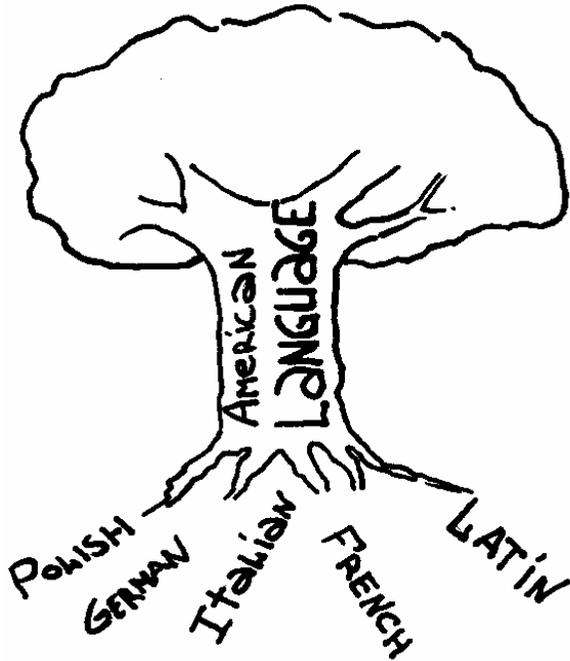


THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE

Robert Hendrickson



If One British traveler, with snobbery bordering on self-destructiveness, complained more than a century ago that American was not “pure enough Anglo-Saxon English”. The American language, with its numerous native terms or Americanisms (from 14,000 to 100,000 of them, according to various estimates) deriving from local conditions and the infusion of so many foreign tongues, would obviously differ from Received Standard British English on that score alone, not to mention the effect of these tongues on American pronunciation. Perhaps a hundred languages are spoken in the United States in addition to English. The top six,

according to the 1970 Census, are German (6 million speakers), Italian (4 million), French (2.5 million), Polish (2.5 million), Yiddish (1.5 million) and Scandinavian languages (1.2 million). Of Native American languages, Navaho is spoken by more people (100,000), than any other, with Ojibwa, or Chippewna, Next (30,000) and Sioux, or Dakota, third (20,000). Indian languages alone have contributed a great number of words to our vocabulary, and obviously these and other Americanisms have become part of the true universal English language, just as have words from the scores of languages that influenced British English over a much longer period of time... In truth, no such thing as Anglo-Saxon English exists anymore, if it ever did. There are well over a million Latin scientific names for animals used by English-speaking people, a million for insects, a million for flowers. That alone totals over 3 million English words with a foreign base. It seems clear that only a small portion of the 8 to 10 million English words (including technical terms and slang) were native-born in the British Isles.

- **infusion** - вплив
- **complain** - скаржитися, висловлювати невдоволення; скарга, біль, недуга
- **destructiveness** - руйнування, знищення
- **score** - різко критикувати (амер.), рахунок
- **total number** - підсумкова кількість
- **portion of words** - частина слів

Questions about the reading

- Why the British traveler's snobbery bordered on "self-destructiveness"?
- Where do you think the traveler was when the words were written?

Writing Assignment

- Write a paragraph about the state where you live. Devide it into parts and describe some characteristics you assotiate with each part. If you have not been to all parts of your state, base your descriptions on impressions you have formed from other sources, like newspapers, TV, etc.

David spent several years in Milan, Italy, working at a school for American and Italian children. At the school she observed some interesting differences among the children, which she attributes to the differing priorities and values of Americans and Italians. Since her return to the United States, Brenda David had been studying piano, flying airplanes, and teaching English as a second language.