



# **LANGUAGE CHANGE (THE TRADITIONAL VIEW)**

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# LANGUAGE CHANGE IN ENGLISH

- Old English: *Foder ure, pu pe art on heofonum...*
- Middle English: *Fader oure pat is i heuen...*
- Early Modern English: *Our father which art in heaven...*
- Modern English: *Our father who is in heaven...*



# IT IS VERY EASY TO DEMONSTRATE LANGUAGE CHANGE OVER TIME TO ENGLISH SPEAKERS.

- *K* in *knit* and *knife* was not silent in the fifteenth century
- *Knight* not only began with a [k], it had a fricative sound in the middle represented by the letters *gh*.



## TRADITIONAL VIEW

- Distinction between:
- **Internally motivated** (*change overtime in language used in a community- but with no language contact as causative agent*)
- *Linguistic reasons – articulation*
- *E.g. change from strong to weak would be to dive: dived (former dove) or prove : prooved (former proven as past participle)*
- **Externally motivated** (*resulting from contact with another language variety or other speakers*)  
*Social Reasons- issue of prestige.*



- The traditional view of language change also favors a family tree account of change and of the relationship among languages. Linguists tend to reconstruct the histories of related languages so that at one point in time one language or a variety splits into two or more or it is lost. More rarely, two or more words such things is much less easy to work with. In this account of change and relationship is much less easy to work with. In this approach the various changes that occur must be seen as flowing into and interacting with one another. It is not all easy contrast with the desire to maintain fluidity in boundaries. A third view of change is that particular changes throughout a language, sometimes in rather idiosyncratic ways.

