English in Multilingual Context
EBS 331

COURSE TUTOR: MS HILDA KODZOE-BONTO

Learning outcomes:

1. Discuss the origin of English

2. Discuss the characteristics Old English, Middle English, Modern English, Early modern English and Late modern English vowels.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

- **BEFORE ENGLISH**
- The language 'English' was known to be a foreign language that was introduced in Britain around the 5th century.
- The Celtic tribe from other parts of Europe was known to be the inhabitants of the island before English was introduced.
- The accounts indicated that before the Celtic, there **was the Stone Age era known as the Paleolithic (Old Stone) Age and the Neolithic (New Stone) Age** whose languages were not known to linguists.

BEFORE ENGLISH

- It is therefore believed that 'Celtic was probably the first Indo-European tongue to be spoken in England' (Baugh & Cable, 2002:39).

- Even though the Celtic language was believed to be the first language to be spoken in England, Baugh & Cable (2002) elaborate on the evidence of Latin spoken in England alongside Celts for about four centuries before English was introduced.

BEFORE ENGLISH

- The Romans invaded Britain in 43 AD by Emperor Claudius and established himself in the central and southern region.

- The Romans however entered Britain when Julius Caesar first visited the Island in 55 AD after conquering Gaul.

- In 410 AD the Celts resisted the Romans.

- The Romans left the British Island but traces of their language Latin was left behind, (graffiti scratched on tiles or pieces of pottery).

BEFORE ENGLISH

- Latin was viewed as the language of civilization therefore it was used by the elites and the upper class in society.

- Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the language Latin did not replace the Celtic language in Britain as in the case of Gaul also conquered by the Romans.

- In the early fifth century or after 410 AD the use of Latin was said to decline due to the withdrawal of the Roman legion in the region. (Algeo, 2010; Baugh & Cable, 2002)

English In Britain

- The use of Latin and Celt points to the fact that Britain was **bilingual** in these two languages before the introduction of English.

- English was introduced by three main Germanic tribes of the Jutes, Angles and the Saxons known as the '**Anglo-Saxons**'.

- The Anglo-Saxons did not have any direct contact with the Romans because the Romans had left the British Island before they came in.

English In Britain

- Several Latin words of about 600 were said to have been adopted by the Celts but due to the bad relationship between the Celts and the English most of the Latin words were not passed on to the English language.

- The few words in Latin adopted by the Anglo-Saxons in the 5th century were picked from the Celtics upon their settlement in England.

- Few of these words are *ceaser,* from the Latin word *castra* meaning 'camp', and several other names of English places as such as *Chester, Colchester, Dorchester, Manchester, Lancaster, Gloucester,* etc.

English In Britain

- Christianization of the British by the Romans in 597 AD was when Old English became greatly influenced by Latin.

- English borrowed a great majority of words from Latin

in relation to church and its service.	not related to the religion
alter, angel, anthem, cleric, deacon, disciple, hymn, pope, priest, temple , synod, epistle, etc.	*cap, sock, silk, chest, millet* (OE *mil*), *oyster, master, verse, meter, elephant, circle, talent, piper* 'pepper', *disc* 'dish', *catte* 'cattle', *mil* 'mile', *munt* 'mountain', *lentil* (OE *lent*), *oyster* (OE *ostre*), *cycene* 'kitchen', *catte* 'cattle'

- **Most of these words have not changed their spelling in Modern English.**

English In Britain

- Though the British Celtic people dominated the British Isles with their language and culture; however, linguistically the Celtic language did not influence Old English much.

- The Celts could not make any notable contribution to the Anglo-Saxon civilization and the Anglo-Saxons also did not have much time to adapt to the Celtic mode of expressions.

- The possible reason for the less linguistic influence of the language on English could be attributed to the bad relationship and the war between the Celts and the Anglo-Saxons.

English In Britain

- There is however some few loan words from Celtic language in Old English.

loan words from Celtic language	name of places and rivers
binn 'basket' or 'crib', *brock* an old English word for 'badger', *bratt* 'cloak', *Avon* 'river', *bray* 'hill', *torr* 'rock', etc. .	Kent, York, Dover, Thames, Derwent, Trent, Severn, Cornwall, etc.

(Hoad, 2006; Algeo, 2010).

- Some other few English words have their origin from Celtic

AFTER ENGLISH - Old English (OE) or Anglo-Saxon

- English language emerged from the Proto-Germanic language that belongs to the Indo-Europe family of languages.

- The Germanic language group was believed to have split into other different distinct sub groups as the **East Germanic, North Germanic and West Germanic language**

- The East Germanic branch of the language was spoken by a group of people who migrated back to southern Europe. The language spoken by this branch is known to be in extinction but the **Gothic exist only in the written form.**

Old English (OE) or Anglo-Saxon

- The North Germanic group evolved into languages like the Icelandic, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and Faroese all known as the Modern Scandinavian languages.

- The West Germanic branch had languages like the German, Low German (Plattdeutsch), Frisian, Dutch, Flemish, Afrikaans, Yiddish and Old English.

- Old English is what has evolved into present day English.

Old English (OE) or Anglo-Saxon

- Proto-Germanic language belongs to the Indo-Europe family of languages.

- It is out of the Proto-Germanic language that the English language emerged from.

- Features of the languages that prove that they are from a common origin.

Modern English	Frisian	Old Norse	Dutch	German	Greek	Sanskrit
father	*feder*	*faðir*	*vader*	*vater*	*patēr*,	*pitar*

Old English (OE) or Anglo-Saxon

- English entered Britain at the time there was no distinct English language.

- The Anglo-Saxon's slit off from their Germanic brothers around the 5th century made the English language to become distinct.

- Old English is said to have begun between the era of 449 and 1100 AD as reported by Algeo, (2010).

Old English (OE) or Anglo-Saxon

- In 865 the Vikings army, led by Ivar the Boneless and his brother Halfdan, sons of Radgnar Lothbrok (Loð brók 'Shaggy-pants), landed in East Anglia.

- The Vikings looted and drove the wealthy English monastery and occupied the whole of the eastern England.

- Later in 878 AD, Alfred defeat Guthrum, the Danish king of East Anglia (i.e. the King of the Vikings).

Old English (OE) or Anglo-Saxon

- After the defeat, a treaty known as the 'Danelaw' was signed with the original Britons, which divided the country into two with the Norsemen to the east and the Anglo-Saxons to the south and west.

- The Vikings spoke Old Norse a North Germanic language similar to the Anglo-Saxon.

- The similarities between the Old English (OE) and Old Norse is said to be subtle which made it difficult to tell whether a word in Modern English (ME) is a native or borrowed word.

Old English (OE) or Anglo-Saxon

Identical vocabularies of both languages	borrowed words from Norse *sk* form
over, under, man, wife, hear, see, folk, thing, winter, will, can, fellow, husband, bag,	sky, skin, scrape, scrub, bask, whisk.

Baugh & Cable, (2002:78).

- There have been several developments to the Anglo-Saxon English that has brought about significant change in its entire structure making it completely different from the present day English.

Old English (OE) or Anglo-Saxon

- The Old English or Anglo-Saxon had a lot of inflections like the German and French.

- It had three genders: male, female and neuter and could be inflected for up to five cases (nominative, accusative, genitive, dative and instrumentals).

- There were 7 classes of strong verbs and 3 of weak verbs, and their endings changed for number, tense, mood and person.

- Adjectives were believed to have 11 forms, while the definite articles 'the' had 3 genders and 4 case forms as singular and plural respectively.

Old English (OE) or Anglo-Saxon

- The Our Father in Old English:

- Fæder ure þu þe eart on heofonum; Si þin nama gehalgod to becume þin rice gewurþe ðin willa on eorðan swa swa on heofonum. urne gedæghwamlican hlaf syle us todæg and forgyf us ure gyltas swa swa we forgyfað urum gyltendum and ne gelæd þu us on costnunge ac alys us of yfele soþlice.

- **TRY AND READ THIS AND COMPARE IT TO PRESENT DAY ENGLISH.**

CHARACTERISTICS OF OLD ENGLISH MONOPHTHONGS

Short vowels   Long vowels

- ɑ as in wascan   (to wash)   ā as in hām   (home)
- æ as in fæþm   (embrace)   ǣ as in dǣl   (deal)
- e as in settan   (set)   ē as in fēdan   (feed)
- i as in sittan   (sit)   ī as in rīdan   (ride)
- o as in moððe   (moth)   ō as in fōd   (food)
- u as in sundor   (sunder)   ū as in mūs   (mouse)
- y as in fyllan   (fill)   ȳ as in mȳs   (mice)

THE DIPHTHONGS

- The diphthongs were noted to be largely made-up of the front vowels followed by a central off glide e.g. ēə, ǣə.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

- Middle English begun between 1100 and 1500 which was marked with the coming of the Normans.

- the term 'Norman' was derived from 'Northman' who represented a group of people who in the 10 century had been granted territory in northern France.

- The Normans who settled at northern France spoke Old Norse and were believed to be descendants of the Vikings.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

- They spoke Old Norse but gave up the use of it in the early 11ᵗʰ century. They then adopted the rural dialect of French called the Norman French popularly known as 'Francien' at that time.

- The Norman French later developed to Anglo-Norman which became the language used by the kings and nobles of England in the courts, administration and culture.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

- Latin - the language of the ruling class became the language used as written language especially by the Church and for all official records.

- English was being used by the majority of the populace in England among the peasantry and the lower class although it was greatly stigmatized by the Normans as a low-class vulgar language.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

- On the wave of the Black Death in 1349 to 1350, on-third of the English population and a number Latin-speaking clergy died.

- The plague left in its wake the rise of the English-speaking populace of peasantry and merchant class to grow in economic and social importance.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

- Subsequently, English became the language of the courts, parliament and used as the medium of instruction in schools.

- English became the lingua franca after the Norman French became '**Anglicized**' after King John lost his French part of the Normandy to the King of France.

- Even though English became the lingua franca French and Latin remained spoken in England.

MIDDLE ENGLISH

- Several words of the Norman French influenced the use of English;

duke, count, prince, majesty, mayor, minister, state, accuse, crime, defend, judge, justice, prison, etc.

(Baugh & Cable, 2002).

- OE   <u>ME</u>   <u>Meaning</u>
- æ and ɑ as in *glæd* a single central vowel ɑ as *glad* 'glad'

- æ as in *glæd* but æ in Southwest Midland and Kentish   as *gled* 'glad' was written **<e >**

- æ later raised in the 16th and 17th centuries in Modern Scots as [ɛ:] and ē [e:] as in *hame* [he:m] 'home' *rape* [re:p] 'rope *stane* [ste:n] 'stone'

- æ in Northern England as ā as *hām* 'home" *rāp* *'rope'* *stān* 'stone'

Middle English Diphthongs

- The Old English diphthongs disappeared and were replaced with a number of new ones in ME:

$$([aɪ, eɪ, aʊ, ɔʊ, ɛʊ, ɪʊ, ɔɪ, ʊɪ]).$$

- ME *lęęf* 'leaf' [lɛ:f] develops out of OE *lēaf*
- ME [se:n] out of Old English *sēon,*   'seen'
- OE *heorte* became *herte* in ME,   'heart'

Modern English

- 1500 to present witnessed the period of Modern English.

- Modern English has two phases:

a. 1500 to 1800 known as the Early Modern

b. 1800 to date known as the Late Modern.

This period is known as the period of expansion of the language to other parts of the world.

Modern English

- English became a global language during the era of colonization. English left England to other parts of the world such as Asia, North America, United States of America and Africa. Before the move of English from its native home England, it was believed that there were just about five to seven million speaker of the language who were almost all within the isles of Britain.

Modern English

- Today, there are varieties of English such as the British and American English which constitute the two main national varieties of English even though there are other varieties such as the Canadian English, Australian English, the Irish Republic English, and the South African English known as the 'Inner Circle' English.

Modern English

- The English that went to other parts of the world as the Americas (Trinidad and Tobago, the Guyana, Jamaica, etc.), West Indies in Europe (Gibraltar, Malta), Africa (Madagascar, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Sierra Leone, etc.), and Asia (Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Bangladesh, etc.) form a variety of English known as the 'Outer Circle' English

Modern English

- Conversely, English is used as an 'official language' or spoken as a first language in about 57 countries which Ghana is included in the former.

- **The English spoken in Ghana, would you say it is British English or Ghanaian English and why?**

Early Modern English vowels

- The Anglo-Saxon English has gone through several phonological changes therefore one of the changes that distinguished the Old English, Middle English from the Early Modern English is the sound system.

Early Modern English vowels

- Middle English   Early Modern English
- [e:]   became   [i]
- [i:]   became   [əɪ] later [aɪ]
- [u:]   became   [əʊ] later [aʊ]
- [o:]   became   [u]
- [ɔ:]   became   [o]
- [ɛ:]   became   [e]
- [a:]   became   [æ]

Late Modern English

- Well (1982) suggests that the central vowel [ɜ:] occurs in stressed syllable in present-day English is relatively new in the English language. He argues that the vowel came into existence in Modern English as result of the "NURSE Merger".

- The Scottish and Irish however did not experience the merger therefore 'lack the NURSE' vowel as a distinct phonological entity, (Well. 1982).

Late Modern English

- The changes that occurred in the Late Modern English to the Modern English is that though the vowel length of the Middle English was carried over, however, the distribution of the sound in words brought about a lot of change in the vowels in the different set of words.

Late Modern English

Middle English		Late Modern English
Time	[ti:m]	/taim/
Green	[gre:n]	/gri:n/
Break	[bre:k]	/breɪk/
Name	[namə]	/neɪm/
Day	[dai]	/deɪ/
Loud	[lu:d]	/laud/
Boot	[bo:t]	/bu:t/
Boat	[bɔ:t]	/boʊt/
Law	[lau]	/lɔ:/