

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON**

University of London

**EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS**

For The Following Qualification:–

*B.A.*

**History of the English Language since Chaucer**

**COURSE CODE : ENGLN26**

**DATE : 18-MAY-04**

**TIME : 10.00**

**TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours**

Candidates must not present substantially the same material in any two answers, whether on this paper or in other parts of the examination.

Answer three questions.

1. Discuss the notion of dialect in terms of the standardization of English during the period covered by the paper.

2. I am of this opinion that our tung should be written cleane and pure, unmixt and unmangled with borowing of other tungen.

(Sir John Cheke, 1561)

Write an essay on the notion of 'purity' in English, as expressed by writers during any period covered by the paper.

3. Life may be lengthened with care, though death cannot be ultimately defeated; tongues, like governments, have a natural tendency to degeneration; we have long preserved our constitution, let us make some struggles for our language.

(Samuel Johnson, Preface to *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 1755)

Consider this passage in relation to eighteenth-century views of English.

4. As to a publick Academy, invested with authority to ascertain the use of words, which is a project that some persons are very sanguine in their expectations from, I think it not only unsuitable to the genius of a free nation, but in itself ill calculated to reform and fix a language.

(Joseph Priestley, 1761)

Discuss the arguments for and against an Academy for English, as expressed by writers during any period covered by the paper.

TURN OVER

5. Poets that Lasting Marble seek  
Must write in Latin or in Greek:  
We write in sand ...

(Edmund Waller, 'Of English Verse', 1664)

Write an essay on attitudes to the use of English in literature during any period covered by the paper.

6. Either: (a) Write an essay on the selection and use of citations in any English dictionary published during the period covered by the paper.
- Or: (b) As soon as a standard language has been formed, which in England was the case after the Reformation, the lexicographer is bound to deal with that alone.

(Richard Chenevix-Trench, 1858)

Do you agree?

7. To what extent has the grammar of English been simplified during the period covered by the paper?
8. Using illustrative examples, discuss some of the processes of semantic change that have affected English during the period covered by the paper.
9. The King's English is not the King's English. It is a joint stock company and Americans own most of the shares.

(Mark Twain)

Write an essay on the notion of 'the King's English'.

10. Write an essay on any one of the following topics in relation to the history of English:
- (a) spelling reform campaigns
  - (b) 'plain English' campaigns
  - (c) censorship

CONTINUED

11. In 1998, Tom McArthur wrote a book about the globalisation of English, entitled *The English Languages*. Is the title justified?

END OF PAPER