

ENGB3 – Developing Language: Language Change (Section B)

Graphological Change

The way that some letters are written has changed over time

- U and V were interchangeable
- Y and I were interchangeable
- Cursive S used to be used at the beginning or middle of a word (long s)
- “uu” used to be used instead of a “w” (literally a double u)
- Capitalised nouns were used to show importance. However, in the C18th prescriptivist movements opposed this excessive capitalisation
- Used to use a hyphen for compound words (e.g. to-day)

f ∫

Font has changed

- Serif typefaces are older; they're used to look more traditional now
- Sans-serif fonts are used to look modern

A f l s A f l s

Sans serif Serif

Changes in Register

- We have a variety of registers in English language today
- In the past, there was only one register. Texts might seem formal to readers today, but it's possible that they were just reflection of the register at the time
- Goodman – more 'informalisation' lately. Texts are becoming less formal

Standardisation

Language has been standardised in these areas...

- Lexis and semantics – word meanings
- Grammar – grammatical rules
- Spelling
- Graphology – handwriting styles

Standardisation was driven by social and political reasons

Supported by technological advances that made it possible to codify language

It is about attitudes and values, such as what is 'correct' and 'poor' English