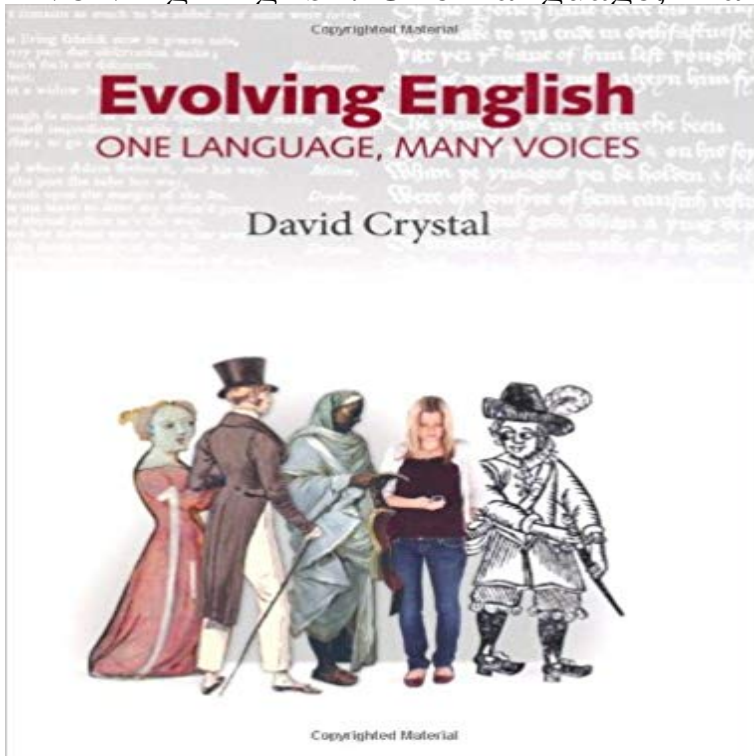


Evolving English: One Language, Many Voices



One-third of the world's population can speak or write in English, which is an unprecedented achievement for a language. How did this enormous reach come about? And what happens to a language when it is used by so many? In *Evolving English*, David Crystal, the leading authority on the development of the English language, answers these questions and more. Unlike other histories of the English language, *Evolving English* is a fully illustrated history, charting the development of the language through images, from the earliest runic inscriptions in Old English and the emergence of a standard variety of English between 1400 and 1800 to the most modern forms of the language, as seen in concrete and text poetry. In telling the story of the language's growth and change, Crystal draws on examples from English in its various guises and uses, including everyday English, English in the workplace, regional and international varieties, and English in playful and literary expression. Crystal's accessible and lively linguistic history shows where language is now, where it has been, and perhaps most important of all, where it is heading. Crystal is not afraid to address the new varieties of the language appearing in world literature, on the Internet, and in cell phone text messages. Both topical and readable, *Evolving English* shows that the story of the world's most common language is as diverse and interesting as the words that comprise it.

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