

Subota S.V.

LECTURE 1

**ENGLISH AS A GERMANIC
LANGUAGE. THE OLD ENGLISH
PERIOD.**

Plan

1. **The subject of the History of the English Language.**
2. **PIE and Indo-European languages.**
3. **PG and Germanic languages.**
4. **Periodization of the History of English.**
5. **Main historical events of the OE period.**
6. **Phonetic system of Germanic languages: stress, the system of consonants, the main changes (Grimm's Law, Verner's Law, Rhotacism).**
7. **PG Vowel system. The main changes (Common Germanic fracture, Common Germanic vowel shift).**
8. **Specific features of Common Germanic Grammar.**

Literature

- ▶ Расторгуева Т.А. История английского языка. – М.: Астрель, 2005. – С. 34-71.
- ▶ Ильиш Б.А. История английского языка. – Л.: Просвещение, 1972. – С. 5-8, 12-16, 20-43.
- ▶ Иванова И.П., Чахоян Л.П. История английского языка. – М.: Высшая школа, 1976. – С. 5-16, 46-53.
- ▶ Студенець Г.І. Історія англійської мови в таблицях. - К.: КДЛУ, 1998. – Tables 10-24, 26-29

Why should we learn the History of the English language?

In studying the English language today, we are faced with a number of irregularities which appear to be unintelligible from the modern point of view.

E.g. hit, get, but *light, daughter, know* or *read*

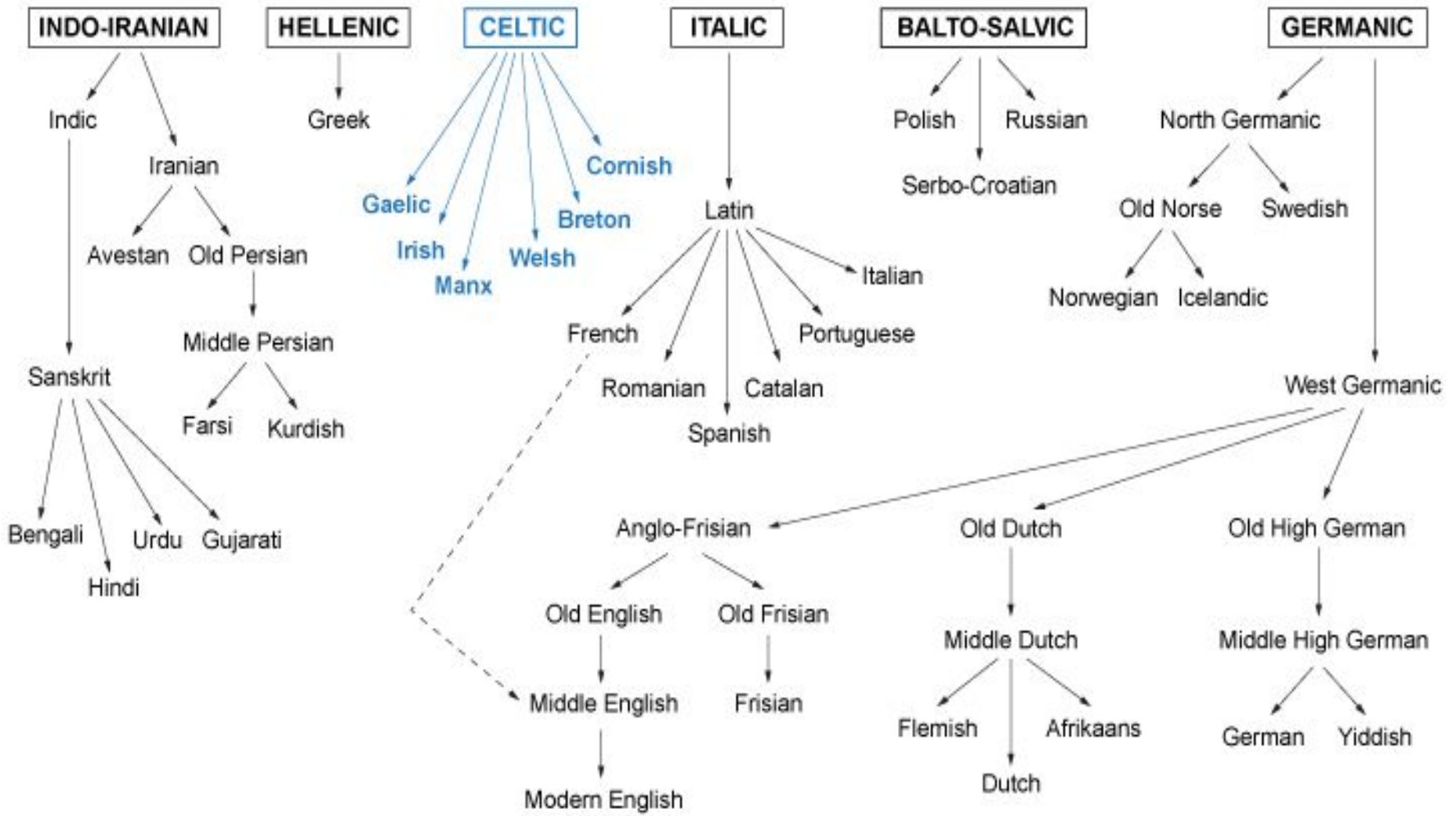
cut-cut-cut, but *put-put-put*

book-books, but *man-men, foot-feet, mouse-mice,*
child-children

The subject of the History of the English Language is a systematic study of the language development from the earliest times to the present day.

- ▶ There are approximately 7000 languages in the world. Languages can be classified according to different principles. The genealogical classification groups languages in accordance their origin from a common linguistic ancestor.
- ▶ Genetically, English belongs to the Germanic group of languages, which is one of the groups of the IE language family.

PROTO-INDO-EUROPEAN

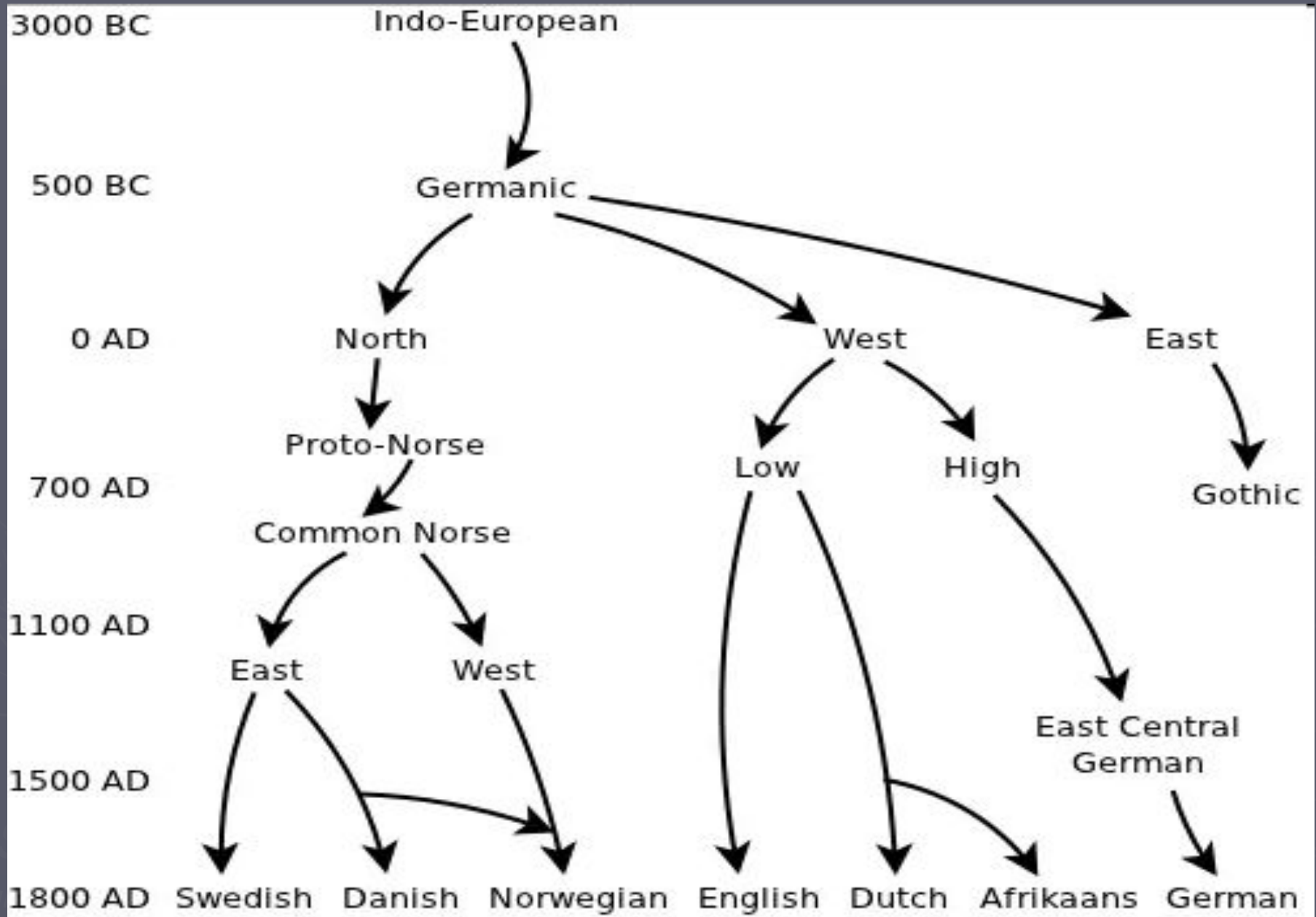


- ▶ **Indo-European family has 12 important branches: Indian, Iranian, Baltic, Slavonic, Germanic, Romanic, Celtic, Greek, Albanian, Armenian, Hettish, and Tocharian.** Thus English belongs to **the Germanic branch of Indo-European family** while **Ukrainian belongs to the Slavonic branch of the same family**, which means that they have a common ancestor. It is usually referred to as **Proto-Indo-European (PIE)**. It existed approximately **6000 years BC**.

Common Germanic branch later split up into three groups:

- ▶ **North Germanic**, represented only by **Old Norse**, which is also called **Old Icelandic**;
- ▶ **West Germanic**, including **Old High German, Old Low German, Old Saxon, Old English** and **Old Frisian**;
- ▶ **East Germanic group**, represented by **Gothic, Burgandian and Vandalic**.

The latter three languages died and are not represented in classification of Modern Germanic languages.



In the 5th c. AD some of the Germanic tribes which lived on the northern coast of Western Europe, namely **the Jutes, the Frisians, the Angles and the Saxons**, crossed the channel and began to conquer Britain. The invasion started in **449 AD**. Since this time we can speak about **the English language proper**. The history of the English language is usually subdivided into **three periods**:

- ▶ **Old English (OE) – V (VII) – XI cc.;**
- ▶ **Middle English (ME) – XII – XV cc. ;**
- ▶ **New English (NE) – XVI c. – present day**

Britain 400 – 500 Anglo-Saxon Homelands and Settlements

Primarily based on Higham's *Rome, Britain and the Anglo-Saxons*, Jones & Mattingly's *Atlas of Roman Britain*, and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*

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- ▶ The English scholar **Henry Sweet** (1845-1912), author of a number of works on the English language and on its history, proposed the following division of the history of English according to the character of vowels in unstressed positions:

- ▶ **OE as the period of full endings (sing**an**)**,
- ▶ **ME as the period of leveled endings (sing**en**)**,
- ▶ **NE as the period of lost endings (to sing).**



The linguistic boundaries between the periods are very close to the important social and political events
(**V c. - the settlement of the Germanic tribes, VII c. - earliest writings, XI c – the Norman Conquest, XV c. the arising of the English nation).**

The Seven Kingdoms of the Heptarchy [ˈhepta:ki]

- ▶ Germanic tribes formed in Britain **seven kingdoms: the Jutes formed Kent, the Saxons – Essex, Wessex and Sussex, and Angles – East Anglia, Northumbria and Mercia.**



OLD ENGLISH DIALECTS

- ▶ The language is represented by **four dialects: Northumbrian, Mercian, Kentish and West-Saxon.** Most of the manuscripts are in West Saxon.



Each of the periods may be characterized by specific features in different aspects of the language: phonology, grammar and vocabulary. If we approach the analysis of the English language of the OE period, we have to mention, first of all, **the shift of stress which took place in PG**. If in PIE there were two kinds of stress - **musical** and **dynamic**, **in Germanic languages only dynamic stress is preserved**. In IE word stress was free and **movable**, in PG (and OE) **it became fixed on the first syllable**.

Word Stress in PG

- ▶ Due to the force of articulation the stressed and unstressed syllables underwent different changes: stressed syllables were pronounced with great distinctness and precision, while unstressed syllables became less distinct and phonetically weakened.

- ▶ *PG *mak-oj-an*
- ▶ *OE macian*

Since the stress was fixed on the root, the weakening and loss of sounds mainly affected the affixes and grammatical endings. Many endings merged with the affixes, were weakened and dropped.

- ▶ *PG *fisk-a-z*
- ▶ *Goth. fisks,*
OE fisc, OI fiskr

PIE CONSONANT SYSTEM

		labial	dental	palatal	velar	labio-velar
stops	voiced	b	d	ǵ	g	g^w
	voiced aspirated	b^h	d^h	ǵ^h	g^h	g^wh
	voiceless	p	t	ǰ	k	k^w
	voiceless aspirated	p^h	t^h	ǰ^h	k^h	k^wh
fricatives		s				
sonorants		j (i) w (u) m n l r j w ɱ ɳ ʎ ɹ				

PG CONSONANT SYSTEM

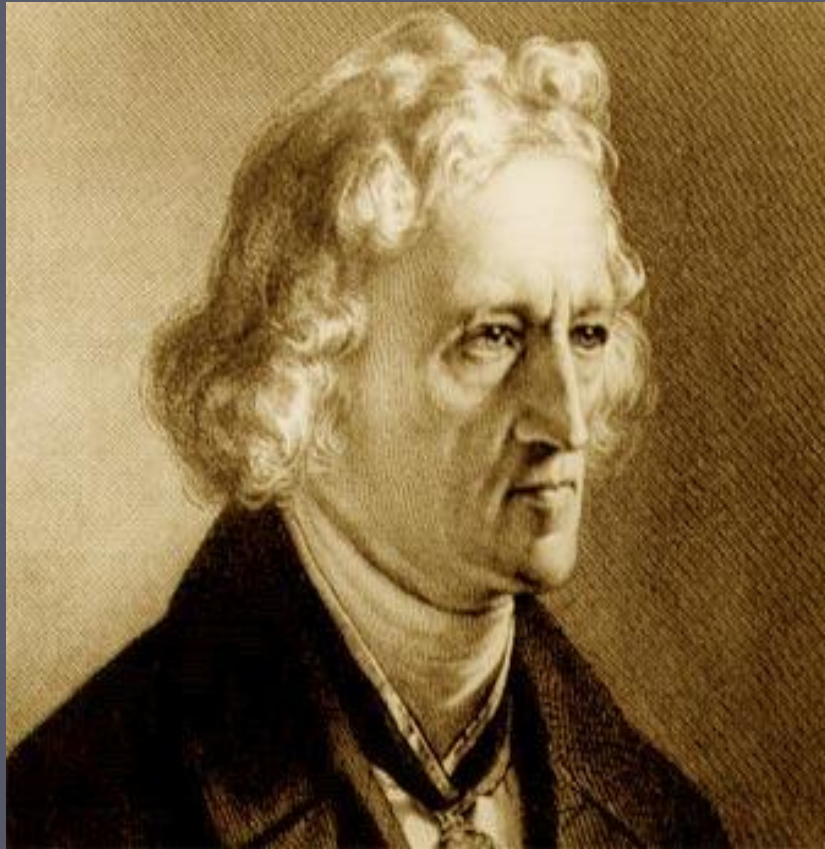
		labial	dental	velar	labio- velar	Pharyngeal
stops	voiced	b	d	g	g^w	
	voiceless	p	t	k	k^w	
fricatives	voiced	v	ð s	ɣ	ɣ^w	
	voiceless	f	θ z	x	x^w	h
sonorants		j (i) w (u) m n l r				

PIE		labial	dental	palatal	velar	labio-velar
stops	voiced	b	d	ǵ	g	g^w
	voiced aspirated	b^h	d^h	ǵ^h	g^h	g^{wh}
	voiceless	p	t	ǰ	k	k^w
	voiceless aspirated	p^h	t^h	ǰ^h	k^h	k^{wh}
fricatives		s				
sonorants		j (i) w (u) m n l r j w m n l r				

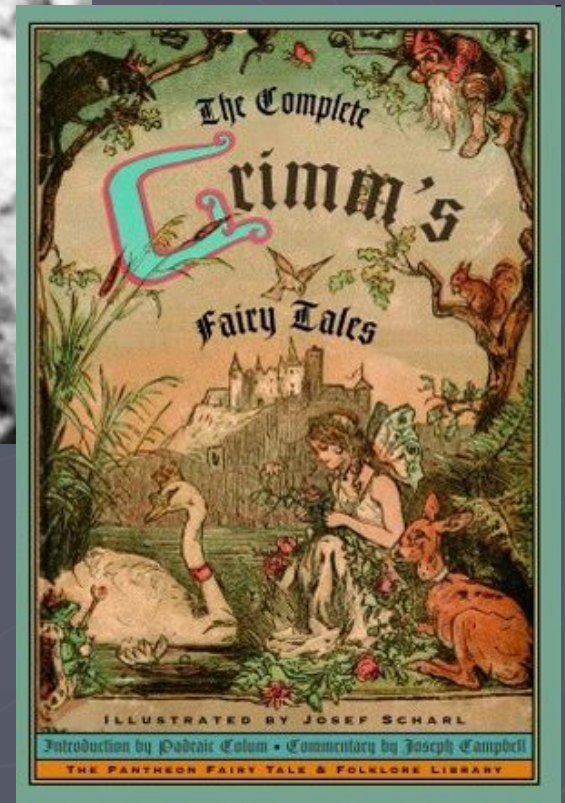
PG		labial	dental	velar	labio-vel ar	Pharyngeal
stops	voiced	b	d	g	g^w	
	voiceless	p	t	k	k^w	
fricatives	voiced	v	ð s	ɣ	ɣ^w	
	voiceless	f	θ z	x	x^w	h
sonorants		j (i) w (u) m n l r				

Jacob Grimm

(1785 – 1863)



Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm



The changes of consonants in PG were first formulated in terms of a phonetic law by J. Grimm in 1822

The essence of Grimm's Law

▶ **The type of articulation changes while the place of articulation is unchanged.**

As a result there appeared more fricatives in PG than there were in PIE.

The correspondences were grouped under 3 acts. Each of the acts covered quite a long period of time about 100 years and more.

The First Consonant Shift (Grimm's Law, PG Consonant Shift)

I act	<p>PIE > PG</p> <p>p > f</p> <p>t > θ</p> <p>k > X</p> <p>k^w > X^w</p>	<p>Lat. pes, pedis – Goth. fatus, Rus. пять – OE fīf</p> <p>Lat. tres – Goth. þreiþ, Rus. ти – OE þu</p> <p>Lat. cord – Goth. hairto, Lat. nox, noctis – Goth. nahts</p> <p>Lat. aqua – Goth. ahwa</p>
II act	<p>b > p</p> <p>d > t</p> <p>g > k</p> <p>g^w > k^w</p>	<p>Rus. болото – OE pōl, Rus. слабый – OE slæpan</p> <p>Lat. decem – Goth. taihun, Lat. edere – Goth. etan</p> <p>Lat. ego – Goth. ik, Lat. ager – OE æcer</p> <p>PIE *gviso – Goth. quis, OE cwic</p>
III act	<p>b^h > b</p> <p>d^h > d</p> <p>g^h > g</p> <p>g^{wh} > g^w</p>	<p>Skr. bhrāta – Goth. brōþar</p> <p>Skr. mádhū – OE. medu</p> <p>PIE *ghostis – Goth. gasts</p> <p>PIE *senghw – Goth. siggwan</p>

Exceptions

1. A PIE voiceless plosive followed the voiceless fricative [s]:

Lat. **st**ella → Eng. **st**ar, Rus. го**ст**ь → Goth. ga**st**s;

2. A PIE voiceless plosive followed another voiceless plosive:

Lat. o**ct**o → Goth. a**ht**au, Lat. ca**pt**us → OHG. Ha**ft**

1. **k** → X (h) 2. **t** → t

p → f

Rus. ты – OE þu

Lat. altus → OE ald

Lat. cord – Goth. hairto

Gr. dekás → Goth. Tigus

▶ PIE [t] → PG [θ] – Grimm's Law

PIE [t] → PG [d] – ?

▶ PIE [k] → PG [X] – Grimm's Law

PIE [k] → PG [γ] – ?

When Grimm's law was discovered, a strange irregularity was spotted in its operation.

- ▶ The PIE voiceless plosives $*p$, $*t$ and $*k$ should have changed into PG $*f$, $*\theta$ and $*x$, according to Grimm's Law. Indeed, that was known to be the usual development. However, there appeared to be a large set of words in which the agreement of Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, Baltic, Slavic etc. guaranteed PIE $*p$, $*t$ or $*k$, and yet the Germanic reflex was voiced ($*b$, $*d$ or $*g$).

Carl Verner

(1787 – 1832)

Karl Verner, a Danish scholar, noticed that a great number of exceptions to Grimm's Law also had a regularity and system of their own, and could be explained logically as well.

Comparing Sanskrit and Germanic cognates, Verner was able to see that stress patterns in words had influenced the pronunciation of nearby consonants.



Verner's law explains regular correspondences of consonants which seemed to contradict Grimm's law were for a long time regarded as exceptions.

According to Verner's Law: All the early PG voiceless fricatives [f, θ, X], which appeared under Grimm's Law, also [s] inherited from PIE, became voiced between vowels if the preceding vowel was unstressed; in the absence of these conditions they remained voiceless.

t → θ → ð → **d** Lat. alt**t**us → OE ald**d**

Voicing of fricatives in PG (Verner's Law)

p → f → v → b	Lat. ca p ut → Goth. haub i þ, OE heaf o d Lat. se p tem → Goth. sib u n, OE seof o n
t → θ → ð → d	Lat. al t us → OE al d
k → X → γ → g	Gr. dek k ás → OE tig u s
s → ʃ → z → r	Lith. au s is → Goth. aus o → OE ēa r e

▶ Lat. **p**ater – Eng. **f**ather

Grimm's Law $p > f$

Verner's Law $t > \delta$???

- 1) **The intervocalic position +**
- 2) **The preceding vowel is not stressed**

-

PIE

Early PG

Late PG

*pa t^hér → *fa θ^hár → *fa đ^hár → 'fađ^hár

Grimm's Law p > f, t > θ

Verner's Law θ > đ

- ▶ Verner's law accounts for the appearance of the voiced fricative [ð] or its later modifications [d] in the place of the voiceless [θ], which should be expected under Grimm's law.
- ▶ In **LPG** the phonetic conditions that caused the voicing had disappeared – the stress had shifted to the 1st syllable. Part of the forms retained a voiceless fricative
While other forms – with a different position of stress in EPG – acquired a voiced fricative.

OE cweþan – cwæþ – cwædon – cweden (NE to say)
[θ] - [d]

As a result of voicing by Verner's Law there appeared an interchange of consonants in the grammatical forms of the verbs termed

GRAMMATICAL INTERCHANGE

OE ceosan – ceas – curon – coren (NE to choose)

[s] - [r]

OE cweþan – cwæþ – cwædon – cweden (NE to say)

[θ] - [d]

OE wesan – wæs – wæron (NE to be)

[s] - [r]

Comp. NE dead – death, was – were

PIE VOWEL SYSTEM

	FRONT		BACK		FRONT		BACK	
High	i			u	i:			u:
Mid		e		o		e:		o:
Low			a				a:	
diphthongs:	ei, ai, oi, eu, au, ou							

PG VOWEL SYSTEM

	FRONT		BACK		FRONT		BACK	
High	i			u	i:			u:
Mid		e				e:		o:
Low			a					

The Common Germanic Vowelshift

(1 BC – 1 AD)

PIE

PG

Lat. **a**ger – Goth. **a**krs
octo – Goth. **a**htau
nox, noctis – Goth. **n**ahts

a →

a

o

PIE

PG

Lat. m**a**ter – OE m**o**dor
Ind. bhr**a**tar – Goth. br**o**þor
Lat. fl**o**s – Goth. bl**o**ma

a:

o: →

o:

- ▶ These changes are important for us to know because they explain the difference between the words in different modern languages which are connected with the changes in the sounds [o] and [a]. Many words in Modern Germanic languages have [a], while in Modern Ukrainian or Russian there is [o], though these languages go back to IE: e.g. German *Zalt* – Rus. *соль*, Ukr. (дай) *солі*, etc.

The Germanic fracture (breaking/mutation)

PIE PG
e → i i/j, nas.+ cons.
 e

Lat. medius – OE middel
 ventus – OE wind
 edit – OE itap
But edere – OE etan

PIE PG
u → u u, nas.+ cons.
 o

Skr. sunus – OE sunu,
 OIcel. sunr
But Celt. hurnan – OE horn

PG VOWEL SYSTEM

	FRONT		BACK		FRONT		BACK	
High	i			u	i:			u:
Mid		e		o		e:		o:
Low			a				a:	
diphthongs:	ai, au, ei, eu							

The Noun

	PIE	PG
Case	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nominative 2. Genitive 3. Dative 4. Accusative 5. Ablative 6. Locative 7. Instrumental 8. Vocative 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nominative 2. Genitive 3. Dative 4. Accusative 5. Instrumental 6. Vocative <p>OE – 4 cases</p> <p>Gothic – 5 cases</p> <p>Old Saxon – 5 cases</p>
Number	Singular Plural Dual	Singular Plural
Gender	Masculine Feminine Neuter	Masculine Feminine Neuter

- ▶ Most nouns and adjectives in PG, and also many verbs, had stem-forming suffixes.
- ▶ According to stem forming suffixes nouns in PG were divided into the following groups:
 - nouns with vowel stems – vocalic stems;
 - nouns with consonant stems – consonantal stems;
 - root nouns without stem forming suffixes – root stems.

e.g. Gothic dags (a-, m.)	Singular	Plural
	N. dags	N. dagos
	G. dagis	G. dage
	D. daga	D. dagam
	Ac. dag	Ac. dagans

The Adjective

The Adjective agreed with the Noun in PG as in other IE languages, e.g. Latin

Latin aqua**a** bona**a** --- Gothic goþa**a** ahwa**a**

The Adjective in PG has two declensions

Strong Gothic blinds**s** manna (a blind man)

Weak Gothic sa blind**a** manna (that blind man)

The Verb

- ▶ .The majority of the verbs in PG and in the OG languages fall into two large groups called strong and weak. The main difference between them was in the means of building the basic forms (the Present Tense, the Past Tense and Participle II).
- ▶ The terms strong and weak were proposed by J. Grimm; he called the verbs strong because they had preserved the richness of form since the age of PIE and could be contrasted to weak verbs lacking such variety of forms.

STRONG AND WEAK VERBS

- ▶ The strong verbs built their basic forms with the help of root vowels interchanges (ablaut) and certain grammatical endings.

E.g. Goth. **f**aran – **f**ōr – **f**ōrun – **f**arans (to go)

- ▶ The weak verbs are a specifically Germanic innovation, for this way of building the basic forms is not found outside the Germanic group. They built the Past Tense and Participle II by inserting a dental suffix (ð, θ, d) between the root and the ending.

E.g. Goth. saljan – sal**id**a – sal**ip**s (to give)

OE locian – loc**o**dē – loc**o**d (to look)

**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR ATTENTION!**