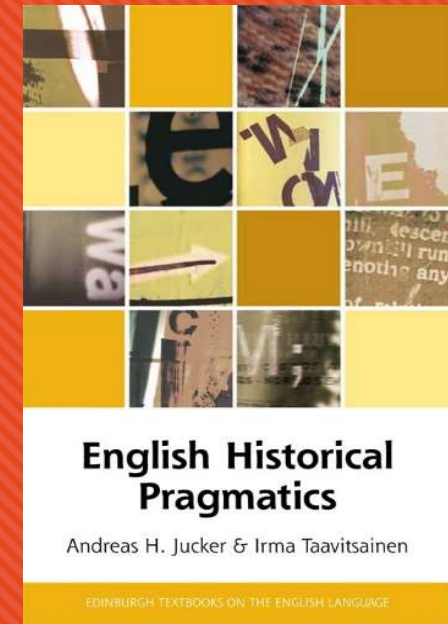
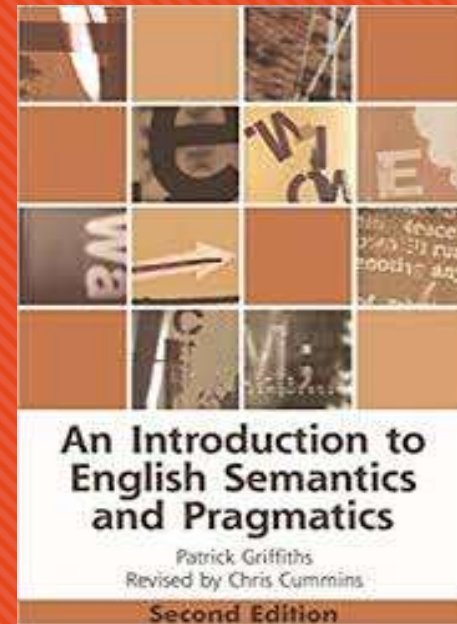
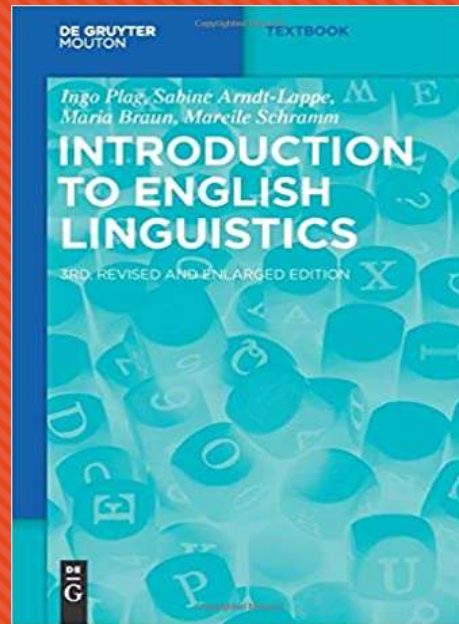
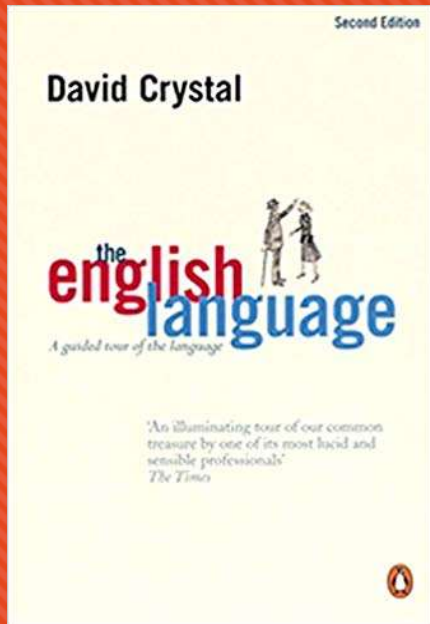




SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

Dipartimento di Studi Europei Americani e Interculturali (SEAI)
Dispense corso di Lingua Inglese 1 – canale E-N
a.a. 2020/2021
Docente: dott. Fabio Ciambella

Materiale didattico destinato ad esclusivo uso interno

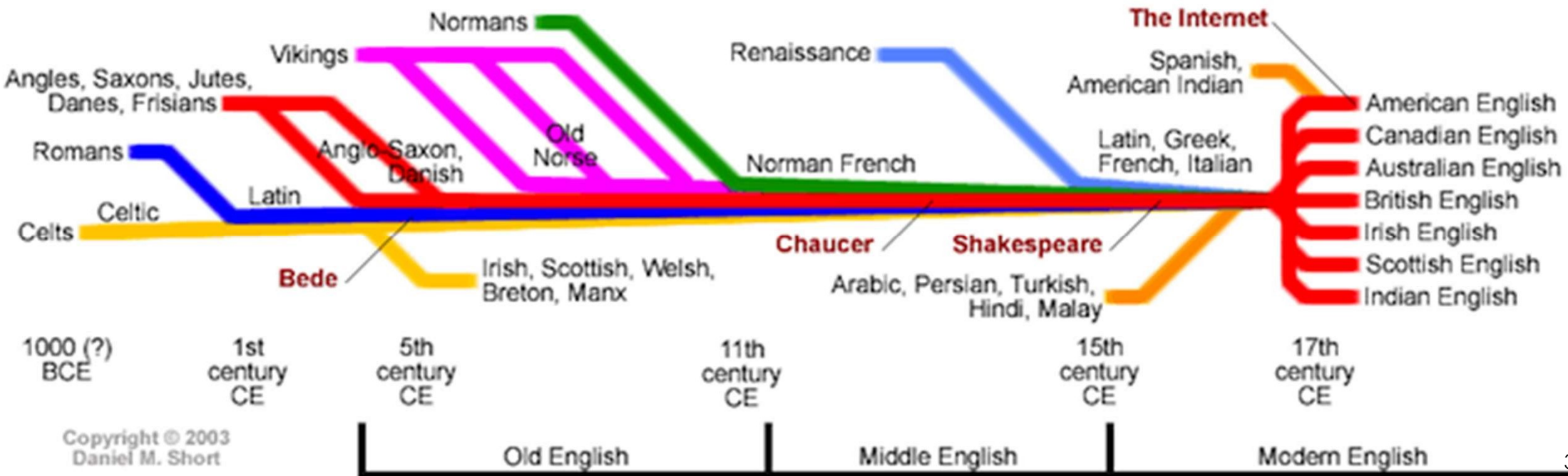


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The history of English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfKhLJAheW>

1. Old English (449 – XII century) [Late Old English/Early Middle English (1066 – XII cent.)]
2. Middle English (XII – XV century) [1476?]
3. Modern English (XV century – today): [Early Modern (XV – mid-XVII cent.), Late Modern (mid-XVII cent. onwards)]





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Old English/Anglo-Saxon



- 449 – Angles, Saxons and Jutes in Britain;
- 1000 CE: Angelcynn → Englalond (language: Englisc);
- Weird spelling: sounds that were not present in the Latin alphabet (thorn **þ**, eth **ð** and ash **æ**);
- Inflected language: declensions and cases (that's why the Saxon genitive is still with us);
- Varied word order: verbs before the subject or at the end of a sentence (like Latin);
- 7 groups of 'strong' verbs (which mainly correspond to our modern irregular verbs)



Old English: Its story



- Celts (from Iberia): first 'invaders' during the Iron Age (600 BCE – 50 CE);
- Romans (Julius Caesar 55 BCE, Emperor Claudius 43-47 CE, Hadrian's Wall 122 CE) → Signs of Latin language: cities in -chester, words like 'street';
- V century CE: Anglo-Saxons arrived → Celts escaped to Cornwall, Wales, Cumbria and Scotland (where Gaelic languages are spoken today). A few Celtic words came into English (River Thames, Greenwich);
- Dark age: 449 and 597 (St. Augustine of Canterbury christianized England);
- Latin MSS with lists of Old English glosses (700 CE → inscriptions and short poems) – 450 Latin words in English vocabulary;
- Viking/Danes invasions (787 – XI cent.);
- Most important literary output in OE: *Beowulf* (MS Cotton Vitellus);
- 4 extant MSS: 1) Junius, 2) Exeter Book, 3) Vercelli Book and 4) Cotton Vitellus or Nowell Codex;
- Most MSS date back to the reign of Alfred the Great (849-899) of Wessex. He stopped the Viking invasion at Edington in 878, ordered the translation of Latin works (among which the most important is Venerable Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*) and began the writing of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*



Viking invasions

- 991: Viking invasion, King Aethelred can't stop it and Vikings reign in England for 25 years;
- Effects on language (1,800 words):
 1. Names of cities ending in -by, -thorp, -thwaite and -toft;
 2. Nouns with sk-;
 3. Personal pronoun 'they/them' and possessive 'their';
 4. 'Are';
 5. Articles and prepositions (no more declensions and cases)

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Old English dialects



Where modern English comes from because of London

Most MSS were written in West Saxon because of Alfred

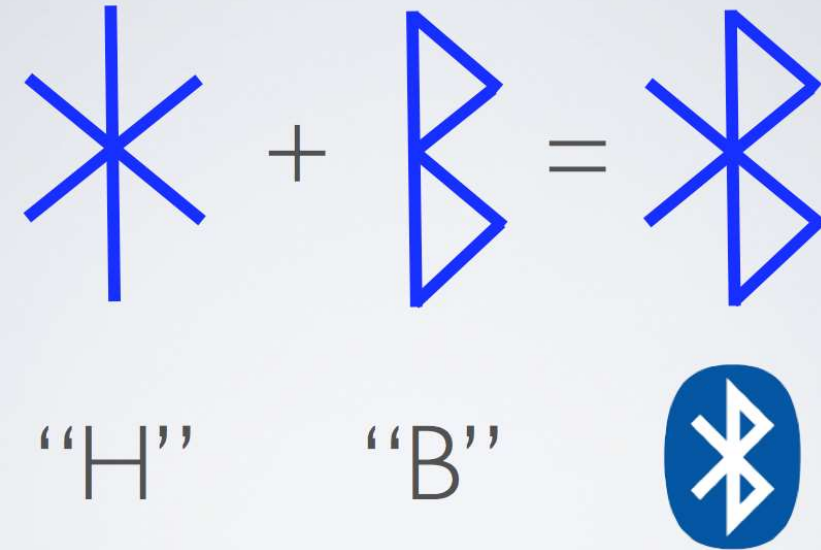


Runes and Futhark

- Invented in the Rhine river area (modern Germany and the Netherlands) because of commercial contacts between Germanic tribes and the Romans (→ influence of Latin alphabet);
- Futhark (from the name of the first six letters of the Runic alphabet);
- Originally 24 letters, in Britain 31 to cover all the sounds of Old English;
- Mystical meaning and secret messages;
- Ruthwell Cross in Dumfriesshire, Scotland (VIII century)



Runes today: The Bluetooth



- Jim Kardach of Intel (1990s) and his passion for Vikings;
- King Harald Blåtand of Denmark (958-986) and the CONNECTION (unification) of Scandinavian people;
- The macabre warriors with blue teeth

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Middle English



- 1066 – Battle of Hastings: William of Normandy conquered Britain;
- Not immediate effects of the French invasion (still texts in West Saxon dialect continued to be written until the mid-XII century);
- Peterborough Chronicle: first text in East Midland dialect, no French words;
- French barons and clergy members (influence of French language);
- 3 languages spoken at the same time: English by the population, French by the Court and Latin by the Church;
- 1204: King John lost Normandy (John Lackland)→ rise of English nationalism;
- 1215: Barons' revolt → Magna Carta (Libertatum)/Great Charter;
- 1362: English used at Parliament for the first time

