

Traditional Grammar

Q. What were the uses of Latin grammar in traditional period? What were the uses of Latin language in the 16th century?

Latin was mainly the language of scholars in England

Latin grammars were used to give Englishmen the skills need to read and write, and sometimes converse.

Q. Why couldn't English be based on Latin? How is the structure of English different from the structure of Latin?

Latin mainly uses inflections to assign cases to words, rather than word order, so changing the word order might not change the meaning of the sentence (just like Arabic). While English depends highly on word order, so, changing word order in English results in change of meaning.

Q. What was the purpose of English grammar?

English grammars were used as a basis for the study of Latin grammar.

Q. How did the traditional grammarians try to refine English regarding subjective and objective complement? What are the changes they made to language?

They thought that English language was getting corrupted, so they made changes to the language. They thought that this is a way of refining their language. These changes are:

1- adding *s* to words like *island*, adding *b* to words like *debt*.

2- they claimed that the subject complement should be in a nominative case like: *it is I* rather than saying *it is me*.

Q. What did they depend on in their description of the language rules?

The rules were based on logic. They did not depend on educated native speakers' language.

Q. How was sentences and clauses classified in traditional English?

Traditional grammarians classified words and sentences depending the grammarians before them, and assigned cases to language, such as: person, number, gender, mood, tense. They ignored word order.