

# ENG207

**VARIETIES OF ENGLISH  
(INCLUDING ENGLISH  
BASED PIDGINS AND  
CREOLES)**



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**Course code: ENG207**

**Course title: Varieties of English (Including English based Pidgins and Creoles)**

**Course credit load: 2 Units**

**Series 1: Development and Historical Periods of the English Language**

**Series 2: Origins and Evolution from Old to Contemporary English**

**Series 3: Diachronic Study of English Usage Across Ages**

**Series 4: Sociolinguistic Factors in English Language Development**

**Series 5: Internationality, Regional, and Contextual Impacts on Standard English**

**Proposed Outline for Series 1**

### **Part 1 Foundations of the English Language**

- 1.1.1 The Indo-European roots of English
- 1.1.2 The Germanic branch and Anglo-Saxon settlement
- 1.1.3 Early influences shaping Old English

### **Part 2 Old English Period**

- 1.2.1 Linguistic features of Old English
- 1.2.2 Literary and cultural contributions
- 1.2.3 Viking and Latin influences

### **Part 3 Middle English Period**

- 1.3.1 Norman Conquest and French influence
- 1.3.2 Simplification of grammar and vocabulary expansion
- 1.3.3 Major literary works and writers

### **Part 4 Modern English Period**

- 1.4.1 Early Modern English: Renaissance and Shakespeare
- 1.4.2 Standardisation and the printing press
- 1.4.3 Contemporary English and global spread

## **Introduction**

Language is never static, it evolves over time and reflects the history, culture, and social changes of its speakers. English, in particular, has undergone remarkable transformations from its earliest roots to the global language we recognise today. By tracing these developments, learners gain a clearer appreciation of how English has adapted to different contexts and why its historical journey remains central to understanding its present-day varieties.



The aim of this Series is to guide you through the major stages in the development of the English language and to equip you with the ability to analyse its historical periods critically. You will be able to connect linguistic features with historical events and evaluate how these shaped the language we use today.

We shall commence this Series by exploring the foundations of the English language, focusing on its Indo-European roots and early influences. Next, we will examine the Old English period, considering its linguistic features and cultural contributions. Following that, we will move on to the Middle English period, where the Norman Conquest and French influence reshaped vocabulary and grammar. Finally, we will conclude with the Modern English period, highlighting the Renaissance, the role of Shakespeare, the impact of the printing press, and the eventual global spread of English. This sequential journey will provide you with a comprehensive view of how English has developed across time.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 2.1** define the Indo-European roots and early foundations of the English language,
- **SLO 2.2** explain the key linguistic features and cultural contributions of the Old English period,
- **SLO 2.3** analyse the impact of the Norman Conquest and French influence on Middle English grammar and vocabulary,
- **SLO 2.4** evaluate the role of the Renaissance, Shakespeare, and the printing press in shaping Early Modern English, and
- **SLO 2.5** describe the global spread and contemporary development of Modern English.

## 1.1 Foundations of the English Language

### 1.1.1 The Indo-European roots of English

The **Indo-European language family** refers to a large group of related languages that originated from a common ancestral tongue spoken thousands of years ago. English belongs to this family, alongside languages such as Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, and Celtic. This connection explains why English shares certain words and grammatical features with other European and Asian languages. For example, the English word *mother* is related to *mater* in Latin and *matar* in Sanskrit.

*Figure 1.1: The Indo-European language family tree*

Fill in the blank: The English word *mother* is related to the Latin word \_\_\_\_\_.

### 1.1.2 The Germanic branch and Anglo-Saxon settlement

The **Germanic branch** is a subgroup of the Indo-European family that gave rise to languages such as German, Dutch, and the Scandinavian tongues. English developed from the West



Germanic group, specifically through the dialects spoken by the **Angles, Saxons, and Jutes**, who migrated to Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries. Their speech formed the basis of what we now call **Old English**, which was distinct from the Celtic languages already spoken in Britain.

*Plate 1.1: Anglo-Saxon migration routes into Britain*

Fill in the blank: The Angles, Saxons, and \_\_\_\_\_ migrated to Britain and shaped Old English.

### 1.1.3 Early influences shaping Old English

Old English did not remain isolated. It absorbed elements from **Latin**, introduced through Christian missionaries, and from **Norse**, brought by Viking settlers. Latin contributed religious and scholarly vocabulary, while Norse added everyday words and simplified grammar structures. These influences enriched the language and made it more flexible. For instance, the Norse word *sky* entered English, while Latin gave us words like *school* and

Box 1.1: Selected Latin and Norse contributions to Old English

Fill in the blank: The Norse word *sky* and the Latin word \_\_\_\_\_ both entered Old English.

#### Pilot questions 1.1

1. Which language family does English belong to?
2. Name two groups of people whose dialects shaped Old English.
3. Identify one Latin word and one Norse word that entered Old English.
4. What role did Christian missionaries play in influencing Old English?
5. Which subgroup of the Indo-European family includes English?

## 1.2 Old English Period

### 1.2.1 Linguistic features of Old English

**Old English** refers to the earliest recorded stage of the English language, spoken roughly between the fifth and eleventh centuries. It was a highly inflected language, meaning that word endings changed to indicate grammatical functions such as tense, case, and number. For example, nouns had different endings depending on whether they were singular or plural, and verbs varied according to person and tense. Old English also had a rich system of sounds, including letters no longer used today, such as **þ (thorn)** representing the *th* sound.

*Figure 1.2: Old English letters and modern equivalents*

Fill in the blank: The Old English letter þ (thorn) represented the sound \_\_\_\_\_.

### 1.2.2 Literary and cultural contributions

Old English literature provides valuable insight into the culture and values of early English society. The most famous work is *Beowulf*, an epic poem that reflects themes of heroism, loyalty, and the struggle between good and evil. Religious texts, chronicles, and poetry also flourished, often written by monks who preserved knowledge in monasteries. These writings reveal how language was used not only for storytelling but also for recording history and spreading Christianity.



Plate 1.2: Illuminated manuscript of Beowulf

Fill in the blank: The epic poem \_\_\_\_\_ is the most famous work of Old English literature.

### 1.2.3 Viking and Latin influences

The Old English period was shaped by external influences. The **Vikings**, who invaded and settled parts of England, introduced many Norse words such as *sky*, *egg*, and *window*. These words often replaced or coexisted with native English terms. Meanwhile, **Latin** influence came through the spread of Christianity, adding words like *altar*, *angel*, and *school*. These borrowings enriched the vocabulary and made Old English more diverse and adaptable.

| Loanword Source | Influence Type                                                                    | Old English Examples | Modern English Equivalent |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Old Norse       | Everyday Life: Words for mundane objects, family, and basic actions.              | <i>scie / sky</i>    | Sky                       |
|                 |                                                                                   | <i>æg</i>            | Egg                       |
|                 |                                                                                   | <i>windage</i>       | Window (lit. "wind-eye")  |
| Latin           | Religious & Academic: Words related to the church, education, and administration. | <i>felagi</i>        | Fellow                    |
|                 |                                                                                   | <i>altar</i>         | Altar                     |
|                 |                                                                                   | <i>engel</i>         | Angel                     |



| Loanword Source | Influence Type | Old English Examples | Modern English Equivalent |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
|                 |                | <i>scōl</i>          | School                    |
|                 |                | <i>mægester</i>      | Master                    |

Box 1.2: Selected Norse and Latin loanwords in Old English

Fill in the blank: The Norse word *egg* and the Latin word \_\_\_\_\_ both entered Old English vocabulary.

#### Pilot questions 1.2

1. What does the term Old English refer to?
2. Name one unique letter used in Old English and its modern equivalent.
3. Identify the most famous literary work of Old English.
4. Which two groups influenced Old English vocabulary during this period?
5. Give one example of a Norse loanword and one example of a Latin loanword.

### 1.3 Middle English Period

#### 1.3.1 Norman Conquest and French influence

The **Norman Conquest** of 1066 marked a turning point in the history of English. When William the Conqueror and his followers took control of England, French became the language of the ruling class, law, and administration. This resulted in thousands of French words entering English, especially in areas such as government, law, art, and fashion. For example, words like *court*, *judge*, and *beauty* were borrowed directly from French. This influence created a clear distinction between the vocabulary of the elite and that of the common people.

*Figure 1.3: French vocabulary influence on Middle English*

Fill in the blank: The Norman Conquest of \_\_\_\_\_ brought French influence into English vocabulary.

#### 1.3.2 Simplification of grammar and vocabulary expansion



During the Middle English period, grammar became simpler compared to Old English. Inflectional endings were reduced, and word order became more important in determining meaning. At the same time, vocabulary expanded significantly due to French and Latin borrowings. Everyday speech began to mix native English words with foreign terms, creating a richer and more flexible language. For instance, the Old English word *ask* coexisted with the French-derived word *question*.

| Native English (Basic) | French Borrowing (Formal) | Latin Borrowing (Scholarly) |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ask                    | Question                  | Interrogate                 |
| King                   | Sovereign                 | Regal                       |
| Holy                   | Sacred                    | Consecrated                 |
| Fire                   | Flame                     | Conflagration               |
| Rise                   | Mount                     | Ascend                      |
| Time                   | Age                       | Epoch                       |

Box 1.3: Examples of vocabulary expansion in Middle English

Fill in the blank: In Middle English, inflectional endings were reduced and \_\_\_\_\_ became more important in determining meaning.

### 1.3.3 Major literary works and writers

The Middle English period produced some of the most celebrated works in English literature. The most notable is Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, which vividly portrays medieval society through a collection of stories told by pilgrims. Other important writers include William Langland, author of *Piers Plowman*, and the anonymous poet of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. These works demonstrate how Middle English was used creatively and effectively, blending native and borrowed vocabulary to produce enduring literary achievements.

Plate 1.3: Manuscript page from *The Canterbury Tales*

Fill in the blank: Geoffrey Chaucer's most famous work is \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Pilot questions 1.3

1. What historical event introduced French influence into English?
2. Give one example of a French loanword in Middle English.
3. How did grammar change during the Middle English period?
4. Name one literary work produced in Middle English.
5. Who wrote *The Canterbury Tales*?

### 1.4 Modern English Period



### 1.4.1 Early Modern English: Renaissance and Shakespeare

**Early Modern English** refers to the stage of the language spoken between the late fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This period coincided with the **Renaissance**, a cultural movement that revived interest in classical learning and the arts. As a result, English absorbed many words from Latin and Greek, especially in fields such as science, philosophy, and literature. Writers like **William Shakespeare** played a crucial role in shaping the language, introducing new words, expressions, and stylistic innovations that enriched English vocabulary and made it more expressive.

*Plate 1.4: A folio page from Shakespeare's plays*

Fill in the blank: The cultural movement that influenced Early Modern English was the \_\_\_\_\_.

### 1.4.2 Standardisation and the printing press influence

The invention of the **printing press** by Johannes Gutenberg in the fifteenth century had a profound impact on English. Printed books helped to stabilise spelling and grammar, reducing regional variations and promoting a more uniform standard. The works of scholars and translators, such as the **King James Bible**, further reinforced this standardisation. As literacy spread, English became more accessible to ordinary people, and the language gained prestige as a medium for education, religion, and governance.

*Figure 1.4: The printing press and English standardization*

Fill in the blank: The invention that helped stabilise spelling and grammar in English was the \_\_\_\_\_.

### 1.4.3 Contemporary English and global spread

**Contemporary English** refers to the form of the language spoken from the eighteenth century to the present day. This period is marked by the global expansion of English through colonisation, trade, science, and technology. English became a world language, used in international communication, education, and diplomacy. The rise of the internet and digital media has further accelerated its spread, creating new varieties and registers of English across different regions. Today, English is spoken by millions as a first, second, or foreign language, making it one of the most influential languages globally.

| Factor           | Description                                                                                                                  | Example / Manifestation                                                                             |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Colonisation     | The expansion of the British Empire across Africa, Asia, and the Americas established English as an administrative language. | The legal and educational systems in countries like India, Nigeria, and Australia.                  |
| Trade & Commerce | English became the default language for international business and maritime shipping to facilitate global markets.           | Standardized "Aviation English" for pilots and the use of English in international stock exchanges. |



| Factor                          | Description                                                                                                                       | Example / Manifestation                                                                        |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Scientific Prestige</b>      | Following the Industrial Revolution and the rise of American research, English became the primary language of academic discourse. | Over 90% of peer-reviewed scientific journals are published in English today.                  |
| <b>Digital Media &amp; Tech</b> | The internet was developed largely in the U.S., making English the native language of the digital world.                          | Coding languages (Python, Java), social media platforms, and search engine algorithms.         |
| <b>Cultural Diplomacy</b>       | The massive export of Western entertainment (Hollywood, Pop music) created a global "soft power" for the language.                | Global reach of streaming platforms like Netflix and the dominance of English-language cinema. |

Box 1.4: Factors contributing to the global spread of English

Fill in the blank: The rise of the \_\_\_\_\_ has accelerated the global spread of English in recent decades.

#### Pilot questions 1.4

1. Which cultural movement influenced Early Modern English?
2. Name one writer who contributed significantly to Early Modern English.
3. What invention helped to standardise spelling and grammar in English?
4. Give one example of a text that reinforced English standardisation.
5. Identify two factors that contributed to the global spread of English.

#### Series summary

This Series has guided you through the development and historical periods of the English language, showing how the language evolved from its earliest foundations to its modern global presence. By tracing this journey, you have seen how historical events, cultural influences, and social changes shaped English into the rich and diverse language it is today.

We began with the Indo-European roots and the Germanic origins of English, then examined the linguistic features and cultural contributions of Old English. Following that, we explored the Middle English period, focusing on the Norman Conquest, French influence, and the rise of literary works such as *The Canterbury Tales*. Finally, we considered the Modern English period, highlighting the Renaissance, Shakespeare, the printing press, and the worldwide spread of English. In line with the Series Learning Outcomes, you should now be able to define the foundations of English, explain the features of Old English, analyse the impact of French influence on Middle English, evaluate the role of cultural and technological forces in Early Modern English, and describe the global spread of contemporary English.

#### Glossary of terms



- **Anglo-Saxons:** Groups of people from northern Europe, including the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, who migrated to Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries and laid the foundation of Old English.
- **Beowulf:** The most famous epic poem written in Old English, reflecting themes of heroism, loyalty, and the struggle between good and evil.
- **Canterbury Tales:** A collection of stories written by Geoffrey Chaucer in Middle English, portraying medieval society through the voices of pilgrims.
- **Contemporary English:** The form of English spoken from the eighteenth century to the present day, marked by global spread and diverse varieties.
- **Early Modern English:** The stage of English spoken between the late fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries, influenced by the Renaissance and writers such as Shakespeare.
- **Germanic branch:** A subgroup of the Indo-European language family that includes English, German, Dutch, and Scandinavian languages.
- **Indo-European language family:** A large group of related languages that originated from a common ancestral tongue, including English, Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit.
- **Latin:** The language of ancient Rome, which contributed many words to English, especially through religion, scholarship, and the Renaissance.
- **Middle English:** The stage of English spoken between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, shaped by French influence after the Norman Conquest and known for literary works such as *The Canterbury Tales*.
- **Norman Conquest:** The invasion of England in 1066 by William the Conqueror, which introduced French as the language of the ruling class and influenced English vocabulary.
- **Norse:** The language of the Vikings, who settled in parts of England and contributed everyday words such as *sky*, *egg*, and *window* to Old English.
- **Old English:** The earliest recorded stage of the English language, spoken between the fifth and eleventh centuries, characterised by inflectional endings and unique letters such as þ (thorn).
- **Printing press:** A fifteenth-century invention that allowed books to be produced more widely, helping to standardise spelling and grammar in English.
- **Renaissance:** A cultural movement in Europe that revived interest in classical learning and the arts, influencing Early Modern English vocabulary and style.
- **Shakespeare:** William Shakespeare, a playwright and poet of the Renaissance, who introduced new words and expressions and enriched Early Modern English.
- **Thorn (þ):** A letter used in Old English to represent the *th* sound, later replaced by modern spelling conventions.

Concept check questions [Series 1]



### Objective questions

1. English belongs to which major language family? (Linked to SLO 2.1)
2. Which letter in Old English represented the *th* sound? (Linked to SLO 2.2)
3. The Norman Conquest of 1066 introduced which language into English vocabulary? (Linked to SLO 2.3)
4. Who wrote *The Canterbury Tales*? (Linked to SLO 2.3)
5. Which invention helped to standardise spelling and grammar in Early Modern English? (Linked to SLO 2.4)

### Short-answer questions

6. Define the term *Anglo-Saxons* and explain their role in shaping Old English. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
7. Identify one Norse loanword and one Latin loanword that entered Old English. (Linked to SLO 2.2)
8. Analyse how grammar changed during the Middle English period. (Linked to SLO 2.3)
9. Evaluate the contribution of Shakespeare to the development of Early Modern English. (Linked to SLO 2.4)
10. Describe two factors that contributed to the global spread of Contemporary English. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

### Long-answer questions

11. Discuss the Indo-European roots of English and explain how the Germanic branch influenced its early development. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
12. Examine the cultural and literary contributions of the Old English period, with reference to *Beowulf*. (Linked to SLO 2.2)
13. Analyse the impact of the Norman Conquest on Middle English vocabulary and literature. (Linked to SLO 2.3)
14. Evaluate the combined influence of the Renaissance, Shakespeare, and the printing press on Early Modern English. (Linked to SLO 2.4)
15. Assess the global spread of Contemporary English, highlighting its role in international communication and digital media. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

[Answers to concept check questions \[Series 1\]](#)

### Objective questions

1. Indo-European language family.
2. Thorn (þ).
3. French.



4. Geoffrey Chaucer.
5. Printing press.

### Short-answer questions

6. The Anglo-Saxons were groups from northern Europe (Angles, Saxons, Jutes) who migrated to Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries. Their dialects formed the basis of Old English.
7. Norse loanword: *sky*. Latin loanword: *altar*.
8. Grammar simplified, with fewer inflectional endings. Word order became more important in determining meaning.
9. Shakespeare enriched vocabulary, introduced new words and expressions, and demonstrated creative use of Early Modern English in drama and poetry.
10. Colonisation (British Empire influence) and digital media (internet and social platforms).

### Long-answer questions

11. *Basic response:* English is part of the Indo-European family. The Germanic branch, especially West Germanic dialects, shaped Old English through Anglo-Saxon settlement. *Value-added response:* Learners may connect this to comparative linguistics, noting similarities between English and other Indo-European languages such as German and Dutch.
12. *Basic response:* Old English literature included epic poetry like *Beowulf*, which reflected themes of heroism and loyalty. Monks also produced religious texts and chronicles. *Value-added response:* Learners may highlight how *Beowulf* illustrates cultural values and compare it with other epic traditions such as Homer's *Iliad*.
13. *Basic response:* The Norman Conquest introduced French vocabulary into English, especially in law, government, and art. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* exemplifies Middle English literature. *Value-added response:* Learners may explore how bilingualism shaped English society and how French influence created social distinctions in vocabulary.
14. *Basic response:* The Renaissance introduced classical vocabulary, Shakespeare enriched expression, and the printing press standardised spelling and grammar. *Value-added response:* Learners may evaluate how these forces collectively elevated English as a prestigious language of culture and scholarship.
15. *Basic response:* Contemporary English spread globally through colonisation, trade, science, and digital media. It is now used in international communication. *Value-added response:* Learners may assess the implications of English as a global lingua franca, considering both opportunities and challenges for linguistic diversity.

### Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 1]

#### Pilot questions 1.1

1. Indo-European language family.
2. Angles and Saxons (also Jutes).



3. Latin word *school* and Norse word *sky*.
4. They introduced Latin vocabulary through religion and scholarship.
5. West Germanic subgroup.

### Pilot questions 1.2

1. The earliest recorded stage of English, spoken between the fifth and eleventh centuries.
2. Thorn (þ), representing the *th* sound.
3. *Beowulf*.
4. Vikings and Christian missionaries (Latin influence).
5. Norse loanword *egg* and Latin loanword *altar*.

### Pilot questions 1.3

1. The Norman Conquest of 1066.
2. *Court* (French loanword).
3. Grammar simplified, with fewer inflectional endings and greater reliance on word order.
4. *The Canterbury Tales*.
5. Geoffrey Chaucer.

### Pilot questions 1.4

1. The Renaissance.
2. William Shakespeare.
3. The printing press.
4. The King James Bible.
5. Colonisation and digital media.

### References and Attributions [Series 1]

The following references and attributions cover the instructional content, illustrations, and suggested open educational resources (OERs) used in **Series 1: Development and Historical Periods of the English Language**. Entries are presented in a clear and consistent style, following APA referencing conventions.

### General references

- Crystal, D. (2003). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Baugh, A. C., & Cable, T. (2013). *A History of the English Language* (6th ed.). Routledge.



- Barber, C., Beal, J. C., & Shaw, P. A. (2012). *The English Language: A Historical Introduction*. Cambridge University Press.

### Illustrations and OER suggestions

- *Figure 1.1: The Indo-European language family tree*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Indo-European language family tree diagram.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a labelled diagram of the Indo-European language family tree highlighting Germanic and English.”
- *Plate 1.1: Anglo-Saxon migration routes into Britain*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Map of Anglo-Saxon migration routes.”
  - AI prompt: “Create a map showing Anglo-Saxon migration routes into Britain with arrows and labels.”
- *Box 1.1: Selected Latin and Norse contributions to Old English*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access linguistic resources on Old English loanwords.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table comparing Latin and Norse contributions to Old English vocabulary.”
- *Figure 1.2: Old English letters and modern equivalents*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Old English alphabet chart.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a chart comparing Old English letters (þ, ð, æ) with their modern English equivalents.”
- *Plate 1.2: Illuminated manuscript of Beowulf*
  - Suggested OER source: British Library, “Beowulf manuscript image” (public domain).
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration of an illuminated manuscript page from Beowulf with decorative borders.”
- *Box 1.2: Selected Norse and Latin loanwords in Old English*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on Norse and Latin loanwords.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table listing Norse and Latin loanwords in Old English with examples.”
- *Figure 1.3: French vocabulary influence on Middle English*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of French loanwords in Middle English.”



- AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing categories of French loanwords in Middle English such as law, government, art.”
- *Box 1.3: Examples of vocabulary expansion in Middle English*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on Middle English vocabulary.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table comparing native English words with French and Latin borrowings in Middle English.”
- *Plate 1.3: Manuscript page from The Canterbury Tales*
  - Suggested OER source: British Library, “Canterbury Tales manuscript image” (public domain).
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration of a medieval manuscript page from The Canterbury Tales with decorative script.”
- *Plate 1.4: A folio page from Shakespeare’s plays*
  - Suggested OER source: Folger Shakespeare Library, “Shakespeare folio images” (public domain).
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration of a Shakespearean folio page with Elizabethan script and decorative borders.”
- *Figure 1.4: The printing press and English standardisation*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of printing press influence on literacy.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing how the printing press influenced spelling, grammar, and literacy in English.”
- *Box 1.4: Factors contributing to the global spread of English*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on global English.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table listing factors contributing to the global spread of English with examples.”

**Course title: Varieties of English (Including English based Pidgins and Creoles)**

**Course credit load: 2 Units**



**Series 1: Development and Historical Periods of the English Language**

**Series 2: Origins and Evolution from Old to Contemporary English**

**Series 3: Diachronic Study of English Usage Across Ages**

**Series 4: Sociolinguistic Factors in English Language Development**

**Series 5: Internationality, Regional, and Contextual Impacts on Standard English**

**Proposed Outline for Series 2**

**Part 1 Transition from Old English to Middle English**

- 2.1.1 Decline of inflectional endings
- 2.1.2 Influence of Norman French vocabulary
- 2.1.3 Shifts in pronunciation and syntax

**Part 2 Transition from Middle English to Early Modern English**

- 2.2.1 Renaissance influence and classical borrowings
- 2.2.2 The Great Vowel Shift
- 2.2.3 Contributions of Shakespeare and other writers

**Part 3 Early Modern English to Modern English**

- 2.3.1 Standardisation through printing and education
- 2.3.2 Expansion of vocabulary through science and exploration
- 2.3.3 Emergence of regional and social varieties

**Part 4 Contemporary English and Global Evolution**

- 2.4.1 English as a world language
- 2.4.2 Technological and digital influences
- 2.4.3 New varieties: World Englishes, Pidgins, and Creoles

Introduction

In the last Series, we explored **Course code: ENG207**

the development and historical periods of the English language, tracing its journey from Old English through Middle English to Modern English. Building on that foundation, this Series will focus more closely on the transitions and processes that shaped English as it evolved across



centuries. Understanding these shifts is essential, as they explain not only the language's structure but also its adaptability and resilience in different cultural and social contexts.

The aim of this Series is to examine the major transitions from Old English to Contemporary English and to equip you with the ability to analyse the linguistic, cultural, and technological factors that influenced these changes. By the end of the Series, you will be able to connect specific developments to broader historical movements and evaluate their impact on the English we use today.

We shall commence this Series by studying the transition from Old English to Middle English, focusing on the decline of inflectional endings, the influence of Norman French, and shifts in pronunciation. Next, we will move on to the transition from Middle English to Early Modern English, considering the Renaissance, the Great Vowel Shift, and the contributions of Shakespeare. Following that, we will examine the move from Early Modern English to Modern English, highlighting standardisation, vocabulary expansion, and the rise of regional varieties. Finally, we will wrap up by exploring Contemporary English, paying attention to its global spread, technological influences, and the emergence of new varieties such as World Englishes, Pidgins, and Creoles. This progression will provide you with a clear and connected view of how English has evolved into its present form.

### Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 2.1** explain the linguistic changes that marked the transition from Old English to Middle English, including the decline of inflectional endings and shifts in pronunciation,
- **SLO 2.2** analyse the influence of Norman French vocabulary on Middle English and its impact on syntax and style,
- **SLO 2.3** describe the Renaissance contributions and evaluate the significance of the Great Vowel Shift in shaping Early Modern English,
- **SLO 2.4** assess the role of printing, education, and exploration in standardising and expanding Modern English, and
- **SLO 2.5** evaluate the global evolution of Contemporary English, with particular attention to technological influences and the emergence of World Englishes, Pidgins, and Creoles.

## 2.1 Transition from Old English to Middle English

### 2.1.1 Decline of inflectional endings

During the transition from Old English to Middle English, one of the most significant changes was the **decline of inflectional endings**, which are word endings used to show grammatical functions such as tense, case, and number. Old English relied heavily on these endings, but by the Middle English period, many had disappeared or become simplified. This shift meant that word order became more important in determining meaning. For example, while Old English could use



endings to show whether a noun was the subject or object, Middle English relied more on sentence structure.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Examples: Daniel, London, table, hope<br/>- Mary uses a blue pen for her notes.</p>                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>noun phrase to avoid repetition.<br/>Examples: I, you, it, we, us, them, those<br/>- I want her to dance with me.</p>                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p><b>ADJECTIVE</b><br/>Describes, modifies or gives more information about a noun or pronoun.<br/>Examples: cold, happy, young, two, fun<br/>- The little girl has a pink hat.</p>                    | <p><b>VERB</b><br/>Shows an action or a state of being.<br/>Examples: go, speak, eat, live, are, is<br/>- I listen to the word and then repeat it.</p>                                   |
| <p><b>ADVERB</b><br/>Modifies a verb, an adjective or another adverb. It tells how (often), where, when.<br/>Examples: slowly, very, always, well, too<br/>- Yesterday, I ate my lunch quickly.</p>    | <p><b>PREPOSITION</b><br/>Shows the relationship of a noun or pronoun to another word.<br/>Examples: at, on, in, from, with, about<br/>- I left my keys on the table for you.</p>        |
| <p><b>CONJUNCTION</b><br/>Joins two words, ideas, phrases together and shows how they are connected.<br/>Examples: and, or, but, because, yet, so<br/>- I was hot and tired but still finished it.</p> | <p><b>INTERJECTION</b><br/>A word or phrase that expresses a strong emotion. It is a short exclamation.<br/>Examples: Ouch! Hey! Oh! Watch out!<br/>- Wow! I passed my English exam.</p> |

Figure 2.1: Decline of inflectional endings in English

Fill in the blank: In Middle English, \_\_\_\_\_ became more important than inflectional endings in determining meaning.

### 2.1.2 Influence of Norman French vocabulary

The **Norman Conquest** of 1066 introduced **Norman French vocabulary** into English, particularly in areas such as law, government, art, and fashion. This influence created a bilingual environment where English was spoken by the common people and French by the ruling elite. Over time, thousands of French words were absorbed into English, enriching its vocabulary and altering its style. For instance, words like judge, court, and beauty entered English during this period.

| Domain                   | Loanword Examples                                         | Modern Context                                                                  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Law &amp; Justice</b> | <i>Judge, jury, court, evidence, felony, verdict</i>      | Nearly all basic legal terminology in English is of French origin.              |
| <b>Government</b>        | <i>Crown, parliament, council, tax, sovereign, mayor</i>  | These reflect the administrative systems established by the Normans.            |
| <b>Military</b>          | <i>Army, navy, soldier, battle, enemy, guard</i>          | French replaced many Old English terms related to organized warfare.            |
| <b>Art &amp; Fashion</b> | <i>Beauty, colour, costume, apparel, design, ornament</i> | These terms highlight the influence of French culture on aesthetics and luxury. |



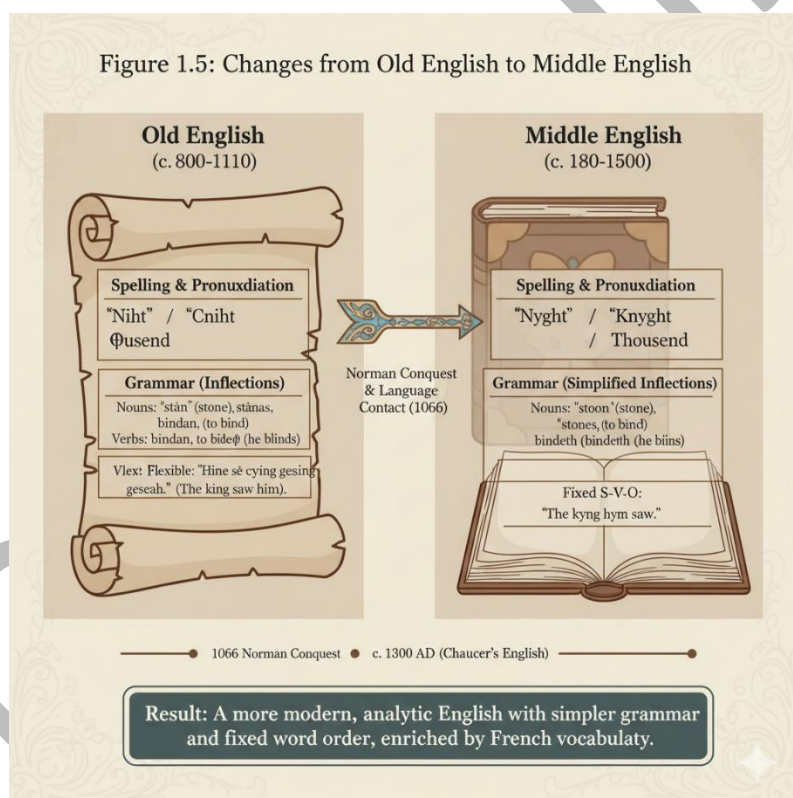
| Domain             | Loanword Examples                                   | Modern Context                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Cuisine</b>     | <i>Beef, pork, mutton, veal, feast, banquet</i>     | We use French names for the meat of the animal, while the Germanic Old English names ( <i>cow, pig, sheep</i> ) stayed for the animal in the field. |
| <b>Social Rank</b> | <i>Duke, baron, noble, peasant, servant, prince</i> | Titles and social hierarchies were largely defined by the French-speaking nobility.                                                                 |

### Box 2.1: Selected Norman French loanwords in Middle English

Fill in the blank: The Norman Conquest of \_\_\_\_\_ introduced French vocabulary into English.

### 2.1.3 Shifts in pronunciation and syntax

Another major change during this transition was in **pronunciation** and **syntax**. Pronunciation began to shift, setting the stage for later developments such as the Great Vowel Shift. Syntax, or sentence structure, also became more regular, with English moving towards a subject–verb–object order. These changes made English easier to learn and more consistent, but they also marked a departure from the highly flexible structures of Old English.



### Plate 2.1: Middle English manuscript with evolving spelling and syntax



Fill in the blank: Middle English syntax moved towards a \_\_\_\_\_-verb-object order.

### Pilot questions 2.1

1. What major grammatical change marked the transition from Old English to Middle English?
2. Which historical event introduced French vocabulary into English?
3. Give two examples of Norman French loanwords in Middle English.
4. How did pronunciation begin to change during the Middle English period?
5. What sentence structure became more common in Middle English?

## 2.2 Transition from Middle English to Early Modern English

### 2.2.1 Renaissance influence and classical borrowings

The **Renaissance** was a cultural movement in Europe during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that revived interest in classical learning, arts, and sciences. This period had a profound impact on English, as scholars and writers borrowed extensively from **Latin** and **Greek**, enriching the vocabulary with terms related to philosophy, science, and literature. Words such as encyclopaedia, philosophy, and theatre entered English during this time, reflecting the intellectual curiosity of the age.

| Category                | Latin Borrowings                              | Greek Borrowings                               |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Science & Medicine      | <i>specimen, vacuum, virus, nausea</i>        | <i>skeleton, larynx, pneumonia, therapy</i>    |
| Literature & Philosophy | <i>meditation, intuition, generic, satire</i> | <i>drama, tragedy, comedy, logic</i>           |
| Mathematics & Logic     | <i>radius, formula, ratio, equilibrium</i>    | <i>geometry, physics, hypothesis, analysis</i> |
| Politics & Society      | <i>census, candidate, permanent, educate</i>  | <i>democracy, anarchy, aristocracy, despot</i> |

Figure 2.2: Classical borrowings in Early Modern English

Fill in the blank: The Renaissance revived interest in \_\_\_\_\_ learning, arts, and sciences.

### 2.2.2 The Great Vowel Shift

One of the most significant linguistic changes during this period was the **Great Vowel Shift**, a major transformation in the pronunciation of long vowels in English. For example, the Middle



English word bite was pronounced like beet, but after the shift, it became closer to the modern pronunciation. This change affected the entire vowel system and is one reason why English spelling often does not match pronunciation today.

| Middle English Word | Pre-Shift Pronunciation (Chaucer's time) | Post-Shift Pronunciation (Modern English) | Transition Detail                                           |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bite</b>         | <i>Beet</i> /i:/                         | <i>Bite</i> /aɪ/                          | The high front vowel /i:/ became the diphthong /aɪ/.        |
| <b>Meet</b>         | <i>Mate</i> /e:/                         | <i>Meet</i> /i:/                          | The mid-high vowel /e:/ moved up to the high position.      |
| <b>Mate</b>         | <i>Maht</i> /a:/                         | <i>Mate</i> /eɪ/                          | The low vowel /a:/ moved up and eventually diphthongized.   |
| <b>House</b>        | <i>Hoos</i> /u:/                         | <i>House</i> /aʊ/                         | The high back vowel /u:/ "broke" into the diphthong /aʊ/.   |
| <b>Boot</b>         | <i>Boat</i> /o:/                         | <i>Boot</i> /u:/                          | The mid-high back vowel /o:/ moved up to the high position. |
| <b>Name</b>         | <i>Nah-muh</i> /a:/                      | <i>Name</i> /eɪ/                          | The vowel raised and the final "e" became silent.           |

#### Box 2.2: Examples of the Great Vowel Shift

Fill in the blank: The Great Vowel Shift mainly affected the pronunciation of \_\_\_\_\_ vowels in English.

### 2.2.3 Contributions of Shakespeare and other writers

The Early Modern English period was also shaped by the works of **William Shakespeare** and other writers. Shakespeare introduced new words and expressions, many of which are still in use today, such as lonely, majestic, and radiance. His creative use of language demonstrated the flexibility and richness of English, while other writers like Edmund Spenser and John Milton also contributed to its literary prestige. These contributions helped establish English as a language capable of expressing complex ideas and emotions.





Plate 2.2: Folio page from Shakespeare's plays

Fill in the blank: The word lonely was introduced into English by \_\_\_\_\_.

Pilot questions 2.2

1. Which cultural movement influenced Early Modern English vocabulary?
2. Give two examples of Latin or Greek borrowings during the Renaissance.
3. What major linguistic change in pronunciation occurred during this period?
4. Provide one example of a word affected by the Great Vowel Shift.
5. Name one writer who contributed significantly to Early Modern English.

2.3 Early Modern English to Modern English

### 2.3.1 Standardisation through printing and education

One of the defining features of the transition from Early Modern English to Modern English was **standardisation**, which refers to the process of establishing consistent rules for spelling, grammar, and usage. The invention of the **printing press** in the fifteenth century played a crucial role in this development, as printed books helped reduce regional variations and promoted a more uniform language. Education also expanded during this period, reinforcing standard forms of English and making literacy more widespread.



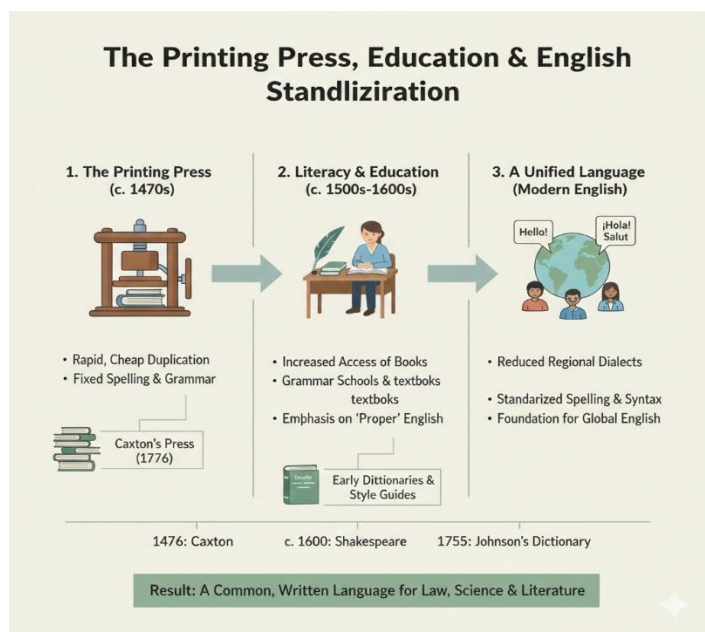


Figure 2.3: Printing press and education in English standardisation

Fill in the blank: The invention of the \_\_\_\_\_ press helped to stabilise spelling and grammar in English.

### 2.3.2 Expansion of vocabulary through science and exploration

The Modern English period saw a significant **expansion of vocabulary**, driven by advances in **science** and global **exploration**. Scientific discoveries introduced new terms such as gravity, oxygen, and telescope, while exploration and trade brought words from other languages into English, including tomato (from Spanish) and shampoo (from Hindi). This expansion reflected the growing role of English as a language of knowledge and international exchange.

| Source                          | Influence on Language                                                                                                         | Example Words                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Science &amp; Technology</b> | The 17th-century Scientific Revolution required precise terminology for new discoveries in physics, chemistry, and biology.   | <i>Gravity, oxygen, electricity, pendulum, bacteria, telescope</i>                               |
| <b>Exploration &amp; Trade</b>  | As English speakers traveled globally, they adopted "loanwords" from indigenous languages for local plants, foods, and goods. | <i>Tomato (Nahuatl), shampoo (Hindi), chocolate (Nahuatl), coffee (Arabic), safari (Swahili)</i> |



| Source                       | Influence on Language                                                                                                                      | Example Words                                                  |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Literature &amp; Arts</b> | The invention of the novel and the professionalization of the essay as a genre created a need for terms describing narrative and critique. | <i>Novel, essay, protagonist, anthology, memoir, aesthetic</i> |
| <b>Industrialization</b>     | The 19th century added a layer of mechanical and economic terms as society shifted to urban manufacturing.                                 | <i>Locomotive, factory, capitalism, telegraph, blueprint</i>   |

### Box 2.3: Vocabulary expansion in Modern English

Fill in the blank: The word shampoo entered English through trade with \_\_\_\_\_.

### 2.3.3 Emergence of regional and social varieties

As English spread across Britain and beyond, it developed **regional and social varieties**. Regional varieties reflected differences in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar across areas such as Scotland, Ireland, and northern England. Social varieties emerged based on class, education, and occupation, influencing how English was spoken and perceived. These varieties enriched the language, making it more diverse and adaptable, while also highlighting issues of identity and social status.



Plate 2.3: Map of regional varieties of English in Britain

Fill in the blank: Regional varieties of English reflected differences in pronunciation, vocabulary, and \_\_\_\_\_.

### Pilot questions 2.3



1. What invention helped to standardise spelling and grammar in English?
2. Give two examples of scientific terms that entered English during the Modern English period.
3. Identify one word borrowed into English through exploration or trade.
4. What are regional varieties of English based on?
5. What are social varieties of English influenced by?

## 2.4 Contemporary English and Global Evolution

### 2.4.1 English as a world language

In the eighteenth century onwards, English began to establish itself as a **world language**, meaning it was used widely beyond its native speakers. This expansion was driven by colonisation, trade, and diplomacy, which spread English to Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Today, English functions as a **lingua franca**, a common language used for communication between people who do not share a native tongue. It is the dominant language in international business, science, and education, making it one of the most influential languages globally.



Figure 2.4: Global spread of English as a world language

Fill in the blank: English functions as a \_\_\_\_\_ franca in international communication.

### 2.4.2 Technological and digital influences

The rise of **technology** and **digital media** has accelerated the global spread of English. The internet, social media platforms, and online education have made English the default language of digital communication. New words and expressions have emerged from technological contexts, such as download, emoji, and hashtag. These influences show how English continues to evolve rapidly, adapting to new modes of communication and cultural trends.



| Domain                         | Linguistic Influence                                                              | Example Words                                                          |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Internet &amp; Software</b> | Basic functional terms that have become everyday household nouns and verbs.       | <i>Download, email, firewall, browser, interface, reboot</i>           |
| <b>Social Media</b>            | Terms describing new modes of social interaction and metadata.                    | <i>Hashtag, emoji, DM (Direct Message), feed, ghosting, influencer</i> |
| <b>Online Culture</b>          | Shorthand and jargon used to describe digital content and trends.                 | <i>Meme, vlog, clickbait, trolling, viral, livestream</i>              |
| <b>Smart Tech &amp; AI</b>     | Vocabulary emerging from the integration of hardware and artificial intelligence. | <i>Algorithm, cloud, chatbot, haptic, wearable, prompt</i>             |

Box 2.4: Examples of technological influences on English vocabulary

Fill in the blank: The word hashtag entered English through the rise of \_\_\_\_\_ media.

### 2.4.3 New varieties: World Englishes, Pidgins, and Creoles

Contemporary English is not uniform; it exists in many **varieties** across the world. **World Englishes** refers to the different forms of English spoken in various regions, shaped by local cultures and languages. In addition, **Pidgins** are simplified forms of English used for trade and communication between groups without a common language, while **Creoles** are fully developed languages that evolve from pidgins when they become native to a community. These varieties demonstrate the adaptability of English and its ability to reflect diverse identities and experiences.

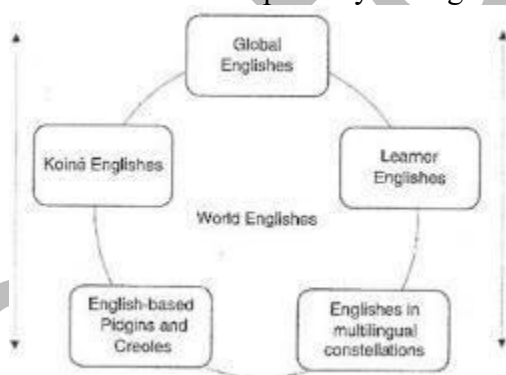


Plate 2.4: Varieties of English across the world

Fill in the blank: A \_\_\_\_\_ is a fully developed language that evolves from a pidgin.

### Pilot questions 2.4



1. What historical factors contributed to English becoming a world language?
2. What does the term lingua franca mean?
3. Give two examples of technological influences on English vocabulary.
4. What role has social media played in shaping English?
5. Distinguish between a pidgin and a creole.

### Series summary

This Series has explored the origins and evolution of English from its Old English foundations to its contemporary global forms. Its purpose has been to show how historical events, cultural movements, and linguistic changes shaped the language across centuries, making it more adaptable and expressive. By tracing these transitions, you have gained insight into why English looks and sounds the way it does today, and how it continues to evolve in response to social and technological influences.

We began with the transition from Old English to Middle English, focusing on the decline of inflectional endings, the influence of Norman French, and shifts in pronunciation. We then examined the move from Middle English to Early Modern English, highlighting the Renaissance, the Great Vowel Shift, and the contributions of Shakespeare. Following that, we considered the development of Modern English, noting the role of printing, education, and exploration in standardising and expanding vocabulary. Finally, we explored Contemporary English, emphasising its global spread, digital influences, and the rise of World Englishes, Pidgins, and Creoles. In line with the Series Learning Outcomes, you should now be able to explain the linguistic changes across these transitions, analyse the impact of French and classical borrowings, describe the Great Vowel Shift, assess the role of standardisation and expansion, and evaluate the global evolution of English in its many varieties.

### Glossary of terms

- **Creole:** A fully developed language that evolves from a pidgin once it becomes the native tongue of a community.
- **Early Modern English:** The stage of English spoken between the late fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, influenced by the Renaissance, the Great Vowel Shift, and writers such as Shakespeare.
- **Great Vowel Shift:** A major change in English pronunciation during the Early Modern period, where long vowels were pronounced differently, leading to mismatches between spelling and pronunciation.
- **Lingua franca:** A common language used for communication between people who do not share the same native language.
- **Middle English:** The stage of English spoken between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, shaped by Norman French influence and marked by simplified grammar and expanded vocabulary.
- **Modern English:** The stage of English spoken from the seventeenth century onwards, characterised by standardisation, vocabulary expansion, and the emergence of regional and social varieties.



- **Norman Conquest:** The invasion of England in 1066 by William the Conqueror, which introduced French vocabulary and cultural influence into English.
- **Pidgin:** A simplified form of language used for communication between groups without a common language, often for trade or practical purposes.
- **Renaissance:** A cultural movement in Europe during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that revived interest in classical learning, arts, and sciences, influencing English vocabulary.
- **Shakespeare:** William Shakespeare, a playwright and poet of the Renaissance, who enriched English with new words, expressions, and creative literary style.
- **Standardisation:** The process of establishing consistent rules for spelling, grammar, and usage in English, supported by the printing press and education.
- **World Englishes:** The different forms of English spoken across the world, shaped by local cultures and languages, reflecting the diversity of contemporary English.

### Concept Check Questions [Series 2]

#### Objective questions

1. Which historical event introduced Norman French vocabulary into English? (Linked to SLO 2.2)
2. The Great Vowel Shift mainly affected the pronunciation of which type of vowels? (Linked to SLO 2.3)
3. Who is the writer credited with introducing words such as lonely and majestic into English? (Linked to SLO 2.3)
4. What invention helped to stabilise spelling and grammar in English? (Linked to SLO 2.4)
5. A creole develops from which simpler form of language? (Linked to SLO 2.5)

#### Short-answer questions

6. Explain how the decline of inflectional endings changed the structure of Middle English. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
7. Identify two Latin or Greek borrowings that entered English during the Renaissance. (Linked to SLO 2.3)
8. Describe one way exploration and trade expanded English vocabulary in the Modern English period. (Linked to SLO 2.4)
9. Analyse the role of social media in shaping Contemporary English vocabulary. (Linked to SLO 2.5)
10. Define the term World Englishes and give one example. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

#### Long-answer questions

11. Discuss the transition from Old English to Middle English, focusing on grammar and vocabulary changes. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
12. Examine the impact of the Norman Conquest on Middle English vocabulary and syntax. (Linked to SLO 2.2)



13. Analyse the significance of the Great Vowel Shift in the development of Early Modern English. (Linked to SLO 2.3)
14. Evaluate the combined influence of the printing press, education, and exploration on Modern English. (Linked to SLO 2.4)
15. Assess the global evolution of Contemporary English, highlighting its role as a lingua franca and the emergence of pidgins and creoles. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

#### Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 2]

#### Objective questions

1. The Norman Conquest of 1066.
2. Long vowels.
3. William Shakespeare.
4. The printing press.
5. A pidgin.

#### Short-answer questions

6. The decline of inflectional endings meant that word order became more important in determining meaning, leading to a more fixed subject–verb–object structure.
7. Examples include encyclopaedia and philosophy.
8. Exploration introduced words from other languages, such as tomato from Spanish and shampoo from Hindi.
9. Social media introduced new vocabulary such as hashtag, emoji, and meme, reflecting digital culture.
10. World Englishes refers to the different forms of English spoken globally, for example Nigerian English.

#### Long-answer questions

11. Basic response: Old English relied on inflectional endings, but Middle English simplified grammar and absorbed French vocabulary. Value-added response: Learners may connect this to broader sociolinguistic changes, noting how simplification made English more accessible and adaptable.
12. Basic response: The Norman Conquest introduced French vocabulary, especially in law, government, and art, influencing Middle English syntax. Value-added response: Learners may explore how bilingualism shaped English society and created social distinctions in language use.
13. Basic response: The Great Vowel Shift changed the pronunciation of long vowels, leading to mismatches between spelling and sound. Value-added response: Learners may evaluate its long-term impact on English orthography and compare it with vowel changes in other languages.
14. Basic response: The printing press and education standardised English, while exploration expanded vocabulary with new words. Value-added response: Learners may assess how these factors elevated English as a language of science, literature, and international exchange.
15. Basic response: Contemporary English spread globally as a lingua franca, with pidgins and creoles emerging in multilingual contexts. Value-added response: Learners may critically evaluate



the benefits and challenges of English dominance, including its impact on linguistic diversity and identity.

## Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 2]

### Pilot questions 2.1

1. The decline of inflectional endings.
2. The Norman Conquest of 1066.
3. Judge and court.
4. Pronunciation began to shift, preparing for the Great Vowel Shift.
5. Subject–verb–object order.

### Pilot questions 2.2

1. The Renaissance.
2. Encyclopaedia and philosophy.
3. The Great Vowel Shift.
4. Bite (pronounced like beet before the shift).
5. William Shakespeare.

### Pilot questions 2.3

1. The printing press.
2. Gravity and oxygen.
3. Tomato.
4. Regional varieties are based on differences in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.
5. Social varieties are influenced by class, education, and occupation.

### Pilot questions 2.4

1. Colonisation, trade, and diplomacy.
2. A common language used for communication between people without a shared native tongue.
3. Hashtag and emoji.
4. It introduced new vocabulary and expressions reflecting digital culture.
5. A pidgin is a simplified language used for communication, while a creole is a fully developed language that evolves from a pidgin.

### References and Attributions [Series 2]

The following references and attributions cover the instructional content, illustrations, and suggested open educational resources (OERs) used in **Series 2: Origins and Evolution from Old to Contemporary English**. Entries are presented in APA style for clarity and consistency.

### General references



- Baugh, A. C., & Cable, T. (2013). *A History of the English Language* (6th ed.). Routledge.
- Barber, C., Beal, J. C., & Shaw, P. A. (2012). *The English Language: A Historical Introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2003). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge University Press.

### Illustrations and OER suggestions

- *Figure 2.1: Decline of inflectional endings in English*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Old English vs Middle English inflection chart.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram comparing Old English noun and verb endings with simplified Middle English forms.”
- *Box 2.1: Selected Norman French loanwords in Middle English*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access linguistic resources on Middle English loanwords.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table listing Norman French loanwords in Middle English by domain.”
- *Plate 2.1: Middle English manuscript with evolving spelling and syntax*
  - Suggested OER source: British Library, “Middle English manuscript image” (public domain).
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration of a Middle English manuscript page highlighting spelling and syntax changes.”
- *Figure 2.2: Classical borrowings in Early Modern English*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of Latin and Greek borrowings in English.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing Latin and Greek borrowings in Early Modern English vocabulary categories.”
- *Box 2.2: Examples of the Great Vowel Shift*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access phonology resources on the Great Vowel Shift.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing examples of the Great Vowel Shift with Middle English and modern pronunciations.”
- *Plate 2.2: Folio page from Shakespeare’s plays*
  - Suggested OER source: Folger Shakespeare Library, “Shakespeare folio images” (public domain).



- AI prompt: “Create an illustration of a Shakespearean folio page with Elizabethan script and decorative borders.”
- *Figure 2.3: Printing press and education in English standardisation*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of printing press influence on literacy.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing how the printing press and education contributed to English standardisation.”
- *Box 2.3: Vocabulary expansion in Modern English*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on Modern English vocabulary.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing vocabulary expansion in Modern English through science, exploration, and literature.”
- *Plate 2.3: Map of regional varieties of English in Britain*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Map of English dialects in Britain.”
  - AI prompt: “Create a map showing regional varieties of English in Britain with labels for Scotland, Ireland, and northern England.”
- *Figure 2.4: Global spread of English as a world language*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “World map showing English-speaking regions.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a world map highlighting regions where English is spoken as a first, second, or foreign language.”
- *Box 2.4: Examples of technological influences on English vocabulary*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on digital English vocabulary.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table listing examples of technological influences on English vocabulary.”
- *Plate 2.4: Varieties of English across the world*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of World Englishes, Pidgins, and Creoles.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing varieties of English worldwide, including World Englishes, Pidgins, and Creoles.”

**Course code: ENG207**



**Course title: Varieties of English (Including English based Pidgins and Creoles)**  
**Course credit load: 2 Units**

**Series 1: Development and Historical Periods of the English Language**

**Series 2: Origins and Evolution from Old to Contemporary English**

**Series 3: Diachronic Study of English Usage Across Ages**

**Series 4: Sociolinguistic Factors in English Language Development**

**Series 5: Internationality, Regional, and Contextual Impacts on Standard English**

**Proposed Outline for Series 3**

**Part 1 English in the Old English Age**

- 3.1.1 Social and cultural contexts of usage
- 3.1.2 Literary and oral traditions
- 3.1.3 Features of everyday communication

**Part 2 English in the Middle English Age**

- 3.2.1 Courtly and administrative usage
- 3.2.2 Religious and scholarly texts
- 3.2.3 Popular and regional expressions

**Part 3 English in the Early Modern and Modern Ages**

- 3.3.1 Influence of printing and education on usage
- 3.3.2 Literary and scientific registers
- 3.3.3 Regional and social varieties in Britain

**Part 4 English in the Contemporary Age**

- 3.4.1 Global spread and international communication
- 3.4.2 Technological and digital registers
- 3.4.3 Emergence of World Englishes, pidgins, and creoles

**Introduction**

In the last Series, we examined the origins and evolution of English from Old English through to its contemporary global forms. Building on that foundation, this Series takes a diachronic perspective, meaning we will study how English has been used across different ages and contexts.



By looking at usage patterns in literature, administration, religion, science, and everyday communication, you will gain a clearer understanding of how English adapted to social needs and cultural influences over time. This perspective is highly relevant to the overall course, as it connects linguistic development with practical usage in society.

The aim of this Series is to equip you with the ability to analyse English usage across historical periods and to evaluate how social, cultural, and technological contexts shaped the way English was spoken and written. By the end of the Series, you should be able to identify distinctive features of English usage in each age and explain their significance in the broader history of the language.

We shall commence this Series by exploring English in the Old English Age, focusing on its social contexts, oral traditions, and everyday communication. Next, we will move on to the Middle English Age, examining courtly, religious, and popular usage. Following that, we will consider the Early Modern and Modern Ages, highlighting the influence of printing, education, literature, and science, as well as the rise of regional and social varieties. Finally, we will wrap up with the Contemporary Age, where we will study English as a global language, its technological registers, and the emergence of World Englishes, pidgins, and creoles. This progression will provide you with a connected view of how English usage has evolved across ages and continues to adapt to new contexts.

### Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 3.1** describe the social and cultural contexts that shaped English usage in the Old English Age,
- **SLO 3.2** analyse the literary, religious, and administrative functions of English in the Middle English Age,
- **SLO 3.3** explain how printing, education, and scientific registers influenced English usage in the Early Modern and Modern Ages,
- **SLO 3.4** evaluate the emergence of regional and social varieties of English in Britain during the Modern Age, and
- **SLO 3.5** assess the global spread of Contemporary English, with particular attention to technological registers, World Englishes, pidgins, and creoles.

### 3.1 English in the Old English Age

#### 3.1.1 Social and cultural contexts of usage

The **Old English Age** (roughly 450–1100 CE) was shaped by the arrival of the **Anglo-Saxons**, who brought their Germanic dialects to Britain. These dialects formed the foundation of Old English. The language was used in everyday life, in governance, and in religious contexts, reflecting the social and cultural realities of the time. Christianity, introduced by missionaries,



added Latin vocabulary, while Viking invasions contributed Norse words

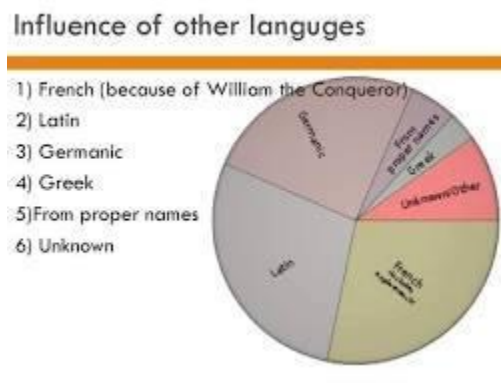


Figure 3.1: Influences on Old English vocabulary

Fill in the blank: The Anglo-Saxons brought their \_\_\_\_\_ dialects to Britain, forming the basis of Old English.

### 3.1.2 Literary and oral traditions

Old English was not only a spoken language but also a medium for **oral traditions** and later **literary works**. Oral poetry celebrated heroic deeds, loyalty, and community values. The most famous surviving text is Beowulf, an epic poem that reflects the culture and worldview of the Anglo-Saxons. Monks also recorded religious texts and chronicles, preserving knowledge and history in written form.



Plate 3.1: Manuscript page from Beowulf

Fill in the blank: The most famous surviving Old English literary work is \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3.1.3 Features of everyday communication

Everyday communication in Old English was marked by distinctive **features** such as inflectional endings, flexible word order, and a vocabulary rooted in Germanic origins. Inflectional endings



indicated grammatical functions like case and number, while word order was less rigid than in later English. Everyday speech also included borrowings from Latin and Norse, showing how contact with other cultures influenced communication.

| Feature                     | Example / Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inflectional Endings</b> | Nouns, adjectives, and pronouns changed their endings to indicate their grammatical role (subject, object, possessive) and number (singular or plural).                                                      |
| <b>Flexible Word Order</b>  | Because the endings carried the meaning, the position of a word in a sentence was less critical. A subject could appear at the end without changing the basic message.                                       |
| <b>Germanic Vocabulary</b>  | The bedrock of the language. Essential words for life, nature, and family are almost entirely Germanic: <i>hus</i> (house), <i>mann</i> (man), <i>wif</i> (woman/wife).                                      |
| <b>Borrowings</b>           | Early interactions brought new words. <b>Latin</b> arrived with Christianity ( <i>altar</i> , <i>biscop</i> ), and <b>Old Norse</b> came through Viking contact ( <i>sky</i> , <i>egg</i> , <i>window</i> ). |

#### Box 3.1: Features of everyday Old English communication

Fill in the blank: In Old English, inflectional \_\_\_\_\_ indicated grammatical functions such as case and number.

#### Pilot questions 3.1

1. What group of people brought Germanic dialects to Britain, forming the basis of Old English?
2. Name one Latin and one Norse word borrowed into Old English.
3. What is the most famous surviving Old English literary work?
4. How did inflectional endings function in Old English grammar?
5. Give one feature of everyday Old English communication.

### 3.2 English in the Middle English Age

#### 3.2.1 Courtly and administrative usage

During the **Middle English Age** (roughly 1100–1500 CE), English was heavily influenced by the **Norman Conquest**. French became the language of the court, law, and administration, while English remained the language of the common people. Over time, English absorbed thousands of French words, especially in domains such as government, law, and culture. This bilingual environment shaped English into a richer and more flexible language.



| Feature                     | Example / Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inflectional Endings</b> | Nouns, adjectives, and pronouns changed their endings to indicate their grammatical role (subject, object, possessive) and number (singular or plural).                                                      |
| <b>Flexible Word Order</b>  | Because the endings carried the meaning, the position of a word in a sentence was less critical. A subject could appear at the end without changing the basic message.                                       |
| <b>Germanic Vocabulary</b>  | The bedrock of the language. Essential words for life, nature, and family are almost entirely Germanic: <i>hus</i> (house), <i>mann</i> (man), <i>wif</i> (woman/wife).                                      |
| <b>Borrowings</b>           | Early interactions brought new words. <b>Latin</b> arrived with Christianity ( <i>altar</i> , <i>biscop</i> ), and <b>Old Norse</b> came through Viking contact ( <i>sky</i> , <i>egg</i> , <i>window</i> ). |

Box 3.2: Examples of French loanwords in Middle English administration

Fill in the blank: After the Norman Conquest, French became the language of the \_\_\_\_\_, law, and administration.

### 3.2.2 Religious and scholarly texts

Religion and scholarship also shaped Middle English usage. Latin remained the language of the Church and learning, but English began to be used more widely in sermons, translations, and devotional works. Writers such as John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English, making religious texts accessible to ordinary people. This marked a significant step in the development of English as a language of faith and knowledge.



Plate 3.2: Manuscript page from Wycliffe's English Bible translation



Fill in the blank: John Wycliffe is known for translating the \_\_\_\_\_ into English during the Middle English period.

### 3.2.3 Popular and regional expressions

Middle English was not uniform; it varied across regions and social groups. **Regional dialects** developed, reflecting local pronunciation and vocabulary. Popular expressions and everyday speech also flourished, often recorded in literature such as Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer's work is particularly important because it captured the richness of Middle English dialects and demonstrated the language's literary potential.



Figure 3.2: Regional dialects of Middle English

Fill in the blank: Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* captured the richness of Middle English \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Pilot questions 3.2

1. Which language dominated courtly and administrative usage after the Norman Conquest?
2. Give two examples of French loanwords in Middle English.
3. Who translated the Bible into English during the Middle English period?
4. What literary work by Chaucer captured the richness of Middle English dialects?
5. Name one feature of regional variation in Middle English.

### 3.3 English in the Early Modern and Modern Ages

#### 3.3.1 Influence of printing and education on usage

The **printing press**, introduced in the fifteenth century, was a turning point in the history of English usage. It allowed books to be produced more quickly and widely, which helped to standardise spelling and grammar. As literacy spread through schools and universities, English



became more consistent and accessible. Education reinforced these standard forms, ensuring that English could serve as a language of scholarship, administration, and everyday communication.

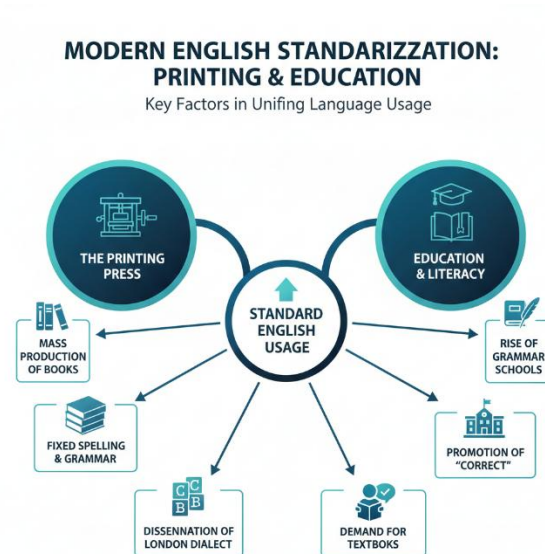


Figure 3.3: Printing and education in English standardisation

Fill in the blank: The invention of the \_\_\_\_\_ press helped to standardise spelling and grammar in English.

### 3.3.2 Literary and scientific registers

The Early Modern and Modern Ages saw English expand into **literary registers** and **scientific registers**. Writers such as William Shakespeare enriched the language with new words and expressions, while scientists like Isaac Newton introduced technical vocabulary to describe discoveries. This period demonstrated English's flexibility, as it could be used both for creative expression and precise scientific description. The coexistence of these registers showed how English adapted to different domains of knowledge and culture.





Plate 3.3: Literary and scientific registers in Early Modern English

Fill in the blank: Isaac Newton's scientific writings introduced new \_\_\_\_\_ vocabulary into English.

### 3.3.3 Regional and social varieties in Britain

As English spread across Britain, it developed **regional varieties** based on geography and **social varieties** based on class and occupation. Regional varieties reflected differences in pronunciation and vocabulary, such as the distinctions between northern and southern English. Social varieties highlighted how education and social status influenced speech, with certain forms considered more prestigious. These varieties enriched English usage, making it diverse and reflective of identity and community.

| Variety Type    | Example / Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Regional</b> | <b>Northern vs. Southern pronunciation:</b> In the North, the word <i>house</i> might have a flatter "oo" sound /hu:s/ in certain dialects (like Geordie), whereas the South uses the diphthong /haus/. Another key difference is the "short a" in <i>bath</i> (North) vs. the "long a" (South).              |
| <b>Social</b>   | <b>Formal vs. Colloquial:</b> The "educated classes" historically used Received Pronunciation (RP), which is non-rhotic and follows strict grammatical rules. In contrast, working-class speech may feature <b>H-dropping</b> (e.g., 'ouse instead of <i>house</i> ) or the use of "innit" as a tag question. |

Box 3.3: Examples of regional and social varieties in Modern English Britain

Fill in the blank: Regional varieties of English reflected differences in pronunciation and \_\_\_\_\_.

Pilot questions 3.3



1. What invention helped to standardise spelling and grammar in English?
2. Name one writer and one scientist who influenced English usage during the Early Modern and Modern Ages.
3. What are literary registers used for?
4. What are scientific registers used for?
5. Give one example of a regional or social variety of English in Britain.

### 3.4 English in the Contemporary Age

#### 3.4.1 Global spread and international communication

In the **Contemporary Age**, English has become a truly global language. It functions as a **lingua franca**, meaning it is widely used for communication between people who do not share the same native language. This spread has been driven by colonisation, international trade, diplomacy, and later by globalisation. Today, English dominates in business, science, education, and entertainment, making it one of the most influential languages worldwide.



Figure 3.4: Global spread of English as a world language

Fill in the blank: English functions as a \_\_\_\_\_ franca in international communication.

#### 3.4.2 Technological and digital registers

The rise of **technology** and **digital media** has accelerated the evolution of English. The internet, social media platforms, and online education have made English the default language of digital communication. New words and expressions have emerged from technological contexts, such as download, emoji, and hashtag. These registers show how English adapts quickly to new modes of communication and cultural trends, reflecting the dynamic nature of the language.



| Domain                          | Example Words                                                  | Explanation                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Internet &amp; Computing</b> | <i>Download, email, firewall, broadband, cache</i>             | Originally technical jargon, these terms are now part of everyday speech as the infrastructure of the internet became a household utility.                      |
| <b>Social Media</b>             | <i>Hashtag, emoji, DM (Direct Message), trending, unfriend</i> | These words describe specific functions of social platforms. Some, like "unfriend," repurpose existing words in entirely new grammatical ways (verbification).  |
| <b>Online Culture</b>           | <i>Meme, vlog, clickbait, influencer, dark mode</i>            | These terms describe the <i>experience</i> of being online. A "meme" (originally a biological concept) now almost exclusively refers to viral internet content. |
| <b>Mobile Tech</b>              | <i>App, selfie, ghosting, textspeak, touch-screen</i>          | The portability of technology created a need for brevity and words that describe how we interact with handheld devices.                                         |

Box 3.4: Examples of technological influences on English vocabulary

Fill in the blank: The word hashtag entered English through the rise of \_\_\_\_\_ media.

### 3.4.3 Emergence of World Englishes, pidgins, and creoles

Contemporary English is not uniform; it exists in many **varieties** across the world. **World Englishes** refers to the different forms of English spoken in various regions, shaped by local cultures and languages. In addition, **pidgins** are simplified forms of English used for trade and communication between groups without a common language, while **creoles** are fully developed languages that evolve from pidgins when they become native to a community. These varieties demonstrate the adaptability of English and its ability to reflect diverse identities and experiences.



## GLOBAL ENGLISHES: World Englishes, Pidgins, & Creoles

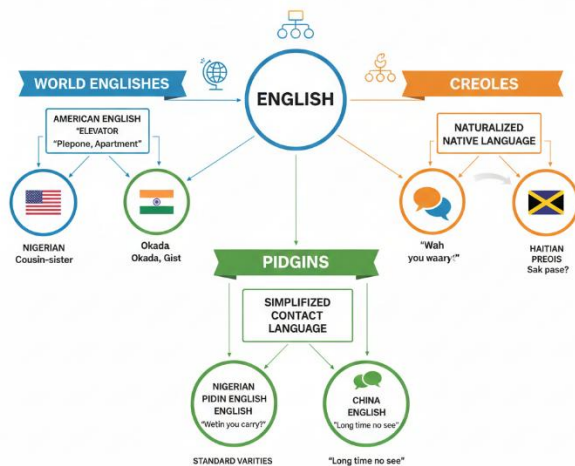


Plate 3.4: Varieties of English across the world

Fill in the blank: A \_\_\_\_\_ is a fully developed language that evolves from a pidgin.

### Pilot questions 3.4

1. What historical factors contributed to English becoming a world language?
2. What does the term lingua franca mean?
3. Give two examples of technological influences on English vocabulary.
4. What role has social media played in shaping English?
5. Distinguish between a pidgin and a creole.

### Series summary

This Series has focused on the diachronic study of English usage, showing how the language adapted to changing social, cultural, and intellectual contexts across the ages. Its purpose has been to highlight the practical ways in which English was used in governance, literature, science, and everyday life, helping you to see the direct connection between historical developments and linguistic change.

We began with the Old English Age, examining its social foundations, oral traditions, and everyday features. We then moved into the Middle English Age, where French and Latin influences shaped courtly, religious, and popular usage. Following that, we explored the Early Modern and Modern Ages, noting the impact of printing, education, and the rise of literary and scientific registers, as well as the development of regional and social varieties. Finally, we considered the Contemporary Age, focusing on English as a global language, its digital registers, and the emergence of World Englishes, pidgins, and creoles. In line with the Series Learning



Outcomes, you should now be able to describe the contexts of Old English usage, analyse Middle English functions, explain the influence of printing and education, evaluate regional and social varieties, and assess the global spread and diversity of Contemporary English.

### Glossary of terms

- **Anglo-Saxons:** Groups of Germanic peoples who settled in Britain around the 5th century and whose dialects formed the basis of Old English.
- **Beowulf:** The most famous surviving Old English epic poem, celebrating heroic deeds and community values.
- **Creole:** A fully developed language that evolves from a pidgin once it becomes the native tongue of a community.
- **Early Modern English:** The stage of English spoken between the late fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, influenced by the Renaissance, the Great Vowel Shift, and writers such as Shakespeare.
- **French loanwords:** Words borrowed from French into Middle English, especially in law, government, and culture after the Norman Conquest.
- **Great Vowel Shift:** A major change in English pronunciation during the Early Modern period, where long vowels were pronounced differently, leading to mismatches between spelling and sound.
- **Lingua franca:** A common language used for communication between people who do not share the same native language.
- **Middle English:** The stage of English spoken between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, shaped by French and Latin influences and marked by regional dialects.
- **Pidgin:** A simplified form of language used for communication between groups without a common language, often for trade.
- **Printing press:** A fifteenth-century invention that allowed books to be produced more quickly, helping to standardise spelling and grammar in English.
- **Regional varieties:** Forms of English that differ according to geographical areas, often showing differences in pronunciation and vocabulary.
- **Shakespeare:** William Shakespeare, a playwright and poet of the Renaissance, who enriched English with new words, expressions, and literary creativity.
- **Social varieties:** Forms of English influenced by social class, education, and occupation, reflecting differences in prestige and identity.
- **World Englishes:** The different forms of English spoken across the world, shaped by local cultures and languages, reflecting the diversity of contemporary English.

### Concept Check Questions [Series 3]

#### Objective questions

1. Which group of people brought Germanic dialects to Britain, forming the basis of Old English? (Linked to SLO 3.1)
2. What is the most famous surviving Old English literary work? (Linked to SLO 3.1)



3. After the Norman Conquest, which language dominated courtly and administrative usage? (Linked to SLO 3.2)
4. Who translated the Bible into English during the Middle English period? (Linked to SLO 3.2)
5. What invention helped to standardise spelling and grammar in English? (Linked to SLO 3.3)
6. A creole develops from which simpler form of language? (Linked to SLO 3.5)

### Short-answer questions

7. Explain how inflectional endings functioned in Old English grammar. (Linked to SLO 3.1)
8. Identify two French loanwords that entered Middle English. (Linked to SLO 3.2)
9. Describe one way printing and education influenced English usage in the Early Modern Age. (Linked to SLO 3.3)
10. Give one example of a regional variety of English in Britain. (Linked to SLO 3.4)
11. Define the term World Englishes and provide one example. (Linked to SLO 3.5)

### Long-answer questions

12. Analyse the social and cultural contexts that shaped English usage in the Old English Age. (Linked to SLO 3.1)
13. Evaluate the impact of the Norman Conquest on Middle English vocabulary and usage. (Linked to SLO 3.2)
14. Discuss the significance of printing, education, and scientific registers in the Early Modern and Modern Ages. (Linked to SLO 3.3)
15. Assess the importance of regional and social varieties in shaping Modern English identity. (Linked to SLO 3.4)
16. Examine the global spread of Contemporary English, focusing on technological registers, pidgins, and creoles. (Linked to SLO 3.5)

Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 3]

### Objective questions

1. The Anglo-Saxons.
2. Beowulf.
3. French.
4. John Wycliffe.
5. The printing press.
6. A pidgin.

### Short-answer questions

7. Inflectional endings indicated grammatical functions such as case and number, allowing flexible word order.
8. Examples include judge and crown.



9. Printing helped standardise spelling and grammar, while education reinforced consistent usage across society.
10. Northern English dialects, for example, differed in pronunciation from southern varieties.
11. World Englishes refers to the diverse forms of English spoken globally, such as Nigerian English.

### **Long-answer questions**

12. Basic response: Old English was shaped by Anglo-Saxon settlement, Christian influence, and Norse contact. Value-added response: Learners may connect this to broader cultural identity, noting how oral traditions and epic poetry reflected community values.
13. Basic response: The Norman Conquest introduced French vocabulary into law, government, and culture. Value-added response: Learners may evaluate how bilingualism created social divisions and enriched English with stylistic diversity.
14. Basic response: Printing and education standardised English, while scientific registers expanded vocabulary. Value-added response: Learners may assess how these developments positioned English as a language of global scholarship and creativity.
15. Basic response: Regional and social varieties reflected differences in pronunciation, vocabulary, and class-based speech. Value-added response: Learners may explore how these varieties shaped identity, prestige, and perceptions of English within Britain.
16. Basic response: Contemporary English spread globally as a lingua franca, with digital registers and pidgins/creoles emerging. Value-added response: Learners may critically evaluate the benefits and challenges of English dominance, including its impact on linguistic diversity and cultural identity.

### **Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 3]**

#### **Pilot questions 3.1**

1. The Anglo-Saxons.
2. Altar (Latin) and sky (Norse).
3. Beowulf.
4. They indicated grammatical functions such as case and number.
5. Flexible word order.

#### **Pilot questions 3.2**

1. French.
2. Judge and parliament.
3. John Wycliffe.
4. The Canterbury Tales.
5. Differences in pronunciation and vocabulary across regions.

#### **Pilot questions 3.3**

1. The printing press.



2. William Shakespeare and Isaac Newton.
3. Creative expression.
4. Precise scientific description.
5. Northern pronunciation of house compared to southern pronunciation.

### Pilot questions 3.4

1. Colonisation, trade, diplomacy, and globalisation.
2. A common language used for communication between people without a shared native tongue.
3. Hashtag and emoji.
4. It introduced new vocabulary and expressions reflecting digital culture.
5. A pidgin is a simplified language used for communication, while a creole is a fully developed language that evolves from a pidgin.

### References and Attributions [Series 3]

The following references and attributions cover the instructional content, illustrations, and suggested open educational resources (OERs) used in **Series 3: Diachronic Study of English Usage Across Ages**. Entries are presented in APA style for clarity and consistency.

#### General references

- Baugh, A. C., & Cable, T. (2013). *A History of the English Language* (6th ed.). Routledge.
- Barber, C., Beal, J. C., & Shaw, P. A. (2012). *The English Language: A Historical Introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2003). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge University Press.

#### Illustrations and OER suggestions

- *Figure 3.1: Influences on Old English vocabulary*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of Old English vocabulary influences.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing Germanic, Latin, and Norse influences on Old English vocabulary.”
- *Plate 3.1: Manuscript page from Beowulf*
  - Suggested OER source: British Library, “Beowulf manuscript image” (public domain).
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration of a manuscript page from Beowulf with decorative script and borders.”
- *Box 3.1: Features of everyday Old English communication*



- Suggested OER source: Open access linguistic resources on Old English grammar.
- AI prompt: “Generate a table listing features of everyday Old English communication with examples.”
- *Box 3.2: Examples of French loanwords in Middle English administration*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “French loanwords in Middle English.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table listing French loanwords in Middle English administration and culture.”
- *Plate 3.2: Manuscript page from Wycliffe’s English Bible translation*
  - Suggested OER source: Lollard Society, “Wycliffe Bible manuscript images” (public domain).
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration of a Middle English Bible manuscript page with Latin and English text.”
- *Figure 3.2: Regional dialects of Middle English*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Map of Middle English dialects.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing Northern, Midlands, and Southern dialects of Middle English with examples.”
- *Figure 3.3: Printing and education in English standardisation*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of printing press influence on literacy.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing how the printing press and education contributed to standardisation of English usage.”
- *Plate 3.3: Literary and scientific registers in Early Modern English*
  - Suggested OER source: Folger Shakespeare Library, “Shakespeare folio images” (public domain); Cambridge University archives, “Newton manuscripts.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing a Shakespeare folio page and a scientific manuscript side by side.”
- *Box 3.3: Examples of regional and social varieties in Modern English Britain*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on English dialects in Britain.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing examples of regional and social varieties of English in Britain.”
- *Figure 3.4: Global spread of English as a world language*



- Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “World map showing English-speaking regions.”
- AI prompt: “Generate a world map highlighting regions where English is spoken as a first, second, or foreign language.”
- *Box 3.4: Examples of technological influences on English vocabulary*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on digital English vocabulary.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table listing examples of technological influences on English vocabulary.”
- *Plate 3.4: Varieties of English across the world*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of World Englishes, pidgins, and creoles.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing varieties of English worldwide, including World Englishes, pidgins, and creoles.”

**Course code: ENG207**

**Course title: Varieties of English (Including English based Pidgins and Creoles)**

**Course credit load: 2 Units**

**Series 1: Development and Historical Periods of the English Language**

**Series 2: Origins and Evolution from Old to Contemporary English**

**Series 3: Diachronic Study of English Usage Across Ages**

**Series 4: Sociolinguistic Factors in English Language Development**

**Series 5: Internationality, Regional, and Contextual Impacts on Standard English**

**Proposed Outline for Series 4**

**Part 1 Language and Society**

- 4.1.1 The relationship between language and social identity
- 4.1.2 Language as a marker of class, gender, and ethnicity
- 4.1.3 Language attitudes and perceptions

**Part 2 Regional and Social Dialects**

- 4.2.1 Regional dialects and pronunciation differences



- 4.2.2 Social dialects and prestige varieties
- 4.2.3 Case studies of dialect variation in English

### Part 3 Language Contact and Change

- 4.3.1 Borrowing and code-switching
- 4.3.2 Bilingualism and multilingualism in English contexts
- 4.3.3 Language shift and maintenance

### Part 4 English in Global and Institutional Contexts

- 4.4.1 English in education and policy
- 4.4.2 English in media and technology
- 4.4.3 English as a global lingua franca

## Introduction

Language is not only a system of sounds and structures but also a reflection of society. The way people speak often reveals their social background, regional identity, and even attitudes towards others. In the last Series, we explored how English developed across historical ages. In this Series, we shift our attention to the sociolinguistic factors that continue to shape English today, helping us understand why the language varies so widely across communities and contexts.

The aim of this Series is to examine the social dimensions of English language development and to equip you with the ability to analyse how factors such as identity, class, region, and globalisation influence English usage. By the end of the Series, you should be able to evaluate the role of society in shaping English and explain how these influences contribute to its diversity.

We shall commence this Series by exploring the relationship between language and society, focusing on identity, class, gender, and attitudes. Next, we will move on to regional and social dialects, considering pronunciation differences, prestige varieties, and case studies of variation. Following that, we will examine language contact and change, including borrowing, code-switching, bilingualism, and language shift. Finally, we will wrap up with English in global and institutional contexts, looking at its role in education, media, technology, and as a global lingua franca. This progression will provide you with a connected view of how sociolinguistic factors drive the ongoing development of English.

### *Series Learning Outcomes*

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- SLO 4.1 analyse the relationship between language and social identity, including class, gender, and ethnicity,

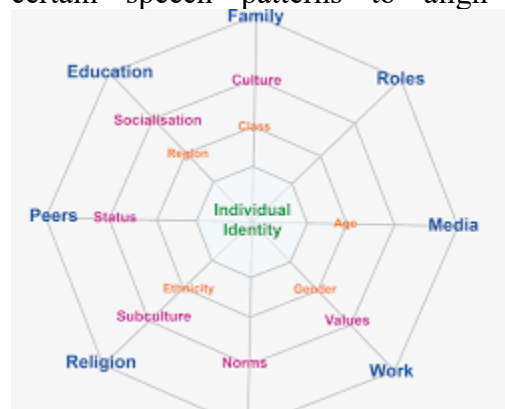


- SLO 4.2 evaluate how language attitudes and perceptions influence English usage in society,
- SLO 4.3 describe the features of regional dialects and social varieties of English,
- SLO 4.4 explain the processes of borrowing, code-switching, and language shift in English contexts, and
- SLO 4.5 assess the role of English in education, media, technology, and as a global lingua franca.

## 4.1 Language and Society

### 4.1.1 The relationship between language and social identity

Language is more than a tool for communication; it is a marker of social identity, meaning it reflects who we are and the groups we belong to. The way we speak often signals our background, education, and community ties. For example, accents and vocabulary choices can indicate regional origin or social class. Language also plays a role in shaping identity, as individuals may adopt certain speech patterns to align with or distance themselves from particular groups.



*Figure 4.1: Language as a marker of social identity*

Fill in the blank: The way we speak often signals our \_\_\_\_\_ and community ties.

### 4.1.2 Language as a marker of class, gender, and ethnicity

Language use varies across class, gender, and ethnicity. Class influences prestige varieties, where certain forms of English are considered more socially valued. Gender differences can be seen in conversational styles, with research noting variations in politeness, directness, and vocabulary choices. Ethnicity also shapes language, as communities may maintain distinctive speech patterns or blend English with features from other languages. Together, these factors show how language is deeply tied to social categories and identity.



| Category            | Linguistic Marker                                    | Example / Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Social Class</b> | <b>Received Pronunciation (RP) vs. Glottal Stops</b> | RP is a "prestige" accent historically linked to the upper classes and elite education. In contrast, the use of glottal stops (e.g., <i>bu'er</i> instead of <i>butter</i> ) is often a marker of working-class or regional identity.  |
| <b>Gender</b>       | <b>Politeness Markers &amp; Hedging</b>              | Sociolinguistic research (such as Lakoff's) suggests that female speech often employs more "hedging" (e.g., <i>"I think," "maybe"</i> ) and tag questions (e.g., <i>"It's cold, isn't it?"</i> ) to build rapport and soften requests. |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>    | <b>Grammatical Divergence (e.g., AAVE)</b>           | African American Vernacular English (AAVE) features unique markers like the <b>habitual "be"</b> ( <i>"He be working"</i> ) to indicate a recurring action, serving as a powerful marker of cultural and ethnic community.             |

Box 4.1: Examples of sociolinguistic markers in English

Fill in the blank: Received Pronunciation (RP) is often associated with \_\_\_\_\_ varieties of English.

#### 4.1.3 Language attitudes and perceptions

People hold language attitudes, which are opinions or feelings about how a language or variety is used. These attitudes influence perceptions of speakers, often associating certain accents or dialects with intelligence, friendliness, or prestige. Positive attitudes can promote acceptance of linguistic diversity, while negative attitudes may lead to discrimination. Understanding language attitudes helps us see how social perceptions shape communication and identity.



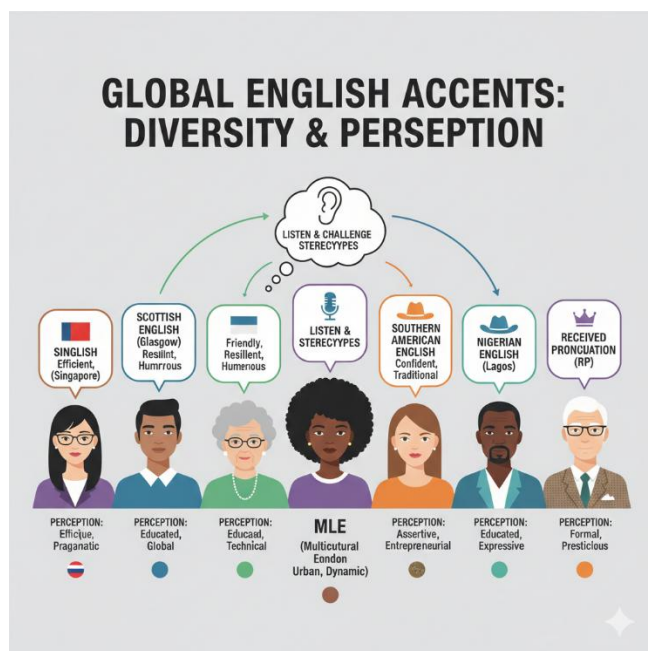


Plate 4.1: Diversity of English accents and perceptions

Fill in the blank: Negative language attitudes may lead to \_\_\_\_\_ against speakers of certain varieties.

#### Pilot questions 4.1

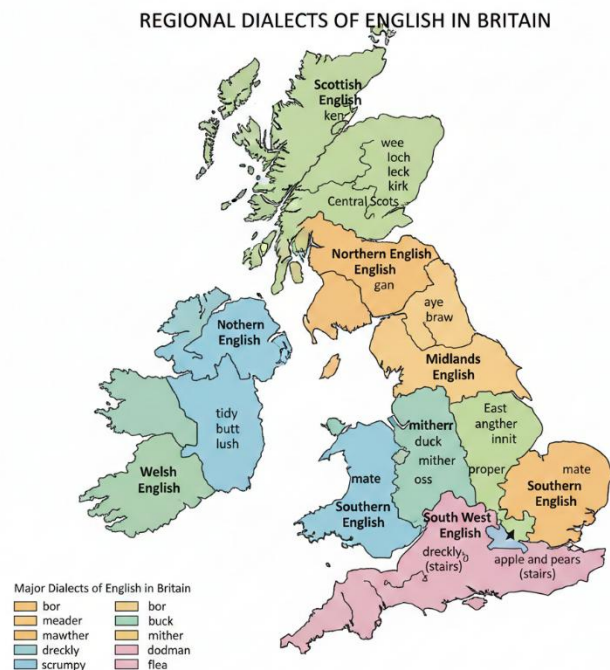
1. What does the term *social identity* mean in relation to language?
2. Give one example of how class influences English usage.
3. Name one sociolinguistic marker associated with gender.
4. What is Received Pronunciation (RP) often linked to?
5. How can negative language attitudes affect speakers?

## 4.2 Regional and Social Dialects

### 4.2.1 Regional dialects and pronunciation differences

Regional dialects are varieties of English spoken in different geographical areas, often marked by distinctive pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. For example, northern English dialects may pronounce certain vowels differently from southern dialects, while Scottish English has unique phonological features. These differences are not errors but natural variations that reflect the history and identity of each region.





*Figure 4.2: Regional dialects of English in Britain*

Fill in the blank: Regional dialects are varieties of English spoken in different \_\_\_\_\_ areas.

#### 4.2.2 Social dialects and prestige varieties

Social dialects are varieties of English associated with social groups, often influenced by class, education, and occupation. Some forms are considered prestige varieties, meaning they carry higher social value and are linked to power or status. For instance, Received Pronunciation (RP) in Britain has historically been regarded as prestigious, while working-class dialects may be stigmatised. These distinctions show how language reflects social hierarchies and attitudes.



## ENGLISH SOCIAL DIALECTS

| VARITY TYPE                 | EXAMPLE/EXPLANATION                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Prestige Variety</b>     | Received Pronunciation (RP) – historically associated with educated classes, often considered standard in the South East of England.                                   |
| <b>Non-Prestige Variety</b> | <b>Cockney Dialect</b> – traditionally linked to working-class East London, known for its distinctive accent and rhyming slang (e. g, "apple and pears" for "stairs"). |



### Box 4.2: Examples of social dialects and prestige varieties

Fill in the blank: Received Pronunciation (RP) has historically been regarded as a \_\_\_\_\_ variety in Britain.

#### 4.2.3 Case studies of dialect variation in English

Case studies help us see how dialects function in real contexts. For example, Geordie English in Newcastle is known for distinctive vowel sounds and vocabulary, while Scouse English in Liverpool has unique intonation patterns. These dialects are tied to local identity and pride, even when they differ from standard English. Studying such cases highlights the richness of English and the importance of valuing linguistic diversity.





*Plate 4.2: Examples of regional dialect variation in Britain*

Fill in the blank: Geordie English is spoken in the city of \_\_\_\_\_.

Pilot questions 4.2

1. What are regional dialects, and what features distinguish them?
2. Give one example of a regional dialect in Britain.
3. What are social dialects, and how are they influenced?
4. Which variety of English has historically been considered prestigious in Britain?
5. Name one case study of dialect variation and its distinctive feature.

## 4.3 Language Contact and Change

### 4.3.1 Borrowing and code-switching

When languages come into contact, they often influence each other through borrowing, which is the adoption of words from one language into another. English has borrowed extensively, taking words from French, Latin, Norse, and many other languages. Another common phenomenon is code-switching, where speakers alternate between two or more languages or varieties within a conversation. Code-switching can serve social purposes, such as signalling identity or adapting to different audiences.



## LANGUAGE CHANGE PROCESSES

| PROCESS               | EXAMPLE/EXPLANATION                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Borrowing</b>      | Words adopted from other languages: "café" (from French), kindergarten, (German), (tsunami Japanese).                                                             |
| <b>Code-switching</b> | Alternating between two more languages within a single conversation or utterance: Mixing with English Yoruba in Nigerian speech, "Spanglish" (Spanish & English). |



### Box 4.3: Examples of borrowing and code-switching in English

Fill in the blank: Borrowing refers to the adoption of \_\_\_\_\_ from one language into another.

#### 4.3.2 Bilingualism and multilingualism in English contexts

Bilingualism refers to the ability to use two languages fluently, while multilingualism extends this to three or more languages. In many English-speaking contexts, bilingualism and multilingualism are common due to migration, colonisation, and globalisation. For example, speakers in India may use English alongside Hindi or regional languages, while in Nigeria, English coexists with Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo. These contexts enrich English usage, creating hybrid forms and expanding its communicative reach.

## GLOBAL BILINGUAL & MULTILINGUAL CONTEXTS OF ENGLISH



*Figure 4.3: Bilingualism and multilingualism in English contexts*

Fill in the blank: In Nigeria, English coexists with Hausa, \_\_\_\_\_, and Igbo.

#### 4.3.3 Language shift and maintenance

Language shift occurs when a community gradually abandons its native language in favour of another, often due to social, political, or economic pressures. In contrast, language maintenance refers to efforts to preserve and continue using a native language despite external influences. English has often been the dominant language in such scenarios, leading to shifts in communities worldwide. However, many groups actively maintain their languages through education, cultural practices, and policy support.



*Plate 4.3: Language maintenance through bilingual education*

Fill in the blank: Language shift occurs when a community gradually abandons its \_\_\_\_\_ language in favour of another.

#### Pilot questions 4.3

1. What is borrowing, and give one example in English.
2. What does code-switching mean?
3. Define bilingualism and multilingualism.
4. Give one example of a multilingual English-speaking context.
5. What is the difference between language shift and language maintenance?

### 4.4 English in Global and Institutional Contexts

#### 4.4.1 English in education and policy

English plays a central role in education, serving as the medium of instruction in many countries. This has significant implications for access to knowledge, as learners often need proficiency in English to succeed academically. At the same time, governments shape language use through policy, deciding whether English should be promoted, balanced with local languages, or restricted.



These decisions influence how English develops and how communities engage with it.

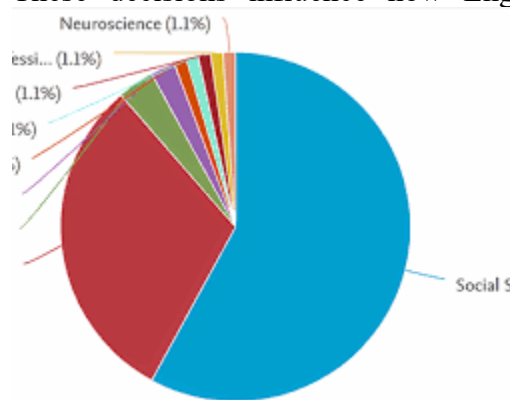


Figure 4.4: English in education and policy contexts

Fill in the blank: Governments shape language use through \_\_\_\_\_, deciding how English should be promoted or balanced with local languages.

#### 4.4.2 English in media and technology

The rise of media and technology has made English the dominant language of global communication. English is widely used in films, television, music, and online platforms, shaping cultural exchange and identity. In technology, English dominates programming languages, software interfaces, and digital communication. This widespread use reinforces English as a global language, while also introducing new vocabulary and registers.



Plate 4.4: English in media and technology



Fill in the blank: English dominates programming languages, software interfaces, and \_\_\_\_\_ communication.

#### 4.4.3 English as a global lingua franca

English today functions as a global lingua franca, meaning it is used for communication between people who do not share the same native language. This role is evident in international business, diplomacy, science, and travel. While this global spread enhances communication, it also raises questions about linguistic diversity and the dominance of English over other languages. Recognising English as a lingua franca helps us understand both its power and its challenges in contemporary society.

##### ENGLISH AS A GLOBAL LINGUA FRANCA

| DOMAIN             | EXAMPLE/EXPLANATION                                        |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Business           | International trade negotiations, corporate communications |
| Diplomacy          | Unifications proceedings, international treaties           |
| Science & Academia | Research publications, international conferences           |
| Travel & Aviation  | Airline communication, tourism, air traffic control        |

#### Box 4.4: Domains where English serves as a global lingua franca

Fill in the blank: English functions as a global \_\_\_\_\_ franca in international business, diplomacy, and science.

#### Pilot questions 4.4

1. How does English function in education, and what role does policy play?
2. Give one example of English use in global media.
3. Why is English dominant in technology?
4. What does the term *lingua franca* mean?
5. Name two domains where English serves as a global lingua franca.

#### Series summary

This Series has examined the sociolinguistic factors that shape English language development, highlighting how social identity, regional variation, language contact, and global contexts influence the way English is used and perceived. Its purpose has been to help you see English not



only as a linguistic system but also as a social phenomenon that reflects identity, power, and cultural exchange.

We began by exploring the relationship between language and society, focusing on identity, class, gender, and attitudes. Then we moved on to regional and social dialects, considering pronunciation differences, prestige varieties, and case studies of variation. Following that, we examined language contact and change, including borrowing, code-switching, bilingualism, and language shift. Finally, we looked at English in global and institutional contexts, considering its role in education, media, technology, and as a global lingua franca. In line with the Series Learning Outcomes, you should now be able to analyse how language reflects social identity, evaluate the influence of attitudes, describe dialectal features, explain processes of contact and change, and assess the global role of English.

### *Glossary of terms*

- Bilingualism: The ability of an individual or community to use two languages fluently in everyday communication.
- Borrowing: The adoption of words or expressions from one language into another, often due to contact between cultures.
- Code-switching: The practice of alternating between two or more languages or varieties within a single conversation or interaction.
- Ethnicity: A social category based on shared cultural traits, traditions, or heritage, which can influence language use and identity.
- Language attitudes: Opinions or feelings people hold about different languages or varieties, which can affect perceptions of speakers.
- Language maintenance: Efforts made by a community to preserve and continue using its native language despite external pressures.
- Language shift: The gradual process by which a community abandons its native language in favour of another, often more dominant language.
- Lingua franca: A common language used for communication between people who do not share the same native language.
- Multilingualism: The ability of an individual or community to use three or more languages fluently.
- Prestige variety: A socially valued form of a language, often associated with education, class, or status.
- Regional dialects: Varieties of a language spoken in specific geographical areas, marked by differences in pronunciation, vocabulary, or grammar.
- Social dialects: Varieties of a language associated with particular social groups, influenced by factors such as class, occupation, or education.
- Social identity: The way language reflects who we are and the groups we belong to, including class, gender, and ethnicity.

### *Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 4]*

#### Objective questions



1. Social identity.
2. Prestige variety.
3. Words or expressions.
4. A common language used for communication between people without a shared native tongue.
5. Received Pronunciation (RP).

#### Short-answer questions

6. Language attitudes can lead to positive perceptions such as prestige or negative ones such as discrimination.
7. Geordie English in Newcastle, known for distinctive vowel sounds.
8. Code-switching is alternating between languages; for example, mixing English and Yoruba in Nigerian speech.
9. English is used as a medium of instruction; policy determines whether it is promoted or balanced with local languages.
10. In science, English is the language of most research publications.

#### Long-answer questions

11. *Basic response:* Language reflects social identity through class-based prestige varieties, gendered speech styles, and ethnic influences. *Value-added response:* Learners may explore how these categories intersect, noting how identity is negotiated through language choices in different contexts.
12. *Basic response:* Regional dialects show geographical variation, while social dialects reflect class and occupation. *Value-added response:* Learners may evaluate how dialects contribute to pride and identity, but also how they can be stigmatised in wider society.
13. *Basic response:* Borrowing introduces new words, code-switching adapts communication, and language shift occurs under social pressure. *Value-added response:* Learners may critically assess how these processes enrich English but also challenge linguistic diversity, especially in multilingual communities.
14. *Basic response:* English dominates education, media, technology, and serves as a global lingua franca. *Value-added response:* Learners may analyse both the opportunities and challenges of English dominance, including issues of access, cultural influence, and linguistic inequality.

#### Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 4]

##### Pilot questions 4.1

1. Social identity refers to how language reflects who we are and the groups we belong to.
2. Received Pronunciation (RP) is linked to prestige and higher social class.
3. Use of politeness markers is often associated with female speech styles.
4. RP is often linked to prestige varieties of English.
5. Negative language attitudes can lead to discrimination against speakers of certain varieties.



#### Pilot questions 4.2

1. Regional dialects are varieties of English spoken in different geographical areas, distinguished by pronunciation, vocabulary, or grammar.
2. Geordie English in Newcastle, known for distinctive vowel sounds.
3. Social dialects are varieties linked to social groups, influenced by class, education, and occupation.
4. Received Pronunciation (RP).
5. Scouse English in Liverpool, noted for unique intonation patterns.

#### Pilot questions 4.3

1. Borrowing is the adoption of words from another language, e.g., *café* from French.
2. Code-switching means alternating between languages or varieties in conversation.
3. Bilingualism is fluency in two languages; multilingualism is fluency in three or more.
4. India, where English coexists with Hindi and regional languages.
5. Language shift is abandoning a native language, while language maintenance is preserving it.

#### Pilot questions 4.4

1. English functions as a medium of instruction; policy determines whether it is promoted or balanced with local languages.
2. English is widely used in films, television, and online platforms.
3. English dominates programming languages, software interfaces, and digital communication.
4. A lingua franca is a common language used between people without a shared native tongue.
5. Business and diplomacy.

#### References and Attributions [Series 4]

The following references and attributions cover the instructional content, illustrations, and suggested open educational resources (OERs) used in **Series 4: Sociolinguistic Factors in English Language Development**. Entries are presented in APA style for clarity and consistency.

##### General references

- Chambers, J. K., & Trudgill, P. (1998). *Dialectology* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Holmes, J. (2013). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Wardhaugh, R., & Fuller, J. M. (2015). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (7th ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Crystal, D. (2003). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge University Press.

##### Illustrations and OER suggestions



- *Figure 4.1: Language as a marker of social identity*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of language and identity.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing how language reflects social identity through class, region, and ethnicity.”
- *Box 4.1: Examples of sociolinguistic markers in English*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access sociolinguistics resources.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing examples of sociolinguistic markers in English by class, gender, and ethnicity.”
- *Plate 4.1: Diversity of English accents and perceptions*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Images of diverse English speakers.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing diverse speakers with different English accents and how they are perceived.”
- *Figure 4.2: Regional dialects of English in Britain*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Map of English dialects in Britain.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a map diagram showing major regional dialects of English in Britain with examples.”
- *Box 4.2: Examples of social dialects and prestige varieties*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on English dialects.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing examples of social dialects and prestige varieties in English.”
- *Plate 4.2: Examples of regional dialect variation in Britain*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Images of regional dialect speakers in Britain.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing speakers from Newcastle, Liverpool, and London with captions of dialect features.”
- *Box 4.3: Examples of borrowing and code-switching in English*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on bilingualism and code-switching.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing examples of borrowing and code-switching in English.”
- *Figure 4.3: Bilingualism and multilingualism in English contexts*



- Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of bilingual and multilingual contexts.”
- AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing examples of bilingual and multilingual contexts where English is used alongside other languages.”
- *Plate 4.3: Language maintenance through bilingual education*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Images of bilingual classrooms.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing a classroom where children are taught English alongside a local language.”
- *Figure 4.4: English in education and policy contexts*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of English in education and policy.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing English as a medium of instruction in schools and its role in government policy.”
- *Plate 4.4: English in media and technology*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Images of English in global media and technology.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing English use in films, social media, and digital technology.”
- *Box 4.4: Domains where English serves as a global lingua franca*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on global English.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing domains where English serves as a global lingua franca with examples.”

**Course code: ENG207**

**Course title: Varieties of English (Including English based Pidgins and Creoles)**

**Course credit load: 2 Units**

**Series 1: Development and Historical Periods of the English Language**

**Series 2: Origins and Evolution from Old to Contemporary English**

**Series 3: Diachronic Study of English Usage Across Ages**

**Series 4: Sociolinguistic Factors in English Language Development**



## **Series 5: Internationality, Regional, and Contextual Impacts on Standard English**

### **Proposed Outline for Series 5**

#### **Part 1 International spread of Standard English**

- 5.1.1 Historical expansion through colonisation and trade
- 5.1.2 English as a global academic and professional language
- 5.1.3 International organisations and English usage

#### **Part 2 Regional variations of Standard English**

- 5.2.1 British, American, and other national standards
- 5.2.2 Pronunciation, vocabulary, and spelling differences
- 5.2.3 Case studies of regional standards in practice

#### **Part 3 Contextual influences on Standard English**

- 5.3.1 English in formal versus informal settings
- 5.3.2 English in digital and technological contexts
- 5.3.3 English in multicultural and multilingual environments

#### **Part 4 Challenges and debates surrounding Standard English**

- 5.4.1 Standardisation versus diversity
- 5.4.2 Language attitudes and perceptions of correctness
- 5.4.3 The future of Standard English in a globalised world

### **Introduction**

In the last Series, we explored how sociolinguistic factors such as identity, class, and regional variation shape English usage. Building on that foundation, this Series turns to the broader question of how Standard English itself is influenced by international spread, regional differences, and contextual demands. Understanding these impacts is essential, as Standard English is not a fixed entity but a dynamic variety shaped by global communication, local practices, and evolving contexts.

The aim of this Series is to examine the international, regional, and contextual forces that affect Standard English and to equip you with the ability to evaluate how these influences contribute to its diversity, adaptability, and ongoing debates about correctness and standardisation.

We shall commence this Series by exploring the international spread of Standard English, focusing on its historical expansion and its role in global organisations. Next, we will move on to regional variations, considering British, American, and other national standards, alongside case studies of



their practical use. Following that, we will examine contextual influences, looking at how Standard English adapts in formal and informal settings, digital environments, and multicultural contexts. Finally, we will wrap up by addressing challenges and debates surrounding Standard English, including issues of diversity, perceptions of correctness, and its future in a globalised world. This progression will provide you with a connected view of how Standard English is shaped by internationality, regionality, and context.

## Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 5.1** analyse the international spread of Standard English and its role in global academic and professional domains,
- **SLO 5.2** describe the distinctive features of regional standards of English, including pronunciation, vocabulary, and spelling,
- **SLO 5.3** evaluate case studies of regional standards to demonstrate how they function in practice,
- **SLO 5.4** explain how contextual factors such as formality, technology, and multicultural settings influence Standard English usage, and
- **SLO 5.5** assess the challenges and debates surrounding Standard English, including issues of diversity, correctness, and its future in a globalised world.

## 5.1 International Spread of Standard English

### 5.1.1 Historical expansion through colonisation and trade

The global presence of English today is largely the result of **colonisation**, which refers to the establishment of control by one country over another, often bringing its language along. British colonial expansion in the 17th to 20th centuries spread English to Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Alongside colonisation, **trade** played a crucial role, as English became a language of commerce and navigation. These historical processes laid the foundation for English as a global language.

Figure 5.1: Historical expansion of English

Fill in the blank: The global presence of English today is largely the result of \_\_\_\_\_ and trade.

### 5.1.2 English as a global academic and professional language

English has become the dominant language in **academia**, meaning it is widely used for teaching, research, and scholarly publications. It is also the primary language in many **professional domains**, including business, science, and international law. This dominance ensures that English serves as a gateway to global knowledge and opportunities, but it also raises questions about accessibility for non-native speakers.



### Box 5.1: Examples of English in academic and professional domains

Fill in the blank: English is the dominant language in \_\_\_\_\_, widely used for teaching, research, and publications.

#### 5.1.3 International organisations and English usage

English is the working language of many **international organisations**, meaning it is used for official communication across nations. Institutions such as the United Nations, the European Union, and the World Trade Organization rely on English for diplomacy, policy-making, and collaboration. This widespread use reinforces English as a global standard, while also highlighting its role in fostering international cooperation.

#### Plate 5.1: English as a working language in international organisations

Fill in the blank: English is the working language of many \_\_\_\_\_ organisations, including the United Nations.

#### Pilot questions 5.1

1. What historical processes contributed to the international spread of English?
2. Give one example of English use in academia.
3. Name one professional domain where English is dominant.
4. Which international organisations use English as a working language?
5. Why does English serve as a gateway to global knowledge and opportunities?

### 5.2 Regional Variations of Standard English

#### 5.2.1 British, American, and other national standards

**Standard English** refers to the socially accepted form of English used in formal communication, education, and official documents. However, there are multiple **national standards**, such as **British English** and **American English**, each with distinctive spelling, vocabulary, and pronunciation. For example, British English uses colour while American English uses color. Other national standards include Canadian English, Australian English, and Indian English, each reflecting local influences and identities.

#### Figure 5.2: Comparison of British and American English standards

Fill in the blank: British English uses the spelling colour, while American English uses \_\_\_\_\_.

#### 5.2.2 Pronunciation, vocabulary, and spelling differences

Regional standards differ not only in spelling but also in **pronunciation** and **vocabulary**. For instance, the word schedule is pronounced with a /ʃ/ sound in British English but with a /sk/ sound



in American English. Vocabulary differences include lift (British) versus elevator (American). These variations show how English adapts to local contexts while maintaining mutual intelligibility across regions.

| Feature       | British English | American English |
|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Spelling      | Centre          | Center           |
| Vocabulary    | Flat            | Apartment        |
| Pronunciation | Schedule (/ʃ/)  | Schedule (/sk/)  |

Box 5.2: Examples of pronunciation, vocabulary, and spelling differences

Fill in the blank: In British English, the word flat refers to a living space, while in American English it is called an \_\_\_\_\_.

### 5.2.3 Case studies of regional standards in practice

Case studies highlight how regional standards function in real contexts. For example, **Indian English** incorporates local idioms and structures influenced by indigenous languages, while **Australian English** features unique slang and pronunciation patterns. These standards are recognised nationally and internationally, showing that Standard English is not uniform but shaped by regional identity and usage.

Plate 5.2: Examples of regional standards of English in practice

Fill in the blank: Indian English often incorporates local \_\_\_\_\_ and structures influenced by indigenous languages.

Pilot questions 5.2

1. What is meant by national standards of English?
2. Give one example of a spelling difference between British and American English.
3. Provide one example of a vocabulary difference between British and American English.
4. How is the word schedule pronounced differently in British and American English?
5. Name one distinctive feature of Indian or Australian English.

## 5.3 Contextual Influences on Standard English

### 5.3.1 English in formal versus informal settings

**Context** refers to the situation in which language is used, and it strongly influences how Standard English is applied. In **formal settings** such as academic writing, legal documents, or professional meetings, Standard English is expected, with careful grammar, precise vocabulary, and structured expression. In **informal settings**, such as casual conversations, text messages, or social media,



English often becomes more flexible, incorporating slang, contractions, and colloquial expressions. Recognising these differences helps speakers adapt appropriately to their audience and purpose.

Figure 5.3: Formal versus informal English contexts

### 5.3.2 English in digital and technological contexts

The rise of **digital communication** has reshaped Standard English. Online platforms such as emails, social media, and instant messaging often blend formal and informal styles. For example, professional emails may follow Standard English conventions, while social media posts may include abbreviations, emojis, or creative spellings. In **technological contexts**, English dominates programming languages, software interfaces, and global digital communication, reinforcing its role as a tool for innovation and connectivity.

Plate 5.3: English in digital and technological contexts

Fill in the blank: Online platforms such as emails and social media often blend \_\_\_\_\_ and informal styles of English.

### 5.3.3 English in multicultural and multilingual environments

In **multicultural** and **multilingual environments**, Standard English adapts to diverse speakers and contexts. For example, in international workplaces, English may be simplified to ensure clarity among non-native speakers. In multicultural societies, English often incorporates expressions from other languages, enriching its vocabulary and reflecting cultural diversity. These adaptations show how Standard English is flexible and responsive to the needs of global communication.

Box 5.3: Examples of English in multicultural and multilingual contexts

Fill in the blank: In international workplaces, English may be \_\_\_\_\_ to ensure clarity among non-native speakers.

#### Pilot questions 5.3

1. What is the difference between formal and informal English contexts?
2. Give one example of English use in digital communication.
3. Why is English dominant in technological contexts?
4. How does Standard English adapt in multicultural environments?
5. Provide one example of English use in a multilingual setting.

## 5.4 Challenges and Debates Surrounding Standard English

### 5.4.1 Standardisation versus diversity



**Standardisation** refers to the process of establishing rules and norms for language use, often to ensure clarity and consistency. In contrast, **diversity** highlights the many varieties of English spoken across regions and communities. While standardisation promotes mutual understanding, it can sometimes marginalise non-standard varieties, which are equally valid expressions of identity and culture. The debate lies in balancing the need for a common standard with the recognition of linguistic diversity.

Figure 5.4: Standardisation versus diversity in English

Fill in the blank: Standardisation promotes mutual understanding, but it can marginalise \_\_\_\_\_ varieties of English.

### 5.4.2 Language attitudes and perceptions of correctness

Speakers often hold strong **language attitudes**, meaning opinions about what counts as “correct” or “proper” English. These perceptions shape how varieties are valued or stigmatised. For instance, Received Pronunciation (RP) has historically been seen as prestigious, while regional dialects may be unfairly judged as less correct. Such attitudes influence education, employment, and social mobility, making debates about correctness central to discussions of Standard English.

Box 5.4: Examples of language attitudes and perceptions

Fill in the blank: Received Pronunciation (RP) has historically been seen as a \_\_\_\_\_ variety of English.

### 5.4.3 The future of Standard English in a globalised world

The future of Standard English is shaped by **globalisation**, meaning increased interconnectedness across nations and cultures. As English continues to spread, new varieties emerge, influenced by local languages and digital communication. Some scholars argue that Standard English may evolve into multiple recognised standards rather than a single global norm. This raises important questions about inclusivity, identity, and the role of English in a multilingual world.

Plate 5.4: The future of Standard English in a globalised world

Fill in the blank: Some scholars argue that Standard English may evolve into multiple recognised \_\_\_\_\_ rather than a single global norm.

#### Pilot questions 5.4

1. What is the difference between standardisation and diversity in English?
2. Give one example of a language attitude that values a particular variety.
3. Why are perceptions of correctness important in discussions of Standard English?
4. How has globalisation influenced the future of Standard English?



## 5. What possibility do scholars suggest about the evolution of Standard English?

### Series summary

This Series has focused on the international, regional, and contextual impacts on Standard English, showing how the language has spread globally, adapted locally, and evolved in response to diverse settings. Its purpose has been to help you appreciate Standard English not as a fixed variety, but as one shaped by history, geography, and social context, making it central to communication in education, business, technology, and global cooperation.

We began by examining the international spread of Standard English through colonisation, trade, academia, and international organisations. Then we moved on to regional variations, considering British, American, and other national standards, alongside differences in spelling, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Following that, we explored contextual influences, looking at how Standard English adapts in formal and informal settings, digital communication, and multicultural environments. Finally, we addressed challenges and debates, including the tension between standardisation and diversity, perceptions of correctness, and the future of English in a globalised world. In line with the Series Learning Outcomes, you should now be able to analyse the global spread of English, describe regional standards, evaluate case studies, explain contextual influences, and assess debates about the future of Standard English.

### Glossary of terms

- **Academia:** The world of education and scholarship, including universities, research, and publications.
- **Colonisation:** The process by which one country establishes control over another, often spreading its language and culture.
- **Context:** The situation or environment in which language is used, influencing how Standard English is applied.
- **Digital communication:** The use of technology-based platforms such as emails, social media, and messaging to exchange information.
- **Diversity:** The presence of different varieties of English across regions and communities, reflecting cultural and linguistic differences.
- **Formal settings:** Situations where Standard English is expected, such as academic writing, legal documents, or professional meetings.
- **Globalisation:** The increasing interconnectedness of nations and cultures, which influences the spread and adaptation of English.
- **International organisations:** Institutions made up of multiple countries, such as the United Nations or European Union, where English is often used as a working language.
- **Language attitudes:** Opinions or beliefs about what counts as correct or proper English, which affect how varieties are valued or stigmatised.
- **Multicultural environments:** Settings where people from different cultural backgrounds interact, often influencing English with borrowed expressions.



- **Multilingual environments:** Settings where multiple languages are spoken, requiring English to adapt for clarity and inclusivity.
- **National standards:** Recognised forms of Standard English used in specific countries, such as British English or American English.
- **Prestige variety:** A socially valued form of English, often associated with education, class, or status.
- **Pronunciation:** The way words are spoken, which can vary across regional standards of English.
- **Professional domains:** Areas of work such as business, science, and law where English is widely used.
- **Standard English:** The socially accepted form of English used in formal communication, education, and official documents.
- **Standardisation:** The process of establishing rules and norms for language use to ensure clarity and consistency.
- **Trade:** The exchange of goods and services across regions, historically contributing to the spread of English.
- **Vocabulary:** The set of words used in a language, which can differ across regional standards.

#### Concept Check Questions [Series 5]

##### Objective questions

1. Which historical processes contributed to the international spread of English? (Linked to SLO 5.1)
2. What is the socially accepted form of English used in formal communication and education? (Linked to SLO 5.2)
3. Give one spelling difference between British and American English. (Linked to SLO 5.2)
4. Which international organisations use English as a working language? (Linked to SLO 5.1)
5. What does the term globalisation mean in relation to English? (Linked to SLO 5.5)

##### Short-answer questions

6. Describe one way English is used in academia. (Linked to SLO 5.1)
7. Explain how pronunciation differs between British and American English for the word schedule. (Linked to SLO 5.2)
8. Identify one example of English use in digital communication. (Linked to SLO 5.3)
9. How does Standard English adapt in multicultural environments? (Linked to SLO 5.3)
10. Give one example of a language attitude that values a particular variety of English. (Linked to SLO 5.4)

##### Long-answer questions

11. Analyse the international spread of Standard English, focusing on colonisation, trade, and global institutions. (Linked to SLO 5.1)



12. Evaluate the role of regional standards such as British, American, and Indian English in shaping identity. (Linked to SLO 5.2, SLO 5.3)
13. Discuss how contextual factors such as formality, technology, and multicultural settings influence Standard English usage. (Linked to SLO 5.3)
14. Assess the challenges and debates surrounding Standard English, including standardisation, diversity, and perceptions of correctness. (Linked to SLO 5.4, SLO 5.5)

#### Answers to Concept Check Questions [Series 5]

#### Objective questions

1. Colonisation and trade.
2. Standard English.
3. Colour (British) versus color (American).
4. United Nations, European Union, World Trade Organization.
5. Increasing interconnectedness of nations and cultures.

#### Short-answer questions

6. Research journals are widely published in English.
7. British English pronounces schedule with /f/, while American English uses /sk/.
8. Social media posts often blend formal and informal English.
9. English may be simplified for clarity or enriched with borrowed expressions.
10. Received Pronunciation (RP) has historically been valued as prestigious.

#### Long-answer questions

11. Basic response: English spread internationally through colonisation, trade, and its adoption in global institutions. Value-added response: Learners may explore how these processes created enduring linguistic hierarchies and shaped English as a tool of power and global communication.
12. Basic response: Regional standards differ in spelling, vocabulary, and pronunciation, shaping national identity. Value-added response: Learners may evaluate how these standards foster pride and distinctiveness, while also raising questions about mutual intelligibility and global recognition.
13. Basic response: Formal contexts demand strict Standard English, while digital and multicultural settings encourage adaptation. Value-added response: Learners may analyse how technology accelerates language change and how multicultural environments enrich English with diverse influences.
14. Basic response: Standardisation ensures clarity, but diversity and perceptions of correctness create debates. Value-added response: Learners may critically assess how globalisation challenges the idea of a single standard, suggesting the possibility of multiple recognised standards in the future.

#### Answers to Pilot Questions [Series 5]

#### Pilot questions 5.1



1. Colonisation and trade.
2. Research journals are widely published in English.
3. Business is one professional domain where English is dominant.
4. United Nations, European Union, and World Trade Organization.
5. Because it is the dominant language in academia and professional domains, giving access to global knowledge.

### Pilot questions 5.2

1. National standards are recognised forms of Standard English used in specific countries.
2. Colour (British) versus color (American).
3. Flat (British) versus apartment (American).
4. British English pronounces schedule with /f/, while American English uses /sk/.
5. Indian English incorporates local idioms and structures; Australian English features unique slang and pronunciation.

### Pilot questions 5.3

1. Formal contexts require careful grammar and precise vocabulary, while informal contexts allow slang and colloquial expressions.
2. Emails are a common example of English use in digital communication.
3. English dominates programming languages, software interfaces, and global digital communication.
4. It may be simplified for clarity or enriched with borrowed words from other languages.
5. In international workplaces, English is adapted for clarity among diverse speakers.

### Pilot questions 5.4

1. Standardisation establishes rules for clarity, while diversity reflects the many valid varieties of English.
2. Received Pronunciation (RP) has historically been valued as prestigious.
3. They influence how varieties are judged, affecting education, employment, and social mobility.
4. Globalisation has spread English further and encouraged the development of new varieties.
5. That Standard English may evolve into multiple recognised standards rather than a single global norm.

### References and Attributions [Series 5]

The following references and attributions cover the instructional content, illustrations, and suggested open educational resources (OERs) used in **Series 5: Internationality, Regional, and Contextual Impacts on Standard English**. Entries are presented in APA style for clarity and consistency.

### General references



- Crystal, D. (2003). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holmes, J. (2013). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Wardhaugh, R., & Fuller, J. M. (2015). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (7th ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Trudgill, P. (2000). *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society* (4th ed.). Penguin.

## Illustrations and attributions

- *Figure 5.1: Historical expansion of English*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Map of British colonial trade routes.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing the spread of English through colonisation and trade routes across continents.”
- *Box 5.1: Examples of English in academic and professional domains*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access sociolinguistics resources.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing examples of English use in academic and professional domains.”
- *Plate 5.1: English as a working language in international organisations*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “United Nations General Assembly.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing international delegates communicating in English at a global organisation.”
- *Figure 5.2: Comparison of British and American English standards*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Comparison chart of British and American spelling.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram comparing spelling and vocabulary differences between British and American English.”
- *Box 5.2: Examples of pronunciation, vocabulary, and spelling differences*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on English language variation.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing examples of pronunciation, vocabulary, and spelling differences between British and American English.”
- *Plate 5.2: Examples of regional standards of English in practice*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Images of English speakers from different regions.”



- AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing speakers from Britain, America, India, and Australia with captions of distinctive English features.”
- *Figure 5.3: Formal versus informal English contexts*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of formal and informal communication styles.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram contrasting features of formal and informal English usage with examples.”
- *Plate 5.3: English in digital and technological contexts*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Images of digital communication platforms.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing English use in emails, social media posts, and programming interfaces.”
- *Box 5.3: Examples of English in multicultural and multilingual contexts*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access resources on multilingual communication.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing examples of English use in multicultural and multilingual contexts.”
- *Figure 5.4: Standardisation versus diversity in English*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Diagram of language standardisation and diversity.”
  - AI prompt: “Generate a diagram showing the tension between standardisation and diversity in English usage.”
- *Box 5.4: Examples of language attitudes and perceptions*
  - Suggested OER source: Open access sociolinguistics resources.
  - AI prompt: “Generate a table showing examples of language attitudes and perceptions of correctness in English.”
- *Plate 5.4: The future of Standard English in a globalised world*
  - Suggested OER source: Wikimedia Commons, “Images of global communication in English.”
  - AI prompt: “Create an illustration showing diverse global speakers using English in business, education, and digital contexts.”



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