

French Influence on the English Language in the Middle English Period



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(Junius Herman)

FRENCH INFLUENCE ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE MIDDLE ENGLISH PERIOD



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GRIN Verlag. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 40 pages. Dimensions: 8.3in. x 5.3in. x 0.3in. Seminar paper from the year 2008 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Linguistics, grade: 2, 3, University of Leipzig (Institut fr Anglistik), course: Sprachwandel Englisch, language: English, abstract: The English language has undergone immense changes over the years of its development from Old English to Modern English as it is known today. It has been shaped by a number of other languages over the centuries. During the Old English period the English language, which was based on the dialects of three Germanic tribes (Angles, Jutes and Saxons), was already influenced by different invading armies like the Celts (Celtic), the Roman missionaries (Latin) and the Viking raiders (Old-Norse). But especially during the Middle English period (1150 - 1500) another language, namely French, exerted a significant influence on the English language and were therefore responsible for great changes brought to English over the years. During this time over 10, 000 French words were adopted into English and about 75 per cent of these are still in use. But changes did not just happen in the English vocabulary. The grammar (mainly word order), the spelling and pronunciation had to undergo changes, as well. It was a period of great change where English turned from an inflected language with a relatively free word order into a language with reduced inflection and a more rigid word order. The linguistic justification for considering the end of the 15th century as the end of the Middle English period is the complete restructuring of the English vowel system that affected all long stressed vowels known as the Great Vowel Shift. Although, these enormous changes were important for the improvement of the English language, there were also disadvantages to it. The loss...



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