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# English Literature

ملخصات تخصص الادب الإنجليزي

**L201A MTA**



ملخصات البروفيسور



## L201A BOOK 2 MTA CHAPTER 2

### DEFINITIONS:

- 1. Standardisation:** is the process through which one variety of a language is selected, codified, and promoted as the correct or "standard" form, often for political, social, or educational purposes. It includes stages like selection, codification, elaboration, and acceptance. **For example**, modern Standard British English developed through centuries of written practices and was solidified by grammarians and dictionaries in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2. Standard British English:** refers to the prestige dialect of English that is considered the norm for formal communication in the United Kingdom. It is the variety of English that is used in official documents, education, news broadcasts, and other formal contexts. It is also associated with a standardized grammar, spelling, and vocabulary, but not with any specific regional accent. **For example**, textbooks and newspapers in the UK are generally written in Standard British English.
- 3. Codification:** is the stage in standardisation where grammatical rules, spelling, and vocabulary are documented, usually in dictionaries and grammars. **For example**, Samuel Johnson's 1755 dictionary helped codify spelling and usage in English.
- 4. Selection:** involves choosing one variety of a language (usually from a powerful region or class) to serve as the standard. **For example**, The dialect of London and the East Midlands was selected as the basis for Standard English during the development of the Chancery Standard in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
- 5. Elaboration:** is the process of expanding the functions of a selected variety so it can be used in all domains of society (law, science, literature, etc.). **For example**, in the early modern period, English was elaborated to express philosophical and scientific ideas that had previously been written in Latin.
- 6. Prescriptivism:** refers to the belief that there are "correct" and "incorrect" forms of language and that people should follow certain rules. **For example**, a prescriptivist might argue that it's wrong to say "ain't" instead of "isn't", or to end a sentence with a preposition, such as in "This is the book I was looking for."
- 7. Implementation:** whereby norms are imposed, and variability suppressed, which was achieved by making text available in official domains, discourage using other alternative language variety and encourage users to be loyal and proud of it.
- 8. A National Language:** the history of English is one of the histories of peoples. It's call 'English' emerged from centuries of language contact spurred on by population movements and a range of political, cultural, and religious changes
- 9. Description (Descriptivism):** focuses on describing how language is actually used by speakers, rather than imposing rules of correctness. **For example**, a descriptivist linguist would accept both "gonna" and "going to" as valid forms used in natural conversation.



**10. Acceptance:** refers to the process by which a population comes to recognize and use the standard variety in official and formal settings. **For example,** by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, schools in Britain were teaching Standard English as the correct form to use in writing and speaking.

**11. Authority:** in language refers to the perceived legitimacy of individuals or institutions (like grammarians, dictionaries, or governments) in defining what is correct English. **For example,** the Oxford English Dictionary is often cited as an authoritative source for definitions and correct spellings.

**12. Attitudes to Language:** refers to the beliefs and feelings that speakers have about different forms of language, including notions of prestige or correctness. **For example,** Some people view Received Pronunciation (RP) as more “proper” or “educated” than regional accents, reflecting societal language attitudes.

**13. Pidgin Language:** is a simplified language that develops as a means of communication between two or more groups who do not share a common language. It typically combines elements of the languages involved and is used for basic functions like trade or work. Pidgins usually have limited vocabulary and simplified grammar and are nobody’s native language. **For example,** in 19<sup>th</sup> century West Africa, West African Pidgin English developed among English-speaking traders and local populations. For instance, the sentence “You go come tomorrow?” translates to “Will you come tomorrow?” in Standard English.

**14. Lexicographer:** a person who compiles dictionaries, contributing to the codification of language. **For example,** Samuel Johnson was a prominent lexicographer whose work shaped English usage in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**15. Grammarian:** a person who writes grammar books, often involved in establishing usage rules during the standardisation process. **For example,** John Wallis’s Grammatica Linguae Anglicanae (1653) was one of the early attempts to systematise English grammar.

**16. Chancery Standard:** a written form of English developed by the Royal Chancery in the 15<sup>th</sup> century that combined features of different dialects into a standard. **For example,** documents issued by the royal court and government offices adopted this uniform style, which influenced later printed English.

**17. Prestige Dialect:** a dialect that gains social status and becomes a model for “good” English due to cultural, political, or economic power. **For example,** the London dialect became prestigious during the late Middle English period and shaped modern Standard English.

**18. Loanword:** a word borrowed from another language. **For example,** words like government, judge, and parliament were borrowed from French after the Norman Conquest.

**19. Multilingualism in England:** the coexistence of multiple languages (e.g. English, French, Latin, Norse, Low German) in medieval England. **For example,** a 14<sup>th</sup>-century English citizen might use English at home, French in court, and Latin in religious settings.

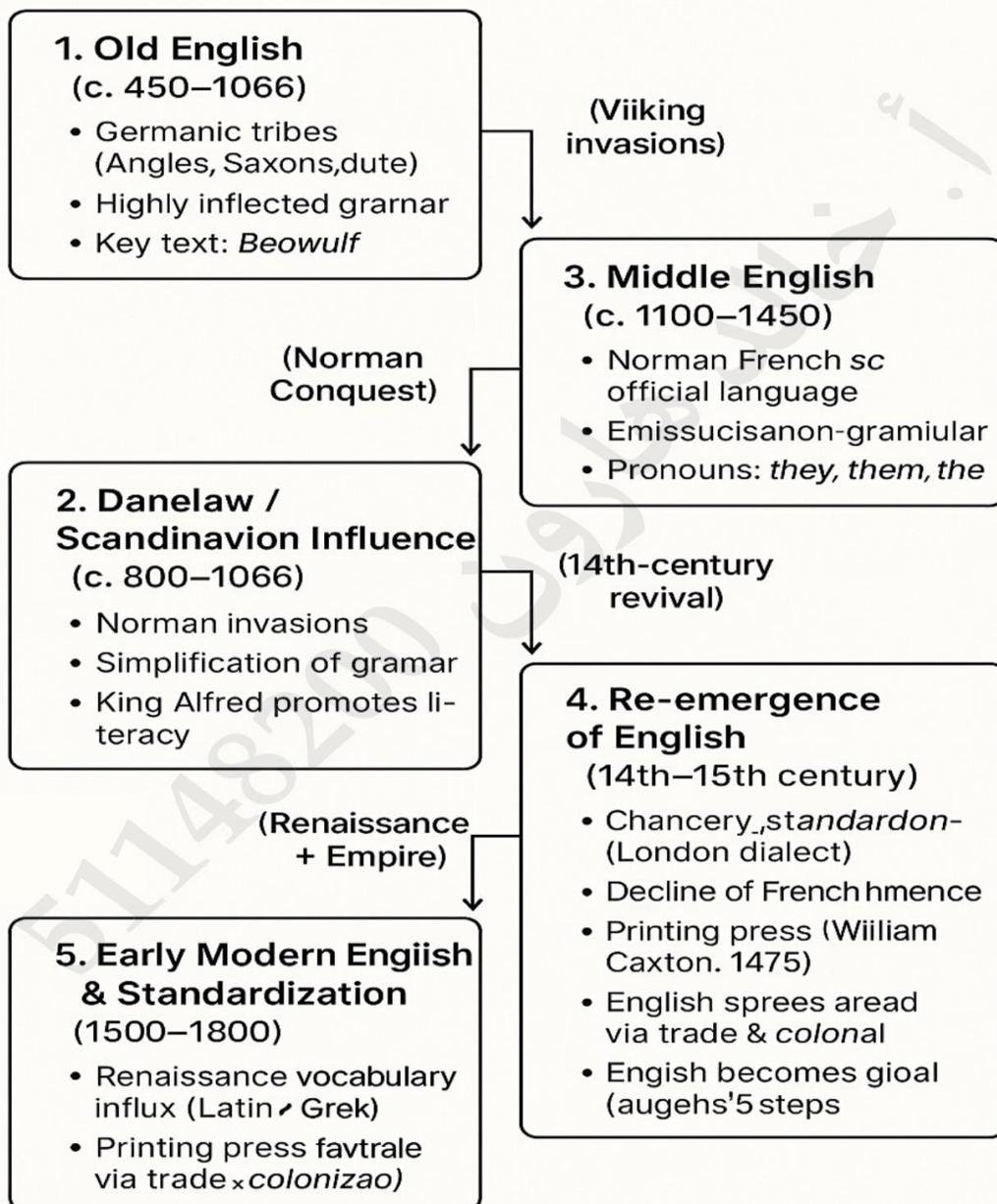
**20. Techniques Grammarians:** had used in grammar texts, such as incorporating usage notes, making decisions on correctness, illustrating meanings with quotations, and even attempting witticisms.



# ESSAY EXAM

Q: What are the **five Ages of English**?

## The Five Ages of English Language Development



**Q: Discuss in brief their main characteristics? Q: Discuss the five stages of English development, focusing on the relationship between the historical events and their consequences on the language?**

The English language has undergone a complex evolution shaped by a dynamic interplay of social, political, and cultural influences. From its Germanic roots to its emergence as a global lingua franca, English reflects centuries of transformation through contact with Celtic, Latin, Norse, and French, and later through colonization and globalization. Scholars generally trace this transformation through five key stages or Ages of English, each defined by significant historical events and linguistic shifts.

**Old English (c. 450–1066 AD): The first age** of English begins with the arrival of Germanic tribes (Angles, Saxons, and Jutes) in Britain around 450 AD. At that time, the island's indigenous population (the Celts) spoke Celtic languages. Following Roman colonization, Latin was introduced as the language of governance and religion. However, when the Romans withdrew, Anglo-Saxon dialects gradually became dominant, forming the foundation of Old English. Celtic influence on English was limited, as the Germanic settlers considered the Celts socially inferior. Nonetheless, a few loanwords (crag, dun) and place names survived. Latin continued to influence Old English, primarily through the Christian Church, which introduced religious vocabulary (monk, altar, bishop). Old English was a synthetic language with complex inflections, and texts like Beowulf exemplify its literary richness.

**Danelaw and Scandinavian Influence (c. 800–1066 AD): The second age** corresponds to the Viking invasions and the establishment of the Danelaw—regions under Danish control. While Latin remained the language of the Church, Old English underwent significant Scandinavian influence due to Norse settlement and intermarriage. This period marked the emergence of the Wessex dialect as a literary standard, especially under King Alfred the Great, who promoted English literacy by translating Latin works. Scandinavian contributions were mostly lexical (sky, egg, they, them, their) and grammatical, notably simplifying inflectional endings and influencing the pronoun system. King Alfred's initiatives helped preserve and unify the English language during a politically fragmented era. The development of regional dialects also began during this time.

**Middle English and Norman French (c. 1066–1450 AD): The Norman Conquest** of 1066 introduced a new ruling class who spoke Norman French. French became the language of the court, law, and education, while Latin remained in ecclesiastical use. English was relegated to the status of a vernacular language, spoken primarily by the common people. This sociolinguistic stratification led to a massive influx of French vocabulary into English—especially in areas of law (court, judge), governance (council, parliament), and culture (music, poetry). Middle English grammar became increasingly analytic, with word order gaining importance over inflection. Though English was suppressed in formal settings, it survived in literature, most famously in



Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. Over time, French dominance waned, and English began to reassert itself in public life.

**Q: What are the stages of standardization of English during the Early Modern Period 1450- 1750 A.D?**

**The Re-emergence of English (14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> Century):** During the **late Middle Ages**, English underwent a significant revival. A standardized dialect, the Chancery Standard, emerged around London, combining features from various regional dialects. This development coincided with the rise of national consciousness and the decline of Norman French prestige. The re-emergence was supported by several factors: the Black Death reduced the French-speaking elite population, the Hundred Years' War with France fostered English patriotism, and social mobility increased the use of English in administration. Printing, introduced by William Caxton in 1476, was instrumental in disseminating the London dialect and standardizing spelling and grammar. Trade expansion and early colonization spread English beyond the British Isles. English creoles and pidgins began to form in colonies, influenced by contact with African and Caribbean languages through the transatlantic slave trade.

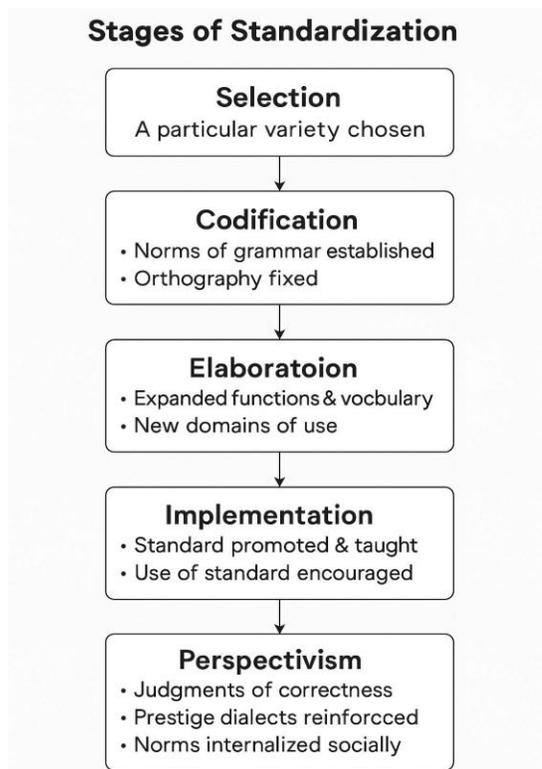
**Early Modern English and Standardization (c. 1500–1800 AD):** **The final age** in this classification marks the consolidation and global spread of English. The Renaissance introduced a revival of classical learning, leading to an influx of Latin and Greek vocabulary, especially in science, philosophy, and literature (genius, democracy, physics). English flourished in the works of William Shakespeare and the King James Bible, establishing its prestige. This period saw systematic efforts to standardize English. As defined by Einar Haugen, the process of standardization involves: **Selection, Codification, Elaboration, Implementation, Perspectivism (Acceptance and prestige)**. Colonial expansion spread English globally, creating new varieties and dialects. American English, influenced by indigenous and immigrant languages, emerged as a major variant. The Industrial Revolution and the British Empire further positioned English as a language of science, administration, and global commerce.

To sum up, the development of the English language is a testament to its adaptability and resilience in the face of conquest, colonization, and globalization. From its Germanic roots in Old English to its modern standardized form, English has absorbed influences from multiple languages and cultures. The five ages of English such as the **Old English, Danelaw, Middle English, Re-emergence, and Early Modern English**, each reflect key historical moments that reshaped its structure, vocabulary, and status. Today, English continues to evolve, enriched by its global use and the cultural exchanges it facilitates.



# ESSAY EXAM

Q: Explain the different stages of standardization?



Q: Explain the need for **Standardization and the actual processes** involved in standardizing the English language?

The process of standardizing the English language was essential in transforming it from a collection of regional dialects into a unified national and international medium of communication. This standardization took place primarily during the Early Modern English period (c. 1500–1800) and was driven by both internal linguistic mechanisms and powerful external historical forces, such as political centralization, colonial expansion, and the invention of the printing press. **According to Einar Haugen's influential model, standardization involves four main stages, Selection, Codification, Elaboration, and Implementation, with an additional fifth stage, Perspectivism, added by modern scholars.**

Q: Selection was a major rockier in the development of the English language as we know it today. Discuss the need for selection as well as the factors leading to the choice of the selected variety?

**The first stage of standardization is Selection** involves choosing a particular dialect or variety of a language to become standard. In the case of English, the South-Eastern Midlands dialect, especially the London variety, was selected due to its association with economic, political, and cultural power. The role of William Caxton, who established the first printing press in England in 1476, was crucial. He selected London English as the basis for printed texts, thereby giving it



wider exposure and authority. The process of "focusing", as proposed by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, further reinforced the selected variety through its use in education, government, and public communication. The processes of selection and codification were especially pivotal in shaping modern English. Selection determined which dialect would serve as the national standard, influencing not just pronunciation and grammar but also identity. Codification provided a lasting record, allowing consistent communication and instruction across regions and generations. These steps helped consolidate English into a prestigious, functional language suitable for international diplomacy, literature, and science.

**Q: Codification was one of the main processes in the development of the English language as we know it today. Discuss how English was codified?**

**The second stage is codification**, which involves recording and fixing the grammatical rules, spelling, and vocabulary of the selected variety in authoritative sources. One of the most notable examples is Samuel Johnson's A Dictionary of the English Language (1755), which provided a comprehensive guide to English words and usage. Codification was also supported by the publication of grammars, such as those written by Robert Lowth, which established "correct" grammatical usage. This stage helped reduce variability and provided a reference point for what constituted "proper" English.

**The third stage, elaboration**, is the expansion of the selected variety's function across multiple domains of communication, such as science, education, law, and government. This required new vocabulary and more complex syntax to suit the intellectual and administrative needs of the expanding English-speaking world. Methods of elaboration included: Borrowing terms from Latin and Greek (biology, philosophy), Coining new words, Calquing (translating foreign expressions), and Extending meanings of existing words. This linguistic flexibility allowed English to serve as a medium for complex thought and global discourse.

**The fourth stage, implementation**, refers to the enforcement and adoption of standard language through institutions and public practices. The use of standard English in official documents, education, and media helped reinforce its dominance. Governments, publishers, and schools discouraged non-standard varieties and promoted loyalty to the chosen norm. As the British Empire expanded, the use of standardized English became a symbol of national identity and authority, especially in colonies.

**While not part of Haugen's original model: Additional Stage, perspectivism** reflects the societal judgment of linguistic features—defining what is considered "correct" or "desirable". This stage supports prescriptivism, where grammar rules are taught not just descriptively, but normatively. In the 19th century, codified English became a moral and educational benchmark, especially in imperial education systems.

**Q: Discuss some of the main external factors that led to the standardization of English in the Early modern period?**

Several historical and social developments accelerated the standardization of English during the **Early Modern** period. Caxton's press standardized spelling and grammar through mass reproduction. Printed texts spread literacy and exposed readers to a single variety of English. The revival of classical knowledge increased the need for precision in language. Latin and Greek influenced English vocabulary, especially in science and philosophy. With the rise of grammar



schools and universities, there was a push for standardized materials and instruction in English. Literacy increased among the middle classes, creating demand for uniform written forms. Standard English was used as a tool of administration across the Empire. Teaching "proper" English became part of colonial education, reinforcing its prestige.

To sum up, standardization of English was a multi-faceted process that took place over several centuries and was shaped by both internal linguistic developments and external sociopolitical forces. **Haugen's four-stage model of selection, codification, elaboration, and implementation, later expanded to include perspectivism, provides a useful framework for understanding this transformation.** The role of print technology, educational reform, colonial expansion, and national unification cannot be overstated. These forces not only refined the English language but also elevated it to a global medium of communication, shaping it into the standardized form we recognize today.

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# ESSAY EXAM

**Q: Analyze, based on the material you have studied, whether English displays aspects of continuity or change over time? Use examples to support your arguments.**

Language is a living system, constantly shaped by historical, political, and social influences. English, as one of the most globally influential languages, demonstrates a complex interplay between continuity and change over time. From its roots in the Germanic dialects of the Anglo-Saxons to its role as a global lingua franca in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, English has undergone substantial transformation in its grammar, lexicon, and pronunciation, while still preserving core structural and functional characteristics.

Despite the substantial transformations English has undergone, it retains several features that demonstrate linguistic continuity. Many basic English words remain Germanic in origin, dating back to the Old English period (c. 450–1150 AD). Words such as man, house, mother, come, and go continue to be widely used in their fundamental meanings. For example, the Old English word *mann* became *man* in Modern English, showing continuity in lexical usage. The Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) word order, which was dominant in late Old English and Middle English, has been retained in Modern English. In both Old and Modern English, basic sentence structure such as *He eats bread* remains consistent, even though inflections and case endings have been simplified or lost. English has continuously served as a medium of expression and cultural identity, from *Beowulf* to Shakespeare to contemporary literature. The tradition of using English in storytelling, religious texts, and official documentation has persisted over centuries.

While the core structure shows continuity, English also demonstrates extensive **linguistic change across various dimensions.** One of the most striking changes in English is the enrichment of its vocabulary through borrowing from other languages, especially due to historical events such as the Norman Conquest (1066) and colonial expansion. Norman



French contributed legal, political, and aristocratic terms (court, justice, parliament). Latin and Greek enriched scientific and academic vocabulary (biology, democracy, physics). Colonial contact introduced words from Arabic (alcohol), Hindi (bungalow), and Swahili (safari). English today includes words from over 350 languages, illustrating remarkable lexical expansion and adaptability. Pronunciation has changed dramatically, especially during the Great Vowel Shift (c. 1400–1600), a process in which the pronunciation of long vowels changed, separating Middle English from Modern English. For example, the word bite was pronounced /bi:tə/ in Middle English but became /baɪt/ in Modern English. This shift caused a disconnect between spelling and pronunciation, contributing to English's irregular orthography. Old English was a synthetic language, rich in inflectional endings. Over time, English transitioned into a more analytic language with fewer inflections, relying more on word order and auxiliary verbs. For example, old English used endings like -est and -eth, while Modern English uses auxiliary verbs (He sings → He does sing).

In the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, English changed not only internally but also externally through localization into multiple global varieties (Indian English, Nigerian English, Singaporean English). Each variety reflects local phonology, grammar, and vocabulary (prepone in Indian English meaning "bring forward in time"). These World Englishes show that English is no longer monolithic but a dynamic and adaptive language shaped by its speakers. However, English has continuity in function and structure but change in form and usage. It has maintained its role as a communicative tool, preserving key grammatical patterns and core vocabulary. Simultaneously, English has responded to external influences through lexical borrowing, phonetic change, and grammatical simplification. Its adaptability has allowed it to remain relevant for centuries, evolving into a global language with multiple standards and varieties.

To sum up, the English language is a product of both historical continuity and linguistic change. While retaining its core syntactic structure and many essential words from its Germanic past, English has evolved significantly in pronunciation, vocabulary, and morphology. The factors influencing this evolution include conquests, technological advances, scientific progress, and globalization. Thus, the history of English is best understood not as a fixed trajectory but as an ongoing narrative of adaptation, balancing a respect for tradition with a remarkable capacity for transformation.

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# ESSAY EXAM

**Q: Discuss the factors that contributed to English emerging to occupy its current prominent position in global society? Support you with discussion.**

The development of English into the national language of Britain was neither instantaneous nor inevitable. It was the result of a complex convergence of historical events, political shifts, social transformations, and cultural movements that unfolded over several centuries. From being a vernacular spoken by commoners to becoming the dominant language of government, education, and national identity, English evolved under the pressures and opportunities of conquest, standardization, and modernization.

During the medieval period, Latin and Norman French were the languages of power, learning, and nobility in Britain, while English was viewed as a local and informal vernacular. As Britain gradually transformed into a centralized nation-state, the need for a common language became more urgent. English became a tool of unification, helping bridge regional dialects and cultural divisions. The rise of national consciousness, especially during the Elizabethan period, contributed to the symbolic value of English as a language of loyalty and patriotism. William Shakespeare's works in English not only enriched the language but also played a vital role in shaping a shared cultural identity. The Industrial Revolution and the growth of commerce required standard language for contracts, education, and communication. Parliamentary laws, business transactions, and school curricula were increasingly conducted in English, further entrenching its practical necessity. English became the language of upward mobility, and speaking it fluently was associated with social prestige and opportunity. Although English had already gained national prominence by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the rise of the British Empire elevated it to global status. Within Britain, this expanded role reinforced the perception of English as the superior national language. As Britain imposed English on its colonies, it simultaneously elevated the language's prestige at home.

To sum up, English became the national language of Britain not merely by linguistic merit but through a series of historical, political, and ideological developments. From the decline of Latin and French prestige to the impact of print culture, religious reform, national identity, and institutional usage, English evolved into a tool of governance, faith, and collective belonging. The gradual but strategic elevation of English aligned with Britain's rise as a centralized and imperial power, ensuring its dominance both at home and abroad. Thus, the history of English is as much a history of social and political transformation as it is of linguistic evolution.



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