

Introduction to English Linguistics

I: Introduction



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Linguistics or Medieval Studies?

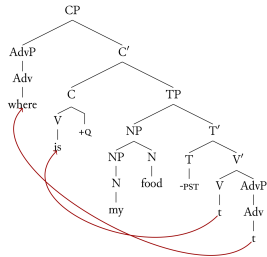


Figure: *Wahlpflicht* between linguistics and medieval studies

Language

Language and Thought



Figure: CC BY-NC-ND TED

Past Language

Past Language

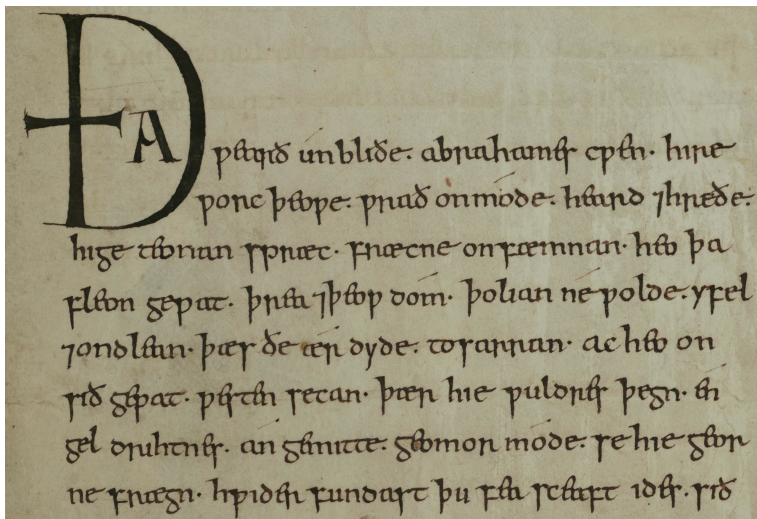


Figure: MS Junius II p. 103 (detail), CC-BY-NC Bodleian Libraries

Clues to Historical Spoken Language

- ▶ Known pseudophonetic script (e.g. Roman alphabet)
- ▶ Poetic constraints (metre, rhyme, alliteration)
- ▶ Historical reference languages (Old Saxon, Old High German)
- ▶ Later spelling and pronunciation (e.g. current English)
- ▶ Regular development

The First English Speakers?

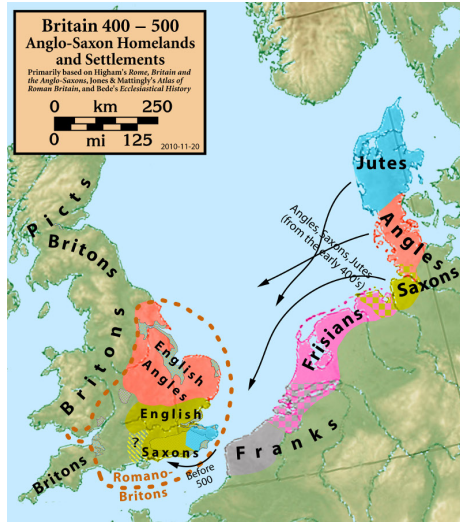


Figure: Homelands and Settlements (CC-BY-SA WMC user “my work”)

Scripts

ƒ	ℳ	ƚ	ƿ	℞	℔	ℵ	Ɔ	℥	†	ℓ	ϕ	ℑ	ℒ	Υ	ℋ	↑	ℬ	℡	™	℣	ℤ	℥	Ω	℧	ℨ	℩	ℰ	
f	ū	þ	ō	r	c	g	w	h	n	ī	g	ē	p	e	s	t	b	e	m	l	i	ē	d	ā	æ	ȳ	ī	ē
e	r	o	s	ā	ē	y	y	æ	ȳ	s	e	o	e	o	i	ī	e	h	a	a	n	þ	æ	c	s	r	o	a
o		r		d	n	f	n	g	d		r	h	o	l	g	r	o		n	g	g	e	g		c		r	r
h		n				u	n	l					þ		l		c		n	u		l						

Table: Anglo-Frisian futhorc, ss. v–xi, 29–33 graphemes

Scripts

ƒ	ℳ	ƚ	Ƒ	℞	℔	ℵ	Ɔ	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	℥	
f	ū	þ	ō	r	c	g	w	h	n	ī	g	ē	p	e	s	t	b	e	m	l	i	ē	d	ā	æ	ȳ	ī	ē
e	r	o	s	ā	ē	y	y	æ	ȳ	s	e	o	e	o	i	ī	e	h	a	a	n	þ	æ	c	s	r	o	a
o		r		d	n	f	n	g	d		r	h	o	l	g	r	o		n	g	g	e	g		c		r	r
h		n				u	n	l					þ		l		c		n	u		l						

Table: Anglo-Frisian futhorc, ss. v–xi, 29–33 graphemes

A	Æ	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	þ	Ð	U	ƿ	Y
a	æ	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	l	m	n	o	p	r	s	t	þ	ð	u	ƿ	y

Table: Old English alphabet

Inflectional Levelling

OE	ME
hȳran	hēren
wē hȳraþ	wē hēren
þæt wē hȳren	þat wē hēren
þā dagas	þē daies
þāra daga	of þē daies
on þāem dagum	in þē daies

Table: Inflectional levelling in Middle English

Morphology: A Foretaste

Morpheme

The smallest meaning-carrying unit of language

- ▶ Free: can form a word by itself
 - ▶ Lexical: Refers to sth outside of language (*fish*)
 - ▶ Functional: Mainly grammatical reference (*the, of*)
- ▶ Bound: Cannot form a word by itself
 - ▶ Inflectional: conveys grammatical information (*-s, -d*)
 - ▶ Derivational: changes a word's sense or grammatical category (*dis-, -ly*)

Language Types

- ▶ Isolating: a low morpheme-per-word ratio, and no inflectional morphemes
- ▶ Analytic: a low morpheme-per-word ratio (Mandarin, MnE)
- ▶ Synthetic: a high morpheme-per-word ratio
 - ▶ Fusional: overlays units of meaning (Latin, German, OE)
 - ▶ Agglutinative: serializes units of meaning (Turkish, Finnish, Inuktitut)

Transitional Characteristics (Selective)

Old to Middle English (c. 1150)

- ▶ Inflectional levelling (*bacan* > *bāken*)

Middle to Modern English (c. 1500)

- ▶ Inflectional loss (*bāken* > *bake*)
- ▶ Great Vowel Shift

The Great Vowel Shift (c. 1350–c. 1700)

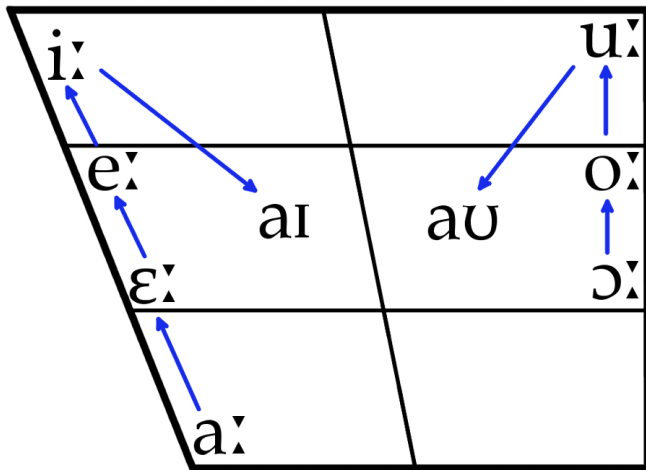


Figure: The Great Vowel Shift in overview

Periodization of English

1. c. 450–c. 1150: Old English (OE)
 - 1.1 c. 450–c. 700: Proto-English (PE)
 - 1.2 c. 700–c. 1150: Old English (OE)
2. c. 1150–c. 1500: Middle English (ME)
3. c. 1500–present: Modern English (MnE)
 - 3.1 c. 1500–c. 1700: Early Modern English (eMnE)
 - 3.2 c. 1700–present? Late Modern English (lMnE)
 - cf. Present-Day-English (PDE)

Linguistics

(Some) Linguistic Disciplines

- ▶ Phonetics
- ▶ Phonology
- ▶ Morphology
- ▶ Word Formation
- ▶ Syntax
- ▶ Lexicology
- ▶ Semiotics
- ▶ Semantics
- ▶ Etymology
- ▶ Pragmatics
- ▶ Dialectology
- ▶ Sociolinguistics

Traditional Parts of Speech of English

- ▶ Noun
- ▶ Adjective
- ▶ Pronoun
- ▶ Verb
- ▶ Adverb
- ▶ Preposition
- ▶ Conjunction
- ▶ Interjection
- ▶ (Numeral)
- ▶ (Determiner)

Traditional Parts of Speech of English

- ▶ Noun: case, number, gender
- ▶ Adjective: case, number, gender
- ▶ Pronoun: case, number, gender
- ▶ Verb: person, number, tense, mood, voice, aspect
- ▶ Adverb
- ▶ Preposition
- ▶ Conjunction (coordinating; subordinating)
- ▶ Interjection
- ▶ (Numeral)
- ▶ (Determiner)

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