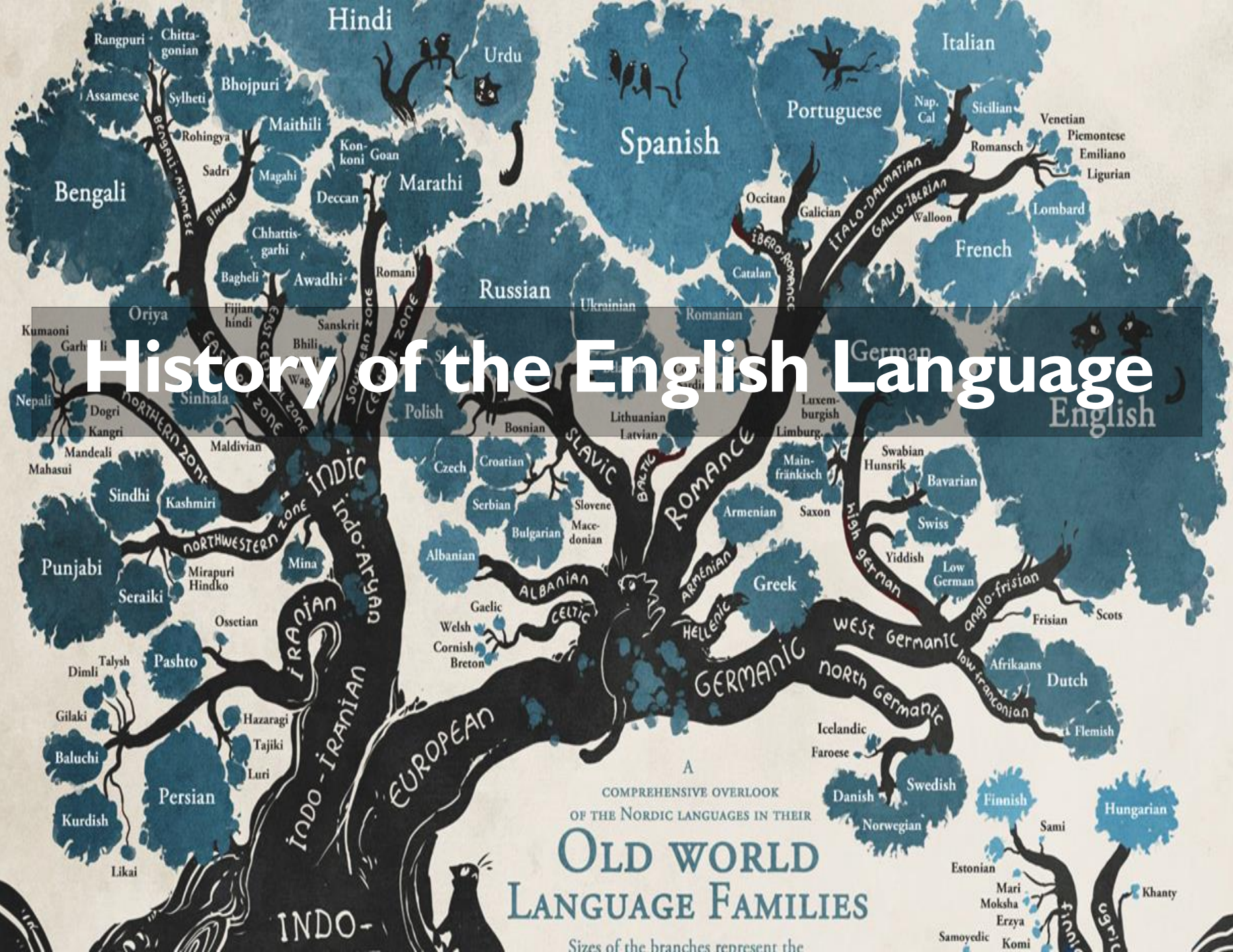


# History of the English Language



A  
COMPREHENSIVE OVERLOOK  
OF THE NORDIC LANGUAGES IN THEIR  
**OLD WORLD  
LANGUAGE FAMILIES**

Sizes of the branches represent the

# Spoken Worldwide

More than 2 billion of the world's 7.7 billion people, about 20 percent of the world's population speaks English as a first or secondary language. It is estimated that one out of four people worldwide speak English with some degree of competence.



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# INTRODUCTION

The history of the English language has traditionally been divided into three main periods: Old English (450 – 1100 AD), Middle English (1100 – circa 1500 AD) and Modern English (since 1500). Over the centuries, the English language has been influenced by a number of other languages.

**Old English (450 – 1100 AD):** During the 5th Century AD three Germanic tribes (Saxons, Angles, and Jutes) came to the British Isles from various parts of northwest Germany as well as Denmark. These tribes were warlike and pushed out most of the original, Celtic-speaking inhabitants from England into Scotland, Wales, and Cornwall. One group migrated to the Brittany Coast of France where their descendants still speak the Celtic Language of Breton today.

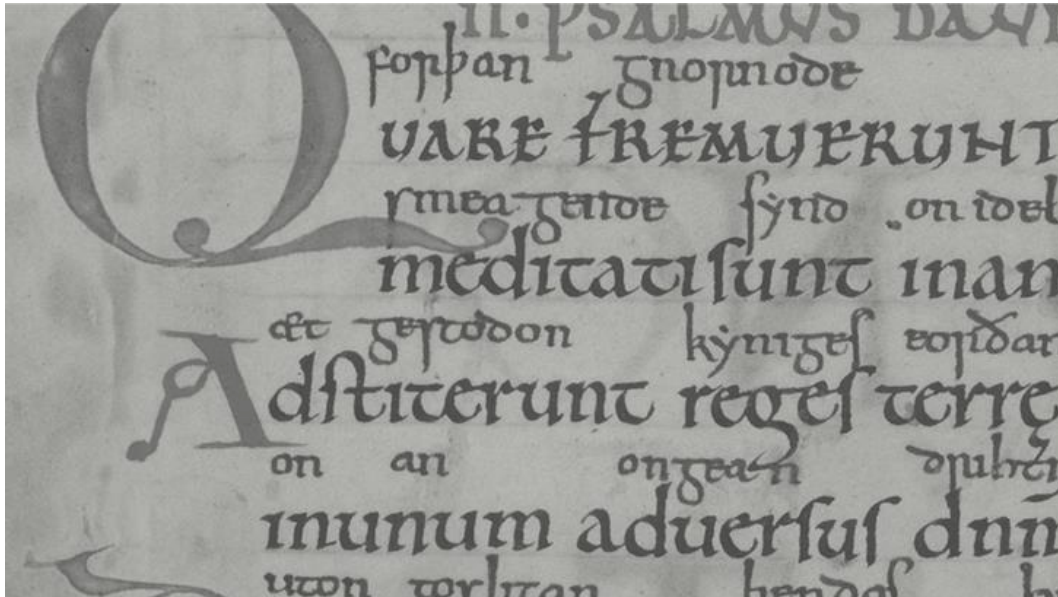
**Middle English (1100 – circa 1500 AD):** After William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy, invaded and conquered England in 1066 AD with his armies and became king, he brought his nobles, who spoke French, to be the new government. The Old French took over as the language of the court, administration, and culture.

# So When English Was First Spoken?

- derived from a Proto-Indo-European language spoken by travelers wandering Europe about 5,000 years ago
- divided into three major historical periods: Old English, Middle English, and Modern English

## Old English

- was brought to the British Isles by Germanic peoples: the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles, starting in 449
- West Saxon's dialect
- the dialect spoken there became the official "Old English"



- **The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)**

*Fæder ure*

*ðu ðe eart on heofenum*

*si ðin nama gehalgod*

*to-becume ðin rice*

*geweorpe ðin willa on eorðan swa swa on heofenum.*

*Urne ge dæghwamlican hlaf syle us to-deag and forgyf us ure gyltas*

*swa swa we forgyfaþ urum gyltendum*

*ane ne gelæde ðu us on costnunge*

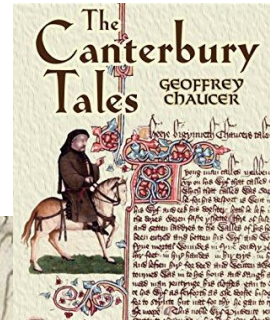
*ac alys us of yfle.*

# Evolution of the English Language

- the Norman conquest in 1066 – the Norman French dialect arrived in Britain
- Old English no longer dominated
- spoken by the aristocracy

## Middle English

- the loss of gender for nouns, some word forms (called inflections), the silent "e," and the coalescing of a more constrained word order
- people with the Norman French background wrote down the English words as they sounded
- the establishment of the S[ubject]-V[erb]-O[bject] type of word-order as normal
- Chaucer wrote in Middle English in the late 1300s
- Chaucer's Canterbury Tales  
*"Whan that Aprill, with his shoures soote  
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote  
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,  
Of which vertu engendred is the flour..."*



- the monosyllabic words for basic concepts, bodily functions, and body parts inherited from Old English and shared with the other Germanic languages
- *God, man, tin, iron, life, death, limb, nose, ear, foot, mother, father, brother, earth, sea, horse*
- Words from French are often polysyllabic terms for the institutions of the Conquest (church, administration, law), for things imported with the Conquest (castles, courts, prisons), and terms of high culture and social status (fashion, literature, art, decoration).
- the language used by William Shakespeare – is dated from around 1500. It incorporated many Renaissance-era loans from Latin and Ancient Greek as well as borrowings from other European languages, including French, German and Dutch.



- Significant pronunciation changes in this period included the ongoing Great Vowel Shift, which affected the qualities of most long vowels from the 1400s through the 1750s.
- For example, a Middle English long high vowel such as e eventually changed to a Modern English long i, and a Middle English long oo evolved into a Modern English ou sound. Long mid- and low-vowels changed as well, such as a long a evolving to a Modern English long e and an ah sound changing to the long a sound.

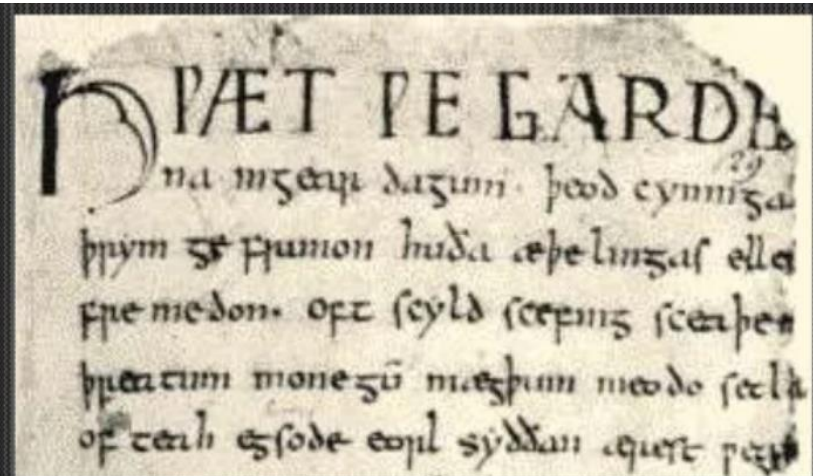


## Latin

- *win* (wine)
- *candel* (candle)
- *belt* (belt)
- *weall* (wall)
- *ecclesia* (church)
- *epicopus* (bishop)
- *baptismus* (baptism)
- *monachus* (monk)
- *eucharistia* (eucharist)
- *presbyter* (presbyter)

## Old Norse

- *eyra* (ear)
- *orr* (liberal)
- *illigr/ illr/ ljótr* (ugly)



Part of the oldest English poem, *Beowulf*, a poem written in Old English



And whan I sawgh he wolde never fine  
To reden on this cursed book al night,  
Al sodeinly thre leves have I plight  
Out of his book right as he redde, and eke  
I with my fist so took him on the cheeke  
That in oure fir he fil bakward adown.  
And up he sterte as dooth a wood leon  
And with his fist he smoot me on the heed  
That in the floor I lay as I were deed.  
And whan he swagh how stille that I lay,  
He was agast, and wolde have fled his way,  
Till atte laste out of my swough I braide:  
"O hastou slain me, false thief?" I saide,  
"And for my land thus hastou mordred me?  
Er I be deed yit wol I kisse thee."

## Old French

- crown
- castle
- court
- parliament
- army
- mansion
- beauty
- romance
- servant
- peasant
- traitor

## Lower- class English

- ox
- cow
- calf
- sheep
- swine
- deer

## Upper- class French

- beef
- lamb
- mutton
- pork
- bacon
- venison



# Today's English

English has adopted new words from other languages (350 languages, according to David Crystal in “English as a Global Language”).

About three-quarters of its words come from Greek and Latin.

Ammon Shea points out in “Bad English: A History of Linguistic Aggravation”, “it is certainly not a Romance language, it is a Germanic one. Evidence of this may be found in the fact that it is quite easy to create a sentence without words of Latin origin, but pretty much impossible to make one that has no words from Old English”.

We need not fear or resist such change, though many people do, since the processes operating now are comparable to those which have operated throughout the observable and reconstructable history of English, and indeed of all other languages.

**The goal of the research** – to study **Modern English** language.

**The object of the research** – the history of the English Language.

**The subject of the research** – grammatical forms and categories in **Modern English**.

Achievement of the aim of the study requires a number of **tasks**:

1. To investigate **Modern English** language;
2. To study the history of the development of **Modern English** language;
3. To analyze grammatical forms and categories in **Modern English**.

# I. Modern English Language History

## I.1 General Characteristics of Modern English

***Early Modern English (1500 – 1800)***. The next wave of innovation in English came with the Renaissance. The revival of classical scholarship brought many classical Latin and Greek words into the Language. These borrowings were deliberate and many bemoaned the adoption of these *inkhorn* terms, but many survive to this day. Shakespeare's character Holofernes in *Loves Labor Lost* is a satire of an overenthusiastic schoolmaster who is too fond of Latinisms.

***Late-Modern English (1800 – present)***. The principal distinction between early- and late-modern English is vocabulary. Pronunciation, grammar, and spelling are largely the same, but Late-Modern English has many more words. These words are the result of two historical factors. The first is the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the technological society. This necessitated new words for things and ideas that had not previously existed. The second was the British Empire. At its height, Britain ruled one quarter of the earth's surface, and English adopted many foreign words and made them its own.

## Industrial Revolution

- trains
- engine
- pulleys
- combustion
- electricity
- telephone
- telegraph
- camera

## Malayo- Polynesian (Tagalog)

- Yo- yo
- boondocks

## Native Australian

- Kangaroo
- boomerang

## India (Pubjabi)

- turban
- curry

## Tamil

- mango
- curry
- anaconda

The British Empire was a maritime empire, and the influence of nautical terms on the English language has been great. Words and phrases like *three sheets to the wind* and *scuttlebutt* have their origins onboard ships.

Finally, the 20th century saw two world wars, and the military influence on the language during the latter half of this century has been great. Before the Great War, military service for English-speaking persons was rare; both Britain and the United States maintained small, volunteer militaries. Military slang existed, but with the exception of nautical terms, rarely influenced standard English. During the mid-20th century, however, virtually all British and American men served in the military. Military slang entered the language like never before. *Blockbuster*, *nosedive*, *camouflage*, *radar*, *roadblock*, *spearhead*, and *landing strip* are all military terms that made their way into standard English.

## 1.2 Dictionaries and Grammars

The first English dictionary, “A Table Alphabeticall”, was published by English schoolteacher Robert Cawdrey in 1604 (8 years before the first Italian dictionary, and 35 years before the first French dictionary, although admittedly some 800 years after the first Arabic dictionary and nearly 1,000 after the first Sanskrit dictionary). Cawdrey’s little book contained 2,543 of what he called “hard words”, especially those borrowed from Hebrew, Greek, Latin and French, although it was not actually a very reliable resource (even the word words was spelled in two different ways on the title page alone, as wordes and words).

Several other dictionaries, as well as grammar, pronunciation and spelling guides, followed during the 17th and 18th Century. The first attempt to list ALL the words in the English language was “An Universall Etymological English Dictionary”, compiled by Nathaniel Bailey in 1721 (the 1736 edition contained about 60,000 entries).

# 2. Modern English Grammar

## 2.1 Parts of Speech in Modern English

### *Identification of parts of speech.*

The words of language, depending on various formal & semantic features, are divided into grammatically relevant sets or classes. Traditionally they are called parts of speech (“lexico-gram.” series of words or categories). Today they are discriminated ac. to 3 criteria: ***semantic, formal & functional.***

***Semantic*** (meaning): presupposes the evaluation of the generalized meaning, characteristic of all words of a given part of speech. The meaning is understood as “categorical meaning of the p.of sp.”.

***Formal*** (form): provides for the exposition of the specific inflexional & derivational (word-building) features of all the lexemic subsets of a part of speech.

***Functional*** (function): concerns the syntactic role of words in the s-  
ce typical of a part of speech.



# ***Notional parts of speech in English.***

According to these criteria words on the upper level are div. into *notional* (the noun, adj., numeral, pronoun, verb, adverb), words of complete nominative mean. characterized by self-dependent f-tions, & *functional* (the article, prepos., conj., particle, modal verb, interjection).

## **Noun:**

- 1) *meaning*-substance;
- 2) the changeable *forms* of number & case;
- 3) the substantive *f-tions* in the s-ce.

## **Adjective:**

- 1) the categorical *mean.* of property;
- 2) *forms* of degrees of comparison;
- 3) *adj.f-tions*.

## **Numeral:**

- 1) number;
- 2) narrow set of simple numerals;
- 3) *f-tions* of numerical attr. & numer. substantive.

## **Pronoun:**

- 1) indication;
- 2) narrow sets of various status with the corresponding formal properties of categ.changeability & w-building;
- 3) the subst. & adjectival *f-tions* for dif. sets.

## 2.2 Sentence and Its Structure

*Inversion of verb and subject.* After an adverbial element, a conjunction, or an object, this was frequent in the sixteenth century (perhaps in as many as one-third of sentences), but dropped sharply after 1600.

*Examples include:*

- ‘And hereof commeth the destruction of the reprobates’ (James Bell, 1581)
- ‘My case is hard, but yet am I not so desperat as to reuenge it vpon my selfe’ (Holinshed’s Chronicle, 1587)

*The multiple negative*

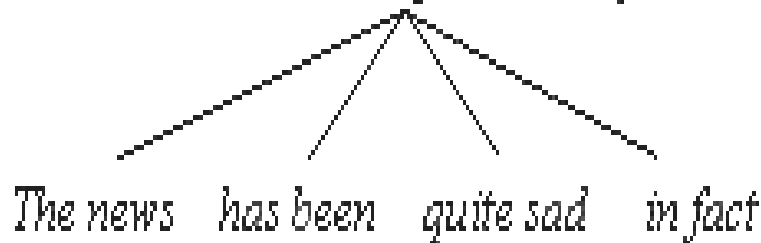
In Old and Middle English it was unexceptional to negate more than one element of a sentence, and this remained down to the early seventeenth century, subsequently becoming rare or nonstandard.

*Examples include:*

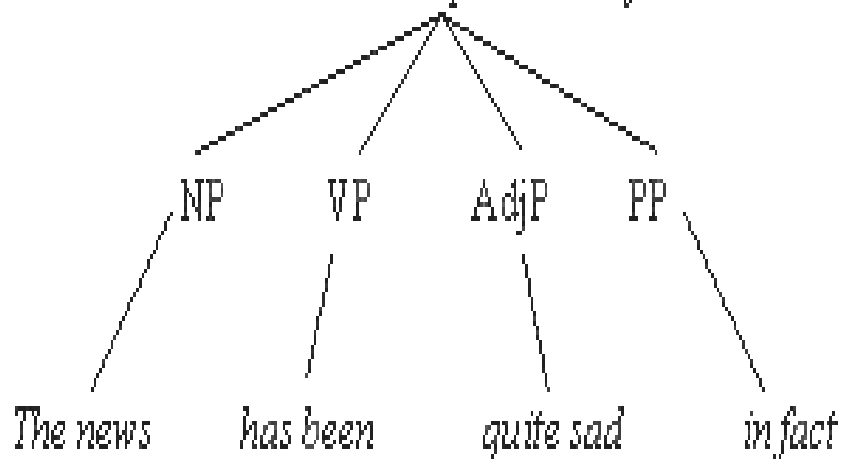
- ‘I wyll not medle with no duplycyte’ (Stephen Hawes, 1503)
- ‘Hee absented not himselfe in no place’ (Philemon Holland, 1606).

**Words and phrases are the constituents of the clause rank. In order to discuss the constituents of the clause, it is necessary to refer to the units smaller than the clause itself.**

*The news has been quite sad in fact.*

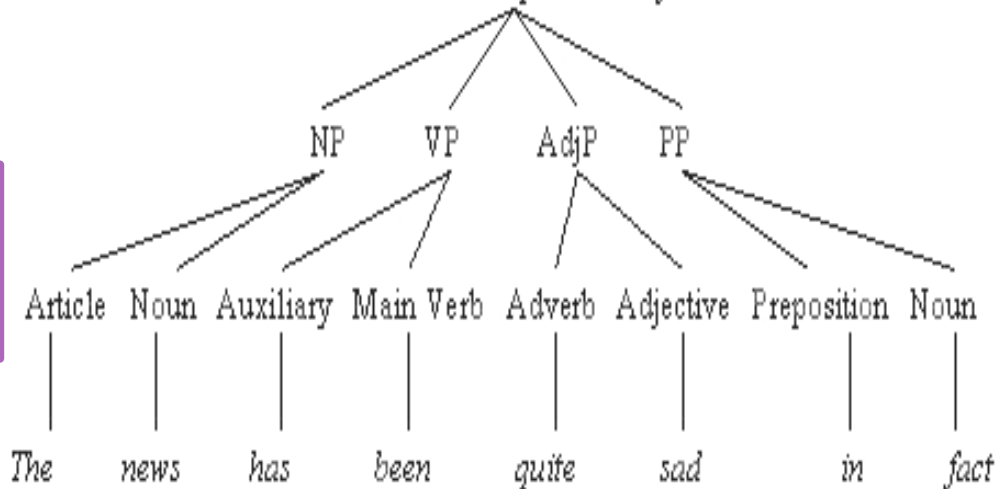


*The news has been quite sad in fact.*



**From our discussion of the phrase rank, we also know that we can categorize the constituents of that clause into the appropriate phrase type.**

*The news has been quite sad in fact.*



**Furthermore, we also know that each phrase can be subcategorized into its constituent parts.**

Functional Categories	Eight Clause Functions
(1) Subject	[1] Subject
(2) Verb	[2] Verb
(3) Objects	[3] Direct Object
	[4] Indirect Object
(4) Complements	[5] Object Complement
	[6] Subject Complement
(5) Adverbials	[7] Adverbial Complement
	[8] Adverbial

## Brief chronology of English

<b>55 BC</b>	Roman invasion of Britain by Julius Caesar	<b>Local inhabitants speak Celt</b>
<b>43 AD</b>	Roman invasion and occupation. Beginning of Roman rule of Britain	
<b>436</b>	Complete withdrawal of the Romans from Britain	
<b>499</b>	Settlement of Britain by Germanic invaders begins	
<b>450-480</b>	Earliest known Old English inscriptions	<b>Old English</b>
<b>1066</b>	William the Conqueror, Duke of Normandy, invades and conquers England	
<b>c. 1150</b>	Earliest surviving manuscripts in Middle English	<b>Middle English</b>
<b>1348</b>	English replaces Latin as the language of instruction in most schools	
<b>1362</b>	English replaces French as the language of law. English is used in Parliament for the first time	
<b>c. 1388</b>	Chaucer's <i>The Canterbury Tales</i>	
<b>c. 1400</b>	The Great Vowel Shift campaign	

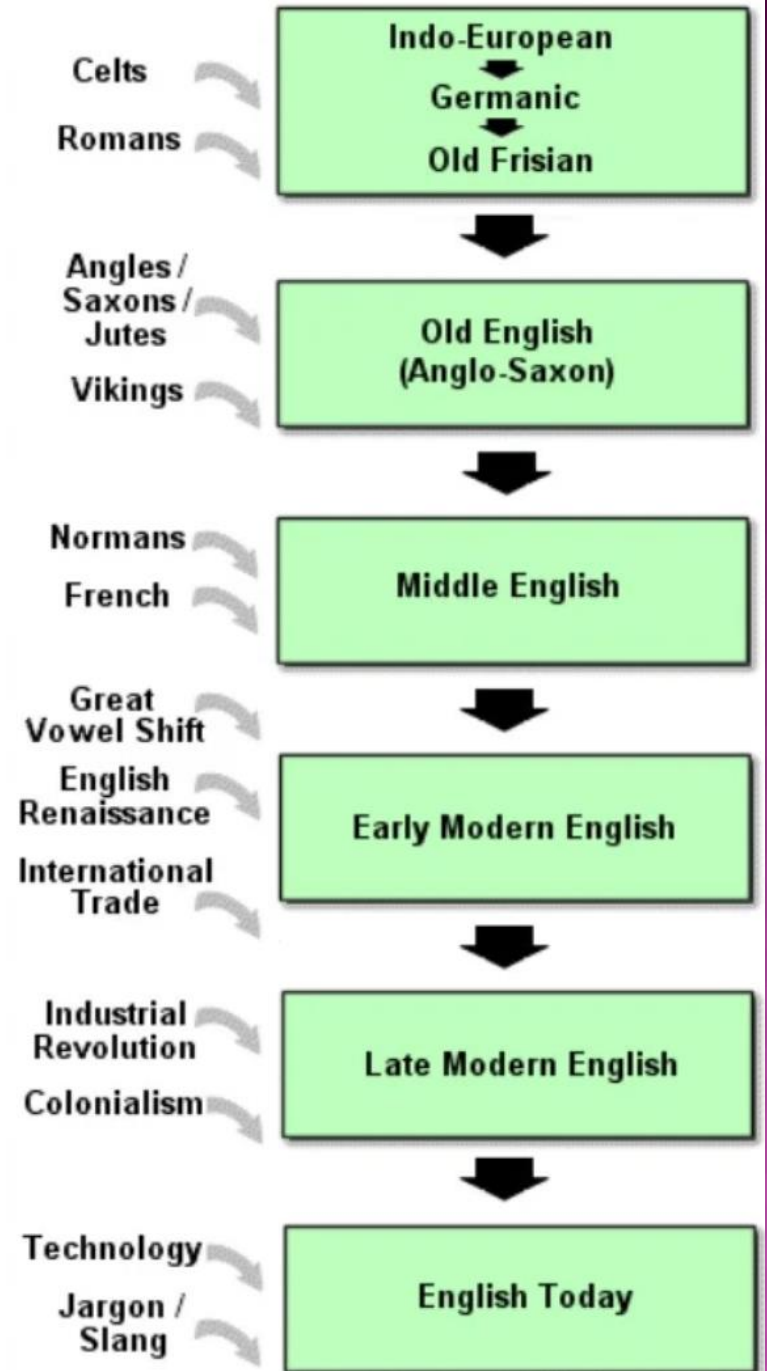
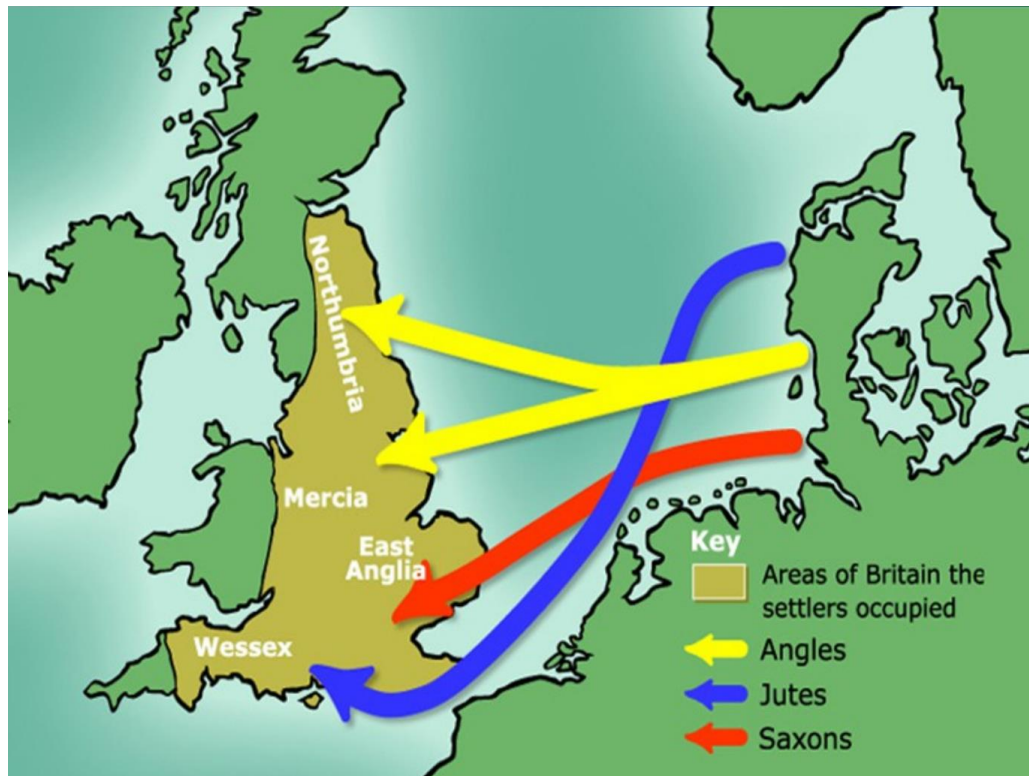
## Brief chronology of English

1476	William Caxton establishes the first English printing press
1604	<i>Table Alphabeticall</i> , the first English dictionary, is published
1607	The first permanent English settlement in the New World (Jamestown) is established
1702	The first daily English-language newspaper, <i>The Daily Courant</i> , is published in London
1755	Samuel Johnson publishes his English dictionary
1782	Britain abandons its colonies in what is later to become the USA
1828	Webster publishes his American English dictionary
1922	The British Broadcasting Corporation is founded
1928	The <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> is published

**Early Modern  
English-  
Contemporary  
Age**

**Modern  
English**

# The main influences on the development of the English language.



# CONCLUSION

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

The main difference between Early Modern English and Late Modern English is vocabulary. Late Modern English has many more words, arising from two principal factors: firstly, the Industrial Revolution and technology created a need for new words; secondly, the British Empire at its height covered one quarter of the earth's surface, and the English language adopted foreign words from many countries.