

# Language from the Stone Age

Everyone <sup>1</sup>*agree / agrees* that language is <sup>2</sup>*always changing / changing always*. For example, words often disappear after a few years and new ones – especially among teenagers and young adults – <sup>3</sup>*are appearing / have appeared* all the time. But speakers of English <sup>4</sup>*are using / have been using* certain words <sup>5</sup>*for / since* tens of thousands of years. That's what researchers at the University of Reading now <sup>6</sup>*believe / are believing*.

Dr Mark Pagel, who is leading the research at the University of Reading, <sup>7</sup>*thinks / is thinking* that words including 'I', 'we' and 'two' <sup>8</sup>*are / have been* with us <sup>9</sup>*for / since* the

Stone Age. Over the last few months, his team <sup>10</sup>*is comparing / has been comparing* modern and ancient languages using computers and the results show that humans <sup>11</sup>*have said / have been saying* some words for the last 15,000 to 20,000 years.

Since these findings, Dr Pagel <sup>12</sup>*is also studying / has also been studying* how quickly words change or disappear. For example, numbers and pronouns <sup>13</sup>*don't often change / aren't often changing* because we use them extremely often. However, less frequently used words <sup>14</sup>*evolve / are evolving* more quickly and are also likely to die out very quickly.