



Council of Science Editors

CSE Annual Meeting
Vancouver, British Columbia
Monday, 19 May 2008

D1. Editing by/for Non-English Speaking Writers/Readers

The Latin Connection

Mauricio Rocha e Silva
São Paulo University Medical College
Editor, Clinics

WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE

circa AD 50 - 400

Language: Latin

Law: Roman

Culture: Greco-Roman

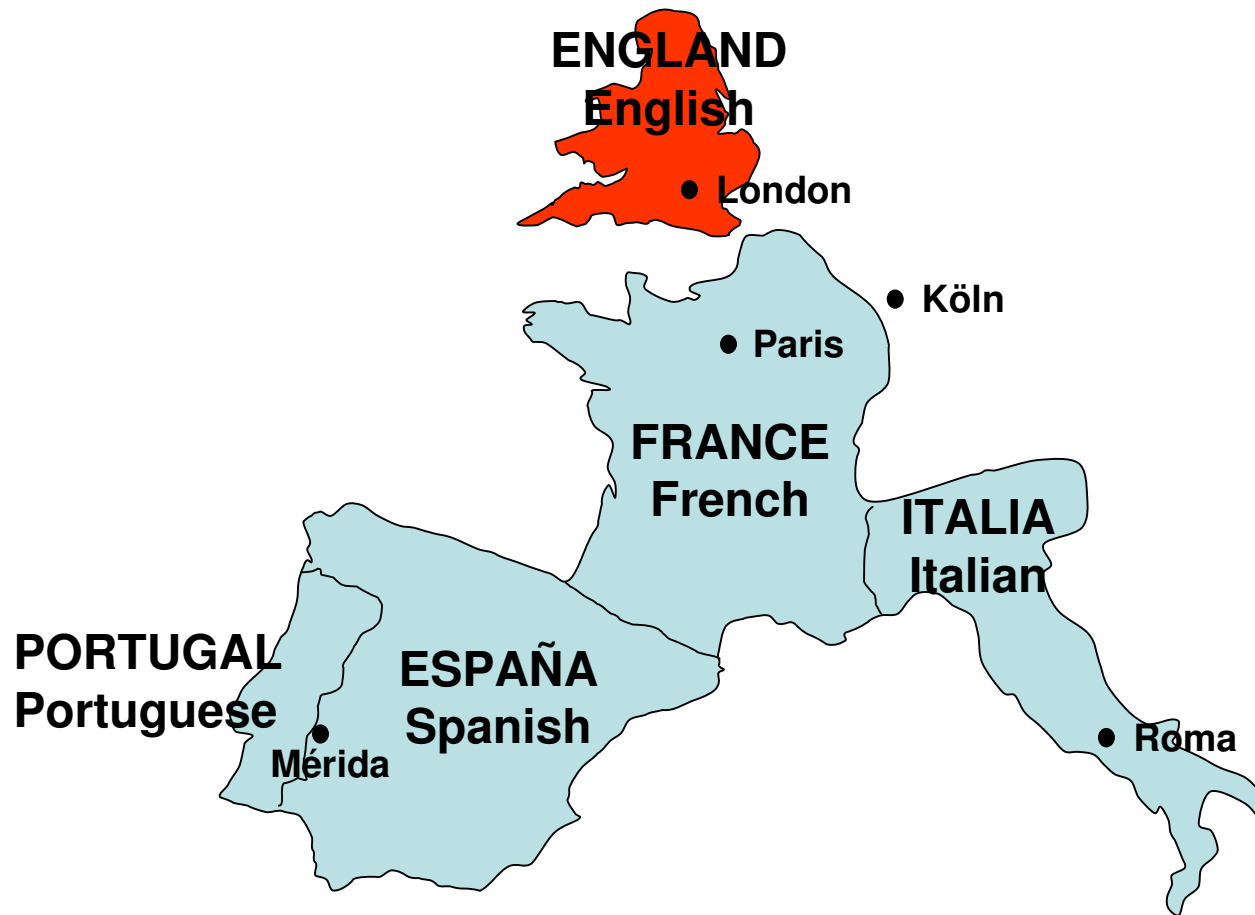
Currency: Sestertium

Capital: Rome

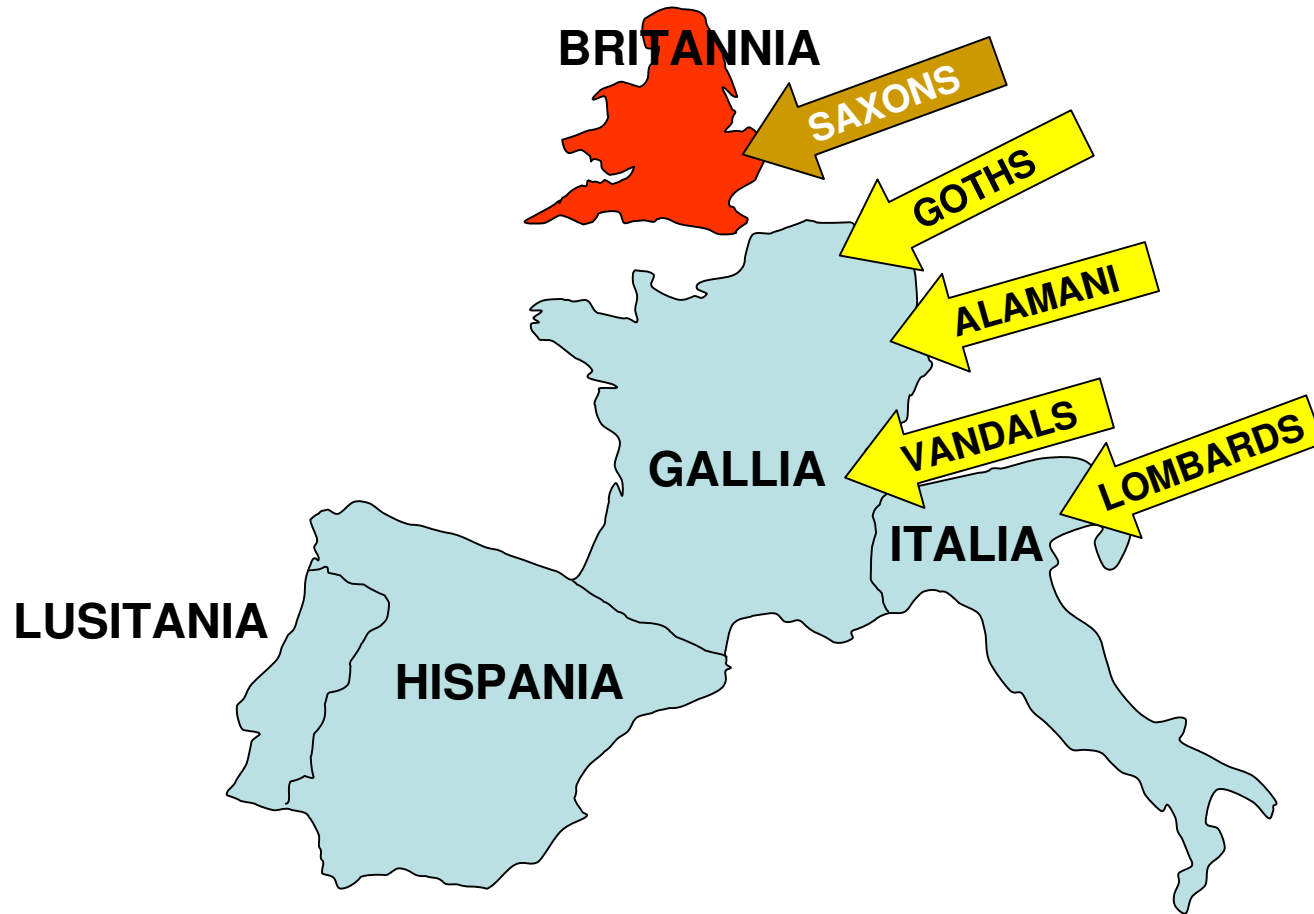


LANGUAGES

Today



WHY?



What Britannia got from the Saxons

- Roman culture: wiped out
- Roman law: wiped out
- Latin: wiped out
- Commerce: wiped out

For nearly 200 years: 6th & 7th Century:
not even money circulated in Saxon Britain!

Then ... suddenly, Saxon Britain got very lucky!

- In the Fall of 1066 a few thousand Normans led by Lord William met a bunch of English led by King Harold near a very small and very wild hamlet called Hastings. They fought it out till evening, in what might have become known as the Bloody Brawl of Hastings. King Harold was killed, the English turned, ran, and were butchered. The Normans had won and Lord William soon afterwards became King of England in their main town, by the Thames.
- William's offspring were lords of the Island for the next three hundred years. They left two great gifts: their laws and their tongue!

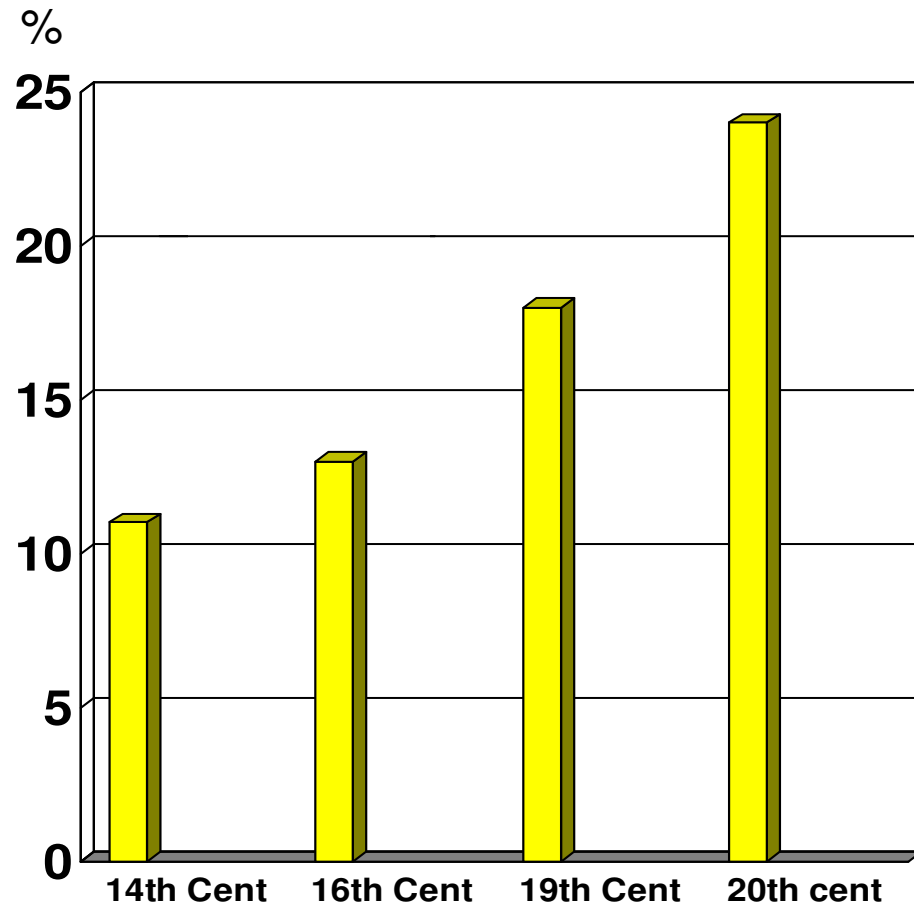
104 words – all of them of anglo-saxon origin

- In **October** of 1066 an **army** of a few thousand Normans **commanded** by **Duke William** met a **similar** English **army commanded** by King Harold. A **brutal battle** followed, which became known to **posterity** as the **Historical Battle** of Hastings. This **encounter** ended with the death of King Harold, followed by a very **disorganized** English **retreat**, all of which meant a **decisive** Norman **victory**. On **Christmas** day, at **Westminster Abbey**, **Duke William** was **crowned** King of England.
- William's **descendants** **governed** the **realm** for the next three **centuries**, and left two **precious** gifts: their laws, but above all, **French language**!

100 words – 71 anglo-saxon, 29 Latin words

- How many Latin words are used in English?

Latin words in English



Guardian Newspaper (May 2008)

- The relatively disciplined front reflects the fact that no senior figure is ready to move against Brown: the only credible challenger to benefit from an early leadership contest would be the Health Secretary, Alan Johnson, who has ruled himself out for fear of intrusion into his family life. All that could change, however, if Cameron can translate the town-hall bloodbath into losses of parliamentary seats. On 22 May, he has a chance to do that. Behind the mock Tudor exterior of the British Lion pub in Crewe, builder Mike Jones was enjoying a drink and a game of darts on Friday evening. 'I don't want Labour in this town again,' he said loudly. 'They've turned this country upside down. They have only won here because of Gwyneth, and they are going to get nailed this time.' The by-election prompted here by the sudden death of the famously feisty local M P Gwyneth Dunwoody gives Brown a most unwelcome new test. The Tories have not won a by-election since 1982: achieving the 8.4 per cent swing needed to win this one would show they had momentum.
- **184 words: 149 anglo-saxon; 41 Latin words (23%)**

<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com> (May 2008)

- The NBA's New Kids on the **Block** meet the Old **Guard**. The Hornets are in the **second round** of the playoffs for the first time since the **franchise moved to New Orleans** in 2003. **San Antonio** is seeking its fifth **NBA title** in 10 years. But while the Spurs will have a huge edge in **postseason experience**, the **defending champs** are facing a **potential** nightmare in this matchup. Led by the **sensational Paul**, the Hornets racked up the **second-best record** in the Western **Conference** during the **regular season**. They boast a bevy of **exceptional** shooters, **including** West and **Peja Stojakovic**, a strong **defense anchored** by shot-blocker **Tyson Chandler** and the kind of youthful legs that could give **San Antonio** fits. **New Orleans** also has **home-court advantage** and is brimming with **confidence** after **dispatching** the more **experienced** Mavs in five games in the first **round**.
- **144 words: 109 anglo-saxon; 39 Latin words (27%)**

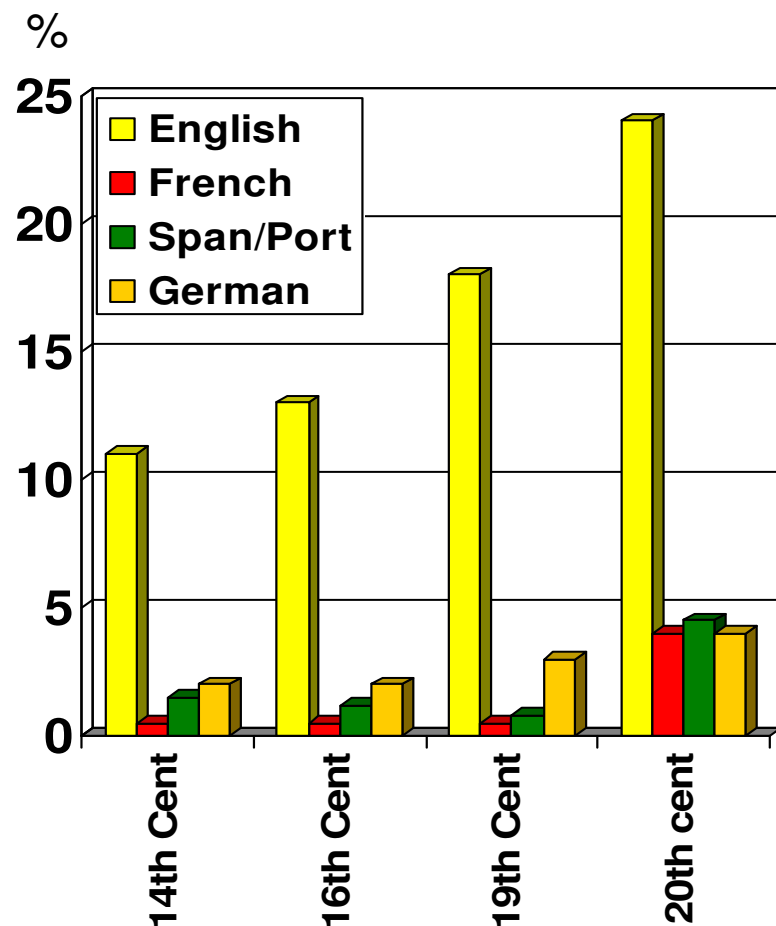
Is this a general thing?

or, what about foreign words in other European languages?

We Latin language speakers complain bitterly about the so called “American invasion”: weekend, delivery, computer, download, sandwich, ...

How many English words occur in a normal Latin Language text?

Foreign words in various European languages



- **English:** mostly latin words through French (14th – 18th century) directly (19th – 20th century)
- **French:** mostly Greek (14th – 19th Century) American English (20th Century)
- **Portuguese/Spanish:** mostly Arabic (14th – 19th Century), American English (20th Century)
- **German:** mostly Latin (14th – 19th Century), mostly American English (20th Century)

What about our stuff?
What is scientific English made of?

Libby, P. The forgotten majority: unfinished business in cardiovascular risk reduction. J Am Coll Cardiol. (Oct) 2005; 46:1225-8.

- Despite meaningful **progress** in the **identification** of **risk factors** and the **development** of highly **effective clinical** tools, deaths from **cardiovascular** disease **continue** to **increase** worldwide. Sparked by an **obesity epidemic**, the **metabolic syndrome** and the rising **incidence** of **type 2 diabetes** have led to an upsurge of **cardiovascular risk**. Although **pharmacologic treatments** with the **statin class** of **drugs** have **reduced cholesterol levels** and lowered **mortality rates**, **several large controlled clinical trials**, including the **Scandinavian Simvastatin Survival Study**, the **Cholesterol and Recurrent Events** trial, the **Air Force/Texas Coronary Atherosclerosis Prevention studies**, and **Long-term Intervention with Pravastatin in Ischemic Disease study**, have indicated that **cardiovascular events continue to occur** in two thirds of all **patients**. Follow-up **studies**, such as the **Heart Protection Study** and the **Pravastatin or Atorvastatin Evaluation and Infection Therapy/Thrombolysis In Myocardial Infarction-22** trials, **reinforced** these earlier **results**. Although **therapy** with **gemfibrozil**, a **fibric acid derivative**, showed **reduced occurrence** of **cardiovascular events** in the **Helsinki Heart Study** and the **Veterans Affairs HDL Intervention Trial**, **results** of other **studies**, e.g., the **Bezafibrate Intervention Program** and the **Diabetes Atherosclerosis Intervention study**, showed **less encouraging results**. Although **lifestyle modifications**, such as **improved diet** and **increased exercise levels**, **benefit general health** and the **metabolic syndrome** and **insulin resistance** in **particular**, **most people continue to resist changes** in their **daily routines**. Thus, **physicians must continue to educate** their **patients regarding** an **optimal balance** of **drug therapy** and **personal behavior**.
- **235 words: 48% anglo-saxon, 43% Latin + 9% other (mainly greek derived)**

Don't get me wrong!
English is a Germanic language!

You can write (or say) things in English exclusively
with Germanic words

You cannot write (or say) anything in English
exclusively with Latin words

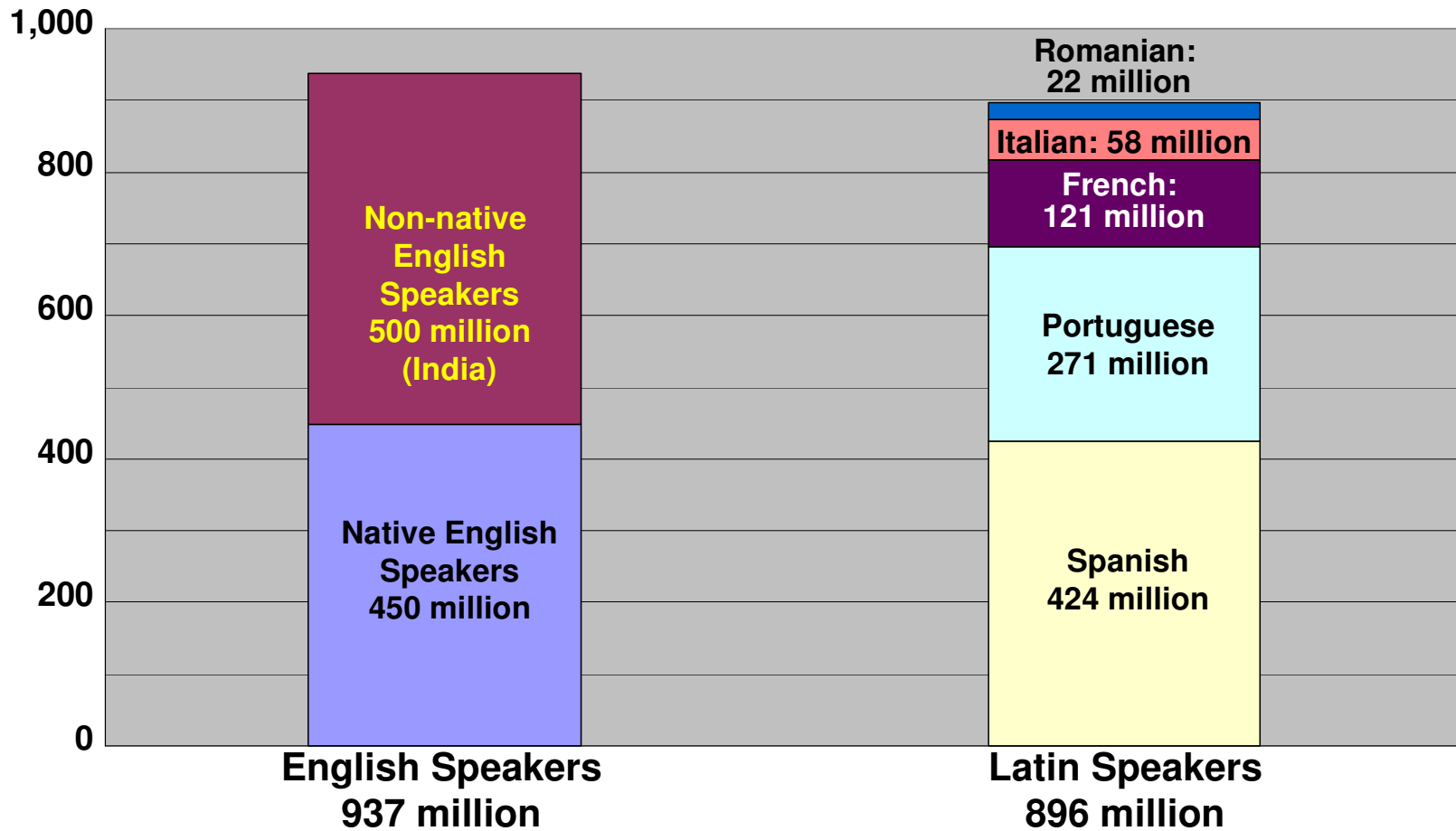
Like no other Indo-European Language
(possibly like no other living language):

English is a highly hybridized language
drawing an enormous part of its vocabulary from Latin

So ...

why worry about Latin language
speaking readers?

Basically, because there's a lot of us



So, please worry about ...

- **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary: points to keep in mind

- Editing text from English speaking Authors
(so that latin speaking people can understand it)
 - Check whether there is a good/better Latin word to replace an Anglo-Saxon word.
 - Not much more to be done.
- Editing text from Latin Language Authors
(so that everybody understands what they say)
 - Consider keeping as many adequate Latin words as possible
 - Refrain from changing from Latin to Anglo-Saxon words to make the text look better

Beware of false cognates (also known as false friends)!

- **Almost** all Latin words mean the same in English and in the Latin Languages (cognates).
- But some definitely do not!

False cognates

Latin languages vs English

ENGLISH	MEANING (IN LATIN)	FRENCH	ITALIAN	PORTUG	SPANISH
Actual	At present, nowadays	Actuel	Attuale	Atual	Actual
Deception	Disappointment	Déception	Decezione	Decepção	Decepción
Character	Temperament	Caractère	Carattere	Caráter	Carácter
College	Secondary school	Collège	Collegio	Colégio	Colegio
Facility	Ease	Facilité	Facilitá	Facilidade	Facilidad
Formidable	Amazing, Great	Formidable	Formidabile	Formidável	Formidable
Parents	Relatives	Parents	Parenti	Parentes	Pariente
Sensible	Sensitive	Sensible	Sensibile	Sensível	Sensible
Library	Bookshop	Librairie	Libreria	Livraria	Libreria
luxury	Lust	Luxure	Lussuria	Luxuria	Lujuria
Mode	Fashion	Mode	Moda	Moda	Moda
Realize	Carry Out, Execute	Réaliser	Realizare	Realisar	Realizar
Pretend	Intend to	Prétendre	Pretendere	Pretender	Pretender

Letrature/Internet sites for cognates



- General – all languages:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_false_friends#L
- French
http://french.about.com/library/fauxamis/blfauxam_p.htm
- Portuguese
<http://www.sk.com.br/sk-fals.html>
- Spanish
<http://spanish.about.com/cs/vocabulary/a/obviouswrong.htm>

False Cognates: points to keep in mind

- Editing text from English speaking authors
 - False cognates are not a big problem
 - They occur infrequently
 - Their meaning is correct in English
 - Latin speakers usually understand most of the differences
- Editing text from Latin Language Authors
 - Watch for cognates which “don’t make sense”
 - In doubt, go for the false cognate dictionary

And, please worry about ...

- Vocabulary
- **Syntax**

What are the main points?

- English and Latin are Indo-European
(which means similar basic structure)
- We all conjugate verbs
 - Latin languages still retain more conjugated forms
 - English has simplified verbs (point for English)

Verbs

I love	I loved
You love	You loved
He loves	He loved
We love	We loved
You love	You loved
We love	They loved

3 verbal forms

J'aime Io amo Eu amo	J'aimais Io amavo Eu amava
Tu aimes Tu ami Tu amas	Tu aimais Tu amavi Tu amavas
Il Aime Lui ama Ele ama	Il Aimait Lui amava Ele amava
Nous aimons Noi amiamo Nos amamos	Nous aimions Noi amavamo Nos amavamos
Vous aimez Voi amiate Vos amais	Vous aimiez Voi amaviate Vos amaveis
Ils aiment Loro amano Eles amam	Ils aimaient Loro amavano Eles amavam

10 - 11 verbal forms

What are the main points

- English and Latin are Indo-European (which means similar basic structure)
- We all conjugate verbs
 - Latin languages still retain more conjugated forms
 - English has simplified verbs (point for English)
- We all used to have declensions for nouns, pronouns and adjectives:
 - German, Slavic, Scandinavian languages still retain them (point against).
 - English and Latin Languages have dropped them.
 - All European Languages (except English) use masculine / feminine arbitrarily for objects (big point against them)

A`bridge is Le Pont, El Puente, Il Ponte, A Ponte, Die Brücke

FR-M SP-M IT-M PT-F G-F

What are the main points

- English and Latin are Indo-European (which means similar basic structure)
- We all conjugate verbs
 - Latin languages still retain more conjugated forms
 - English has simplified verbs (point for English)
- We all used to have declensions for nouns, pronouns and adjectives:
 - German, Slavic, Scandinavian languages still retain them (point against).
 - English and Latin Languages have dropped them.
 - All European Languages (except English) use masculine / feminine arbitrarily for objects (big point against them)
 - **English uses neutral for all objects**
 - **All English adjectives are neutral**
 - **English has 1 definite, 1 indefinite article**
- **It doesn't get any better than that if you are looking for a universal language**

Active vs. Passive Voice

- Passive voice is not recommended by style manuals (not in English, not in the Latin Languages)
- So why do we use the passive voice at all?
 - The old guys were very shy.
 - The new guys stick to old habits.
- Where can the passive voice be a problem?
 - In Introduction
 - In Methods
 - In Results
 - In Discussion

Passive/Active Voice

in “Methods”

- This project was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee
- The Institutional Ethics Committee approved this project.

In this particular case ambiguity is zero!

Passive/Active Voice

in “Methods”

This project was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee

The Institutional Ethics Committee Approved this project

BUT ...

- Patients were treated for 3 days with drug “x”.
- Samples were kept for 3 days at -70°C.
- Mice were kept for 3 days in metabolic cages
- We treated patients for 3 days with drug “x”.
- Biochemical lab “y” kept samples for 3 days at -70°C/.
- The Animal Care Division kept mice for 3 days in metabolic cages

In “Methods” passive voice ambiguity is not always quite zero

Active/Passive Voice

in Results

- A decrease in parameter “x” was observed after 3 days of treatment “a”.
- An increase in parameter “x” was observed in treated samples in comparison to controls.
- A fall in parameter “x” of mice was detected following treatment “z”
- We observed a decrease in parameter “x” after 3 days of treatment “a”.
- Parameter “x” increased in treated samples, in comparisons to controls.
- The computerized monitoring system detected a fall in parameter “x” of mice following treatment “z”.

In "Results", passive voice ambiguity is virtually zero

Active/Passive Voice

in Introduction or Discussion

- It is suggested ... **WHO SUGGESTS?**
- The following points have been raised: **WHO RAISED?**
- Objections have been put forward concerning ... **WHO PUT THE OBJECTIONS FORWARD?**

passive voice ambiguity virtually infinite

Active/Passive Voice – Latin to English

ACTIVE VOICE

We recorded a significant elevation of global temperature

In any Latin language (except French):

(X) Registramos una significativa elevacion de temperatura global

~~Translates to: Recorded a significant elevation of global temperature~~
translates to: We recorded a significant elevation of global temperature

PASSIVE VOICE

“A significant elevation in global temperature was recorded”

Una significativa elevacion de temperatura global fue registrada

Registrose una significativa elevacion de temperatura global

It was recorded a significant elevation of global temperature

English as the Scientific Language

English is already the commercial and diplomatic language of the world

- British Empire (1800 – 1945)
- American Empire (1945 - ?)
 - But what about the Portuguese/Spanish Empires (1450 – 1800)?
- British/American scientific predominance (1900 - ?).
 - But what about German/French/Japanese Science (1850 – 1930 and 1955 – 2008)?
- English as a uniquely hybrid language
English as a uniquely simple language

Recommendations

- Watch for those false cognates.
- Watch for the pronouns (or lack of) from Italian, Spanish, Portuguese speakers.
- Ban the passive voice
(in your Instructions to authors)
- Encourage the use of
 - Author citing by name
 - We (I) did whatever ...

(in your Instructions to authors)

Conclusions

- English is the perfect universal language, especially for science
 - Highly hybridized with Latin
 - Virtually no verbal conjugation
 - No Masculine/feminine, except male/female
 - Strictly neutral adjectives
 - Spoken by 20% of the human population
 - Easily understood by at least 20% more
 - Native lingo of 40% of science producers
 - Contemporary imperial language
 - Not likely to be replaced in the near future
- Remember: LATIN OUTLIVED THE EMPIRE BY 1000 YRS
(Mandarin does not qualify; Portuguese, Spanish, French and German had their chances and blew them)

Muito obrigado
Merci beaucoup
Grazie mille
Muchas gracias