

Contents

CHAPTER 1

What Is a Language? 1

Some Confusion about Language, 1. Why Did We Choose to Talk? 2. Some Theories about the Origin of Language, 3. The Structural Levels of Language, 4. A Tentative Definition of Language, 5. Speech and Writing, 7. Some Writing to Look Through, 8. The Variations of Language, 10. The Chicken or the Egg? 11. Langue and Parole, 11. The True-Language Theory, 12. The Sum-of-Parts Theory, 14. A Suggested Compromise, 16.

CHAPTER 2

The Sounds We Talk With 19

Selection of Sounds, 19. Phonetics, 20. Phonemes, 22. Origin and Distortion of the Ordinary Alphabet, 24. The IPA, 25. The Two Extremes of Our Sound System, 27. The Consonant Phonemes, 28. The Voiceless Stops, 28. The Voiced Stops, 29. Fricatives and Affricates, 29. The

Liquids and Nasals, 30. Consonant Summary, 31. The Vowel Phonemes, 32. The Short Vowels, 32. Long Vowel and Diphthong Symbols, 34. Diphthongs in "R-Less" Dialects, 34. Phonemic Transcription, 35.

CHAPTER 3 *The Pre-History of English* 38

Reconstructing Languages, 38. Some Romance Languages, 38. Mechanics of Sound Change, 40. English and German, 42. The Great Language Families, 43. Origin of the Indo-European Family, 44. The Branches of Indo-European, 45. The Modern Discovery of Indo-European, 47. The Germanic Group and Grimm's Law, 49. Heavy Germanic Stress, 52. The Three Branches of Germanic, 53. The Genealogy of English, 54.

CHAPTER 4 *Old English* 55

The Beginnings of English, 55. Pre-Christian England, 58. The Introduction of Christianity, 61. The Coming of the Danes, 61. Alfred and English Prose, 64. The Diversity of Old English, 65. An Approach to the Old English Sound System, 67. The Consonants, 68. The Vowels, 71. The Diphthongs, 72. Summary of Old English Sounds, 72. A Specimen of Old English, 73. The "Synthetic" Structure of Old English, 78. Nouns, 80. The Personal Pronouns, 83. Demonstrative and Interrogative Pronouns, 85. Adjectives, 87. Verbs, 88. Strong and Weak Verbs, 88. The Strong Verbs, 89. Classes of Strong Verbs, 90. The Weak Verbs, 92. Changes in Classification, 92. Adverbs, 93. Prepositions, Conjunctions, and Interjections, 94. Summary of Old English Inflections, 94. "The Creation," 94. Analyzing "The Creation," 96. Vocabulary Replacements, 99. "Caesar's Invasion," 101. The Latin Element in Old English, 101. The Scandinavian Element, 104.

CHAPTER 5 *The Middle English Period* 108

The Norman Conquest, 108. The Feudal System, 110. The Organization of the Country, 112. The Submergence of English, 113. The Diversity of

Middle English, 114. Some Peculiarities of Middle English Manuscripts, 117. Sound Changes in Middle English, 119. Loss of Inflections, 121. Borrowings from the French Vocabulary, 121. Irregularities in French Borrowings, 123. Indirect Influence of French, 124. Other Foreign Influences on Middle English, 125. Loss of Native Words and Word Elements, 125. Middle English Spelling, 126. The *Orrmulum*, 128. The *Cursor Mundi*, 130. *Alysoun*, 131. The London Dialect, 133. The Text of Chaucer, 133. Specimen of Chaucer, 134. Chaucer's Consonants, 136. Chaucer's Vowels, 136. Pronunciation, 137. Vocabulary, 139. Grammatical Structure, 142. Nouns, 142. Pronouns, 143. Adjectives, 144. Verbs, 144. Negatives, 145. Impersonal Constructions, 146. *The Morte Darthur*, 151.

CHAPTER 6

The English Renaissance 157

Early Modern English, 157. The Great Vowel Shift, 158. The Short Vowels, 160. Consonants, 160. Changes in Inflection, 161. The Spread of Education, 163. Weakening of Class Distinctions, 164. Introduction of Printing, 165. Development of Spelling Conventions, 166. English and Latin in the Renaissance, 170. The Debatable Importance of Authors, 171. Increase in Vocabulary, 173. The Conservatives, 174. The Enthusiasts for Native Resources, 179. The Travelers: Oversea Language, 181. Scholarly Innovators: Inkhorn Terms — and Others, 182. Copiousness, 184. Compendiousness, 185. Other Reasons for Borrowing, 186. Renaissance Neglect of Grammar, 189. Development of Sentence Structure, 190. The Status of Local Dialects, 192. The Quality of Renaissance English, 193.

CHAPTER 7

The Authorities Step In 195

The Desire to Regulate the Language, 195. "Universal Grammar," 198. The Idea of an Academy, 199. The Incubating Period, 199. The Earliest English Dictionaries, 200. Johnson's Dictionary, 205. The Beginnings of Our Traditional Grammar, 211. The Lowth Tradition, 212. Lowth's Preface, 213. Lowth's Grammar, 215. Sound Changes, 217. Development of Progressive and "Emphatic" Constructions, 218.

CHAPTER 8
English Spreads Out 220

The Double Expansion of English, 220. Trade and the British Empire, 221. The Influence of American English, 222. Other English-Speaking Countries, 225. The Expansion of Knowledge, 225. The Oxford English Dictionary, 226. Making Compounds, 230. Shortenings, 231. Other Sources, 232. Changes in Meaning, 232. Varieties of English, 235. Changes in the Verb System, 237.

CHAPTER 9
"Traditional" Grammar — and Some Early Reactions 239

Some General Remarks about Grammar, 239. Structural Patterns, 242. Variations in Traditional Grammar, 243. Nouns and Adjectives, 244. Number, 247. Gender, 247. Case, 249. Pronouns, 252. Verbs, 253. Person and Number, 254. Tense, 254. Mood, 255. Voice, 255. Latin and English Systems Compared, 255. Adverbs, 257. Prepositions and Conjunctions, 258. Interjections, 259. A Few Roman Ghosts, 259. "Formal English," 260. "Functional Grammar," 261. The "Doctrine of Usage" Reappears, 262. Structural Linguistics, 262.

CHAPTER 10
Contemporary Developments in America 264
by Samuel R. Levin and Constantine Kaniklidis

Introduction, 264. Transformational-Generative Syntax: The Standard Theory, 268. Generative Phonology, 289. Case Grammar, 297. Post-Standard Theory Developments, 302.

Select Bibliography 307

Index 310