A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Abstract:

The development, evolution, and construction of the English language have long been fascinating subjects for debate. It is obvious that language speakers maintain the false belief that their language is constant. But languages are always changing, much like life and the human body, even if we might not be aware of them. However, it is important to be aware of the changes since they represent a language's whole live reality.

We must be aware that there are several approaches to study a language's history. A language undergoes numerous changes throughout time, and these changes can take many distinct forms. We must not separate ourselves from the initial event and progression of changes. We will learn about "family of languages" in this series, and that English is a member of a certain family of languages.

Keywords: Development, Evolution, English, language, Progression, Distinct, Family of languages

I.INTRODUCTION:

What does 'history of a language' mean? To pose an even more fundamental question: What really is "history"? History is described as "A relation of incidents" in the Oxford English Dictionary, "but only of those professedly true."

A written account that "constitutes a continuous methodical record, in order of time, of important or public events, especially those connected with a particular country, people, individual, etc." is what is meant by the second definition."The official record of the past, particularly of human affairs or actions," according to it. As a result, history is a recounting of events that truly took place in the past and are related to something, in this instance language. There are now two perspectives on how to examine historical "incidents," or events and developments that affected the English language: (a) internal and (b) external.

Without necessarily making reference to the external causes (events or circumstances), we analyse the changes in the structure and word stock of the language in the internal history. We see language as an independent system that is prone to change and development. It is believed that language is a type of creature with its own set of rules for change. The fact that a language is spoken by so many different individuals means, for instance, that the pronunciation or sound values of a language are destined to vary throughout time. On the other hand, in external history, such modifications to the audio system are regarded as the results of contact with some other language or languages. The main focus is on external circumstances and events, such as situations of language interaction and shifting roles, and language changes are considered as outcomes of these events and variables. However, there are only minor differences in focus between these two strategies.

Our source for the early history of English settlement, the arrival of St. Augustine in 597, and the conversion of England to Christianity is the Ecclesiastical History of the English People, which was written in Latin by Venerable Bede (a Christian priest) around 730. The Parker Chronicle is "the oldest historical prose in any Germanic language" and relates the 755 battle at Merton in Surrey where King Cynewulf was killed.

The terms were exhaustively recorded together with their etymologies and attested shifting meanings with supporting documentation in The New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, which was published from 1884 to 1928 (and amended and reissued with a supplement as The Oxford English Dictionary in 1933). Based on the idea that

pronunciation should match spelling, John Walker created A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary in 1791. The English Pronouncing Dictionary was written by Daniel Jones in 1917 "to record the pronunciation used by a considerable number of typical Southern English people in everyday conversation."

II. ORIGINS OF ENGLISH:

A language is a people's spoken language. A language's history is consequently a people's history. The current *avatura* of English may have originated as the language of a few Germanic tribes in Europe, but it has undergone a number of modifications as a result of migration, invasion, six conversions, settlement, and colonialism. The Indo-European family of languages includes the Germanic speech group as a branch:
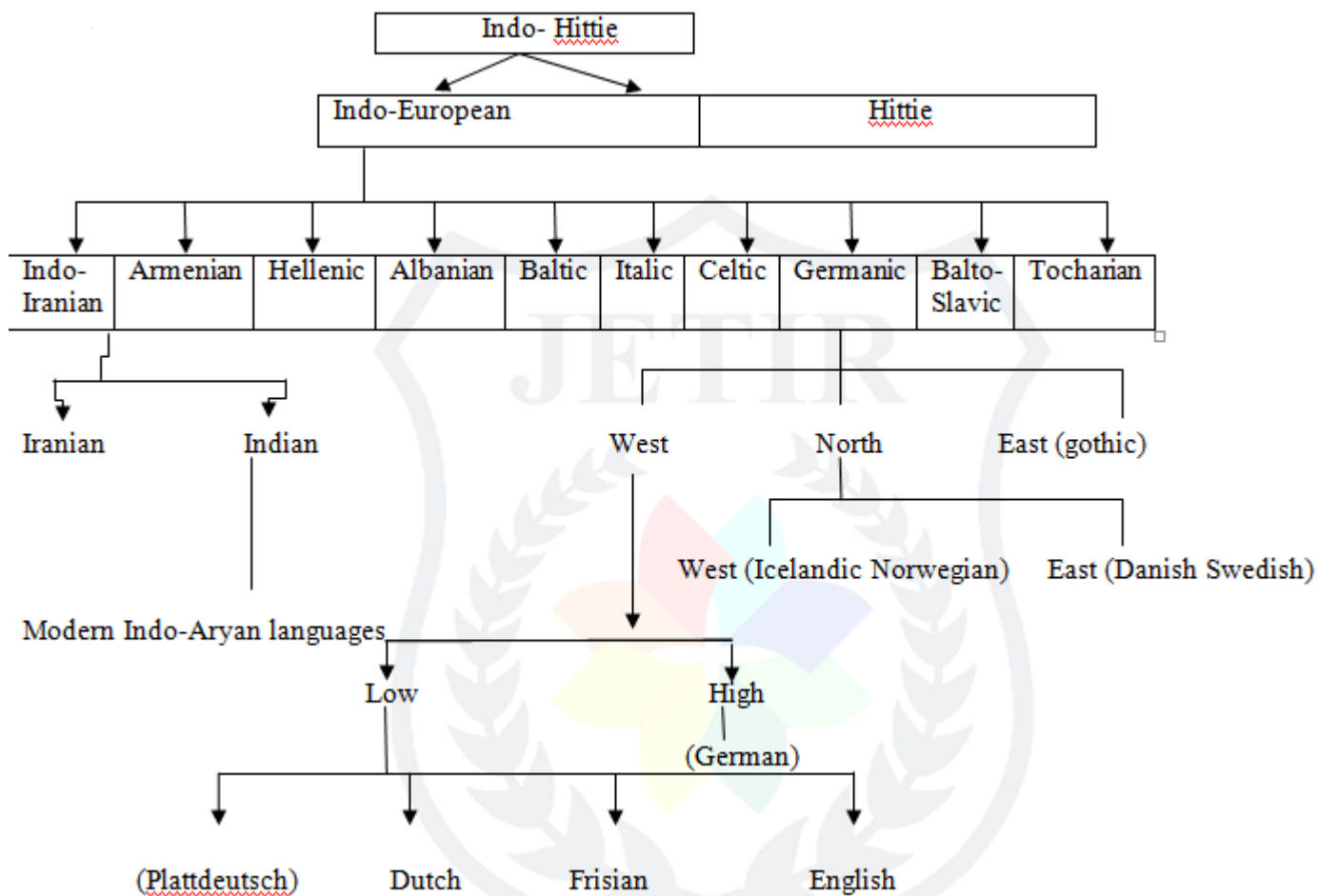
The nine major branches of the Indo-European language family are represented in this graphic. Observe just the lines of descent in the diagram. The borrowing relationships between the branches and sub-branches of the language sub-families can be illustrated by crisscrossing the lateral horizontal lines.

Only the Germanic branch's sub-branches are depicted in the figure, along with the position of English within this sub-family. Additionally, it displays where modern Indo-Aryan languages like Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, etc. fit in.

The Indo-European family of languages is a prime example of a language family that exhibits systematic similarities and shared properties. Linguists believe that these similarities are not coincidental, but rather indicative of a common ancestral language from which the various Indo-European languages have evolved. This ancestral language is believed to have been spoken in a specific geographical area and gradually diverged into different branches or varieties over time.

As time goes on, these variants diverge enough from one another to be classified as distinct languages. Take the Dravidian family of languages and the Indo-Aryan languages of today, for instance. The Indo-Aryan languages of the vast northern plains, including Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, and even *Pushto,* share a number of characteristics, including vocabulary, sounds, and even grammatical components. As a result, it is said that they are all of Indo-Aryan descent.

This also applies to Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Kannada, which are all Dravidian languages. In turn, the Indo-Aryan languages resemble the Iranian language family. They are descended from one parent family, the Indo-Iranian, at a higher level. By determining this connection on a higher level, it can be said that in the distant past, there was a single

language that we refer to as "Indo-Iranian," which split into different varieties that later evolved over a considerable amount of time into the modern Iranian and Language Indian languages.

The process by which a language is divided into variations and sub-varieties, languages and sub-languages causes the scenario in which many distinct languages have a great deal of systematic similarities. These languages are referred to as a "family," and like members of a human family, languages exhibit various degrees of relatedness, specific ties, shared ancestors at various generational stages, and eventually an ancestral connection. In this respect, Indo-European is considered to be the 'ancestor' of a significant percentage of languages currently spoken in Asia and Europe.

Why do languages continually split and fragment into distinct dialects, sub-dialects, variations, and other languages is an intriguing issue. The fact that so many people, millions in fact, speak a language in a variety of settings and circumstances may be the cause.

This is what may be referred to as a natural change's cause. When languages come into touch with one another, changes also begin to occur. The third factor influencing linguistic evolution is geographic segregation or fragmentation. Because of all of this, the most obvious fact regarding language is that different individuals speak in various ways. This coordinated variety (present at a particular moment) causes historical change, which causes splits, which results in a number of languages connected to one another in varying degrees of affinity or proximity and making up a family.

When discussing the "so-called language families," it's important to keep in mind that dialects don't actually exist until all of its speakers pass away, as happened with Etruscan, Gothic, Cornish, and a number of other languages. [When we talk about Latin or Sanskrit as being dead languages, we are actually talking about the literary, scriptural languages; nonetheless, oral Latin still exists in a variety of forms in Italian, French, Spanish, and other classical languages, and Sanskrit in Hindi, Punjabi, Marathi, and other Indo-Aryan languages.]

Therefore, when used in English, the phrases "family," "ancestor," "parent," and other chronological expressions must only be taken as analogies. According to Thomas Pyle (1964:65), "Languages are expansions of previous languages rather than descendants in the sense that humans are successors of their ancestors. The data of current languages and the documented texts that are accessible for the ancient languages are used to reassemble the ancestral language, in this instance Indo-European. The name of this proto-language is Indo-European.

It should be noted that the identification and research of Sanskrit by western academics in the late 18th and early 19th centuries—of whom Sir William Jones was the most well-known—made this notion of one language serving as the "common source"—indeed, all aspects of historical and comparative study of languages—possible.

III. THREE PERIODS - THE MAKING OF ENGLISH

The Germanic family of Indo-European languages includes Modern English, as was previously established. The three Germanic tribes of the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles moved to the area that is now England in the fifth and sixth centuries. St. Augustine arrived in England in 597 and converted the country to Latin Christianity. Scandinavian invasions occurred in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. The Norman Conquest occurred in the eleventh century. The revival of learning occurred in the sixteenth century.

The name "English" refers to "*the speech of the Anglii*," or the Angles, one of the three closely related tribes that first arrived in Britain in the fifth century and settled in Kent and Southern Hampshire, followed by the Saxons from Holstein south of the Thames, and the Angles from Schleswig north of the Thames. The name of the Angles in Germanic was *Angli*, which in Old English became Engle. The Germanic populations in Britain were referred to be *Englaland* after the year 1000; the language was always called *Englisc*.

1. A more straightforward verb *conjugation* with only two tenses (one for the past, one for the present, and one for the future), as well as a distinction between strong verbs (*sing-sang-sung*) and weak verbs (*walk-walked-walked*).

2. *Strong and weak adjectives* were divided into two categories, one of which was used when the adjective stood independently before the noun and the other when it was used effectively or with a subsequent defining element. This distinction is no longer utilised in contemporary English but can be seen in Old English.

3. A definite *stress accent*, in which the accent is now determined by stress rather than pitch and tends to concentrate on only one syllable of a phrase with several syllables. Because they are near the conclusion and the standard

convention is to stress the initial syllables, this has resulted in English inflectional pronunciations deteriorating as a result of unstressed vowels being slurred or dropped.

4. As previously mentioned, there is a regular movement of the Indo-European stop consonants: *voiceless stops* (stage I) become *spirant*, *voiced stops* become *voiceless* (stage 2), and *voiceless inflated stops* become *voiced stops* (stage 3).

The three tribes that arrived in Britain in the way previously stated in three waves spoke different Germanic languages, which were combined to create the English language we use today. Although it has been asserted that of all the dialects descended from Indo-European, "English has had most interactions with its kinfolk near and far," during the course of the following five hundred years or more it developed into an autonomous language entirely distinct from any Germanic language prevalent on the Continent. The English invaded a territory populated by Celts after leaving their homeland on the continent, and they have lived next to Celts ever since.

They came into touch with individuals who talked Latin with the arrival of Christian missionaries and, following the Norman Conquest, with those who spoke diverse varieties of a language descended from Latin. With the renewal of study, Greek was joined to Latin, and subsequently, thanks to their remarkable political ties to India, the English spent over two centuries interacting with speakers of the oldest and most easterly branch of all languages. Throughout its 1500-year history, English has consistently advanced. There are three primary eras in this evolution that may be distinguished. This separation, like all others, is a matter of convenience, yet it allows for the recognition of some distinct characteristics.

The three periods are: Old English- (450 - 1100)
               Middle English-(1100 – 1500)
             Modern English-(1500 - The present)

Old English is a period with complete accents since noun, adjective, and verb ends were left unaltered during this time. The Middle English period, also known as the period of levelled inflections, is defined by a significant reduction in the inflections that had begun to break down towards the end of the Old English period. Due to the extensive disappearance of the previous inflectional system, the Modern English era is known as the time of lost inflections. The characteristics of Old English, Middle English, and the Modern Period will now be roughly outlined.

Northumbrian, Mercian, West Saxon, and Kentish were the four different dialects of Old English. West Saxon eventually gained power, and it is via its records that we are able to study Old English. The noun and adjective are conceptually conjugated for four cases in the singular and four in the plural, and the adjective also has unique forms for each of the three genders. Old English is a synthesised language.

More than a hundred words could be created from a single root in the Old English language thanks to its inventive use of prefixes and suffixes. The following suffixes were some of the most often used ones: -dom, -end, -ere, -nes, -ung, -scipe (to make nouns) and -sum, -wis (to construct adjectives). About twelve frequent prefixes, such as -be, -for, -fore, -ge, -mis, -of, -on, etc., were most frequently employed with this property to produce verbs. The abundance of self-explaining compounds, which are combinations of two or more native words whose meanings are obvious, such as *gimmwyrhta* (gem-worker) and (jeweller), was another noteworthy aspect.

The ability to create new words by fusing old ones and by extracting them using prefixes and suffixes offered Old English an incredible amount of diversity and flexibility. This is seen in its literature, which is renowned for its poetry that is full of metaphors and synonyms, such as Beowulf. Along with Beowulf, other short lyrical poems from the Middle Ages include the Dirges, Wanderer, Seafarer, and two poems about the Great War: the Battle of Brunanburg and the Battle of Maldon. One other well-known sorrowful poetry is The Ruin. More over half of this literary genre, known as Anglo-Saxon literature, has Christian themes.

The Old English Period is a multilingual era, during which many languages were spoken at once. Their interaction ultimately resulted in a sophisticated communication system. First, English interacted with Celtic, the enslaved people's language, which was an additional branch of Indo-European. The place names Kent, London, Cornwall, and York are the most obvious examples of the weak Celtic influence. There are just a few of current English terms with Celtic roots outside of place names. In contrast, English has been heavily influenced by Latin, which is arguably the most ubiquitous of all impacts. Scandinavian culture is the third influence.

In accordance to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the Scandinavian pillaging attacks started in A.D. 787 and lasted for more than 250 years until between 1014 and 1039 A.D. The Scandinavian influence was pervasive; it also affected language and syntax. This was undoubtedly made easier by the 'northmen's' close racial affinity with the English, by their eventual integration, and by the Danes' relatively early conversion to Christianity.

Levelled accents are a characteristic of Middle English. In reality, it was a time when every facet of the language underwent transformation. The French invasion of England in 1066, popularly known as the Norman Conquest, was the single biggest cause of this. The Normans, who held Normandy on the northern coast of France, directly across the channel, were the same "Northmen" whose cousins had immigrated to England around the same time. However, they had adopted French culture and language. The whole English nobility was replaced by a French aristocracy when William the Conqueror became king of England, and the French language displaced English from its proper position.

The process of English's restoration did not start until the governing elite progressively began to think in English after the fall of Normandy, especially in the next century. The defining moment was achieved in October 1362, when the "parliament was first opened in English and when the Statute of Pleading was established, by which all court matters were to be conducted going forward in English though 'registered in Latin' Law. According to Simeon Potter (1950), "French lingered for a long time until being eventually banned by an Act of Parliament in 1731.

English continued to be the primary tongue of the uncultured while French remained an elite language for a long time; yet, duality was common throughout this time until English made a comeback in the 14th century. The two languages saw a change in focus throughout the thirteenth century. The "official" language and the language of the higher classes stayed French. But it also started to become clear that the English language is the one that Englishmen should know and utilize.

French had started to deteriorate by the end of the thirteenth century, and measures were taken to stop this trend. The emergence of the economic middle class starting in the 15th century turned French into the enemy language during the Hundred Years' War, and this ultimately ruled in favour of English. When employment became scarce due to "The Black Death," which disproportionately affected the poor, it "boosted the financial value of the working class and with it the significance of the English language which they spoke." The French-speaking population became multilingual when English became widely used in the 14th century. English also became the language of the legal system, and from 1349, English started to be used once more in educational settings.

The rejuvenated English language and its significant role in English culture are reflected in the resurrected Middle English literature. The 'father' of English poetry, Geoffrey Chaucer, lived in the fourteenth century, as did William Langland (1362-87), who wrote Troilus and Criseyde and the Canterbury Tales, Piers Ploughman, who wrote a lengthy social allegory, John Wycliffe (d.1384), who translated the Bible, and an unidentified author of Sir Gawaine and the Green Knight, a well-known middle English romance.

English was widely used as a literary language in the course of the fifteenth century, and notable prose authors including Malory, Lydgate, and Caxton were active. The Elizabethan era in general and the great Shakespeare in particular were the ages that made the time and language ready for its highest manifestation. Shakespeare represents the beginning of the Modern Era.

The main concept of the Modern Era is standardisation, and linguistically, English became a language of analysis. With the help of Shakespeare and others, it was made flawless as an appropriate platform for both prose and poetry. In addition, deliberate efforts were made to make it an appropriate medium for science, spelling reforms were made, dictionaries were written, and English was introduced to new, foreign lands offering rise to fresh, foreign versions of English.

The Industrial Revolution was another major change-making event during this time, followed by the immigration to and settlement in the new countries of the USA, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, and finally the imperial conquest of Asia and Africa. The Renaissance was the first major innovation event during this time. All of them have helped to shape contemporary English and make it a global language.

IV. CONCLUSION:

A language has both an internal and external history. The internal history is the result of how these occurrences have affected the sounds, vocabulary, and structure of that language. The external history is the record of political, social, and economic events that affect people who speak it.

The early Celts' immigration to the island, Roman rule over England, the ensuing migration of the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, the eventual conversion of the English to Christianity, the "Scandinavian encroachment and settlement," the "French" invasion of England, the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, the settlement of America, Canada, and Australia, and the settlement of Asia and Africa make up the global history of the English language.

The concurrent internal history would include modifications to the English word pool as a result of contact with so many languages, a shift in English framework from synthetic to analytic, the development of English as a suitable medium for poetry, prose, science, and other records, as well as media and communication. It would also include its consistency and, finally, the division of English into several distinct but associated varieties with geographic spread.

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