English Language and Translation 2
2nd Language - 2018-19
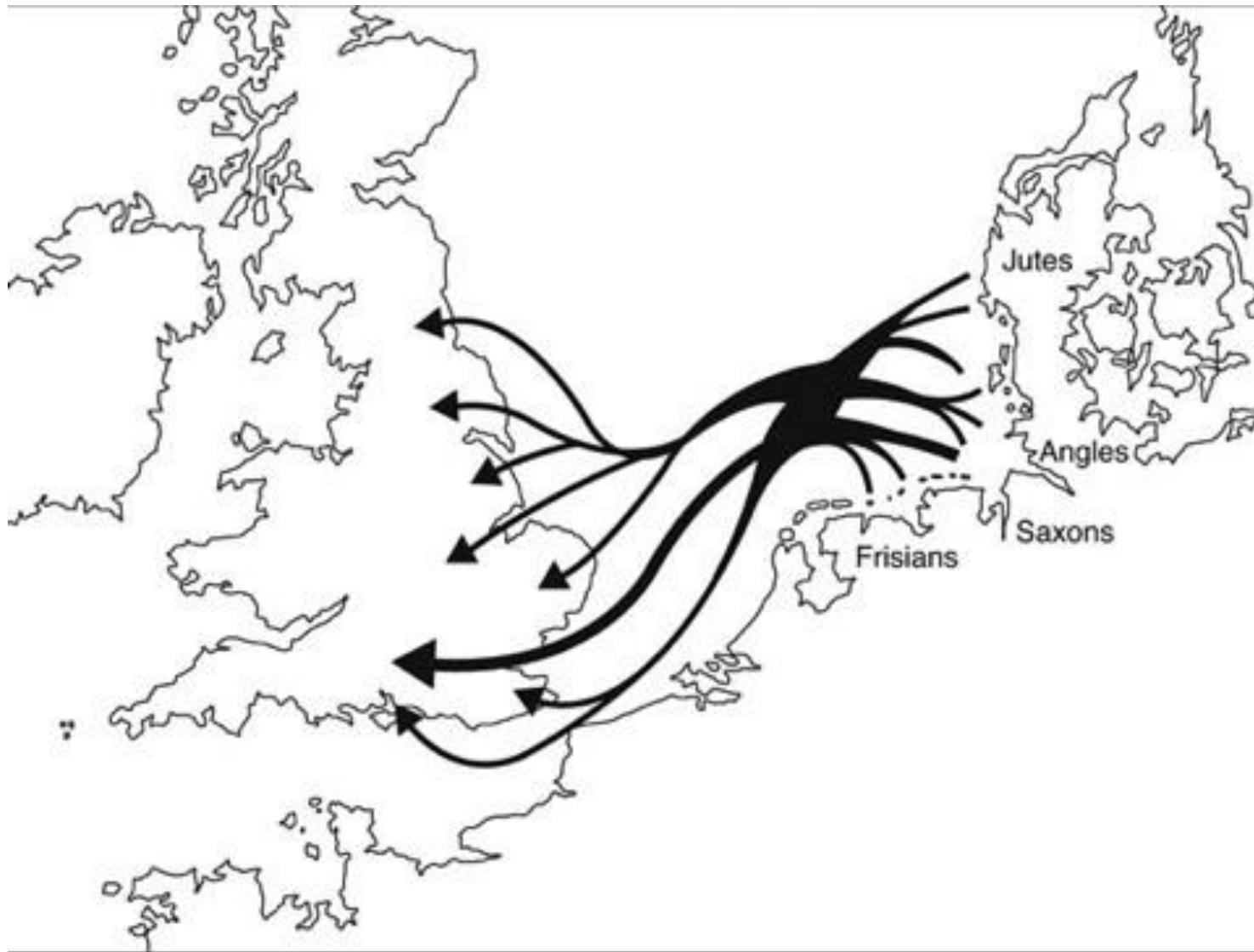
Lesson 8: 21 January 2019

Lexis: Development of English and Word Origins

M Hammersley – 21 Jan 2019

Development of English

- Timeline:

- Original inhabitants of Britain (Britons): Celtic-speaking tribes

- Roman invasion: Julius Caesar (54-55 BC), Claudius AD 43

- Germanic tribes (AD 449): Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Frisians

Development of English

Development of English

Timeline:

- Vikings: Destruction of Lindisfarne Monastery (793)

- Normans: Battle of Hastings (1066)

Development of English

The most important factor in the development of English has been the arrival of successive waves of settlers and invaders speaking different languages. The history of placenames in Britain is closely connected to the presence of various languages at various points in time.

Jonathan Culpepper, *History of English*, 2015 (3rd Edition)

Placenames

- Celtic (Cities: London, Glasgow, Cardiff; Regions: Kent; Rivers: Thames)

- Anglo-Saxon (Cities: Stratford, Portsmouth; Regions: Sussex, East Anglia)

- Latin (Cities: Lancaster, Stratford, Portsmouth)

Old English

Development of English as a spoken language

First written texts in Old English:
- Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (890 on)
- Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People (Latin original 731; OE 890-930)
- Beowulf (975-1010)

Towards a 'Standard English'

Process of standardisation involves:

- Selection
- Acceptance
- Elaboration
- Codification

A Survey of Modern English, Gramley Patzold (1992)

M Hammersley – 21 Jan 2019

Towards a 'Standard English'

Selection

'Standard' mostly defined by power, status, public position, class

- London – political, economic, social power
- Oxford/Cambridge – intellectual influence

Mostly the Anglo-Saxon model, but some examples from Norse/Viking influence, e.g. does for doeth; their, them)

Towards a 'Standard English'

Acceptance

- Spread of model by movement of people (merchants scholars, etc.)

- Development of Middle English

- Use in literature (Chaucer, Canterbury Tales, 1400)

- National identity

Towards a 'Standard English'

Elaboration

- Expansion and differentiation   of vocabulary (Anglo-Saxon v Latin/French)

- Latin maintained through Church and Law

- London - Printing press (Caxton 1476)

Towards a 'Standard English'

Codification

- Dictionary of the English Language, Johnson (1755)

- OED (1928)

- Critical Pronouncing Dictionary, Walker (1791)

- English Grammar, Lindley Murray (1795)

However, disparity between spoken forms and written forms remains

Word Origins

Anglo-Saxon

- Basic vocabulary
- Short, mono-syllabic words
- Verbs describing basic processes(often irregular)
- Comparatives with 'er'
- Raw materials (food nouns refer to the animal), simple processes
- Stylistically neutral

Word Origins

French

- More complex vocabulary
- Longer, multi-syllabic words
- Verbs describing sophisticated processes (often regular)
- Comparatives with 'more'
- Food nouns refer to the meat
- Language of political, military, economic authority; culture

Word Origins

Latin/Greek

- Specialised vocabulary (semantic fields): religion, law, medicine, arts, science
- Perception of greater difficulty in pronunciation, spelling and understanding
- Often used deliberately to impress socially, maintain distance, establish groups/elites, etc.
- Some deliberate re-spelling in English to reflect Latin roots: e.g. fact, transport, excite
- False friends emerge though different development of words: actually, eventually, premises, sensible, sympathetic

Word Origins

New Words

Other languages:
- Italian (pizza, zucchini, alfresco)
- Indian (bungalow, guru, pashmina, thug)
- Japanese (tsunami)
- Spanish (siesta)

New areas of activity:
- computing and online activities
- finance and economics
- sports
- music
- social culture

M Hammersley – 21 Jan 2019

Word Origins

New Words

Vocabulary becomes 'old-fashioned', antiquated
•Asylum – Hospital
•Consumption – Tuberculosis
•Wireless – Radio
•Frock – Dress

Neologisms
•Selfie, Emoji, Vape, Friend/Unfriend
•Brexit
•Post-truth (OED 2016 Word of the Year)

M Hammersley – 21 Jan 2019

Word Frequency

- 64% of Shorter OED words from French/Latin/Greek
- 26% from   Anglo-Saxon

- 4000 most frequent word = 51% Germanic, 48% French/Latin, hardly any Greek

- 12 most frequent verbs in Longman's Corpus: say, get, go, know, think, see, make, come, take, want, give, mean

- Similar pairs will often have non-semantic differences: e.g. go in/enter; get up/rise; look into/investigate; book/reserve

M Hammersley – 21 Jan 2019

Word Formation (Morphology)

- Free morphemes = words with lexical meaning
- Many bound morphemes = (grammatical) function or modification, e.g. -s, -ed, -ing, -est, er
- Other affixes (prefixes or suffixes) are also bound morphemes that have lexical meaning, e.g. dis-, un-, -less, -ful and produce derivations

M Hammersley – 21 Jan 2019

Word Formation (Morphology)

- Derivations, e.g. interest, interesting, interestingly, uninteresting, uninterested, disinterested
- Compounds, e.g. bed and breakfast; keyboard; start-up; guidelines
- Conversions, this impacts on you; I will text you
- Blending, e.g. brash (bold=rash)
- Clipping, e.g. 'phone, fridge
- Acronyms (LED), abbreviations (MEP)

STANDARD ENGLISH

The kind of English that draws least attention to itself over the widest area and through the widest range of usage

(Quirk and Stein, 1990)

- More associated with written than spoken English

    - Educated usage
    - Appropriate usage
    - Individual attitudes: 'good or bad'

STANDARD ENGLISH

Standard English is that variety of English which is usually used in print, and which is normally taught in schools and to non-native speakers learning the language. It is also the variety which is normally spoken by educated people and used in news broadcasts and other similar situations. The difference between standard and non-standard, it should be noted, has nothing in principle to do with differences between formal and colloquial language, or with concepts such as 'bad language'. Standard English has colloquial as well as formal variants, and standard English speakers swear as much as others.

<div align="right">

(Trudgill 1974: 17)

</div>

BRITISH ENGLISH

More associated with spoken than written English

- Queen's English
- Oxford English
- BBC English

- Received Pronunciation

- Estuary English

GENERAL AMERICAN

GENERAL AMERICAN

- Northern
- Midland
- Southern

- Pronunciation of North-Midland area taken as General American (as used on main TV networks)

- Lexical standardisation:
- Noah Webster, An American Dictionary of the English Language (1828)
- Merriam-Webster first used in 1983

Other 'Englishes'

Caribbean

Australian/New Zealand

Africa
South Africa

India
Pakistan

With multiple accents, but also many dialects