

# ★ Origin of English Language

## Language

Language is the expression of human personality in words whether written or spoken. It is the universal medium alike for conveying the common facts and feelings of everyday life. It compares a number of languages, it probably soon appears that some of them have some sort of relationship to one another. The other languages may seem quite isolated. The history of different languages shows that they have descended from some common ancestor and spread to different areas.

The various languages of the world can be classified according to the genealogy. To

which they belong and the families to which they are classified now. For example, if we take the words for 'is' in some of the better known European and Asiatic languages, we may reconstruct with fair probability the ancestral pre-historic origin. Thus, Latin 'est', Greek 'esti', Sanskrit 'asti', Russian 'est', German 'ist', all these terms may have descended from some common pre-historic root. Similarly, the Latin 'centum', shows something special with the Sanskrit term 'shatam'. The Graeco-Roman term 'igmi' is very close to the Sanskrit term 'igmi'.

English belongs, in all its stages, to the 'Indo-European' family of languages. This group covers formerly known as 'Indo-Germanic' and still earlier 'Indo-Aryan'. 'Indo-European' is the name given to the set of linguistic forms from which nearly all European languages

as well as those of persic and a very large part of India can be shown to have descended. However, we do not know that all these pre-historic forms co-existed.

Indo-European merely suggests that this group covers most of Europe and India. The pre-dominance of German scholars coined the earlier term Indo-Germanic. The word Angern too was promoted by the German philologists.

Beginning at some period several thousand years B.C. this Indo-European spread itself both east and west gradually, if mixed with many Non-Indo-European languages. As speakers said farther and farther from the starting point, this group developed more and more qualities which made them different.

The earliest period of English was formerly called Anglo-Saxon. However, it has been replaced by old English term. The tribes such as angels, saxons and jutes to settle in Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries were from Northern Germany. These brought with them what is called a Low German type of language. This language was transplanted to England later on kind two distinct divisions in Europe.

1) High German [most German and Austrians]

2) Low German [Dutch, Flemish, Frisian, English etc.]

English has developed over the years many qualities of sound and syntax which differentiate it both from the original common Germanic

languages including all the dialects.

### 2) Latin :-

It includes ancient as well as modern form of this language and all its derivatives.

### 3) Celtic :-

This survives in ancient inscriptions and in the medieval and modern language of Wales, Ireland, The Scottish Highlands and Brittany. This language also existed in Cornwall and the Isle of Man.

### 4) Germanic :-

This group comprises of the languages of Germany, Scandinavia, Holland and the Flemish parts of Belgium as well as English.

from their ancestor. In this way it may be assumed that the modern languages of Europe, Persia & India have developed.

There are eight main groups of Indo European language. These are divided into

roughly an eastern and a western set of groups. The eastern and a western set of languages form groups of languages. They are:

### 1) Balto - Slavic :-

This group consists of all the Slavic languages and the related languages of Baltic countries such as Lithuania and Latvia.

### 2) Indo - Iranian :-

This group consists of the various languages of

Old and new India of which Sanskrit is the maker. The languages of Iran and Persia are also included here.

### 3) Armenian :-

This group comprises of various Armenian dialects, ancient and modern.

### 4) Albanian :-

The language of this group is only spoken over a relatively small area. However, it forms a separate group by its nature and helplessness.

## The western groups

One:

### 1) Greeks

It includes ancient and modern Greek.

and from all the other Germanic languages. However, if we think of the whole history of the language as a continuum, it may be divided as under :-

1) Old English (From the earliest writings till about 1100)

2) Middle English (From about 1100 till the end of the middle ages)

3) Modern English (From then onwards)

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