

Germanic Languages and Their Peculiarities.

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Abstract

This article is about “Germanic languages and their peculiarities”. In linguistics, there are different language families and language groups. These languages are used as a means of communication in different parts of the world. Nowadays, Germanic languages are the most widely utilized by language users. For instance, the most developed countries of the world are used English and German language as their mother tongue. Knowing history of those, languages and their general aspects help learner to comprehend language in all side.

Keywords: Languages families, languages groups, “dead language”, migration, umlaut, native speakers, Grimm’s Law, Varner’s Law.

As we know, the language has been the main communication unit in the society for a long time. For thousands of years, it has been used as an easy way to exchange information amongst people to be acquainted with cultures, for commercial deals and to understand each other in every aspect of life. The language is the first sound that people heard and it called, as “Mother tongue” due to it is the initial communication tool of the people. As it can be seen, people how appreciate their mothers; language has also an important role in people life as mothers.

Nowadays, there are more than 7000 languages all over the world. Since, there are diverse languages in the world; linguists learn them through dividing into several language families and groups. Two languages, which are related to one family, have similar phonetic and grammatical sides are mentioned. However, every language has own features. Now we will learn Germanic languages and their peculiarities. Germanic languages are related to the Indo-European languages family. Germanic languages are widely spread in Western European countries: Great Britain, Germany, Austrian, the Netherlands, Belgium, Swiss, Luxembourg, Swedish, Dania, Norwegian and Icelandic; in North American countries: the USA, Canada, JAR, Australia, New Zealand; in Asian countries: India, Pakistan and others. It is difficult to calculate the speakers of Germanic languages. Especially, it is possible to find English speakers around the world. According to the statistics, 250-300 millions of world population and more than 50 countries speak English languages as native. Certainly, there are much more speakers, who speak English

as a second language, than native language speakers. General native speakers of Germanic languages are approximately 440 million people.

Nowadays, the Dutch language speakers also comprise many people as equally the English language. These two languages are main factor to develop tourism. If we have a look at history, the Dutch national language was improved in sixteenth century in Scandinavian countries and in England and Germany it was developed in sixteenth-seventeenth century. According to the historical sources, Germanic languages have three main parts:

1. Western Germanic languages;
2. Eastern Germanic languages;
3. Northern Germanic languages;

The components of Western Germanic languages are Got, Vandal, Burgundy, and Heaped and Geril languages and at the time being, they are called “dead languages” that are not consumed anymore. These languages were spoken until seventh century. Historical migration, such as the relocation of people from place to place and subsequent adaptation to the new place has greatly affected to the disappearance of these “dead languages”. The original samples of Western Germanic languages are seen in historical resources. For example, The Bible, which was translated from Greek into the Gothic language by the priest Ulfilas in the IV century, is the only available source for Western Germanic languages. In addition, in the sources of Crimean language was used in several parts of the Crimea until the end of the XVIII century.

These days, linguists calculated diverse Germanic languages, which are spoken, are 48. Their 41 of them are accepted Western Germanic and others are related to the northern Germanic languages group. Western Germanic languages include three major Germanic languages, which are widely used by the world population.

They are:

1. English language. Native speakers are 360-400 millions of the world population.
2. The Dutch language. This language has more that 100 million of spealers.
3. The Netherlands language. 24 million of world population accepted this language as mother tongue.

Furthermore, there are several parts of Western Germanic languages that are spoken in many countries of the world, such as Luxembourg, Afrikaans, Frisians and Cabin languages. The migration period influenced on not only the Eastern Germanic languages but also Western Germanic languages. In this period several of the Germanic languages were not used. One of them is Lombard language.

Northern German languages comprise Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Faroese and these languages are composed of 20 million speakers. These days Norwegian has two literary languages: riksmol and lansmol.

The distribution of the English language to the outside of England is caused by founding different English variants in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and JAR. The Dutch language has an Austrian variant whereas Swiss has 2 variants: Swiss dialect and literary language.

Germanic languages are different from the Indo-European family with their own peculiarities. They are:

- The law of changing consonants. These laws were called Grimm and Verner, which were named after their founders. According to the law, in the Latin alphabet consonant /t, d/ was changed to /θ, ð/ in the Germanic group;
- The words used in the German language have the stress on the first (main) stem;
- Unstressed words come across reduplication, it means they are not read;
- Vowels are changed assimilatively. The ablaut event has morphological features. "German umlaut" is a distinctive feature of the Germanic languages;
- Adjectives may be strong and weak;
- Grammatical features of Germanic languages are determined by the different level of analytics, such as the number of cases and different symbols of verbs.

Germanic languages have their own several peculiarities. Nowadays, Germanic languages can help to learn their specific features with millions of users.

Taking all into consideration, we can say that learning language is a complex event. People who have patience and energy can reach the achievement of learning languages. Knowing the history, origins, stages and the way it is used in the present of learning languages will increase the interest in that language. Finding similarities and general features of the language groups may give a hand to simplify the process of learning and this is the main factor.

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