UNIT 1 AN INTRODUCTION

Structure

1.0   OBJECTIVES

We want you to understand tnat

1.   we can study the history of a language in more than one way;

2.   there is something like 'a language family' and that English belongs to a particular family of languages;

3.   over a period of time many changes take place in a language, these changes are of different kinds, and

4.   when we distance ourselves from the actual incidence and sequence of changes, it is possible to see broad **phases** in the history of a language, stages in which a language is recognisably different.

Some of the vocabulary used may appear technical. We suggest that you re-read these units after going through the entire course.

1.1   APPROACHES AND SOURCES

What is 'history of a language'? To ask a still more basic question - what is 'history'? The Oxford English Dictionary defines history as,

i.   'A relation of incidents (... only of those professedly true.)'

ii.   'A written narrative constituting a continuous methodical record , in order of time, of important or public events, especially those connected with a particular country, people, individual, etc.'

iii.   'The formal record of the past, especially of human affairs or actions.'

History, therefore, is a re-telling of what actually happened in the past, of incidents connected with something, in this case language.

Now there are two ways of looking at the 'incidents', at the events and changes, that happened in the past in relation to the English language : (a) *internal* , and (b) *external*. In the *internal history*, we consider language as an autonomous system, subject to change and evolution and we examine the changes in the structure and the

5

word-stock of the language without a necessary reference to the external causes (events or circumstances). Language itself is seen as a kind of organism with its own laws of change. Thus, for example, the pronunciation or the sound values of a language are bound to change over a period of time on account of the fact that the language is spoken by so many different people. In the *external history*, on the other hand, such changes in the sound system are seen as consequences of contact with some other language or languages. The primary interest is the external events and factors - situations of language contact and changing functions - changes in the language are seen as results of these events and factors. These two approaches, however, are not essentially different; the difference is only one of emphasis.

What are the sources for the history of a language? Documents, i.e., written records such as chronicles including general histories , histories of and dictionaries of language, books about different aspects of language and minor records such as inscriptions and coins. The chronicles give information about the external history ; a comparative study of literature and minor records spread over long periods of time shows the internal changes that have taken place in language.

The Ecclesiastical History of the English People written in Latin by Venerable Bede (a Christian priest) around 730 is the earliest, and among the most valuable histories and is our source for the early settlement history of England, the coming of St.Augustine in 597 and the conversion of England to Christianity. **The Parker Chronicle** which describes the 755 battle at Merton in Surrey in which King Cynewulf was slain is "the oldest historical prose in any Germanic language". Robert Cawdrey's **A Table Alphabetical** is the first all-English dictionary which appeared in 1604. Dr.Johnson's celebrated dictionary coded words and their spellings in 1755. **The New English Dictionary on Historical Principles** which_ appeared from 1884 to 1928 (and was revised and reprinted with a supplement as **The Oxford English Dictionary** in 1933) comprehensively listed the words with their etymology and their attested changing meanings with documentary evidence. John Walker produced in 1791 **A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary** based on the precept that the best pronunciation is one that accords with spellings. Daniel Jones in 1917 published the **English Pronouncing Dictionary** " to record the pronunciation used by a considerable number of typical Southern English people in ordinary conversation".

The poetry of Chaucer (mid 15th c.), of Shakespeare (early 16th c.), of Dryden and Pope (late 17th, early 18th c.), of Wordsworth (early 19th c.), of Eliot and Yeats (20th c.) and the prose of Tyndale (16th c.) , of King James Bible (1611), Of Addison 18th c.), of .Coleridge and Carlyle (19th c.), of Bertrand Russell and Whitehead (20th c.) are some of the major literary documents that attest the changes that have contributed to the formation of modern English .

In the twentieth century, there has been a great interest in the history of English, which according to A.C.Baugh is " a cultural subject" (1973:1). Two early studies, Henry Bradley's **The Making of English** (1904) and Otto Jesperson's **Growth and Structure of the English Language** (1905), "are still the most stimulating"
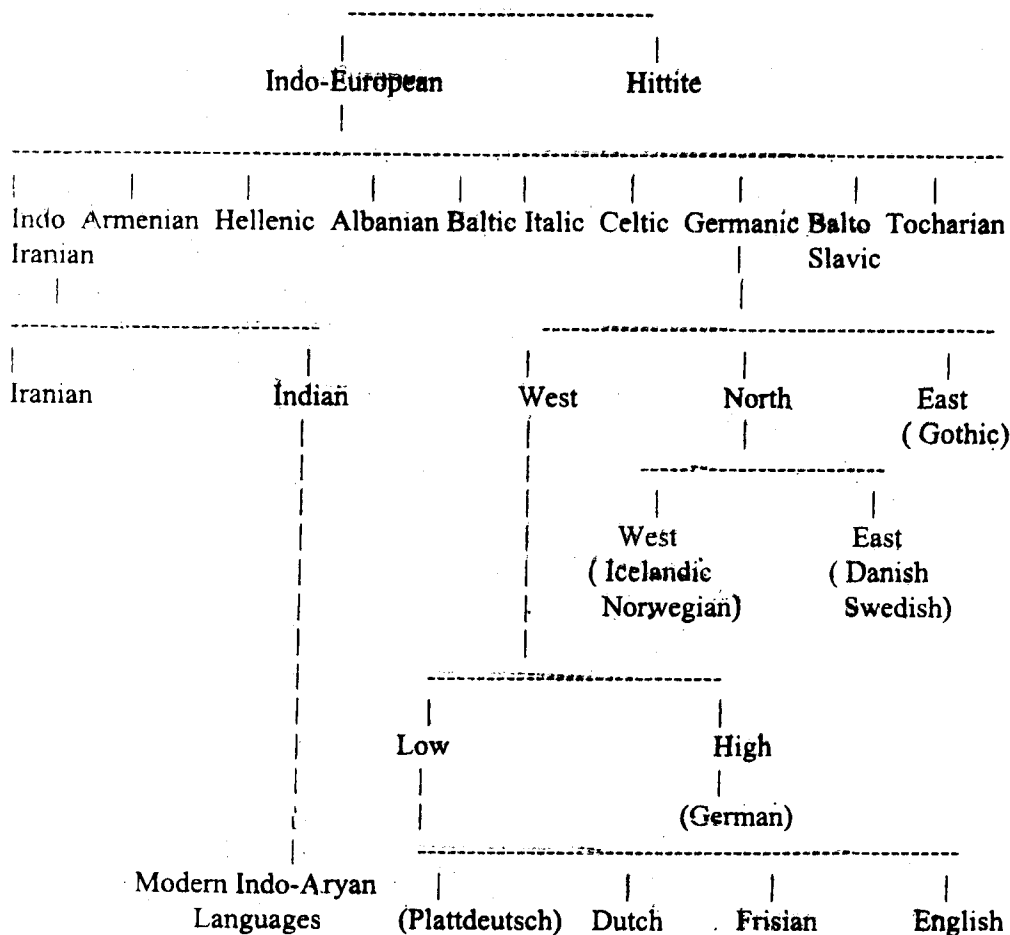
1.2   ORIGINS OF ENGLISH

Let us first look at the origins of the English language.

A language is the speech of a people. The history of a language is ,therefore, the history of a people. English perhaps started as the speech of some Germanic tribes in Europe and through a series of changes brought about by migrations, invasions, conversions, settlement and colonisation assumed its present *avatara*. The Germanic speech group itself constitutes a branch of the Indo-European family of languages:

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                                    Indo-Hittite
                         ------------------------------------
                              |                      |
                        Indo-European             Hittite
                              |
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------
  |       |        |         |        |      |       |        |        |      |
Indo  Armenian  Hellenic  Albanian  Baltic Italic Celtic  Germanic  Balto Tocharian
Iranian                                                       |      Slavic
  |                                                           |
----------------------------            -----------------------------------------
  |                    |                       |              |              |
Iranian             Indian                   West           North          East
                      |                        |              |           ( Gothic)
                      |                        |              |
                      |                        |         ------------------
                      |                        |              |          |
                      |                        |            West       East
                      |                        |          ( Icelandic ( Danish
                      |                        |           Norwegian)  Swedish)
                      |                        |
                      |                ------------------------
                      |                     |              |
                      |                   Low            High
                      |                     |              |
                      |                     |          (German)
                      |                     |
                      |                ----------------------------------------
  Modern Indo-Aryan   |              |          |          |            |
     Languages      (Plattdeutsch)  Dutch    Frisian     English
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This diagram shows the nine main branches of the Indo-European family of languages. The diagram shows only lines of descent. There are many inter-relations due to borrowing among branches and sub-branches of the sub-families of languages which could be shown by criss-crossing lateral / horizontal lines.

The diagram shows the sub-branches of only the Germanic branch and the place of English in this sub-family. It also shows the corresponding place of Modern Indo-Aryan languages. e.g. Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Panjabi, etc.

What is the meaning of a *family of languages*? What is this *Indo-European family* of languages? Languages which show some common features, some shared properties, are said to belong to 'one family'. It is assumed that such systematic similarities cannot be accidental; these similarities are there because the concerned languages have 'descended' from a common 'parent'. That is, at some point of time, there was a language spoken over a given geographical area which over a period of time broke up, fragmented, into a number of 'sibling' varieties. With the passage of time these varieties become sufficiently different from each other to be considered as separate *languages*. Consider for example the modern Indo-Aryan and the Dravidian group of languages of India. **The Indo-Aryan languages of the great northern plains:** languages such as Punjabi , Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali and even Pushto have many features in common - sounds, words and even elements of grammar. So they are all said to belong to the Indo-Aryan family. **The same holds true for Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Kannada as members of the Dravidian language family.** The Indo-Aryan languages in turn, show similarities with the Iranian family. At a higher level, they belong to one ancestral family - the Indo-Iranian. Establishing this relationship at a higher level, is another way of saying that farther back in time, there was one language, designated by us as 'Indo-Iranian', which fragmented into varieties which

in turn have developed over a long period of time into the modern Iranian and Indian languages.

It is the process of break-up of a language into varieties and sub-varieties, languages and sub-languages which leads to the situation of a number of different languages having many systematic resemblances. Such languages are described as a 'family' and just as members of a human family show varying degrees of relatedness, have specified relationships and have common ancestors at different generation levels and, ultimately , a common ancestor, so do languages. In this sense Indo-European is the 'ancestor 'of a very large number of languages spoken today in Asia and Europe.

An interesting question is - why do languages continuously break up and fragment into different dialects, sub-dialects, varieties and other languages? The reason lies perhaps in the fact that so many persons, millions, in fact, speak a language under varying conditions and in different situations. This is the cause of what may be called *natural change*. Languages also start changing when they come in *contact* with each other. The third reason of language change is *geographical division or separation*. As a result of all this, the most self-evident fact about language is that people talk differently. This *synchronic variation* (existing at a given time) leads to *historical change* and change leads to *split*, a process which produces a number of languages related to each other in different degrees of closeness or affinity and constituting a *family*. However, when we "discuss the so-called language families...we must bear in mind that a language is not born, nor does it die except when every single one of its speakers dies , as has happened to Etruscan, Gothic, Cornish, and a good many other languages. [When we speak of Latin or Sanskrit as a dead language, we are referring to the literary / textual language; but spoken Latin still lives in various developments in Italian, French , Spanish and the other Romance languages and Sanskrit in Hindi, Punjabi, Marathi and other Indo-Aryan languages]

Hence the terms *family, ancestor, parent*, and other genealogical expressions when applied to languages must be regarded as no more than metaphors. Languages are developments of older languages rather than descendants in the sense in which people are descendants of their forefathers" Thomas Pyle (1964:65). The ancestor language,Indo-European in this case, is reconstructed on the basis of the data of existing languages and the attested documents that are available of the classical languages. This *proto-language* is called *Indo-European*.

It may be noted that this idea of one language as the 'common source', in fact the whole discipline of historical and comparative study of languages was made possible by the discovery and study of Sanskrit by the western scholars in the late 18th and the 19th centuries, the most famous of whom was Sir William Jones.

Are there any *Non-Indo-European languages* or language groups? Yes - a very large number: Semitic (Hebrew, Arabic among others); Hamitic (Berber languages of North Africa) ; Dravidian (Tamil, Telugu,Kannada,Malayalam); Indo-Chinese (Chinese, Japanese, etc.) ;Malay-Polynesian (languages of the islands of the Pacific ocean) ; American Indian (languages of the Americas and Mexico) ; Ural-Altaic (Finnish, Hungarian, Turkish , Mongolian), etc.

1.3 EMERGENCE TO CONSOLIDATION

The formation of English from Indo-European is " the story of three invasions and a cultural revolution. In the simplest terms, the language was brought to Britain by Germanic tribes, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, influenced by Latin and Greek when St.Augustine and his followers converted England to Christianity, subtly enriched by

the Danes, and finally transformed by the French - speaking Normans." (Robert McCrum et.al.1986:51)

While the modern Indo-European languages are spoken today in large parts of Europe and Asia, the parent Indo-European language , a hypothetical reconstruction by the 19th century German linguists, must have been spoken , (it is commonly believed) by people living in the Euro-Asian "medievel Lithuania which, in fact, reached from the Baltic across the Ukraine to the lower waters of the Dneiper." (Simeon Potter 1950:8)

All Indo-European languages share two common features - they are all *inflectional* in structure and they have a *common word-stock*. The oldest literary texts preserved in any Indo-European language are the Sanskrit Vedas (not later than 1500 B.C.), followed by the Old Persian Avesta (1000 B.C.).In Germanic, the most ancient records are the Biblical translations in East Germanic. Consideration of about fifty common words has given us some idea about the life-style of the vanished Indo-European tribes. They lived in a cold land where it snowed, domesticated animals like oxen, pigs and sheep, reared horses, had an established social and family structure and worshipped many gods that are clearly the ancestors of Indian, Mediterranean and Celtic gods. And as already noted they must have lived in north central Europe. The wheel and the horse led to a dispersal of these people - some of them travelled East and established the Indo-Iranian languages of the Caucasus and the Indian sub-continent. Others drifted west and their descendants are found in Greece, Italy, Germany and the Baltic. English has much in common with all these languages - the English word *brother* resembles Dutch *broeder*, German *bruder*, Greek *phrater*, Russian *brat*, Irish *brathair* and Sanskrit *bhratar*.

We said that the proto-Indo-European was an *inflected language* - we mean that the grammatical functions such as case, number and person for nouns and tense and mood for verbs were indicated by varying the form of a single word through suffixes (endings) and vowel changes within the word as in Modern English *man -man's - men - men's* and *sing - sings - sang - singing*. The Indo-European *inflectional system* has been very much simplified in most modern languages: English, French, and Spanish. German retains it considerably more. Sanskrit, of all the Indo-European languages, gives a "remarkably clear picture ...of the older Indo-European inflectional system...so that its forms show us, even better than Greek or Latin can do, what the system of Indo-European must have been" (Thomas Pyles 1964:74). Indo-European had a very elaborate inflectional system for both nouns and verbs.

Because Indo-European was an inflected language, *word-order* was free. Thus in Sanskrit we can say 'devadatta: odanam pacati' or 'odanam devadatta: pacati' or even 'pacati odanam devadatta:' to say "Devadatta cooks rice".

Since English belongs to the Germanic group, it is not out of place to make note of how Germanic came to differ from the proto Indo-European. Germanic came to differ from the parent Indo-European in the following ways:

1.   The verb inflection system became simplified - many distinctions of tense and aspect were lost .

2.   Declension of adjectives became weak. (Modern English has lost all such declensions of the adjective.)

3.   In Indo-European, any syllable of a word could be stressed - in Germanic, the first syllable came regularly to be stressed (except in *compound verbs* such as *believe, forget*).

4.   Indo-European vowels changed to Germanic vowels as follows:

IE *o* > Gmc *a* ; long *a* > long *o*

5.   IE stops *bh, dh, gh* > *b, d g* ; *p, t, k* >*f, th, h* ; *b, d,* and *g* > *p, t, k.*

These changes took place over a long period of time and are described in linguistic histories as First Sound Shift (Grimm's Law).

1.4   THREE PERIODS - THE MAKING OF ENGLISH

As mentioned earlier Modern English belongs to the Germanic group of Indo-European languages. In the history of the making of English, some movements and events stand out.: 5th and 6th century migration of the three Germanic tribes: Jutes, Saxons and Angles to what is now known as England ; St.Augustine's arrival in 597 and the conversion of England to Latin Christianity; 8th, 9th and 10th century Scandinavian invasions ; the Norman conquest in the 11th century; the revival of learning in the 16th century; the settlement of North America, Australia, and South Africa by the English-speaking people in the 19th century and the political colonization of India and others in the same century.

The name 'English' means 'the speech of the Anglii', the Angles, one of the three related tribes that settled in Britannia beginning 5th century - then from Jutland came the first tribe and settled in Kent and Southern Hampshire ; Saxons from Holstein next settled south of the Thames ; the Angles from Schleswig settled last north of the Thames. The Germanic name of the Angles was *Angli* which became *Engle* in Old English. After 1000 AD *Englaland* was used to denote the Germanic peoples in Britain - the language was always known as *Englisc.*

This 'speech of the Anglii' belonged to the Germanic group. We may ask what characteristics the Germanic languages as a branch have in common? Four principal ones have been pointed out:

1.   A simpler *verb conjugation* (only two tenses - one to express past , one to express present and future) including a twofold classification of strong verbs (*sing-sang-sung*) and weak verbs (*walk-walked-walked).*

2.   A twofold classification of *strong and weak adjectives* , a distinction now lost in modern English but demonstrable from Old English - one system ('strong') when the adjective stood alone before the noun and another ('weak') when used substantively or with a preceding defining element . For example, Old English *gode menn* and *pas godan menn.*

3.   A fixed *stress accent* - the accent has become a matter of stress (as against pitch accent) with a tendency to focus on one syllable of a poly-syllabic word. This has led in English to the slurring or dropping of unstressed vowels and the consequent weakening of the inflectional endings (because they are at the end and the usual tendency is to stress the first syllables).

4.   Regular shifting of the Indo-European *stop consonants* as already noted above - *voiceless stops* > *spirants* (stage 1); *voiced stops* > *voiceless* (stage 2); *voiceless aspirated stops* > *voiced stops* (stage 3).

The English language of today has resulted from a fusion of the Germanic dialects spoken by the three tribes who came to Britannia in three waves in the manner described above. In the next five hundred years or so it developed into an independent language quite distinct from any Germanic language spoken on the

Continent, though it has been claimed that of all the tongues descended from Indo-European, " English h .s had most contacts with its kindred near and far. Leaving their continental homes, the English entered a land inhabited by Celts and have had Celts as their neighbours ever since. With the coming of Christian missionaries they were brought into close contact with those who spoke Latin and, after the Norman Conquest, with those who spoke various forms of a language derived from Latin. To Latin, Greek was added with the revival of learning and later still, by their memorable political association with India, the English lived and worked for nearly two centuries with peoples whose languages were descended from the oldest and most easterly branch of all." (Simeon Potter, 1950)

In the 1500 years of its existence, English has developed continuously. In this development, it is possible to see three main periods. Like all divisions this division is also a matter of convenience but one in which it is possible to recognise certain distinguishing characteristics in each period. The three periods are :

Old English	450 - 1100
Middle English	1100 - 1500
Modern English	1500 - the present

The period of **Old English** is a period of **full inflections** since in this period the endings of nouns, adjectives and verbs remained unchanged. During the **Middle English period**, the inflections which had started breaking down towards the end of the Old English period, become greatly reduced and the period is therefore known as the period of **levelled inflections**. The Modern English period is the period of **lost inflections** as the old inflectional system disappears to a great extent.. We will now broadly outline the features characteristic of Old English, Middle English and the Modern Period.

Old English had four dialects - Northumbrian, Mercian, West Saxon, and Kentish (see, the dialect map , Appendix 1, from Robertson, p.38). West Saxon gradually gained ascendancy and the documents which enable us to study Old English are documents of West Saxon (see, examples of Old English in Appendix 2, from A.C.Baugh, p.71-73). Grammatically, Old English is a **synthetic language**: 'Theoretically the noun and adjective are inflected for four cases in the singular and four in the plural ...and in addition the adjective has separate forms for each of the three *genders*." (Baugh, A.C, 1973-64). The nouns are inflected for *number* (singular and plural) and *case* (four- nominative, genitive, dative and accusative) ; the verbs show two tenses by inflection (present and past), three *moods* (indicative, subjunctive, imperative), two numbers and three persons ; adjectives have a strong and a weak declension.

In vocabulary, Old English was very resourceful in the formation of words by means of *prefixes* and *suffixes*; it was possible to form more than a hundred words from the same root. Some of the most commonly employed suffixes were: *-dom , -end , -ere , -nes , -ung ,-scipe* (to form nouns) and *-sum , -wis* to form adjectives. This feature was most widely used to form verbs with about twelve common prefixes to form verbs : *be- , for- , fore- , ge- , mis-, of- , on* , etc.. Another notable feature was the large number of *self-explaining compounds*, that is compounds of two or more native words whose meaning is self-evident such as *gimmwyrhta* (gem-worker), (jeweller). This capacity for forming new words by combining the existing ones and by deriving them with the help of prefixes and suffixes gave a remarkable variety and flexibility to Old English. This is evident in its literature which is distinguished for its poetry rich in synonyms and metaphors e.g. Beowulf.

Besides **Beowulf**, there are a number of short lyrical poems , the dirges, **Wanderer**, **Seafarer** and the two great war poems , the **Battle of Brunanburg** and **Battle of Maldon. The Ruin** is another famous sad poem. This is called Anglo-Saxon literature and more than half of it is Christian in theme.

The Old English period is a *multi-lingual* period - a period with several languages being used simultaneously. Their contact inevitably produced a rich system of communication. To begin with, English interacted with Celtic, the language of the conquered people, itself another branch of the Indo-European tree. The Celtic influence is not strong and is most evident in place-names : *Kent, London, Cornwall. York* go back to Celtic sources. Outside place-names there are no more than about twenty words of Celtic origin in modern English. As against this the Latin influence has been very strong on English, perhaps the most pervasive of all influences. The third influence is the Scandinavian influence. The Scandinavian plundering raids began, according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in A.D.787 and continued with interruptions for more than 250 years until from 1014 to 1039 A.D. The Scandinavian influence was thorough - it extended to matters of grammar and syntax as well. This of course was facilitated by the close racial kinship between the 'northmen' and the English, by the fact of their subsequent assimilation and by the fact that the Danes accepted Christianity fairly early.

The Middle English period is the period of levelled inflections. It is in fact a period in which changes occurred in every aspect of the language. The greatest single factor for this was the conquest of England by the French, known familiarly as the Norman Conquest in 1066. The Normans were the same 'Northmen' whose cousins had come to England about the same time as they occupied Normandy, on the northern coast of France, right across the channel, only they had become 'French' culturally and linguistically. With William the Conqueror becoming the king of England , the entire English nobility was replaced by a French aristocracy and the French language dispossessed English of its rightful place. Only gradually, with the loss of Normandy, particularly in the next century, did the ruling class begin to think in English and thus began the process of rehabilitation of English. The turning point reached in October 1362, when the "parliament was first opened in English and when the Statute of Pleading was enacted whereby all court cases were to be henceforth conducted in English though 'enrolled in Latin' Law. French ...persisted for many years ...was finally abolished by an Act of Parliament in 1731" (Simeon Potter, 1950). French for long remained the prestigious language while English remained the language of the uncultivated people; however, there was rampant bilingualism during this period till English reasserted itself in the 14th century. The thirteenth century was a period of shifting emphasis on the two languages. French remained the 'official' language and the language of the upper classes. However, the attitude that the proper language for the Englishmen to know and use is English also began to become noticeable. At the end of the thirteenth century, French had begun to decline and efforts were made to arrest its declining standards. The Hundred Years' War made French the language of the enemy and the rise of the commercial middle class from 15th century onwards decided the case finally in favour of English. And then "The Black Death" which afflicted the poor more than the rich made labour scarce and thus "increased the economic importance of the labouring class and with it the importance of the English language which they spoke." English came to be generally adopted in the 14th century, the French-speaking people were now bilingual; English became the language of the law-courts and after 1349 English began to be used again in the schools. In the 15th century, French became restricted as the language of culture and fashion. Further, English now was once again adopted as the language for records of towns and guilds and in 1425 English came to be generally adopted in writing.

The resurgent Middle English literature represents the revitalised English language and its important place in English life. Fourteenth century is the age of Geoffrey Chaucer (1350-1400), the 'father' of English poetry and the author of Troilus and Criseyde and Canterbury Tales, William Langland (1362-87), the author of a long social allegory, Piers Plowman and John Wycliffe (d.1384), translator of the Bible also belong to this age as also did the unknown author of the popular middle English romance, Sir Gawaine and the Green Knight. The fifteenth century saw extended use of English as a literary medium and had a number of distinguished writers of prose, such as Malory, Lydgate and Caxton. This was the age which made the time and the language ripe for its finest fruition, the Elizabethan age in general and the great Shakespeare in particular. With Shakespeare, we are on the threshold of the Modern Period.

Standardisation is the key word for the **Modern Period:** grammatically, English settled down as an **analytical** language. In the hands of Shakespeare and others, it was perfected as a fit medium for both prose and poetry; conscious efforts were made to make it an appropriate vehicle for science; spelling reforms were undertaken; dictionaries were composed and English was transplanted in other lands giving rise to new, *non-native varieties of English.*

Renaissance was the first great change-making event in this period; the second was the Industrial Revolution; the third was migration to and settlement in the new lands: USA, Australia, Canada and New Zealand ; the fourth was the imperial colonisation of Asian and African lands. All these have contributed to the making of modern English and towards making it a world language.

1.5   LET US SUM UP

The history of a language is both internal and external : the external history is the record of political, social and economic events that befall the speakers of a language; and the effect of those events on the sounds, the vocabulary and the structure of that language constitutes its internal history.

The external history of the English language consists of - the early migration of Celts to the island, the Roman rule of England, the subsequent migration of Angles, Saxons and Jutes, the conversion of the English people to Christianity, the Scandinavian invasions and settlement, the 'French' conquest of England, the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution , settlement of America, Canada and Australia and colonisation of Asia and Africa.

The concomitant internal history would subsume changes in the English word stock as a result of contact with so many languages; change of English structure from synthetic to analytic; formation of English as a fit medium first for poetry then prose, then for science and other registers , for media and communication; its standardisation and finally, with geographic expansion, the splitting of English into several recognisably different but related varieties. We shall take up this story of growth and change in the subsequent units.

1.6   KEY WORDS

Before we end this unit, let us enumerate the key concepts in the order in which they have figured in this discussion. You should make sure that you understand these concepts by referring once again to the places in the discussion where these concepts occur.

Standard Variety — the variety of language which has the highest status in the community or nation, and which is usually based on the speech and writing of educated native speakers of the language. A standard variety is usually described in dictionaries, grammars, taught is schools and universities, and used in media.

Internal history — here, language is considered an autonomous system subject to change and evolution. The changes is sounds, words and structure is seen according to linguistic laws and not with reference to external causes.

External history — the record of events that befall on the speakers of a language, and the effect of those events on the sound, vocabulary and structure of that language.

Family of languages — this refers to a set of languages deriving from a common ancestor, or 'parent' e.g. the **Indo-European family** consists of the 'daughter' languages Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, etc.which all developed out of **Proto-Indo European.**

Indo-European Languages — languages which are related and which are supposed to have had a common ancestor language called, "Proto Indo-European". Languages in this group include most European languages e.g. English, French, German, etc. They also include the ancient Indian languages Sanskrit and Pali, and such languages as Hindi, Bengali, Sinhala, Farsi, etc.

Dialect — a variety of a language spoken in one part of a country (regional dialect) or by people belonging to a particular social class (social dialect).

Synchronic Variation — the study of a language system at a particular point of time, e.g. the sound system of Modern British English.

Synthetic Language — a type of language using **structural** criteria, and focusing on the characteristics of the **word.** In synthetic languages, words typically contain more than one morpheme. Examples include Latin, Greek, Arabic, Turkish and so on.

Analytical Language — this term is seen in opposition to **synthetic** languages, where words contain typically more then one morpheme. Analytical languages are typically monomorphemic.

Inflecting Language — a language in which the form of a word changes to show a change in meaning or grammatical function. Greek and Latin are inflecting languages.

Word order — the arrangement of words in a sentence. Languages often differ in their word order. For instance, English is a language in which the verb occurs in the medial position, while Hindi is a verb-final language.

Stop consonant	consonant which is produced by stopping the air stream from the lungs, and then suddenly releasing it. For example the sounds/b/and/ p/ in English.
Standardisation	the process of making some aspect of language usage conform to a standard variety. This is usually implemented by a government authority.

1.7 READING LIST

1. Aitchison, J. 1996. **The Seeds of Speech : Language Origin and Evolution**. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

2. A.C.Baugh **A History of the English Language** Bombay :Allied Publishers 1973 (Third Indian Reprint) [A very lucid, chronological study it has specimens of English from different periods]

3. Henry Bradley **The Making of English**. London. 1904 [A very, short readable study]

4. Otto Jesperson **Growth and Structure of the English Language** Oxford 1905

   [A very stimulating study that explains the grammatical changes in English]

5. Dick Leith **A Social History of English**. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1983

   [describes the growth of English in terms of the changing socio-political context]

6. Robert McCrum, William Cran, Robert MacNeil **The Story of English**. London: B.B.C. Publications .1986 [a study that focuses more on the present than the past and on the everyday spoken English of the ordinary people and on the non-native varieties]

1.8 QUESTIONS

1. What is a language family? Which language family does English belong to? What is the relationship between English and Hindi, Panjabi, Gujarati?

2. Write a composition in about 250 words on the three periods which went into the making of modern day English. Take care to include both the External as well as the Internal History.