

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Faculty of Arts

Special Degree Examination in Arts (English), Year 2, Semester 1, 2018/19

ENG 2124 – History of the English Language

Two Hours

Answer **THREE (03)** questions.

1. “The importance of a language is largely determined by the importance of the people who speak it” (Baugh and Cable, 2002). Do you agree? Substantiate your position with reference to a selected period in the history of the English language.
2. “...Although...English spelling is often characterized as chaotic and rife with irregular patterns, an investigation of the many patterns in English spelling and of the history of individual words provides important insights into the nature of sound change, word origins, [and] the effects of print on pronunciation” (Denham and Lobeck, 2012). Discuss.
3. The Norman Conquest and the French language influenced the transition of English from an inflectional to an analytic language during the Middle English period. Discuss this statement with reference to at least three (03) changes in grammar during this period.
4. ‘Print capitalism played an immense role in the development of Modern English and further laid the base for national consciousness.’ Critically engage with this statement.
5. Dick Leith (2007) identifies three types of English colonisation. Comment on one (01) type of colonisation and its linguistic consequences with reference to at least one (01) country or region.
6. A uniform standard worldwide is essential for maintaining ‘international English’ or ‘global English’ as a viable means of communication (a *lingua franca*). Critically engage with this claim.

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