three and then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[j] or no [j] in Tuesday</td>
<td>[w] or [w] in white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[æ] or [a] in ask</td>
<td>[p, t, k] or glottal word-finally, e.g. late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cluster simplification in went</td>
<td>intervocalic [t] or [flap] in water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
highly unusual, or marked, and it is not surprising they are subject to change: [æ], [θ], and the glides and liquids.

Many of these sound changes were discussed in previous chapters; they remain relevant in all varieties of present-day English. For characteristics unique to American English, see Wolfram (1991) who provides 20 pages of “socially diagnostic structures.”

The discussion of *h*-deletion in Chapter 6 (Section 2) touched on the shift of Old English [ʍ] to [w] and the arbitrariness of their distribution in most varieties of English: *house* [haws] vs. *hour* [awr]. Some speakers continue to make the distinction between [ʍ] and [w] and in the last few years many have pointed out that it is prestigious in certain parts of the United States to make that distinction. The prestige variants in the United Kingdom do not use [ʍ], but Scottish and Irish variants do and this distinction was transferred to the US, e.g. to Appalachia.

The confusion between words with initial [h] and those without stems from the fact that Anglo-Saxon words (hand, house, and hard) had an [h] while French loans did not (hour, host, and hospital). In the United Kingdom, *h*-deletion in words of Anglo-Saxon origin points to lower social status. Because of this, in the 1938 film version of George Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion*, Professor Higgins tries to teach Eliza Doolittle the [h] by using the sentence in (2):

(2) In Hampshire, Hereford, and Hartford, hurricanes hardly ever happen.

Eliza resorts to hypercorrection: she says *hever* for *ever* in an attempt to pronounce the sentence correctly. According to Trudgill (1999: 29), most traditional dialects in England drop [h], except in the northeast around Newcastle and in East Anglia. Dropping the [h] is not a social marker in the US, however, where it occurs across varieties.

The absence of the velar nasal in both British and American English has a long history. In Alexander Pope’s (1688–1744) poetry, the [ɪn] pronunciation is prevalent: *brewing* and *farthing* rhyme with *ruin* and *garden*, respectively. This issue has been researched in present-day English by Trudgill (1974) and others; they have found that socio-economic status strongly influences the pronunciation of *-ing*. Trudgill finds that working class speakers in Norwich, East England, always use [ɪn], but middle class speakers use this form only 31% of the time. In the Eastern part of the US, the velar nasal is often rendered as [ŋɡ], e.g. in *Long Island*.

As mentioned earlier, [r] weakens in the late 16th century and is replaced by [ə], which in effect lengthens the vowel it follows. This use becomes established, especially in London, but never in Scotland. Interestingly, many American settlers speak varieties with an [r] — Scottish and Irish in Philadelphia and New York in the late 18th century — hence, [r] has a strong presence in the American colonies. Initially, the [r]-less variant is less formal and is criticized (on both sides of the ocean), but later it gains prominence in standard British and certain varieties of American English. Labov’s (1966) work on [r] in three New York City department stores (Saks, Macy’s, and Klein) is cited frequently. Employees were asked for items that were to be found on the fourth floor and the use of [r] was noted. The employees at the high-end store (Saks) pronounced the [r] more
Chapter 8. Modern English: 1700–the present

often than those at the low-end store (Klein, which is no longer in existence). The study was redone in 1986 and the differences between the stores remained (Labov 1994) even though there was an overall increase.

**Linking** [r] occurs when one word ends and the following one starts with a vowel; **intrusive** [r] occurs when words such as *idea* and *banana* are pronounced with a final [r] even in isolation. This seems to have started in London speech (MacMahon 1998: 476), in a variety later named Cockney. One of the features of Received Pronunciation, or RP, used by 3 to 5% of speakers in England, is intrusive [r], in *I saw it* [ajʊərɪt]. African American English, an [r]-less variety, lacks the linking [r] in *four o’clock* and *forever*. It can also have *a expert*, rather than *an expert*, and [də] *expert* rather than [di] *expert* (Mufwene 1992: 296). Thus, the rules for connecting words and syllables differ between varieties.

Another sound change in Modern English is the deletion of the glide in words such as *Tuesday* and *new*. In the US, ‘new’ is pronounced [nu], not [nju]. The same happens in Cockney English and other varieties. In Canadian English, the pronunciation depends on whether the speaker identifies with Britain or the US: in Ontario, close to the center of government center, [nju] is more common. Thus, the initially internal change to [nu] and [tusdej] has become externally motivated. In Chapter 9, I show this in more detail for Canadian English.

Vowels are notoriously unstable and remain so in this period: for instance, [a] changes to [æ] in *ask* and *mask* in American English. We mentioned earlier that Scottish has a [u] which in other varieties has undergone the GVS. In this period, vowels without stress tend to become [ə], especially in the latter half of the 19th century (MacMahon 1998: 462). In American English, [a:] becomes more back and merges with [ɛ:], and *pen* and *pin*, *merry* and *Mary* sound alike in many varieties.

The **stress patterns** of many words change over time: the first edition of the OED (1884–1928) lists *abdomen*, *anchovy*, *quandary*, *secretive*, and *sonorous* as having the main stress on the second syllable; present-day speakers typically put the stress on the first syllable (Bauer 1994: 97).

In conclusion, initially the pronunciation of Modern English is prescriptive (Received Pronunciation, BBC English, or the Queen’s English), but after World War II, variation is tolerated more, as indicated by the BBC having regional accents reporting and a very successful program *The Routes of English* (www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/routesofenglish). However, it is difficult to make generalizations about the pronunciation of English since it varies greatly from region to region. Also, speakers constantly invent new forms: currently, certain age-groups say [nu] for *no*. This could set in motion another shift or the [nu] pronunciation could disappear overnight.

### 3. Modern English Morphology

The trend towards a more analytic language, and the expected loss of case and agreement, continues in Modern English. In this section, we will examine pronominal forms, verbal
endings, adverbs, and adjectives, i.e. the morphology of English. As with sounds, it is diffi-
cult to describe the morphological changes in neutral terms since many are stigmatized.

The case loss in personal pronouns continues in spoken, less formal, varieties. The
prescriptive paradigm is given in Table 8.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>my</td>
<td>your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC/DAT</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, due to a decreased sense of case, accusatives are used not only as objects but also
as (part of) subjects, as in the 19th century example in (3). Nominatives are also used as
subjects as well as (part of) objects, as in (4). The latter are probably hypercorrections:

(3) Us London lawyers don’t often get an out. (Charles Dickens Bleak House 7.54)

(4) This is between you and I.

In (5), where Jane Austen portrays a character of lower social standing, an accusative me
is used after the complementizer as; most written varieties of Modern English would use
the nominative I:

(5) for they are quite as well educated as me (Harriet in Emma, Vol. I, Ch. 4)

There are also many varieties of English in which the possessive ’s/’ on nouns (the geni-
tive case) has disappeared. This ending appears on a possessor noun in front of the noun
that is possessed, as in (6), where Mary owns the book; in (7), where the employees do
not own the cafeteria, the possessive marker is not necessary. Yet, some people insist on
adding it:

(6) Mary’s book

(7) Employees’ cafeteria

As we saw (Tables 7.4 and 7.5), the pronoun system, and especially the second person,
has been quite unstable over time. The singular/plural distinction is lost around 1400; in
certain regional varieties of Modern English, y(ou) all is occasionally added to compen-
sate for the loss of the thou/you distinction after 1600, as in (8):

(8) You all have a great time here!

Maps of the United States indicating where variants such as youse, you guys, and you lot
are used can be found at http://cfprod01.imt.uwm.edu/Dept/FLL/linguistics/dialect/
staticmaps/q_50.html.

The (standard) Modern English reflexive pronouns are as listed in (9):
(9) myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves

What regularities or irregularities do you see? Think about why varieties might ‘invent’ forms such as myself, yourself, herself, himself, ourself, theirselves (Appendix E contains a hisself), or meself, himself, etc. which are possible as well.

Pronouns refer to an antecedent: he can refer to Santa Claus. The choice of which third person pronoun to use can be problematic in Modern English, as (10), (11), and (12) show:

(10) “When one first studies Navaho religious belief and practice, he thinks more than once that the Eskimos’ description … would be appropriate for the Navahos as well.” (The Navaho 1946, Clyde and Dorothy Kluckhohn)

(11) But nobody has their fridges repaired anymore, they can’t afford it. (BNC — Guardian Newspaper 1989)

(12) This is best obtained by systematic observation of his or her teaching of normal lessons. (BNC — formal document 1982)

This phenomenon is called pronoun resolution.

As for the morphology of auxiliaries, the history of be and have is interesting, especially with regard to ain’t. The OED mentions that this form is the contracted form of have not, has not, and are not. In 18th century England, it is very common in formal speech as a contraction of am not (with the [m] assimilating to the alveolar [t]), but not of have not. At the moment, it is not considered standard, but it is used in informal speech for any form of the negative to be. As Mencken (1921[1937]: 202) says,

No American of any pretensions, I assume, would defend ain’t as a substitute for isn’t…and yet ain’t is already tolerably respectable in the first person, where English countenances the even more clumsy aren’t.

Mencken was wrong when he predicted that this would soon change and that the “popular speech [would be] pulling the exacter speech along”: ain’t is still seen as colloquial.

In Modern English, present tense verbs become more regular in many varieties. Trudgill (1974) and Hughes and Trudgill (1996) show the paradigms for different regions of England, as in Table 8.6. The core of East Anglia consists of Norfolk and Suffolk counties, and possibly extends into Cambridgeshire and Essex, just North of London.

Table 8.6. Present tense verb variation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>East Anglia</th>
<th>North and Southwest</th>
<th>Southeast and ‘standard’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I walk</td>
<td>I walks</td>
<td>I walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you walk</td>
<td>you walks</td>
<td>you walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s/he walk</td>
<td>s/he walks</td>
<td>s/he walks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we walk</td>
<td>we walks</td>
<td>we walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you walk</td>
<td>you walks</td>
<td>you walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they walk</td>
<td>they walks</td>
<td>they walk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A regularization as in the two left-hand columns occurs in other varieties, e.g. African American English (see McDavid 1966).

The rule of verbal agreement in Modern English is well-known: take the head of the subject and have that head agree in number and person with the finite verb. There is sometimes indeterminacy as to what the head is. For instance, in (13), the subject that in the relative clause that is not on the tape refers to the plural antecedent things. Prescriptively speaking, the verb is should therefore be are:

(13) There are other things you talked about that is not on the tape (Christopher Darden in the ’OJ Trial’, 2 March 1995).

There is also a regularization of strong past tense forms and irregular verbs. Verb sets such as chide, chid, chid(den) become chid, chided, chided, and abide, abode, abode become abide, abided, abided. Irregular verb paradigms are also regularized: go, went, gone becomes go, went, went (e.g. I should’ve went there) or go, gone, gone. Very often the pattern is as in (14):

(14) present | past | participle
| go, bite | went, bit | gone, bitten

Sometimes, weak paradigms become strong: sneak, sneaked, sneaked becomes sneak, sneak, snuck, with the pattern of a strong verb. This could be hypercorrection.

In Old and Middle English, a subjunctive form appears (see Tables 4.14 to 4.16 for Old English). It expresses a wish, desire, or necessity where none of the actions have actually taken place yet, as in Old English (26), repeated as (15):

(15) Ic wille … þæt þu forgyte þæt ic þe nu secge
I want that you forget-SUBJ that I you now say

In Modern English, the subjunctive is replaced by other forms, mainly infinitives with (for) to, as in (16), a possible translation of (15), and (17), or by modal auxiliaries, as in (18):

(16) I want you to forget what I am telling you now.

(17) as I expect for my reward to be honoured with Miss Sophia’s hand as a partner.
(1766 Goldsmith, OED see interest)

(18) Wouldn’t it be nice if you should forget what I am telling you now.

The subjunctive, as in (19), still occurs (more in American than British English), but it sounds formal. As mentioned in Chapter 5, we see the subjunctive after originally Latinate verbs and adjectives, such as require, suggest, and important:
(19) It is important that he **leave** early.

Some early American texts have only subjunctives, as in (20), and no infinitival complements:

(20) **Samuel Adams — Letter to Elbridge Gerry—1775**
Some of our Military Gentlemen have, I fear, disgraced us; It is then **important that** every Anecdote that concerns a Man of real Merit among them (and Such I know there are) be improvd, as far as decency will admit of it, to their Advantage and the Honor of a Colony which for its Zeal in the great Cause as well as its Sufferings, deserve so much of America. (from letter 81, http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/DelVol02.html)

George Washington (in the 37 volumes of his work written between 1745 and 1799) uses **important for** with an infinitive several times, as in (21), but also continues to use the subjunctive:

(21) 'Tis almost as **important for** us to know what does not happen as what does happen (1780, Volume 19 from http://etext.lib.virginia.edu).

The differences in form between **adverbs** and **adjectives** continue to be robust in certain environments. Even though degree adverbs, as in (22), are losing the -ly (due to analogy with other degree adverbs such as so and very), adverbs modifying the sentence, such as **unfortunately** in (23), in general keep this ending:

(22) Ninety-nine percent of vampires are **real** nice people. (BNC — *Liverpool Echo and Daily Post* 1993)

(23) **Unfortunately** the same bench that I mentioned previously happened to be in my way again. (BNC — school essays)

There is so much anxiety about saying the wrong thing that hypercorrection often occurs, as in (24) from a popular radio program on cars. In (24), **differently** is meant to say something about the noun **the clutch**, not about the verb **feel**. This verb is a copular or linking verb here. It would therefore make sense to use an adjective (**different**) rather than the adverb (**differently**):

(24) Does the clutch feel any **differently**?

This anxiety on the part of speakers is especially strong when it comes to expressions with a (possible) copular verb such as (25) from Dylan Thomas, which many people recite with **gently** rather than **gentle**, making **go** into a regular intransitive verb:

(25) Do not go **gentle** into that good night.

Both **gentle** and **gently** happen to be correct. The uncertainty is about whether the subject noun is being modified (in which case an adjective is ok and the verb is a copula) or the verb (in which case an adverb should be used and the verb is an intransitive).
Uncertainty also seems to surround the comparative and superlative endings, where speakers sometimes use both in, for instance, the most expensivest. As mentioned in Chapter 6, in Middle English, the number of comparative and superlative analytic forms increased and in Early Modern English, there was great freedom in the choice of forms. The current Modern English system is very complex, the result of 18th century grammar rules.

From a prescriptive point of view, one of the more problematic adverbs is the negative not/-n’t. The -n’t form is very similar to Old English ne in being weak (pronounced with a schwa); therefore, it comes as no surprise that another negative reinforces or replaces the weakened one, as in (26):

(26) I don’t measure nothin. (Labov 1972: 177)

As is well-known, this structure is so highly stigmatized that it is not likely to be used in formal varieties soon. Anderwald (2002) reports that 14.3% of negative constructions contain multiple elements that express a single negation in the spoken BNC.

Another common way to reinforce the weakened n’t is by using never, as in (27) and (28):

(27) I never thought I’d be able to remember it all. (BNC — fiction 1988)
(28) But I never went there! (BNC — non-fiction 1991)

As we have seen, there is a trend towards further regularization in Modern English morphology; as we will see later, however, this trend is stopped by prescriptive rules.

4. Modern English Syntax

This section will discuss some developments — such as the increase in the use of auxiliaries and words such as like. These continue to move English towards becoming a more analytic language. There are also developments related to the relative pronouns, but they are stopped by prescriptive rules. In addition, we will consider how a corpus can be used to study the differences between formal and less formal English and examine changes in punctuation where they are relevant to syntax. Finally, we will review some of the grammatical ‘errors’ the educational system seeks to correct, a development that stops the language from losing more of its synthetic characteristics.

The word order of Modern English is SVO, with Verb-fronting in questions. Subjects are obligatory, except in the phenomenon of topic-drop, typical for e-mail and letters and demonstrated in (29). In topic-drop typically a first person pronoun is left out:

(29) Would like to see you soon.
The number of auxiliaries, prepositions, and determiners has increased since the Early Modern English period. Here, we will examine auxiliaries, with some possibilities listed in (30):

(30) modal perfect progressive passive main verb
    He might have been being seen.

**Modals** have many meanings: permission, ability, possibility, and volition. Two of these meanings, ability and permission, are shown in Figure 8.1.

![Figure 8.1. The different meanings of can. © 2003 Paws, Inc. Reprinted with permission of Universal Press Syndicate. All rights reserved.](image)

The uses and meanings of modals can change quite rapidly: many people have stopped using *may* for permission, as in the slightly formal (31a), and use *can* instead, as in (31b) and Figure 8.1:

(31) a. May I go now?
    b. Can I go now?

There are many varieties of English with double modals, as in (32) — African American English (as well as Gullah), Scottish English, and Ozark English:

(32) He **might** **can** do it if he tried
    he might be able to do it if he tried (from Brown 1991: 76)

Through grammaticalization, many new modal and future forms are introduced in the Modern English period. *Gonna* is used as a future auxiliary, even though the OED says it is “colloq. (esp. U.S.) or vulgar pronunciation of *going to*.” The OED’s first listing is 1913. Krug (2000) provides historical background and modern instances of *gonna, gotta, hafte*, and *wanna*. The OED’s first use of *going to* as a future auxiliary is 1482, but *gonna* is not used until much later.

Currently, only *have* is used as a **perfect auxiliary**; as mentioned in the previous chapter, however, *be* is still used as a present perfect auxiliary with motion verbs in the Early Modern English period, and this still occurs in the 19th century, as (33) shows:

(33) But before I **am** run away with by my feelings… (Jane Austen’s Mr. Collins in *Pride & Prejudice*)
Before 1800, it is also possible to say *I have seen it yesterday*, as it is in a number of other languages and varieties; later this changes and currently only *I saw it yesterday* is used.

The **progressive** use of *be* and *-ing* is introduced relatively late; sentences such as *as I say now* continue until 1800. Before that, grammars and dictionaries — such as Johnson’s acclaimed 1755 dictionary — do not mention *be+ing* as a separate form. When the progressive appears, often a preposition (*on* reduced to *a-*) precedes the participle, as in (34):

(34) I think my wits are a wool-gathering.  
(Swift, *Polite conversation* 423, from Visser 1973: 1999)

The form in (34) is still used in some varieties of English, such as Appalachian English, but most varieties do not have the prefix *a-*. Progressives are also combined with other auxiliaries; for example, in (35) the progressive is combined with a passive. In earlier English, a progressive passive is expressed as in (36) (see Visser 1973: 2004):

(35) The house was **being built**.
(36) The house was **building**.

The regular **passive** is constructed with the auxiliary *be*, as in (37), but a newer form using *get* also arises, as in (38):

(37) She **was hit** by a wave of familiarity. (BNC, fiction)
(38) Then he **got knocked** out. (BNC, fiction)

According to the OED, the *get*-passive is first used in 1652.

Analytic languages make use of grammatical words derived from lexical verbs or prepositions. We saw that *to* comes to mark the indirect object and also that a clause is non-finite. Another case of grammaticalization is the preposition *like* becoming a complementizer: it goes from introducing a noun to introducing a sentence:

(39) Winston tastes good **like** a good cigarette should.

Consistent with this is the use of *like* to introduce quotes, as in (40). This is called a quotative. There are other such quotatives: *all* in (41), from the same (cartoon) text (see van Gelderen 2002b: 133):

(40) And I’m **like** … you know … “I don’t think so.”
(41) And then he’s **all** “Oh, right.”

*Like* (and *sort of*, *kind of*, and *all*) is also used to soften requests or to hedge something. These are then called discourse markers or mood markers, since they tell you a lot about the speaker’s attitudes.
Relatives also undergo change in Modern English and, as we will show, the preference of speakers for *that* over *who/whom/which* is expected in an analytic language. Relative pronouns show much variation throughout the history of English; the changes they undergo are stopped in two ways by language-external, prescriptive forces: these prescriptive forces dictate the choice of the relative and impose restriction on stranding prepositions.

In Modern English, restrictive relatives are formed by using *that* or a *wh*-pronoun, as in (42); the relatively infrequent, non-restrictive relatives are formed by using a *wh*-pronoun, as in (43):

(42) The person *who* I met.

(43) Jane Austen, *whose* sentences were used above, was a Modern English writer.

The *wh*-pronoun shows case and is therefore more synthetic: *who, whose,* and *whom* are nominative, genitive, and accusative/dative, respectively. In Modern English, there is a strong tendency to use *that* (and *as*), rather than *wh*-pronouns, or to have no marker at all (Dekeyser 1996: 299). This is so because the *wh*-pronoun shows case and the language learner does not have much evidence for assuming case distinctions are relevant in English.

The preference for *that* can be shown using a corpus of spoken English. Differences between spoken and written varieties always indicate that prescriptive rules are at work; such rules are typically followed only in the written, more formal variety. In the 2-million Corpus of Spoken Professional American English, or CSE (see http://athel.com), *that* is much more frequent than the *wh*-form, as Table 8.7 shows. The results in Table 8.7 were obtained by searching for a determiner followed by a noun followed by a relative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>the N</th>
<th>a(n) N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>that</em></td>
<td>5637 (=82%)</td>
<td>1758 (=81%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>wh</em>-form</td>
<td>1199 (=18%)</td>
<td>414 (=19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>6836 (=100%)</td>
<td>2172 (=100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The CSE is a relatively formal corpus of spoken American English (including White House press briefings and faculty meetings); the numbers are even more extreme in other studies of spoken varieties. Montgomery and Bailey (1991: 155) analyzed relative clauses in academic writing as well as speech. They found that of 200 relative clauses in speech, 138 have *that*, 36 have no pronoun, and the remaining 26 (or 13%) have a *wh*-form. The writing sample, as expected, is different. There are 22 clauses with *that*, six with no pronoun, and the remaining 172 (or 86%) are *wh*-forms. Even for human antecedents, the number of *wh*-pronouns is very low — 18% in the spoken sample, as opposed to 67% in the written sample.
The same tendency away from the *wh*-form has been observed by Romaine (1982) and Poussa (2002). Miller (1993) shows that in Scottish English, a preposition and relative pronoun are often replaced by *that*, as in (44), or just a *wh*-form, as in (45); American English treats *where* like *that* in (46):

(44) I haven't been to a party yet *that* I haven't got home the same night. (Miller 1993: 112)

(45) a cake *where* you don't gain weight.

(46) That house *where* nobody lives in (real estate agent).

If you rephrase (44) and (45) in prescriptively correct English, you get (47) and (48), where the *wh*-form and the preposition are taken along:

(47) … a party from *which* I didn't get home …

(48) … a cake from *which* you don't gain weight.

The switch to *that* has not been completed for several reasons. The prescriptive rules about relatives favor *wh*-relatives over *that*. For instance, there is a rule that *who* is to be used for humans and, as Fowler (1926[1950]: 716) says, “at present there is much more reluctance to apply *that* to a person than to a thing.” Since Shakespeare's time, *wh*-pronouns have been used to refer to things and *that* to people even though prescriptive rules abhor this use: “*who* refers to people or to animals that have names. *Which* and *that* usually refer to objects, events, or animals and sometimes to groups of people” (Kirszner & Mandell 1992: 381). Anecdotal reports from English composition teachers say they often correct sentences such as (49); (50) is from an e-mail, but it would be ‘wrong’, prescriptively speaking:

(49) People *that* eat the above foods, intending to increase their protein consumption, can unintentionally eat too much fat.

(50) The people *that* you should contact are …

Examples where *which* refers to a person occur in the 19th century as well. Note that the preposition is taken along, however:

(51) the landlord … *through which* it was … (Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit* 12, 71)

The prescriptive rule against preposition stranding also (indirectly) favors *wh*-relatives. Sentences such as (52) that end in prepositions can have either a *wh*-relative or *that* but they are considered incorrect; (53), where only a *wh*-relative is possible, is preferred:

(52) I met the woman *who/that* I had seen a picture *of*.

(53) I met the woman of whom I had seen a picture.
The figures for the spoken and written samples given in Montgomery and Bailey (1991: 156) show that the written sample more closely mirrors the prescriptive norm. In speech, 86% of prepositions are stranded; in writing, that is the case for only 7%. Since (53) is only possible with wh-relatives, the prescriptive rule (indirectly) also favors wh-relatives. Dekeyser (1996) has argued that this preference for using case marked pronouns such as who/whom/whose in Middle and Modern English and demonstrative pronouns in Old English exists in formal registers throughout the history of English. He compares the translated Bede and the non-translated Peterborough Chronicle and says that the more complex pronoun “became the hallmark of more sophisticated registers” (293).

Note also that very few wh-elements show case. For instance, in the CSE, there is one instance of a noun followed by whom, as in (54), but hundreds with who:

(54) and that the president, whom I think you’ve all heard on this subject, is — he has… (CSE — White House briefings 1997)

Therefore, perhaps who is becoming a relative marker in (52), not marked for case. This occurrence of who without case marking may be the reason it is a ‘competitor’ to that.

In Early Modern English punctuation was seen to perform several functions. In Modern English, punctuation is used to indicate the main players in the sentence: subject, verb, and object. Many times, adverbs or relative clauses, if they are out of place or provide background information, as in (54), are indicated by commas. In the (non-politically correct) (55), the difference in comma placement makes a difference in the meaning (the commas are left out, but experiment a little):

(55) Woman without her man is like a fish on a bicycle.

We have mentioned prescriptive forces. What are they? In the publishing world, there are style sheets specific to a publisher or journal. Another prescriptive force is the school system. It has stopped the trends towards analyticity by continuing to correct pronouns and by enforcing the third person singular -s. Mencken (1921 [1937]: 419–420) comments on a study of children in Kansas City in 1915 conducted by W. Charters; it shows several ‘errors’ that have to be corrected by the educational system: a tendency for the verb not to agree with the subject and for nouns not to have the appropriate case. These ‘errors’ occur across varieties of English and indicate how the language is changing. The majority of such ‘errors’ involve verb inflection, tense, and (pronominal) case.

Even though this list is from almost a hundred years ago, the educational system still corrects these same errors. However, if we conducted a similar survey, we might find an increase in these features. In Section 5, we will examine the effect of dictionaries and style guides on the language.

Unlike the chapters about earlier varieties of English, this section will not analyze a text since the language discussed is similar to present-day English. Therefore, to conclude, we will summarize the features of most varieties of Modern English in Table 8.9. Written varieties maintain the third person -s (in she walks) and the case on pronouns.
Table 8.8. ‘Errors’ observed in 1915 (according to by Charters)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Error</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Subject not in the nominative</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Predicate nominative not in the nominative</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Object of verb not in the objective</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Wrong form of noun or pronoun (e.g. sheeps)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. First person pronoun first</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Failure of the pronoun to agree</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Confusion of demonstrative and personal pronouns</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Failure of the verb to agree with its subject</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Confusion of past and present (She give us four)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Confusion of past and present participle</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Wrong tense</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Wrong verb</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Incorrect use of mood</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Incorrect comparison of adjectives</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Confusion of comparative and superlative</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Confusion of adjectives and adverbs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Misplaced modifier (He only went two miles)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r. Double negative</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s. Confusion of preposition and conjunction</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t. Syntactical redundancy (Mother, she said so. Where is it at).</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u. Wrong part of speech due to similarity (…would of..)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.9. Characteristics of Modern English grammar

Morphology:

a. (Pronominal) case endings disappear further  
b. Verbal paradigms are regularized, especially in the past and perfect  
c. Verbal inflection is lost (in non-standard English), e.g. the subjunctive is replaced by the infinitive  
d. Loss of -ly, especially in degree adverbs  

Syntax:

e. Word order is fixed and subjects are obligatory  
f. Auxiliaries such as get are introduced  
g. Multiple negation (in non-standard)  
h. Relatives show a preference for that  
i. Punctuation is grammatical  

We now turn to the changes due solely to external reasons.
5. The Modern English Lexicon

As mentioned in Section 1, in the 19th and 20th centuries, there are multiple changes in the social and political circumstances.

The British Enlightenment, however, does not introduce many new words specific to its ideas. This is interesting in light of arguments that this movement originates in The Netherlands and France and is marginal in Britain. Some new words from the first decade of the 18th century are: colonist, idealist, phonography, tarboosh, bamboozle, civilization, nymphotomy, paracentric, nucleus, metallurgy, categorize, purist, and materialize. Many of these are based on Latin or French words. Words from the Romantic period — even though not particularly Romantic — include colonial (1796); Hindi, Hindoostani, pur-dah, pyjamas (all from 1800); and hysteria, phobia, tonsillitis, conventionalist (1801). The Industrial Revolution contributes locomotive (1829), Industrialism (1831), and industrial school (1853), and Imperialism is responsible for Gurkha (1811), the British Raj (1859), khaki (1863), and tropical disease (1828).

The 19th and 20th century innovations in science and technology cause an immense increase in vocabulary (Baugh & Cable 2002: 297–302). Words for novel concepts in several fields are provided in Table 8.10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8.10. New words by specialization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicine:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appendicitis, clinic, radiotherapy, HIV, AIDS, aspirin, insulin, hormones. MRI, PET, vaccine, cholesterol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>electrode, biochemical, DNA, relativity theory, radiation, fractals, atom bomb, UV rays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freudian, Jungian, psychotherapy, shock therapy, multiple personality, behaviorism, closure, ego, fixation, Gestalt, IQ, REM, Rorschach test, Type A personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV, radio, computer, internet, mouse, chip, bookmark, commercial, CD, DVD, GTS, wiki, podcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>locomotive, helicopter, train, automobile, shuttle, airplane, cruise control, garage, sunroof, SUV, ATV, public/mass transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nativism, phoneme, transformational grammar, polysynthetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gun, tank, agent orange, WMD, embedded journalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>existentialist, rationalist, postmodern, positivism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art/music:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impressionist, outsider art, rap, hip-hop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emancipation, human rights, Cold War, banana republic, junta, cold war, police state, chads, teflon president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creative book-keeping, e-bubble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eco-tourism, geocaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the sources for new words in this period are listed in Table 8.11.
Table 8.11. New sources of vocabulary

a. **loans** from other languages: zeitgeist, weltanschauung, schadenfreude, wanderlust, kindergarden, jungle, pajamas/pyjamas, polo, pasta, broccoli, zucchini, mensch, bête noire, fait accompli
b. **new compounds** or phrases: skydiving, acid rain, junkfood, green butcher (one that sells free range meat), a wedding wedding (a very extravagant wedding), gabfest, innerchild, geek-chic
c. **new affixes**: postmodern, prewoman, proto-Nostratic, counterrevolution, pseudo-metarule, ex-ex-husband (divorced and then remarried)
d. **clippings, mergers, and inventions**: decaf, motel, fridge(idaire), phys-ed, ad(vertisement), dancercise, boycot, quizling, popemobile, bookmobile, camcorder, talkathon, smog, slumlord, simulcast, netglish (internet English), veggie-burger, block-buster, crime-buster, bikaholic, chocaholic, workaholic
e. **phrase words**: hit-and-run drivers, a nobody-cares attitude, a larger-than-life problem, a so-not-cool situation, so-out-of-the-loop
f. **conversion**: to impact (N to V), to fax (N to V), a show-off (V to N), play-off (N to V), to teach-in (N to V), the Ancients (Adj to N), to empty (Adj to V)
g. **slang**: rip-off, pizzazz, crap, grody to the max (from the 1970s), depresso city
h. **acronyms**: SUV (Sports Utility Vehicle), ATM (Automatic Teller Machine), HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction), VD (Venereal Disease), ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union), FAQ (Frequently Asked Question)

As in Middle English, the exact path of a loan in Modern English is not always clear: a word could come directly from Latin or via French. For this reason, the term *International Scientific* is sometimes used in dictionaries (Webster’s Third) to clarify the origin of words. Compounding and new affixes as in Table 8.11 have always been popular. Clippings, phrase words, and acronyms become popular in the 20th century, not only in English but in other languages (in Dutch, it was called *turbotaal* ‘turbo-speech’ for a while). Slang is always attractive because of its directness. However, once words are


1940: borscht belt, clochard, intercom, male chauvinist, Okinawan, panzer, paratroops, Picassian, Quisling, roadblock, sitzkrieg, superbomb, superconduction, West Nile virus
1950: apparat, bonsai, brainwashing, encrypt, fall-out, geekish, hi-fi, information theory, lateralization, LSD, McCarthyism, moving target, napalm(ing), open-heart, Orwellian, psychometrician, yellowcake, to zonk
1960: bionics, breathalyzer, Castroism, dullsville, dumbo, kook, to market test, minivan, nerdy, over-inhibition, reportability, software
1970: biofeedback, citizen advocacy, detox, herstory, humongous, minidisk, offroading, poststructural, yucky
1980: ecofeminism, to download, mega-rich, neohippie, neopunk, non-veg, power dressing, Reaganomics, waitperson, what’s-her-face
1990: bi-curious, cringeworthy, DWEM (Dead White European Male), emoticon, feminazi, greenwashing, nanostructured, Nostraticist, soap-dodger
accepted into the standard, slang has to rejuvenate itself with new slang. We will come back to slang in Section 6.

The OED allows us to search by year and Table 8.12 lists some new words for the years 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, and 1990. For 2000, there were no entries yet!

The total numbers of new words for these years are interesting. In the 2006 online version of the OED, there are 378, 376, 374, 282, 120, and 74 new entries, respectively for each of the six years. This shows you more about the collection methods of the OED than about the new words coined.

Table 8.13 lists some of the most recent new words and phrases. Do you recognize them, and if so, do you know what they mean? If not, Appendix I at the end of the book has a glossary. Which of the new categories in Table 8.11 do they represent? Which of these might still be around in 10 years’ time?

Table 8.13. Some new words from 2003 (from American Speech and other sources)
crap-tacular, to embed, to jump the shark, SARS, amber alert, black tide, botox party, Bushism, dataveilance, dialarhoea, dirty bomb, virtuocrat, walking-pinata, blog, WMD, belligerati, gamma girl, juice-jacker, to otherize, flexitarian, freedom fries

Not only are new words introduced in this period, but the meaning of some words changes. The word fun has an interesting history of reversal. It started out as slang for ‘cheat, trick’, according to a 1700 dictionary of cant. By 1727, it had come to mean ‘amusement’. One way to trace the meaning of words is by looking them up in the OED, which list the different meanings and when they first arise. Another way is through collocations. Biber et al. (1998: 43 ff) show that in modern corpora great, big, and large occur in very different contexts: academic texts include large but rarely big; in fiction, large is less frequent than big. If you check older corpora, you can see that big is quite rare, and has a specialized meaning, so academic texts show a more conservative use in this case.
6. Attitudes towards Linguistic Differences

There are many competing tendencies, both egalitarian and elitist, regarding grammar, varieties of English, pronunciation, and spelling. Dictionaries and pronunciation guides support both sides and are quite influential. In English, dictionaries are a surrogate for the academies other countries have established. In this section, we will discuss some common views on English and standardization as well as the attempts to form an Academy. We will also list some grammars, spelling and pronunciation guides, and dictionaries, which show both prescriptive and descriptive tendencies. We will conclude with a discussion of the role of the OED and language 'mavens'.

The attempts to establish an Academy started in the early 1600s, when other nations established academies (Italy in 1582, France in 1635, and Spain 1713), and culminated after 1700. The reason for the Italian, French, and Spanish Academies had been the purification and standardization of the language, in particular through the publication of official dictionaries. In England, John Dryden was in favor of an academy as early as 1664, in *The Rival Ladies*; Daniel Defoe called for one in 1697, in *Essay upon Projects*; and Jonathan Swift did so in 1712, when he published *A Proposal for Correcting, Improving, and Ascertaining the English Tongue*. There was opposition to an academy as well; the influential Samuel Johnson, for example, opposed an academy in the preface to his 1755 dictionary (available at http://www.andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/preface.html). According to him, the role of academies was to stop language change, but language change could not be stopped in his view.

There are strong views on the state of the English language on the other side of the Atlantic as well. James Fennimore Cooper (1838: *The American Democrat*: see Bolton 1982: 286) and Elias Molee (1890 *Pure Saxon English*) suggest regularizing the spelling and the grammar and replacing Latinate vocabulary. The tension over Latinate vocabulary has been strong since Middle English and remains so to this day. The concern about Latinate vocabulary is reminiscent of the 20th century ideas of Orwell and Ogden, mentioned in Chapter 5. A 20th-century American concerned with English is Henry Louis Mencken; his *The American Language*, published for the first time in 1921, remains popular to this day (see http://www.bartleby.com/185). In it, he argues that American is more down-to-earth English and that it resists some of the artificial rules British English has had since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

**Grammars** become quite prescriptive in Modern English. In Johnson's 1755 dictionary, a history and a grammar of the English language precede the dictionary. The grammar includes lists of irregular verbs and derivational suffixes and prefixes. The dictionary also contains some prescriptive grammatical rules such as the one against converting a noun into a verb: *to profound* is said to be “a barbarous word”, as can be seen in Figure 8.3. The real reason behind this dislike is unclear since *to purpose* is ok.
A very influential grammarian of the period is Robert Lowth, who later became Bishop of London. Lowth applied Latin Grammar to English in his *Short Introduction to English Grammar* of 1762 and introduced rules such as *It is I* rather than *It is me*, rules for the use of *who/m* and rules for the use of *between* and *among*. Lowth also opposed using intransitives as transitives and the other way around as well as the use of double negatives and split infinitives. Many of these rules are based on Latin grammar and do not make much sense for English. However, prescriptive grammarians in the 21st century still maintain many of them.

In 1795, Lindley Murray (1745–1826) published *The English Grammar*, a revised edition was published in 1810 edition and the book sold a total of two million copies. As Vorlat (1959) points out, Murray depended heavily on his predecessors: Edmund Coote’s (1596) work mentioned in the previous chapter, James Greenwood’s (1711) *An Essay towards a Practical English Grammar*, and Lowth’s Grammar. Vorlat (1959) sees at the end of the 18th century unprecedented plagiarism as well as prescriptivism. John Wilkins (1668) and James Harris (1751) also published grammars, focusing on universal grammar.

William Cobbett’s *A Grammar of the English Language*, first published in New York in 1818, was written to promote thinking and create an egalitarian society. He felt that much deception goes on in politics and that clear argumentation and grammar make that harder. Cobbett is very critical of some of the rules of Lowth, who influenced Webster (1758–1843), the American spelling and dictionary expert. Webster himself at first condemned the use of *who* as an object, but later wrote that a sentence such as (56) “is hardly English at all” (Finegan 1980: 41):

**Figure 8.3. To profound in Johnson’s Dictionary**
Whom do you see?

If Webster’s views had been heeded, the analytic tendency might have continued, but that was not the case.

Correct spelling becomes a concern in the Early Modern English period and remains so to the present. Johnson adjusts the orthography because it “had been unsettled and fortuitous” (from 1755 Preface). He explains that “these spots of barbarity” cannot be washed away. According to him, part of the problem is that the loan words have different origins. For instance, we have enchant from French but incantation from Latin.

Webster’s speller (1783) sold 100 million copies (Algeo 2001: 34). As mentioned earlier, some of his initial choices were later modified: favour and honour lose their u. Throughout Webster’s (1828) dictionary, music and logic are written without a final -k (which is transferred into British English as well); behavior, honor, and color are spelled with -or, not -our; center and theater with -er, not -re; and defense and offense with a final -se, not -ce. Thomas Dyche and Daniel Fenning produced spelling guides in 1723 and 1756, respectively (Salmon 1999: 45). Societies for the improvement of English, such as the Society for Pure English (1919–48) also came into being in this period. Today, there are spelling (and other) guidelines available online, e.g. at www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/errors.html; paper versions of spelling guides abound as well.

Johnson’s 1755 dictionary does not prescribe pronunciation. His contemporaries do this for him and, as we have seen in Section 1, some pronunciations become stigmatized in this period. In 1775, John Walker published a dictionary of pronunciation; he was possibly the first to coin the term Received Pronunciation (RP). Wyld uses Received Standard English, English free of regionalisms, or “the type which most well-bred people think of when they speak of ‘English’” (1920: 2). Webster is also concerned with uniform pronunciation in his American Spelling Book. He advocates the pronunciation of each letter in each syllable and each syllable. As a result, words such as secretary tend to have four syllables in American English, but three in other varieties. Modern pronunciation guides include Daniel Jones’ English Pronouncing Dictionary (originally from 1917 but updated) and John Kenyon & Thomas Knott’s A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English (originally from 1944 but updated since then).

By the 18th century, what were called ‘hard word dictionaries’ are less necessary: hard words disappear, are absorbed, or become part of a specialized vocabulary. The first modern dictionary with definitions is John Kersey’s 1702 A New English Dictionary: Or, a Complete Collection of the Most Proper and Significant Words. It contains 28,000 words, but the definitions are not specific: for example goat is defined as a beast (Bolton 1982: 241). Thus, this is a spelling dictionary. In 1721, Nathan Bailey’s An Universal Etymological English Dictionary appears. It has 40,000 entries and the definitions are more explicit (though quite prescriptive, see Görlach 1999b: 154). Johnson’s 1755 dictionary also contains 40,000 entries but includes numerous quotes.

Johnson’s dictionary is the first to provide examples illustrating actual use as Figure 8.3 shows. The number of authors quoted is quite limited: of the 116,000 quotations,
50% are from Shakespeare, Dryden, Swift, Pope, Addison, Hooker, Bacon, the King James Version and some have a moral point. As DeMaria (1986: 17) shows, the quotes are occasionally altered (possibly on purpose): Caliban’s (57a) becomes (57b):

(57) a. I know how to curse.
   b. I know not how to curse. (Tempest I, ii, 364)

Johnson’s dictionary contains 2300 folio-size pages, but he was criticized by his contemporaries for not being strict enough:

we cannot help wishing that the author…had oftener passed his own censure upon those words which are not of approved use. (Adam Smith in a review, see Rypins 1925)

In addition, Johnson was said to include “vulgar and cant words.”

Webster’s *Compendious Dictionary of the English Language* (1806) initially contained 37,500 words. One of Webster’s aims was a nationalist one: to show that American English is as different from British English as the respective political systems. In the preface to his 1828 *American Dictionary* he wrote:

It is not only important, but, in a degree necessary, that the people of this country, should have an *American Dictionary* of the English Language; for, although the body of the language is the same as in England, and it is desirable to perpetuate that sameness, yet some differences must exist… [T]he principal differences between the people of this country and all others, arise from different forms of government, different laws, institutions and customs.

Table 8.14 lists some of the available 18th and 19th century dictionaries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>number of entries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kersey</td>
<td>1702 28000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey</td>
<td>1721 40000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>1755 40000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster</td>
<td>1806 37500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster</td>
<td>1828 70000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Later in the Modern English period, the *Oxford English Dictionary* becomes the resource for work on the English language. In its current online form (www.oed.com), it covers over half a million words and includes 2.5 million quotations. Words and quotations are constantly being added but it is unfortunately not free. Work on the OED officially started in 1858 but did not really get off the ground until James Murray took on the project in 1879. Murray found volunteers to go through books and to send him noteworthy quotes. He and other editors spent many years sorting through the quotations (see Figure 8.4) and the first edition was finally completed in 1928, years after Murray’s death.
The OED is prescriptive and uses terms such as “now considered better,” “vulgar,” “offensive,” “incorrect,” and “slipshod.”

There are other influential dictionaries, such as Webster’s Third, an updated version that appeared in 1961, but was initially heavily criticized for including phrases such as irregardless and for eliminating labels such as incorrect, improper, and colloquial. This edition survives as Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged. It includes 476,000 entries and weighs 12.5 pounds.

In addition to dictionaries, there are language ‘mavens’ such as Edwin Newman and William Safire. They have (weekly) columns or write books on how to use English. Many speakers seem to enjoy these self-appointed authorities. Since the 1970s, Edwin Newman has published several bestsellers, such as A Civil Tongue and Strictly Speaking. In them, he makes fun of sentences such as (58), in which the word chronologically is used for ‘first come first serve’ rather than by the age of the car:

(58) Vehicles will be parked chronologically as they enter the lot. (US Capitol police)

As Quinn (1980) points out, one of the problems with Newman and earlier prescriptivists is that no reliable sources for their prescriptive rules are provided. Thus, in (58), the meaning of chronologically could be changing, in which case there would be nothing strange about the sentence.

William Safire has published a weekly column on language in the New York Times for over 25 years; he is also the author of a dozen books on language, most recently The Right Word in the Right Place at the Right Time (2004). He is criticized (Quinn 1980: 66ff.) for citing inconsistent rules. For instance, Safire is concerned about the difference between less and fewer (the rule is to say less money but fewer coins), but fails to mention early uses
that do not make this distinction. In fact, usage is not as strict at all and the rules of the mavens are made-up and idiosyncratic; they do not take into account language change.

In conclusion, there are many conflicting reactions in the Modern English period to the increasingly analytical character of the language, as well as to its changing vocabulary. These reactions come in the form of dictionaries, grammars, spelling and pronunciation guides.

7. Some Regional and Register Varieties

As mentioned in Section 2, many regional pronunciations become connected to social status and class. In this section, we briefly discuss regions and social class. We also examine register varieties, including jargon. The focus is on British English, with occasional examples from other varieties.

Trudgill (1999: 65–7) divides the modern dialects in England into 16 kinds, but says that the major split is between the North and the South, roughly as indicated by the thickest line in Figure 8.5. The dialects of the South are further divided into those of the Southwest, with an [r] in words such as arm, and those of the East without [r]. The two main groups in the North are Central and Northern.

![Figure 8.5. Modern dialects in England (from Trudgill 1999: 65)](image-url)
There are, according to Trudgill, also modern traditional dialects which are different from the ones in Figure 8.5. These dialects are more similar to the Old and Middle English varieties discussed in Chapters 4 and 6.

There is an excellent website (www.collectbritain.co.uk/collections/dialects) where you can hear different accents and learn about the linguistic characteristics of each audio clip. The BBC has a similar site: www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/routesofenglish/storysofar/series3.shtml. Since 1984, a new term — Estuary English, first suggested in David Rosewarne — has been used for the English spoken around London. It has elements of Cockney as well as of RP. You can hear this variety at www.ic.arizona.edu/~lsp (choose British English) and www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/estuary/home.htm. Estuary English replaces word-final [l] with [w], has a glottal stop rather than [t], and uses basically a lot. Other varieties are evolving as well.

The distinctive features between the modern dialects typically involve sounds, but there are a few differences in morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. As mentioned in Section 3, reflexive pronouns have different forms. Speakers create forms such as hisself on the basis of myself and ourself. Demonstratives are also frequently different. There are forms such as them people or thilk people, the latter being typical for the southwest of England. Possessive pronouns often change from my to me, as in me book, and our books becomes us books, especially in the North of England. These changes all point to a regularization of the language in non-standard varieties.

The present tense endings have leveled completely in some modern varieties: either the -s ending is lost or it is added to all forms as we have seen in Table 8.6. The forms of the verbs to be level as well; some speakers say I was, you was, we was, and others I were, you were, s/he were. There are many other such morphological and syntactic differences.

The history of English also determines some of the variation in regional vocabulary. In some areas, Old English words such as to grave ‘to dig’ survive. In the areas of Britain influenced by Scandinavian invaders, words such as till laik (for ‘to play’) continue to occur.

Dialect maps exist for American English. Some are based on the differences in vocabulary (pail/bucket, sack/bag), pronunciation (no difference in pin and pen), or syntax (the use of double modals). Certain regions keep archaic features such as double modals (in parts of Texas and Arkansas), for to infinitives (in the Ozark region), a-prefixes on the participle (as in he’s a-coming home in Appalachian and Southern American English). The Atlas of North American English appeared in 2005, with 200 maps (put together by Labov, et al, http://web.uni-marburg.de/linguistik//dgweb/atlas). One of the criticisms of the dialect maps is that they emphasize the Eastern part of the US to the exclusion of the West.

When it comes to varieties in register, the level of formality is relevant: there is less regional variation in formal writing. Formal styles adhere more closely to prescriptive rules such as the one about relative clauses discussed earlier. E-mail is considered an informal form of writing. However, recently some companies and government agencies
have hired writing teachers to provide courses for their employees since significant miscommunication can occur in e-mail. One request to a writing instructor reads as (59):

(59) i need help i am writing a essay on writing i work for this company and my boss wants me to help improve the workers writing skills can yall help me with some information thank you. (from the International Herald Tribune, 8 December 2004)

The passage above is understandable, even though some punctuation would help the reader. In speech, we use intonation to show where a sentence stops and whether information is relevant. Since written messages cannot convey this information, it helps to have periods and question marks. One of the messages that had prompted the request above is (60):

(60) I updated the Status report for the four discrepancies Lennie forward us via e-mail (they in Barry file) .. to make sure my logic was correct It seems we provide Murray with incorrect information … However after verifying controls on JBL — JBL has the indicator as B??? — I wanted to make sure with the recent changes — I processed today — before Murray make the changes again on the mainframe to ‘C’. (also from the IHT, 8 Dec 2004)

Passages such as the two just quoted show that writers do not always reread what they are writing and do not consider their audience. The last excerpt contains grammatical irregularities: lack of past tense on forward and provide, deletion of copula in they in Barry files, lack of case on Barry and lack of a tense marker on make. Despite the many grammatical irregularities, the lack of logical connections is what makes the passage confusing. In many debates about alleged language decay, grammatical errors are cited as the culprit. However, it could be argued that the style and level of convolution are the real culprits, as Orwell argues.

**Slang** is difficult to define; therefore, the term *informal language* might be preferable. As mentioned in Section 4, both slang and jargon are specialized vocabularies, but slang is always informal and jargon may be formal. Thus, slang and jargon can be seen as varieties different in register; however, they are also used by different social groups. The OED, in earlier editions, defines slang as “language of a low and vulgar kind.” It is perhaps easiest to define slang by providing examples. Political slang such as *snollygoster* ‘a shrewd, unprincipled person, i.e. a politician’, *neverendum* ‘a referendum repeated until the desired outcome is achieved’, *velcroid* ‘someone who seeks the company of the powerful’, and *zooplane* ‘plane carrying journalists with a politician’ all occur in the *Oxford Dictionary of Political Slang* (2004).

Numerous student slang dictionaries have recently been published: at University of California, Los Angeles, University of North Carolina, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (www.intranet.csupomona.edu/~jasanders/slang/project.html), and Arizona State University. However, due to community censorship, many of the dictionaries have had to be taken off the internet. Some of the same sources as the ones listed...
in Table 8.11 are used in creating slang. There are new affixes, as in chocolate-heaven, 
lowrider-city, heartbreak-city, weirdsville, nowheresville, drugsville, clipping, as in perp 
for perpetrator, G-man for FBI-personnel (= government man), etc. Some slang terms fade 
and then become popular again. This happened with sweet, awesome, and cool; phoney is 
from the 1770s, but has survived.

Examples of jargon are provided in (61) and (62), the former being more formal. The 
latter shows how short-lived slang is. Even though (62) is from the early 1990s, it feels 
completely dated even a few years later:

(61) …, a fourth feature, round, is relevant for categorizing vowels. Front vowels 
such as [i] and [e] are produced with the lips in a spread position, whereas back 
vowels such as [u] and [o] are made with rounded lips. (from Chapter 2)

(62) Though some called him a munchkin, Waldo could hack with anybody, 
and as he opened the condom his thoughts turned to frobnicating. Soon he 
would advance to tweaking and phreaking because his studly equipment was 
bytesexual. His only fear was that he would bogotify the program. (from The 

Terms such as front vowel, fricative, postmodern, deconstruct, to clipboard it over, hackification, 
winnitude, and WOMBAT (waste of money, brains and time) are all jargon. For more, 
see www.quinion.com/words/wordlinks.htm.

The use of colloquial language gives an utterance more strength and creates solidarity 
with the audience, as this code switching between formal and colloquial speech — alleg-
edly uttered by an Arizona politician — shows:

(63) We must not permit the state of Arizona to deplete our water supply. Ain’t no 
way we’re gonna give’em that water.

The LA Times reported on 11 August 1986 that a gang member had testified “that he was 
in his hoopty around dimday when some mud duck with a tray-eight tried to take him 
out of the box.” This certainly sounds serious! Detective writers like Raymond Chandler 
and Dashiel Hammett often make use of slang words.

(64) The flim-flammer jumped in the flivver and faded.

(65) You dumb mug, get your mitts off the marbles before I stuff that mud-pipe 
down your mush — and tell your moll to hand over the mazuma.

The alliteration in these sentences is impressive. The general idea is obvious, but if you 
want to know what these quotes mean, see http://www.miskatonic.org/slang.html, where 
a ‘glossary of hardboiled slang’ will help you with the interpretation. Slang dictionaries 
are numerous. Perhaps the most known is Eric Partridge’s A Dictionary of Slang and 
Unconventional English.
This section has provided a brief introduction to some variants of English. Reading sociolinguistic works (or taking a course in that subject) would provide a lot more detail and theoretical insight.

8. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined the most recognizable stage of English so far. It starts around 1700 and is called Modern English. After 1700, smaller changes in spelling, pronunciation, grammar, and lexicon continue to take place. The lexicon expands tremendously. English also starts to spread across the world. Prescriptive attitudes continue, but to a lesser extent than before World War II. The question of what defines English becomes much discussed, as we will see later.
Keywords

Enlightenment, Romanticism, Colonialism, Imperialism, stigmatization of regional forms, variety in pronouns, introduction of new auxiliaries, prescriptive rules (e.g. for relatives and split infinitives), sources of new words, slang and jargon, prescriptive dictionaries, and corpora.

The texts chosen for Appendix A to E represent political and literary writing and are given in chronological order: A, B, and C are from the late 18th century and D and E from the early 20th century.

Exercises

1. In the light of current conventions, comment on the punctuation and word choice of the text in Appendix A.

2. Comment on the spelling and grammar of the texts in Appendix B or C. How ‘modern’ are they?

3. What sound change has occurred between the words on the left and the right in the following sets:
   a. [dәr] other > [dәr]
   b. prescribe > perscribe
   c. overall > overhalls (from Appendix E)
   d. guest [gest] > [ges]
   e. wasp > waps

4. Put the following into 21st century standard English. What have you changed and why?
   a. Be not afraid to go there.
   b. Are you going to come here regular? (Dickens, Pickwick Papers, 54, 380)

5. Adverbs are sometimes an issue in Modern English. In Old English, first is both an adverb and an adjective, since -ly is not a regular ending. When second is borrowed from French, it is an adjective only and secondly is the adverb form. Discuss why we debate whether (a) or (b) is correct:
   a. First, I will examine … Secondly, I will discuss …
   b. Firstly, I will examine … Secondly, I will discuss …

6. Regional and other varieties of English are often represented in literature. Take an excerpt from Sons & Lovers (Appendix D) or Their Eyes Were Watching God (Appendix E), or another work such as Alice Walker’s The Color Purple or Scott Momaday’s A House Made of Dawn. Find the characteristics of this variety of English (e.g. deletion of sounds, changed syllable
structure, replacement of [θ], invariant or zero be, interesting case markings, multiple negation, etc.). Be aware that the authors may have wanted to strengthen the language features of their characters.

7. Are there constructions you (as a native or non-native speaker) use that people correct? If so, which ones? Use the BNC to see if other speakers of English use those constructions. (Sometimes, this may not be possible.)

8. Find the Vietnamese and Inuit (also known as Eskimo) words that the OED lists as part of Modern English by using Advanced Search.

9. Some words might not ‘make it’. Cuddle puddle ‘pile of ecstasy users on the floor’ was first used in 2000; it is a cute phrase and therefore may get recycled as was the case with jacuzzi, first used in 1987 (American Speech 2003). Discuss some of these recycling constructions: do their sounds change or can they be seen as widening? Sources for more new words are www.computerhistory.org.

10. Find two euphemisms (sometimes acronyms such as WC from water closet and also shifts such as toilet from toillette ‘small towel’).

Appendix A

A Petition to the Merchants, Clothiers and all such as wish well to the Staple Manufactory of this Nation

Below is a petition by workers in Leeds (a major center of wool manufacture in Yorkshire) published in a local newspaper in 1786. The workers are complaining about the effect of machines on previously well-paid work. On www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1786machines.html, you can look at the reply from the Cloth Merchants in 1791, defending machines.

The Humble ADDRESS and PETITION of Thousands, who labour in the Cloth Manufactory.

SHEWETH, That the Scribbling-Machines have thrown thousands of your petitioners out of employ, whereby they are brought into great distress, and are not able to procure a maintenance for their families, and deprived them of the opportunity of bringing up their children to labour: We have therefore to request, that prejudice and self-interest may be laid aside, and that you may pay that attention to the following facts, which the nature of the case requires.

The number of Scribbling-Machines extending about seventeen miles south-west of LEEDS, exceed all belief, being no less than one hundred and seventy! and as each machine will do as much work in twelve hours, as ten men can in that time do by hand, (speaking within bounds) and they working night-and-day, one machine will do as much work in one day as would otherwise employ twenty men.
As we do not mean to assert any thing but what we can prove to be true, we allow four men to be employed at each machine twelve hours, working night and day, will take eight men in twenty-four hours; so that, upon a moderate computation twelve men are thrown out of employ for every single machine used in scribbling; and as it may be sup’posed the number of machines in all the other quarters together, nearly equal those in the South-West, full four thousand men are left; to shift for a living how they can, and must of course fall to the Parish, if not timely relieved. Allowing one boy to be bound apprentice from each family out of work, eight thousand hands are deprived of the opportunity of getting a livelihood.

We therefore hope, that the feelings of humanity will lead those who have it in their power to prevent the use of those machines, to give every discouragement they can to what has a tendency so prejudicial to their fellow-creatures.

This is not all; the injury to the Cloth is great, in so much that in Frizing, instead of leaving a nap upon the cloth, the wool is drawn out and the Cloth is left thread-bare.

Many more evils we could enumerate, but we would hope, that the sensible part of mankind, who are not biased by interest, must see the dreadful tendancy of their continuance; a depopulation must be the consequence; trade being then lost, the landed interest will have no other satisfaction but that of being last devoured.

We wish to propose a few queries to those who would plead for the further continuance of these machines:

Men of common sense must know, that so many machines in use, take the work from the hands employed in Scribbling, — and who did that business before machines were invented.

How are those men, thus thrown out of employ to provide for their families; — and what are they to put their children apprentice to, that the rising generation may have something to keep them at work, in order that they may not be like vagabonds strolling about in idleness? Some say, Begin and learn some other business. — Suppose we do; who will maintain our families, whilst we undertake the arduous task; and when we have learned it, how do we know we shall be any better for all our pains; for by the time we have served our second apprenticeship, another machine may arise, which may take away that business also; so that our families, being half pined whilst we are learning how to provide them with bread, will be wholly so during the period of our third apprenticeship.

But what are our children to do; are they to be brought up in idleness? Indeed as things are, it is no wonder to hear of so many executions; for our parts, though we may be thought illiterate men, our conceptions are, that bringing children up to industry, and keeping them employed, is the way to keep them from falling into those crimes, which an idle habit naturally leads to.

These things impartially considered will we hope, be strong advocates in our favour; and we conceive that men of sense, religion and humanity, will be satisfied of the reasonableness, as well as necessity of this address, and that their own feelings will urge them to espouse the cause of us and our families —
Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) was a feminist, radical, social theorist, educator, journalist, travel writer, and novelist. One of her insights in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (http://www.bartleby.com/144) is that the condition of women in a given culture is not natural but is produced and replicated by that culture. The extract from Chapter 12 (1792) is on education.

*Chap. XII. On National Education.*

The good effects resulting from attention to private education will ever be very confined, and the parent who really puts his own hand to the plow, will always, in some degree, be disappointed, till education becomes a grand national concern. A man cannot retire into desart with his child, and if he did he could not bring himself back to childhood, and become the proper friend and play-fellow of an infant or youth. And when children are confined to the society of men and women, they very soon acquire that kind of premature manhood which stops the growth of every vigorous power of mind or body. In order to open their faculties they should be excited to think for themselves; and this can only be done by mixing a number of children together, and making them jointly pursue the same objects.

A child very soon contracts a benumbing indolence of mind, which he has seldom sufficient vigour afterwards to shake off, when he only asks a question instead of seeking for information, and then relies implicitly on the answer he receives. With his equals in age this could never be the case, and the subjects of inquiry, though they might be influenced, would not be entirely under the direction of men, who frequently damp, if not destroy, abilities, by bringing them forward too hastily: and too hastily they will infallibly be brought forward, if the child be confined to the society of a man, however sagacious that man may be.

Besides, in youth the seeds of every affection should be sown, and the respectful regard, which is felt for a parent, is very different from the social affections that are to constitute the happiness of life as it advances. Of these equality is the basis, and an intercourse of sentiments unclogged by that observant seriousness which prevents disputation, though it may not enforce submission. Let a child have ever such an affection for his parent, he will always languish to play and chat with children; and the very respect which he entertains, for filial esteem always has a dash of fear mixed with it, will, if it do not teach him cunning, at
least prevent him from pouring out the little secrets which first open the heart to friendship and confidence, gradually leading to more expansive benevolence. Added to this, he will never acquire that frank ingenuousness of behaviour, which young people can only attain by being frequently in society where they dare to speak what they think; neither afraid of being reproved for their presumption, nor laughed at for their folly.

Forcibly impressed by the reflections which the sight of schools, as they are at present conducted, naturally suggested, I have formerly delivered my opinion rather warmly in favour of a private education; but further experience has led me to view the subject in a different light. I still, however, think schools, as they are now regulated, the hotbeds of vice and folly, and the knowledge of human nature, supposed to be attained there, merely cunning selfishness.

... The only way to avoid two extremes equally injurious to morality, would be to contrive some way of combining a public and private education. Thus to make men citizens two natural steps might be taken, which seem directly to lead to the desired point; for the domestic affections, that first open the heart to the various modifications of humanity, would be cultivated, whilst the children were nevertheless allowed to spend great part of their time, on terms of equality, with other children.

Appendix C

George Washington’s Journal

George Washington (1732–1799), the first president of the US, left a substantial set of texts, some of which are available at http://gwpapers.virginia.edu. One of his journal entries is reproduced below. The background to the excerpt is that in the fall of 1794, George Washington traveled from Philadelphia to western Pennsylvania to suppress the Whiskey Insurrection that erupted in the Pennsylvania counties of Westmoreland, Fayette, Washington, and Allegheny. The uprising was against the Excise Act, passed by Congress in 1791, which had imposed substantial duties on domestically distilled spirits.

9 October 1794, Journal entry
On the 9th. William Findley and David Redick — deputed by the Committee of Safety (as it is designated) which met on the 2d. of this month at Parkinson Ferry arrived in Camp with the Resolutions of the said Committee; and to give information of the State of things in the four Western Counties of Pennsylvania to wit — Washington Fayette Westd. & Alligany in order to see if it would prevent the March of the Army into them.

At 10 o’clock I had a meeting with these persons in presence of Govr. Howell (of New Jersey) the Secretary of the Treasury, Colo. Hamilton, & Mr. Dandridge: Govr. Mifflin was invited to be present, but excused himself on acct. of business.
I told the Deputies that by one of the Resolutions it would appear that they were empowered to give information of the disposition & of the existing state of matters in the four Counties above mentioned; that I was ready to hear & would listen patiently, and with candour to what they had to say.

Mr. Findley began. He confined his information to such parts of the four Counties as he was best acquainted with; referring to Mr. Reddick for a recital of what fell within his knowledge, in the other parts of these Counties.

The substance of Mr. Findley's communications were as follows — viz. — That the People in the parts where he was best acquainted, had seen there folly; and he believed were disposed to submit to the Laws; that he thought, but could not undertake to be responsible, for the re-establishment of the public Offices for the Collection of the Taxes on distilled spirits, & Stills — intimating however, that it might be best for the present, & until the people's minds were a little more tranquilized, to hold the Office of Inspection at Pittsburgh under the protection — or at least under the influence of the Garrison; That he thought the Distillers would either enter their stills or would put them down; That the Civil authority was beginning to recover its tone; & enumerated some instances of it; That the ignorance, & general want of information among the people far exceeded any thing he had any conception of; That it was not merely the excise law their opposition was aimed at, but to all law, & Government; and to the Officers of Government; and that the situation in which he had been, & the life he had led for sometime, was such, that rather than go through it again, he would prefer quitting this scene altogether.

Mr. Reddick's information was similar to the above; except as to the three last recitals — on which I do not recollect that he expressed any sentiment further than that the situation of those who were not in the opposition to government whilst the frenzy was at its height, were obliged to sleep with their Arms by their bed Sides every night; not knowing but that before Morning they might have occasion to use them in defence of their persons, or their properties.

He added, that for a long time after the riots commenced, and until lately, the distrust of one another was such, that even friends were afraid to communicate their sentiments to each other; That by whispers this was brought about; and growing bolder as they became more communicative they found their strength, and that there was a general disposition not only to acquiesce under, but to support the Laws — and he gave some instances also of Magistrates enforcing them.

He said the People of those Counties believed that the opposition to the Excise law — or at least that their dereliction to it, in every other part of the U. States was similar to their own, and that no Troops could be got to March against them for the purpose of coercion; that every act until very lately, of Troops marching against them was disbelieved; & supposed to be the fabricated tales of governmental men; That now they had got alarmed; That many were disposing of their property at an under rate, in order to leave the Country, and added (I think) that they would go to Detroit. That no person of any consequence, except one, but what
had availed themselves of the proffered amnesty; That those who were still in the opposition, and obnoxious to the laws, were Men of little or no property, & cared but little where they resided; That he did not believe there was the least intention in them to oppose the Army; & that there was not three rounds of ammunition for them in all the Western Country. He (& I think Mr. Findley also) was apprehensive that the resentments of the Army might be productive of treatment to some of these people that might be attended with disagreeable consequences; & on that account seemed to deprecate the March of it: declaring however, that it was their wish, if the people did not give proofs of unequivocal submission, that it might not stop short of its object.

After hearing what both had to say, I briefly told them — That it had been the earnest wish of governmt. to bring the people of those counties to a sense of their duty, by mild, & lenient means; That for the purpose of representing to their sober reflection the fatal consequences of such conduct Commissioners had been sent amongst them that they might be warned, in time, of what must follow, if they persevered in their opposition to the laws; but that coercion wou’d not be resorted to except in the dernier resort: but, that the season of the year made it indispensible that preparation for it should keep pace with the propositions that had been made; That it was unnecessary for me to enumerate the transactions of those people (as they related to the proceedings of government) forasmuch as they knew them as well as I did; That the measure which they were not witness to the adoption of was not less painful than expensive — Was inconvenient, & distressing — in every point of view; but as I considered the support of the Laws as an object of the first magnitude, and the greatest part of the expense had already been incurred, that nothing Short of the most unequivocal proofs of absolute Submission should retard the March of the army into the Western counties, in order to convince them that the government could, & would enforce obedience to the laws — not suffering them to be insulted with impunity. Being asked again what proofs would be required, I answered, they knew as well as I did, what was due to justice & example. They understood my meaning — and asked if they might have another interview. I appointed five oclock in the After noon for it. At this second Meeting there was little more than a repet[t]ion of what had passed in the forenoon; and it being again mentioned that all the principal characters, except one, in the Western counties who had been in the opposition, had submitted to the propositions — I was induced, seeing them in the Street the next day, to ask Mr. Redick who that one was? — telling him at the same time I required no disclosure that he did not feel himself entirely free to make. He requested a little time to think of it, and asked for another meeting — which was appointed at 5 oclock that afternoon — which took place accordingly when he said David Bradford was the person he had alluded to in his former conversations.

He requested to know if a Meeting of the people, by their deputies, would be permitted by the Army at any given point, on their March into that Country (with fresh evidence of the sincerity of their disposition to acquiesce in whatever might be required) . I replied I saw no objection to it, provided they came unarmed; but to be cautious that not a gun was fired,
there could be no answering for consequences in this case. I assured them that every possible care should be taken to keep the Troops from offering them any insult or damage and that those who always had been subordinate to the Laws, & such as had availed themselves of the amnesty, should not be injured in their persons or property; and that the treatment of the rest would depend upon their own conduct. That the Army, unless opposed, did not mean to act as executioners, or bring offenders to a Military Tribunal; but merely to aid the civil Magistrates, with whom offences would lye. Thus endd. the matter.

Appendix D

D.H. Lawrence’s Lady Chatterley’s Lover

D.H. Lawrence (1885–1930) grew up in Nottinghamshire and used regional speech to give a better understanding of the setting and social class. Lady Chatterley’s Lover was first printed privately by an Italian printer in 1928 (since Lawrence could not find a British publisher). Because there was no copyright on the book, pirated versions appeared everywhere. The following are excerpts from Chapter 8.

She saw a secret little clearing, and a secret little hut made of rustic poles. And she had never been here before! She realized it was the quiet place where the growing pheasants were reared; the keeper in his shirt-sleeves was kneeling, hammering. The dog trotted forward with a short, sharp bark, and the keeper lifted his face suddenly and saw her. He had a startled look in his eyes.

He straightened himself and saluted, watching her in silence, as she came forward with weakening limbs. He resented the intrusion; he cherished his solitude as his only and last freedom in life.

“I wondered what the hammering was,” she said, feeling weak and breathless, and a little afraid of him, as he looked so straight at her.

“Ah’m gettin’ th’ coops ready for th’ young bods,” he said, in broad vernacular.

She did not know what to say, and she felt weak.

“I should like to sit down a bit,” she said.

“Come and sit ‘ere i’ th’ ut,” he said, going in front of her to the hut, pushing aside some timber and stuff, and drawing out a rustic chair, made of hazel sticks.

“Am Ah t’ light yer a little fire?” he asked, with the curious naïveté of the dialect.

“Oh, don’t bother,” she replied.
But he looked at her hands; they were rather blue. So he quickly took some larch twigs to the little brick fire-place in the corner, and in a moment the yellow flame was running up the chimney. He made a place by the brick hearth.

“Sit ‘ere then a bit, and warm yer,” he said.

... 

A wet brown dog came running and did not bark, lifting a wet feather of a tail. The man followed in a wet black oilskin jacket, like a chauffeur, and face flushed a little. She felt him recoil in his quick walk, when he saw her. She stood up in the handbreadth of dryness under the rustic porch. He saluted without speaking, coming slowly near. She began to withdraw.

“I’m just going,” she said.

“Was yer waitin’ to get in?” he asked, looking at the hut, not at her.

“No, I only sat a few minutes in the shelter,” she said, with quiet dignity.

He looked at her. She looked cold.

“Sir Clifford ‘adn’t got no other key then?” he asked.

“No, but it doesn’t matter. I can sit perfectly dry under this porch. Good afternoon!” She hated the excess of vernacular in his speech.

He watched her closely, as she was moving away. Then he hitched up his jacket, and put his hand in his breeches pocket, taking out the key of the hut.

“ ’Appen yer’d better ‘ave this key, an’ Ah min fend for t’ bods some other road.”

She looked at him.

“What do you mean?” she asked.

“I mean as ’appen Ah can find anuther pleece as’ll du for rearin’ th’ pheasants. If yer want ter be ‘ere, yo’ll non want me messin’ abaht a’ th’ time.”

She looked at him, getting his meaning through the fog of the dialect.

“Why don’t you speak ordinary English?” she said coldly.

“Me! Ah thowt it wor ordinary.”

She was silent for a few moments in anger.

“So if yer want t’ key, yer’d better tacit. Or ’appen Ah’d better gi’e ’t yer termorrer, an’ clear all t’ stuff aht fust. Would that du for yer?”

She became more angry.
“I didn’t want your key,” she said. “I don’t want you to clear anything out at all. I don’t in the least want to turn you out of your hut, thank you! I only wanted to be able to sit here sometimes, like today. But I can sit perfectly well under the porch, so please say no more about it.”

He looked at her again, with his wicked blue eyes.

“Why,” he began, in the broad slow dialect. “Your Ladyship’s as welcome as Christmas ter th’ hut an’ th’ key an’ iverythink as is. On’y this time O’ th’ year ther’s bods ter set, an’ Ah’ve got ter be potterin’ abaht a good bit, seein’ after ‘em, an’ a’. Winter time Ah ned ‘ardly come nigh th’ pleece. But what wi’ spring, an’ Sir Clifford wantin’ ter start th’ pheasants…An’ your Ladyship’d non want me tinkerin’ around an’ about when she was ‘ere, all the time.”

She listened with a dim kind of amazement.

“Why should I mind your being here?” she asked.

He looked at her curiously.

“T’nuisance on me!” he said briefly, but significantly. She flushed. “Very well!” she said finally. “I won’t trouble you. But I don’t think I should have minded at all sitting and seeing you look after the birds. I should have liked it. But since you think it interferes with you, I won’t disturb you, don’t be afraid. You are Sir Clifford’s keeper, not mine.”

The phrase sounded queer, she didn’t know why. But she let it pass.

“Nay, your Ladyship. It’s your Ladyship’s own ‘ut. It’s as your Ladyship likes an’ pleases, every time. Yer can turn me off at a wik’s notice. It wor only…”

“Oh what?” she asked, baffled.

He pushed back his hat in an odd comic way.

“On’y as ‘appen yo’d like the place ter yersen, when yer did come, an’ not me messin’ abaht.”

“But why?” she said, angry. “Aren’t you a civilized human being? Do you think I ought to be afraid of you? Why should I take any notice of you and your being here or not? Why is it important?”

He looked at her, all his face glimmering with wicked laughter.

“It’s not, your Ladyship. Not in the very least,” he said.

“Well, why then?” she asked.

“Shall I get your Ladyship another key then?”

“No thank you! I don’t want it.”

“Ah’ll get it anyhow. We’d best ‘ave two keys ter th’ place.”
“And I consider you are insolent,” said Connie, with her colour up, panting a little.

“Nay, nay!” he said quickly. “Dunna yer say that! Nay, nay! I niver meant nuthink. Ah on’y thought as if yo’ come ’ere, Ah s’d ave ter clear out, an’ it’d mean a lot of work, settin’ up somewheres else. But if your Ladyship isn’t going ter take no notice O’ me, then…it’s Sir Clifford’s ‘ut, an’ everythink is as your Ladyship likes, everythink is as your Ladyship likes an’ pleases, barrin’ yer take no notice O’ me, doin’ th’ bits of jobs as Ah’ve got ter do.”

Connie went away completely bewildered. She was not sure whether she had been insulted and mortally offended, or not. Perhaps the man really only meant what he said; that he thought she would expect him to keep away. As if she would dream of it! And as if he could possibly be so important, he and his stupid presence.

Appendix E

**Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes were watching God***

Zora Neale Hurston (1891–1960) was criticized for painting too positive a picture of life in the southern US in the early part of the 20th century. Her work was rediscovered in the 1970s, e.g. by Alice Walker. The excerpt below is taken from Chapter 1 of *Their Eyes were watching God*, first published in 1937.

Ships at a distance have every man’s wish on board. For some they come in with the tide. For others they sail forever on the horizon, never out of sight, never landing until the Watcher turns his eyes away in resignation, his dreams mocked to death by Time. That is the life of men.

Now, women forget all those things they don’t want to remember, and remember everything they don’t want to forget. The dream is the truth. Then they act and do things accordingly.

So the beginning of this was a woman and she had come back from burying the dead. Not the dead of sick and ailing with friends at the pillow and the feet. She had come back from the sodden and the bloated; the sudden dead, their eyes flung wide open in judgment.

The people all saw her come because it was sundown. The sun was gone, but he had left his footprints in the sky. It was the time for sitting on porches beside the road. It was the time to hear things and talk. These sitters had been tongueless, earless, eyeless conveniences all day long. Mules and other brutes had occupied their skins. But now, the sun and the bossman were gone, so the skins felt powerful and human. They became lords of sounds and lesser things. They passed nations through their mouths. They sat in judgment.

Seeing the woman as she was made them remember the envy they had stored up from other times. So they chewed up the back parts of their minds and swallowed with relish. They made burning statements with questions, and killing tools out of laughs. It was mass cruelty.
A mood come alive. Words walking without masters; walking altogether like harmony in a song.

“What she doin' coming back here in dem overhalls? Can't she find no dress to put on? — Where's dat blue satin dress she left here in? — Where all dat money her husband took and died and left her? — What dat ole forty year ole 'oman doin' wid her hair swingin' down her back lak some young gal? — Where she left dat young lad of a boy she went off here wid? — Thought she was going to marry? — Where he left her? — What he done wid all her money? — Betcha he off wid some gal so young she ain't even got no hairs — why she don't stay in her class? —”

When she got to where they were she turned her face on the bander log and spoke. They scrambled a noisy “good evenin'” and left their mouths setting open and their ears full of hope. Her speech was pleasant enough, but she kept walking straight on to her gate. The porch couldn't talk for looking.

The men noticed her firm buttocks like she had grape fruits in her hip pockets; the great rope of black hair swinging to her waist and unraveling in the wind like a plume; then her pugnacious breasts trying to bore holes in her shirt. They, the men, were saving with the mind what they lost with the eye. The women took the faded shirt and muddy overalls and laid them away for remembrance. It was a weapon against her strength and if it turned out of no significance, still it was a hope that she might fall to their level some day.

But nobody moved, nobody spoke, nobody even thought to swallow spit until after her gate slammed behind her.

Pearl Stone opened her mouth and laughed real hard because she didn't know what else to do. She fell all over Mrs. Sumpkins while she laughed. Mrs. Sumpkins snorted violently and sucked her teeth.

“Humph! Y'all let her worry yuh. You ain't like me. Ah ain't got her to study 'bout. If she ain't got manners enough to stop and let folks know how she been makin' out, let her g'wan!”

“She ain't even worth talkin' after,” Lulu Moss drawled through her nose. “She sits high, but she looks low. Dat's what Ah say 'bout dese ole women runnin' after young boys.”

Pheoby Watson hitched her rocking chair forward before she spoke. “Well, nobody don't know if it's anything to tell or not. Me, Ah'm her best friend, and Ah don't know.”

“Maybe us don't know into things lak you do, but we all know how she went 'way from here and us sho seen her come back. 'Tain't no use in your tryin' to cloak no ole woman lak Janie Starks, Pheoby, friend or no friend.”

“At dat she ain't so ole as some of y'all dat's talking.”

“She's way past forty to my knowledge, Pheoby.”

“No more'n forty at de outside.”

“She's 'way too old for a boy like Tea Cake.”

“Tea Cake ain't been no boy for some time. He's round thirty his ownself.”

“Don't keer what it was, she could stop and say a few words with us. She act like we done done something to her,” Pearl Stone complained. “She de one been doin' wrong.”
“You mean, you mad ‘cause she didn’t stop and tell us all her business. Anyhow, what you ever know her to do so bad as y’all make out? The worst thing Ah ever knowed her to do was taking a few years offa her age and dat ain’t never harmed nobody. Y’all makes me tired. De way you talkin’ you’d think de folks in dis town didn’t do nothin’ in de bed ‘cept praise de Lawd. You have to ‘scuse me, ‘cause Ah’m bound to go take her some supper.” Pheoby stood up sharply.

“Don’t mind us,” Lulu smiled, “just go right ahead, us can mind yo’ house for you till you git back. Mah supper is done. You bettah go see how she feel. You kin let de rest of us know.”

“Lawd,” Pearl agreed, “Ah done scorched-up dat lil meat and bread too long to talk about. Ah kin stay ‘way from home long as Ah please. Mah husband ain’t fussyy.”

“Oh, er, Pheoby, if youse ready to go, Ah could walk over dere wid you,” Mrs. Sumpkins volunteered. “It’s sort of duskin’ down dark. De booger man might ketch yuh.”

“Naw, Ah thank yuh. Nothin’ couldn’t ketch me dese few steps Ah’m goin’. Anyhow mah husband tell me say no first class booger would have me. If she got anything to tell yuh you’ll hear it.”

Pheoby hurried on off with a covered bowl in her hands. She left the porch pelting her back with unasked questions. They hoped the answers were cruel and strange. When she arrived at the place, Pheoby Watson didn’t go in by the front gate and down the palm walk to the front door. She walked around the fence corner and went in the intimate gate with her heaping plate of mulatto rice. Janie must be round that side.

She found her sitting on the steps of the back porch with the lamps all filled and the chimneys cleaned.

“Hello, Janie, how you comin’?”

“Aw, pretty good, Ah’m tryin’ to soak some uh de tiredness and de dirt outa mah feet.” She laughed a little.

“Ah see you is. Gal, you sho looks good. You looks like youse yo’ own daughter.” They both laughed. “Even wid dem overhalls on, you shows yo’ womanhood.”

“G’wan! G’wan! You must think Ah brought yuh somethin’. When Ah ain’t brought home a thing but mahself.”

“Dat’s a gracious plenty. Yo’ friends wouldn’t want nothin’ better.”

“Ah takes dat flattery offa you, Pheoby, ‘cause Ah know it’s from de heart.” Janie extended her hand. “Good Lawd Pheoby! ain’t you never goin’ tuh gimme dat lil rations you brought me? Ah ain’t had a thing on mah stomach today exceptin’ mah hand.” They both laughed easily. “Give it here and have a seat.”

“Ah knowed you’d be hungry. No time to be huntin’ stove wood after dark. Mah mulatto rice ain’t so good dis time. Not enough bacon grease, but Ah reckon it’ll kill hungry.”

“Ah’ll tell you in a minute,” Janie said, lifting the cover. “Gal, it’s too good! you switches a mean fanny round in a kitchen.”

“Aw, dat ain’t much to eat, Janie. But Ah’m liable to have something sho nuff good tomorrow, ‘cause you done come.”
Janie ate heartily and said nothing. The varicolo red cloud dust that the sun had stirred up in the sky was settling by slow degrees.

“Here, Pheoby, take yo’ ole plate. Ah ain’t got a bit of use for a empty dish. Dat grub sho come in handy.”

Pheoby laughed at her friend’s rough joke. “Youse just as crazy as you ever was.”

“Hand me dat wash-rag on dat chair by you, honey. Lemme scrub mah feet.” She took the cloth and rubbed vigorously. Laughter came to her from the big road.

“Well, Ah see Mouth-Almighty is still sittin’ in de sameplace. And Ah reckon they got me up in they mouth now.”

“Yes indeed. You know if you pass some people and don’t speak tuh ‘em dey got tuh go way back in yo’ life and see whut you ever done. They know mo’ ‘bout yuh than you do yo’ self. An envious heart makes a treacherous ear. They done ‘heard’ ‘bout you just what they hope done happened.”

“If God don’t think no mo’ ‘bout ‘em then Ah do, they’s a lost ball in de high grass.”

“Ah hears what they say ‘cause they just will collect round mah porch ‘cause it’s on de big road. Mah husband git so sick of ‘em sometime he makes ‘em all git for home.”

“Sam is right too. They just wearin’ out yo’ sittin’ chairs.”

“Yeah, Sam say most of ‘em goes to church so they’ll be sure to rise in Judgment. Dat’s de day dat every secret is s’posed to be made known. They wants to be there and hear it all.”

“Sam is too crazy! You can’t stop laughin’ when youse round him.”

“Uuh hunh. He says he aims to be there hisself so he can find out who stole his corn-cob pipe.”

“Pheoby, dat Sam of your’n just won’t quit! Crazy thing!”

“Most of dese zigaboos is so het up over yo’ business till they liable to hurry theyself to Judgment to find out about you if they don’t soon know. You better make haste and tell ‘em ‘bout you and Tea Cake gittin’ married, and if he taken all yo’ money and went off wid some young gal, and where at he is now and where at is all yo’ clothes dat you got to come back here in overhalls.”

“Ah don’t mean to bother wid tellin’ ‘em nothin’, Pheoby ‘Tain’t worth de trouble. You can tell ‘em what Ah say if you wants to. Dat’s just de same as me ‘cause mah tongue is in mah friend’s mouf.”

“If you so desire Ah’ll tell ‘em what you tell me to tell’em.”

“To start off wid, people like dem wastes up too much time puttin’ they mouf on things they don’t know nothin’ about. Now they got to look into me loving Tea Cake and see whether it was done right or not! They don’t know if life is a mess of corn-meal dumplings, and if love is a bed-quilt!”

“So long as they get a name to gnaw on they don’t care whose it is, and what about, ‘specially if they can make it sound like evil.”
“If they wants to see and know, why they don’t come kiss and be kissed? Ah could then sit down and tell ‘em things. Ah been a delegate to de big ‘ssociation of life. Yessuh! De Grand Lodge, de big convention of livin’ is just where Ah been dis year and a half y’all ain’t seen me.”

They sat there in the fresh young darkness close together. Pheoby eager to feel and do through Janie, but hating to show her zest for fear it might be thought mere curiosity. Janie full of that oldest human longing — self revelation. Pheoby held her tongue for a long time, but she couldn’t help moving her feet. So Janie spoke.

“They don’t need to worry about me and my overhalls long as Ah still got nine hundred dollars in de bank. Tea Cake got me into wearing ’em-following behind him. Tea Cake ain’t wasted up no money of mine, and he ain’t left me for no young gal, neither. He give me every consolation in de world. He’d tell ‘em so too, if he was here. If he wasn’t gone.”

Pheoby dilated all over with eagerness, “Tea Cake gone?”

“Yeah, Pheoby, Tea Cake is gone. And dat’s de only reason you see me back here — cause Ah ain’t got nothing to make me happy no more where Ah was at. Down in the Everglades there, down on the muck.”

“It’s hard for me to understand what you mean, de way you tell it. And then again Ah’m hard of understandin’ at times.”

“Naw, ‘tain’t nothin’ lak you might think. So ‘tain’t no use in me telling you somethin’ unless Ah give you de understandin’ to go ‘long wid it. Unless you see de fur, a mink skin ain’t no different from a coon hide. Looka heah, Pheoby, is Sam waitin’ on you for his supper?”

“It’s all ready and waitin’. If he ain’t got sense enough to eat it, dat’s his hard luck.”

“Well then, we can set right where we is and talk. Ah got the house all opened up to let dis breeze get a little catchin’.”

“Pheoby, we been kissin’-friends for twenty years, so Ah depend on you for a good thought. And Ah’m talking to you from dat standpoint.”

Time makes everything old so the kissing, young darkness became a monstropolous old thing while Janie talked.
In this chapter, we will focus more closely on the varieties of English spoken outside the British Isles. These varieties are referred to as World English(es), Englishes, Global English, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), and English as an International Language (EIL), which reflects the fact that English is used as a global/international language in addition to having native or near-native speakers. The term lingua franca applies to any language that is used widely by non-native speakers of it to communicate. Latin was the lingua franca of the medieval period, and English has this status at the moment. We will use the terms World English(es) or Englishes as they are more inclusive than EIL or ELF. In addition to examining some features of the varieties of English, we will discuss the effects of the widespread use of English on endangered languages.

In Chapter 1, we mentioned an interesting quote attributed to Uriel Weinreich: “a language is a dialect with an army.” It is often difficult to distinguish varieties (or dialects) from languages, and, as the quote suggests, in many cases the distinction is politically motivated. When the United States gained political independence from Britain, for example, it also wanted an independent language, as different from British English as possible. This need to create a distinct identity is language-external and results in diverging Englishes. Modern mass communication and globalization are also external forces, but they function as converging factors.

Section 1 of this chapter examines some historical events relevant to the spread of English and discusses the approximate numbers of speakers for different varieties as well as some sources for studying World Englishes. Sections 2 to 4, discuss the sounds, spelling, grammar, and lexicon. Section 5 examines English-influenced pidgins and creoles and Section 6 focuses on the broader consequences of the spread of English. The emphasis in this chapter is on some of the features of the sound system, grammar, and vocabulary of World Englishes. Many of these overlap of course with those of Chapter 8.

1. External History and Sources

After 1600, English speakers started to spread around the world for a variety of reasons: exploration, trade, forced and voluntary migrations, and wars. We will discuss a few of the major events that influenced this spread. See Appendix III at the end of the book for
a chronology of events. We will also look at how the number of speakers is estimated and where the data come from.

The Americas and Australia were the first to become affected by the spread of English. In 1497, John Cabot reached Newfoundland, now part of Canada, backed by the British monarch Henry VII. He was trying to find a northern passage to the East Indies. The first permanent, English-speaking settlers — the Jamestown settlers sent by a trading company — did not inhabit North America until 1607, however. Forced migrations, such as those due to religious persecutions, prison colonies, and later the slave trade, also contributed to the spread of English: British prisoners were sent to the West Indies (Barbados) in the 1620s, to Georgia in the US in the 1730s, and to Australia in the 1780s. When a famine broke out in Ireland in the 1820s, many people were forced to leave Ireland for other parts of the world. In addition, due to the Highland Clearances, where many thousands people were evicted to enable large-scale sheep farming, many inhabitants of Scotland had to move elsewhere. The migrants from Scotland and Ireland often only spoke Gaelic, and were therefore only indirectly related to the spread of English.

Parts of Africa and Asia were also colonized early on. The most important trading company in the English-speaking world was the British East India Company. It was established in 1600 and had a monopoly on all trade, initially mainly spices, in the East Indies. Its main interests were in India — including what is now Bangladesh and Pakistan — starting around 1615. The 1670s saw West Africa used for trade and slave trading. Other areas colonized and controlled by the Empire were: South East Asia (Burma, Malaysia, and Singapore among others) in the 1800s, East Africa after 1880, and South Africa by 1902. After its independence from Britain in 1776, the United States of America expanded its territory as well and contributed to the spread of English. With the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the US nearly doubled its size. The much smaller Gadsden Purchase followed in 1853 and in the late 1890s, the US gained control over Hawaii, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico.

After World War II, major decolonization took place: the Philippines became independent in 1946, India and Pakistan in 1947, and Burma and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in 1948. Nigeria and Kenya gained independence in 1960 and 1963, respectively. However, many of the newly independent countries retained the English language after independence. Some, such as India and South Africa, did this because of the multitude of languages spoken and the unifying force of English, as we’ll now see.

According to the Ethnologue data (Gordon 2005: 26; 352), in addition to English, 427 languages are spoken in India. Even though English is spoken by only 5% of the population, it plays an important role in Indian society due to the British domination of India up to its independence in 1947. The Indian constitution is written in English and India has large numbers of non-native speakers of English. English is an associate official language, used together with Hindi for resolutions, permits, and contracts. Hindi and English are the national or official languages, but 22 languages are official ‘scheduled’ languages (see also Annamalai 2001; Mehrota 1998). Currently, the role of English in India is increasing due to the outsourcing industries and services.
The English spoken in India is distinct and referred to as Indian English. It is very similar (at least for an outsider) to Pakistani or Bangladeshi English. Here we will group northern and southern Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Sri Lankan English together as South Asian English. See Appendix B and Exercise 4 at the end of this chapter for examples.

Since South Africa’s first free elections in 1994, eleven languages have been recognized as official: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, and isiZulu. There are also eight unofficial languages: Fanagalo, Lobedu, Northern Ndenele, Phuti, Sign Language, Khoe, Nama, and San, and there is a commitment to promote and ensure respect for German, Gujarati, Portuguese, Telegu and many others (Mesthrie 2002). English is often used as a lingua franca, even though it is estimated that only 8% of the population use it at home (Gordon 2005: 185).

In addition to being a leftover of colonization and being used for linguistic unity, English is currently being taught as a second (ESL) or foreign language (EFL) to non-English speakers in the US, East Asia (China, Korea, and Japan), and Europe (especially Northern Europe). One of the main reasons for this recent dispersal of English has been the cultural, scientific, and economic dominance of the US after World War II and the increased globalization since the last decade of the 20th century. A distinction is often made between ESL and EFL, although this is increasingly difficult. ESL is used when learning English in a country where it is spoken as a native language (such as the US), or has a political or historical presence (such as India). EFL is used when English is taught and learned in a country where it is not spoken natively (in Korea, for example). This distinction becomes harder to make in diverse, multi-cultural and multi-lingual societies; therefore, the term ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) is sometimes used. It could be that English is becoming a basic skill that needs to be taught at the primary school level at the same time as writing, reading, arithmetic, and social studies. That would make it a second language for most.

Some people might argue that the importance of English is also due to a concerted effort to maintain it as the world language: heavy monetary investments are being made through the British Council, for example, to achieve this (www.learnenglish.org.uk). Teaching English (CELTA, i.e. Cambridge Certificate), testing (TOEFL), and publishing materials in it are major sources of income. In Graddol (2006), there is an estimate of £11.3 billion of direct and indirect income from teaching of English for the United Kingdom (see also Pennycook 1994). British, American, and Australian universities are competing to get international students, and European universities (having adopted English in many of their programs) are starting to compete as well. In the 1990s, many prestigious universities developed online curricula and degrees aimed at the national and international market, but this was not successful and largely abandoned. Instead, these same universities have now entered into joint ventures with e.g. Chinese universities and have established overseas branches.

Figure 9.1 (McArthur 2002) shows a map of areas where English is important. It is not precise in that it does not indicate English as relevant in Northern Europe, for example,
even though it is used there in many contexts. It also shows English as being significant in Argentina, where the Ethnologue database (Gordon 2005: 218–9) does not mention it.

The estimates of the number of speakers of English vary widely depending on whether one includes non-native speakers or not. Bailey (1991: vii) estimates that 15% of the world’s population makes regular use of English. Crystal (2003: 6) estimates that this number has grown to 25%, or 1.5 billion and Graddol (1997) estimates the same 1.5 billion speakers. Graddol (2006: 95) estimates that, due to China’s decision to make English a compulsory primary school subject, 20 million users of English will be added each year. It is difficult to confirm these figures because of the lack of agreement on how much English a speaker needs to know to be included.

Kachru (1985) formulated the well-known distinction between the inner circle (where English is used in the home: Great Britain, Ireland, US, Canada, Australia, NZ), the outer circle (where English is part of the government/school system: India, Singapore, and 50 other regions), and the expanding circle (where there is no history of colonization but where English is used for communication with other countries: Europe, China, and Japan). His model is depicted in Figure 9.2, from Kachru (1992: 356).

Using Kachru’s model, Crystal (2003: 61) estimates for 2001 that the inner circle has 320–380 million speakers, the outer circle 300–500 million and the expanding circle 500 million to 1 billion. He thus arrives at the 1.5 billion mentioned earlier.
In the 1980s, Kachru's model raised awareness of the different Englishes; more recently, however, it has been criticized as no longer reflecting reality. In many countries where English is not spoken natively — such as Norway and the Netherlands — it has become a second language in certain domains, such as business, banking, advertising, and education. Kachru has therefore suggested another model (see Graddol 2006: 110), one where the inner circle has 500 million “high proficiency users” and the outer circle shows the numbers of lower proficiency speakers.

Several journals, such as English World-Wide and World Englishes, publish articles on World Englishes and there is a book series with almost 50 titles, e.g. Focus on Canada (Clarke 1993), Focus on South Africa (de Klerk 1996), Indian English: Texts and Interpretation (Mehrotra 1998), and Filipino English and Taglish (Thompson 2003). Dictionaries abound, e.g. the Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage (Allsop 1996), The New Zealand Pocket Oxford Dictionary (Burchfeld 1986), the Canadian Oxford Dictionary, the
Australian National Dictionary (Ramson 1988), the Australian Oxford Dictionary (Moore 1999), A Dictionary of South African English (Branford 1991), and many others. There are also many web-resources, such as the International Corpus of English (ICE), and numerous newspapers and radio stations online for primary (written and spoken) sources. Try ICE at www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice/sounds.htm; IDEA International Dialects of English at http://www.ku.edu/~idea/; or http://classweb.gmu.edu/accent.

Some of the (literary) writers writing in English outside Britain and the US are listed in Table 9.1. Again, many of these are hard to place: Shani Mootoo, for example, was born in Ireland, grew up in Trinidad, and now lives in Canada, and Margaret Lawrence lived in Africa and Europe for extended periods of time.

Table 9.1. Some literary figures writing in English outside the US/UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Writers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kenya:</td>
<td>Meja Mwangi (1948–), Stanley Gazemba (?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Zealand:</td>
<td>Janet Frame (1924–2004), Keri Hulme (1947–), Witi Ihimaera (1944–), Katherine Mansfield (1888–1923)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singapore:</td>
<td>Catherine Lim (1942–), Gopal Baratham (1935–), Goh Sin Tub (**), Philip Jeyaretnam (1964–)</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Africa:</td>
<td>Nadine Gordimer (1923–), John Coetzee (1940–), Dennis Brutus (1924–)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad/Tobago</td>
<td>V.S. Naipaul (1932–), Sharlow Mohammed (1949–), Deborah Jean Baptiste-Samuel (1967–)</td>
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2. Spelling and Sounds

As mentioned earlier, sounds vary enormously across varieties of English; a few of those variations will be discussed here. First, we will examine differences in spelling; these are due to external reasons — the conscious decisions of editors, educators, and politicians. We will also discuss some differences in pronunciation and stress, which are due to language internal changes.

The varieties of English exhibit only slight spelling differences. Table 9.2 lists some of the differences between British, American, and Canadian English, which are not nearly as numerous and substantial as those between various authors of Old, Middle, and Early
Modern English texts. The relatively standard spelling may be responsible for keeping the different Englishes mutually understandable, constituting a **converging factor in a diverging situation**. Well-known (minor) differences between British and American spelling involve *colour-color, centre-center*, and *gaol-jail*. These spelling differences are due to external rather than internal factors.

**Table 9.2.** Spelling differences between British, American, and Canadian English

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<thead>
<tr>
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</table>

Official Canadian spelling (as taught in schools and used in journalism) adopts some British and some American spellings, as can be seen in Table 9.2. The words in this table are taken from Canadian government or media websites. An interesting phrase is the ‘Yukon Tire Centre’ in Whitehorse, Canada, which combines the American *tire* with the British *centre*. A 1985 style guide put out by the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada provides a list of both American and British spellings, but recommends that a writer check the *Gage Canadian Dictionary*. There is also the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (K. Barber 1998), with almost 2,000 Canadianisms and suggested Canadian spellings and pronunciations.

That language/spelling is political can be seen in several ways. Apart from the efforts to be distinct from both British and American spelling, there are also speakers of Canadian English that identify with either British or American English. Even though Canada has officially been independent since 1931 (Statute of Westminster), the British Queen is still Queen of Canada. The ties to the British are most obvious in the capital Ottawa and in the province of Ontario, where many immigrants from Britain settled and where British spellings are popular. The further away (geographically) a speaker is from Ontario, the more the spelling tends to be that of the US. Figure 9.3 shows that in the 1980s almost 90% of teenage-students in Ontario preferred the British spelling of *neighbour* while in the Western provinces that number was lower than 40%.
As far as pronunciation is concerned, we know that cross-linguistically some sounds are less frequent: the interdental fricatives [θ] and [ð], the low front vowel [æ], the velar fricative [X], and the retroflex sounds. Some marked sounds in varieties of British and American English correspond to unmarked ones in other varieties and vice versa. For instance, in Australian English, the interdental fricative matches a voiced labio-dental [v] in words like *that* and a voiceless labio-dental [f] in words like *three* (Turner 1994). This is expected given the voicing differences between the initial sounds in *that* and *three*. South Asian, Singaporean, Australian, and New Zealand English also replace this interdental, and as mentioned in Chapter 8, interdental fricatives are also absent in Newfoundland, Ireland, New York, and African American English, to name a few.

The low front vowel [æ] frequently corresponds to another sound as well. It can be a raised vowel, so *man* sounds like *men*, not unexpected since [æ] is less frequent cross-linguistically. This raised vowel occurs in areas of the US influenced by Germanic languages as well as in Australia. Listen to the Australian Broadcast Corporation’s programs on www.abc.net.au to get a sense for this.

Certain marked sounds may appear only in certain World Englishes. The velar fricative [X], as it appears in South African, in Yiddish English *chutzpah* and *toches*, and in Scottish English *loch*, is unusual for most speakers of British or American English, where only a velar stop occurs. The retroflex *t* and *d* in which the tongue-tip is curled towards...
the roof of the mouth is common in South Asian English (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka). A rolling [r] occurs in Scotland and New Zealand (because of Scottish influence), especially on the southern island.

Having considered the markedness of sounds, we now turn to the more general characteristics of vowels and consonants. We know that vowels change frequently in the history of English; therefore, they are very different across varieties. Important vowel differences between British and American English involve the pronunciation of tomato [tәmatow] or [tәmejtow], ate [εt] or [ejt], been [bin] or [bin], and vase [vas] or [vejs]. In Australian English, the second vowel in basic is pronounced [ə]; American and British have [I] instead. Australian, New Zealand, and South African English sound very similar to each other, especially when compared with other varieties. The [æ] mentioned above shifts in all three. New Zealand English speakers shift some vowels, so air and ear sound the same. Radio programs using New Zealand English speakers can be heard at www.rnzi.com. In some varieties of English, both pin and pen are pronounced [pɪn]. Using the vowel diagram, try to explain these differences in the pronunciation of vowels.

Consonants vary in place, voice, and manner of articulation. In Middle English, there is a frequent variation in place between the alveolar [s] and the alveo-palatal [ʃ]: fish is written (and probably pronounced) as fis and shall as sal. We encountered differences in palatalization in Old English as well: [sk] is palatalized to [ʃ], but not to the same extent in all varieties. Bauer (2002: 82) provides a list of consonant differences in the World Englishes. Table 9.3 lists some that have to do with the place of articulation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RP</th>
<th>Am</th>
<th>Can</th>
<th>Aus</th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ss in:</td>
<td>assume</td>
<td>sj</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>s-sj-/</td>
<td>sj-/</td>
<td>f-sj-s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sch in:</td>
<td>schedule</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>sk</td>
<td>sk-/</td>
<td>f-sk</td>
<td>sk-/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g in:</td>
<td>figure</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>gj</td>
<td>gj-g</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In many varieties, voicing disappears in certain consonants: the initial affricate in jet plane devoices to chet plane in Kenyan English and the medial [ʃ] in pleasure becomes a voiceless [ʃ] in Indian English. Spanish American (the English of Cuban Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Spanish speakers in the US Southwest), South African English, and many European non-native varieties devoice word final consonants, as in please [plis].

The manner of articulation of consonants varies as well. In Spanish-influenced American English, affricates become fricatives and check is pronounced [ʃɛk]. Fricatives can also become stops: lub rather than love in Trinidad English (Winer 1997). After and before nasals, a number of deletions and changes take place, as mentioned in Chapter 2: American English winter [wɪnәr] corresponds to British [wɪntә].

Cross-linguistically, consonant clusters are not common. Therefore, as we saw in the case of hlaf ‘loaf’ [lәwf] and knee [nli], they often simplify. This happens in many varieties of English: speakers of African American, Navajo English, West African Pidgin English,
and many other varieties pronounce (and write) the final clusters of *pronounced* and *produced* as [ns] and [s] not [nst] and [st]. Another well-known simplification occurs in *asked*, which changes from [æskt] to [æst]. In certain varieties, a vowel breaks up the cluster (epentheses): *film* becomes [filәm] in Ireland, Scotland, and South Africa. This combination of a liquid and a nasal is especially difficult to pronounce, but similar changes occur with a liquid only or a nasal and another consonant, as in *milk* [m ilk]. The change in *nuclear*, which can be pronounced [nukliәr] or [nukular], is also cluster simplification.

The intonation of individual words as well as entire sentences can also vary across varieties. For example, Kenyan English stresses the last syllable in words such as *argument*, *to demonstrate*, *to execute*. British and American English differ in the stress on *advertisement* and *artisan*.

Sound changes often start as *assimilatory changes*, i.e. internal to the language system. However, sometimes, a particular pronunciation becomes a marker of identity and causes a change external to the language system. *Canadian Raising* is a good example of this. In Canadian English, the vowels in the first and second words of the following sets are different: *writer* and *rider*; *ice* and *eyes*; *a house* and *to house*. The vowels [aj] and [aw] raise before voiceless consonants (*writer*, *ice*, and *a house*) but not before voiced ones (*rider*, *eyes*, and *to house*). To hear some examples, go to http://www.yorku.ca/twainweb/troberts/raising.html). Even though this change starts out as internal, it is emphasized by speakers — including Americans — who want to sound Canadian (see Figure 1.4 in Chapter 1 for another Canadianism that can easily be adopted).

As discussed in this section, spelling and pronunciation show both diverging and converging tendencies in present-day English: having more speakers means more variety and divergence, but more global communication leads to similarities and convergence. You can hear a variety of Englishes by visiting the following sites: www.world-english.org/listening.htm and www.dreamtime.net.au/dreaming/storylist.htm

### 3. Grammar

Many of the grammatical features of the World Englishes are determined by where the original settlers came from. For instance, Newfoundland and Australia had a large influx of Irish English settlers and retain some of the features of Irish English. The grammars of the Englishes differ in *morphology* (case loss and regularization of pronouns, regularization of verbal agreement, and number of nouns) and *syntax* (word order, auxiliaries, the use of pronouns, negation, comparatives, complementation, prepositions, and tags) and many of the differences can be considered analytic tendencies.

Table 8.5 of the previous chapter provided the *pronoun* paradigm for formal/written English. Many Englishes have regularized this paradigm. Regularization involves using one form, e.g. for both nominative and accusative case. We saw examples of this trend in earlier chapters, and if you check Appendix A (line 15), *im* ‘he/him’ is used in both subject and object position. Regularizing may mean introducing new forms to fill in
gaps in the paradigm. Old and Middle English have distinct pronouns for second person singular and plural, as do most languages in the world. Speakers tend to expect that and some speakers of Scottish English retain a singular *thou* in addition to a plural *you*. Some varieties in the United States have plural *you (a)’ll* in addition to singular *you*, and Irish and American English varieties include *youse*. All of these can be seen as ‘repair’ strategies to keep the paradigm regular. We will discuss another such strategy in the section on creole grammar.

As mentioned previously, English reflexive pronouns are morphologically irregular: the first and second person use the possessive *my* and *your* and the third person masculine uses an accusative *him* and *them*. Reflexives are therefore regularized to *hisself* and *themselves* in many varieties, e.g. Spanish English (see Fought 2003).

A major shift in many Englishes is the elimination of many different verbal endings; this renders the present tense paradigm either *I go, you go, s/he go, we go, they go* or *I goes, you goes, s/he goes, we goes, they goes*, a phenomenon also present in Middle English. The sentence in (1) is an example of non-prescriptively correct agreement from Tanzanian English:

(1) Okay the day is not important but uh what the issue *we was* talking about we are therefore maybe uh the question to address ourselves is what *we materialise* or what we think of the address which was which was made by the Zanzibar Presidents. (ICE EA)

Even auxiliaries are regularized in some varieties of colloquial English, as in (2) and (3):

(2) *There bees no sinse in a shutdown anny way*  
‘There is no sense in a shut down anyway’ (Sarah Jewett in *The Gray Mills of Farley*).

(3) Ah she *don’t* care. (ICE, Singapore)

**Collective nouns** such as *government, police,* and *committee* can be either singular or plural. They are typically singular in American English, but plural in British English. This affects verb endings as well. The choice is arbitrary, but as with spelling, different varieties choose one of the two options: in (4) from Singapore English the noun is considered plural, where in other varieties it may be singular:

(4) Then *the police were* brought in and then they you know removed the rascal.  
(ICE, Singapore)

In some varieties, **non-count nouns** such as *research, toast,* and *knowledge* are treated as count and are pluralized or counted, as in (5), adapted from a non-native speaker utterance, and (6) from Indian English:

(5) Genetic engineering *researches* were explored.

(6) I’d like two *toasts*, please. (Trudgill & Hannah 2002: 131)
In East Asia and West Africa (Ghana), *furniture* is regularized to *furnitures* in the plural and *luggage* can also have a regular plural -s. Though less frequently, the opposite occurs as well: count nouns become non-count, as in (7) from Nigerian Pidgin English:

(7) take bribe, make mistake

**Syntactically**, the most common word order differences involve **questions**: subject-auxiliary inversion does not occur in *wh*-questions in South Asian and European (non-native) English, as in (8) from Indian English:

(8) Where she is working. (from ICE, India)

In most, but not all, varieties of English, inversion also takes place when the initial adverb is negative, as in (9a), but varieties differ, as (9b) shows:

(9) a. Never will I send for him. (BNC — fiction)
    b. Never I have enough money. (from an Indian financial site)

**Pronoun doubling**, as in (10), occurs in many Englishes: West African, and Romance and Slavic (non-native) English. The pronoun ‘copies’ the nominal subject in (10) and, less frequently, the relative pronoun in (11):

(10) My brother, *he* is…

(11) The people who I talked to *them*…

One reason for this doubling or copying may be that the pronoun is analyzed as verbal agreement. We will come back to this possibly cyclical change in the next chapter.

**Subject and object-drop** are frequent as well, e.g. in Singapore English. In many cases, there is transfer from the first language. In the Singapore portion of ICE, for instance, there are many instances of *cannot* beginning a sentences, as in (12). This variety drops the object too, as in (13):

(12) Cannot remember now. (ICE, Singapore)

(13) Can I renew? (Tay 1982: 65)

In Singapore, four languages are recognized as official (e.g. all can be used in parliament): Malay, English, Chinese, and Tamil. Influence from Chinese, a language that allows both subject and object to be absent, may be the reason for this pronoun-drop.

**Modals** are used slightly differently in each variety. In South African Indian English, *should* can be used instead of *used to*, as in (14), and in Nigerian English, *would* is used for *will*, as in (15):

(14) *That time she should drink normal tea.*
    ‘She used to drink tea with sugar then.’ (Mesthrie 1996: 92)

(15) Fog patches are expected which by mid-morning *would* give way to a partly cloudy and hazy afternoon. (from the Guardian of Nigeria, quoted in Banjo 1997: 89)
As mentioned in Chapter 8, many Englishes, both British and American, have double modals such as *might could*.

There are also differences in the use of ‘dummy’ *do*. The question ‘Have you seen him?’ can be answered differently, as shown in (16):

(16) American    British
    I may have    I may have done

The use of **auxiliaries to express aspect** varies widely. Irish English and certain kinds of Canadian use (17) and (18), respectively, to express the perfective; and in South African English, (19) is used for the progressive. These examples show influences from other languages: Irish in (17) and (18) and Afrikaans in (19):

(17) *I am after doing that*
    ‘I have done that.’

(18) *He’s after telling me about it*
    ‘He told me about it’ (Ottawa Valley)

(19) *We are busy doing that.*
    ‘We are doing that.’

In most varieties of English, the progressive is used only with activity verbs, not verbs expressing a state. Well-known examples are (20) and (21), where (b) is ungrammatical:

(20) a. I am eating right now.
    b. *I eat right now.

(21) a. She knows the answer
    b. *She is knowing the answer.

The grammaticality judgments are different in some varieties of English, as (22) shows:

(22) Shammi must be knowing her sister well. (ICE, India)

Progressive auxiliaries are frequently deleted, as in (23), from a Korean non-native speaker:

(23) *I gonna send you an e-mail*
    ‘I am going to send you an e-mail’.

The perfect auxiliary *have* is used with *just* and *already* in British, but not in American English. It is frequently left out in American sentences in general:

(24) American    British
    I just/already ate    I have just/already eaten

In some varieties (Malaysian English), *already* is the only marker for past or perfective, as in (25):
(25) My father already pass away. (Newbrook 1997: 240)

South Asian, West African, and European English all have constructions such as (26). For these speakers, the perfect auxiliary *have* is compatible with an absolute time reference, as it is in British (and American) English before 1800:

(26) I have done that yesterday.

**Comparatives** are interesting in that in many varieties they are expressed exclusively through analytic means. For example, in West Africa, (27) is common with the comparative *more* left out, and in creole varieties, constructions like (28), from Gullah, are common. We will discuss creoles in more detail later:

(27) *He like that than this*
    ‘He likes that better than this.’

(28) *I tal pas me*
    he tall past me
    ‘He is taller than I.’ (Turner 1949: 215)

**Clausal complementation**, indicated by brackets in (29) to (32), varies across varieties of English. The use of an infinitive rather than a present participle, as in (29), and the presence or absence of infinitival *to*, as in (30), vary:

(29) a. We are involved [to collect poems]. (Indian English, from Trudgill & Hannah 2002: 134)
    b. We are involved in [collecting poems].

(30) a. He allowed [her go]. (Nigerian Pidgin)
    b. He allowed [her to go].

So does the choice between a subjunctive in (31) and an infinitive in (32). As mentioned earlier, subjunctives are more frequent in American than in British English. However, in both varieties, the preferred choice is the analytic infinitive, i.e. (31):

(31) I would like [for you to do your homework].

(32) It is important [that he do that].

**Negatives** differ in many ways. We already discussed alternative negation (see (26) to (28) of Chapter 8). There are other interesting phenomena. In most Englishes, *anymore* can only be used in a negative or unreal situation, such as (33). There are, however, varieties where *anymore* is used with the meaning ‘nowadays’, as in (34), especially in Iowa, Ohio, and parts of Canada:

(33) That joke isn’t funny *anymore*.

(34) *He complains a lot anymore*
    ‘He complains a lot nowadays’. (Niagara Peninsula)
Negative sentences in general show many differences as (35) from Malaysian English, (36) from a very fluent English speaker whose native language is German, and (37) from Welsh English show:

(35) *All the letters didn’t arrive.*

‘None of the letters arrived’. (Newbrook 1997)

(36) *I don’t keep those papers as well.*

‘I don’t keep those papers either’.

(37) *I can’t do that, too.*

‘I can’t do that either’. (Trudgill & Hannah 2002: 33)

**Tag questions** are used in many ways, e.g. to seek confirmation. In most varieties of British and American English, speakers restate the sentence in a positive or negative way, as in (38) and (39):

(38) But he’s not the greatest of conductors, **is he?** (BNC Daily Telegraph Newspaper 1992)

(39) He’s the greatest, **isn’t he?**

Due to the loss of inflection, invariant tags, such as *isn’t it*, are on the increase. They occur in South Asian (40), the self-corrected Singaporean (41), West African, and Welsh:

(40) He is already scale three **isn’t it.** (ICE, India)

(41) this time you’re buying return ticket **isn’t it aren’t you.** (ICE, Singapore)

Many languages use shorter forms rather than tag questions: German and Dutch use *nicht(wahr)* and *niet(waar)* ‘not (true)’, respectively, or even just *hè* in Dutch. In Canada, there is a sentence-final ‘eh’ that functions as a tag. See the cartoon in Chapter 1 (Figure 1.4).

Recently there has been a sentence-initial *yeah-no*, as in (42), in Australian, South African, and New Zealand English; it may be catching on elsewhere as well. It is used after yes-no questions, where the choice between *yes* and *no* is not obvious:

(42) Speaker A: You don’t like them, do you?

Speaker B: **No, yeah I really dislike them.** (Baik & Shim 1993)

Tag questions express the mood of the speaker; there are numerous other ways — discourse markers such as *well, actually, you know, right* — to achieve this. Certain Englishes are interesting for their use of special discourse markers. One-word particles such as *lah* and *ya*, as in (43), are frequent in Singapore English. *Lah* indicates mood: persuasion, objection, or annoyance. It is also a marker of solidarity, used between friends or relatives. It is due to Chinese influence:
(43) Ya I suppose in a way it’s quite nice lah you know to bring them up in one shot. (ICE, Singapore)

This section discussed some morphological and syntactic features of certain varieties that differ from those of British and American English. Some of these differences have become identity markers: Canadian *eh* and Singaporean *lah*. Other changes are internal, happening without much conscious thought.

Table 9.4 offers a summary of the grammatical features discussed.

### Table 9.4. Some grammatical features of the Englishes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morphology:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Pronominal paradigms are regularized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Verbal paradigms are regularized, as in (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Nouns vary as to whether they are count or non-count, as in (8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syntax:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d. Word order differs in questions and initial negative adverbs, as in (17) to (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Pronoun-doubling and pronoun-drop occur, as in (10) and (12) respectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Auxiliaries express tense and aspect in different ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Comparatives have analytic forms, e.g. (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Non-finite complementation varies, e.g. (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Negatives, tag questions, and discourse markers vary, as in (35) to (37), (38) and (39), and (43)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 4. The Lexicons of the World Englishes

The vocabulary of the Englishes is very diverse. Each variety borrows from native sources, which contributes to divergence. Dictionaries are important not only because they help identify specific vocabulary items but also because once a variety is documented in a dictionary, it tends to become the standard and discourages further divergence. In this section, we discuss a number of reasons for the differences in World English lexicons: (a) contact with indigenous languages, (b) contact with (later) immigrant languages, (c) different lexical choices, and (d) differences going back to 17th century English, before English speakers started to spread around the world. We also briefly discuss code switching.

We will start by discussing the **contact with indigenous languages**. Many loans involve place names: a third of all Australian place names are taken from aboriginal languages and 27 US states have Native American names (even though we do not recognize the source anymore). For instance, *Arizona* most likely comes from a Tohono O’odham word meaning ‘small spring’; however, it is sometimes ‘explained’ as Spanish for ‘arid zone’. Table 9.5 lists some common words that came into a variety from languages that were there before the initial contact: aboriginal languages in Australia, Maori in New Zealand, Afrikaans in South Africa, and Hindi/Urdu in South Asia.
Table 9.5. New words due to contact with indigenous languages (with the less obvious meanings within ‘…’)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>straight borrowings: mallee, wallaby, wombat, boomerang, dingo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>adaptations: paddock ‘field’, outback, station, stock, bush, shanty ‘pub’, sheila ‘girl’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>anorak, coyote, squash, chipmunk, moose, raccoon, igloo, kayak, totem, pecan, hickory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>hoot ‘money’, kete (kit) ‘basket’, kitchen tidy ‘garbage can’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>police walla ‘policeman’, auto rickshaw wallah people ‘rickshaw driver’, dhobi ‘washerwoman’, chowkidar ‘guard’, panchayat ‘village council’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The words introduced into English due to colonialism in the 19th century were discussed in the previous chapter. Most of these, such as *pyjamas/pajamas*, are now mainstream English and are not listed in Table 9.5. For other borrowings, see www.wordorigins.org.

The lexicons of the different varieties also diverge due to later contact with immigrant languages: American English adopted words from African languages (due to contact with African slaves) and from European languages (due to contact with European immigrants). Some of these words are listed in Table 9.6.

Table 9.6. Words adopted into (American) English through later contact with other languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>cayman, dengue (fever), gumbo, jumbo, yam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian French</td>
<td>prairie, rapids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>chop-suey (Cantonese), chow mein, feng-shui, ginseng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>boss, Santa Claus, cookie, spook, Yankee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>semester, seminar, noodle, pretzel, schnitzel, hex, wunderkind, deli(catessen), -fest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>patio, taco, tamale, tortilla, tequila, ranch, corral, rodeo, canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yiddish</td>
<td>chutzpah, borscht belt, dreck, mensch, -nik, schlep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>boondocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>amok, batik, orangutan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Often varieties of English combine words from the two types of contact discussed so far. In Robeson County, North Carolina, there is a community of Lumbee Native American Indians, African Americans, and Anglo Americans. Some words typical for the different Lumbee speakers in North Carolina are listed in (44), from Dannenberg (2002: 31):

(44) Lumbee: Juvenile ‘slingshot’, ellick ‘coffee’
Lumbee and Appalachian: chawed ‘embarrassed’, judious ‘strange’, gaum ‘mess’
Lumbee and African American: cooter ‘turtle’
Lumbee, African American, and Anglo American: kelvinator ‘refrigerator’
Sometimes, different varieties adopt different words for no apparent reason. It could be that one variant is a successor to an Old English word and another is a loan. As can be seen from Table 9.7, words such as *sidewalk* (descended from Old English) and *pavement* (an early French loan) exist in different varieties. Note that since there is no subway in Australia, it is not clear what the word for it might be. See also http://english2american.com/dictionary/wholelot.html for differences between British and American. The sources for the words in Table 9.7 are dictionaries, native speakers, websites, and corpora.

**Table 9.7.** American, British, Canadian, and Australian vocabulary alternatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American</th>
<th>British</th>
<th>Canadian</th>
<th>Australian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sidewalk</td>
<td>pavement</td>
<td>sidewalk</td>
<td>footpath/pavement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elevator</td>
<td>lift</td>
<td>elevator</td>
<td>elevator/lift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subway</td>
<td>underground or tube</td>
<td>subway or metro</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>term/semester</td>
<td>term</td>
<td>term/semester</td>
<td>semester/term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sports shoes(sneakers)</td>
<td>trainers</td>
<td>running shoes</td>
<td>sneakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sweater</td>
<td>jersey/jumper</td>
<td>sweater</td>
<td>jumper/pullover</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some words vary regionally: in Canada, *holiday* and *vacation* are preferred in different parts of the country, even though the former is the typically Canadian one. A 1993 study surveyed speakers on both sides of the US-Canadian border and the results for *tap* (Canadian) and *faucet* (American) are shown in Figure 9.4 (Zeller 1993: 186).

![Figure 9.4. Lexical choices on two sides of the border](image)

As mentioned earlier for spelling, the American variant is more popular away from the center of political power, Ontario.

The last reason for the differences in lexicons is that some words go back to 17th century English: the fact that some words, such as the ones in (45), are lost in current British English but not in American, results in differences between the two varieties:

As noted before, the differences in vocabulary are endless. Over time, vocabulary variation could become a diverging factor: the adoption of multiple French and Latin words made English different from its Germanic sister languages.

Before concluding this section, we will briefly examine code-switching. When languages borrow words, those words are adapted to fit their phonological systems. Borrowing happens when new ideas, food, and concepts are encountered. Code switching occurs when both languages (or codes) are used and neither one is adapted into the system of the other. It arises in bilingual (or multilingual) communities: (46) is an example of switching between English and Spanish, (47) between Korean and English, and (48) between Chinese and English:

(46) then she would tell us about this story about que venia una araña muy bonita de muchos colores (that came a spider very beautiful of many colors) (from Anderson-Mejías 2004)

(47) Anja, this is a new-han movie-i-ya
    No, this is a new-Adjective ending movie-is-DECL
    ‘No, this is a new movie!’ (from Kim 2005: 37)

(48) ni zai nagging wo
    ‘you are nagging me’. (from Chen 1999: 32)

The literature on code switching is extensive. Code switching illuminates many issues in language change — what happens to the language in a bilingual context. Many linguists (myself included) argue that the grammar of the two languages stays intact and the lexicons of the two languages mix, whenever this is grammatically possible. That would mean that code switches as in (46) to (48) are not separate varieties of English, but rather English being used next to another language.

5. English-influenced Pidgins and Creoles

Certain pidgin and creole languages contain English words and are therefore considered as varieties of English. Even though their lexicon is predominantly English, however, their grammars are not necessarily English-based. We will therefore treat pidgins and creoles differently from other varieties of English. In this section, we will define pidgins and creoles, provide a map of where they occur, and examine some of their linguistic features.

In simple terms, a pidgin is a language learned by adults in cases of intense language contact between very different languages and is typically used in limited domains e.g. trade. A creole is acquired by children growing up and is used in all domains. Pidgins
typically become the default language, or lingua franca, for a particular region and facilitate trade and communication. The traditional account is that both arise under slavery and that pidgins become creoles when acquired by children. However, Mufwene (2001) argues that pidgins remain stable, typically in non-slavery contexts, but that creoles arise on slave plantations without going through a pidgin stage. Both pidgins and creoles are sometimes defined in terms of their lexifier language, the language that contributes much of the vocabulary: Tok Pisin, for instance, is defined in terms of English as English provides most of its vocabulary.

In this section, we focus on pidgins and creoles with English words. Romaine (1990: 315–322) lists a total of 80 pidgins and creoles, 33 of which are English based. Figure 9.5 provides a map of 31 pidgins and creoles.

Figure 9.5. Map of English-based creoles and pidgins (Todd 1984: 39)

African American English is sometimes considered a creole (Baugh 1983), sometimes a dialect of English. The reason for these views is that varieties such as Gullah (or Sea Island Creole) are clearly creoles but that the varieties spoken by the majority of African Americans in the US are so similar to most other varieties of American English, that they can no longer be considered creoles. Creoles are often seen as moving along a continuum: from basilect (closest to the creole), to mesolect (in the middle between creole and American English), to acrolect (closer to American English) and back again. This terminology is problematic, however, since it implies a value judgment.

Some of the linguistic features of a pidgin are: limited vocabulary (due to its limited status as a trade language), ‘simple’ phonology and morphology, and the absence of grammatical words (auxiliaries and determiners). A sentence from 19th century Chinese Pidgin English is provided in (49). This was used in trade contact, e.g. along the Chinese coast and in Canton:
(49) Boy! makee pay my that two piecee book
     boy  make  give me that two piece  book
     ‘Give me those two books, boy.’ (Baker & Mühlhäusler 1990: 99)

In (49), piecee helps express that the object is plural. In the same way that English speakers say two pieces of wood and two kinds of rice (and not two woods or two rices), Chinese uses a classifier with what are count nouns such as book in English. In (49), give is analyzed as two verbs make and pay and this is a very common construction in Chinese. Chinese Pidgin English is therefore clearly relexified Chinese. Examples of other pidgins are Chinook Jargon, based on the Native American language Chinook spoken along the coast of the state of Washington, and Delaware Jargon, based on the Native American language Lenape spoken in the drainage area of the Delaware River (in the Eastern US).

A creole is acquired by children as a native language. They are languages without (much) inflection. Children learning them acquire them as analytic languages and use certain words as grammatical markers to indicate possession (e.g. fu in (50) from ‘for’) or progressive aspect (Jamaican de which derives from there). A creole has features from both the lexifier language, sometimes called superstratum, and the African language that is its basis, sometimes called substratum. Again, this terminology is not appropriate since it seems to imply one is ‘higher’ than the other, but it is provided here since it is encountered in the literature. The sentence in (50) is from Ndjuka, an English-based creole from Suriname. In (50), the word order is SVO and a generalization of the preposition fu ‘for’ occurs to cover possessive ‘of’ as well:

(50) Mi be go a onti anga wan dogu fu mi
     I had gone PROG hunt with a dog of mine
     ‘I had gone hunting with a dog of mine.’ (Holm 1988: 8)

As is obvious from (50), creoles are analytic languages with pronouns not displaying case distinctions: mi in (50) is both subject and (prepositional) object. A typical set of creole pronouns are provided in Table 9.8.

Table 9.8. Pronouns in Early Jamaican Creole (Bailey 1966)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S(ingular)</th>
<th>P(plural)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>mi</td>
<td>wi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>yu</td>
<td>unu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>im</td>
<td>dem</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All forms except unu ‘you-P’ are recognizable for English speakers. The second person plural is an innovation since, as mentioned earlier, there is a gap in the paradigm of Modern English pronouns.

**Tense, mood, and aspect** markers are typical for (basilectal) creoles. In (50), be, go, and a are such markers. They derive from verbs and auxiliaries. Nigerian Pidgin has progressive de, perfective don, and future tense go, as in (51) to (53). These are derived from there, do, and go, respectively:
Verbs of activity, such as kom ‘come’ in (51), mark the present progressive through special means, such as the auxiliary de, but not the past tense, as (54) shows for chop ‘eat’. Verbs of state, such as layk ‘like’, on the other hand, mark the past through bin, as in (55), but not the present, as (56) shows:

(51)  i de kom  
‘He is coming.’

(52)  i don kom  
‘He has arrived.’

(53)  i go kom  
‘He’ll come.’

(54)  a chop nyam  
‘I ate yams.’

(55)  I bin layk nyams  
‘I liked yams.’

(56)  a layk nyam  
‘I like yams.’ (Faraclas 1996: 196–7)

There are many universal tendencies in the sound structure of creoles: the inventory is often reduced from that of the lexifier language and consonant clusters are eliminated. Similar processes occur in other varieties as well, and a few of the typical features are listed in Table 9.9.

Table 9.9. Creole features

| Metathesis: | Bahamian Creole English crispy (English crispy) |
| Loss of clusters: | Sranan Creole English tan (English stand) |
| Epenthesis: | Sranan Creole English dogu in (40) (English dog) |

In the consonant and vowel inventory, there are also many substratum influences: nasalized stops ([mb] and [nd]), double stops ([kp] and [gb]), nasal vowels, and many other fairly complex features.

The meaning of words in creoles often widens: tea is used to refer to any hot drink in many creoles (Holm 1988: 101), and finger is often extended to ‘toe’ (Nigerian Pidgin). Gras in Tok Pisin is used for ‘grass’ and gras nogut for ‘weed’; gras is also used in maus-gras ‘moustache’ and gras bilong hed ‘hair’. A word can also be used euphemistically: hip in the Bahamas and wes (from waist) in Krio are used for ‘buttocks’ (Holm 1988: 102). There is some widening or generalization as when machine is used for ‘motorcycle’ in Nigerian Pidgin and meaning shift when make mouth is used to mean ‘boast’ (Babawilly’s dictionary).

As mentioned, pidgins and creoles are often classified in terms of their lexifier language, the language that supplied much of their lexicons; this, however, does not rule out
grammatical influence by the lexifier. The distinction between pidgins and creoles is not always clear-cut, as Holm reminds us: some West African Pidgins are rudimentary trade languages and others have full registers. Names can also be deceptive: Nigerian Pidgin is spoken natively (Faracas 1996) and should be called a creole. However, so many people speak the language non-natively that the term Nigerian Pidgin is used. The same is true of Tok Pisin, a language of Papua New Guinea, which 50,000 people speak as a first language and 4 million as a second (Ethnologue figures Gordon 2005: 628).

As to resources, there is a corpus of Jamaican Creole texts on a site by Peter Patrick (http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~patrickp/JCtexts.html) and of Written British Creole (www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/staff/mark/cwc/cwbcman.htm). There is also a very active pidgin and creole society that meets once a year (http://www.mona.uwi.edu/dllp/spcl/home.html), book series (e.g. Creole Language Library) and a Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages.

6. Consequences of the Spread of English

English has spread because of colonialism, migration, and — most recently — globalization. Speakers of many languages feel they need to speak English to participate in business, government, music, the arts, and academia. There are a number of worries connected with this spread. Two worries are the marginalization of people who do not speak English or do not speak it natively, and the loss of linguistic diversity.

As for the marginalization of people who do not speak English, an English-speaking elite is being created in countries such as Nigeria and Kenya where less than 10% of the population speaks English and India where less than 5% of the population does (though the latter may be going up with the growth of the outsourcing industry). Phillipson (2003: 6) quotes the first prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, as writing in 1956:

I am anxious to prevent a new caste system being perpetuated in India — an English knowing caste separated from the mass of our public.

Even when non-native speakers have a good command of English, they can be at a disadvantage. Phillipson (2003: 166 ff) gives the example of native speaking journalists using difficult English with foreign politicians they want to criticize for certain policies. If English is used for global communication, we need to focus on fluent non-native competency and value that. Phillipson proposes the term English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) to help this process. This term is supposed to promote a varied, rather than a monolithic, view of English and to emphasize the fact that this variety is more sensitive to cross-cultural factors.

The implications of the spread of English for language diversity are far-reaching (see www.sil.org/sociolx/ndg-lg-home.html). The more English spreads the more other languages are in danger. The same concern holds for the spread of Spanish, Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian, and Arabic. The Chinese language policies, for example, are very restrictive in only allowing Mandarin Chinese and promoting it over other varieties, such
as Shanghainese (which was used in radio and TV, e.g. for the cartoon *Tom and Jerry*, but since December 2004 was forced to stop). Even languages with fewer speakers such as Scandinavian (with relation to Sami) and Italian (with relation to the many dialects in Italian: Bolognese, Venetian, Napolitan, etc.).

Since the early 1990s, there has been a lot of information on endangered languages. Krauss (1992) estimates that 90% of the languages alive in the 1990s will disappear in the 21st century. Krauss also estimates that of the 187 languages in the USA and Canada, 149 are no longer acquired by children. Other countries have more languages and may lose more of them: Indonesia has 670, Papua New Guinea 850, Nigeria 410, Cameroon 250, and Mexico 240. UNESCO's website estimates that 90% of the world's languages are not represented on the internet. This seems to be changing a little. Google and Microsoft have developed software and websites for many languages. One can search Google using 116 different interface languages, such as Swahili, Tatar, Basque, Quechua, Amharic, and Xhosa, and there seem to be many writing systems represented on the web. While in 1998 85% of web pages were in English, this had dropped to 68% in 2000 (Graddol 2006: 44). Lesser used languages are starting to have a presence on the internet, but many languages are oral ones.

If a language is not acquired by children, it is probably on the road to extinction. Some estimate that fewer than 5% of Navajo children acquire Navajo, a language spoken in Arizona, natively. The children learn some Navajo in the school system, but this is not enough. The prevailing (American) culture gives the message that speaking English will provide a job (most people on the reservation live below the poverty-level and are without basic plumbing and electricity since there are few decent jobs). Even though loss is inevitable, some loss can be avoided by promoting the use of the language, as has been done somewhat successfully in the case of many Native American languages (see http://www.u.arizona.edu/~aildi), for languages such as Welsh (see news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/2755217.stm), Irish, and Sami, and by economic initiatives.

There are also Western European languages with millions of speakers that are somewhat in danger. For instance, in Norway, English is quickly becoming the language of business and higher education. This may lead to diglossia or domain loss, where Norwegian might be used in the home and with friends but not on the job. A next stage may be that parents start to send their children to schools using English even though they continue to use Norwegian at home. With the globalization of universities, many university classes in non-English speaking countries are conducted in English. In 1999, 29 European countries signed the Bologna Declaration (http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna.pdf) pledging closer ties and standardizing higher education across Europe. Even though the use of English is not mandatory, it is certainly very practical. English is very helpful as lingua franca in Europe but here too there is a growing awareness of choices there exist (e.g. the 1998 program for the promotion of Swedish). One possible scenario for the next 30 years or so is stable diglossia: English used in certain domains and the local languages in others.
In this section we have discussed a few of the social consequences of English as a world language. External processes such as globalization inevitably lead to less diversity, be it in food, clothing, or language. Awareness of the enormity of the problem may lead to a slowing of the loss.

7. Conclusion

This chapter examined some internal trends that we identified earlier and that continue in the World Englishes: a regularization of paradigms and an increase in analytic features. The vocabulary diversifies due to external factors as does spelling. The sound structure and lexicons of the Englishes perhaps exhibit the highest level of divergence, but the relatively uniform spelling is a converging factor. We also discussed the effects of the spread of English and some issues related to endangered languages. The texts in the Appendices exemplify a few of the Englishes.
Keywords

World Englishes; convergent; divergent; differences in sound/spelling, grammar, and vocabulary; pidgins; creoles; external and internal reasons; and endangered languages.

Exercises

1. Read the poem in Appendix A aloud. If you need more practice analyzing the language, identify its phonological and grammatical features.

2. If consonant cluster simplification occurs in a variety, how might the following be pronounced? You could apply deletion or epenthesis:

   stranger: ........
   straight: ........
   school: ........
   snake: ........
   sleep: ........

3. In Kenya English, medicine means ‘any chemicals’. What has happened?

4. The poem by R. Parthasarathy, a part of which is provided below, was first published in 1975 and is a caricature of Indian English (Mehrota 1998). Identify the characteristics of this variety. Compare this to the Letter in Appendix B also written using another variety of South Asian English.

   What is Your Good Name, Please?
   What is your good name, please?
   I am remembering we used to be neighbours
   in Hindu Colony ten fifteen years before
   Never mind. What you do now? 4
   You are in service, isn’t it?
   I am Matric fail. Self-employed.
   Only last year I celebrated my marriage.
   It was inter-caste. Now I am not able 8
   to make the two ends meet.

5. What linguistic feature(s) in the text in Appendix C do you find most striking?

6. Identify phonological, syntactic, and other differences between the Belize Creole English and its translation:
ay now di kayna rowp bika we mi de luk fu rowp wan taym,
I know the kind rope because we ANT PROG look for rope one time
‘I know the kind of rope because we were looking for rope one time’.

rayt ... an a fayn di bes rowp, a tingk ...
right ... and I found the best rope, I think

bika wi me wahn song rope layk dat fu tay awt di ne de
because we ANT want some rope like that to tie the net there
‘because we wanted some rope like that to tie the net with’ (Holm 1989: 479 citing Escure 1983)

7. Are there any words you recognize in the Tok Pisin text in Appendix D? Which ones?
8. Find a radio station, or other site, that lets you listen to a variety of English spoken outside of Great Britain and the US. List as many of the special characteristics as you can.
9. Are there situations where you code switch (either between varieties of English or between different languages)? If yes, when does this occur?
10. Try to find out what is meant by Singlish, Hinglish, Taglish, Yinglish, Chinglish, and Spanglish.

Appendix A

Caribbean English

Jean Binta Breeze’s “get flat” is taken from Riddym Ravings and Other Poems, 1988. She was born in Jamaica in 1957 but now lives in London, UK.

get flat
Wen storm come
yuh bawl
‘get flat’
an watch mountain
rub a dub
5
troo de sea
from Brixton
to Elleston Flats
yuh can see de wukkin riddim
ben de people dem back
10
‘haad wuk kean kill yuh, son’
but Manson
kar im boson
gawn a boneyard
im sey a wouldn see im 15
wen a reach back home
an Aunt May gi mi a letta
to de relative a Englan, sey
time harder
dan weh did mek yuh lef
20
time hard
an yuh people dem a fret
de relative reply
a nuh forget we forget
but yah so nuh no betta
25
a me three pickney nah wuk
two side a de ocean
de laughline sink
like de mercury
prior to de storm
30

two side a de ocean
de riddim jus a bawl
‘get flat, everybady get flat’

an ah see a whole sea
35
a ben back

Appendix B

South Asian English

This letter appeared in Dawn, an English-language newspaper published in Karachi, Pakistan. The letter is from the online version.

‘World Bank to the rescue’

WHILE commenting on the World Bank’s Rs10 billion education loan for Sindh, it has been pertinently pointed out in your editorial (Nov 10): “The Sindh education department will have to ensure that the money earmarked for school buildings is actually spent for that purpose. There is also need to ensure that after they have been completed, the schools are actually used as educational institutions and not as autaqs by the feudals of that areas.”
Our history regarding utilization of international loans is not transparent. Huge amounts were collected in the name of building the Quaid’s mausoleum as a surcharge on cinema tickets, excise payments and other revenues. Where that money had gone has never been fully disclosed. Similarly, Iqra surcharge to be collected on imports / exports but there is no records of its utilization for educational purposes.

Ministers heading the education department are irrelevant. They may come and go or be replaced. The functionaries are deep-rooted. Therefore, the minister is a tool in their hands. The performance of the education sector is below the mark.

The Pakistan National High School was a prestigious educational institution prior to independence. It was a magnificent building. It was demolished under the auspices of the education department at the behest of some persons who wanted to turn into a cloth market.

Another glaring example is that of the Government High School, Somerset Street, Saddar, Karachi. That piece of land consisted of the R.P. Rabadi Primary School established by a Parsi philanthropist and the Government High School which was the Yusuf Abdullah High School and was subsequently converted into the Government High School in 1953. Both the institutes were demolished and on the same plot a hotel was built.

These are only two examples exposing the performance of our education department. There are many others.

Therefore, we should welcome it if the World Bank WB nominates its own consultant to monitor the disbursement of the Rs10 billion education loan given to Sindh for its transparent utilization.

Karachi
(20 November 2005)

Appendix C

West African English

*The Tide* is a state-owned paper, based in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. In their own words: “The Tide … has become the best state owned newspaper in Nigeria and had become a dominant voice in the Niger Delta, South East Zone especially on environmental matters. Its extensive interest in the oil and gas coverage has also made it a must-read for the business community. With the increasing openness of government in Rivers State and Nigeria as a whole, The Tide stands to rise to the point the international community would be glad to do business with.” (spelling left as was, taken from http://www.nigeriamasterweb.com/paperfrmes.html)
20 November 2005 (online version), Egwu committed to rural development — commissioner
The former National Deputy President of Nigeria Union of journalists (NUJ), Hon. Abia Onyike
who is currently the Commissioner for Information, Ebonyi State, in this interview with Regis
Anukwuoji x-rays the politics of the State and the challenge of his new position.

You were a unionist and today a commissioner. Don’t you think there could be conflicting
interests in the discharge of your new assignment?

There wouldn’t be any conflict whatsoever, because now I am the chief spokesman of
Ebonyi State government. The platform of NUJ will rather enable me to prosecute the current
mission, oil my contacts and networking within the mass media in Nigeria, and I would rather
think that those contacts that I made would help me to enhance my productivity, and it will
also help me to reposition the image of the State and even ensure that the State does better
than it had done in terms of media visibility and positive image making.

The ministry is the back- bone of the various popular polices of Governor Same Egwu’s
administration. When you talk about education and agriculture for example, these are areas
that must be assisted by the media in order to carry the people along to effectively participate
in the various programmes that have been initiated and carried out by the creative Governor
of Ebonyi state. Certainly, I have already spoken to a number of stakeholders in these sectors
and told them of the preparedness of the ministry to provide the opportunity to using their
media organs of back up our campaigns like ensuring that free and compulsory education
policy of the State government is carried to the grassroots. So, the media in the State have
been used and will continue to be used to mount the campaign in various creative ways…

What’s your plan of action for the ministry?

We are going to reposition the Ebonyi State ministry of information, to enable it cope with
the challenges of publicising maximally the activities, programmes and polices of the State
government and we are going to be creative. We are going to be very methodical and ensure
that there is grassroot-oriented media campaign that will mobilize the citizenry, sensitise them
adequately to be aware of what government is doing and what the government has done
and intends to do in the nearest future. We are also going to maximally sustain the positive
relationship between the State government and national media organizations, the print and
electronic. We are going to ensure that the progressive, welfarist, and pragmatic polices of the
Dr Sam Egwu’s administration in Ebonyi state are well communicated to Nigerians as a whole.
We are going to ensure that all the Parastatals whose infrastructures are not adequate to cope
with the arrangements, we are going to beef up their facilities.

Appendix D

Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Tok Pisin, a creole

In Papua New Guinea, Tok Pisin is the native language of some people in mixed urban areas.
It is also the main means of communication between speakers of different languages and the

Atikel 1
Yumi olgeta mama karim umi long stap fri na wankain long wei yumi lukim i gutpela na strepela tru. Uumi olgeta igat ting ting bilong wanem samting I rait na rong na mipela olgeta I mas mekim gutpela pasin long ol narapela long tingting bilong brata susa.

Atikel 2
Yumi manmeri igat olgeta raits na fridom i stap long dispela toksave, na noken skelim ol kainkain ol nammeri long ol samting olsem, kala bilong skin, em man o meri, tokples, lotu, politik, o oI ol narapela tingting, kantri o wanem hap yu kam long en, ol samting yu i gat, taim ol manmeri bon, o oI ol narapela samting. Moa yet, noken mekim narapela samting long ol manmeri long as bilong wok politiks, wok jastis, o wok namel long ol kantri ilong dispela giraun o hap ol manmeri i kam long en, sapos em i free o narapela kantri i lukautim, i nogat gavman bilong ol yet o i aninit yet long pawa bilong king na kwin.

Atikel 3
Yumi olgeta igat rait long stap laip, fri na sef.

Atikel 4
Nogat manmeri mas stap na wok olsem slev. Yumi olgeta i mas stopim wok slev na wok bilong salim ol manmeri olsem slev.

Atikel 5
Nogat wanpela manmeri igat rait long givim pen nating long narapela na bagarapim nem, kros, pasin nogut o nogut wei bilong panisim manmeri.

Article 1
All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2
Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3
Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4
No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5
No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
Chapter 10

Conclusion

In this chapter, we will review the major changes in English since 450 CE. Throughout the book we talked about English changing. It is of course the speakers who change the language, and we will discuss now how this happens between different generations.

The role of language in shaping a culture is often asserted in arguments about the spread of English; this is referred to as *linguistic relativity* or the *Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis*. We will argue that the grammar of a language does not influence the thinking of its speakers, but that the vocabulary might be a reflection of the culture. We conclude by reviewing some of the resources we have used in this book.

1. From Old English to the Present

As has been mentioned, English begins around 450 CE, when speakers of Germanic languages settle in Britain. This date is quite arbitrary because the language did not change right away. Over time, however, the speakers of Old English acquired a more analytic language. This might have been due to the contact with speakers of Scandinavian and other languages or due to language-internal factors.

By 1150, the date we adopted as the start of Middle English, many case endings have disappeared and the use of grammatical words is on the increase. This development continues between 1150 and 1500, and the English at the end of the Middle English period resembles present-day English in many respects. During the Middle English period, French and Latin words come into the language and cause changes in the sound system (expanded use of [v] and [dʒ]) and the morphology (many derivational affixes are introduced).

The period between 1500 and 1700 is a transition period with some changes in grammar and sounds (e.g. the completion of the Great Vowel Shift). The major change is perhaps the adoption of tens of thousands of Latin, Greek, and newly-invented words. This leads to the appearance of dictionaries of hard words and gives rise to concerns about the purity of the language. The result is a set of prescriptive rules for spelling, pronunciation, and grammar that are still adhered to today. Had the language been left alone, we might not have pronominal case or the third person verbal -s, forms that are no longer present in many varieties of English.
The period after 1700 is perhaps best characterized by the spread of English around the world: the emerging varieties of English lead to divergence while globalization encourages convergence. Politically, we could argue that Canadian, Kenyan, and Singaporean English are separate languages, if, as Weinreich said, a language is a dialect with an army. Linguistically, most people would argue that these varieties are all English despite differences in the phonology, grammar, and lexicon. All Englishes display the analytic character that English has been moving towards: an abundance of grammatical words (auxiliaries and prepositions) and reliance on word order. Much of the vocabulary of these varieties is similar as well.

2. Theories of Language Change

In this book, we have focused on how English changes, occasionally speculating about the reasons for change. Historical linguists not only describe language change (e.g. how Old English becomes Modern English) but are also interested in why language changes. The reasons for language change can be external and internal — chance or necessity. Borrowing words (or making up new ones) is one change this book has discussed. It is driven by the need to describe innovations or to be creative or to outdo the neighbors, i.e. it happens for external reasons. It is a matter of chance which word is selected. We have also examined changes that happen (mainly) for internal reasons, such as some vowel shifts and the change from a synthetic to an analytic language. The reasons for these changes are less obvious: they are driven by the needs of children acquiring a language. Sometimes, the two factors are hard to keep separate.

As mentioned, speakers change the language. In this section, we will discuss a model, formulated by Andersen (1973) and developed by Lightfoot (1979), accounting for language change in terms of language acquisition. Since the late 1950s, Noam Chomsky has articulated theories of language acquisition that rely on Universal Grammar (UG), an innate language faculty that when “stimulated by appropriate and continuing experience, … creates a grammar that creates sentences with formal and semantic properties” (Chomsky 1975: 36). Our innate language faculty, or Universal Grammar, enables us to create a set of rules, or grammar, by being exposed to (generally rather chaotic) language.

Chomsky (1986) sees Universal Grammar as the solution to what he calls Plato’s Problem: how do children acquire their language(s) so fast given that the input is so poor. The set of rules we acquire enables us to produce sentences we have never heard before. These sentences can also be infinitely long (if we had the time and energy). Language acquisition, in this framework, is not imitation but interplay between Universal Grammar and the exposure to a particular language. We know that acquisition is not just imitation since children create e.g. goed as the past tense of go, and we know that input is essential from the fact that children who were neglected by their parents never acquired a regular language (see Curtiss 1977 on Genie). Some linguists disagree with this position and put more emphasis on the actual input than on Universal Grammar.
Chapter 10. Conclusion

This need for exposure to a particular language explains why, even though we all start out with the same Universal Grammar, we acquire slightly different grammars. It also explains why we acquire grammars slightly different from those of our parents. Figure 10.1 represents Andersen’s (1973) model.

In this model, a child starting to construct a grammar (Grₙ) on the basis of the language s/he hears (Lgₙ) will produce sentences that might be slightly different from those in the input (Lgₙ). The language the child produces (Lgₙ₊₁) undergoes changes during her/his lifetime: words get added and constructions are adopted for external reasons (e.g. fashion). This modified output serves as the input for a new generation building its grammar (Grₙ₊₁) from scratch. This Grₙ₊₁ will produce yet another output, Lgₙ₊₂. This output is then of course modified when the child goes to school and learns certain (prescriptive) rules that are not really part of the child’s grammar, e.g. to use whom.

Let’s think about what Universal Grammar might contain. It might, for instance, include nouns and verbs as building blocks, or in more abstract terms referents and predicates. It might include Economy Principles (van Gelderen 2004) that require us to choose the easiest analysis and are based on general cognitive principles. It probably includes choices (Baker 2001) or parameters to be set: for example, verbs either follow objects, as in most Old English sentences, or precede them, as in Modern English. Thus, a child acquiring Middle English might have reset the parameter from verb-after-the-object to verb-before-the-object. See Lightfoot (1999) for more on this.

Grammaticalization has been mentioned frequently in this book. It involves a lexical item losing its semantic and phonological features and increasing its grammatical function. For instance, in Old English, willan was a main verb meaning ‘to want’, but it lost some of its lexical meaning and became (was reanalyzed by the language learner as) a modal auxiliary. Once an auxiliary, it also weakened phonologically, becoming ‘ll. Other cases of grammaticalization discussed in this book (even though not always emphasized as grammaticalization) are listed in Table 10.1. Heine & Kuteva (2002) provide numerous other examples from the world’s languages.

![Figure 10.1. Universal Grammar and the Acquisition of Grammars](image_url)

**Table 10.1.** Some instances of Grammaticalization

| Negative phrase na wiht ‘no creature’ > not/n’t (Chapter 4 and 6) |
| Preposition for and till > Complementizer (Chapter 6) |
| Verbs have, be, will, do > Auxiliaries (Chapter 6 and 7) |
| Preposition to > future/unreal marker (Chapter 6) |
| Preposition like > Complementizer and Discourse marker (Chapter 8) |
There have been many attempts to explain grammaticalization, some using Universal Grammar and some general cognitive principles. See e.g. Hopper & Traugott (2003) and van Gelderen (2004).

In conclusion, there are two kinds of linguistic change. One kind has nothing to do with Universal Grammar, but is motivated by a need to be creative and expressive, e.g. through borrowings. The other kind is due to reanalysis by the language learner, guided by Universal Grammar. Lightfoot (1979: 405) distinguishes these as “provoked by extra-grammatical factors” and “changes necessitated by various principles of grammar”, hence, chance and necessity.

3. The Linguistic Cycle: Synthetic to Analytic to Synthetic Again?

We saw English change from a language with many endings to one with fewer endings, from synthetic to analytic. We currently find more evidence of this trend with cases being lost and endings regularized in varieties of English. However, there is some evidence that (at least in the verbal system) English speakers are incorporating synthetic forms into their grammars.

The change from synthetic to analytic occurs mainly between Old and Middle English. Throughout Middle English, there is a loss of endings and an increase in the use of grammatical words such as the auxiliary have and prepositions. However, starting as early as the Late Middle English period (e.g. in the 15th century Paston Letters), there are also signs that auxiliaries contract and become more synthetic. Sentences (1) to (3) illustrate this trend. In (1), the auxiliary have has become an affix, in (2) the negative not has become an affix, and in the colloquial, non-formal (3), the first person pronoun I, right next to the auxiliary, serves as an agreement marker on the verb (me is the subject pronoun):

(1) I shoulda known that. (starts in 1450).
(2) Don’t you be jealous now. (HC from1680)
(3) Me, I was flying economy, but the plane, … was guzzling gas. (BNC from 1985)

Sentences such as (4) sound archaic (or formal) because the agreement marker I is not close enough to the verb, and this construction cannot be found in the corpora (or on google) with the pronoun separated from the verb by possibly:

(4) I possibly won’t do that.

This trend, known as the linguistic cycle, is not unexpected: languages go from synthetic to analytic and back to synthetic again. In the case of English, the change towards synthetic seems to involve only the verbal system. Case endings on nominals are not reappearing, but number such as the plural in you all may be.
4. Some Theories about Language

In this section, we examine a few language theories relevant to language change. First of all, we will clarify some misconceptions about what the terms innateness and Universal Grammar mean; we will also discuss the fact that the influence of language/grammar on thinking/culture is often overemphasized.

The model in Figure 10.1 assumes that no language specific feature, such as particular vowels or certain words, is innate. Children have to be exposed to language to build up a grammar and Universal Grammar helps in this process. Children can therefore learn any language they are exposed to, regardless of the language of their parents. There is still sometimes a mistaken perception, see Figure 10.2, that language is in children's DNA and that they are better at learning the languages of their biological parents.

![Image](image.png)

Figure 10.2. Linguistic innateness and DNA

Genetic theories have affected theories of language change. In the 1930s, for instance, a theory based on Mendelian genetics hypothesized that at some point there was a language of laughing people with the front vowel [i] and a language of non-laughing people with the back vowel [u]. These people intermarried and the result is a system with three vowels, [i, a, u]. This theory is of course not taken seriously nowadays, but was worked out in great detail by van Ginneken (1932: 26ff).

Other theories had to do with the climate of a region or the ethnic character of a group: for example, one theory claimed that consonants shift in mountainous regions (Collitz 1918) or due to the ‘desire for liberty’ on the part of the people (Grimm 1853). We have to evaluate these claims very carefully. It may be that a new nation, in order to assert its independence, adopts spellings or pronunciations identified as especially significant. Much change, however, is due to internal factors, not a particular climate or geographic configuration. Recently, researchers (Trudgill 2005) have looked at very isolated communities and have argued that they might use more pronouns and demonstratives rather than full nouns because every speaker knows what the other is talking about. It would be interesting to see more work on this.

A very influential theory is the one that the language we speak influences our thinking. It has been named the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis or the Linguistic Relativity Principle, after two linguists, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, who wrote about Native
American languages in the early 20th century. Their work was extremely influential. However, it led to the claim that Hopi is a language without tense (but see below) and that, consequently, its speakers do not have much sense for time. In the same vein, it could be argued that Turkish and Chinese, languages without gender, would lead to less gendered societies than the US, for instance. This seems not to be true.

Much in the spirit of this work, Otto Jespersen, a Danish linguist from the early 20th century, says this about Hawaiian on the basis of its sound system: “the total impression is childlike and effeminate”; therefore, we should:

not expect much vigour or energy in a people speaking such a language; it seems adapted only to inhabitants of sunny regions where the soil requires hardly any labour… In a lesser degree we find the same phonetic structure in such languages as Italian and Spanish; but how different are our Northern tongues (1938: 3).

Generalizations such as this one are dangerous; they are often used to put down the people who speak a particular language and can have social and political consequences.

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis has been criticized on a variety of empirical grounds. First, even though Whorf argued that Hopi has no grammatical tense marking, Malotki (1983) shows that Hopi has many ways to express time; thus, the lack of grammatical tense should not influence the thinking of Hopi speakers. Secondly, Navajo has certain verbs that have a different stem depending on whether their object is long, or single solid and round, or fabric-like, or some other shape. If the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis were correct, Navajo children (and adults) should do better at games using objects of different shapes since they would be attuned to that from their language. There is no evidence to support that claim (see Casagrande 1960).

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis can also be criticized on other grounds. The syntax of a language is an arbitrary device. Languages can have OV in one clause and VO in another (e.g. Old English and many Germanic languages). Embracing a theory similar to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis can lead to claims that because English is a simpler language than German, for example, it is more suitable for being a world language (e.g. Baugh & Cable 2002: 10–1 speak of assets and liabilities of English). Nothing in English, however, is special linguistically, even though this has often been claimed. Jacob Grimm, for instance, says: “Of all modern languages, not one has acquired such great strength and vigour as the English” (Bailey 1991: 109). According to Grimm, English did this by “casting off almost all inflections” and freeing itself of ancient phonetic laws.

As we have seen, English became widespread for external reasons, migrations, colonialism, and (later) globalization, not because of its grammar. One area in which languages are different is vocabulary: it may be the case that having a variety of words for a particular concept enables more subtle distinctions, though the case of the Inuit people who were supposed to have many words for snow has proved to be a myth. However, there is no evidence that the grammatical features of a language affect the thinking of its speakers.
Chomsky (1986), when discussing Plato’s problem (how we acquire language so fast on the basis of so little input), also discusses the opposite, namely Orwell’s Problem (how we know so little given that we have so much evidence). A lot of Chomsky’s political writing have shown that, in a democracy, the media and government manufacture consent and deceive us in that process (see also Chapter 5). The worry about the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis may be that it provides no barrier to deception: if language determines our thinking, we will have no means to discover the true state of affairs. We will now turn to something practical.

5. Resources

Throughout the book, we have used the OED (see Appendix II at the end of the book again for a short refresher). Other excellent resources are Visser’s four volume An Historical Syntax of the English Language (1963–73) and Mitchell’s two volumes Old English Grammar (1985). The internet also provides a wealth of resources. You can download texts (be careful that the editions have not been modernized), and listen to a few audio versions. Table 10.2 lists a few useful URLs.

The sites listed in Table 10.2 contain many texts. For instance, http://www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth/library/oe/oe.html allows you to download texts. If you are interested in all the texts of the Exeter Book, they are available. The easiest way to examine them may be to download them one by one and save them together as a .txt file. Some texts are not as fragmented and are easier to save. After you have saved the texts, you can use a word processing program to find certain words or phrases; this is tedious, however, and will not give you a quick sense for a word or construction. If you use a concordance program, such as MonoConc (www.monoconc.com), the search is faster and the search results are presented in a more organized manner. However, you will need to buy the program. It allows you to use .txt files and then you can search for prefixes and suffixes (e.g. walk* will search for walked, walks, walker, and walking) and for certain constructions.

If you do not want to download the texts and use a concordance program, there are ready-made corpora, such as the Old English Dictionary Corpus at http://www.doe.utoronto.ca. There is a good site that keeps links to these up to date: http://ebbs.english.vt.edu/hel.

6. Conclusion

This book focuses on changes in the sound system, grammar (morphology and syntax), and lexicon of English since 450 CE, a somewhat arbitrary point in time. Another arbitrary issue is what counts as English, a difficult question to answer. We can look at the history or at the structure of the language, as we have done in this book. Either way, the result is a complex picture.
Table 10.2. Some HEL URLs

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Texts:</th>
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<td>and: <a href="http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/authors.html">http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/authors.html</a></td>
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<td>Modern corpora are freely usable on the net using their search engines:</td>
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<td>BNC: <a href="http://thetis.bl.uk/">http://thetis.bl.uk/</a></td>
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Some Issues

Major questions you should be able to discuss: the origin of English and its definition; differences and similarities between Modern English and earlier stages as well as other languages; the role of dictionaries; issues concerning EL/World Englishes; the relationship between language and political decisions; the pros and cons of spelling reform; your position regarding about prescriptive rules; and the influence of the internet

Instead of exercises, a list of projects and paper topics follows. The projects are practical, possibly for undergraduates; the paper topics are more suited to advanced undergraduates and graduate students.
Practical Projects

1. Compare four or five translations of *Beowulf* into Modern English, e.g. Donaldson (1966), Chickering (1977), Rebsamen (1991), or Heaney (2000). Comment on the choice of vocabulary, the word order, the use of grammatical words, and the use of alliteration.

2. Take a formal and less formal piece of (your own) writing and then estimate how many loans you use in each. Then, take a group of related loans from your own writing (e.g. on medicine, sports, wildlife) and see if there is a pattern in terms of where the loans come from.

3. Select a few pages of a text you like (Old, Middle, or Modern English) and examine the different editions. Is there a facsimile; did the writer (in the case of a recent author) leave his original with changes; are there translations?

4. Use the OED's Advanced search (first cited date) to find the new words for several years you are interested in. Are there patterns (new words for space exploration in the 1960s)?

5. Take a few pages of an alliterating text, either Old or Middle English or both, and discover what sounds alliterate the most (alveolar or voiced or is there no pattern?). See Minkova (2003).

6. Kachru (1985) makes a distinction between inner, outer, and expanding circle with respect to International English. Listen to some of the sites mentioned in Chapter 9 (ICE and IDEA) and provide some evidence for or against Kachru's way of organizing the different Englishes.

7. Take a topic you are interested in (music, wall paper, dogs, Civil War, railroads), select one area (train parts, dog breeds, car names) and try to find a pattern. Where do the words originate and when do they first come into English?


9. Examine the influence of English on another language or of another language on English. Pick the influence on sounds, grammar, or the lexicon.

10. Examine *wal* and *gal* in place names. They may provide clues to where the Celts lived.

11. Which letters of the alphabet have more entries in an English dictionary. Explore why. Think, for instance, about our discussion of *v*-initial words.

phrases, and passages in the dramatic works of Shakespeare, with a supplementary concordance to the poems. Explore how the latter resource might still be relevant in today’s world of electronic corpora and editions.

Paper projects

1. The GVS can be discussed in great detail. Review some of the literature that goes into more GVS intricacies (Jespersen 1909; Lass 1987, 1999; Stockwell 1985) and select one aspect for further analysis, e.g. was it a push or a drag-chain.

2. Discuss the grammaticalization of a preposition into a complementizer, e.g. like or after (see Heine & Kuteva 2002 for data and Heine & Reh 1984, Hopper & Traugott 2003, Roberts & Roussou 2003, or van Gelderen 2004 for a framework).

3. Old English has many compounds. In Chapter 6, we mentioned that Middle English has fewer. Modern English has many phrasal compounds such as chocolate toy factory as well as compounds of the Old English kind. Compare an Old English text to its contemporary translation and draw conclusion about the frequency of compounding. Josefsson (2005) and others have explained certain differences in terms of the loss of inflection in Modern English; evaluate those claims.

4. Take a period in the history of linguistics, such as the early or late 19th century, and see what issues were of interest to those linguists. You can read William Jones or Schlegel or Humboldt at www.ling.hawaii.edu/faculty/stampe/Linguistics/LehmannReader.

5. Examine Webster’s nationalism and moralism as influences on the dictionary, see e.g. Rollins (1976).

6. Alastair Pennycook (1994; 1998) examines the role of English as a gatekeeper (for access to jobs and higher education) and its role in colonialism (sometimes promoted and sometimes not). Review his claims with a focus on one particular situation, e.g. Hong Kong.

7. Authorship debate. Review Wells & Taylor’s (1986) statistics and see if you can duplicate some of their findings.

8. Describe the possible Celtic or Latin or Scandinavian influence on a Middle English text.


10. Vennemann (1999; 2003) argues that speakers of Indo-European languages (Germanic and Celtic) interacted with speakers of Basque and Semitic languages. Summarize his evidence and evaluate it.
11. We know more about social nuances in Modern English than in Old or Middle English. The differences between men and women, older and younger people, upwardly mobile and not so mobile can be investigated. Speech patterns of women and men have been studied extensively. Phillipps (1970) studied the modes of address in the late 18th century. The use of first names is very restricted between men and women and different social classes, as in the following exchange in Jane Austen's *Emma* between Emma and 'Mr. Knightley', who are in love and to be married:

“Mr. Knightley.” — You always called me, “Mr. Knightley;” … I want you to call me something else, but I do not know what.
I remember once calling you George, in one of my amiable fits, about ten years ago. I did it because I thought it would offend you; but, as you made no objection, I never did it again.
And cannot you call me “George” now?
Impossible. (Jane Austen, *Emma*)

12. Lakoff’s (1975) *Language and Woman’s Place* sparked a lot of research and criticism. Does the language of women differ from that of men in using more adjectives, tag questions, and hedges, or are these preferences a matter of social status? Nowadays, research is also focused on gender in the classroom and other public spaces.
Appendix I

Possible answers to the exercises and some additional information

Chapter 1

1. For France, the 2005 Ethnologue (edited by Gordon) lists 27 living (spoken) languages, apart from French. The Ethnologue is periodically updated, so this may change if a language becomes extinct.

2. Recent changes are the introduction of *like* as a hedge marker, as in ‘you like still owe me some money’, and as a quotation marker. These are internal changes, since the preposition *like* is used in a different grammatical function and speakers were initially not aware of this change. If it is being used by speakers to mark a certain variety of English, it is an external one.

3. To encourage it, you could use a word in a popular book or TV-series. An example is *germaphobe* in Seinfeld: ‘an obsessive about cleanliness’. There is a site just on new terms in Seinfeld: www.movieprop.com/tvandmovie/Seinfeld/terms.htm.

4. *Just*, *street*, and *poor* do not look like loans. *Just* is introduced in 1382 with quite a different function and meaning; *street* already occurs in Old English, indicating it was borrowed into Germanic before Old English split of, and *poor* around 1200. These words had time to be ‘adapted’ and therefore look English.

5. One such word is *contumely* ‘insolent or insulting language’. The OED lists Chaucer as first using it around 1386.

6. You might take 10 pages of a 1000-page dictionary (not all starting with the same letter though) and see how many of the words you know on these pages. Say it is 100, then you might know 10,000 words.

7. English differs from Dutch in its word order (Dutch has Verb-Second or verb last), its sounds (Dutch has a velar fricative, much like Scottish English *loch*, but no velar stop), and its spelling (Dutch spelling is more phonetic).
8. *Assistant, honorable, travelled, studied,* and *scholar* are different words in Modern English and they are indeed loans. (The name *Albinus* and *Angle- and abbad* occur in Old English but are early loans from Latin).

**Chapter 2**

1. The text of 1 with all vowels and consonants is:

   The Moon May have Water

   Scientists think they have detected water on the Moon. Suddenly, visions of people living in lunar colonies that stop off to refuel on the way to Mars are less far-fetched. After two years of careful analysis, scientists said yesterday that radar signals from an American spacecraft indicated the moon was not bone-dry. The spacecraft’s radar signatures suggested the presence of water ice in the permanently cold shadows of a deep basin near the lunar south pole.

   The text with the vowels left out is easier to read. This shows that consonants are the most relevant in recognizing English words (but not so in Hawaiian). If we were to engage in spelling reform, we could therefore simplify the vowels used in the spelling of English. There are, however, varieties of English with consonant cluster simplification, and therefore not concentrating on the vowels might be problematic.

2. From my own experience, some of the grammatical words (due to their lack of stress) are often confused, e.g. *their* for *there* and *it’s* for *its*. Of the lexical words, I often see *grammer* for *grammar* and I myself often have to check the spelling of *responsible, occurrence,* and *chocolate.*

3. For: reduces time needed to learn the system. Against: hard to agree on; would make older texts harder.

4. [b], [θ], [u], [dʒ], [ŋ], [æ]

5. manner: non-nasal (oral)-nasal voice: voiceless-voiced
   manner: stop-fricative place: alveolar-velar

6. [k] = velar (others alveolar)
   [k] (again) = voiceless (others voiced); or [b] = labial
   [i] = high (others mid and low); or [a] = back

7. [e]: mid front long vowel
   [k]: voiceless velar stop
   [n]: alveolar nasal (nasals are also stops and voiced)
   [f]: voiceless labio-dental fricative
   [d]: voiced alveolar stop
Appendix I. Possible answers to the exercises and some additional information

8. a. vowel shift and deletion of [h]
   b. metathesis, vowel shift, and deletion of the last syllable
   c. metathesis (and spelling change)
   d. assimilation (of the nasal to the place of the following consonant)
   e. deletion of intervocalic [f].

9. Subjects: Ohtere, he, he, he, he, þæt land, hit, and Finnas; Indirect Object: his hlaforde, Ælfrede cyninge; objects of prepositions: þæm lande, þa Westsæ, feawum stowum.
The word bude might be related to abode ‘place to live’ and þeah to though.

Chapter 3

1. Three language families: A is separate, B is too, and C to M cluster together. As mentioned above, Ruhlen, who bases this division on Greenberg’s work, has been criticized. According to Ruhlen, the language families are Eskimo-Aleut (A), Na-Dene (B), and Amerind (C).

2. This is for a short assignment.

3. bhar to beran
   pitar to fæder
   pada to fot
   trayas to þrie
   tvam to þu

4. We can’t say much about the vowel changes, e.g. [o] > [i] in (a). The other changes are as follows:
   a. Noctis loses the ending -is and the [k] > [X], according to Grimm’s Law. This shift is still visible in the spelling of night but the velar [X] disappeared in the Modern English pronunciation.
   b. Gelu and glacial both have the pre-Grimm’s Law [g]. Both are Latin words; glacial was borrowed from Latin in a later period (according to the OED in 1656).
   c. The initial [k] in cannabis changes to a [h], according to Grimm’s Law, and the -is and medial vowel are lost. The word-final labial [b] devoices to [p] and the alveolar [n] assimilates to labial [m] (because of the [p]).
   d. The [d] in dentis devoices to [t] and the stop [t] changes to a fricative, both according to Grimm’s Law. The ending is again lost.
   e. The [g] in gens devoices to [k] and the ending is lost.

5. You could go with the Latin [kentum]. The changes would then involve fronting of the [k] (palatalization) to the fricative [s] in Spanish and French, and to the affricate [tʃ] in Italian. The final -m would delete, the French vowel would become nasalized and the final [nt] would delete.
6. The Second Consonant Shift involves labial and alveolar stops changing to affricates (syllable-initially) and to fricatives (medially). The stops remain stops after an initial [s]. The velar stop changes to a fricative everywhere except in initial position.

7. If you look up bher-, you will find a number of related words: fertile, burden, birth, fortune, infer, offer, and prefer. According to Grimm's Law, Germanic should have an initial [b]. It has that in birth and burden and these are Germanic words derived from Indo European. The others go back to Latin words (where the Sanskrit [bh] becomes an [f] in Latin). Greek loan words into English that derive from the root bher are anaphor, metaphor, and euphoria.

8. According to Grimm's Law, Sanskrit [gh] should be [g] in Germanic, and it is in geit and goat. If you check Table 3.9, you will see that the Sanskrit [gh] corresponds to the Latin [h], so that explains haedus.

Chapter 4

1. heafod – head
   sawolhus – body
   segl – sail
   seoce – sick
   halgode – hallowed ‘blessed’
   gecuron – chosen
   tiʒul – tile

2. a. metathesis (and semantic narrowing of wrist)
   b. palatalization of the final consonant

3. a. The nobles sailed over the sea to Normandy.
   b. Rome was sacked by the Goths.
   c. The king heard that the archbishop wanted to talk to his friends and wise people.
   d. Edwin was slain during the fight.
   e. Now the serpent lays bereft of his treasure.
   f. He killed himself.

4. a. fisces, fisce, hund, hundum
   b. (þa) sceap
   c. gomban, eafera, guma are clear.

5. There are other answers possible than the ones given below:
   narrowing
   narrowing
   narrowing
   shift
narrowing
narrowing
widening

6. Since *meat* in Old English meant ‘food’, it is to be expected that some of the other
Germanic languages (still) have a similar meaning for this word.

7. The preposition *on* is frequent while *æt* and *to* also appear. Other recognizable words
in the first two lines are perhaps *man(n)*, *halgode*, *dæg*, *cyng*, *hine*, *bebyrgede*, *innan*,
and *circean*. Some of these can indeed be found in the facsimile.

8. Note the Old English character of both texts, e.g. no determiners and auxiliaries, the
presence of cases). The differences between I and II concern:

A. *Orthography/sound:*
   - The *u* in I corresponds to *w* in II.
   - The ‘th’ sounds are written differently. Since Latin has no symbol for [þ] and [ð],
     early manuscripts use *d* or *th* for them, but later the Runic *þ* is used and an Irish
     symbol is adapted to δ. Scribes use them indiscriminately from C8 onwards. The
     former lasts until the 16th century, but the latter disappears in the 13th. See lines
     2, 7.
   - Palatalization in II, e.g. *herian* in line 1 and *mihte* in line 2.
   - Stops in I correspond to fricatives in II, e.g. in lines 2 and 6. The voicing in *heben*
     is probably an indication that the sound is [v] but that there is no way to represent
     it. The scribe is not consistent though.
   - Breaking in II, e.g. *weard* in lines 1 and 7, and *bearnun* in line 5.

B. *Morphology/syntax:*
   - Case endings weaken in II, e.g. in lines 1, 2, 7. However, text II has some Case
     endings that are quite strong (still): e.g. *-um* in lines 5 and 9.
   - Subjects are left out in I, line 1.
   - *til* in I corresponds to *to* in II.
   - the participial prefix *ge-* is not present in I.

9. This is really up to you.

10. These are *loud(ly)*, *many*, and *even(ing)*. From Old to Modern English, they have
    undergone, deletion of initial [h], palatalization, and voicing, respectively.
    These all mean ‘be silent’; *mec* is the accusative of the first person singular, and *ofer*
    is spelled that way since voicing between vowels may not always have taken place.
    The answer to Riddle 7 is quite probably a swan; and the one to Riddle 8 could be a
    jay or a nightingale (see Mackie 1934).

11. In the below answer, only some of the more obvious differences are pointed out; this
    cannot be complete, unfortunately.
In line 1 of *Wulf and Eadwacer*, the word order is typical for Old English since the verb of the main clause, *is*, is in second position and the verb of the embedded clause, *gife*, is in final position. The word order in lines 2 and 3 is standard again, verb-first in the main clause of line 2 since it is a question but verb last in the embedded clause in line 2, and verb-second in line 3. The words other than the verbs are much freer, e.g. *minum* ‘my’ and *leodum* ‘people’ in line 1 can be split even though they go together, and *him* and *man* occur in reverse order from Modern English.

*The Wanderer* starts out with an impersonal construction, i.e. one that doesn’t have a nominative subject. The verb is not often in second position (except in line 4). We see some adjectives and nouns follow what they precede in Modern English, e.g. *earfeþa gemyndig* ‘mindful of hardship’ and *modsefan minne* ‘my thoughts’.

12. *Garlic* is related to Old English *garleac* a compound of ‘spear’ and ‘leek’; *marshal* comes from *mare* and *scald* ‘servant’; *nostril* derives from *nosetyrel* ‘nose hole’ and went via *nosethirl* to the modern form; *Mildred* comes from an Old English word meaning ‘mild power’.

13. This again is up to you and the text you choose.

**Chapter 5**

*Answer to in-text question*

The borrowings in (12) are listed in bold; 25% of the words are loans in this prose fragment:

(12) The phrase and the day and the scene harmonised in a chord. Words. Was it their colours? He allowed them to glow and fade, hue after hue: sunrise gold, the russet and green of apple orchards, azure of waves, the greyfringed fleece of clouds. No, it was not their colours: it was the poise and balance of the period itself. Did he then love the rhythmic rise and fall of words better than their associations of legend and colour? Or was it that, being as weak of sight as he was shy of mind, he drew less pleasure from the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language many coloured and richly storiéd than from the contemplation of an inner world of individual emotions mirrored perfectly in a lucid supple periodic prose?

The borrowings in (13) are again marked in bold; 5% and 11% respectively are loans in these poems. Of these loans, *just* and *tasted* are well-incorporated loans, borrowed in the 14th and 13th centuries respectively:

(13) A word is dead
When it is said, Fire and Ice
Some say the world will end in fire,
Appendix I. Possible answers to the exercises and some additional information

Some say.
I say it just
Begins to live
That day.

Some say in ice.
From what I’ve tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.

But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

Answers to the Exercises

1. The visible Celtic influence on English is restricted to loan words. Many of the loans concern place names and religious words (showing that Christianity was introduced by Irish missionaries). This means there probably was substantial contact. There is now a lively debate as to how much influence Celtic morphology and syntax might have had.

2. The Scandinavian words introduced were words used daily, e.g. take, anger, skill and want. There are also place names, indicating the settlement areas of the migrants. Many of the loans are verbs, and this probably shows that the contact was intense.

3. They came in after the sound change by the name of breaking was no longer taking place; otherwise they would have been earc and pealm. It may be that they did undergo breaking and that they were later borrowed again.

4. The prefix re- derives from Latin and is first introduced in the 16th century. Hybrids are redo, retake, and reboot. The suffix -ly is not a loan and can form hybrids such as accurately but the loan -ation does not seem to form hybrids.

5. A sentence such as (a) would become a sentence as in (b):
   a. I don’t want to talk to them now.
   b. I have a negative desire to converse with them at the present moment.

6. Depending on the date of the text the numbers of loans may be quite different.

7. Both the structure and the vocabulary cause problems. It is of course not fair to take a sentence out of context and we might in fact do better reading an entire book or paper by this author. In order to understand the sentence, the use of brackets may be helpful, as in (a). The sentence consists of six finite and two non-finite verb phrases, but the core consists of two coordinated finite verbs, brought and marked. The other six verbs are embedded in this core.
   a. The move from […] to a view of […] brought the question of temporality into the thinking of structure, and marked a shift from a form of […] to one […].
The vocabulary too is daunting. For instance, *structuralist* and *structural* are used as adjectives; *structure* is used once as a verb and twice as a noun, and it hard to understand the thinking of *structure* and structural totalities.

**Chapter 6**

1. The text is **Middle rather than Old** English for the following reasons:
   Sounds: *so* rather than *swa*; the vowel in *voys* is new; *oure* rather than *ure*. Syntax: many articles; word order is mainly VO (*telle another tale*).

**Middle rather than Modern** English:
Morphology: *lough* is a strong verb where it is weak in Modern English; the third person singular *-th* ending on verbs is common (*gooth*); the use of *kan* for ‘know’; and *-en* endings on infinitives.
Syntax: multiple negation in lines 9 and 10; occasional older OV word order (*I you preye*).

2. The most obvious ones are *gooth, is, telleth, art, is, herkneth, make, am, knowe, mys-speke, seye, wyte, preye, hath, stynt, is, mayst*. However, the ones with no obvious endings are present tense verbs as well: *moot, lat, shal, konne, kan, wol, shal, lat, wol, wol, tel, wol*, and *lat*. Since this is a late Middle English text, we can conclude from the endings that it is relatively southern.

3. The second person pronouns used are *ye* (twice in line 5), *thou*, and *thy* in line 22, *you* in line 27, *thy* in lines 31 and 32, and *thou* in the last line.
   In line 5, the Monk is addressed with *ye* by the Host, but the Miller with *thou* in line 22. The case endings are appropriate since *ye* and *thou* are used as nominatives. The Miller addresses the Host with *you* in line 27 since he is trying to be polite and the case is appropriate for an object. The Reeve then addresses the Miller using a possessive *thy* in line 32 and a nominative *thou* in line 36. These are all ‘appropriate’ to fit the social relationships of the time as well as case.

4. a. Intervocalic voicing and final vowel weakening.
   b. Unrounding of [y] and loss of final syllable.
   c. [g] to [w] and loss of ending.
   d. Palatalization of [g] to [j] and then deletion of [j].
   e. Deletion of initial [h] and loss of the ending.
   f. [a] shifts to [o] and final [k] palatalizes.

5. a. ‘And it happened to him in his sleep that he was walking in a thick forest to weep’.
   There is no pleonastic subject to *byfel* and *hym* is a dative rather than a nominative subject. This is an impersonal construction. In addition, *faste* means ‘thick’ and comes
after the noun it modifies, and the form *welk* is a strong past tense. Notice also that Modern English might indicate the progressive aspect in *was walking*.

b. ‘where these things exist, the religion is right’.

The two clauses in Middle English are not embedded by means of a *wh*-word whereas they are in Modern English. The reason the first clause is considered the embedded one is the word order: it is verb-final.

6. One possibility is ‘There was a priest whose name was Layamon. He was Leifnoth’s son (let God have mercy on him), and lived at a lovely church at Areley, on the bank of the Severn. He thought it was lovely and close to Redstone where he read Mass. A splendid idea came to his mind that he wanted to tell the story of England’s noblemen: what they were called and from where they came, these first owners of England after the flood that came from God and that killed everything here except Noah, Sem, Japhet and Ham, and their four wives who were with them on the Ark.’

As to the endings, there are certainly possessive endings (e.g. *Leouenaðes*) and remnants of prepositional endings (e.g. the *-e* on the noun in *æfter þan flode* and *from Drihtene*). Determiners are not as frequent as in later Middle English, e.g. lacking in *on archen* ‘on the Ark’ but some appear, e.g. the indefinite *a Frenchis clerc*. This would be Early Middle English as indicated by the word order (*he bock radde*) and the presence of impersonal constructions (e.g. *līðe him beo Drihten*).

Northern features are the use of *on* in *bonke* (line 6) and *mon* (line 29). Southern are the use of *heo* for ‘they’ (line 8), *heo* for ‘she’, and the prefix on the past participle (line 1, 8, and 21). There are both palatalized forms (*chirechen* in line 3) and non-palatalized form (*Englisca* in line 16). This makes it a mixed text which is expected if it is from the West Midlands.

7. There seems to be more embedding as in *As I bihelde in-to the est an hiegh to the sonne I seigh a toure on a toft trielich ymaked*. Articles are frequent, e.g. *Of alle maner of men the mene and the riche*, and the present participle is of the modern form, *Worchyng and wandryng* and *In settyng and in sowyng*.

There is still a lot that is Middle English too, the present plural ending and the absence of a special reflexive in *Some putten hem to the plow*, and the prefix on the past participle *ymaked*. Impersonals also occur: *Me byfel a ferly*.

8. Examples of its use are *borʒ* ‘borough’, *wroʒt* ‘wrought’, *Welneʒe* ‘almost’, and *brondeʒ* ‘brands’. The first three represent old [g] sounds that palatalized; the last word may have been a [z]. Some editions make a distinction and only use ʒ for the former use. Note also the interesting use of *tz* in *watʒ*, probably pronounced as [s].

9. Make sure to undo the GVS. Just other notes on this text. Some of the loans are *perced*, *veyne*, *licour*, *vertu*, *engendred*, *flour*, *inspired*, *tendre*, *cours*, *melodye*, *nature*, *corages*, *pilgrimages*, *palmeres*, *strauenge*. The morphology shows nominative *they* but
accusative *hem*; the plural on nouns is *-es* is the plural; the present tense third person has *-th* (as we have seen above too); the past participle still has a prefix in *yronne*.

10. It is southern: the *i-* on *icumen* would have disappeared in the North and *groweth* and *bloweth* (and lots of other verbs) have third person endings typical for the South. The palatalized velar is in evidence in *michel* ‘much’.

11. Review the answer to exercise 8 of Chapter 4. Northernisms in Caedmon’s Hymn are: *til*, lack of palatalization, and early loss of *ge/i-* on past participles.

12. *gas* and not *goeth*, *wagges* not *waggeth*, and the use of *til*. Chaucer is portraying a Northerner.

13. The spelling in F shows a lot of free variation, e.g. *rygth* and *ryth*, and *I* as well as *i*, and *ge* and *ye*. There is a frequent use of *x*, e.g. in *xal, xulde, nexth*, the thorn is still in use, and there is no *wh* in *wan* and *wat*.

Chapter 7

1. Some typical EModE spellings: the thorn has disappeared; the *u* is still used for [v] in *beleue* and the *v* for [ɔ] in *vmwonted*. Final *-e* still appears on *throwne* and *blynde* and *-ie* is the ending in *mutabilitie*. The *y* and *i* are both used for the same sounds and many words have different spellings from ModE. Spellings are not fixed, e.g. *wo* and *woe*.

Morphological features typical of EModE: there is a reflexive pronoun, but written as two separate forms, e.g. *her self*, the second person singular forms *thou/the* are still used, and verbs have endings such as *hast* and *hath*.

Syntactic features: the object follows the verb as it does in ModE and the use of auxiliaries, prepositions, and articles makes this an EModE text rather than an ME one.

Lexical features: quite some Latin loans, e.g. *allurementes, mutabilitie, and felicitie*.

2. The text in Appendix B has Modern English *s* represented with a symbol similar to *f*, shows contractions (*th’, ’t, ’s, ’d, ’le, ’o’), writes words separately compared to the custom in Modern English (*our selues* and *a ground*), has abundant use of colons, and has word final *e* (*keepe*).

The signature is ‘A’.

3. a. *knave* lost its initial [k] and changed its vowel (GVS).
   b. *wrong* lost its initial [w] and the velar nasal was pronounced in some varieties.
   c. The vowel changed (GVS) and the velar [X] was lost in *bright*.
   d. The [r] was lost before the [s].

4. Both (a) and (b) show that the *-ly* was not always used on adverbs; (b) shows that *my selfe* is (still) in the process of becoming a reflexive pronoun.
5. *Mal* in *maladjust, malcontent, maladapt* is the least productive in numbers, and means ‘ill or badly’. It was borrowed from French. The prefix *mis* is actually Germanic and appears in *misdeed, mistake, misfortune*. It also means ‘bad(ly)’. Finally, *pseudo* ‘meaning ‘fake, false’ is very productive, as in *pseudo-science, pseudo-art, pseudo-intellectual*. It came into English via Latin which had borrowed it from Greek.

6. The first of each set is a loan from French that was introduced relatively early (e.g. *poor* is first attested in 1205) and is more incorporated. The second of the set is from the same original word but came into English at a later date, and mainly from Latin.

7. The text of Appendix D shows interesting morphology: verbs have Modern English endings and there are lots of contractions, syntax: relative clauses appear without a relative pronoun, as in the first line, double negatives (*I am not apt to believe neither*), the use of *that* as the relative pronoun for humans, and the use of *be* for a perfect (*I am grown so dull …*) appear, lexicon: *charity* has narrowed in Modern English and different prepositions are used (*at your last letter*), and orthography, spelling, and punctuation: very little is different from Modern English.

The text of Appendix E shows interesting morphology: contractions (*’d*), words written separately (*my self*), no -ly on *I could scarce think*, syntax: long embeddings (e.g. the first sentence), and orthography, spelling, and punctuation: still *f* for *s*, and since Newton wrote in Britain, it is interesting to see that both *colors* and *colours* appear.

8. Shakespeare for the first two words, Harvey for the third, and Spenser for the last.

9. I picked 1660. Using the Advanced search in the OED, I found 540 new words, and most of those are scientific (e.g. *amalgamate, air-pump, boethic, and cortex*), religious (*allotheism, monotheism, cabalize* and *idolizer*), or philosophical/political (*anti-monarchical, restoration, illiteracy*). These reflect the developments of that time period well.

10. Appendix C includes many Northernisms, e.g *quhilk, awen, quher, qhithe, knawe* (see Chapter 6). These spellings are of course indicative of the pronunciation. It may be that *pronounced* and *pronouncing* are spellings indicative of not having the GVS apply to [u]. There are other special spelling conventions too, e.g. *symboles, rightlie, everie*, and *voual*.

11. All available techniques should be applied since each author is different. Since it is easier for authors to change their style by using different content words than to increase the use of grammatical words, I would focus on the latter.

A possible plan is to check the relative pronouns (see also the next chapter and Hope 1994). You could take three pages of three different EModE authors and see how
many *wh* or *that* relatives each uses (use percentages and make tables as with the contraction data in Table 7.11).

### Chapter 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition/Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>craptacular</td>
<td>crappily and spectacular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to embed</td>
<td>assign a reporter to a combat unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to jump the shark</td>
<td>deteriorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SARS</td>
<td>severe acute respiratory syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber Alert</td>
<td>In the 1970s, any announcement of a threat to public safety; in the late 1990s, an announcement after a child has been abducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black tide</td>
<td>massive oil spill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>botox party</td>
<td>social gathering where botox is injected to reduce wrinkles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushism</td>
<td>peculiarities noted in the speech of either president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dataveilance</td>
<td>monitoring of a person's online activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dialarhoea</td>
<td>the dialing of a cell phone in a pocket or hand bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dirty bomb</td>
<td>conventional bomb packed with radio-active material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>virtuecrat</td>
<td>moral or self-righteous politician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walking pinata</td>
<td>person who is the object of relentless criticism or scorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blog</td>
<td>web log, personal site with commentaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapons of Mass Destruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>belligerati</td>
<td>pro-war journalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gamma girl</td>
<td>teenage girl who is emotionally healthy, socially secure, independent and nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juice-jacker</td>
<td>person stealing electrical power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to otherize</td>
<td>make someone an 'other'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexitarian</td>
<td>a flexible vegetarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freedom fries</td>
<td>French fries, renamed after the French opposition to the Iraq invasion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Glossary of the words in Table 8.13**

### Answers to the Exercises

1. The text of Appendix A is an official petition and basically Modern English. The use of the -th in *sheweth* shows the formality, as does the number of formal words, such as *employ, distress, procure,* and *maintenance.* There are some interesting trends, e.g. the number of *. . . exceed all belief.* In prescriptively correct English, *number* is the head of the subject and must therefore agree with the verb *exceed* in number (which it doesn’t).

2. The language in Appendix B and C is Modern English. Appendix B is quite formal, and has a few interesting spellings, e.g. *desart for desert,* and the use of *ever* as ‘always’ (in the third paragraph), an older use. Because the text of Appendix C is a journal, there are many abbreviations, the apostrophe is not used for possessives, e.g. *Mr.*
Findleys communications, and the use of commas differs. There are also a few words that are used less narrowly than they are now, e.g. recital.

3. a. The interdental voiced fricative has become an alveolar stop.
   b. metathesis.
   c. An [h] is inserted at the beginning of a syllable, possibly due to hypercorrection (rule against h-dropping).
   d. consonant cluster simplification.
4. a. Don’t be afraid: a dummy do is added.
   b. …regularly: the -ly is needed on adverbs.
5. Version (a) would be historically correct: first was always both an adjective and an adverb, but second came into the language later (as an adjective) and at that point in time adverbs were formed using the -ly. Version (b) has had regularization and from a non-historical point of view, this would be the most sensible.
6. In Appendix D, the author tries to give a flavor of the Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire speech (in the East Midlands) of the gamekeeper. This is hard to do in writing, and Lawrence uses an abundance of contractions to make the speech look more colloquial (e.g. th’). Features typical for many regional varieties are h-dropping in ‘ere and lack of velar nasal in gettin’, as is the occasional double negative. There isn’t much that makes it specifically East Midlands.
   Some interesting features in the dialogue of Appendix E concerning the sounds are that the velar nasal is replaced by an alveolar one in talkin’, the interdental fricative by an alveolar one in wid dat and by a labio-dental in mouf. Morphologically, there is regularization in hisself and knowed and the use of y’all and youse. There are multiple negatives, the auxiliary done, and questions without inversion (Where he left her?).
7. I think I use relative that a lot, certainly more than prescriptively correct. However, due to my profession as an English professor, I rarely have people comment on my grammar. The data on what a corpus does are reviewed in this chapter.
8. Remember the numbers may vary due to updates. There are only 13 loans from Vietnamese in the OED (some come in through French) but most of these are very rare. The ones that did get introduced: 1957 Viet Cong ‘Vietnamese Communist’; 1885 Tet ‘New Year’, now just used in Tet Offensive; 1824 dong ‘coin’, now the official currency.
   There are 7 loans if you search for Inuit but 25 if you use Eskimo, 1662 kayak and 1662 iglu ‘house’ (spelled igloo in English) the most well-known.
9. By looking at some of the words from Table 8.13 in the OED, you can see the recycling. For instance the verb embed first appears in the later 18th century to mean ‘fix firmly in a surrounding mass’. It then gets scientific meaning, e.g. as in linguistics (embedded sentence), and later a political one.
10. Death is a taboo, and words for dying include: *pass away, buy the farm, buy his lunch, cash in your chips, give up the ghost, pay the piper.*

Chapter 9

1. Some of the phonological features include an alveolar stop rather than an interdental fricative in *de(m)* and *troo*, cluster simplification in *an* and *wouldn*, and syllable-final consonant deletion in *gi*.

   Some morphological features are a regularization of verbal agreement (*Wen storm come*) and third person pronoun *im* for both subjects and objects (*im sey a wouldn see im*).

2. In West African Pidgin English, the words listed would be pronounced as listed here (from Schneider 1966: 23):

   - [trenja] (with deletion of [s])
   - [tret] (with deletion of [s])
   - [sikul] (with epenthesis)
   - [sinek] (again epenthesis)
   - [silip] (again epenthesis)

   You could have chosen other strategies, e.g. epenthesis in *stranger* and *straight* and deletion in *school*, *snake*, and *sleep*.

3. Widening.

4. Some features are the absence of auxiliaries in questions (*what you do now*), aspectual auxiliaries used (*I am remembering*) and not used (*you do now*), special vocabulary (*Matric fail* and *inter-caste*), and unchanging tags (*isn’t it*).

   The text in Appendix B shows certain special vocabulary (*R(upee)*s, *autaq, Iqra*) and uses of words in slightly different circumstances (*pertinently, transparent utilization*). The use of auxiliaries (*Where that money had gone has never …*) and non-count nouns (*There is also need to …*) are also interesting.

5. Most striking in Appendix C are word choice in *prosecute the current mission* and *welfarist*, the use of a phrasal verb in *to carry the people along*, the complementation in *the opportunity to using* and *to enable it cope*, and the use of a non-count in *there is … media campaign*. The spelling is predominantly British (*programmes, publicising*).

6. Phonological are the replacement of the interdental and the loss of clusters in *di, bika* (line 1), *an, di, bes, tingk* (line 2), *bika, wahn, di, ne, de*.

   Syntactic are the use of aspectual auxiliaries (*mi, de* in line 1, *me* in line 3), the use of *fu* as an infinitival marker, and the SVO word order.
7. Recognizable are perhaps *atikel* ‘article’, *fri(dom)* ‘free(dom)’, *rait* ‘right’, *rong* ‘wrong’, *brata* ‘brother’, etc.

8. This will depend on your choice. You might be struck by how the vowels sound or cluster simplification.

9. This will depend on your situation.

10. These terms are short for Singapore English, Hindi English, Tagalog English, Yiddish English, Chinese English, and Spanish English. The terms are not usually used by linguists and differ widely in what they mean. For instance, code switching as in (46) might be termed Spanglish and that in (47) Konglish (Korean English).
Appendix II

How to use the OED

In this Appendix, we will discuss some ways of looking up a word in the electronic version of the OED. The OED book version is fairly similar in content. Both versions provide you with the etymology of a word, the various spellings throughout its history, and a number of other facts. Two words, very and with, have been arbitrarily selected. We know from Chapter 4 (Section 2) that the first is most likely a loan since it starts with a [v]. We will also use Advanced Search in the electronic version. The OED online is updated every three months; the numbers of hits listed below may therefore vary slightly from the ones you get, as well as the ordering of items. You can also search the unrevised second edition in Advanced Search.

Regular Search

Very

When you first get into the online version, you get a ‘Welcome to OED Online’ screen, with a box in the upper right hand corner that says ‘find word.’ This is the ‘simple search’ box. Type in very and you get a choice between 1very as a noun or 2very as an adjective, adverb, and noun. In this case, click once on the second option. It then gives you Figure II.1 below and many pages more (which are not included).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>very, a., adv., and n.¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pronunciation spellings etymology quotations date chart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. adj. I. 1. Really or truly entitled to the name or designation; possessing the true character of the person or thing named; properly so called or designated; = TRUE a. 5.
Very common from c 1300 to c 1600; now rare except as an echo of Biblical usage.

a. Of persons, or the Deity.

α, β c1250 Kent. Serm. in O.E. Misc. 27 Be þet hi offrede gold..seawede þet he was sothfast kink, and be þet hi offrede Stor..seawede þet he was verry prest. a1300 Cursor M. 22729 A clude..bar him vp, wonder bright; Warrai man and godd warrai[…] 1533 GAU Richt Vay 37 Be this word..he is veray God.

Figure II.1. The OED entry for very.
Under A, the adjectival uses are given, and if you scroll down further, you'll get to B with the adverbial uses, and to C with the nominal ones. These pages are not reproduced here. From Figure II.1, you can learn that the first use of very as adjective was around 1250 and the texts it is first found in. This adjectival use is not the most typical Modern English use so you may want to scroll down. If the earlier quotes are hard to read, just skip them.

On the initial screen, the quotations are given automatically but not the pronunciation, etymology, spellings, and date chart. You can click on them to get this information. For instance, clicking on the etymology button, you get (1) added on top:

(1) [a. AF. verrai, verrey, verai, veray, OF. verai, varai, vrai (mod. F. vrai, Pr. verai), f. the stem of L. verus true.]

Initially, you may have to look up the abbreviations in the ‘help’ section (bottom right corner). The ones relevant to (1) appear in Table II.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>adopted from (but it also means adjective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF</td>
<td>Anglo-French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OF</td>
<td>Old French (also OFr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mod.F.</td>
<td>Modern French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr.</td>
<td>Provencal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.</td>
<td>Latin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What the OED says in (1) is that very is adopted from the version of French spoken in England, i.e. AF. This is a subtle way of saying it is a loan word from French. They may have evidence that it was actually used by French speakers in England rather than borrowed by someone whose main language was English. For our purposes that distinction is not so relevant. Our conclusion can be that it is a loan from French and has cognates in Provencal and is “f. the stem of L. verus”, i.e. the French derives from Latin. The quotes that are given tell you that very is borrowed in the Early Middle English period.

Clicking on ‘spelling forms’, 46 different spellings appear! The date chart is helpful to see when one use of the word is common.

With

The smaller, grammatical words are the hardest to trace in the OED. That is because their spelling is very variant and often the meaning and use change quite a lot. If you look up with in the OED, you will initially get nine results. The first five give you with listed under other entries, e.g. eye, and aren’t usually very relevant. The sixth use is that as a prefix and the seventh as a noun, a technical term not known widely for a partition in a chimney. The one probably most relevant to you is that of with, prep., (adv., conj.). Clicking on that will give you a very long entry that starts as in Figure II.2.
A. prep. The prevailing senses of this prep. in the earliest periods are those of opposition (‘against’) and of motion or rest in proximity (‘towards,’ ‘alongside’), which are now current only in certain traditional collocations or specific applications. These notions readily pass into fig. uses denoting various kinds of relations, among which those implying reciprocity are at first prominent. The most remarkable development in the signification of with consists in its having taken over in the ME. period the chief senses belonging properly to OE. *mid* MID prep.1 (cognate with Gr. μετά with). These senses are mainly those denoting association, combination or union, instrumentality or means, and attendant circumstance. These are all important senses of ON. *við*, to which fact their currency and ultimate predominance in the English word are partly due. The last important stage was the extension of with from the instrument to the agent, in which use it was current for different periods along with of and through, and later with by, which finally superseded the other three. The range of meanings in general has no doubt been enlarged by association with L. *cum*. The interaction of senses and sense-groups has been such that the position of a particular sense in the order of development is often difficult to determine.

Figure II.2. The OED entry for with.

The information in this figure gives a good description of the change in meaning but that is pretty abstract. If you wonder about what the A, a, 1, and I refer to, click on the entry map at the bottom left. You will see that this entry is divided into A, B, C, and D and these correspond to preposition, adverb, conjunction, and compound respectively. A in its turn is divided into I, II, and III. These are the main meanings, with I “denoting opposition”, II “denoting personal relation” etc, and III “denoting instrumentality” etc. We can see from the examples that meanings I and II are from the earliest Old English, but that III first appears only around 1200.

**Advanced Search for date and language**

If you want to find all the words that first appear in say 1600, you could look at the printed *Chronological English Dictionary* (by Finkenstaedt et al). You could also do this online using the OED and get a much larger set of new words. Go into the search page of the OED, and look in the left bottom corner for ‘advanced search.’ Click on this and you get something looking like Figure II.3.

Then, type 1600 in the empty box on the top line and change the ‘full text’ to ‘first cited date’. Click on start search and you will get 1070 entries.

If you would like to find all the words in the OED of Celtic or Chinese origin, you go to the same page, and using the screen of Figure II.3, you type in Celtic in the empty box and change ‘full text’ to ‘etymologies.’ You will find 217 entries, which you will need to check since some say “perhaps Celtic” and the like.
Exercises with the OED

1. Do a simple search for ‘tree’. Which of the 8 hits that turn up should you click on to get the regular entry? Are there cognates in other languages? Is it a loan words into English, or was it always part of Germanic and just passed on that way?

2. Still using a simple search, use a wildcard (e.g. ‘?’ for one character and ‘*’ for any number). For instance, br?ng might get you bring, breng, brung, brang, brong. How would you get both the singular and the plural of a particular noun?

3. In order to find the Old English þ, you can use th. Look up ‘the’.

4. While still in simple search, use the date chart to get a quick sense of the different meanings of ‘sharp’ and when they came into the language.

5. Using advanced search, look how many instances of ‘ain’t’ there are in the entire OED.

6. First look up ‘assasination’ in simple search. Then, use advanced search and try the ‘full text’ option.

7. Are there ways to find out how often Shakespeare is cited, or how many words derive from Arabic, or if any words start with a y and end in z? Experiment a little.
Appendix III

Chronology of Historical Events

This chronology of external events is based on Morgan’s (1984) history as well as on McArthur (2002), Fennell (2001), and www.bbc.co.uk/history.

Earliest occupations

8000 BCE Hunter–gatherers move across Europe also into what is now the British Isles
6500 BCE Formation of English Channel
6000 BCE Shift to farming
3000 BCE Stonehenge culture
2500 BCE Bronze Age in Britain
1000 BCE Migrations of Celtic people to Britain begins
600 BCE Iron Age
55–54 BCE Expeditions by Caesar
43 Invasion by Claudius
43–7 South and East England brought under Roman control
50 London founded
70–84 Wales, Northern England, and Scotland under Roman control
100–200 Uprisings in Scotland
122 Hadrian Wall begun
150 Small groups of settlers from the continent
410 Romans withdraw

The Germanic migrations 450–1066

450 (449) Hengest and Horsa come to Kent (‘invited’ to hold back the Picts)
455 Hengest rebels against Vortigern
477 Saxons in Sussex
495 Saxons in Wessex
527 Saxon kingdoms in Essex and Middlesex
Anglian kingdoms in Mercia, Northumbria, and East Anglia
Æthelberht becomes King of Kent
Augustine missionaries land in Kent and conversion to Christianity starts
Scandinavian attacks on Lindisfarne, Jarrow, Iona and subsequent conquest of Northumbria
Scandinavian conquest of East Anglia
Rule of King Alfred and establishment of the Danelaw
Rule of King Cnut and his heirs
Rule of King Edward

From the Norman-French period to the Renaissance 1066–1476

Death of King Edward
King Harold's defeat at Hastings and William of Normandy takes over
William (of Normandy) becomes king
First Crusade
Becket becomes Archbishop of Canterbury
Becket is murdered
Conquest of Ireland
King John loses Normandy to the French
Conquest of Wales
Expulsion of Jews from England
Great Famine
The 100-year War
The Black Death, i.e. plague, kills one-third of the population
Statute of Pleadings (legal proceedings in English)
The Peasants' revolt
Condemnation of Wycliff

Renaissance and Restoration 1476–1680

Introduction of the printing press by Caxton
Columbus reaches the 'New World'
Cabot reaches Newfoundland, Canada
St John's, Newfoundland, established as the first British colony in North America
Reign of Henry VIII
Act of Supremacy, English monarch becomes head of the Church of England
Monasteries dissembled
Appendix III. Chronology of Historical Events

1539  English bible in every church
1550  Population of England reaches 3 million
1558–1603 Queen Elizabeth I
1600  The East India Company is granted a charter
1607  Settlement at Jamestown
1611  The King James Bible (KJV)
1612  English presence in Bermuda and in India
1620  Pilgrim fathers establish colony in Plymouth
1624–30 War between England and Spain
1626–29 War between England and France
1627–47 Settlements on Barbados and the Bahamas
1629  Charles I dissolves parliament
1642–48 First and Second Civil War
1649  Charles I beheaded; Charles II becomes king
1649–55 Cromwell conquers Ireland
1649  Jews officially admitted
1655  English presence in Jamaica
1653–60 Cromwell is ‘Lord Protector’
1660  Charles II ‘restored’
1660  Royal Society founded, to promote science
1670  Hudson Bay Company active
1670s Colonization of West Africa

Enlightenment, Romanticism, Colonialization, and Industrial Revolution 1680–1900

1688  The Glorious Revolution
1689–1702 Rule of William and Mary
1700  Population of England is 5 million
1707  Act of Union, uniting England and Scotland as the UK
1746  Battle of Culloden; subsequent repression of Scottish Gaelic
1755  Johnson’s Dictionary
1759  Wolfe takes Quebec for England
1760–1850 Highland Clearances in Scotland, with resulting emigration and loss of Celtic
1763  Trading in Basra, Iraq
1765–1947 British rule over India
1773  Boston Tea Party
1775–1783 American War of Independence
1776  American Declaration of Independence
1780s Colonies (of convicts) in Australia
1789  French Revolution
1789  George Washington first American president
1791  British colonies in Upper and Lower Canada
1803  Louisiana Purchase
1806  British take over the Cape Colony in South Africa
1806  Webster’s Dictionary
1821–1823  Irish famine
1820s  Railroads in the US
1819–24  Malacca and Singapore occupied by the British
1834  Slavery abolished in the British Empire
1830s  Settlement of New Zealand
1842  China cedes Hong Kong
1844  First telegraph
1837–1901  Reign of Queen Victoria
1853  Gadsden Purchase
1853  Japan opened to Western trade
1858  Decision to start the OED
1861–65  American Civil War
1861  British colony in Nigeria
1862  British colony in Honduras
1865  Abolition of slavery in the United States of America
1869  Suez Canal opened
1876  Telephone invented
1884  Berlin Conference determines colonial power in Africa
1886  Annexation of Burma
1890s  Rhodesia and Uganda colonized in an attempt to control the Cape-to-Cairo corridor
1880–1902  Boer Wars and British conquest of South Africa
1898  American control over Hawaii, Philippines, and Puerto Rico; Hong Kong and Territories leased to Britain for 99 years

The Modern Period 1900–present

1901  Death of Queen Victoria
1907  Hollywood becomes a filmmaking center
1914–1918  First World war
1916  Easter Uprising, leading to Irish independence in 1921
1918  Women (over 30) get the vote in Britain
1920  Kenya as British colony
1922  BBC starts
1928  OED appears (with supplement in 1933)
1931  Statute of Westminster (former British Dominions de facto independent); British Commonwealth
1939  photocopying invented
1939–1945  Second World war
1942  First computers
1945  United Nations founded
1946  Philippines independent
1947  The independence of India and Pakistan; and New Zealand
1948  Burma and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) independent
1949  NATO founded
1950–53  Korean War
1951  First computers
1960  Nigeria becomes independent
1960  World population reaches 3 billion
1961–75  Vietnam War
1963  Kenya becomes independent
1973  Britain joins European Union (confirmed in a 1975 referendum)
1980  CNN starts
1984  Apple PC
1990s  Internet becomes major communication tool
1990  Native American Languages Act
1990–1  Gulf War
1999  World population reaches 6 billion
2000  OED online
2003  Iraq War
2003  In Wales, 20% speak Welsh, up 2.4% in 10 years
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