



THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

AIMS OF THE UNIT	2
A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE	3-20
1. Where It All Began	3-4
2. Similarities of Language	5-7
3. The Beginning of Language in Britain	8-12
4. The Middle English Period	13-17
5. The Modern English Period	18-19
6. Today's English	20
THE ORIGINS OF ENGLISH WORDS	21-31
1. Etymology	21-26
2. Derivations of Some Common English Phrases	27-31
DENOTATION AND CONNOTATION	32-36
WORDS FOR BUILDING VOCABULARY	37-47

© 1996 T. R. Gadd, B.A., M. Ed.

Permission is granted to the individual teacher who purchases one copy of the book "**The English Language**", to reproduce the activities for use in his/her classroom only. Reproduction of these materials for an entire school or for a school system, or for other colleagues or for commercial sale is strictly prohibited.

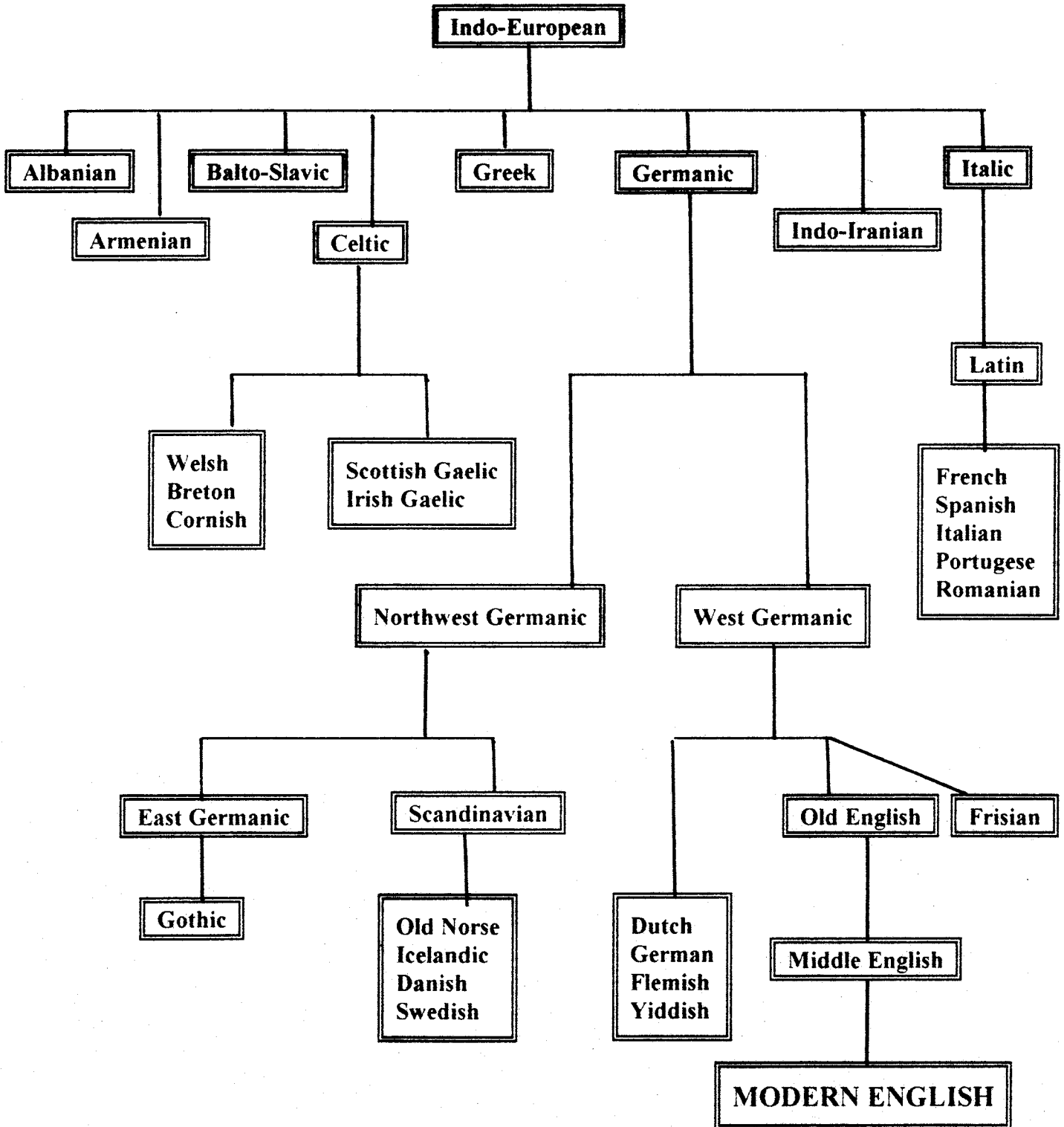
ISBN 1-55035-441-8

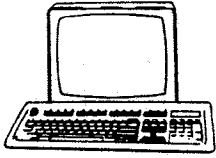


THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE



THE INDO-EUROPEAN FAMILY OF LANGUAGES





2. SIMILARITIES OF LANGUAGES

As people began to emigrate to different parts of the world, they took their languages with them. When they settled in particular areas, their language developed differently from that of their neighbours, who may have lived hundreds of miles away. Yet, they share language characteristics with those people who originated in the same place. For this reason, there are numerous similarities between languages in different parts of Europe.

Much of the vocabulary of the Germanic languages shown on the chart on page 4 is similar; certain words in German, English and Dutch, for example, are simply variations of the old Germanic words. The "Romance" languages, those that developed from Latin (or Roman, hence the word "romance"--it has nothing to do with love), also share words that are similar in spelling and pronunciation. Spanish and Italian, for example, are so similar that it is possible for a Spaniard to communicate with an Italian each using his or her own language. The Spanish, *Donde está la estación?* is similar to the Italian *Dov'è la stazione?* yet is quite different from the English, *Where is the station?* There are also such similarities in the Baltic and Slavic languages: Polish shares many similar sounding vocabulary words with Croatian, for example.

The chart on page 6 shows similarities of several languages. You will note from the chart that sometimes common words are quite different in languages which you would expect to be similar. This is because there have been other influences either within the language or from other languages.



SIMILARITIES OF LANGUAGES



English	German	Norwegian	Latin	French	Italian	Spanish
night	nacht	nåt	nox	nuit	notte	noches
yes	ja	ja	¹	oui	si	si
no	nein	ne	²	non	no	no
good	gut	gø	bonus	bon	buon	bueno
day	tag	dag	dies	jour	giorno	dia
bread	brot	brø	panus	pain	pane	pan
I	ich	jeg	³	je	io	³

The chart shows several Germanic words which are similar and several Romance language words which are similar, but it also shows variations; for example, Spanish *dia* is similar to Latin *dies*, whereas the French *jour* is close to Italian *giorno* and quite different from the Latin and Spanish.

¹No single word existed for *yes*; the sentence was rephrased in the affirmative.

²No single word existed for *no*; the sentence was rephrased in the negative.

³No single word existed; the pronoun was contained in the verb ending.



A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE



SIMILARITIES OF LANGUAGES

ACTIVITY #1:

Below is a blank chart, similar to that which appears on page 6, except that the non-English languages have been omitted.

Find classmates, relatives or other acquaintances who have a working knowledge of a language which does not appear on the original chart; fill in the name of the language at the top of the column and the translation for each English word. Share your results with your classmates.

Determine what words are similar to each other and what languages are similar.

English						
night						
yes						
no						
good						
day						
bread						
I						