Material:

Un pañuelo con el que se tapará los ojos a quien haga de burro.

Evaluación:

Se utilizarán preferentemente:

- Encuestas, cuestionarios y escalas
- Observación de conductas y escalas de apreciación.
- Perfil Pragmático Comunicativo (Higuera- Romero, 1999)
- ITPA (Kirk y McCarthy, 1968)

Bibliografía


Páginas Web:


“Programa 00-01: Psicología del desarrollo y adquisición del lenguaje” por la Universidad de Salamanca en http://www.upsa.es/-/psicologia/titulaciones/logopedia.

Viking Raids over England

**Título:** Viking Raids over England. **Target:** Profesores de Inglés, Bachillerato. **Asignatura:** Inglés. **Autor:** Antonio Daniel Juan Rubio, Licenciado en Filología Inglesa, Profesor de Inglés en Educación Secundaria.

The term Viking means men of the north or king of the sea. This term is today applied to those Scandinavians who abandoned their homes in Norway, Denmark, or Sweden. The first two groups were called Normans, whilst the last group was called Varengian.

The latter, who were considered Vikings, appeared for the first time in Ireland and in England then in the 8th century, and their descendents continued to live there until the year 1050. In the 8th century, a second stage of invasions began in Europe and Magyars started to appear along with the Vikings.
The Vikings disappeared when Christianity became the main religion. In historical scriptures, the Vikings are known as Normans and Danes. However, these terms do not impose any attempt to distinguish between the different Scandinavian races.

With regard to their religion before the aforementioned conversion to Christianity, it is said that the Vikings believed in life after death. This was fundamentally a naturalistic religion. They also had a wide pantheon of Gods, among which Thor and Odin stand out as the most prominent. After their lives on earth, they were led to paradise where the Valkyries, also known as Gods of War, were waiting for them.

As far as their social structure is regarded, it is important to point out that they had not a king. They lived in communities and they chose a chief for the expeditions on the advice of the council of elders. This chief was called “jarl”. In this society, the ideal of a state was non-existent.

Considering the reasons for their desire to invade, it must be said that the most important one was the increase in population which they were currently undergoing. As a result of this, they found themselves pushed into the sea for further settlements.

Despite not knowing the point of the compass and having to guide themselves by the stars, which caused them great problems, they could get to Iceland, Greenland, and possibly North-America and Sicily. At the beginning, their lootings were sporadic. Their trade was based on slaves, fur, or walrus teeth. After these beginnings, they conquered and formed different kingdoms.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Vikings appeared, for the first time, on the 8th June 793. They looted the Lindisfarne monastery on Holy Island off the East coast of England. From that time on, they became a nightmare for all England and its inhabitants.

However, the Viking invaders failed in their attempt to make England a united country as king Offa of Mercia had previously done. Besides, it was not Northumbria or Mercia, but rather a third Anglo-Saxon kingdom, Wessex that managed to unify England into once centralized state.

During the 9th century, the Anglo-Saxon domination of England was affected by the numerous attacks from Danish Vikings. Many years before, the Danes had made raids into the East of England, but they had never attacked such an enormous and powerful army.

The history of the Danes domination is characterised by developments which followed the same pattern everywhere, and we can observe three different phases in this development:

1) The first phase involves direct looting which began with brief landings on the coast and later reached as far as the mouths of rivers.
2) The second phase began when the invaders came over and established organised states. This is called the “Dane gelds” phase in which the Vikings used their strength to threaten the population.

3) On the third and final phase of the Danish conquests, England and its resources had been over-tapped; it had been attacked too many times and had become a devastated and disorganised country. There were no longer great spoils to be had for the rescue of its peoples. This phase is called the phase of direct exploitation. During this phase, the Danish army took possession of the area and created settlements which covered massive areas of land, and thus funding “Danish states”.

According to the English history, the first phase began in 834, the second in 845, and finally the third phase is believed to have started in 876. The Danes had invaded East Anglia by the year 865, and any attempt at resistance in Northumbria had finished by the year 867. Then, they prepared their entire army to attack the kingdom of Wessex in the south, in the same year in which Alfred was crowned king.

By the year 871, the Danes had been halted and had to retreat back to their headquarters in Reading. However, under the reign of Guthrum, the Danes attacked Wessex again and this time Alfred was forced to seek refuge in the dams of Somerset.

Alfred was the only English statesman who had shown a willingness to fight back against the Vikings. He regrouped his troops very quickly and built a navy capable of fighting the Danes in rough seas. A sudden attack on the invaders at Edington produced an overwhelming victory for Alfred. Then he established a non-aggression pact with the Danish king of England Guthrum, who was called Ethelstan II after his conversion to Christianity.

This pact recognised the area above the dividing line from Chester to London as Danish colonisation territory known as “Dane law”. Thus the territories which remained under Danish control were: Northumbria (including York), the five-town zone (including Nottingham), East Anglia, and Essex (including London).

King Alfred recognised that it was impossible, as it was desirable, to throw the Vikings out of England. What he wanted was for them to settle down peacefully and become themselves part of a harmonious rural community. He thought that an enemy with a full stomach looked a lot less dangerous than one with the stomach empty.

By the year 892, new Viking attacks had begun on England from France. Nonetheless, this time king Alfred had introduced some innovations into England’s defences such as fortified towns and the first English navy, which all went to greatly improve their defensive capabilities. King Alfred was recognised, at this time, as king of all the English people.

Later on, his son Edward and his daughter Ethelfled kept the Danes at a distance until his grandson Athelstan was finally king of all England. Unfortunately, the lords of Wessex could not maintain such a high level of resistance, and when the second wave of Danish invasions began, there was no king Alfred to hand off the invaders.
The later years of the 10th century saw the reign of Ethelred, a weak and unpopular king who was forced to buy a precarious security for his reign through the payment of taxes. All those bribes did was to postpone the inevitable, so the Danish king Sveen quickly decided to conquer the whole England. His son Knut the Great took up his plans once more and had executed it by the year 1016.

A powerful Danish empire had been born, whose origins were in the North Sea. It turned out that no conquest of any kind was necessary because after the death of king Ethelred and that of his son Edward Ironside, a much more intelligent man than his father, Knut found out no opposition.

The Knut kingdom was so huge that he had to delegate some of his power to the lords. In turn, these lords became extremely powerful and governed their own shares with a great amount of independence. Later on, he was converted to Christianity, calming down the English a little.

By this time England was divided up like this: the North part was converted by the “jarls de lade” with its own autonomy, whilst the South became a Danish protectorate. Denmark was the origin of a huge empire which covered an area ranging from the Baltic to the Irish Sea.

After Knut’s death in 1035, thirty years of disturbances followed. Several important characters emerged from these disturbances, such as Suepon Estridsen, and Knut the Saint. England might have easily seen itself broken into a conglomerate of small states if such an evolution had not been suppressed by the Norman Conquest of William the Conqueror. The Normans were the great diffusers of the forecoming medieval system, bringing civilisation wherever they went to.

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIKING RAIDS**

Two generations after the death of Charlemagne, the most important period of the Vikings’ history came out. They rampaged through Europe in a horrific wave of murders, lootings and mutilations. Firstly, they appeared from the icy Scandinavian North, the area from which the first Germanic tribe to raid Rome had appeared. The Vikings, like the Germanic tribes, found an empire that was being destroyed.

The clergymen saw the Germanic raids as the death of Western civilisation and the end of their ideals. Because of this, they interpreted the Viking threat as a punishment from God due to the sins of European society.

The marauders came into different categories. Firstly they came as destroyers, then as invaders, and finally they established themselves as colonists. However, and on the positive side, one thing that the Vikings did for Europe was to provide an enormous boost to its further trade links.

What was the main feature of the Viking arrival into Europe, and especially into England with all that strong conquering power? Historians give varying reasons for this difficult question. Most of them agree with the fact that one of the most important consequences was the population increase in the colonies, which due to the mountainous landscape in Northern Europe was very small.
However, the increase in population was not the only cause of the problem. Because of the developments in commerce, they were made greedy by the riches it produced, resulting in an insatiable desire for adventure and the promise of even greater spoils.

The changes in climate in the Scandinavian area were also an important factor as to the cause of their raids into Europe, since the temperature was gradually dropping. This forced them to seek warmer lands. Nevertheless, this theory does not seem to have too many supporters among the historians.

On the other hand, it is thought that there is no one major reason for the Viking expansion but rather a combination of all of them. In other words, the great increase in population, plus the changes in climate, plus the search for riches, all together caused the Viking expansion throughout Europe.

In England, the Danish raids had begun around the year 831 AD, and they were more frequent from the year 840 onwards. Then with an enormous navy, the Danes subjected the English to a terrible raid. The Vikings built the largest navy in the world and it was after this that the European landscape began to take on a medieval aspect.

Castles, fortified cities, wall, etc appeared elsewhere trying to counter the Vikings lootings. So that the Vikings could be considered as the precursors of the Medieval Age as regards to the feudal systems and the building of fortified walls around each city to avoid being attacked.

But, what brought about this sudden change in Viking life? It is commonly believed that the main reason lays in the fact that the Vikings, instead of returning to their own countries where they would have found a very cold winter, decided to settle down in suitable places from where they could begin looting by the rivers and fluvial valleys of Southern England.

Around that time a tribute or tax was established. It was enforced in all communities which could not defend their own properties. In England, this tax was called “Dane geld”. This is said to be an important precedent in the development of medieval society in which the vassals paid security money to the lords because of the invaders. This is another important positive change, both economically and socially, as a result of the Viking establishment in Europe.

By about the year 865 AD, the Danish invasions into Southern England were being attempted in a big scale invasion. Their various conquests had created the English territory under Danish control. For more than a century, this state was involved in a permanent ballet against Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the South-West until Alfred of Wessex brought the situation under control.

A pact was signed after his death which meant the recognition of a Viking kingdom as a regular member of the European community. This is also an important event since it signalled the integration of the Vikings into the European society.

The propagation of Christianity throughout the whole Scandinavia was a very important feature of the Vikings integration into the European society. Because of their Christian conversion, they became integrated into the communities of the areas they attacked.
Along with all this, the number of Viking lootings gradually decreased during the second half of the 10th century. By that time, they had exhausted their manpower reserves. Therefore, from then onwards, they had to satisfy their desire for adventure by means of trading with far-off lands.

The decrease in the number of warriors, as well as their conversion to Christianity, signalled the beginning of medieval society, helped greatly by the Vikings. The Viking period had many consequences for the whole Europe, but especially for England.

They achieved, at that time, a veritable economic revolution. The whole shoreline of Western Europe was unified by the Viking navy by its control of the only trade route. It was a perfect sea route which soon replaced the Mediterranean one.

We believe that we must emphasise the positive consequences of the Viking raids. Because of these positive results, we can regard the period as a success not only for the Vikings, whose culture was enhanced everywhere, but for all Europe because from that moment, England was transformed into one of the most important economic and commercial countries of Europe.

Due to the decrease in Viking attacks, Europe was now able to avoid the incessant battles which were part of such raids. Thus the growth of towns and countries gradually continued. In fact, the Viking raids had forced many areas of Charlemagne’s land into adapting a kind of provisional government: feudalism.

The Viking period will be remembered as an extremely important one. This period will be regarded as having more positive effects on the world’s history than negative ones. And as far as England is concerned, the Viking Age gave her the boost needed to become the most important economic and commercial country of Europe.

Besides, the Danish invasion forced the country into unification. This unity allowed England to create a huge empire, which in turn meant massive improvements in their social conditions and its trade via the Baltic and Northern Seas.

CONCLUSION

The extent of the disaster caused by the two Viking raids in England is evident. They were, however, made up for by the strong demographic increase and the commercial development which came about as a result of the transformation of the island into a new economic state.

Not all parts of the society underwent the same sort of changes. The clergy and the aristocracy, for instance, came off worst, while the plain citizens and small farmers in general benefited to a greater or lesser extent from the Viking raids.

It would not be completely untrue to say that England, whose kings were normally either Danish or English, actually belonged to a kind of ruling Danish class or to one run by the Danes between 1016
and 1066. The English boycotted the new Danish lords and forced them either to flee the countries or to resell their properties.

The role of the Dane law was so important that it still continued to exist after its complete destruction by the Normans. Many fugitives managed to escape the final disaster and took refuge in Norway and Denmark where they occupied an important role in their societies, especially in the church. Later on, they greatly contributed to prepare an important reconciliation between the Scandinavian society and that of the East.

The Vikings were an extremely important race in the history of the world. They invaded and conquered an enormous number of lands, territories, and countries from the North Sea to Russia between the 5th and the 11th centuries.

We have discussed the main characteristics of the Viking people, especially the Danes, the reasons for, and the development of their influence on Southern England. The Vikings introduced many changes in Southern England, but they also underwent many changes from their contact with the Anglo-Saxon people, such as their conversion to Christianity.

Our research has allowed us the chance of a deep insight into the ways of the Viking people, their customs and traditions, their religion, and above all, the causes of their expansion. This has allowed us to have a more profound understanding of the philosophy which created and caused their expansion and movements along Europe.

**Bibliografía**


