So, do you guys speak English?

• Yes!
• And so did Shakespeare:
  *A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.*

• Translation?
  Not really!

So, do you guys speak English?

• Yes! And so did Chaucer:
  *Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote*
  *The droght of March hath perced to the roote.*

• Translation?
  *When April with its sweet showers*
  *The drought of March has pierced to the root.*

So, do you guys speak English?

• Yes! And so did the guy who wrote *Beowulf*:
  *Wolde guman findan þone þe him on sweofote sare geteode.*

• Translation?
  *He wanted to find the man who harmed him while he slept.*

Languages change over time

• So, you get the obvious point: Languages do change over time.
• There are two main questions with regard to language change:
  *First, how does a language change?*
  *Second, why does a language change?*

• We talk about this today.
Language = Lexicon + Grammar

- Remember that a language has two components: a lexicon (simply a list of words) and a grammar (a system that manipulates the lexicon in several ways).
- The grammar of a language includes rules that affect pronunciation (phonology), word formation (morphology), sentence structure (syntax), and meaning (semantics).
- As we should expect, language change occurs in all these areas. Let’s see how.

Lexical change

- The lexicon of a language undergoes change in either one of two ways: “word gain” or “word loss”.

Word gain

- New words are always added to the lexicon of every language, almost on a daily basis. We have already seen in our discussion of word-formation that there are systematic word-formation processes that create new words and add them to the dictionary of every language: derivation, word coinage, conversion, clipping, blending, acronyms, borrowing and loan translations, compounding, back-formation, and eponyms.

Word loss

- So, Shakespeare used beseem (= to be suitable), wot (= to know), foin (= gladly).
- And technology might drive some words out of use, e.g., buckboard, buggy, dogcart, hansom, etc.

Two bits?

Iceboxes?
Word loss

- Euphemisms can also eventually lead to loss of words: lavatory, bathroom, restroom, lady's room/men's room, etc.
- Hugh Rawson's Dictionary of euphemisms and other doubletalk includes:
  - 'act of God' for disaster
  - 'administrative assistant' for secretary
  - 'associate' for co-worker of lower rank

Semantic change

- Language change may also take the form of changing the meanings of existing words. There are three such cases: broadening (dog), narrowing (meat), and semantic shift.
- There are two basic types of semantic shift: elevation (knight, chivalrous) and degradation (lust, silly).
- Keeping the system balanced: mete, flæsc, and foda.

Morphological change

- Languages also change morphologically over time. And morphological rules may be lost, added, or changed.

Loss of morphology

- Latin had case markings on nouns. Romance languages do not have any of these today.
- Old English (OE) actually did have case markings.

Case-marking in OE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Genitive</th>
<th>Dative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>bond</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>bond</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>bond</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>bond-es</td>
<td>ofme-es</td>
<td>ofme-es</td>
<td>ofme-es</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>bond-e</td>
<td>ofme-e</td>
<td>ofme-e</td>
<td>ofme-e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Loss of morphology in OE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Genitive</th>
<th>Dative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>bond</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>bond</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>bond</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
<td>ofme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>bond-es</td>
<td>ofme-es</td>
<td>ofme-es</td>
<td>ofme-es</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>bond-e</td>
<td>ofme-e</td>
<td>ofme-e</td>
<td>ofme-e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seo the youth gave a gift to the shepherd's son.
Loss of morphology in OE

• The loss of the case system was compensated by the use of prepositions, particularly “to” for the dative, and “of” for the genitive. It also led to restrictions on word order, as we’ll see later.

Loss of derivational morphemes

• A derivational rule may be lost with or without remnants. If there are many remnants, we say that the rule has become unproductive. This is what happened to the suffix -t, which was once used to derive nouns from verbs in English:
  
  - drew → draft
  - drive → drift
  - shove → shift

Loss of derivational morphemes

• Old English had a suffix –u to make nouns from adjectives:
  - menig “many” → menigu “multitude”
  - eald “old” → aeldu “old age”

• This was completely lost; there are no remnant words.

Adding rules:
Borrowing of derivational affixes

• Latin –bils was borrowed into English via French words (e.g., change → changeable). But it was afterwards applied also to native words, such as wash → washable.

Grammaticalization

• Grammaticalization is a process whereby a lexical item acquires a grammatical function in the language:
  
  lexical morpheme → grammatical morpheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old English word</th>
<th>Modern English suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bad</td>
<td>‘bad, condition, nasty’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eolc</td>
<td>‘condition, power’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(go)-hlc</td>
<td>‘similar, equal, like’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grammaticalization

• The possessive morpheme bita: in Egyptian Arabic is probably a metathesized form from the verb taba ’ (=follow) via grammaticalization:

  ḥil-kitāb bita: Ahmād

  the-book Possessive Ahmād

  “Ahmād’s book”
New affixes from compounding

• A common source for new affixes lies in compounding. A [N+N] compound with a certain N in a certain position may become the model for a new suffixation rule because the second N is reanalyzed as a suffix.
• A new affix may thus arise from compounding, as in the case of Dutch boer, which originally means “farmer,” but was then extended to mean “supplier/seller of”:
  - groenteboer “one who sells vegetables”
  - visboer “one who sells fish”
  - kolenboer “one who sells coals”
  - patatboer “one who sells French fries”

New affixes from “false” analysis

• New affixes may also arise from a false analysis of words that have a morphological structure. The process is also called folk etymology:
  - alcoholic ➔ workaholic, chocaholic, shopaholic
  - hamburger ➔ cheesburger, fishburger, chickenburger

New affixes out of “nowhere”

• In some cases, there’s no morphological structure at all, or at least not one that falls within the realm of English morphology:
  - watergate leads to Irangate, contragate

Extending affixes to new categories

• Sometimes, morphological change takes place when an affix is used with categories that it normally does not apply to, thereby deriving new words:
  - -able in objectionable
  - -ese in motherese and journales

Syntactic change: Word Order

• Word order in a language could change over time. For example, Old English (OE) had more variable word order than Modern English (ModE) does.
• So, we do find SVO order in simple transitive clauses:
  - Hē gesēah þone mann
  - He saw the man

Syntactic change

•
Syntactic change: Word Order

• When the clause began with an element such as Ḟa (="then"), the verb would follow that element, therefore preceding the subject:
  Ḟa ṣende sē cyning Ḟone disc
  then sent the king the dish
  “Then the king sent the dish.”

• When the object was a pronoun, the order in OE was typically SOV:
  Hēo hine lærde
  She him saved
  “She saved him.”

• The same SOV word order also prevailed in embedded clauses, even when the object was not a pronoun:
  Ḟa hē Ḟone cyning sōhte, hē bēotode
  when he the king visited, he boasted
  “When he visited the king, he boasted.”

• As we noted earlier, case markings were lost during the Middle English (MidE) period, and, as you should expect, SVO order became the unmarked word order in the language.
  • The following table shows the change in word order frequency that took place around 1300 and 1400:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1000</th>
<th>1200</th>
<th>1300</th>
<th>1400</th>
<th>1500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OV %</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VO %</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Negation in OE was done by placing the negation marker ne before a verbal element:
  Ḟiet he na siǰan geboren ne wūrdē
  that he never after born not would-be
  “that he should never be born after that”

• Notice word order and the use of double negatives.
Syntactic change: Negation

- Proto-Indo-European is believed to have had a negation marker *ne*.
- In old Latin, a new form arose from combining *ne* with the word for “one” (*unum*). This led to the form *non*.
- Hence, Old French ended up with both *non* and *ne*.

Syntactic change: Negation

- Both forms developed a division of labor, where *ne* became the used form when the negation word is placed before verbs, and *non* for other cases of negation:
  - *Il ne dorme pas*
  - *he not sleeps (not)*
  - *Vous venez ou non?*
  - *you come or not*
- Interestingly, many French speakers today are dropping the *ne*:
  - *J’ai pas dit ça*
  - *I’ve not said this*

Double comparatives and superlatives

- Examples: *more gladder, more lower, moost royallest, moost shamefullest*
- These were all ok in Middle English.

Genitives

- The Wife’s Tale of Bath (MidE)
- The Wife of Bath’s Tale (ModE)
- The man’s hat from Boston (MidE)
- The man from Boston’s hat (ModE)

Phonological change

- Perhaps the most noticeable change in the grammar of a language happens in pronunciation.
- Even though change can affect all areas of phonology (e.g., tone, stress, and syllable structure), we will focus here primarily on change involving individual sounds as they occur in sequence. This is called sequential change.

Assimilation in place or manner

- Early Latin [impossibilis] → Late Latin [impossiblis]
- Early OE [stefn] → Later OE [stemn] “stem”
- Latin [octo] (c = k) → Italian [otto] “eight”
Assimilation: Affrication

- Affrication is a form of assimilation in which palatalized stops become affricates, either [ts] or [tʃ] if the original stop was voiceless, or [dz] or [dʒ] if the original stop was voiced, e.g.,
  Latin centum [k] → Old French gent [ts] “one hundred”
  Latin meðius [d] → Italian mezzo [dz] “half”

Assimilation: Nasalization

- Vowels may get nasalized before nasal consonants, followed by deletion of that nasal consonant (typically when it is final). This is how nasal vowels were created in French and Portuguese, e.g.,
  Latin bon- Portugese bon [bõ] French bon [bɔ] “good”

Dissimilation

- Late Latin [amna] → Spanish [alma] “soul”
- Italian [albero] (but cf. French arbre).

Epenthesis

- Earlier OE [ganra] → Late OE [gandra] “gander”

Metathesis

- Earlier OE wasp → Late OE wasp “wasp”
- Earlier OE jfridda → Late OE jfrīdda “third”
- Also at a distance:
  Latin mirāculum → Spanish milagro

Vowel deletion

- A vowel may be deleted from a word, resulting in **apocope** (if the vowel is final) or **syncope** (if the vowel is medial):
  - Apocope:
  - Syncope:
Vowel reduction

- Vowel deletion is frequently preceded by vowel reduction, where a vowel is reduced to schwa, followed by syncope or apocope, e.g.,
  - Old English (OE) → Middle English (MidE) → Early Modern English (Early ModE)
    - stānæ [ʌ] → stones [o] → stones [ə]
    - namæ [a] → name [o] → name [ə]

Consonant deletion

- Consonants may also delete from a word giving rise to another instance of pronunciation change, e.g., Old and Middle English had [kn] and [gn], but the initial consonant underwent deletion.
- And of course French provides a great example of loss of word-final consonant deletion:
  - Old and Middle English (OE) → present-day French (Fr.)
    - gross [gros] “large”
    - chaud [cho] “warm”

Substitution

- Substitution involves the replacement of one segment with another similar-sounding segment:
  - Middle English [x] → Modern English [f] in “laugh”
  - Standard English [u] → Cockney [f] in “thin”

Phonological Shift

- A phonological shift is a change in which a series of sounds is systematically modified so that their organization with respect to each other is altered.
- A well known example of this phonological change is the so-called Great Vowel Shift (GVS) in the history of English, where the seven long vowels underwent a series of modifications between 1400-1600, as shown in the following table:
A pronunciation puzzle

please-pleasant
serene-serenity
sane-sanity
crime-criminal

Next class agenda

• Reconstructing dead languages: The comparative method. Read Chapter 11, pp. 509-518.
• And, hopefully, Pidgins and Creoles, Chapter 10, pp. 453.460.