

Research of English Language Communication

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ABSTRACT

English language teaching is very important because of the global status of English. English language teaching is a process that requires great efforts on the part of all the participants. Classroom interaction, activities, textbooks are the most important elements of teaching process for the aims and objectives of a course. In view of the importance of English as a foreign language in Iraq, the researcher has examined the existing textbooks and system of teaching English in order to point out the shortcomings which have been hindering the Iraqi students from mastering the English language. The problem can be solved by using new textbooks. The teachers of English should also be equipped with an up-to-date knowledge of English Language Teaching (ELT).

1. Introduction

English is a West Germanic language that was first spoken in early medieval England and eventually became a global *lingua franca*. It is named after the Angles, one of the Germanic tribes that migrated to the area of Great Britain that later took their name, as England. Both names derive from Anglia, a peninsula in the Baltic Sea. The language is closely related to Frisian and Low Saxon, and its vocabulary has been significantly influenced by other Germanic languages, particularly Norse (a North Germanic language), and to a greater extent by Latin and French.

English has developed over the course of more than 1,400 years. The earliest forms of English, a group of West Germanic (Ingvaenic) dialects brought to Great Britain by Anglo-Saxon settlers in the 5th century, are collectively called Old English. Middle English began in the late 11th century with the Norman conquest of England; this was a period in which the language was influenced by French. Early Modern English began in the late 15th century with the introduction of the printing press to London, the printing of the King James Bible and the start of the Great Vowel Shift.

Modern English has been spreading around the world since the 17th century by the worldwide influence of the British Empire and the United States. Through all types of printed and electronic media of these countries, English has become the leading language of international discourse and the *lingua franca* in many regions and professional contexts such as science, navigation and law.

English is the largest language by number of speakers, and the third most-spoken native language in the world, after Standard Chinese and Spanish. It is the most widely learned second language and is either the official language or one of the official languages in almost 60 sovereign states. There are more people who have learned it as a second language than there are native speakers. It is estimated that there are over 2 billion speakers of English.^[12] English is the majority native language in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland, and it is widely spoken in some areas of

the Caribbean, Africa and South Asia. It is a co-official language of the United Nations, the European Union and many other world and regional international organisations. It is the most widely spoken Germanic language, accounting for at least 70% of speakers of this Indo-European branch. English has a vast vocabulary, though counting how many words any language has is impossible. English speakers are called "Anglophones".

Modern English grammar is the result of a gradual change from a typical Indo-European dependent marking pattern, with a rich inflectional morphology and relatively free word order, to a mostly analytic pattern with little inflection, a fairly fixed subject–verb–object word order and a complex syntax.^[16] Modern English relies more on auxiliary verbs and word order for the expression of complex tenses, aspect and mood, as well as passive constructions, interrogatives and some negation. The variation among the accents and dialects of English used in different countries and regions—in terms of phonetics and phonology, and sometimes also vocabulary, idioms, grammar, and spelling—can often be understood by speakers of different dialects, but in extreme cases can lead to confusion or even mutual unintelligibility between English speakers.

English is an Indo-European language and belongs to the West Germanic group of the Germanic languages.^[17] Old English originated from a Germanic tribal and linguistic continuum along the Frisian North Sea coast, whose languages gradually evolved into the Anglic languages in the British Isles, and into the Frisian languages and Low German/Low Saxon on the continent. The Frisian languages, which together with the Anglic languages form the Anglo-Frisian languages, are the closest living relatives of English. Low German/Low Saxon is also closely related, and sometimes English, the Frisian languages, and Low German are grouped together as the Ingvaenic (North Sea Germanic) languages, though this grouping remains debated.^[18] Old English evolved into Middle English, which in turn evolved into Modern English.^[19] Particular dialects of Old and Middle English also developed into a number of other Anglic

languages, including Scots^[20] and the extinct Fingallian and Forth and Bargo (Yola) dialects of Ireland.^[21]

Like Icelandic and Faroese, the development of English in the British Isles isolated it from the continental Germanic languages and influences. It has since evolved considerably. English is not mutually intelligible with any continental Germanic language, differing in vocabulary, syntax, and phonology, although some of these, such as Dutch or Frisian, do show strong affinities with English, especially with its earlier stages.^[22]

Unlike Icelandic and Faroese, which were isolated, the development of English was influenced by a long series of invasions of the British Isles by other peoples and languages, particularly Old Norse and Norman French. These left a profound mark of their own on the language, so that English shows some similarities in vocabulary and grammar with many languages outside its linguistic clades—but it is not mutually intelligible with any of those languages either. Some scholars have argued that English can be considered a mixed language or a creole—a theory called the Middle English creole hypothesis. Although the great influence of these languages on the vocabulary and grammar of Modern English is widely acknowledged, most specialists in language contact do not consider English to be a true mixed language.^{[23][24]}

English is classified as a Germanic language because it shares innovations with other Germanic languages such as Dutch, German, and Swedish.^[25] These shared innovations show that the languages have descended from a single common ancestor called Proto-Germanic. Some shared features of Germanic languages include the division of verbs into strong and weak classes, the use of modal verbs, and the sound changes affecting Proto-Indo-European consonants, known as Grimm's and Verner's laws. English is classified as an Anglo-Frisian language because Frisian and English share other features, such as the palatalisation of consonants that were velar consonants in Proto-Germanic (see Phonological history of Old English § Palatalization).

English studies (usually called simply English) is an academic discipline taught in primary, secondary, and post-secondary education in English-speaking countries; it is not to be confused with English taught as a foreign language, which is a distinct discipline. It involves the study and exploration of texts created in English literature. English includes: the study of literature written in the English language (especially novels, plays, short stories, and poetry), the majority of which comes from Britain, the United States, and Ireland (although English-language literature from any country may be studied, and local or national literature is usually emphasized in any given country); English composition, including writing essays, short stories, and poetry; English language arts, including the study of grammar, usage, and style; and English sociolinguistics, including discourse analysis of written and spoken texts in the English language, the history of the English language, English language learning and teaching, and the study of World Englishes.

English linguistics (syntax, morphology, phonetics, phonology, etc.) is usually treated as a distinct discipline, taught in a department of linguistics.

The disciplinary divide between a dominant literature or usage orientation is one motivation for the division of the North American Modern Language Association (MLA) into two subgroups. At universities in non-English-speaking countries, the same department often covers all aspects of English studies, including linguistics: this is reflected, for example, in the structure and activities of the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE).

It is common for departments of English to offer courses and scholarship in the areas of the English language, literature (including literary criticism and literary theory), public speaking and speech-writing, rhetoric, composition studies, creative writing, philology and etymology, journalism, poetry, publishing, literacy, area studies (especially American studies), the philosophy of language, theater and play-writing, screenwriting, communication studies, technical communication, cultural studies, critical theory, gender studies, ethnic studies, disability studies, digital media and electronic publishing, film studies and other media studies, and various courses in the liberal arts and humanities, among others. In most English-speaking countries, the study at all educational levels of texts produced in non-English languages takes place in other departments, such as departments of foreign language or of comparative literature.

The English Major (alternatively "English concentration," "B.A. in English") is a term in the United States and a few other countries for an undergraduate university degree focused around reading, analyzing, and writing texts in the English language. The term may also be used to describe a student who is pursuing such a degree.

Students who major in English reflect upon, analyse, and interpret literature and film, presenting their analyses in clear, cogent writing. Although help-wanted postings rarely solicit English majors specifically, a degree in English hones critical thinking skills essential to a number of career fields, including writing, editing, publishing, teaching, research, advertising, public relations, law, and finance.

The history of English studies at the modern university in Europe and America begins in the second half of the nineteenth century. Initially, English studies comprised a motley array of content: the practice of oratory, the study of rhetoric and grammar, the composition of poetry, and the appreciation of literature (mostly by authors from England, since American literature and language study was only added in the twentieth century).^[1] In Germany and several other European countries, English philology, a strongly positivistic and historically interested practice of reading pre-modern texts, became the preferred scholarly paradigm, but English-speaking countries distanced themselves from philological paradigms soon after World War I.^[2] At the end of this process, English departments tended to refocus their work on various forms of writing instruction (creative, professional, critical) and the interpreting of literary texts, and teacher education in English recovered from the neglect it had suffered because of more science-oriented paradigms.^[3] Today, English departments in native-speaking countries re-evaluate their roles as sole guardians of the discipline because English is less and less native speakers' unique 'property' and has to be shared with the millions of speakers and writers from other

countries for whom English is an essential means of communication and artistic expression.[4]

English literature became an object of study in French universities as part of foreign (comparative) literature in the nineteenth century. A chair of foreign literature was established at the College de France in 1841.[5] English was first taught independently from other languages and literature in the University of Lille and in the University of Lyons and only afterwards in the Sorbonne. These three universities were the first major centres of English studies in France. The first lecturer and later professor of English studies would seem to have been Auguste Angellier. After spending several years teaching French in England in the 1860s and 1870s, he became a lecturer in English studies at the University of Lille in 1881 and a professor of English in 1893. In France nowadays, literature, civilisation, linguistics and the spoken and written language are all important in English studies in universities.[6]

The English major rose to prominence in American colleges during the first half of the 1970s.[7] It provided an opportunity for students to develop critical skills in analytical reading with the aim of improving their writing, as well as exercises in rhetoric and persuasive expression that had been traditionally only taught in classical studies and available to the very few due to language barriers and a

shortage of professors who could actively engage students in the humanities. Outside the United States (originating in Scotland and then rippling out into the English-speaking world) the English major became popular in the latter half of the 19th century during a time when religious beliefs were shaken in the face of scientific discoveries.[8] Literature was thought to act as a replacement for religion in the retention and advancement of culture, and the English Major thus provided students with the chance to draw moral, ethical, and philosophical qualities and meanings of older studies from a richer and broader source of literature than that of the ancient Greek and Latin classics.

Since 2000, there have been questions about the specific function of English departments at the contemporary U.S. college and university.^[by whom?] The absence of a clearly defined disciplinary identity and the increasingly utilitarian goals in U.S. society present a challenge to those academic units still mostly focusing on the printed book and the traditional division in historical periods and national literatures, and neglecting allegedly non-theoretical areas such as professional writing, composition, and multimodal communication.[9]

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