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The History of the English Language

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Пособие «The History of the English Language» (авторы Широких И.А., Савочкина Е.А.) представляет собой полный курс лекций, посвященных развитию английского языка от индоевропейского истока до сегодняшних дней.

В пособии подробно описаны ключевые этапы в становлении английского языка, а исторические изменения, повлиявшие на данный язык, позиционируются как непрерывный процесс, что позволяет объяснять языковые явления, имеющие место в современном английском языке.

Учебное пособие «The History of the English Language» соответствует основным требованиям нормативных документов и позволит обеспечить качественную подготовку бакалавров направления 45.03.02. Лингвистика (Перевод и переводоведение), также оно может быть полезным для студентов, владеющих английским языком на продвинутом уровне, преподавателей и ученых, занимающихся прикладными исследованиями языка.

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1. Subject and Aims of the History of English

The History of English covers the main events in the historical development of the English language: the history of its phonetic structure and spelling, the evolution of its grammatical system, the growth of its vocabulary, and also the changing historical conditions of English-speaking communities relevant to language history. One of the aims of this course is to provide knowledge of linguistic history sufficient to account for the principal features of present-day English. Any student is aware of English difficulties of reading:

Difficulties of reading

Bit – three letters – three sounds – full correspondence between Latin letters and English sounds;

Bite – four letter – three sounds – no correspondence between the vowels and their graphic representation;

Knight – six letters – three sounds – the letter *k* and *gh* do not stand for any sounds but *gh* evidently shows that *i* stands for [ai]

At the time when Latin characters were first used in Britain (7th century) writing was phonetic: the letters stood, roughly, for the same sounds as in Latin. Many modern spellings show how the words were pronounced some four or five hundred years ago, e.g. in the 14th century *knight* sounded as [knix't], *root* as [ro:t], *tale* as [ˈta:lə].

Vocabulary

Since English belongs to the Germanic group of languages, it would be natural to expect that it has many words or roots in common with cognate Germanic lan-

guages: German, Swedish, Danish and others. Many more words in Modern English have exact parallels in the Romance languages: French, Latin, Spanish.

English	Other Germanic languages	Romance languages
Peace (OE fri)	G Frieden Sw fred	Fr paix L pace
Dutch vrede Sp paz		It pace

The history of English will say when and how these borrowings were made and will thus account for the composition of the modern vocabulary.

Grammar

The History of the language will supply explanation both for the general, regular features of the grammatical structure and for its specific peculiarities and exceptions. It will explain why English has so few inflections; how its analytical structure arose – with an abundance of compound forms and a fixed word order. In describing the evolution of English, a number of theoretical questions such as the relationship between statics and dynamics in language, the role of linguistic and extra linguistic factors, the interdependence of different processes in languages history will be discussed in respect of concrete linguistic facts.

2. Evolution of Language and the Scope of Language History

The history of the English language has been reconstructed on the basis of written records of different periods. The earliest extant written texts in English are dated in the 7th c.; the earliest records in other Germanic languages go back to the 3rd or 4th c. A. D. The development of English, however, began a long time before it was first recorded. The pre-written history of English and cognate languages was first studied by methods of comparative linguistics evolved in the 19th c. By applying these methods linguists discovered the kinship of what is now known as the Indo-European family languages and grouped them into Germanic, Slavonic, Romance, Celtic and

others. It is one of the intentions of this course to show how comparison of existing and reconstructed forms can demonstrate differences and similarities in languages, and how reconstructed forms help to understand later developments.

Any living language can never be absolutely static; it develops together with the speech community. In order to answer the following questions: *what* events occurred in the course of time, *how* and *why* they occurred a few theoretical questions and principles pertaining to language history must be considered. The evolution or historical development of language is made up of diverse facts and processes. It includes the internal or structural development of the language system, its various subsystem and component parts.

The description of internal linguistic history is usually presented in accordance with the division of language into linguistic levels: the phonetic level, the morphological level, the syntactic level, and the lexical level. Accordingly, the history of the language can be subdivided into historical phonetics, historical morphology, historical syntax and historical lexicology. The “external” history of the language embraces a large number of diverse matters: the spread of the language in geographical and social space, the differentiation of language into functional varieties, contacts with other languages. In discussing these aspects of history we shall deal with the concept of language space and of linguistic situation.

In spite of certain changes at one or another linguistic level, there exist certain permanent, universal properties to be found in all languages at any period of time, such as *e.g. the division of sounds of speech and the parts of the sentence*. The proportion of stable and changeable features varies at different historical periods and at different linguistic levels but there is no doubt that we can find statics and dynamics both in synchrony and in diachrony.

One can distinguish three main types of differences in language: geographical, social and temporal. The OE form of the Past tense, Plural Indicative Mood of the verb *to find* – *fundon* [*ˈfundon*] became *founden* [*ˈfuːndən*] in the 12th-13th c. and *found* in Modern English. All these changes can be defined as structural or intralinguistic as they belong to the language system.

Most linguistic changes involve some kind of substitution and can therefore be called *replacements*. Replacements are subdivided into different types or patterns. A simple one-to-one replacement occurs when a new unit merely takes the place of the old one, e.g. in the words *but*, *feet* the vowels [u] and [e:] (pronounced four or five hundred years ago) have been replaced by [ʌ] and [i:] respectively ([u] > [ʌ] and [e:] > [i:]). Most linguistic changes have a more complicated pattern. Two or more units may fall together and thus may be replaced by one unit, or, vice versa, two distinct units may take the place of one. The former type of replacement is defined as *merging* or *merger*; the latter is known as *splitting* or *split*. The modern Common case of nouns is the result of the merging of three OE cases – Nominative, Genitive and Accusative. Many instances of splitting can be found in the history of English sounds, e.g. the consonant [k] has split into two phonemes [k] and [tʃ] in words like *kin*, *keep* and *chin*, *child*. Some changes are pure innovations, which do not replace anything, or pure losses, e.g. *high-jacking*, *baby-sitter*. OE *witena zemot* “Assembly of the elders”, numerous OE poetic words denoting *warriors*, *ships and the sea*.

Various classifications of linguistic changes are used to achieve an orderly analysis and presentation. Linguistic changes are conveniently classified and described in accordance with linguistic levels. At these levels further subdivisions are made: phonetic changes, positional changes, qualitative and quantitative changes, positional and independent changes, and so on. Changes at the higher level fall into formal and semantic; since they can affect the plane of expression and the plane of content; semantic changes, in their turn, may take various forms: narrowing or widening of meaning, metaphoric and metonymic changes, etc.

In describing the evolution of language, we shall more often deal with the development of entire sets of systems of linguistic units. Every separate change enters a large frame and forms a part of the development of a certain system. The alteration of one element is a part of the alteration of the entire system as it reveals a rearrangement of its structure, a change in the relationships of its components.

In the early periods of history the verb system in English was relatively poor: there were only two Simple tenses in the Indicative Mood – Present and Past – the

prototypes of the modern Present and Past Indefinite. In the course of time the system was enriched by numerous analytical forms: the Future tense, the Continuous and Perfect forms. The development of these forms transformed the entire verb system, which has acquired new formal and semantic oppositions; the growth of analytical forms has also affected the employment of the two simple forms, for some of their former meanings came to be expressed by new compound forms (e.g. futurity and priority).

Different parts or levels of language develop at different rates. The vocabulary of a language can change very rapidly. New words are usually built in conformity with the existing ways of word-formation, which are very slow to change; the new formations make use of available elements – roots, affixes- and support the productive word-building patterns by extending them to new instances. (e.g. *motel* – *hotel*; *typescript* – *manuscripts*) The system of phonemes cannot be subjected to sudden or rapid changes since it must preserve the oppositions between the phonemes required for the distinction of phonemes. Likewise, the grammatical system is very slow to change. Being the most abstract of linguistic level, it must provide stable formal devices for arranging words into classes and for connecting them into phrases and sentences.

3. The Concept and Rate of Linguistic Changes. Mechanism of Change.

Role of Synchronic Variation

Mechanism of Change. Role of Synchronic Variation

In order to understand how the change came about one must also trace the process or mechanism of the change. A linguistic change begins with synchronic variation. Alongside the existing language units there spring up new units. They may be similar in meaning but slightly different in form, stylistic connotations, social values, distribution in language space, etc. In the same way, new meanings may arise in the existing words or forms in addition to their main meanings. Both kinds of variation – formal and semantic – supply the raw material for impending changes.

Synchronic variation is caused by two main factors: functional differentiation of language and tendencies of historical development. The range of synchronic variation largely depends on the distinction of the main functional varieties and also on the variable use of the language in different conditions of communication, in various social group and in individual forms of speech. Synchronic variation reveals the tendencies of historical development and is produced by those tendencies. New features, which appear as instances of synchronic variation, represent *dynamics in synchrony* and arise in conformity with productive historical trends.

At every period of history, language offers a wide choice of expressive means to the speaker. From this stock the speaker selects forms of expression suitable in the given situation; sometimes he creates new expressive means – forms, words, phrases – in accordance with the productive historical tendencies. Old and new forms begin to be used indiscriminately, in **free variation**, which may lead to a change in their relative frequencies and finally to the substitution of one for another. The process of change consisting of several stages, including the stage of variation is illustrated below by the substitution of the verb ending *-(e)s* for the earlier *-eth*.

<i>Before the change</i>	<i>Process of change (variation stage)</i>	<i>After the change</i>
14 th c. <i>-eth</i>	15 th -17 th c. <i>-eth - (e)s</i>	18 th c. <i>-- -(e)s</i>
<i>help-eth</i>	<i>help-eth</i>	----
	<i>help-s</i>	<i>help-s</i>

Causes of Language Evolution

Like any movement in nature and society, the evolution of language is caused by the struggle of opposites. The moving power underlying the development of language is made up of two main forces: one force is the growing and changing needs of man in the speech community; the other is the resisting force that curbs the changes and preserves the language in a state fit for communication. The two forces are manifestations of the two principal functions of language – its expressive and communicative functions.

The most widely accepted classification of factors relevant to language history divides them into external or extralinguistic and internal (also intra-linguistic and systemic). The term “extra-linguistic” embraces a variety of conditions bearing upon different aspects of human life: events in the history of the people relevant to the development of the language, such as the structure of society, expansion over new geographical areas, migrations, political and economic unity or disunity, contacts with other peoples, the progress of culture and literature.

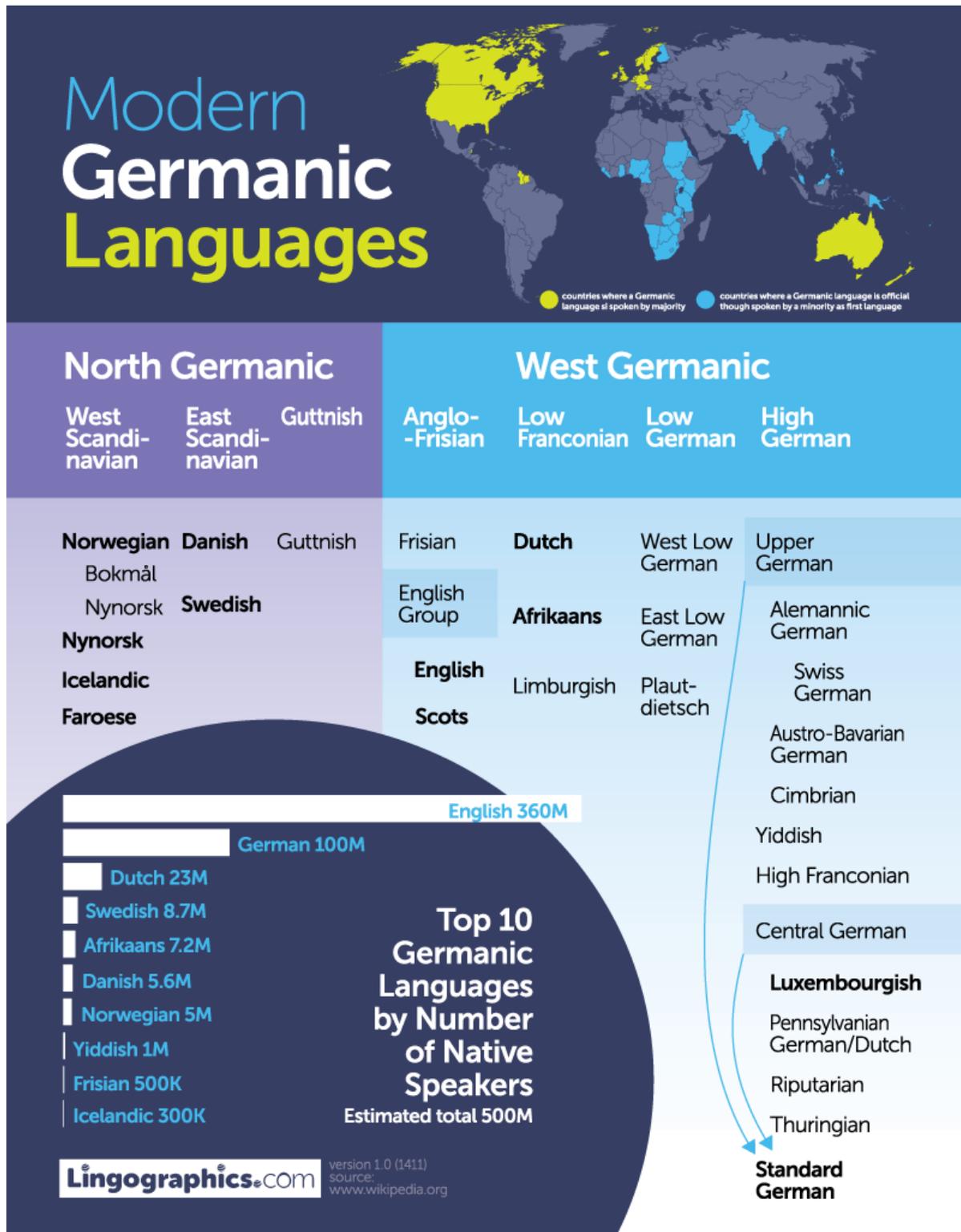
Internal factors of language evolution arise from the language system. They can be subdivided into general factors, which operate in all languages as inherent properties of any language system, and specific factors operating in one language or in a group of related languages at a certain period of time. The most general causes of language evolution are to be found in the tendencies to improve the language technique or its formal apparatus, e.g. *numerous assimilative and simplifying phonetic changes* in the history of English – *the consonant cluster [kn] in know, and knee was simplified to [n]*.

Among the general causes of language evolution, or rather among its universal regularities, we must mention the interdependence of changes within the sub-systems of the language and the interaction of changes at different linguistic levels. The simplification of noun morphology involved changes at different levels: phonetic weakening of final syllables, analogical leveling of forms at the morphological level, and stabilization of the word order at the level of syntax.

These specific factors are trends of evolution characteristic of separate languages or linguistic groups. Since English belongs to the Germanic group of languages, it shares many Germanic trends of development with cognate languages. These trends were caused by common Germanic factors but were transformed and modified in the history of English. Thus, English like other Germanic languages, displayed a tendency towards a more analytical grammatical structure, but it has gone further along this way of development than most other languages, probably owing to the peculiar combination of internal and external conditions and to the interaction of changes at different linguistic levels.

Germanic Languages

1. The History of Germanic Languages.
2. East Germanic. North Germanic.
3. West Germanic.



1. The History of Germanic Languages

The historical, or genealogical classification, groups languages in accordance with their origin from a common linguistic ancestor. Genetically, English belongs to the Germanic or Teutonic group of languages, which is one of the twelve groups of the Indo-European linguistic family. The Germanic languages in the modern world are English, German, Netherlandish (in the Netherlands and Belgium known also as Dutch and Flemish respectively), Afrikaans, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Frisian, Faroese (in the Faroe Islands), Yiddish. The history of the Germanic group begins with the appearance of what is known as the Proto-Germanic (or Primitive Teutonic) language. It is supposed to have split from related IE tongues sometime between the 15th and 10th c. BC. The southern coast of the Baltic Sea in the region of Elbe is regarded as the most probable original home of the Teutons.

Proto-Germanic (PG) is an entirely pre-historical language. It was never recorded in written form. In the 19th c. it was reconstructed by methods of comparative linguistics from written evidence in descendant languages. It is believed that at the earliest stages of history PG was fundamentally one language, though dialectally coloured. Towards the beginning of our era Germanic appears divided into dialectal groups and tribal dialects. The external history of the ancient Teutons around the beginning of our era is known from classical writings: *Commentaries on the Gallic war* (*Commentarii de bello Gallico*), *Natural History* (*Naturalis Historia*). The tri-partite division of the Germanic languages proposed by 19th c. philologists corresponds to Pliny's (a prominent Roman scientist and writer) grouping of the Old Teutonic tribes. PG split into three branches: East Germanic (Vindili in Pliny's classification), North Germanic (Hilleviones) and West Germanic (which embraces Ingveones, Istævones and Herminones in Pliny's list).

2. East Germanic. North Germanic

East Germanic. The most numerous and powerful tribes of the East Germanic subgroup were the Goths. The Gothic language, now dead, has been preserved in written records of the 4th-6th c. The Goths were the first of the Teutons to become

Christian. In the 4th c. Ulfilas, a west Gothic bishop, made a translation of the Gospels from Greek into Gothic. This manuscript is known as the *Silver Codex* (*Codex Argenteus*). It is one of the earliest texts in the languages of the Germanic group. It represents a form of language very close to PG and therefore throws light on the pre-written stages of history of all the languages of the Germanic group, including English.

North Germanic. The Teutons who stayed in Scandinavia after the departure of the Goths gave rise to the North Germanic subgroup of languages. The speech of the North Germanic tribes showed little dialectal variation until the 9th c. and is regarded as a sort of common North Germanic parent-language called Old Norse or Old Scandinavian. It has come down to us in runic inscriptions made in runic alphabet or the runes dated from the 3rd to the 9th c. The runes were used by North and West Germanic tribes. The disintegration of Old Norse into separate dialects and languages began after the 9th c., when the Scandinavians started out on their sea voyages. The principal linguistic differentiation in Scandinavia corresponded to the political division into Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The earliest written records in Old Danish, Old Norwegian and Old Swedish date from the 13th c.

In addition to the three languages on the mainland, the North Germanic subgroup includes two more languages: Icelandic and Faroese, whose origin goes back to the Viking Age. In the Faroe Islands the West Norwegian dialects brought by Scandinavians developed into a separate language called Faroese. Iceland was practically uninhabited at the time of the first Scandinavians settlements (9th c.). The West Scandinavian dialects grew into an independent language, Icelandic. As compared with other North Germanic languages, Icelandic has retained a more archaic vocabulary and grammatical system. Modern Icelandic is very much like Old Icelandic and Old Norse, for it has not participated in the linguistic changes, which took place in the other Scandinavian languages, probably because of its geographical isolation. Old Icelandic written records are: the Elder Edda (Poetic Edda), the Younger (prose) Edda and the Old Icelandic sagas.

3. West Germanic

West Germanic was probably quite distinct even at the beginning of our era since Pliny and Tacitus described them under three tribal names. On the eve of their “great migrations” of the 4th and 5th c. the West Germans included several tribes: the Franconians (or Franks) subdivided into Low, Middle and High Franconians; the Angles and the Frisian (known as the Anglo-Frisian group); the Jutes and the Saxons. A group of tribes known as High Germans lived in the mountainous southern regions of Germany (hence the name High Germans as contrasted to Low Germans – a name applied to the West Germanic tribes in the low-lying northern areas). The High Germans included a number of tribes: the Alemanians, the Swabians, the Bavarians, the Thuringians.

In the early Middle Ages the Franks consolidated into a powerful tribal alliance. Towards the 8th c. their kingdom grew into one of the largest states in Western Europe. Under Charlemagne (768 – 814) the Holy Roman Empire of the Franks embraced France and half of Italy, and stretched northwards up to the North and Baltic Sea. The Franconian dialects were spoken in the extreme North of the Empire; in the later Middle Ages they developed into Dutch – the language of the Low Countries (the Netherlands) and the Flemish – the language of Flanders. The earliest texts in Low Franconian date from the 10th c. - 12th c. records represent the earliest Old Dutch. About three hundred years ago the Dutch language was brought to South Africa by colonists from Southern Holland. Their dialects in Africa eventually grew into a separate West Germanic language, Afrikaans. Afrikaans has incorporated elements from the speech of English and German colonists in Africa and from the tongues of the natives.

The High Germanic dialects consolidated into a common language known as Old High German (OHG). The first written records in OHG date from the 8th and 9th c. (glosses to Latin texts, translations from Latin and religious poems). The Written Standard of New High German was established after the Reformation (16c.) though no Spoken Standard existed until the 19th c. as Germany remained politically divided into a number of kingdoms and dukedoms. To this day German is remarkable

for great dialectal diversity of speech. Another offshoot of High German is Yiddish. It grew from the High German dialects which were adopted by numerous Jewish communities scattered over Germany in the 11th and 12th c. these dialects blended with elements of Hebrew and Slavonic and developed into a separate West Germanic language with spoken and literary form.

At the Later stage of the great migration period – in the 5th c. – a group of West Germanic tribes started out on their invasion of the British Isles. The invaders came from the lowlands near the North Sea: the Angles, part of the Saxons and Frisians, and, probably, the Jutes. Their dialects in the British Isles developed into the English language. The territory of English was at first confined to what is now known as England proper. From the 13th to the 17th c. it extended to other parts of the British Isles.

Linguistic Features of Germanic Languages

- 1. Phonetics of Germanic Languages.**
- 2. Grammar. The Verb.**
- 3. Grammar. Morphology.**

1. Phonetics of Germanic Languages

Word stress. The peculiar Germanic system of word accentuation is one of the most important distinguishing features of the group. It is known that in ancient Indo European (IE), prior to the separation of Germanic, there existed two ways of word accentuation: musical pitch and force stress. The position of the stress was free and movable, which means that it could fall on any syllable of the word and could be shifted both in form-building and word-building (*Russian* *домом, дома, домовни-чать, дома*). Both these properties of the word accent were changed in PG. Force or expiratory stress (also called dynamic and breath stress) became the only type of stress used. The stress was now fixed on the first syllable, which was usually the root of the word and sometimes the prefix. These features of word accent were inherited by Germanic languages, and despite later alterations are observable today.

English: become, becoming, overcome.

German: Liebe, lieben, liebte, geliebt, lieberhaft, Liebling.

Due to the difference in the force of articulation the stressed and unstressed syllables underwent widely different changes: accented syllables were pronounced with great distinctness and precision, while unaccented became less distinct and were phonetically weakened.

Vowels. Throughout history, beginning with PG, vowels displayed a strong tendency to change. They underwent different kinds of alterations: *qualitative* and *quantitative*, *dependent* and *independent*. *Qualitative* changes affect the quality of the sound, e.g. [o > a] or [p > f]. *Quantitative* changes make long sounds short or short sounds long, e.g. [i > i:], [ll > l]. *Dependent* changes (also *positional* or *combinative*) are restricted to certain positions or phonetic conditions, e.g. a sound may change under the influence of the neighbouring sounds or in a certain type of a syllable. *Independent* changes (also *spontaneous* or *regular*) take place irrespective of phonetic conditions, e.g. they affect a certain sound in all positions.

From an early date the treatment of vowels was determined by the nature of words stress. In accented syllables the oppositions between vowels were carefully maintained and new distinctive features were introduced, so that the number of stressed vowels grew. In unaccented positions the original contrasts between vowels were weakened or lost. The distinction of short and long vowels was neutralised so that by the age of writing the long vowels in unstressed syllables had been shortened. As for originally short vowels, they tended to be reduced to a neutral sound, losing their qualitative distinctions and were often dropped in unstressed final syllables.

Strict differentiation of long and short vowels is commonly regarded as an important characteristic of the Germanic group. The contrast of short and long vowels is supported by the different directions of their changes. While long vowels generally tended to become closer and to diphthongise, short vowels, on the contrary, often changed into more open sounds. IE short [o] changed in Germanic into the more open vowel [a] and thus ceased to be distinguished from the original IE [a]. In other words

in PG they merged into [o]. The merging of long vowels proceeded in the opposite direction: IE long [a:] was narrowed to [o:] and merged with [o:].

In later PG and in separate Germanic languages the vowels displayed a tendency to positional assimilative changes. The pronunciation of a vowel was modified under the influence of the following or preceding consonant. Sometimes a vowel was approximated more closely to the following vowel. The resulting sounds were phonetically conditioned allophones which could eventually coincide with another phoneme or develop into a new phoneme. After the changes, in Late PG the vowel system contained the following sounds:

SHORT VOWELS i e a o u

LONG VOWELS i: e: a: o: u:

It is believed that in addition to these monophthongs PG had a set of diphthongs made up of more open nuclei and closer glides: [ei], [ai], [eu], [au] and also [iu]. Nowadays many scholars interpret them as sequences of two independent monophthongs.

Consonants. Proto-Germanic Consonant Shift. The specific peculiarities of consonants constitute the most remarkable distinctive feature of the Germanic linguistic group. Comparison with other languages within the IE family reveals regular correspondences between Germanic and non-Germanic consonants. Thus, we regularly find [f] in Germanic where other IE languages have [p]:

E.g. E full --- R полный --- Fr plein

The consonants in Germanic look “shifted” as compared with the consonants on non-Germanic languages. The alterations of the consonants took place in PG, and the resulting sounds were inherited by the languages of the Germanic group. The changes of consonants in PG were first formulated in terms of a phonetic law by Jacob Grimm in the early 19th c .and are often called Grimm’s Law. It is also known as the *First* or *Proto-Germanic consonant shift*.

By the terms of Grimm’s Law voiceless plosives developed inPG into voiceless fricatives (Act I). IE voiced plosives were shifted to voiceless plosives (Act II)

and IE voiced aspirated plosives were reflected either as voiced fricatives or as pure voiced plosives (Act III).

Another important series of consonant changes in PG was discovered in the late 19th c. by a Danish scholar, Carl Verner. They are known as Verner's Law. Verner's Law explains some correspondences of consonants which seemed to contradict Grimm's Law and were for a long time regarded as exceptions. According to Verner's Law all the early PG voiceless fricatives [f, θ, x] which arose under Grimm's Law, and also [s] inherited from PIE, became voiced between vowels if the preceding vowel was unstressed. In the absence of these conditions they remained voiceless. The voicing occurred in early PG at the time when the stress was not yet fixed on the root-morpheme. The process of voicing can be shown as a step in a succession of consonant changes in prehistorically reconstructed forms.

e.g. the changes of the second consonant in the word father: Proto-Indo-European – pa'ter > Early PG – fa'θar > fa'ðar > Late PG 'faðar

Verner's Law accounts for the appearance of voiced fricatives or its later modifications [d] in place of the voiceless [θ] which ought to be expected under Grimm's Law. In late PG, when the phonetic conditions that caused the voicing had disappeared, the stress had shifted to the first syllable.

2. Grammar. The Verb

Like other old IE languages both PG and the OG languages had a synthetic grammatical structure, which means that the relationships between the parts of the sentence were shown by the forms of the words rather than by their position or by auxiliary words. In later history all the Germanic languages developed analytical forms and ways of word connection. The suppletive way of form-building was inherited from ancient IE. It was restricted to a few personal pronouns, adjectives and verbs. Compare the following forms of pronouns in Germanic and non-Germanic languages: L – ego Fr – je R - я Gt – ik O Icel – ek OE – ic NE – I

The wide use of sound interchanges has always been a characteristic feature of the Germanic group. In various forms of the word and in words derived from one and

the same root, the root-morpheme appeared as a set of variants. The consonants were relatively stable, the vowels were variable. Forms of the verb *bear*:

O Icel bera – bar – barum – borrin

Vowel interchanges found in Old and Modern Germanic languages originated at different historical periods. The earliest set of vowel interchanges is called *vowel gradation* or *ablaut*. Ablaut is an independent vowel interchange unconnected with any phonetic conditions. Different vowels appear in the same environment, surrounded by the same sound. (All the words in the example given above are examples of ablaut.) Vowel gradation did not reflect any phonetic changes but was used as a special independent device to differentiate between words and grammatical forms built from the same root. Ablaut was inherited by Germanic from ancient IE. The principal gradation series used in the IE languages – [e – o] – can be shown in Russian examples: *несму – носил*. This kind of ablaut is called *qualitative*, as the vowels differ only in quality. Alternation of short and long vowels, and also alternation with a “zero” (i.e. lack of vowel) represent *quantitative* ablaut:

L [e:] legi (elected) [e] lego (elect)

The Germanic languages employed both types of ablaut – qualitative and quantitative, - and their combinations. Of all its sphere of application in Germanic ablaut was most consistently used in building the principal forms of the verbs called strong. Each form was characterised by a certain grade. Each set of principal forms of the verb employed a gradation series. Gradation vowels were combined with other sounds in different classes of verbs and thus yielded several new gradation series.

Examples of Vowel Gradation in Gothic Strong Verbs

IE	e	o	zero	zero
PG	e/ i	a	zero	zero
Principal forms	Infinitive	Past sg.	Past pl.	Participle II
Class 1	reisan	rais	risum	risans NE rise
Class 2	kuisan	kaus	kusum	kusans choose
Class 3	bindan	band	bundum	bundans bind

3. Grammar. Morphology

Some changes in the morphological structure of the word in Late PG account for the development of an elaborate system of declensions in OG languages, and for the formation of grammatical endings. Originally, in Early PG the word consisted of three main component parts: the root, the stem-suffix and the grammatical ending. The stem-suffix was a means of word derivation, the ending – a marker of the grammatical form. In Late PG the old stem-suffixes lost their derivational force and merged with other components of the word, usually with the endings. The word was simplified: the three-morpheme structure was transformed into a two-morpheme structure.

PG - root + stem-suffix + grammatical ending *fisk – a – z*

OG - stem + grammatical ending *fisks* *(New English fish)*

Most nouns and adjectives in PG, and also many verbs, had stem-forming suffixes. According to stem-suffixes they fell into groups, or classes: *a-stem*, *i-stem*, *o-stem*, etc. This grouping accounts for the formation of different declensions in nouns and adjectives, and for some differences in the conjugation of verbs. Groups of nouns with different stem-suffixes made distinct types of declension. The original grammatical endings were alike for most nouns, e.g. *Nominative, singular –z*; *Dative –i*; *Accusative –m*. When these endings fused with different stem-suffixes, each group of nouns acquired a different set of endings.

The bulk of the verbs in PG and in other OG languages fall into two large groups called *strong* and *weak*. The terms strong and weak were proposed by J. Grimm. He called the verbs strong because they had preserved the richness of form since the age of the parent-language and in this sense could be contrasted to weak verbs lacking such variety of forms. The main difference between these groups lies in the means of building the principal forms: the Present tense, the Past tense and Participle II. The strong verbs built their principal forms with the help of root vowel interchanges plus certain grammatical endings. The weak verbs built the Past tense and Participle II by inserting a special suffix between the root and the ending. The suffix – PG –ð is referred to as the dental suffix, as [ð] is an interdental fricative consonant:

e.g. O Icel (Infinitive) – kalla (Past tense) – kallaða (Participle II) – kallaðr (NE) call, called; OE (Infinitive) – macian (Past tense) – macode (Participle II) – macod (NE) make, made.

Old English

- 1. Old English. Historical background.**
- 2. Old English dialects. Old English written records.**
- 3. Old English alphabet and pronunciation.**

1. Old English. Historical background

The history of the English language begins with the invasion of the British Isles by Germanic tribes in the 5th c. of our era. Prior to the Germanic invasion the British Isles must have been inhabited for at least fifty thousand years. The earliest inhabitants whose linguistic affiliation has been established are the Celts. The first millennium B. C. was the period of Celtic migrations and expansion. Celtic languages were spoken over extensive parts of Europe before our era. Later they were absorbed by other IE languages and left very few vestiges behind.

Julius Caesar made two raids on Britain, in 55 and 54 B. C. Although he failed to subjugate Britain, Roman economic penetration to Britain grew. In A. D. 43 Britain was again invaded by Roman legions under Emperor Claudius, and towards the end of the century was made a province of the Roman Empire. The Romanization of distant Britain was more superficial than that of continental provinces. The Roman occupation of Britain lasted nearly 400 years. It came to an end in the early 5th c. The Empire was breaking up due to internal and external causes, - particularly the attacks of barbarian tribes (including the Teutons) and the growth of independent kingdoms on former Roman territories.

The 5th c. was the age of increased Germanic expansion. About the middle of the century several West Germanic tribes overran Britain and, for the most part, had colonised the island by the end of the century, though the invasion lasted well into the

6th c. The invaders of Britain came from the western subdivision of Germanic tribes. The newcomers were of the three strongest races of Germany, the Saxons, the Angles and the Jutes. Gildas, a Celtic historian of the day, alluded to the settlement as the “ruin of Britain” and described the horrible devastation of the country. The bulk of the new population sprang from the Germanic invaders, though, to a certain extent, they intermixed with the Britons. Gradually the Germanic conquerors and the surviving Celts blended into a single people. The invaders certainly prevailed over the natives so far as language was concerned. The linguistic conquest was complete. After the settlement West Germanic tongues came to be spoken all over Britain with the exception of a few distant regions where Celts were in the majority: Scotland, Wales and Cornwall. The migration of the Germanic tribes to the British Isles and the resulting separation from the Germanic tribes in the mainland was a decisive event in their linguistic history. Being cut off from related OG tongues the closely related group of West Germanic dialects developed into a separate Germanic language, English. That is why the Germanic settlement of Britain can be regarded as the beginning of the independent history of the English language.

Some events of external history have a direct bearing on the development of the language. They are: the economic and social structure of society, the introduction of Christianity and the relations between the kingdoms. The economic isolation of Britain as well as the political disunity of the country led to the formation of new geographical boundaries between the speech of different localities. The growth of feudalism was accompanied by the rise of regional dialectal division replacing the tribal division of the Germanic settlers. These forces, however, worked together with the unifying force: the complete separation from related continental tribes (and tongues) united the people into one corporate whole and transformed their closely related dialects into a single tongue different from its continental relations.

In the 8th c. raiders from Scandinavia (the “Danes”) made their first plundering attacks on England. The struggle of the English against the Scandinavians lasted over 300 years, in the course of which period more than half of England was occupied by the invaders and reconquered again. The linguistic amalgamation of the Danes was

easy, since their tongues belonged to the same linguistic group. The ultimate effect of the Scandinavian invasions on the English language became manifested at a late date, in the 12th – 13th c., when the Scandinavian element was incorporated in the central English dialects.

A most important role in the history of the English language was played by the introduction of Christianity. In less than a century (6th c.) practically all England was Christianized. The strict unified organization of the church proved a major factor in the centralization of the country. The introduction of the Christianity gave a strong impetus to the growth of culture and learning. Monasteries were founded all over the country, with monastic schools attached. Religious services and teaching were conducted in Latin. English culture shifted to the southern kingdoms, most of all to Wessex, where a cultural efflorescence began during the reign of Alfred (871 – 901). From that time till the end of the OE period Wessex, with its capital at Winchester, remained the cultural center of England.

2. Old English dialects. Old English written records

Kentish. It had developed from the tongue of the Jutes and Frisians.

West Saxon, the main dialect of the Saxon group. Other Saxon dialects in England have not survived in written form and are not known to modern scholars.

Mercian, a dialect derived from the speech of the southern Angles.

Northumbrian, another Anglian dialect.

The boundaries between the dialects were uncertain and probably movable. The dialects passed into one another imperceptibly and dialectal forms were freely borrowed from one dialectal into another. Throughout this period the dialects enjoyed relative equality. None of them was the dominant form of speech, each being the main type used over a limited area. The changes in the linguistic situation justify the distinction of two historical periods. In Early OE from the 5th to the 7th c. the would be English language consisted of a group of spoken tribal dialects having neither a written nor a dominant form. At the time of written OE the dialects had changes from tribal to regional. They possessed both an oral and a written form and were no longer

equal. In the domain of writing the West Saxon dialect prevailed over its neighbours. Alongside OE dialects a foreign language, Latin, was widely used in writing.

Old English Written Records

The records of OE writing embrace a variety of matter: they are dated in different centuries, represent various local dialects, belong to diverse genres and are written in different scripts. The earliest written records of English are inscriptions on hard material made in special alphabet known as the runes. The word rune originally meant “secret”, “mystery” and hence came to denote inscriptions believed to be magic. Later the word “rune” was applied to the characters used in writing these inscriptions. The runes were used as letters, each symbol to indicate a separate sound. Besides, a rune could also represent a word beginning with that sound and was called by that word, e.g. the rune þ denoting the sound [θ] and [ð] was called “thorn” and could stand for *OE ðorn* (*NE thorn*); the runes ƿ, stood for [w] and [f] and were called “wynn” joy and “feoh” cattle (*NE fee*). In some inscriptions the runes were found arranged in a fixed order making a sort of alphabet. After the first six letters this alphabet is called **futhork**.

The two best known runic inscriptions in England are the earliest extant OE written records. One of them is an inscription on a box called the “Franks Casket”, the other is a short text on a stone cross in Dumfriesshire near the village of Ruthwell known as the “Ruthwell Cross”. The Casket is a small box made of whale bone. There are pictures in the centre and runic inscriptions around. The Ruthwell Cross is a 15ft tall stone cross inscribed and ornamented on all sides. The principal inscription has been reconstructed into a passage from an OE religion poem, *THE DREAM OF THE ROOD*.

Our knowledge of the OE language comes mainly from manuscripts written in Latin characters. Latin in England was the language of the church and also the language of writing and education. Like the scribes of other countries, British scribes modified the Latin script to suit their needs. They changed the shape of some letters, added new symbols to indicate sounds, for which Latin had no equivalents.

The first English words to be written down with the help of Latin characters were personal names and place names inserted in Latin texts. Among the earliest insertions in Latin texts are pieces of OE poetry. Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (written in Latin in the 8th c.) contains an English fragment of five lines known as "Bede's Death Song" and a religious poem of nine lines, "Cædmon's Hymn". The earliest poem of the time was *Beowulf*, an epic of the 7th or 8th c. It is based on old legends about the tribal life of the Ancient Teutons. Practically all OE poetry is written in the OG alliterative verse: the lines are not rhymed and the number of syllables in a line is free, only the number of stressed syllables being fixed. OE prose is a most valuable source of information for the history of the language. The earliest samples of continuous prose are the first pages of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*: brief annals of the year's happenings made at various monasteries.

Old English alphabet and pronunciation

OE scribes used two kinds of letters: the runes and the letters of the Latin alphabet. Like any alphabetic writing, OE writing was based on a phonetic principle: every letter indicated a separate sound. This principle, however, was not always observed, even at the earliest stages of phonetic spelling. Some OE letters indicated two or more sounds, even distinct phonemes.

Old English Alphabet: a æ b c [k], [k']; d e f [f], [v]; Ʒ [g], [g'], [y], [j]; h [x], [x'], [h]; i, l, m, n [n], [ŋ]; o p r s [s], [z]; t ð [ð], [θ]; u w x y [y].

The letters could indicate short and long sounds. The length of vowels is shown by a macron: *bat* [ba:t], *NE boat* or by a line above the letter. Long consonants are indicated by double letters.

In reading OE texts one should observe the following rules for letters indicating more than one sound. The letters f, s and Ʒ, stand for voiced fricatives between vowels and also between a vowel and a voiced consonants; otherwise they indicate corresponding voiceless fricatives.

f	OE ofer [over]	NE over	OE feohtan [feoxtan]	NE fight
	selfa [selva]	self	oft [oft]	often
s	risan [ri:zan]	rise	ras [ra:s]	rose

			Ʒast [ga:st]	ghost
ð	oðer [o:ðer]	other	ðæt [θæt]	that
	wyrðe [wyrðe]	worthy	leoð [leo:θ]	“song”

The letter Ʒ stands for [g] initially before back vowels, for [j] before and front vowels, for [ʒ] between back vowels and for [gʷ] mostly when preceded by *c*:

OE Ʒan [g]; Ʒear [j]; da Ʒas [y]; secƷan [gʷg] (NE go, year, day, days, say).

The letter h stands for [x] between a back vowel and a consonant and also initially before consonants and for [xʷ] next to front vowels; the distribution of [h] is uncertain: *OE hlæne [x]; tahte [x], niht [xʷ]; he [x] or [h] (NE lean, taught, night, he).*

Old English Phonetics

- 1. Word Stress. Independent Changes. Development of Monophthongs. Development of Diphthongs.**
- 2. Assimilative Vowel Changes: Breaking and Diphthongization. Palatal Mutation.**
- 3. Treatment of Fricatives. Hardening. Rhotacism. Voicing and Devoicing. West Germanic Gemination of Consonants. Velar Consonants in Early Old English. Growth of New Phonemes. Old English Consonant System (9th – 10th c.)**

1. Word stress

OE is so far removed from Modern E that one may take it for an entirely different language. This is largely due to the peculiarities of its pronunciation. The survey of OE phonetics deals with word accentuation, the systems of vowels and consonants and their origins. In OE a dynamic or force stress was employed. In disyllabic and polysyllabic words the accent fell on the root-morpheme or on the first syllable. Word stress was fixed. Polysyllabic words, especially compounds, may have had two stresses, chief and secondary, the chief stress being fixed on the first root-morpheme.

In words with prefixes the position of the stress varied: verb prefixes were unaccented, while in nouns and adjectives the stress was commonly thrown on to the prefix.

<i>a-'risan, mis-'faran - verb</i>	<i>(NE arise; go astray)</i>
<i>'to-weard, 'or-eald - adjective</i>	<i>(NE toward; very old)</i>
<i>'mis-dæd, 'uð - ʒenʒ - noun</i>	<i>(NE misdeed; escape)</i>

If the words were derived from the same root, word stress, together with other means, served to distinguish the noun from the verb.

<i>'and-swaru (noun) - and-'swarian (verb)</i>	<i>(NE answer)</i>
<i>'on-ʒin (noun) - on-'zinnan (verb)</i>	<i>(NE beginning, begin)</i>
<i>'forwyrd (noun) - for-'weorðan (verb)</i>	<i>(NE destruction, perish)</i>

Independent changes. Development of monophthongs

The PG short [a] and the long [a:], which had arisen in West and North Germanic, underwent similar alterations in Early OE. They were fronted and, in the process of fronting, they split into several sounds. The principal regular direction of the change – [a] > [æ] and [a:] > [æ:] – is often referred to as the fronting or palatalisation of [a, a:]. The other directions can be interpreted as positional deviations or restrictions to this trend. Short [a] could change to [ɔ] or [a] and long [a:] became [o:] before nasal. The preservation or, perhaps, the restoration of the short [a] was caused by back vowel.

Development of diphthongs

The PG diphthongs - [ei, ai, iu, eu, au] underwent regular independent changes in Early OE. They took place in all phonetic conditions irrespective of environment. The diphthongs with the *i-glide* were monophthongised into [i:] and [a:], respectively. The diphthongs in –u were reflected as long diphthongs [io:], [eo:] and [ea:]. If the sounds in PG were not diphthongs but sequences of two separate phonemes, the changes should be defined as phonologization of vowel sequences. This will mean that these changes increased the number of vowel phonemes in the language. Moreo-

ver, they introduced new distinctive features into the vowel system by setting up vowels with diphthongal glides. Henceforth, monophthongs were opposed to diphthongs.

2. Assimilative vowel changes: breaking and diphthongization

The tendency to assimilative vowel change, characteristic of late PG and of the OG languages, accounts for many modifications of vowels in Early OE. Under the influence of succeeding and preceding consonants some Early OE monophthongs developed into diphthongs. If a front vowel stood before a velar consonant there developed a short glide between them, as the organs of speech prepared themselves for the transition from one sound to the other. The glide, together with the original monophthong formed a diphthong. Diphthongization of vowels could also be caused by preceding consonants: a glide arose after a palatal consonants as a sort of transition to the succeeding vowel.

The front vowels [i], [e] and the newly developed [æ], changed into diphthongs with a back glide when they stood before [h], before long (doubled) [ll] or [l] plus another consonant, and before [r] plus other consonant, e.g. [e] > [eo] in OE *deorc*, NE *dark*. The change is known as *breaking or fracture*. Breaking is dated in Early OE, for in OE texts we find the process already completed. Yet it must have taken place later than the vowel changes described above as the new vowel [æ], which appeared some time during the 5th c., could be subjected to breaking under the conditions described.

Palatal Mutation

The OE tendency to positional vowel change is most apparent in the process termed “mutation”. Mutation is the change of one vowel to another through the influence of a vowel in the succeeding syllable. The most important series of vowel mutations, shared in varying degrees by all OG languages (except Gothic), is known as “i-Umlaut” or “palatal mutation”. Palatal mutation is the fronting and raising of vowels through the influence of [i] or [j] (the non-syllabic [i]) in the immediately following syllable. The vowel was fronted and made narrower so as to approach the articulation

of [i]. *OE an (NE one)* with a back vowel in the root and *OE æniȝ (NE any)* derived from the same root with the root vowel mutated to a narrow and more front sound under the influence of [i] in the suffixes: [a:] > [æ].

Since the sounds [i] and [j] were common in suffixes and endings, palatal mutation was of very frequent occurrence. Practically all Early OE monophthongs, as well as diphthongs except the closest front vowels [e] and [i] were palatalised in these phonetic conditions. Palatal mutation led to the growth of new vowel interchanges and to the increased variability of the root-morphemes. Owing to palatal mutation many related words and grammatical forms acquired new root-vowel interchanges: *boc, bec (NE book, books)*.

Old English Vowel System (9th – 10th c.)

Monophthongs

Diphthongs

Short i e (æ) æ (a) a o u y (ie) ea eo

Long i: e: (æ:) æ: a: o: u: y: (ie) ea: eo:

[a] - is a nasalised [a]. The vowels shown in parantheses were unstable and soon fused with resembling sounds [a] with [a] or [o], [ie, ie:] with [y, y:].

3. Treatment of Fricatives. Hardening. Rhotacism. Voicing and Devoicing

On the whole, consonants were historically more stable than vowels. Still qualitative and quantitative, independent and positional changes took place. After the changes under Grimm's Law and Verner's Law PG had the following two sets of fricative consonants: voiceless [f, θ, x, s] and voiced [v, ð, ȝ, z]. PG voiced fricatives tended to be hardened to corresponding plosives while voiceless fricatives developed new voiced allophones. The PG voiced [ð] was always hardened to [d] in OE and other WG languages: *e.g. Gt goðs, O Icel goðr and OE ȝod (NE good)*. The two other fricative, [v] and [ȝ] were hardened to [b] and [g] initially and after nasals, otherwise they remained fricatives. PG [z] underwent a phonetic modification through the stage of [ȝ] into [r] and thus became a sonorant, which ultimately merged with the older IE

[r]: e.g. *Gt wasjan*, *O Icel verja* and *OE werian* (*NE wear*). This process is termed rhotacism.

In the meantime or somewhat later the PG set of voiceless fricatives [f, θ, x, s] and also those of the voiced fricatives which had not turned into plosives, that is, [v] and [ʒ], were subjected to a new process of voicing and devoicing. In Early OE they became or remained voiced intervocally and between vowels, sonorants and voiced consonants. They remained or became voiceless in other environments, namely, initially, finally and next to other voiceless consonants: e.g. *Gt qiða*, *qað* with [θ] in both forms, and *OE cweðan* [ð] between vowels and *cwæð* [θ] at the end of the word *NE arch*. (*quoth – say*).

West Germanic gemination of consonants

In all WG languages, at an early stage of their independent history, most consonants were lengthened after a short vowel before [j]. This process is known as WG “gemination” or “doubling” of consonants, as the resulting long consonants are indicated by means of double letters, e.g. *fuljan* > *OE fyllan* (*NE fill*). During the process, or some time later, [j] was lost, so that the long consonants ceased to be phonetically conditioned. When the long and short consonants began to occur in identical phonetic conditions, namely between vowels, their distinction became phonemic. The change did not affect the sonorant [r], e.g. *OE werian* (*NE wear*), nor did it operate if the consonant was preceded by a long vowel, e.g. *OE deman*, *metan* (*NE deem*, *meet*) – the earlier forms of these words contained [j], which had caused palatal mutation but had not led to the lengthening of consonants.

Velar consonants in Early Old English. Growth of new phonemes

In Early OE velar consonants split into two distinct sets of sounds, which eventually led to the growth of new phonemes. The velar consonants [k, g, x, ʒ] were palatalized before a front vowel, and sometimes also after a front vowel, unless followed by a back vowel. Thus in *OE cild* (*NE child*) the velar consonant [k] was softened to [kʰ] as it stood before the front vowel [i:]: [kild] > [kʰild]. In the absence of these phonetic conditions the consonants did not change, with the result that lingual consonants split into two sets, palatal and velar. The difference between them became

phonemic when, a short time later, velar and palatal consonants began to occur in similar phonetic conditions;

e.g. OE cild [k'ild], ciest [k'iest] (NE child, chest) with palatal [k'] and ceald, cepan (NE cold, keep) with hard, velar [k] – both before front vowels.

In the course of time the phonetic difference between them grew and towards the end of the period the palatal consonants developed into sibilants and affricates: [k'] > [tʃ], [g] > [dʒ].

Loss of consonants in some positions

Nasal sonorants were regularly lost before fricatives consonants. In the process the preceding vowel was probably nasalised and lengthened: *e.g. Gt uns, OHG uns – OE us (NE us)*. Fricative consonants could be dropped between vowels and before some plosive consonants. These losses were accompanied by a compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel or the fusion of the preceding and succeeding vowel into a diphthong: *e.g. OE seon*, which corresponds to *Gt saihwan, OE slean (NE slay)*. The loss of semi-vowels and consonants in unstressed final syllables took place as well. [j] was regularly dropped in suffixes after producing various changes in the root: palatal mutation of vowels, lengthening of consonants after short vowels.

Old English Consonant System (9th – 10th c.)

The system consisted of several correlated sets of consonants. All the consonants fell into plosives and fricatives. Plosives were further differentiated as voiced and voiceless, the difference being phonemic. The fricative consonants were also subdivided into voiced and voiceless. In this set sonority was merely a phonetic difference between allophones. The most universal distinctive feature in the consonants system was the difference in length. During the entire OE period long consonants are believed to have been opposed to short ones on a phonemic level. They were mostly distinguished in intervocal position. Single and geminated (long) consonants are found in identical phonemic conditions: *e.g. OE læde (1st Person, Singular, Present of lædan (NE lead)) and lædde (Past)*.

Old English Consonants

Place of articulation	Labial, labiodental	Forelingual (dental)	Mediolingual (palatal)	Back lingual (velar)
Manner of articulation				
plosive voiceless	p	t	k'	k
voiced	p: b	t: d	k': g':	k: g:
fricative voiceless	f	θ θ: ð	x' x':	x x: (h)
voiced	f: v	s s: z	ʒ' (j)	ʒ
sonorants	m m: w	n n: r	j	(ŋ)

Old English Grammar

1. OE Grammar. General Remarks.
2. OE Noun. Grammatical Categories. The Use of Cases.
3. Morphological Classifications of Nouns. Declensions.
4. The Verb. Grammatical Categories of the Finite Verb.

1. OE Grammar. General remarks

OE was a synthetic, or inflected type of language. It showed the relations between words and expressed other grammatical meanings mainly with the help of simple (synthetic) grammatical forms. In building grammatical forms OE employed grammatical endings, sound interchanges in the root, grammatical prefixes, and suppletive formation.

The parts of speech to be distinguished in OE are as follows: the noun, the adjective, the pronoun, the numeral (all referred to as nominal parts of speech or nomina), the verb, the adverb, the preposition, the conjunction, and the interjection. Grammatical categories are usually subdivided into nominal categories, found in nominal parts of speech and verbal categories found chiefly in the finite verb. There were five nominal in OE: number, case, gender, degrees of comparison, and the category of definiteness/ indefiniteness. Verbal categories were not numerous: tense and mood – verbal categories proper – and number and person, showing agreement between the verb-predicate and the subject of the sentence. The distinction of categorial

forms by the noun and the verb was to a large extent determined by their division into morphological classes: declensions and conjugations.

2. The Noun. Grammatical categories. The use of cases

The OE noun had two grammatical or morphological categories: number and case. In addition, nouns distinguished three genders, but this distinction was not a grammatical category. It was merely a classifying feature accounting for the division of nouns into morphological classes. The category of number consisted of two members, singular and plural. They were well distinguished formally in all the declensions. The noun had four cases: Nominative, Genitive, Dative and Accusative.

The Nominative can be loosely defined as the case of the active agent, for it was the case of the subject mainly used with verbs denoting activity. The Nominative could also indicate the subject characterised by a certain quality or state. It could serve as a predicative and as the case of address, there being no special Vocative case: *e.g. Sunu min, hlyste minre lare – address (My son, listen to my teaching)*. The Genitive case was primarily the case of nouns and pronouns serving as attributes to other nouns. The meaning of the Genitive were very complex and can only roughly be grouped under the headings “Subjective” and “Objective” Genitive. Subjective Gen. is associated with the possessive meaning and the meaning of origin: *e.g. ʒrendles dæda – Grendel’s deeds*. Objective Gen. is associated with what is termed “partitive meaning: *e.g. sum hund scipa – a hundred of ships*. Dative was the chief case used with prepositions: *e.g. on mozenne – in the morning*. The Accusative case was the form that indicated a relationship to a verb. Being a direct object it denoted the recipient of an action, the result of the action and other meanings: *e.g. se wulf nimð and todæld ða sceap – the wolf takes and scatters the sheep*.

There was considerable fluctuation in the use of cases in OE. One and the same verb could be construed with different cases without any noticeable change of the meaning. The vague meaning of cases was of great consequence for the subsequent changes of the case system.

3. Morphological classifications of Nouns. Declensions

The most remarkable feature of OE nouns was their elaborate system of declensions, which was a sort of morphological classification. The total number of declensions, including both the major and minor types, exceeded twenty five. All in all there were only ten distinct endings (plus some phonetic variants of these endings) and few relevant root-vowel interchanges used in the noun paradigms. *Historically, the OE system of declensions was based on a number of distinctions: the stem-suffix, the gender of nouns, the phonetic structure of the word, phonetic changes in the final syllables.*

In the first place, the morphological classification of OE nouns rested upon the most ancient (IE) grouping of nouns according to the stem-suffixes. Stem-suffixes could consist of vowels (vocalic stems, e.g. *a-stem*, *i-stem*), of consonants (consonantal stems, e.g. *n-stem*), of sound sequences (e.g. *-ja-stems*, *-nd-stems*). Some groups of nouns had no stem-forming suffix and they are usually termed “root-stems”: e.g. *man*, *boc – man*, *book*.

Another reason which accounts for the division of nouns into numerous declensions is their grouping according to gender. OE nouns distinguished three genders: Masculine, Feminine, and Neutral. Though originally a semantic division, gender in OE was not always associated with the meaning of nouns. In OE gender was primarily a grammatical distinction. Masc., Fem., and Neut. nouns could have different forms, even if they belonged to the same form (types of declension).

The division into genders was in a certain way connected with the division into stems, though there was no direct correspondence between them. Some stems were represented by nouns of one particular gender, e.g. *o-stems* were always Fem., others embraced nouns of two or three genders.

Other reasons accounting for the division into declensions were structural and phonetic. Monosyllabic nouns had certain peculiarities as compared to polysyllabic. Monosyllables with a long root-syllable (that is, containing vowel plus a consonant or a short vowel plus two consonants – also called “long-stemmed” nouns) differed in some forms from nouns with a short syllable (short-stemmed nouns).

4. The Verb. Grammatical categories of the Finite Verb

The OE verb was characterized by many peculiar features. Though the verb had few grammatical categories, its paradigm had a very complicated structure. Verbs fell into numerous morphological classes and employed a variety of form-building means. All the forms of the verb were synthetic, as analytical forms were only beginning to appear. The non-finite forms had little in common with the finite forms but shared many features with the nominal parts of speech.

The verb-predicate agreed with the subject of the sentence into two grammatical categories: Number and Person. Its specifically verbal categories were Mood and Tense. Thus in OE *he bindeð* - (*he binds*) *the verb is in the 3rd Person, Singular, Present Tense, Indicative Mood*. In the sentence *Brinzað me hider ða* (*Bring me those loaves*) *brinzað is in the Imperative Mood, Plural*.

Finite forms regularly distinguished between two numbers: Singular and Plural. Opposition through number was never neutralised. The category of Person was made up of three forms: the 1st, the 2nd and the 3rd. Person distinctions were neutralised in many positions. Person was consistently shown only in the Present Tense of the Indicative Mood Singular. Person was not distinguished in the Plural not in the Subjunctive Mood.

The category of Mood was constituted by the Indicative, Imperative and Subjunctive. There were a few homonymous forms which eliminated the distinction between the moods. Subjunctive did not differ from the Indicative in the 1st Person Singular, Present Tense – *bere, deme* (*bear, deem*) – and in the 1st and 3rd Person in the Past. The category of Tense in OE consisted of two categorial forms, Present and Past. The Tenses were formally distinguished by all the verbs in the Indicative and Subjunctive Moods.

In order to understand the structure of the verb system one should get acquainted with the meanings and use of Moods and Tenses in OE. The use of the Subjunctive Mood in OE was in many respects different from the use in later ages. Subjunctive Forms conveyed a very general meaning of unreality or supposition. In addition,

Subjunctive was common in clauses of time, clauses of result and in clauses presenting reported speech.

The meanings of the tense forms were also very general. The forms of the Present were used to indicate present and future actions: *e.g. ðonne ðu ða in bringst, he ytt and bletsað ðe – futurity – when you bring them, he will eat and bless you*. The Past Tense was used in a most general sense to indicate various events in the past (including those which are nowadays expressed by the forms of the Past Continuous, Past Perfect, Present Perfect).

The existence of the four grammatical categories is confirmed by consistent opposition of form and meaning. In addition two debating categories Aspect and Voice should be mentioned. Until recently it was believed that in OE – as well as in other OG languages – the category of Aspect was expressed by the regular contrast of verbs with and without the prefix *-ze*. Verbs with the prefix had a perfect meaning while the same verbs without the prefix indicated a non-completed action: *e.g. OE feohtan - zefeohtan (fight – gain by fighting)*. In some recent explorations, however, it has been shown that the prefix *-ze* in OE can hardly be regarded as a marker of Aspect. It could change the aspective meaning of the verb by making it perfective, but it could also change its lexical meaning: *e.g. sittan - zesittan (sit – occupy)*. It has also been noticed that verbs without a prefix could sometimes have a perfective meaning: *e.g. siððan Withergyld læz - since Withergild fell*. It follows that the prefix *-ze* should rather be regarded as an element of word-building, a derivational prefix of vague general meaning, though its ties with certain shades of aspective meaning are obvious.

The category of Voice in OE is another debatable issue. In OE texts we find a few isolated relicts of synthetic *Mediopassive forms* (which may have existed in PG and were well developed in Gothic): *e.g. ða ea ðe hatte Araxis – the river that is called Arax* with the active use of the same verb *ða deor hie hatað hranas – those deer they called reindeer*. The passive meaning was frequently indicated with the help of Participle II of transitive verbs used as predicatives with the verbs *beon* (NE *be*) and *weorðan* (*become*): *e.g. ðæt hus wearð ða forburnen – that house was (got)*

then burned down. During the OE period these constructions were gradually transformed into the analytical forms of the Passive Voice.

Old English Verb. Classes of Verbs

- 1. Morphological Classification of OE Verbs. Strong Verbs.**
- 2. Weak Verbs.**
- 3. Minor Groups of Verbs.**

1. Morphological classification of OE Verbs. Strong Verbs

The OE verb is remarkable for its complicated morphological classification which determined the application of form-building means in various groups of verbs. Thus, its paradigm had a complicated structure, though the number of grammatical categories of the verb in OE was not great – four categories. All the forms of the verb were synthetic, as analytical forms were only beginning to appear. All the forms of the verb, finite as well as non-finite, were derived from a set of stems or principal parts of the verb. The Present tense stem was used in all the Present tense forms, Indicative, Imperative and Subjunctive, and also in the Present Participle and the Infinitive. All the forms of the Past tense were derived from the Past tense stems. The Past Participle had a separate stem.

The majority of OE verbs fell into two great divisions: the strong verbs and the weak verbs. Besides these two main groups there were a few verbs which could be put together as minor groups. The main difference between the strong and the weak verbs lay in the means of forming the principal parts, or the stems of the verb. The strong verbs formed their stems by means of vowel gradation and by adding certain suffixes. The strong verbs had four stems, as they distinguished two stems in the Past Tense – one for the 1st and 3rd Person, Singular, Indicative Mood, the other – for the Past tense forms, Indicative and Subjunctive Moods. The weak verbs derived their Past tense stem and the stem of Participle II from the Present tense stem with the help

main differences between the classes were as follows: in Class I the Infinitive ended in *-an*, seldom *-ian*; the Past form had *-de*, *-ede* or *-te*; Participle II was marked by *-d*, *-ed* or *-t*. Some verbs of Class I had a double consonant in the Infinitive others had a vowel interchange in the root, used together with suffixation.

Class II had no subdivisions. In Class II the Infinitive ended in *-ian* and the Past tense stem and Participle II had [o] before the dental suffix. This was the most numerous and regular of all classes. The verbs of Class III had an Infinitive in *-an* and no vowel before the dental suffix. It included only four verbs with a full conjugation and a few isolated forms of other verbs. Genetically, the division into classes goes back to the differences between the derivational stem-suffixes used to build the verbs or the nominal stems from which they were derived.

3. Minor groups of verbs

Several minor groups of verbs – **suppletive, anomalous, preterite-presents** – can be referred neither to strong nor to weak verbs.

The most important group of these verbs was the so-called preterite-presents or past-present verbs. Originally the Present tense forms of these verbs were Past tense forms, or, more precisely, IE perfect forms, denoting past actions relevant for the present. Later these forms acquired a present meaning but preserved many formal features of the Past tense. Most of these verbs had new Past Tense forms built with the help of the dental suffix. Some of them also acquired the forms of the verbals: Participle and Infinitives. Most verbs did not have a full paradigm and were in this sense “defective”.

The Preterite-Present verb originated from the so-called Resultative Aspect. It is believed that in the Pre-Old Germanic languages the distinction was between aspects, which show the way the action is developing. There used to be 3 aspects: the Continuous, Momentaneous and Resultative. The Continuous aspect presents actions as developing in time, without reference to any completion. The Momentaneous Aspect presents the action as heading towards completion. The Resultative Aspect presents the action as completed and having brought about a new stage of things. From

these 3 aspects the Tenses of Germanic strong verbs were developed. The Continuous Aspect yielded the Present Tense. The Momentaneous Aspect yielded the Past Tense. The Resultative aspect developed in 2 directions: 1) it joined the momentaneous aspect; 2) it gave rise to the preterite-present verbsto form their Present Tense.

Preterite-present verbs signify the present result of a past action. In some verbs the Present Tense meaning derived from the Resultative aspect can be well seen: the meaning “*know*” (*знаю*) develops from a meaning “*have learned*” (*узнал*); the meaning “*can*” (*могу*) from a meaning “*have learned*” (*научился*), *managed* (*смог*). Most of the preterite-present verbs did not indicate actions, but expressed a kind of attitude to an action denoted by another verb in the Infinitive. In other words, they were used like modal verbs, and 6 of them eventually developed into modern modal verbs – *NE ought, dare, shall, can, may, must*.

Suppletive verbs: beon, wesan, ȝan

Suppletive verbs are verbs whose paradigm is made up of several roots. In other words suppletive verbs build up different forms from different roots: *I am, he was; я хожу, он шел; I go, he went*. Suppletion is one of the oldest means of form-building. All I-E languages have suppletive verbs: *Germ.: sein – war – bin; Rus.: быть, есть*.

In OE there were two suppletive verbs: *ȝan* and *beon, wesan*. The verb *ȝan* built its Past from a different root – *eode*. The forms of the verb *be* are derived from three roots: *wes-, es-, and be-*. The Past forms were built from the root *wes-* on the pattern of Class 5 strong verbs: *wesan – wæs – wæron – weren*

The present tense forms were different modifications of the root *es-* and *be-* (*IE wes- and bhu-*).

Anomalous verbs: willan, don

Anomalous verbs are verbs with irregular forms: *willan, don*. They have some individual peculiarities. *Willan* with the meaning of volition, desire resembles the preterite-present verbs in meaning and function as it indicated an attitude to an action and it was often followed by an Infinitive. The form of the Past Tense *wolde* is similar to the Past Tense *scolde* of the preterite-present verb *sculan*. Eventually, on analo-

gy with preterite-present verbs it developed into a modal verb and later together with *scullan* – into an auxiliary verb.

The verb *don* combined the features of weak and strong verbs: *don- dyde - 3e-don*. Like weak verbs it formed its Past tense with the help of a dental suffix *-d* and had a vowel interchange (o-y) and *-n* in Participle II, which is characteristic of strong verbs.

Old English Syntax

1. Old English Syntax. General Characteristics.
2. The Simple Sentence.
3. Compound and Complex Sentences. Connectives.

1. Old English Syntax. General characteristics

The syntactic structure of OE was determined by two major conditions: the nature of OE morphology and the relations between the spoken and the written forms of the language. OE was largely a synthetic language; it possessed a system of grammatical forms which could indicate the connection between words. It was primarily a spoken language, consequently, the syntax of the sentence was relatively simple; co-ordination of clauses prevailed over subordination; complicated syntactic constructions were rare.

The syntactic structure of a language can be described at the phrase and sentence levels. OE noun, adjective and verb patterns had certain specific features which are important to note in view of their later changes. A noun pattern consisted of a noun as the head word and pronouns, adjectives, numerals and other nouns as determiners and attributes. Most noun modifiers agreed with the noun in gender, number and case: *e.g. on ðæm oðrum ðrim dazum ... "in those other three days" - Dative, plural, Masc.*

An adjective pattern could include adverbs, nouns or pronouns in one of the oblique cases with or without prepositions, and infinitives. Verb patterns included a

great variety of dependant components: nouns and pronouns in oblique cases with or without prepositions, adverbs, infinitives and participles: e.g. *bring þa ðinȝ ... "bring those things" (Accusative); He ... sealed hit hys mader ... "he... gave it to his mother" (Accusative, Dative)*. Infinitives and participles were often used in verb phrases with verbs of incomplete predication (some of these phrases were later transformed into analytical forms): e.g. *mihtest findan ... "might find"; he wolde fandian ... "he wanted to find out"*.

The order of words in the OE sentence was relatively free. The position of words in the sentence was often determined by logical and stylistic factors rather than by grammatical constraints. Nevertheless the freedom of word order and its seeming independence of grammar should not be overestimated. The order of words could depend on the communicative type of the sentence – question versus statement, on the type of clause, on the presence and place of some secondary parts of the sentence. A peculiar type of word order is found in many subordinate and in some coordinate clauses: the clause begins with the subject following the connective, and ends with the predicate or its finite part, all the secondary parts being enclosed between them. It also should be noted that objects were often placed before the predicate or between two parts of the predicate.

2. The Simple sentence

In OE there were simple and composite sentences. The following example shows the structure of the simple sentence in OE, its principal and secondary parts: e.g. *Solice sum mann hæfde twezen suna (mann - Subject, hæfde - Simple Predicate) "truly a certain man had two sons"*. The connection between the parts of the sentences was shown by the forms of the words as they had formal markers of gender, case, number and person. The presence of formal markers made it possible to miss out some parts of the sentence which would be obligatory in an English sentence nowadays: e.g. *Him ðuhte ... "it seemed to him"*.

As compared with later periods agreement and government played an important role in the word phrase and in the sentence. Accordingly, the place of the

word in relation to other words was of secondary importance and the order of words was relatively free. One of the conspicuous features of OE syntax was multiple negation within a sentence or clause. The most common negative particle was *ne* which was placed before the verb. It was often accompanied by other negative words, mostly *naht* or *noht*, which had developed from *ne-a-whit* (*nothing*). These words reinforced the meaning of negation: e.g. *Ne con ic noht sinzan ... *I cannot sing nothing**. Another peculiarity of OE negation was that the particle *ne* could be attached to some verbs, pronouns and adverbs to form single words: e.g. *hit na buton zewinne næs* (*næs* from *ne wæs* "no was"). New English *none*, *neither* are traces of such forms.

3. Compound and complex sentences. Connectives

Composite sentences are presented in OE by compound and complex ones. e.g. *He cwæð ðæt he bude on ðæm lande, norðweardum wið ða Westsæ.* "He said that he lived on that land to the North of the Atlantic ocean." The both types are found even in the oldest OE texts. There was a large inventory of subordinate clauses such as attributive, object and adverbial clauses. And yet, many constructions looked clumsy, loosely connected somewhat disorderly, which is natural in a language, whose written form had only begun to grow.

Coordinate clauses were mostly joined by *and*, a conjunction of a most general meaning, which could connect statements with various semantic relations. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles abound in successions of clauses or sentences all beginning with *and*: e.g. *And ða on 7 eat se cynin 7 ðæt ond he, on ða duru eode, and ða unbeanlice hine werede...* "and then the king saw that, and he went to the door, and then bravely defended himself..."

The pronoun and conjunction *ðæt* was used to introduce object clauses and adverbial clauses, alone or with other form-words. In the course of Old English the structure of the complex sentence was considerably improved. Ælfric, the greatest writer of the late 10th - early 11th c., employed a variety of connectives indicating the relations between the clauses with greater clarity and precision. A peculiar types of

word order is found in many subordinate and in some coordinate clauses: the clause begins with the subject following the connective, and ends with the predicate or its finite part, all the secondary parts being enclosed between them: *e.g. Ohthere sæde his hlaforde, Ælfrede cyninze ðæt he ealra Norðmonna norðmest bude.*

The evolution of English syntax was tied up with profound changes in morphology. The decline of the inflectional system was accompanied by the growth of the functional load of syntactic means of word connection. The most obvious difference between OE syntax and the syntax of the ME and NE periods is that the word order became more strict and the use of prepositions more extensive. The structure of the sentence and the word phrase, on the one hand, became more complicated, on the other hand – were stabilized and standardized.

Chronological Division in the History of English

- 1. Introduction. Old English Period.**
- 2. Middle English Period.**
- 3. New English Period.**

1. Introduction. Old English period

The historical development of a language is a continuous uninterrupted process without sudden breaks or rapid transformations. Therefore, any periodization imposed on language history by linguists, with precise dates, might appear artificial, if not arbitrary. The commonly accepted, traditional periodization divides English history into **three periods: Old English (OE), Middle English (ME) and New English (NE)**, with boundaries attached to definite dates and historical events affecting the language. OE begins with the Germanic settlement of Britain (5th c.) or with the beginning of writing (7th c.) and ends with the Norman Conquest (1066); ME begins with the Norman conquest and ends on the introduction of printing (1475), which is the start of the Modern or New English period (Mod E or NE); the New period lasts to the present day.

Although, language history is a slow uninterrupted chain of events, the changes are not even distributed in time: periods of intensive and vast changes at one or many levels may be followed by periods of relative stability. It seems quite possible that the differences in the rate of changes are largely conditioned by linguistic situation, which also accounts for many other features of language evolution. Therefore division into chronological periods should take into account both aspects: external and internal (extra- and intralinguistic). **The following periodization of English history is partly based on the conventional three periods; it subdivides the history of the English language into seven periods differing in linguistic situation and the nature of linguistic changes.**

Old English Period

The **first - pre-written or pre-historical - period**, which may be termed *Early Old English*, lasts from the West Germanic invasion of Britain till the beginning of writing, that is from the 5th to the close of the 7th c. It is the stage of tribal dialects of the West Germanic invaders (Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Frisians), which were gradually losing contacts with the related continental tongues. The tribal dialects were used for oral communication, there being no written form of English.

The evolution of the language in this period is hypothetical. It has been reconstructed from the written evidence of other Old Germanic languages, especially Gothic, and from later OE written records. It was the period of transition from PG to Written OE. Early OE linguistic changes, particularly numerous sound changes, marked OE off from PG and from other OG languages.

The second historical period extends from the 8th c. till the end of the 11th c. The English language of that time is referred to as *Old English* or *Anglo-Saxon*; it can also be called *Written OE* as compared with the pre-written Early OE period. The tribal dialects gradually changed into local or regional dialects. Towards the end of the period the differences between the dialects grew and their relative position altered. They were probably equal as a medium of oral communication, while in the sphere of writing one of the dialects, West Saxon, had gained supremacy over the other dialects (Kentish, Mercian and Northumbrian).

The language of this period is usually described synchronically and is treated as a more or less stable system, though this assumption may be due to scarcity of evidence. Careful examination of OE texts has revealed increasing variation in the 10th and 11th c., which testifies to growing dialectal divergence and the historical instability of the language.

OE was a typical OG language, with a purely Germanic vocabulary, and few foreign borrowings; it displayed specific phonetic peculiarities, owing to intensive changes which took place in Early OE. As far as grammar is concerned, OE was an inflected or synthetic language with a well-developed system of morphological categories, especially in the noun and adjective, and with an elaborate grouping of all inflected parts of speech into morphological classes. H. Sweet, a prominent English scholar of the late 19th c., called OE the "**period of full endings**" in comparison with later periods. The decline of the morphological system began in the Northern dialects in the 10th and 11th c.

2. Middle English period

The **third period**, known as *Early Middle English*, starts after 1066, the year of the Norman Conquest, and covers the 12th, 13th and half of the 14th c. It was the stage of the greatest dialectal divergence caused by the feudal system and by foreign influences - Scandinavian and French.

Under Norman rule the official language in England was French, or rather its variety called **Anglo-French** or **Anglo-Norman**. It was also the dominant language of literature. There is an obvious gap in the English literary tradition in the 12th c. The local dialects were mainly used for oral communication and were but little employed in writing. Towards the end of the period their literary prestige grew, as English began to displace French in the sphere of writing, as well as in many other spheres. Dialectal divergence and lack of official English made a favourable environment for intensive linguistic change.

Early ME was a time of great changes at all levels of the language, especially in lexis and grammar. English absorbed two layers of lexical borrowings: the Scandi-

navian element in the North-Eastern area (due to the Scandinavian invasion since the 8th c.) and the French element in the speech of townspeople in the South-East, especially in the higher social strata (due to the Norman Conquest). Phonetic and grammatical changes proceeded at a high rate, unrestricted by written tradition. Grammatical alterations were so drastic that by the end of the period they had transformed English from a highly inflected language into a mainly analytical one; for the most part, they affected the nominal system.

The **fourth period** – from the later 14th c. till the end of the 15th – embraces the age of Chaucer, the greatest English medieval writer and forerunner of the English Renaissance. We may call it *Late* or *Classical Middle English*. It was the time of restoration of English to the position of the state and literary language and the time of literary flourishing. The main dialect used in writing and literature was the mixed dialect of London. The London dialect was originally derived from the Southern dialectal group, but during the 14th c. the southern traits were largely replaced by East Midland traits. Literary flourishing had a stabilizing effect on language, so that the rate of linguistic changes was slowed down.

The written record of the late 14th and 15th c. testify to the growth of the English vocabulary and to the increasing proportion of French loan-words in English. The phonetic and grammatical structure had incorporated and perpetuated the fundamental changes of the preceding period. Most of the inflections in the nominal system - in nouns, adjectives, pronouns – had fallen together. H. Sweet called Middle English the period of levelled endings. The verb system was expanding, as numerous new analytical forms and verbal phrases on the way to becoming analytical forms were used alongside old simple forms.

3. New English period

The **fifth period** – *Early New English* – lasted from the introduction of printing to the age of Shakespeare, that is from 1475 to 1660. It was a time of great historical consequence: under the growing capitalist system the country became economically and politically unified; the changes in the political and social structure, the pro-

gress of culture, education, and literature favoured linguistic unity. The growth of the English nation was accompanied by the formation of the national English language.

The Early NE period was a time of sweeping changes at all levels, in the first place lexical and phonetic. The growth of the vocabulary was a natural reflection of the progress of culture in the new, bourgeois society. New words from internal and external sources enriched the vocabulary. Extensive phonetic changes were transforming the vowel system, which resulted in the growing gap between the written and spoken forms of the word (that is, between pronunciation and spelling). The loss of many inflectional endings in the 15th c. justified the definition **period of lost endings** given by H. Sweet to the NE period. The inventory of grammatical forms and syntactical constructions was almost the same as in Mod E, but their use was different. The abundance of grammatical units occurring without any apparent restrictions, or regularities produces an impression of great freedom of grammatical constructions.

The **sixth period** extends from the mid-17th c. to the close of the 18th c. In the history of the language it is often called **the age of normalization and correctness**, in the history of literature – **the neoclassical age**. This age witnessed the establishment of norms, which can be defined as received standards recognized as correct at the given period. The norms were fixed as rules and prescriptions of correct usage in the numerous dictionaries and grammar-books published at the time and were spread through education and writing.

The 18th c. has been called the period of **fixing the pronunciation**. The great sound shifts were over and pronunciation was being stabilized. Word usage and grammar construction were subjected to restriction and normalization. The morphological system, particularly the verb system, acquired a more strict symmetrical pattern. The formation of new verbal grammatical categories was completed. Syntactic structures were perfected and standardized.

The English language of the 19th and 20th c. represents **the seventh period** in the history of English – *Late New English* or *Modern English*. By the 19th c. English had achieved the relative stability typical of an age of literary florescence and had acquired all properties of a national language, with its functional stratification

and recognised standards. The classical language of literature was strictly distinguished from the local dialects and the dialects of lower social ranks.

The 20 th c. witnessed considerable intermixture of dialects. The local dialects are now retreating, being displaced by **Standard English**. The best form of English, the *Received Standard*, and also the regional modified standards are being spread through new channels: the press, radio, cinema, television. Nevertheless, the two dimensions of synchronic functional stratification of English are as important as before: the horizontal stratification in Britain applies to modified regional standards and local dialects, while the vertical dimension reflects the social structure of the English speaking community.

Middle English

- 1. ME: Spelling changes. Rules of Reading.**
- 2. Word Stress in ME and Early New English.**
- 3. Main Trends of the Changes in Stressed Vowels in ME and Early New English.**

1. ME: Spelling changes. Rules of Reading.

The written forms of the words in Late ME texts resemble their modern forms, though the pronunciation of the words was different. In the course of ME many new devices were introduced into the system of spelling; some of them reflected the sound changes which had been completed or were still in progress in ME; others were graphic replacements of OE letters by new letter and digraphs.

In ME the runic letters passed out of use. Thorn -ð and the crossed *d* were replaced by the digraph *th*, which retained the same sound value: [θ] and [ð]; the rune “wynn” was displaced by “double u” – *w* -; the ligatures *æ* and *oe* fell into disuse. Many innovations in ME spelling reveal an influence of the French scribal tradition. The digraphs *ou*, *ie*, and *ch* which occurred in many French borrowings and were regularly used in Anglo Norman texts were adopted as new ways of indication the

sound [u:], [e:], and [tʃ]: e.g. ME *double* [ˈdubl̩] from O Fr *double*. The two-fold use of *g* and *c*, which has survived today, owes its origin to French. Late ME notaries introduces *sh* (also *ssh* and *sch*) to indicate the new sibilant [ʃ]: e.g. ME *ship* (from OE *scip*).

Some replacements were probably made to avoid confusion of resembling letter: thus *o* was employed not only for [o] but also to indicate short [u] alongside the letter *u*. That is how OE *munuc* became ME *monk*, though it was pronounced as [mʊnk] and OE *lufu* became ME *love* [ˈlʊvə] (NE *monk*, *love*). The length of the vowel can sometimes be inferred from the nature of the syllable; open syllables often contain long vowels. The succeeding consonant groups can also serve as indicators: vowels are long before a sonorant plus a plosive consonant and short before other consonant sequences: e.g. ME *maken* [ˈma:ken], *lok* [lok], *bihynden* [biˈhi:ndən], *bisetten* [biˈsettən].

In reading ME texts there is no need to observe the distinctions of sound length but these distinctions are most important for a proper understanding of ME and Early New English sound changes.

2. Word stress in ME and Early New English

The word accent acquired greater positional freedom and began to play a more important role in word derivation. These changes were connected with the phonetic assimilation of the thousands of loan-words adopted during the ME period. New accentual patterns are found in numerous ME loan-words from French. As the loan-words were assimilated, the words stress was moved closer to the beginning of the word in line with the English (Germanic) system - “recessive” tendency: e.g. ME *vertu* [verˈtʃu:] became NE *virtue* [ˈvɜ: tʃə]. The shift can be show as follows: s’s -> ‘ss (*s* stands for “syllable”).

In words of three or more syllables the shift of the stress could be caused by the recessive tendency and also by the “rhythmic” tendency, which required a regular alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables. Under the rhythmic tendency, a secondary stress would arise at a distance of one syllable from the original stress. This new

stress was either preserved as a secondary stress or else became the only or the principal stress of the word.

e.g. ME *recommenden* [reko'mendən] > NE *recommend* [,rekə'mend] – ss'ss > ss's

e.g. ME *comfortable* [komfor'tablə] > NE *comfortable* ['kʌmfətəbl] – ss'ss > 'sss.

Sometimes the shifting of the word stress should be attributed not only to the phonetic tendencies but also to certain morphological factors. Word stress performed a phonological function as it distinguished a verb from a noun: to keep verb prefixes unstressed: e.g. ME *accepten* > NE *accept*.

3. Main trends of the changes in stressed vowels in ME and Early New English

The sound changes can be grouped into two main stages: Early ME changes, which show the transition from Written OE to Late ME – the age of literary flourishing or the “age of Chaucer” – and Early NE changes, which show the transition from ME to later NE – the language of the 18th and the 19th c. Extensive changes of vowels are one of the most remarkable features of English linguistic history. A variety of changes affected vowels in stressed syllables; the modification of unaccented vowels was more uniform and simple. The boundaries between stressed and unstressed vowels were not static: in the course of time a vowel could lose or acquire stress, as many words stress was shifted; consequently, the vowel would pass into the other group and would be subjected to other kind of changes. In Early ME the pronunciation of unstressed syllables became increasingly indistinct. Late ME had only two vowels in unaccented syllables: [ə] and [i], which are never directly contrasted. This means that phonemic contrasts in unstressed vowels had been practically lost. OE *fiscas* ME *fishes* [fiʃis] or [fiʃəs] NE *fishes* pl.

The occurrence of only two vowels, [ə] and [i], in unstressed final syllables is regarded as an important mark of ME, distinguishing it on the one hand from OE with its greater variety of unstressed vowels, and on the other hand from NE, when

the ME final [ə] was dropped. New unstressed vowels appeared in borrowed words or developed from stressed ones, as a result of various change, e.g. the shifting of word stress in ME and NE, vocalisation of [r] in such endings as *writer*, *actor*, where [er] and [or] became [ə].

The system of vowel phonemes had undergone drastic changes in the course of English linguistic history. Though the total number of phonemes has practically remained the same, their distinctive features and the principles of their opposition in the system have altered. Some prevailing trends of vowel changes can be singled out for certain groups of vowels at certain periods. Long vowels were the most changeable and historically unstable group of English sounds. At all times they displayed a strong tendency to become narrower and to diphthongize, whereas short vowels displayed a reverse trend towards greater openness, though this trend was less obvious and less consistent. Qualitative and quantitative changes were intertwined and often proceeded together. Late ME saw the beginnings of a new series of sweeping changes: independent qualitative changes of all long vowels known as the “Great Vowel Shift”. It lasted from the 14th till the 17th or even 18th c. Numerous positional vowel changes of this period – together with vocalization of consonants – gave rise to a number of new long monophthongs and diphthongs.

Middle English Phonetics

- 1. Quantitative and Qualitative Vowel Changes in Early NE.**
- 2. Development of Diphthongs.**
- 3. The Great Vowel Shift. Changes of Short Vowels in Early NE.**

1. Quantitative and qualitative vowel changes in Early NE

In later OE and in Early ME vowel length began to depend on phonetic conditions. The earliest of positional **quantitative changes** was the readjustment of quantity before some consonant cluster; it occurred in Early ME or perhaps even in Late OE.

(1) Short vowels were lengthened before two homorganic consonants, a sonorant and plosive; consequently, all vowels occurring in this position remained or became long, e.g. *OE wild* > *ME wild* [wi:ld] (*NE wild*).

(2) All other groups of two or more consonants produced the reverse effect: they made the preceding long vowels short, and henceforth all vowels in this position became or remained short, e.g. *OE cepte* > *ME kepte* [keptə] (*NE kept*).

(3) Short vowels became long in open syllables. In the process of lengthening close vowels acquired a more open quality, e.g. *OE wike* > *weke* [‘we:kə]

The changes of vowel quantity reduced the number of positions in which the opposition of long vowels to short ones could be used for phonemic contrast.

Qualitative vowel changes in Early ME were less important, they were independent of phonetic environment. The OE close labialized vowel [y] and [y:] disappeared in Early ME, merging with various sounds in different various sounds in different dialectal areas. In Early ME the dialectal differences grew. In some areas OE [y], [y:] developed into [e], [e:], in others they changed to [i], [i:]. In the South-West and in the West Midlands the tow vowels were for some time preserved as [y] and [y:] but later were moved backward and merged with [u], [u:].

<i>OE fyllan</i>	<i>ME Kentish</i>	<i>fellen</i>	<i>NE fill</i>
<i>West Midland and South Western fullen</i> [‘fyllən, ‘fullən]			
<i>East Midland and Northern</i>		<i>fillen</i>	

ME pronunciations illustrate the variation stage; the NE words given in the last column show the final stage of the change: selection of one of co-existing variants in Standard English.

In Early ME the long OE [a:] was narrowed to [ɔ:]. This was an early instance of the growing tendency of all long monophthongs to become closer. The tendency was intensified in Late ME when all long vowels changed in that direction: e.g. *OE stan* *ME Northern stan(e)* [‘sta:nə] other dialects *stoon, stone* [‘sto:n(ə)] *NE stone*. The short OE [æ] was replaced in ME by the back vowel [a]. In OE [æ] was either a separate phoneme or one of a group of allophones distinguished in writing [æ, a, a,

ea]. All these sounds were reflected in ME as [a], except the nasalised [a] which became [o] in the West Midlands. e.g. *OE earm* > *ME arm* [arm] *NE arm*

2. Development of diphthongs

One of the most important sound changes of the Early ME period was the loss of OE diphthongs and the growth of new diphthongs, with new qualitative and quantitative distinctions. Towards the end of the OE period some of the diphthongs merged with monophthongs. In Early ME the remaining diphthongs were also contrasted to monophthongs: the long [ea:] coalesced with the reflex of OE [æ:] - ME [e:]; the short [ea] ceased to be distinguished from OE [æ] and became [a] in ME. The diphthongs [eo:, eo] – as well as their dialectal variants [io:, io] – fell together with the monophthongs [e:, e, i:, i]. Later they shared in the development of respective monophthongs.

As a result of these changes the vowel system lost two sets of diphthongs, long and short. In the meantime a new set of diphthongs developed from some sequences of vowels and consonants due to the vocalisation of OE [j] and [y], that is to their change into vowels. In Early ME the sounds [j] and [y] between and after vowels changed into [i] and [u] and formed diphthongs together with the preceding vowels, e.g. *OE dæz* > *ME day* [dai]. These changes gave rise to two sets of diphthongs; with *i-glides* and *u-glides*. The same types of diphthongs appeared also from other sources: the glide –u developed from OE [w] as in OE *snaw*, which became ME snow [snou], and before [x] and [l] as in Late ME *smaul* (alongside *smal*) and *taught* (NE snow, small, taught). The newly formed ME diphthongs differed from the OE in structure. They had an open nucleus and a close glide; they were arranged in a system consisting of two sets (*with i-glides* and *u-glides*) but were not contrasted through quantity as long to short.

System of Vowels in Late Middle English (the age of Chaucer, Late 14th c.)

	Monophthongs						Diphthongs		
Short	i	e	a	o	u		ei	ai	oi
Long	i:	e:	ɛ:	a: ɔ:	o:	u:	au	ou	

3. The Great Vowel Shift. Changes of short vowels in Early NE

The Great Vowel Shift is the name given to a series of changes of long vowels between the 14th and the 18th c. During this period all the long vowels became closer or were diphthongised. The changes can be defined as “independent”, as they were not caused by any apparent phonetic conditions in the syllable or in the word, but affected regularly every stressed long vowel in any position.

ME (intermediate stage)	NE	ME	NE
i:	ai	time	time
e:	i:	kepen	keep
ɛ:e:	i:	street	street
a:	ei	maken	make
o:	ou	stone	stone
o:	u:	moon	moon
u:	au	mous	mouse
au	ɔ:	cause	cause

The long [o:] was shifted one step, to become [u:], while ME [u:] changed to [au]. Some long vowels – [u:], [i:] and [a:] – broke into diphthongs, the first element being contrasted to the second as a more open sound: [au], [ai] and [ei], respectively. The Great Vowel Shift did not add any new sounds to the vowel system. Every long vowel, as well as some diphthongs, was “shifted”, and the pronunciation of all the words with these sounds was altered. The Great Vowel Shift was not followed by any regular spelling changes: the modification in the pronunciation of words was not reflected in their written forms.

During the Shift even the names of some English letter were changed, for they contained long vowels.

ME: A [a:], E [e:], O [o:], I [i:], B [be:], K [ka:]

NE: A [ei], E [i:], O [ou], I [ai], B [bi:], K [kei]

Changes of short vowels in Early NE

The short vowels in Early NE were not on the whole more stable than the long vowels: only two short vowels out of five underwent certain alternations: [a] and [u]. In ME the sound [æ] existed as well. It was an allophone or variant of [a]. Both allophones [a] and [æ] were indicated by the letter *a* in ME. In that case the development

of ME [a] in Early NE was merely a replacement of one dominant allophone by another, and the difference between ME *man* and NE *man* was very slight.

The other change in the set of short vowels was a case of delabialization: ME short [u] lost its labial character and became [ʌ], except in some dialectal forms or when preceded by some labials, e.g. *ME hut* [hut] > *NE hut*, *ME comen* [ˈkumen] > *NE come*, but *ME putten* [ˈputen] > *NE put*; *ME pullen* [ˈpulen] > *NE pull*.

Phonetics of Early New English

1. **Growth of Long Monophthongs and Diphthongs in Early New English.**
2. **Evolution of Consonants.**
3. **Voicing of Consonants. Loss of Consonants.**

1. Growth of long monophthongs and diphthongs in Early New English

Two voiceless fricatives, [x] and [xʰ], were vocalised towards the end of the ME period. The glide [u] had probably developed before the velar consonant [x] even before its vocalization. It is regularly shown in ME spelling, e.g. *ME taughte* [ˈtauxte], *braughte* [ˈbrauxte]. Later [au] was contracted to [ɔ:] in accordance with regular vowel changes, and [x] was lost, which transformed the words into NE *taught*, *brought*. The palatal fricative [xʰ] changed to [j] some time during the 15th c. and together with the preceding [i] yielded a long monophthong [i:], which participated in the Great Vowel Shift. Thus, words like *night*, since the age of Chaucer have passed through the following stages: [nix't] > [nijt] > [ni:t] > [nait].

The most important instance of vocalisation is the development of [r], which accounts for the appearance of many new long monophthongs and diphthongs. The sonorant [r] began to produce a certain influence upon the preceding vowels in Late ME, long before it showed any signs of vocalisation. [r] made the preceding vowel more open and retracted. The cluster [er] changed to [ar], e.g. *OE deorc* became *Early ME derk* [derk] due to the contraction of the OE diphthong [eo] to [e], and changed to *dark* [dark] in Late ME.

In Early NE [r] was vocalised when it stood after vowels, either finally or followed by another consonant. Losing its consonantal character [r] changed into the neutral sound [ə], which was added to the preceding vowel as a glide thus forming a diphthong, e.g. *ME there* [ˈθe:rə] > *NE there*. Sometimes the only trace left by the loss of [r] was the compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel, e.g. *ME arm* [arm] *NE arm*, *ME for* [for] > [foə] > [fɔ:].

The formation of monophthongs, diphthongs and triphthongs in the course of the vocalization of [r] was a very complicated process, for [r] could occur practically after any vowel, and in the meantime the vowels underwent different alterations. The influence of [r] could sometimes slow down or prevent the changes of long vowels under the Great Vowel Shift, for [r] tended to make the vowel more open, while the shift made it closer. Sometimes the vowel changed into the nucleus of a diphthong with the ə-glide from [r] at an intermediate stage of the shift.

It is apparent that the vocalisation of [r] had a profound effect on the vowel system. There developed a new set of diphthongs, and also triphthongs, with ə-glide: [iə, eə, uə, etc]. There arose a new central long monophthong [ɜ:]. The new long [a:] filled a vacant position in the system, since ME [a:] had been diphthongised under the Great Vowel Shift, and the new [ɔ:] merged with [o:] resulting from the contraction of ME [au], e.g. *drauen* [ˈdrauən] > *NE draw*.

There were a few other instances of the growth of long vowels from short ones in some phonetic conditions. The consonant sequences which brought about the lengthening were: [ss], [ft] and [nt]. The sequences mainly affected the vowel [a], e.g. *ME plant* [plant] > *NE plant* [pla:nt].

The reverse quantitative change – shortening of vowels – occurred in Early NE before single dental and velar consonants [θ, d, t, k], e.g. *ME breath* [bre:θ] > *NE breath* [breθ]. The long [u:] became short before [k] and sometimes before [t], e.g. *book* ME [o:] > [u:] > [u].

2. Evolution of consonants

English consonants were on the whole far more stable than vowels. A large number of consonants have probably remained unchanged through all historical periods. Thus we can assume that the sonorants [m, n, l], the plosives [p, b, t, d] and also [k, g] in most positions have not been subjected to any noticeable changes.

The most important developments in the history of English consonants were the growth of new sets of sounds, - affricates and sibilants, - and the new phonological treatment of fricatives. Both changes added a number of consonant phonemes to the system. On the other hand, some consonants were lost or vocalised, which affected both the consonant and the vowel system. Like vowel changes, consonant changes can be shown as occurring in the transition period from Written OE to Late ME that is in Early NE, and in the transition from ME to the language of the 18th c., that is in the Early NE period.

In OE there were no affricates and no sibilants, except [s, z]. The earliest distinct sets of these sounds appeared towards the end of OE or during the Early ME period. The new type of consonants developed from OE palatal plosives [k', g'], and also from the consonant cluster [sk']. The three new phonemes which arose from these sources were [tʃ], [dʒ] and [ʃ]. In Early ME they began to be indicated by special letters and digraphs, which came into use mainly under the influence of the French scribal tradition – ch, tch, g, dg, sh, ssh, sch.

OE	ME	OE	ME	NE
k'	tʃ	cild	child	child
g'	dʒ	ecʒe	edge	edge
sk'	ʃ	sceap	sheep	sheep

The opposition of velar consonants to palatal – [k, k'; y, j] – had disappeared. Instead, plosive consonants were contrasted to the new affricates and in the set of affricates [tʃ] was opposed to [dʒ] through sonority. In Early NE the cluster [sj, zj, tj, dj] – through reciprocal assimilation in unstressed position – regularly changed into [ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ]. Three of these sounds, [ʃ, tʃ, dʒ], merged with the phonemes already existing in the language, while the fourth, [ʒ], made a new phoneme. Now the four sounds formed a well-balanced system of two correlated pairs:

Late ME	NE	Late ME	NE
sj	ʃ	condicioun	condition
zj	ʒ	plesure	pleasure
tj	tʃ	nature	nature
dj	dʒ	souldier	soldier

3. Voicing of consonants. Loss of consonants

A new, decisive alteration took place in the 16th c. The fricatives were once again subjected to voicing under certain phonetic conditions. Henceforth they were pronounced as voiced if they were preceded by an unstressed vowel and followed by a stressed one: Early NE *possess* the first voiceless [s] which stood between an unstressed and a stressed vowels had become voiced, while the second [s], which was preceded by an accented vowel, remained voiceless, e.g. ME *possessen* [po'sesən] > NE *possess*.

Probably the effect of stress extended beyond the boundaries of the word. The endings took no accent but could be followed by other words beginning with an accented syllable. This supposition is confirmed by the voicing of consonants in many form-words: articles, pronouns, auxiliaries, prepositions. They receive no stress in speech but may be surrounded by notional words which are logically accented.

e.g. *In this yere, in the XXI day of Aprile, was that frere bore which mad these Annotaciones* (In this year, on the twenty-first day of April, was born the friar who made these notes)

Voicing of consonants in Early NE

ME	NE	ME	NE
s	z	was [was]	was
f	v	pensif [pen'sif]	pensive
θ	ð	there	there
ks	gz	anxietie	anxiety
tʃ	dʒ	knowleche	knowledge

Loss of consonants

The growth of new diphthongs and long monophthongs was the reason of a number of consonants to disappear. They were vocalized and gave rise to diphthongal glides or made the preceding short vowels long. The loss of long consonant phonemes has been attributed to a variety of reasons. Long consonants disappeared firstly

because their functional load was very low, and, secondly, because length was becoming a prosodic feature, that is a property of the syllable rather than of the sound. In ME the length of the syllable was regulated by the lengthening and shortening of vowels. Therefore the quantitative difference of the consonants became irrelevant. Some consonants were lost in consonant clusters, which became simpler and easier to pronounce, e.g. the initial [x] survived in ME as an aspirate [h], when followed by a vowel, but was lost when followed by a sonorant, e.g. *OE he* > *ME he* [he:] > *NE he*; *OE hlystan* > *ME listen* [ˈlistən] (with further simplification of the medial cluster in *NE listen*, as [t] was dropped between [s] and [n]).

The Main Aspects of the Grammatical System (11 – 18 c.)

- 1. Parts of Speech.**
- 2. Means of Form-building.**
- 3. Main Trends of Development.**

1. Parts of speech

In the course of ME and Early NE the grammatical system of the language underwent profound alteration. Since the OE period the very grammatical type of the language has changed. From what can be defined as a synthetic or inflected language, with a well developed morphology English has been transformed into a language of the analytical type, with analytical forms and ways of word connection prevailing over synthetic ones. Like the development of other linguistic levels, the history of English grammar was a complex evolutionary process made up of stable and changeable constituents.

The division of words into parts of speech has proved to be one of the most permanent characteristics of the language. Though all the periods of history English preserved the distinctions between the following parts of speech: the noun, the adjective, the pronoun, the numeral, the verb, the adverb, the preposition, the conjunction, and the interjection. The only new part of speech was the article which split from the

pronouns in Early ME (provided that the article is treated as an independent part of speech).

Increased variation of the noun forms in the late 10th c. and especially in the 11th and 12th c. testifies to impending changes and to a strong tendency toward a re-arrangement and simplification of the declensions. The number of variants of grammatical forms in the 11th and 12th c. was twice as high as in the preceding centuries. Among the variant forms there were direct descendants of OE forms with phonetically weakened endings and also numerous analogical forms taken over from other parts of the same paradigms and from more influential morphological classes.

The most numerous OE morphological classes of nouns were a-stems, o-stems and n-stems. Even in Late OE the endings used in these types were added by analogy to other kinds of nouns, especially if they belonged to the same gender. That is how the noun declensions tended to be re-arranged on the basis of Gender.

2. Means of form-building

Between the 10th and the 16th c., that is from Late OE to Early NE the ways of building up grammatical forms underwent considerable changes. In OE all the forms which can be included into morphological paradigms were synthetic. In ME and Early NE, grammatical forms could also be built in the analytical way, with the help of auxiliary words. The proportion of synthetic forms in the language has become very small, for in the meantime many of the old synthetic forms have been lost and no new synthetic forms have developed.

In the synthetic forms of the ME and Early NE periods, few as those forms were, the means of form-building were the same as before: inflections, sound interchanges and suppletion. Only prefixation, namely the prefix *3e-*, which was commonly used in OE to mark Participle II, went out of use in Late ME. Suppletive form-building was confined to a few words, mostly surviving from OE and even earlier periods. Sound interchanges were not productive, though they did not die out. They still occurred in many verbs, some adjectives and nouns. Moreover, a number of new interchanges arose in Early ME in some groups of weak verbs.

Inflections continued to be used in all the inflected (changeable) parts of speech. It is notable, that as compared with the OE period they became less varied. The OE period of history has been described as a period of “full endings”, ME – as a period of “levelled endings” and NE – as a period of “lost endings”. In ME all the vowels in the endings were reduced to the neutral [ə] and many consonants were levelled under –n or dropped. The process of levelling implies replacement of inflections by analogy, e.g. –(e)s as a marker of pl. Forms of nouns displaced the endings –(e)n and –e.

The analytical way of form-building was a new device, which developed in Late OE and ME and came to occupy a most important place in the grammatical system. Analytical forms developed from free word groups (phrases, syntactical constructions). The first components of these phrases gradually weakened or even lost its lexical meaning and turned into a grammatical marker, while the second component retained its lexical meaning and acquired a new grammatical value in the compound form: *e.g. the meaning and function of the verb to have - he had them (possession); they had him killed/ they had killed him (the meaning of possession is weakened).*

The growth of analytical grammatical forms from free word phrases belongs partly to historical morphology and partly to syntax, for they are instances of transition from the syntactical to the morphological level.

3. Main trends of development

The main direction of development for the nominal parts of speech in all the periods of history can be defined as morphological simplification. The period between c. 1000 and 1300 has been called an “age of great changes” (A. Baugh), for it witnessed one of the greatest events in the history of English grammar: the decline and transformation of the nominal morphological system. Some nominal categories were lost – Gender and Case in Adjectives, Gender in Nouns; the number of forms distinguished in the surviving categories was reduced – cases in nouns and noun-pronouns, numbers in personal pronouns. Morphological division into types of declension practically disappeared. In Late ME the Adjective lost the large vestiges of

the old paradigm: the distinction of number and the distinction of weak and strong verbs.

The evolution of the verb system was a far more complicated process. The simplification and levelling of forms made the verb conjugation more regular and uniform. The OE morphological classification of verbs was practically broken up. On the other hand, the paradigm of the verb grew, as new grammatical forms and distinctions came into being. The number of verbal grammatical categories increased, as did the number of forms within the categories. The verb acquired the categories of Voice, Time Correlation (or Phase) and Aspect. Within the category of Tense there developed a new form – the Future Tense. In the Category of Mood there arose new forms of the Subjunctive.

These changes involved the non-finite forms too, for the infinitive and the participle, having lost many nominal features, developed verbal features. They acquired new analytical forms and new categories like the finite verb. Unlike the changes in the nominal system, the new developments in the verb system were not limited to a short span of two or three hundred years. They extended over a long period: from Late OE till Late NE. Even in the age of Shakespeare the verb system was in some respects different from that of Mod E and many changes were still underway.

The main changes at the syntactic level were: the rise of new syntactic patterns of the word phrase and sentence; the growth of predicative constructions; the development of the complex sentences and of diverse means of connecting clauses. Syntactic changes are mostly observable in Late ME and in NE, in the periods of literary efflorescence.

Middle English Noun

- 1. ME Noun: the Gender.**
- 2. ME Noun: the Category of Case.**
- 3. ME Noun: the Category of Number.**

1. ME Noun: the Gender

The decline of the OE declension system lasted over three hundred years and revealed considerable dialectal differences. It started in the North of England and gradually spread southwards. The dialects differed not only in the chronology but also in the nature of changes. The Southern dialects re-arranged and simplified the noun declensions on the basis of stem and gender distinctions. In the Midland and Northern dialects the system of declension was much simpler. There was only one major type of declension and a few traces of other types. In Late ME, when Southern traits were replaced by Central and Northern traits in the dialect of London, this pattern of noun declensions prevailed in literary English.

The declension of nouns in the age of Chaucer, in its main features, was the same as in Mod E. the simplification of noun morphology was on the whole completed. Most nouns distinguished two forms: the basic form (with the “zero” ending) and the form in *-(e)s*. The nouns originally descending from other types of declensions for the most part had joined this major type which had developed from Masc. *a*-stems.

Simplification of noun morphology affected the grammatical categories of the noun in different ways and to a varying degree. The OE Gender, being classifying feature (and not a grammatical category proper) disappeared together with other distinctive features of the noun declensions. In the 11th and 12th c. the Gender of the nouns was deprived of its main formal support – the weakened and levelled endings of adjectives and adjective pronouns ceased to indicate gender. Semantically gender was associated with the differentiation of sex and therefore the formal grouping into genders was smoothly and naturally superseded by a semantic division into inanimate and animate nouns, with a further subdivision of the latter into males and females.

In Chaucer’s time gender is a lexical category, like in Mod E: nouns are referred to as he and she if they denote human beings, *e.g. She wolde wepe, if that she saw a mous, Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde (Chaucer) – She would weep, if she saw a mouse caught in a trap, if it was dead or it bled.*

2. ME Noun: the category of Case

The grammatical category or case was preserved but underwent profound changes in Early ME. The number of cases in the noun paradigm was reduced from four to two in Late ME. The syncretism of cases was a slow process which went on step by step. Even in OE the forms of the Nominative and Accusative were not distinguished in the Plural, and in some classes they coincided also in the Singular. In Early ME they fell together in both numbers. Moreover three OE cases - Nominative, Accusative and Dative fell together. Henceforth, they can be called the Common case, as in present-day English.

Only the Genitive case was kept separate from the other forms. In the 14th c. the ending *-es* of the Genitive Singular had become almost universal, there being only several exceptions. In the Plural the Genitive Case had no special marker – it was not distinguished from the Common case Plural or perhaps, from Genitive Singular. The formal distinction between cases in the Plural was lost, except in the nouns which did not take *-(e)s* in the Plural. Several nouns with a weak plural form in *-en* or with a vowel interchange, such as *oxen or men*, added the marker of the Genitive case *-es* to these forms: *oxenes, mennes*. In the 17th and 18th c. a new graphic marker of the Genitive case came into use: the apostrophe, e.g. *man's, children's*. This device could be employed only in writing, in oral speech the forms remained homonymous.

The gradual reduction of the case-system

OE	Early ME	Late ME and NE
Nominative		
Accusative	Common	
Dative	Dative	Common
Genitive	Genitive	Genitive

The reduction of the number of cases was linked up with a change in the meaning and functions of the surviving forms. The Common case, which resulted from the

fusion of three OE cases assumed all the functions of the former Nominative, Accusative and Dative, and also some functions of the Genitive. The ME Common case had a very general meaning, which was made more specific by the context: prepositions, the meaning of the verb-predicate, the word order. With the help of these means it could express various meanings formerly belonging to different cases.

The main function of the Accusative case – to represent the direct object – was fulfilled in ME by the Common case. The noun was placed next to the verb, or else its relations with the predicate were apparently from the meaning of the transitive verb and the noun, e.g.

He knew the tavernes well in every tow.

For catel hadde they ynogh and rente (Chaucer) (He knew well taverns in every town for they and enough wealth and income)

The history of the Gen. case requires special consideration. In ME the Gen. case is used only attributively, to modify a noun, but even in this function it has a rival – prepositional phrases, above all the phrases with the preposition of. The practice to express Genitival relations by the of-phrase goes back to OE. The use of the of-phrase grew rapidly in the 13th and 14th c. In some texts there appears a certain differentiation between the synonyms: the inflectional Gen. is preferred with animate nouns, while the of-phrase is more widely used with inanimate ones. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre (He was very worthy in his lord's campaigns)

He had maad ful many a mariage of Yonge women (He made many marriages of young women)

And specially, from every shires ende,

Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende. (And especially from the end of every shire of England they went to Canterbury)

Various theories have been advanced to account for the restricted use of the Genitive case, particularly for the preference of the inflectional Genitive with personal nouns. It has been suggested that the tendency to use the inflectional Genitive

with names of persons is a continuation of an old tradition pertaining to word order. It has been noticed that the original distinction between the use of the Genitive with different kind of nouns was not in form but in position. The Genitive of personal nouns was placed before the governing noun, while the Genitive of other nouns was placed after it. The post-positive Genitive was later replaced by the *of-phrase* with the result that the *of-phrase* came to be preferred with inanimate nouns and the inflectional Genitive – with personal (animate) ones.

Another theory attributes the wider use of the inflectional Genitive with animate nouns to the influence of a specific possessive construction containing a possessive pronoun: *the painter 'ys name*, where 'ys is regarded as a shortened form of *his* – lit. "*the painter his name*".

3. ME Noun: the category of Number

The other grammatical category of the noun, Number proved to be the most stable of all the nominal categories. The noun preserved the formal distinction of two Numbers through all historical periods. Increased variation in Early ME did not obliterate number distinctions. On the contrary, it showed that more uniform markers of the Plural spread by analogy to different morphological classes of nouns, and thus strengthened the formal differentiation of number.

In Late ME the ending *-es* was the prevalent marker of nouns in the Plural. In Early NE it extended to more nouns – to the new words of the growing English vocabulary and to many words, which built their Plural in a different way in ME or employed *-es* as one of the variant endings. The Plural ending *-es* underwent several phonetic changes: the voicing of fricatives and the loss of unstressed vowels in final syllables.

Phonetic conditions	ME	NE
<i>after a voiced consonant or a vowel</i>	<i>stones</i>	<i>stones</i>
<i>after a voiceless consonant</i>	<i>bookes</i>	<i>books</i>
<i>after sibilants and affricates</i>	<i>dishes</i>	<i>dishes</i>

The ME Plural ending *-en*, used as a variant marker with some nouns, lost its former productivity, so that in Standard Mod E it is found only in *oxen*, *brethren* and *children*. The small group of ME nouns with homonymous forms of number has been reduced to exceptions in Mod E: *deer*, *sheep* and *swine*. The group of former root-stem has survived only as exceptions: *man*, *tooth* and the like. It follows that the majority of English nouns have preserved and even reinforced the formal distinction of Number in the Common Case. Meanwhile, they have practically lost these distinctions in the Genitive case, for Genitive has a distinct form in the Plural only with nouns whose Plural ending is not *-es*.

Despite the regular neutralization of number distinctions in the Genitive case we can say that differentiation of Number in nouns has become more explicit and more precise. The functional load and the frequency of occurrence of the Common Case are certainly much higher than those of the Genitive. Therefore, the regular formal distinction of Number in the Common Case is more important than its neutralization in the Genitive Case.

The Verb. Simplifying Changes in the Verb Conjugation

- 1. ME Verb: Number and Person.**
- 2. ME Verb: Mood and Tenses.**
- 3. ME Verb: Strong Verbs vs. Weak Verbs.**

1. ME Verb: Number and Person

Number distinctions were not only preserved in ME but even became more consistent and regular. Towards the end of the period (in the 15th c.) they were neutralized in most positions. In the 13th and 14th c. the ending *-en* turned into the main, almost universal marker of the Plural forms of the verb. It was used in both tenses of the Indicative and Subjunctive moods. In most classes of strong verbs there was an additional distinctive feature between the Singular and Plural forms in the Past tense

of the Indicative mood. The two Past tense stems had different root vowels. But both ways of indicating Plural turned out to be very unstable. The ending *-en* was frequently missed out in the late 14th c. and was dropped in the 15th c. The Past tense stems of the strong verbs merged into one form.

All number distinctions were thus lost with the exception of the 2nd and 3rd **Person**, Present tense, Indicative Mood. The Singular forms were marked by the ending *-est* and *-eth/ -es* and were formally opposed to the forms of the Plural Number distinctions in the 2nd Person existed as long as *thou*, the pronoun of the 2nd Person Singular was used. *Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages. (Chaucer, 14th c.) (Then folks long to go on pilgrimages.)*

All men make faults. (Shakespeare, 17th c.)

The differences in the forms of *Person* were maintained in ME, though they became more variable. The OE endings of the 3rd Person, Singular *-ð, -eð, iað* merged into a single ending *-(e)th*. The variant ending of the 3rd Person Singular *-es* was a new marker first recorded in the Northern dialects. It is believed that *-s* was borrowed from the Plural forms which commonly ended in *-es* in the North. It spread to the Singular and began to be used as a variant in the 2nd and 3rd Person, but later was restricted to the 3rd. In the early 18th c. *-(e)s* was more common in private letters than in official and literary texts, but by the end of the century it was the dominant inflection of the 3rd Person Singular in all forms of speech. The use of *-eth* was stylistically restricted to high poetry and religious texts.

But my late spring no buds or blossom shew'th

Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth. (Milton)

The ending *-(e)st* of the 2nd **Person** Singular became obsolete together with the pronoun *thou*. The replacement of *thou* by *you / ye* eliminated the distinction of person in the verb paradigm – with the exception of the 3rd Person of the Present tense.

2. ME Verb: Mood and Tenses

The morphology of the verb displayed two distinct tendencies of development. It underwent considerable simplifying changes, which affected the synthetic forms

and became far more complicated owing to the growth of new, analytical forms and new grammatical categories. Many markers of the grammatical forms of the verb were reduced, levelled and lost in ME and Early NE. The reduction, levelling and loss of endings resulted in the increased neutralization of formal oppositions and the growth of homonymy.

ME forms of the verb are represented by numerous variants, which reflect dialectal differences and tendencies of potential changes. The intermixture of dialectal features in the speech of London and the literary language of the Renaissance played an important role in the formation of the verb paradigm. The simplifying changes in the verb morphology affected the distinction of the grammatical categories to a varying degree.

Mood. Owing to the reduction of endings and leveling of forms the formal differences between the moods were also greatly obscured. In ME the homonymy of the mood forms grew. The Indicative and Subjunctive moods could no longer be distinguished in the Plural, when *-en* became the dominant flexion of the Indicative Plural in the Present and Past. The reduction and loss of this ending in Early NE took place in all the forms irrespective of mood. When in the 15th c. the two Past tense stems of the strong verbs merged, all the forms of the moods in the past tense fell together with the exception of the verb *to be*, which retained a distinct form of the Subjunctive in the Past Singular – *were* as opposed to *was*.

Tenses. The distinction of tenses was presented in the verb paradigm through all historical periods. As before, the Past tense was shown with the help of the dental suffix in the weak verbs, and with the help of the root-vowel interchange – in the strong verbs. The only exception was a small group of verbs which came from OE weak verbs of Class I. In these verbs the dental suffix fused with the last consonant of the root – [t] – and after the loss of the endings the three principal forms coincided: *OE settan – sette - 3e-set (ed) ME seten – sette – set NE set – set – set*.

3. ME Verbs: strong verbs vs. weak verbs

The historical changes in the ways of building the principal forms of the verb ("stems") transformed the morphological classification of verbs. The OE division into classes of weak and strong verbs was completely rearranged and broken up. Most verbs adopted the way of form-building employed by weak verbs: the dental suffix. The strict classification of the strong verbs, with their regular system of form-building, degenerated. In the long run all these changes led to increased regularity and uniformity and to the development of a more consisted and simple system of building the principal forms of the verb.

Strong verbs. The seven classes of OE strong verbs underwent multiple grammatical and phonetic changes. In ME the final syllables of the stems, like all final syllables, were weakened, in Early NE most of them were lost. Thus, the OE endings *-an*, *-on*, *-en* were all reduced to ME *-en*. In ME and Early NE the root-vowels in the principal forms of all the classes of strong verbs underwent the regular changes of stressed vowels. Due to phonetic changes vowel gradation in Early ME was considerably modified. At the same time there was a strong tendency to make the system of forms more regular. The strong verbs were easily influenced by analogy. It was due to analogy that they lost practically all consonant interchanges in ME and Early NE.

The most important change in the system of strong verbs was the reduction in the number of stems from four to three, by removing the distinction between the two past tense stems, Singular and Plural. One of the most important events in the history of the strong verbs was their transition into weak. In ME and Early NE many strong verbs began to form their Past and Participle II with the help of the dental suffix instead of vowel gradation. Therefore, the number of strong verbs decreased. On OE there were about three hundred strong verbs. Some of them dropped out of use owing to changes in the vocabulary, while most of the remaining verbs became weak. Out of 195 OE strong verbs, preserved in the language, only 67 have retained strong forms with root vowel interchanges roughly corresponding to the OE gradation series. 128 verbs acquires weak forms; most of these verbs belong nowadays to "regular" or "standard" verbs, *e.g. NE grip (former Class 1), lock (Class 2), help (Class 3) wash*

(Class 6). The number of new verbs, which joined the classes of strong verbs, was very small - several former weak verbs, *e.g. NE wear, dig, stick and some borrowings - take, thrive (from O Scan), strive (from O Fr)*.

Weak verbs. The evolution of the weak verbs in ME and Early NE reveals a strong tendency towards greater regularity and order. In ME we can distinguish two classes of weak verbs with some rearrangements between the classes as compared with OE. ME verbs of Class I took the ending *-de* in the past without an intermediate vowel before the dental suffix - and the ending *-ed* in the Past Participle. They had descended from OE verbs of Class I with a long root syllable (containing a long vowel or a short vowel plus two consonants - *OE deman*). The verbs of Class II, which were marked by *-ode, -od* in OE, had weakened these endings to *-ede, -ed* in ME. Since a few verbs of OE Class I had *-ede, ed* (the types Ia *styrán*), they are included in ME Class II.

Consequently, the only difference between the two classes of weak verbs in ME was the presence or absence of the element *-e* before the dental suffix in the Past tense stem. In Late ME the vowel *[e]* in unstressed medial and final syllables became very unstable and was lost. This change eliminated the differences between the two classes and also the distinctions between the 2nd and 3rd principal forms, thus reducing the number of stems in the weak verbs from three to two. Late ME weak verbs are the immediate source of modern standard (regular) verbs.

Verbals in Middle English and Early New English

- 1. The Infinitive.**
- 2. The Participles.**
- 3. The Gerund.**

1. The Infinitive

The main trends of the Verbals' evolution in ME and NE can be defined as gradual loss of most nominal features (except syntactical functions) and growth of

verbal features. The simplifying changes in the verb paradigm, and the decay of the OE inflectional system account for the first of these trends – loss of case distinctions in the infinitive and of forms of agreement in the Participle. While the Verbals lost their nominal grammatical categories, they retained their nominal syntactic features: the syntactic functions corresponding to those of the noun and adjectives. They also retained their verbal syntactic features – the ability to take an object and an adverbial modifier.

In the Old English there were two infinitive forms: one of them is called **the Dative Infinitive** (the Indo-European infinitive had been a declinable noun). This infinitive is preceded by *to* and has the ending *-anne*. It was used in independent syntactic positions, mainly as adverbial modifier of purpose, but also as subject and predicative. The infinitive with the ending *-an* functions, as a rule, in combination with preterite-present verbs and in other verbal collocations. **The Infinitive** lost its inflected form in Early ME. OE *writan* and *to writanne* appear in ME as *(to) writen*, and in NE as *(to) write*. The preposition *to*, which was placed in OE before the inflected infinitive to show the direction or purpose, lost its prepositional force and changed into a formal sign of the Infinitive. In ME the Infinitive with *to* does not necessary express purpose. In order to reinforce the meaning of purpose another preposition *for* was sometimes placed before the *to*-infinitive.

e.g. ...to Caunterbury they wende ðhe hooly, blisful martir for to seke. (Chaucer)
= *They went to Canterbury to seek the holy blissful martyr.*

e.g. To lyven in delit was evere his wone. (Chaucer) = *To live in delight was always his habit.*

It may have been important to preserve the infinitive marker *to* in order to distinguish the infinitive from other forms built from the Present tense stem, which had lost their endings: *e.g. ME 1st person, singular - finde, 2nd person, singular - findest, 3rd person, singular - findeth, plural - finden, Infinitive - (to) finden; Early New English – find.*

2. The Participles

The distinction between the two **participles** were preserved in ME and NE. Participle I had an active meaning and expressed a process or quality simultaneous with the events described by the predicate of the sentence. Participle II had an active or passive meaning depending on the transitivity of the verb, and expressed a preceding action or its results in the subsequent situation.

The form of Participle I in Early ME is of special interest as it displayed considerable dialectal difference. The Southern and Midland forms were derived from the present tense stem with the help of *-ing(e)*, while other dialects had forms in *-inde*, *-ende* and *-ande*. The first of these variants – *-finding(e)*, *-looking(e)* – became the dominant form in the literary language.

In ME the weak verbs built Participle II with the help of the dental suffix *-(e)d*, *-t*, the strong verbs– with the help of vowel gradation and the suffix *-en*. The Past Participle and the Past tense of the weak verbs fell together by the end of ME, when the unstressed [ə] in the ultimate syllable was dropped. In Early NE there was a strong tendency to eliminate the difference between the Past tense and Participle II in all strong verbs. The OE prefix *ze-*, which was a frequent marker of the Past Participle was weakened to *i-* or *y-* in ME. It was typical of Southern ME dialects and is fairly common in Chaucer's poetry, but rare in prose.

For he was late y-come from his viage,

And wente for to doon his pilgrimage (For he had come from his voyage late and went to do his pilgrimage)

For some reason the past participle of strong verbs seems to have been more tenacious than the past tense. In a number of verbs weak participles are later in appearing and the strong form often continued in use after the verb had definitely become weak. In the verb *beat* the Participle *beaten* has remained the standard form, while in a number of other verbs the strong participle (*cloven*, *graven*, *hewn*, *laden*, *molten*, *mown*, *(mis)shapen*, *shaven*, *sodden*, *swollen*) are still used, especially as adjectives.

3. The Gerund

The Late ME period witnessed the growth of a new verbal known in modern grammars as **the Gerund**. The gerund can be traced to three sources: the OE verbal noun in *-unz* and *-inz*, the Present Participle and the Infinitive. In OE the verbal noun derived from transitive verbs took an object in the Genitive case, which corresponded to the direct object of the finite verb, e.g. *OE soe feding ðara sceapa = the feeding of the sheep*. The syntactic functions of the verbal noun, the infinitive and the participle partly overlapped.

In ME the Present Participle and the verbal noun became identical: they both ended in *-ing*. This led to the confusion of some of their features. Verbal nouns began to take direct objects, like participles and infinitive. This verbal feature – a direct object – as well as the frequent absence of article before the *-ing*-form functioning as a noun – transformed the verbal noun into a Gerund in the modern understanding of the term. The earliest instance of a verbal noun resembling a Gerund date from the 12th century. Chaucer uses the *-ing*-form in substantival functions in both ways: with a prepositional object like a verbal noun and with a direct object: e.g. *in getyng on your riches and the using hem (=in getting your riches and using them)*. In Early NE the *-ing*-form in the function of a noun is commonly used with an adverbial modifier and with a direct object - in case of transitive verbs, e.g. *Tis pity ... That wishing well had not a body in't Which might be felt. (Shakespeare) Drink, being poured out of a cup into a glass, by filling the one, doth empty the other.(Shakespeare)*

Those were the verbal features of the Gerund. The nominal features, retained from the verbal noun, were its syntactic functions and the ability to be modified by a possessive pronoun or a noun in the Genitive case: e.g. *And why should we proclaim it in an hour before his entering? (Shakespeare)*

In the course of time the sphere of the usage of the Gerund grew. It replaced the Infinitive and the Participle in many adverbial functions. Its great advantage was that it could be used with various prepositions, e.g. *And now he fainted and cried, in fainting, upon Rosalind.*

Development of the English Vocabulary from the 12th to the 19th c. Part I

1. Types and Sources of Changes.
2. Scandinavian Influence on the Vocabulary.
3. French Influence on the Vocabulary in Middle English.

1. Types and sources of changes.

In the course of the thousand years – from OE to modern times – the English vocabulary has multiplied tenfold. Among the changes in the vocabulary we can distinguish:

a) Losses

Losses were connected with the changing conditions of life and the obsolescence of many medieval concepts and customs. Some regulations and institutions of OE kingdoms, as well as some religious rituals, were cancelled or forgotten in the ME period. OE *witenagemōt* ‘assembly of the elders’ ceased to exist under the Norman rule. There were many groups of synonyms whose differentiation became irrelevant in ME. OE *here*, *fierd*, *werod* indicated an armed force, an army. The distinction between the synonyms was lost when they were all replaced by the ME borrowings from French *army*, *troop*. The specific OE poetic vocabulary (numerous poetic synonyms of ordinary, neutral words) went out of use together with the genre of OE poetry. Many words current in ME fell out of use and became obsolete in NE, e.g.: ME *chapman* ‘pedlar’. Losses could also affect the plane of content. The word survived, but some of its meanings became obsolete. OE *talū* meant ‘number, series’ and ‘story, narrative’, while its ME and NE descendant *tale* retained only the latter meanings.

b) Replacements

80 to 85% of the OE words went out of use and were replaced. OE *weorðan* was replaced by *become*. Replacements occurred in the sphere of content: the word was retained but its meaning was changed or was replaced by a new one. OE *dream* (‘joy’) acquired meaning, formerly rendered by OE *swefn*. The “one-to-one” replacements did not increase the number of words in the vocabulary. Most of them be-

longed to the “split”-type: one item was replaced, or one meaning differentiated into several ones.

c) Additions

Among additions we can find pure innovations – entirely new words which were created to name new things, new ideas and new qualities, e.g. ME *cite* ‘town with a cathedral’, *duke*, *duchesse*, *prynce* – new ranks and titles; NE *bourgeois*, *potato*, *nylon*. Several words of close meaning could survive with certain differences in stylistic connotations, combinability, etc. For example: OE *heard*, ME *hard*, *ferme*, *solide*, NE *hard*, *firm*, *solid*, *severe*. The development of new meanings in the existing words extended the vocabulary and led to the growth of polysemy and homonymy. For instance, ME *journee* meant ‘day’s work’, sometimes ‘day’s march’, later ‘travel, journey’.

The Sources of New Words

The sources of new words are usually divided into internal and external. Internal ways of developing the vocabulary were productive in all historical periods. Word-formation and semantic changes were equally prolific in the creation of new words and new meanings. The role of external sources is very considerable. One of the most drastic changes in the English vocabulary is the change in its etymological composition. OE vocabulary was almost entirely Germanic and resistant to borrowing; the language of later periods absorbed foreign words and made use of foreign word components in word formation. As a result, the native Germanic element constitutes from 30 to 50% of the vocabulary; the other two thirds come from foreign sources. The importance of the surviving native words is borne out by the fact that they belong to the most frequent layer of words, and that native components are widely used in word-building, in word phrases and phraseological units. The linguistic situation in ME was most favorable for strong foreign influence – first Scandinavian then French.

2. Scandinavian influence on the vocabulary

The greater part of lexical borrowings from O Scand was not recorded until the 13th c. The presence of the Scandinavians in the English population is indicated by a large number of place-names in the northern and eastern areas; most frequent are place-names with the Scandinavian components, e.g. *Inverness, Grimsby, Brimtoft*.

In the beginning Scandinavian loan-words were dialectally restricted; they increased the range of language variation; later due to dialect mixture they penetrated into other parts of the language space, passed into London English and the national language. Some words died out or were retained only in the local dialects, e.g. *kirk* 'church'. The total number of Scandinavian borrowings in English is estimated at about 900 words; about 700 of them belong to Standard English.

Scandinavian borrowings mostly pertain to everyday life and do not differ from native words. Only the earliest loan-words deal with military and legal matters. These early borrowings are Late OE *barda, cnearr, scegþ* (different types of ships), *cnif* (NE knife), *lagu* (NE law). Many Scandinavian military and legal terms disappeared or were displaced by French terms. Everyday words of Scandinavian origin are: *bag, egg, freckle; awkward, rotten, tight; call, drown, thrive*.

A most convincing proof of the close contacts between the two languages is the replacement of some native form-words by Scandinavian borrowings: *both, though, fro* (which was used interchangeably with the native parallel *from* and has been preserved in the phrase *to and fro*).

A Scandinavian word could enter the language as an innovation, without replacing any other lexical item. More often, however, the loan-word was a synonym of a native English word and their rivalry led to different results: the loan-word could eventually disappear or be restricted to dialectal use (e.g. Late OE *barda* 'ship', *lip* 'fleet'); it could replace the native word (e.g. *they, take, call*, which replaced OE *hīe, niman, clipian*); both words could survive as synonyms with a slight difference in meaning.

Assimilation of loan-words was easy. Both in ME and nowadays it is difficult to distinguish Scandinavian loans from native words. The only criteria that can be

applied are some phonetic features of borrowed words: the consonant cluster [sk] is a frequent mark of Scandinavian loan-words, e.g. *sky*, *skill*; it does not occur in native words, as OE [sk] had been palatalized and modified to [ʃ]. Some native words changed phonetically. Words like *give*, *get*, *gift* are sometimes included in the list of Scandinavian loan-words, but are also regarded as instances of phonetic influence on native words.

3. French influence on the vocabulary in Middle English

English was exposed to several waves of French influence. The effect was seen first and foremost in a large number of lexical borrowings. At the initial stages of penetration French words were restricted to some varieties of English. Eventually French loan-words spread throughout the language space and became an integral of the English vocabulary. The total number of French borrowings by far exceeds the number of borrowings from any other foreign language. The greater part of French loan-words in English date from ME.

During the initial years the infiltration of French words into the English language progressed slowly (examples include Early ME *castel* (NE *castle*), Early ME *werre* (NE *war*). On the whole, prior to the 13th c. no more than one thousand words entered the English language, whereas by 1400 their number had risen to 10,000 (75% of them are still in common use).

The French borrowings of the ME period are usually described according to semantic spheres. Nearly all the words relating to the government and administration of the country (*council*, *parliament*, *sovereign*), words pertaining to the feudal system and words indicating titles and ranks of the nobility (*baron*, *peer*) are of French origin. Military terms were adopted in ME (*armour*, *battle*). Many words belong to the domain of law and jurisdiction (*attorney*, *defendant*, *justice*). A large number of words pertain to the Church and religion (*baptism*, *clergy*, *miracle*). Many loan-words refer to house, furniture and architecture (*castle*, *mansion*, *table*). Some words are connected with art (*beauty*, *ornament*, *paint*). Another group includes names of garments (*collar*, *dress*, *jewel*). Many belong to the domain of entertainment (*cards*,

dance, tournament). Some words were related to different aspects of the life of the upper classes and of the town life: forms of address – *sir, madam*, and also *mister, mistress* (as well as *master* and *servant*); names of some meals – *dinner, supper* – and dishes.

Many French loan-words can only be listed as miscellaneous, e.g.: *advice, manner, treasure, use*. French influence led to different kinds of changes in the vocabulary. Firstly, there were many innovations. Secondly, there were numerous replacements of native words by French equivalents. The adoption of a word synonymous with a native word did not necessarily lead to replacement. The influx of French words is one of the main historical reasons for the abundance of synonyms in Mod E. The difference between the native and borrowed words often lies in their stylistic connotations: French loan-words preserve a more bookish, literary character.

The English vocabulary was also enriched by the adoption of French affixes. They could become productive in English only after the loan-words with those affixes were completely assimilated by the language. Assimilation of French words by the speakers of English was a more difficult process. Nevertheless, phonetic assimilation of borrowed words progressed quickly. The foreign features were lost and the words were adapted to the norms of English pronunciation. French sounds were replaced by resembling English sounds. The stress in French loan-words was shifted.

Grammatical assimilation of borrowed words evidently did not give much trouble to the speakers. They freely added English grammatical endings to the stems of the borrowed words and used them in all grammatical forms like native words: e.g. countable nouns took the universal ending -(e)s in the pl, all the verbs (except *strive*) became weak and took the suffix -d- to form the Past and Part. II.

In ME some French roots came to be combined with English affixes and other roots, e.g. Late ME *un-fruit-ful, gentil-man* (NE *unfruitful, gentleman*).

It is not easy to identify a French borrowing and to distinguish it from native words or borrowings from other languages. The more reliable criteria are French suffixes and prefixes frequently occurring in borrowed words: *-ment, -ty, -ion, re-, de-* and others; and yet, since they came to be employed as derivational means in English

and yielded new specifically English words, they cannot serve as absolutely reliable marks of French words.

Development of the English Vocabulary from the 12th to the 19th c. Part II

- 1. Borrowings from Classical Languages (Part I).**
- 2. Borrowings from Classical Languages (Part II).**
- 3. Borrowings from Contemporary Languages in New English.**

1. Borrowings from classical languages (Part I)

Latin words were borrowed in all historical periods. In ME their proportion was high only in religious texts translated from Latin. The extraordinary surge of interest in the classics in the age of the Renaissance opened the gates to a new wave of borrowings from Latin and from Greek. In the 16th and 17th c. Latin was the main language of philosophy and science, its use in the sphere of religion became more restricted after the Reformation and the publication of the English versions of the Bible.

Many classical borrowings came into Early NE through French. Sometimes the immediate source of the loan-word cannot be determined. Thus the words *solid*, *position*, *consolation*, and many others could be adopted either directly from Latin or from French. Some loan-words from O Fr were re-shaped by the erudites of the age of Renaissance according to their Latin prototypes: *describe* in place of Chaucer's *decrive(n)*, *equal* instead of *egal*.

One of the reasons for the influx of Latin words at the age of the Renaissance was that many of the new ideas encountered in classical works were not susceptible to precise translation – therefore scholars often preferred to retain the Latin terms.

A distinction must be made between genuine Latin and Greek words, which were used in ancient times, and those which were based on them. Borrowings which were adopted in their original form/meaning or with slight adaptation largely date

from the 16th c. They mostly indicate abstract concepts and belong to the vocabulary of educated people or even erudites.

In some cases, it has been possible to specify the date of the borrowings. Numerous Latin and Greek words were first used by Thomas More (early 16th c): *anticipate, explain, necessitate*. Many classical borrowings first appeared in Shakespeare's works: *apostrophe, dislocate, reliance*. The following are loan-words of the 16th and early 17th c. which still circulate today: *census, genius, inferior, submit*, etc. The borrowings could lose their "learned" character: *animal, discuss, quiet*.

Some borrowings have a more specialized meaning and belong to scientific terminology: *acid, curriculum, ultimatum*. A distinct semantic group of Greek loan-words pertains to theatre, literature and rhetoric: *comedy, dialogue, metaphor*. Classical loan-words could undergo a shift of meaning. Thus the original meaning of *L musculus* (NE *muscle*) was 'little mouse'.

2. Borrowings from classical languages (Part II)

Classical languages have provided a supply of roots in the creation of new words. Words *protestant, inertia*, are based on classical roots but were created in modern times. These words constitute the classical element in the English vocabulary. They form the basis of international terminology. The body of international terms continued to grow in the 18th-19th c. A new impetus for their creation was given by the great technical progress of the 20th c, which is reflected in hundreds of newly coined terms or Latin and Greek words applied in new meanings: *antibiotic, protein, introvert*.

Latin and Greek have also supplied English with productive derivational affixes: *humanism* (-ism from the Gr -ismos, L -ismus); *protagonist* (from the Gr -istes, L -ista). One of the effects of the classical borrowings was the further increase of the number of synonyms. Replacement of native words by classical loan-words was rare; a normal result was an addition of another synonym to the existing set.

It is evident that Latin and French words are more bookish than native. Some French and Latin loan-words go back to one and the same Latin root. They differ in

sound, form and in meaning. Early NE borrowings from classical languages have been assimilated by the language: they do not contain any foreign sounds and receive primary and secondary stresses; the grammatical forms of borrowed words are usually built in accordance with the regular rules of English grammar.

In order to identify Latin loan-words of the Early NE period we should note some endings and suffixes which occur in Latin borrowings but are not used for word creation in English. Some verbs were derived from Latin Past Participle, of verbs belonging to different conjugations: verbs in *-ate*: *dominate, locale, separate*; verbs in *-ute*: *execute, prosecute, verbs*; in *-ct*: *correct, inspect*. Verbs derived from Latin infinitives have miscellaneous endings, e.g. *admit, compell, induce*. More informative are the elements *-ent, -ant* in adjectives and nouns: *apparent, important, accident*. Some loan-words retain peculiarities of spelling: *ph* in *photography*, *ps* in *psychology*, *ch* in *archaic*.

3. Borrowings from Contemporary Languages in New English

The influx of **French** words reached new peaks in the late 15th and in the late 17th c. French borrowings of the later periods mainly pertain to diplomatic relations, social life, art and fashions: *dossier, cafe, ballet*. Words of miscellaneous character are: *detail, essay, ticket*. Later French borrowings differ widely from the loan-words adopted in ME. Most of them have not been completely assimilated and have retained a foreign appearance to the present day. Words like *genre* and *restaurant* have nasalized vowels and a French spelling.

English speakers of the NE period borrowed freely from many other languages. Even in the 17th c. the English vocabulary contained words derived from no less than fifty foreign tongues, including Italian, Dutch, Spanish, German, Portuguese and Russian. A number of words were adopted from languages of other countries and continents, which came into contact with English: Persian, Chinese, Hungarian, Turkish, Malayan, Polynesian, the native languages of India and America.

English owes the greatest number of foreign words to **Italian**. A few early borrowings pertain to commercial and military affairs while the vast majority of words

are related to art, music and literature. In the 14th c. English imported the Italian words *million*, *pistol*, *alarm*. Examples of musical terms adopted in English are: *bass*, *duet*, *violin*. The loan-words *balcony*, *corridor*, *gallery* indicate certain spheres of culture; *replica*, *sonnet* – concepts in literature. Some words retained their Italian appearance, others changed, because entered the English language through French: *artisan*, *campaign*, *intrigue*. Many words in general use do not differ from English words in sound/spelling.

Borrowings from **Spanish** came as a result of contacts and rivalry with Spain in the military, commercial and political fields: *barricade*, *cannibal*, *cargo*. Many loan-words indicated new things encountered in the colonies: *banana*, *chocolate*, *mosquito*.

Loan-words from related Germanic tongues were no less foreign to English speakers. Yet their sound form was somewhat closer to English and their assimilation progressed rapidly. Dutch words and some of the German words do not differ in appearance from native English words.

Dutch made abundant contribution to English in the 15th and 16th c, when commercial relations between England and the Netherlands were at their peak. Dutch artisans came to England to practice their trade, and sell their goods. They specialized in wool weaving and brewing: *pack*, *hops*, *tub*. Extensive borrowing is found in nautical terminology: *buoy*, *deck*, *freight*. The flourishing of art accounts for some Dutch loan-words relating to art: *easel*, *landscape*, *sketch*.

Mineralogical loan-words from **German** are connected with the employment of German specialists in the English mining industry: *cobalt*, *nickel*, *zinc*. The advance of philosophy in the 18th and 19th c. accounts for philosophical terms: *transcendental*, *dynamics*. Some borrowings do not belong to a particular semantic sphere: *kindergarten*, *stroll*, *waltz*. The most peculiar feature of German influence in the 18th and 19th c. is the creation of translation-loans on German models from native English components: *home-sickness* comes from *Heimweh*. Recent German borrowings in English, connected with World War II, are: *blitz*, *bunker*, *Nazi*.

The earliest **Russian** loan-words entered the language in the 16th c, when the English trade company established the first trade relations with Russia. English borrowings adopted from the 16th till the 19th c. indicate articles of trade and specific features of life in Russia: *intelligentsia, tsar, vodka*. The loan-words adopted after 1917 reflect the new social relations and political institutions in the USSR: *bolshevik, Komsomol, Soviet*. Some of the new words are translation-loans: *collective farm, Five-Year-Plan, wall newspaper*. In the recent decades many technical terms came from Russian, indicating the achievements in different branches of science: *sputnik, cosmonaut, synchrophasotron*.

History of Word-formation

1. **Suffixation.**
2. **Suffixation, Conversion.**
3. **Compounding.**

1. Suffixation.

The growth of the English vocabulary from internal sources can be observed in all periods of history; internal sources of vocabulary growth may have become relatively less important in ME. In the 15th, 16th and 17th c. the role of internal sources became more important. As before, word formation fell into two types: word derivation and word composition.

Suffixation has always been the most productive way of deriving new words, most of the OE productive suffixes have survived, and many new suffixes have been added. In ME many OE prefixes fell into disuse; then the use of prefixes grew again; Early NE prefixes could come from foreign sources. Sound interchanges and the shifting of word stress were mainly employed as a means of word differentiation. In the Early NE period conversion became productive.

New **vowel alternations** in related words could arise as a result of quantitative vowel changes in Early ME. They did not take place in all the words derived from the

same root. The role of sound interchanges has grown due to the weakening and loss of many suffixes and grammatical endings. **Consonant interchanges** were rare, though sometimes they came to serve the same function as vowel interchanges in the absence of endings. Cf. ME *hour* – *housen*, NE *house* [s] n – *house* [z] v

In OE **stress** was sometimes moved in derivation. The shifting of word stress, together with other means provided a regular distinction between some verbs and nouns with prefixes. In ME these pairs of words practically died out. In the course of the phonetic assimilation of Franco-Latin borrowings the stress was moved closer to the beginning of the word, but in order to preserve the distinction between verbs and noun the stress in verbs was sometimes retained on the second syllable. Thus word stress became the only distinctive mark in some pairs of modern words.

OE **prefixes** were productive means of forming verbs from other verbs. Many verb prefixes had a very vague and general meaning, the simple and derived verb were synonymous. The prefix could be easily dispensed with; instead of the OE pairs of synonyms, differing in the prefix, ME retained only the simple verb. The use of verb phrases with adverbs grew. The adverbs modified the meaning of the verb like OE prefixes. It is believed the frequency of these phrases in ME increased under the influence of O Scand. The loss of some verbs with prefixes in ME can be ascribed to re-placement of native words by borrowings, e.g.: OE *forfaren* was replaced by ME *perishen* (from O Fr).

Many **native verb prefixes** dropped out of use. In some words, the prefix fused with the root and the structure of the word was simplified. Some OE prefixes continued to be used and their productivity grew. The OE prefix *be-* yielded ME *be-witchen* (NE *bewitch*). The negative prefixes *mis-* and *an-* produced many new words: *mislagen*, *misdemen* (NE *mislagen*, 'misjudge'); in Early NE its productivity grew. OE *un-* was mainly used with nouns and adjectives; it remained productive in all the periods: ME *unable*, *unknowen*, Early NE – *unhook*, *unload*. Several prefixes developed from OE adverbs and prepositions (*out-*, *over-*, *under-*): ME *outcome*, ME *overgowe(n)*, ME *undervvrite(n)*.

In Late ME, and in Early NE French, Latin, and Greek, **foreign prefixes** were adopted by the English language as component parts of loan-words; then they were singled out as separate components and used in word-building. English borrowed many French words with the prefix *re-*, e.g.: ME *re-comforten*. Eventually it grew into one of the most productive verb prefixes in English. The verb prefixes *de-* and *dis-* of Romance origin entered the English language in many loan-words: ME *destructive*. Later they came to be used with other foreign and native stems: *disown*. The prefix *en-* was productive in Early NE but it isn't productive anymore: ME *enclosen*, NE *enrich*. The adjectival prefix *in-* was one of many ME prefixes of negative meaning. They produced numerous synonyms recorded in the English texts from the 14th to the 16th c.: *unpleasant, displeasant; impossible, impossible; disable, unable, non-able; unfirm, infirm*. A number of new prefixes employed since the 17th c. had entered the language in numerous classical borrowings – Latin and Greek. Since most of the classical loan-words belonged to the sphere of science, philosophy and literature, the use of new prefixes was confined to these spheres.

2. Suffixation, Conversion.

Suffixation has remained the most productive way of word derivation through all historical periods. Several **native suffixes** were lost as means of derivation. OE *-ere* developed into the most productive suffix of agent nouns in ME and NE. At first it formed nouns from substantival stems, but soon began to produce them from verbal stems: OE *writere* (NE *writer*). Gradually the meaning of the suffix extended, and it began to indicate a number of other things. The old suffixes of abstract nouns *-ap*, *-op*, *-p*, were supplanted in many derived words by synonymous native affixes *-ness* and *-ing* and a few borrowed ones: ME *clearness*, ME *spelling*, etc. New derivatives with *-dom*., *-ship* and *-hood* can be found in the texts of all historical periods: ME *dukedom*, *manhood*, *courtship*. A new suffix *-man*, developed from a root-morpheme in ME: ME *woman*, NE *ploughman*. All the OE adjective suffixes remained productive. OE *-ise*, ME *-ish* indicated qualities and states: OE *cildisc* (NE *childish*). OE *-ij*, ME *-y* produced adjectives from noun-, verb- and adjective-stems in all historical pe-

riods: ME *sleepy*. The OE adjectival suffix -lic, ME and NE -iy produced adjectives from nominal stems in ME and NE: ME *fatherly*. ME -less: ME *helpless*. OE and ME -ful developed from the OE adjective full and was a genuine suffix as early as ME: ME *harmful*. Native verb suffixes were not productive. Only -en was used to derive verbs: ME and NE *gladden, lighten, weaken*.

Borrowed suffixes entered the English language with the two biggest waves of loan-words: French in ME and classical in Early NE. French loan-words with the suffix -able: ME *agreeable, admissible*. Borrowed suffixes were used to form different parts of speech: nouns, adjectives and verbs. Many suffixes had similar functions and meaning and were synonymous with native suffixes. In Late ME and Early NE, the French suffix -ess produced many derivatives: ME *authoress, princess*. The French suffix -ee is found in derived words in ME, but productive only later: ME *grantee*, NE *employee*. The suffix -or (from Fr) resembled the native suffix -er, its application remained more restricted: *collector, educator*. The suffixes adopted as components of classical borrowings in Early NE -ist, -ite came to be used as means of derivation: *columnist, capitalist*. Borrowed noun-suffixes of abstract nouns -ante or -etzsche, -ty, -age, -ry, -ment: ME and NE *avoidance, peerage, sophistry, readability, fulfillment*. The most productive adjective suffix was -able/-ible: *capable, drinkable*. Another frequent adjective suffix -ous: *lustrous, thunderous, righteous*. The adjective suffixes -al and -ic: *economical, atomic*. Verb suffixes were few, but two of them -ise and -fy became highly productive: *normalize, intensify*.

Most borrowed affixes belong to the language of science, literature, politics, philosophy, that is to the spheres where borrowed roots abound and native stems are in the minority.

Conversion arose in Late ME and grew into a specifically English way of creating new words. Conversion is effected through a change in the meaning, the grammatical paradigm and the syntactic use of the word in the sentence. The word is transformed into another part of speech with an identical initial form, e.g. NE *house* n and *house* v. Growth of conversion is accounted for by the reduction of endings and suffixes and the simplification of the morphological structure of the word. The use of

conversion was not restricted to the formation of verbs from nouns: nouns came to be derived from verbs. These instances were rare in ME but more common later: e.g. Early NE *drive* n from *drive* v. Now conversion is one of the most productive ways of word-building, accounting for the free transformation of nouns into verbs and vice versa through a change in their syntactic position.

3. Compounding

Many **compound words** went out of use in ME. Numerous compound nouns used in OE poetry died out together with the genre. In Early NE the productivity of compounding grew. Compounding was more characteristic of nouns and adjectives than of verbs. Compound words of the ME and Early NE periods were formed after the word-building patterns inherited from OE, modifications of these patterns and new structural patterns. Compound nouns were built according to a variety of patterns. The most productive type – two noun-stems – was inherited from OE: ME *football*, *nightgown*.

Compounds containing a verbal noun or the newly formed gerund or the stem of agent nouns were new modifications of this basic pattern: ME *working-day*, NE *looking-glass*. Instances of compound nouns with stems of agent nouns in *-er*: ME *landholder*, Early NE *fortune-teller*. Adjective stems as the first components occur in ME *stronghold*, Early NE *shorthand*. Adverb stems are rare – ME *forefader* (NE *forefather*). The patterns with verb-stems have become more productive in NE: ME *breakfast* (NE *breakfast*). A new pattern of compound nouns arose in NE consisting of a verb-stem and an adverb: NE *break down*. Compound adjectives continued to be formed in accordance with the same patterns as in OE. Noun- and adjective stems are combined in ME *heedstrong*, NE *color-blind*. The most productive type of compound adjectives in ME and NE was "derivational compounds", consisting of an adjective stem, a noun-stem and the suffix *-ed*: ME *grey-hared* (NE *gray-haired*).

All through the ME and Early NE periods compound words could be subjected to morphological **simplification**. Instances of morphological simplification can be found even in Early OE. Simplification transformed many compounds into derived

words, producing new suffixes out of root-morphemes. Instances of morphological simplification can be observed in later periods as well: OE *wifman* was simplified to NE *woman*. Many modern English words have arisen as a result of simplification. Simplification could also affect word phrases: *alone* is a contraction of *all one*.

The concept of "simplification" (or, perhaps, "contraction") can be applied to one more way of word formation often termed "**back formation**". "Back formation" is a process of word-building based on analogy. Thus ME *beggere* (NE *beggar*) produced the verb *beg*, *editor* was contracted to *edit*. "Back formation" is a sort of simplification as it changes derived words into simple ones.

Internal sources of the replenishment of the vocabulary include also multiple **semantic changes** which created new meanings and new words through semantic shifts and through splitting of words into distinct lexical units. Semantic changes are commonly divided into widening and narrowing of meaning and into metaphoric and metonymic shifts.

Instances of **narrowing** can be found in the history of OE *dēor* which meant 'animal' and changed into the modern *deer*. Narrowing of meaning can often be observed in groups of synonyms, as in the course of time each synonym acquires its own, more specialized, narrow sphere of application: thus *deer* was a synonym of *animal* and *beest* in ME. **Widening** of meaning: holiday was formerly a religious festival, the first component from OE *halig*, NE *holy*, but came to be applied to all kinds of occasions when people do not work or attend classes. Many words of concrete meaning came to be used figuratively, which is an instance of **widening of meaning** and of **metaphoric change**: *drive*, *go*, etc. formerly denoted physical actions but have acquired a more general, non-concrete meaning through metaphoric use.

Some semantic changes can only be referred to miscellaneous as they involve different kinds of semantic changes and sometimes structural changes too. Many semantic changes in the vocabulary proceed together with stylistic changes, as in changing their meanings words acquire or lose certain shades of meaning and stylistic connotations. All these subtle changes account for the enrichment of the vocabulary in the ME and NE periods.

Development of Syntax in Middle English and Early New English

- 1. The Simple Sentence.**
- 2. Predicative Constructions. Word Order. Negation.**
- 3. Compound and Complex Sentences.**

1. The simple sentence

The evolution of English syntax was tied up with profound changes in morphology. The decline of the inflectional system was accompanied by the growth of the functional load of syntactic means of word connection. The most obvious difference between OE syntax and the syntax of the ME and NE periods is that the word order became more strict and the use of prepositions more extensive. The structure of the sentence and the word phrase, on the one hand, became more complicated, on the other hand – were stabilized and standardized.

In the course of history the simple sentence in many respects became more orderly and more uniform. Yet, at the same time it grew complicated as the sentence came to include more extended and complex parts: longer attributive groups, diverse subjects and predicates and numerous predicative constructions (syntactic complexes). In OE the ties between the words in the sentence were shown mainly by means of government and agreement, with the help of numerous inflections. In ME and Early NE, with most of the inflections endings levelled and dropped, the relations between the parts of the sentence were shown by their relative position, environment, semantic ties, prepositions, and by a more rigid syntactic structure.

Every place in the sentence came to be associated with a certain syntactic function. In the new structure of the sentence syntactic functions were determined by position, and no position could remain vacant. This is evidenced by the obligatory use of the subject. In OE the formal subject, expressed by the pronoun *hit*, was used only in some types of impersonal sentences, namely those indicating weather phenomena. In ME the subject it occurs in all types of impersonal sentences.

For it reynyd almoste euey othir day. (Brut) – For it rained almost every other day.

Of his falshede it dulleth me to ryme. (Chaucer) – Of his falsehood it annoys me to speak.

As compared with OE the subject of the sentence became more varied in meaning, as well as in the forms of expression. Due to the growth of new verb forms the Subject could now denote not only the agent or a thing characterised by a certain property, but also the recipient of an action or the “passive” subject of a state and feeling. The Predicate had likewise become more varied in form and meaning. The Simple Predicate could be expressed by compound forms which indicated multiple new meanings and subtle semantic distinctions, lacking in OE verb forms or expressed formerly by contextual means. ME witnessed a remarkable growth of link-verbs: about 80 verbs occur as copulas in texts between the 15th and 18th c. In a way the new link-verbs made up for the loss of some OE prefixes and compound verbs which denoted the growth of a quality or the transition into a state.

And tho it drewe nere Cristenese. (Brute) And though it drew near Christmas – Christmas was coming

As me best thinketh (Chaucer) as it seems best to me

The structure of the predicative became more complex. It could include various prepositional phrases and diverse attributes.

That's a deep story of a deep love;

For he was more than over shoes in love (Shakespeare)

Was the evolution of English syntax tied up with profound changes in morphology?

2. Predicative constructions. Word order. Negation

Predicative Constructions. One of the most important developments of Late ME and Early NE syntax was the growth of predicative constructions. The Accusative with the Infinitive and the Accusative with the Participle which date from the OE period, came to be used with an increasing number of verbs of various meanings.

New types of predicative constructions appeared in Late ME and Early NE texts: the Nominative with the Infinitive and with Participle I, II (also known as Subjective Predicative constructions), the Nominative Absolute construction and the Absolute construction with prepositions and the For-phrase with the Infinitive and the Gerundial construction.

He was reported to be a very uncontented person (Complex subject)

The descriptions whereof were too long for mee to write, and you to read. (for-phrase with the Infinitive)

Predicative constructions have developed from different sources: from verb patterns with direct and prepositional objects followed by an infinitive or a participle, nouns patterns with participles used as attributes, verbal nouns modified by possessive pronouns or nouns, elliptical infinitive sentences.

Word order. In ME and Early NE the order of words in the sentence underwent noticeable changes. It became fixed and direct: S – P – O, or subject plus notional part of the predicate (mainly in questions). The fixation of the word order proceeded together with reduction and loss of inflectional endings, the two developments being intertwined, though syntactic changes were less intensive and less rapid. In the 17th and 18th c. the order of words in the sentence was generally determined by the same rules as operate in English today. The fixed, direct word order prevailed in statements, unless inversion was required for communicative purpose or for emphasis. The order of the Subject and Predicate remained direct in sentences beginning with an adverbial modifier: then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet. In OE an initial adverbial modifier required an inverted word order – P + S.

Negation. One of the peculiar features of the OE sentence was multiple negation. The use of several negative particles and forms continued throughout the ME period: *Ne bryng nat every man into thyn hous (Chaucer) – Don't bring every man into your house – ne* is a negative particle used with verbs, *nat* – another negative particle. Gradually double negation went out of use. In the age of Correctness (18th c.) when the scholars tried to improve and perfect the language, multiple negation was

banned as illogical. It was believed that one negation eliminated the other like two minuses in mathematics and the resulting meaning would be affirmative.

3. Compound and complex sentences

The growth of the written forms of English, and the advance of literary in Late ME and Early NE manifested itself in the further development of the compound and complex sentences. Differentiation between the two types became more evident, the use of connectives – more precise. The diversity of sentence structure in Late ME and Early NE reveals considerable freedom in the nature and use of clauses. The flexibility of sentence patterns and the variable use of connectives were subjected to new constraints and regulations in the period of Normalization.

Many new conjunctions and other connective words appeared during the ME period: *both... and*, a coordinating conjunction, was made up of a borrowed Scandinavian dual adjective *bath* and the native *and*. *Because*, a subordinating conjunction, was a hybrid consisting of the native English preposition and a borrowed Latin noun *cause* (*by + cause = for the reason*). Numerous connectives developed from adverbs and pronouns – *who, what, which, where, whose, how, why*. These connectives sometimes occurred in combination with *that* (like *when that*), which probably served to show that the former pronouns and adverbs were employed in a new, connective function.

An adverbial clause of cause joined with the help of *by way of reason* and *by cause that*:

Than seys they ther-in swich difficultee

By way of resoun, for to speke al playn,

By cause that ther was swich diversitee

Bitwene her bothe lawes... (Then they saw there such difficulty in it for the reason, to speak plainly, because there was so much difference between their two laws)

The structure of the sentence was further perfected in the 18th and 19th c. From the 15th to 18th c. the number of coordinating connectives was almost doubled. Most conspicuous was the frequent use of *and*, a conjunction of almost general meaning.

Other conjunctions widened their meanings and new connectives arose from various sources to express the subtle semantic relationships between clauses and sentences: *in consequence, in fact, to conclude, either... nor*.

In the *Age of Correctness* the employment of connectives, as well as the structure of the sentence, was subjected to logical regulation in the writings of the best stylists: J. Dryden, S. Johnson, R. Steele, J. Addison, J. Swift, D. Defoe. Their style combined a clear order with ease and flexibility of expression, which manifested itself in the choice of words, grammatical forms and syntactic patterns.

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