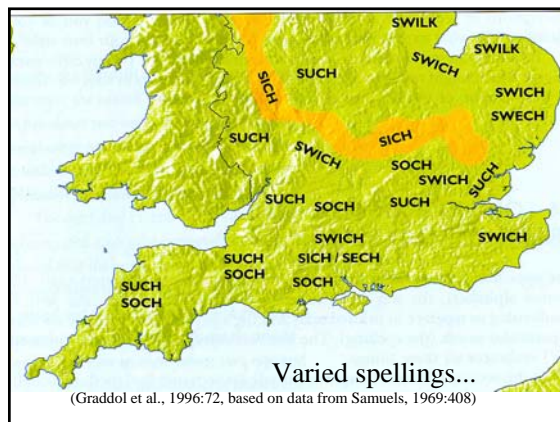


## Development of English

- Changes in Words
  - semantics of existing words
  - incorporation of new words
- Changes in Grammar
  - reduced morphology
  - change in word order (SOV vs. SVO)
- Changes in Phonetics/Phonology
  - vowel shifts
- Changes in Semantics
- Changes in Text types



## Loss of inflections in English

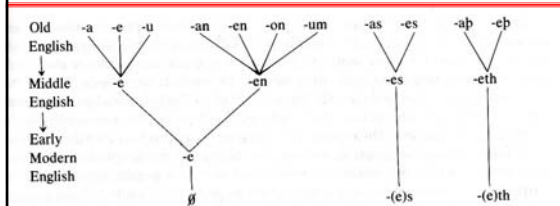
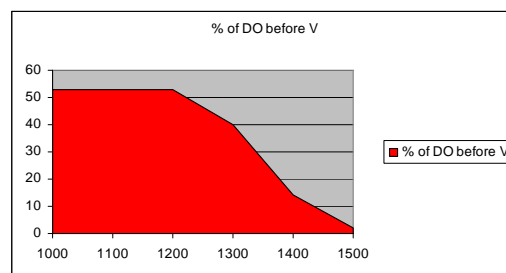


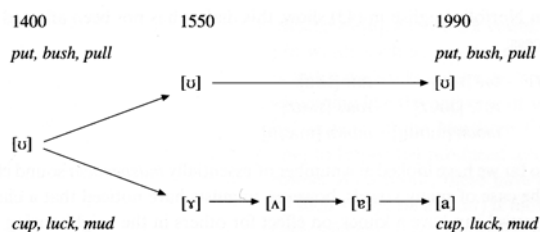
FIGURE 10-4  
The Historical Reduction of English Inflections

From: Finnegan (1989:317).

## The transition from SOV to SVO word order in English



## LANGUAGE CHANGE: a case of 'vowel split' in London



## Spread of 'stress change': an ongoing process

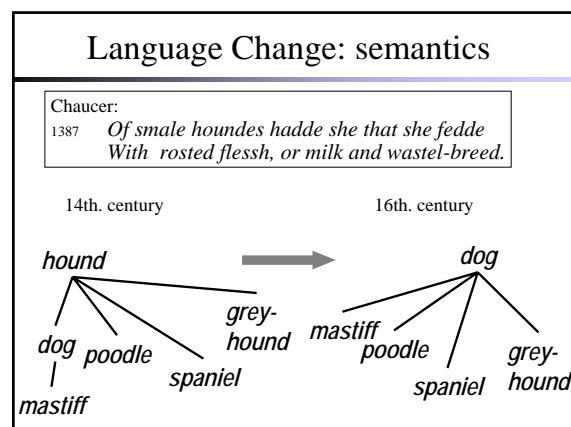
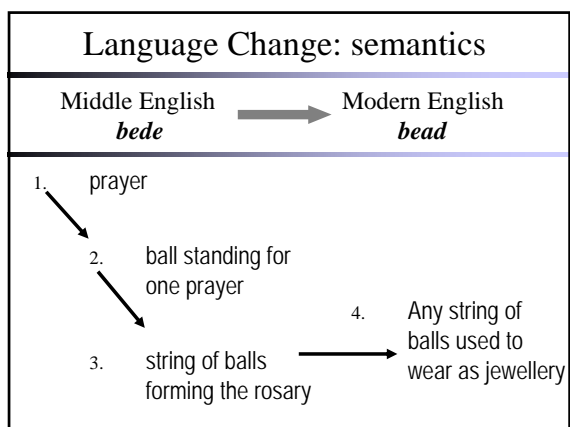
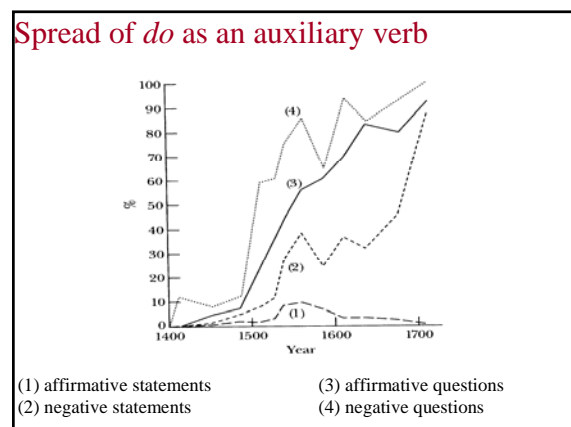
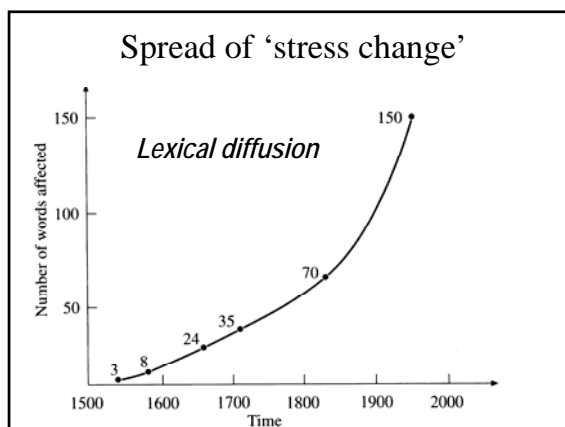
*outlaw, convert, record, ...*

Table 8.55 Stress shift in English (nouns)

Before the 16th century	During the 16th century	During the 18th century	Today
rebél	rébel	rébel	rébel
affix	affix	áffix	áffix
recéss	recéss	recéss	récess
místake	místake	místake	místake

*report, support, ...*

"dispute" ?



### Language Change: semantics

**Semantic narrowing**

- hound : 'a hunting breed'
- fowl 'any bird' : 'a domesticated bird'

**Amelioration**

- pretty 'tricky, sly' : 'attractive'
- knight 'boy' : 'a man of honorable military rank'

**Perjoration**

- silly 'happy, prosperous' : 'foolish'
- wench 'girl' : 'wanton woman, prostitute'

**Shift**

- immoral 'not customary' : 'unethical'
- bead 'prayer' : 'bead'

**Weakening**

- wreak 'avenge, punish' : 'to cause, inflict'
- quell 'kill, murder' : 'to put down, pacify'

### Language Change: semantics

Chaucer: (a) *At mete wel ytaught was she with alle  
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,*  
(b) *Full semely after hir mete she raughte*

Middle English *mete* → Modern English *meat*

A meal, occasionally dinner

a. Any kind of food:  
*the mete shall be mylk,  
honey and wyne*

b. Food in general,  
opposite to drink:  
*it is mete and drinke*

→

The flesh of animals  
used for food

## Subjects and Objects in English

- The fifth day saw our departure.
- The room seats 500 people.
- The stove has blown a fuse.
- The bucket was leaking water.
- A pound once bought two pints of beer.
- This ad will sell us a lot.
- John wounded his leg in the war.
- The latest edition of this book has added a chapter.
- She stroked her long fingers over the new coat.
- He wiped the wet cloth over the dish.
- He swam the Channel in one day.
- They fled the capital.
- The albatross was riding the wind.
- He threatened violence.
- The march protested the invasion of Harikutu.
- The book sold two million copies.

Adapted from Bernard Kornman (1989) *Linguistic Essentials* Corbin, p.134

## Origin of English Words

**Table 8.46** Origin of the 5000 most frequent words in English

Degree of frequency	(Source language %)			
	English	French	Latin	Other
First 1000	83	11	2	4
Second 1000	34	46	11	9
Third 1000	29	46	14	11
Fourth 1000	27	45	17	11
Fifth 1000	27	47	17	9

## Languages in England

**Table 14.15** Main languages reported in five LEAs

Table 14.15	Main languages reported in five LEAs				
	Bradford	Coventry	London Borough of Peterborough	London Borough of Waltham Forest	
(1) Total no. of pupils recorded as using a language other than English at home	14,201	7189	7407	2408	5521
(2) Total no. of identifiably distinct languages reported	64	50	87	42	65
(3) The most frequently reported spoken languages or language groupings as a % of (1) to the nearest whole number	Punjabi 53 Urdu 19 Gujarati 9 Bengali 3 Punjabi 3 Italian 3 Polish 1 Hindi 1 Chinese 1 Creoles* 1 Ukrainian 1	Punjabi 53 Gujarati 16 Urdu 7 Hindi 3 Italian 2 Bengali 2 Polish 2 Chinese 1 Creoles* 1	Greek 34 Turkish 15 Creoles* 9 Gujarati 6 Italian 6 French- based 4 Hindi 2 Creoles* 3 Urdu 2 Punjabi 2 Spanish 2 Chinese 2 French 1	Punjabi 24 Urdu 21 Gujarati 18 Greek 8 Chinese 4 Creoles* 7 Polish 2 Turkish 2 German 2 French- based 2 Hindi 1 Creoles* 1 Bengali 1 Chinese 2 Italian 2 Hindi 1 French 1	Punjabi 31 Urdu 21 Gujarati 8 Greek 8 Creoles* 7 Turkish 4 French- based 2 Creoles* 3 Bengali 3 Chinese 2 Italian 2 Hindi 1 French 1
(4) Total of (3) as cumulative % of (1)	95%	93%	86%	90%	91%

\* 'Creoles' here means English-based and other non-French-based Creole languages.