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ACADEMIC LEARNING APPROACH TOWARDS THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to trace and acknowledge the major historical antecedent of English language. The history of English has given a lot of evidences on drastic change, but the changes that took place were not all at the same time. The word "English" is obviously related to England, and English has spoken in England about 1,500 years ago. But it was in existence before that time by the different users. Among the indo-European language family. English covers a vast period, extending from the earliest history down to the 1066 AD. This is regarded as a key date in the history of English. This paper adopts the qualitative research design because is dealing with the history of English which is the only mechanism that can help some English scholars to understanding the past, to analyze the present and predict the future of global English. This paper also employed the secondary sources of Data collection in line with the existing literature.

KEY WORDS:
Academic, Learning, Approach, History, English, Language.

Introduction

The history of English language will never be complete without mentioning the Celtic tribe, the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes. These tribes were in existence approximately about 2,000 years ago. Almost at the same time when Jesus Christ was lived in Palestine and the language that evolved into English of today was spoken in the north-western parts of Germany. Similarly, (Jowitt, 2015) notes that the

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Celts were the first inhabitants of the British Isles about whom any historical records exist. Having spread through the central and the Western Europe, they have arrived in South-Eastern England some centuries before the birth of Christ. They did not speak English, but their languages belonged to the Indo-European family languages, to which English also belongs.

Thereafter, the Celts of that time comes mainly from Roman sources, and the first event in the history of the British Isles to which a date can be assigned. That was about 55BC, which may be the first encounter between the Celts of Britain and the Romans. In that year, the Roman soldiers under the leadership of Julius casesor crossed the English channel coast of England, called "Britannia, was the name by which the land was already known to the Romans, and from it the modern name Britain is drived.

Likewise, "British" or "Britons" was the name given by the Romans to the Celts in habitants. Today, they are often known as the Ancient Britons, to distinguish them from the modern citizens. They practiced Agriculture, Manufactured iron tools and weapons, and built forts of turf and stone on the tops of hills. But politically they were fragmented and the technologically advanced Romans regarded them as "Barbarians". On the other hand, the meeting resistance from the Celts and not yet bent on conquest, because the Romans did not stay long, either in 55 BC or again the following year 54 BC. After that, they did not come back for nearly 100 years, during that time, they came back to conquer. Romans were the second inhabitants of the British that solidly contributed towards the history of English globally. (Charles, 1999) realizes that "the Romans were one of the succession of people of the Ancient world. Meaning, the lands of the middle East and ground the Mediterranean in the period of 3000 BC-500 AD (3,500 years) ago, who developed a literate civilization based on agriculture, slave labour and ,military power that brought other people by force under their leadership. The Roman Empire, with Latin as its language and its capital at Rome in present day of Italy, was the most extensive of all, and with the conquest of Britain contributed a lot to the development of the Empire.

The Romans regarded themselves as the giant of the Greek civilization that reached its high in the city-state of Athens in the fifty century BC. But the Empire had been spread around the eastern Mediterranean lands through the conquest of Alexander the Great in the late fourth century. This is because Romans conquest most important lands that previously owned by the Greek Empire. They have admired and emulate the ideas of the Greek philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Livy, etc. This is because Romans were not good thinkers, but they were very good in Civil Engineering as well as military organization strategy. Rome eventually practiced to one-man rule, but Greek was shared the power among the various government officials. That is why Julius Caesar was an efficient dictator in Roman Empire for few years before his assassination in 44 BC; his great-nephew Augustus Caesar was the first of a long line of Emperors.

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Invading Britain again in 43 AD, the Romans rapidly conquered about two-thirds of the Island. It remained under their rule for approximately 350 years and was administered as a province with a governor appointed by the Emperor. The experience of the Celts or Ancient Britons under their rule can be hundred years later. Although, British rule of most parts of Africa lasted for not longer than 100 years.

The Anglo-Saxons were the third inhabitants of the British that also contributed in the history of English. (Jowitt, 2015)states that "when the Romans withdrew from Britain, the native British were left to fend for themselves. Before long, Anglo-Saxon invaders arrived in large numbers with the intention of settling. They were chiefly interested in the fertile soil from the eastern and southern parts of Britain, which were also closest to their homeland in Germany". They set up a number of kingdoms: Kent, Sussex, wessex, Norithnbria, East Anglia and Mercia. The tendency was for one of these to became more important history on the planet. In some cases their names survive today in the names of countries or universities. The whole area occupied by the Anglo-Saxons later came to be referred to "Angla-Land, (the land of Angles). But the Angles were being more in number than the Saxons, and from this world "England" was clearly derived. The Anglo- Saxons civilization was nearly extinguished, but under king Alfred of Wessex (reigned 871-899).

The Danes were the fourth major inhabitants of the British that similarly contributed to the historical perspective of English language. Around 800-801, the British Isles was like continental Europe, come under attack from a new wave of "Barbarians". These were the warlike and heathen Danes and Norwegians from Scandinavian, known collectively as Vikings. England was attacked mostly by Danes. They descended again and again on the English coast and Penetrated for inland. Plundering and burning, churches and the monasteries. The treasures they had accumulated in the previous 200 years, were a great attraction. Later in the ninth century the Danes came to England to settle especially in the eastern parts of the country. That counter attacked, led to the several of the Anglo-Saxons kingdoms disappeared. The earliest written records of the Danish language dated back to the Viking Age, almost 1,000 years ago, when old Norse was spoken. This is because old Norse was the language of the Viking Age, Scandinavians invaders, including Danes, Norwegians, Swedes.

ORIGIN OF ENGLISH

Many academic sources have been acknowledged that English originated from the Germanic language. The political outline was shown that, Geographically, English language has its origin in north-western Germany and was brought from there to England by the Celts, Anglo-Saxons, Romans, Danes, etc. Approximately, 1,500 – 1,600 years ago, at that time, English was very different from what it is today, in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. The difference is signaled by the use of the expression "Old English" or

(sometimes Anglo-Saxons) to refer to the earlier form of the language. Since that time, old English has evolved into the language of today. This evolution is generally regarded as failing into three main stages in line with the periods. (Jowitt, 2015) highlighted below:
Old English : 500 to about 1,100 AD
Middle English: about 1,100 – 1,500AD
Modern English: 1,500 – present day

Old English:- It is most important in an investigation of the development of English sounds over the last thousand years ago. This is to indicates that the pronunciation of (oɛ) should be established with some certainty. If this can be done, we should have a starting points for the phonetic route for change to the present English. The term old English, however, spans a period of some four hundred years, from about 700 AD to 1100 AD respectively. Moreover, the invasion of the Angles, Saxons and jutes in the fifth and the sixth centuries introduced four separate varieties of English namely:

i. The Angles, in the midlands, north-east England and the south of Scotland, sing types of English known as Mercian and Northumbrian or in general term (Anglican).
ii. The Saxons, in the south and south-west, using the west-Saxons dialect
iii. The jutes, settling mainly in the region of Kent and using a dialect called Kentish.
iv. The West-Saxons, which was to become a kind of standard English language. Meaning, the one about which most is known from the extent texts. In its later form-that in use between about 900 AD and the 1100AD, and it is referred [A] and the [∂] were written in the earlier manuscripts as "th" sound both of them. Also, joined form ([∂e) was initially written as single ([∂) sound.

Middle English:- Spelling forms can also help us to deduce the pronunciation of the ME period, roughly 1100 A.D – 1450 respectively. Generally speaking, it may be said that the letters still had their Latin values which were written to be sounded. This is because the initial [k] sound in the word like "Knokke" was still pronounced in modern English ward "Knock". This persistence of Latin values in spelling was no doubt due to the influence of the churches, which were still the centre of teaching and writing. And the absence of a thoroughly standardized spelling that account for its predominantly phonetic character. However, English spelling was modified by the French influences. Notably, the French [ch] spelling was introduced to the present English sound [tʃ], the French [y] sound interchange with short [u].

Modern English:- The same sources of evidence which we have already considered remain available for the modern period, roughly 1450 AD-1600 A.D. The introduction of printing brought the standardization of spelling and already the spoken as well as written forms of the language were beginning to diverge. But individuals, especially in their private correspondence, often used spellings of a largely phonetic kind, in the same

unsophisticated also the logical way that children still doing it in their modern writing. In the same way, if fifteenth-and the sixteenth centuries spellings show the word sweet occasionally written as (Swith). It may be assumed that this original MƐ [e:] was by now so close to that it could be presented by [i] with its Latin value. This is to indicates that both old English, middle, and modern English have some Latin value.

THE THREE (3) HISTORICAL MODIFICATIONS OF ENGLISH SYSTEM:

1. **Distribution of Phonemes:-** The similarities of the system given above may obscure the fact that the systems of the same sound have been used in different period of time. More especially as far as the vowels are concerned, but may occur in different categories of many words according to the period. Example, [u:] now in food, but occurred to oƐ in words such as town; [i:], now in team, but occurred in oƐ in word like time. (Sharma, 2005) summaries below some of the most striking changes affecting the vowel quality used in particulars words categories:

	OE	ME	modE	PresE
Time	i:	i:	∂i:	∂i
Sweet	e:	e:	i	i:
Clean	∂e:	Ɛ	e:or[i:]	i:
Stone	∂:	Ɔ:	o:	2u
Name	∂	∂:	Ɛ:	ei
Moon	o:	a:	u:	U:
House	u:	u:	∂u	∂u
Love	u	u	δ	^ or (δ)

2. **Vowel changes:-** Several trends become apparent from many study towards the quality changes. Example, the loss of post-vocalic [r] in the eighteenth centaury gave rise to the presE centering diphthongs $/I\partial, Ɛ\partial, u\partial/$, the pure vowel /$\partial$:/ and introduced /$\partial$:, Ɔ:/ into new categories of words like [cart, port, etc]. Also, the vowels under weak accent are increasingly obscured to [∂] or [i] are elided. But rounded from vowels have been lost, eg oƐ/y:, y/ and earlier/$\emptyset; \emptyset/$.
3. **Consonant changes:-** Changes in the consonantal system. Are less striking, but the following may be noted: other consonant clusters were lost like [hI, hr, hn by ME and introduced kn, gn, wr]. Similarly, new phonemes have emerged, eg ts, d3, $\partial, \int$, these consonants were derived their origin from French. Allophone of certain phonemes have been lost, eg the [δ] . allophone of [g] in the late OE and the [X, C] allophones of [h1] in mode.

NORMAN CONQUEST

In 1066, the history of England and English have been changed. This is because some years before 1066, in 1016 the conquest was a symbol of political movement and it was a pivotal movement that forever altered the linguistics towards the cultural landscape of England led by the William the conqueror. The Normans were originally Viking descendants who settled in Normandy part of France and heavily defeated the Anglo-Saxons forces at the Battle of Hastings. This victory marked the end of an era and the beginning of a profound transformation, especially in the area of English language. The conquest did not just change the political power in English, but also reshaped the many lexical items in today's English.

(Sharma, 2015) states that the linguistic impact and the fusion of languages drived from the historical aspect of Noman conquest. Before the Norman conquest arrived, old English with its Germanic roots was the dominant language in English. However, the Norman conquest introduced a new linguistic of the new ruling elite, French quickly permeated the upper language of the court, the legal system, and the language of the common people. Over time, those two languages began to intermingle given rise to middle English that contributed to the vocabulary and the simple grammar of old English with the elegance and sophistication of French.

The examples of this fusion are everywhere in modern English. Consider the conquest between some lexical items like "kingly" -(Old English), "royal"- (Norman French) and "regal"-(Latin). Each word reflects a difference historical influence, all coexisting within the same language English but different periods. That is why, this period of linguistic blending was crucial in expending English's vocabulary, creating a language that could express both the everyday and the elevated with the cultural changed.

NORMAN CONQUEST BEYOND THE LANGUAGE CHANGES

(Margaret, 2019) opines that the Norman conquest also brought sweeping some social changes or socio-cultural changes that maybe beyond the ordinary linguistics changes. This is has to do with the introduction of the "Feudal" system that restructured the English Society, creating a clear division between the Norman nobility and the Anglo-Saxon peasantry. This division was Mirrored in the language changes, while the peasants used old English terms for their livestock. Examples, ("Cow" "Sheep") the French-speaking nobility used different terms for the meat they consumed. Examples, ("beef," mutton"), this distinction maybe found in vocabulary underscored in the social hierarchy, with language itself reflecting the power dynamics of the time.

Another aspect is also beyond the vocabulary development, the Normans introduced new cultural practices architectural styles and legal systems. The Romanesque architecture, seen in the construction of grand cathedrals castles symbolized Normans dominance. In

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legal terms, many terms we use today such as "court" "jury" and "attorney" – all originated from this period, highlighting from this long lasting impact of Norman governance.

The pronunciation and grammar evolution of English language. Means the influence of Norman French extended beyond words were structured. The complex infectious of old English began to more fluid sentence construction. The rigid word order of old English loosened, giving rise to the more flexible syntax characteristic of middle English. Additionally, French phonology left its mark on English pronunciation, adding new sounds and altering the existing ones. Consider the below change in pronunciation of words like ("Knife and "Knight"), in old English, the "K" and "g" sounds were pronounced. But under the French power influence, those sounds become silent, giving us the modern pronunciation we are using today.

LINGUISTIC REVOLUTION OF NORMAN CONQUEST

The aspect of historical contend, Norman conquest was a linguistic revolution as well as it was a political intellectual movement. This is because the fusion of old English and Norman French created middle English, a language that would continue to evolve and eventually given rise to modern English. This period of transformation also laid the ground-work for the English language's enabling adaptability and richness. This is has a linkage enabling it to absorb influence from various cultures and eras.

Today, the legacy of the Norman conquest is still evident in the many words we speak and write in English language. These are in line with the laws we follows, and the cultural traditions we cherish. By understanding this pivotal moment in the history of English language, we gain a deeper appreciation for the complexity and resilience of the English. A language that has been shaped by the conquest, adaptation and the blending of diverse influences.

Similarly, the Norman conquest brought approximately 10,000 French wards into English language, these words cover various domains including the following examples:

1. Government and Administration like crown, State, empire, authority, sovereign, parliament, assembly, treaty, alliance, etc.
2. Law and judiciary such as attorney, chancellor, judge, jury, noble, royal, judgment, etc.
3. Religion teaching, some words like clergy, preach, sacrament, abbot, vestment, preacher, etc.
4. Food for our dairly eating such as beef, pork, mutton, bacon, venison, veal, etc.
5. Titles of rank, lexical items like duke, marquees, peer, prince, valuableness, baron, sovereign, etc.

Note: The Norman conquest's impact on the English was significant, transforming it into the diverse and expressive language we know today. (Jowitt, 2015) states that the impact of Northan conquest including the Bilingualism and language evolution. Means French becoming the language of the ruling class and English for the masses.

PRESENT-DAY SITUATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The English of today particularly accepted world variations have been sensitive to the pronunciation rather than influence of pragmatics in line with the societal development. That is why (crystal, 1997) views that, "pragmatics was a branch of philosophy that presently deals with the philosophy of language that study how sense can be made in a given communication contend. The wrong accent of English speaking of today, may still be an impediment to social intercourse or to advancement of entry in a certain professions. The extreme sensitivity of standard English grammatical usage is apparently not paralleled to many foreign countries, or even part of the English speaking-world.

In light with the above, even within the R.P itself had been conveniently distinguish into main three types: The conservative R.P form used by the other generation. The traditional R.P form used by the certain professions, or social groups. The general R.P form used by the large population in the British because their pronunciation practice has been adopted by the BBC. The advanced R.P forms mainly used by young people of exclusive social groups-mostly of the upper classes and served as exaggerated English variety.

It has been recognized that the role of British R.P in English speaking-world of today has changed very considerably in the last century. This is because over 300 million people now speaking English as their first language but their geographical location and social setting different from that of British. This is why this number of R.P speakers have been restricted in only limited area called great-Britain but the majority of English pronunciation style which is also accepted. This is occur as a result of political reasons because America is a world super power, interms of political power, economic capacity, military Arsenal, social-media platforms, science led to the spate of English Language.

PERIODS OF ENGLISH DEVELOPMENT

Many attempt have been made by the different scholars to acknowledge based on global perspective. This is because some scholars have divided the periods of English development into there stages, others have specified five, others have indicated seven and others summaries the periods into two.

(Eka, 2016) States that the scholars who prefer a split of historical perspective of English into two periods study about the earlier and its later stages with about 450 AD to 1450 AD. But marking the early period, and about 1950 to the present day, marking the later stages. This is a very broad split obviously prevents the writers from given an important

information which may be hidden in the bulk of each stage. Those who break the history into three like David Jowitt apparently start from old English to middle English and then to modern English. The different scholars in this group consider the period of uninterrupted homogeneity up to the period of English development. This is quite close to 1200AD, and then the modern period from about 1750 to the present day. Those who prefer a stages of English periods probably ignore the period of foundation in antiquity and see the periods below:

i. Old English - 500 - 1100
ii. Middle English - 1100 - 1485
iii. Early modern period - 1485-1750
iv. Modern English period - 1750-1950
v. Later modern English - 1950- to the present day.

This in this group certainly pay attention to the general homogeneity of old English. Then, the period, of commencement of remarkable changes and the period of slower changes – Early modern, modern and later modern period. finally, the scholars who consider a stages of English periods into seven obviously place equal important on all periods beginning from the foundations in antiquity and thus below:

1. The pre-history period dating to about 450AD;
2. The early old English period - 450-850
3. The later old English period - 850-1100;
4. The middle old English period - 1100-1450;
5. The early modern English period - 1450-1750;
6. The modern English period - 1750-1950;
7. The later modern English period - 1950 to the present – day.

What were the scholars or researchers in this subject prefers, the important point should not be forgotten-that there are no exact periods of historical development of English. This is because most of the important time, date, and periods overlap and spills into each other period. That is why, a proper guidance in the matter of periods of historical development of English is should be a carefully to note that the characteristics of each period may be found in another period.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed secondary sources of data collections. The choice of this, stand as unconnected with the fact that the area of the study would be limited to only the historical lesson of English language. This is because the content of this topic or similar area is still subject linguistics backgrounds. As a result of history or English is very sensitive

area because its wide- range of coverage. The secondary sources of data where derived from existing or related literature, journals, articles, languages reports writing, language planning documentation, online sources and other relevant materials to the study.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

These are tools used in collecting, measuring and analyzing the data related to a particular subject matter or topic of discussion. This paper adopted the secondary sources of data based on existing literature like journals, articles, text – books and many more useful materials. That is why the study would be guided by the Halidayan systemic Linguistic theory, because the theory consider the language and communication as constructed for social purposes in line with the functionality, contend, register, semiotics and Grammar. These are also relevant to the history of English language can half to understand the past, to analyze the present and predict the future of English language.

DISCUSSION

English has some lexical relationship with many languages among the Indo-European family, in the case of Jutish language was closely related to old English. The two languages shared many similarities interms of vocabulary and grammar. On the other hand, Jutish also had a strong connections with old Norse, Means the language of the Viking age and the Scandinavians invaders. Although Jutish is an extinct language with the independent capacity, but has its influence in modern English, particularly in some words related to everyday life, agriculture and navigation. The word "Jute" itself is derived from the Jutes name and can be seen in modern English. "Eotan", the Jutes word for "giant" or "monster" is still seen in modern English words like "ettin" or "ent". Similarly, "wudu", the jutes word for "wood or" "forest", still can be found in modern English words like wood and "woody".

CONCLUSION

There is needs to understand that English and by extension (Britain) has remained the traditional historical home and starting point of English language. This is because the Englishes of America, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South-Africa may be regarded as evidence of spread towards global English. This happened as a result of British nationals mixed together with the other people in the new colonies, settlements and give a birth to numerous accents in the whole world. From these new Englishes other referred to as "newer Englishes' and these include the English in Ireland, wales and parts of Scotland. English spreat to the above places long after it has existed in other parts of the region. It is commonly known that both welsh and G$\partial e/ic$ in the (Wales and Scot land) have exerted tremendous influence on the Englishes of those parts of British. There is also

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the spread of English that has resulted in the much never Englishes, some examples here include Indian English, Philippine English, Singaporean English and African Englishes of nations such as Nigeria, Ghana and so on. The points that this paper tried to make is that, English has been used to promote unity in Europe, but celebrate diversity in Africa, Through the consequences of imperialism. English history is marked by numerous waves of immigration and cultural exchange towards the role of individual legacy and leadership. English history is also shaped by the actions and decisions of influential individuals, from monarchs to politicians.

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