

The origins of the english language essay

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The origins of the English language Language is one of aesthetic tools of expressing thoughts, emotions and sharing impressions, and it is always interesting to find out whether people, who lived on the same territory, used the same language apparatus for communication. The English language is extremely rich, given Celtic, Roman, Turkish and German influences it went through. The territory where the language conceived, Britain, was inhabited by several different tribes in the course of history. Two thousand years ago, in the Iron Age, the peninsula was a place of residence for Celtic tribes, which had their own language and a unique culture, which have survived till the present day in Wales and other localities of the modern UK. In modern English, there is a number of words of Celtic origin, mostly associated with transportation: a cart, a car, coracle and so forth (Mores, 1986, p.

111). Later, in the first century AD, Romans arrived into Britain and ruled the territory for about 400 years. The new rulers “ imposed their own way of life and culture, making use of the existing Celtic aristocracy to govern and encouraging this ruling class to adopt Roman dress and Roman language” (Mores, 1986, p. 136), so there are much more Latin than Celtic words in the modern English. For instance, most words ending with -ization (e.

g., organization, civilization) are of Latin origin. Nowadays, they are an integral part of our language. The words associated with time and date and measurements were also borrowed directly from Latin.

In 6th century AD, Proto-English started its development by the direct trajectory, it was born as a part of the language group it belongs to nowadays. It needs to be noted that English is categorized as a part of the

huge Indo-European language family, Germanic language group (Language Families, 2008; Gregory, 2003). After the Roman Empire was destroyed, Germanic tribes like Angles, Saxons, Frisians and Jutes captured Western Europe. According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in 5th-7th centuries the tribes were uniting against the Picts and developed a common language, both literally and figuratively (Farrell, 1995, p. 79). As historians write, “ the English language arrived in Britain on the point of ? sword”! (Farrell, 1995, p. 81). Proto-English was very different from the language we use nowadays and included only such familiar words as cook, fork, cheese, kitchen, linen, mile, pillow, pound, i. e. only the names of domestic utensils and routines have remained in use until the 21st century. Old English, according to the estimates, was used from the 9th till the 12th centuries and emerged as a result after the Northern tribes directed their territorial appetites to Britain. “ The new and the earlier settlers spoke languages from different branches of the Germanic family; many of their lexical roots were the same or similar, although their grammars were more distinct [...]” (Myres, 1986, p. 46). Therefore, English became more diversified, yet most rules of Northern languages grammar have not survived until the present day.

In the 12th century, Old English was replaced by Middle English, which was developing under the conditions of the relative autonomy of Anglo-Saxon governments. The famous Canterbury Tales by Chaucer were written in Middle English, and modern speakers are normally able to understand the book. As one can assume, English acquired its authentic features only after the region gained independence, and in the Middle English, “ gendered

grammar" (by German tradition) was fully eliminated and word spelling was simplified (e. g. umlauts were partially removed). The development of Early Modern English was conditioned by the Great Vowel Shift (15th century), when pronunciation and spelling were even more " optimized", especially in terms of the simplification of diphthongs so that English pronunciation fully diverged from the German. Modern English formed by the 19th century as a response to scientific progress, which caused the appearance of new words of Greek and Latin origins (e. g.

radio, telegraphy), change of personal pronouns (e. g. " thy" and " thee" were ultimately replaced with " yours" and " you", which means that interlocutors were no longer addressed in the third person) and the shortening of adjectives and adverbs.

English of the 21st century has adopted even more Greek and Latin terms as well as developed new slang words, often deriving from languages immigrant groups speak. National minorities tend to turn the genuine English language into systems like " Spanglish" (as well as Chinese English, Russian English and so forth), but it is highly important to preserve English in its authentic state of the Shakespearean epoch; otherwise, there is a risk of losing it just like Celts lost their native language with the advent of the Roman civilization. Bibliography Myres, J. 1986. The English Settlements.

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