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## **BORROWINGS AND THEIR HISTORICAL REASONS**

*Стаття присвячена проблемі вивчення лексичного запасу англійської мови. Автор розглядає методи, за допомогою яких етимологія як наука досліджує походження слів тієї чи іншої мови. Автор зосереджується на походженні та історичних причинах появи певних шарів лексики в англійській мові. Значна увага приділяється запозиченням з інших мов як способу поповнення словникового запасу англійської мови. Розглядаються три основні аспекти мови, у межах яких запозичені слова адаптуються до нової мови: фонетичний, граматичний та семантичний. У статті також аналізуються такі напрямки семантичного розвитку слів як генералізація та спеціалізація.*

***Ключові слова:** етимологія, запозичення, генералізація, спеціалізація, лексика, походження, порівняння, семантика.*

Стаття посвячена проблемі изучения лексического запаса англійського языка. Автор рассматривает методы, при помощи которых этимология как наука исследует происхождение слов того или иного языка. Автор сосредоточивается на происхождении и исторических причинах появления определенных слоев лексики в англійском языке. Значительное внимание уделяется заимствованиям из других языков как способу пополнения словарного запаса англійского языка. Рассматриваются три основные аспекты языка, в рамках которых заимствованные слова адаптируются к новому языку: фонетический, грамматический и семантический. В статье также анализируются такие направления семантического развития слов как генерализация и специализация.

**Ключевые слова:** этимология, заимствование, генерализация, специализация, лексика, происхождение, сравнение, семантика.

*The article is devoted to the problem of studying vocabulary of English language. The author considers methods with the help of which etymology as a science investigates the origin of words of this or that language. These methods are: philological research; making use of dialectological data; the comparative method; the study of semantic change. Scientists try to investigate when the words entered a language, from what source, and how their form and meaning have changed over time. In languages with a long written history, etymology makes use of philology, the study of how words change from culture to culture over time. Etymologists also apply the methods of comparative linguistics to reconstruct information about languages that are too old for any direct information (such as writing) to be known. The author touches upon difficulties on the way of finding the origin of certain words through time, such as sound change, semantic change, or combination of these two mechanisms. The history of the language is closely connected with the history of the nation speaking the language. By virtue of being a member of the Germanic group, English belongs to a still larger family of languages called Indo-European. The author concentrates on the origin and historical reasons of appearance of certain layers of vocabulary in English language during different periods of history of British Isles. Etymological theory recognizes that words originate through such basic mechanisms as borrowing, word formation, onomatopoeia and sound symbolism. Much attention is paid to borrowings from other languages as one of the methods of enriching the vocabulary of English language. The author mentions the three main areas of the new language system in which the borrowed words are adjusted: the phonetic (when sounds are adopted), the grammatical (changes in form or categories of the word) and the semantic (connected with the meaning of the word). No living language is static, and in time words develop new meanings and lose old ones. Such directions of semantic development of words as generalization and specialization are analyzed in the article. The examples of words borrowed from different foreign languages and created in ways mentioned above are given by the author.*

**Key words:** *etymology, borrowing, generalization, specialization, vocabulary, origin, comparison, semantics.*

English vocabulary, which is one of the most extensive amongst the world's languages, contains an immense number of words of foreign origin. Explanations for this should be sought in the history of the language which is closely connected with the history of the nation speaking the language. In order to have a better understanding of the problem, it is necessary to go through a brief survey of certain historical facts, relating to different epochs, to compare the importance of native and foreign elements in enriching English vocabulary.

A lot of scientists made researches in different aspects of lexicology of English language. There are works devoted to colloquial words and slang, idioms, and dialect words. Many linguists (L. Smith, H. Bradley, T. Lounsbury) believe foreign influence to be the most important factor affecting the English language.

From the point of view of etymology, English vocabulary can be divided into 2 parts: 70% of borrowings in English language, 30% of native words. There are two main sources of borrowings in English language – Romanic and Germanic, both are analyzed in the article.

The aim of this article is to make an attempt to investigate the origin of different layers of English vocabulary.

The objectives of the article are to study historical reasons for appearance of borrowings in English language and tendencies of their development. We also tried to indicate some of the ways in which words change their meanings in English language.

The history of words is studied by etymology. Scientists try to investigate when the words entered a language, from what source, and how their form and meaning have changed over time. Etymological theory recognizes that words originate through a limited number of basic mechanisms, the most important of which are the following: borrowing, i.e. the adoption of loanwords from other languages, word formation such as derivation and compounding, onomatopoeia and sound symbolism, i.e. the creation of imitative words.

The word etymology itself comes from the Greek. The term was originally applied to the search of supposedly «original» or «true» meanings of words, on principles that are rejected as unscientific by modern linguistics. The search for meaningful origins for familiar or strange words is far older than the modern understanding of linguistic evolution and the relationships of languages, with its roots no deeper than the 18th century. The Sanskrit linguists and grammarians of ancient India were the first to make a comprehensive analysis of linguistics and etymology. The study of Sanskrit etymology has provided Western scholars the basis of historical linguistics and modern etymology.

Etymologists apply a number of methods to study the origins of words, some of which are: 1) philological research; changes in the form and meaning of the word can be traced with the aid of older texts, if such are available;

2) making use of dialectological data; the form or meaning of the word might show variation between dialects, which may yield clues of its earlier history; 3) the comparative method; by a systematic comparison of related languages, etymologists can detect which words derive from their common ancestor language and which were instead later borrowed from another language; 4) the study of semantic change; etymologists often have to make hypotheses about changes of meaning of particular words. Such hypotheses are tested against the general knowledge of semantic shifts. For example, the assumption of a particular change of meaning can be substantiated by showing that the same type of change has occurred in many other languages as well.

In languages with a long written history, etymology makes use of philology, the study of how words change from culture to culture over time. However, etymologists also apply the methods of comparative linguistics to reconstruct information about languages that are too old for any direct information (such as writing) to be known. By analyzing related languages with a technique known as the comparative method, linguists can make inferences about their shared parent language and its vocabulary. In this way, word roots have been found which can be traced all the way back to the origin of, for instance, the Indo-European language family.

While the origin of newly emerged words is often more or less transparent, it tends to become obscured through time due to different reasons. The first one is sound change. For example, it is not obvious at first sight that English *set* is related to *sit* (the former is originally a causative formation of the latter), and even less so that *bless* is related to *blood* (the former was originally a derivative with the meaning «to mark with blood»). The next reason is semantic change. English *bead* originally meant «prayer», and acquired its modern sense through the practice of counting prayers with beads. Most often there is a combination of etymological mechanisms. For example, the German word *bitte* (please) and the Dutch word *bidden* (to pray) are related through sound and meaning to the English word *bead*. The combination of sound change and semantic change often creates etymological connections that are impossible to detect by merely looking at the modern word-forms.

A look at the origins of the words that make up the English language involves also a look at the origins of the language itself. With the abundance of words derived from Latin and Greek, the casual observer might guess that English would be, like French, Spanish, and Italian, a romance language derivative of the Latin spoken by the ancient Romans. But although the Romans made a few visits to Britain in the first century A.D., long before the English were there, English is not a romantic language. In terms of its genetic stock, English is a member of the Germanic group, and thus a sister of such extinct tongues as Old Norse and Gothic and such modern ones as Swedish, Dutch and German.

The history of English is intimately tied to the history of the British Isles over the last 1500 years or so. We may speak of English as having its beginning

with the conquest and settlement of a large part of the island of Britain by Germanic tribes from the European continent in the fifth century, although the earliest written documents of the language belong to the seventh century. Of course these Germanic people did not, upon their arrival in England, suddenly begin to speak a new language. They spoke the closely related Germanic tongues of their continental homelands. From these developed the English language. In fact, words *English* and *England* are derived from the name of one of these early Germanic peoples, the Angles. From its beginnings English has been gradually changing and evolving, as language tends to do, until the earliest written records have become all but incomprehensible to the speaker of Modern English without specialized training.

By virtue of being a member of the Germanic group, English belongs to a still larger family of languages called Indo-European. The languages of this family, which includes most of the modern European languages as well as such important languages of antiquity as Latin, Greek and Sanskrit, all resemble each other in a number of ways, particularly in vocabulary. One needs no training in the fine points of philology to see that the similarities between forms like English *father*, German *vater*, Latin *pater*, Greek *pater*, and Sanskrit *pitṛ*, all of which have the same meaning, are not likely to be the result of accident. We account for resemblances like these by the assumption that all of these languages are descended from a common ancestor.

The oldest form of English, known as Anglo-Saxon or Old English and dating from the beginning of the language to about A.D. 1100, retained the basic grammatical properties of the Germanic branch of the Indo-European family. Between the vocabularies of Old English and Modern English, there is a certain continuity at the core, since something over half of the thousand most common words of the Old English poetic vocabulary have survived into Modern English more or less intact, apart from normal sound change. And of the thousand most common Modern English words, four-fifth are of Old English origin. But away from this ancestral core of words like *be*, *water*, and *strong*, the picture is one of radical change. Perhaps five-sixths of the Old English words of which we have record left no descendants in Modern English. And a majority of the words used in English today are of foreign origin. Of the foreign languages affecting the Old English vocabulary, the most influential was Latin. Ecclesiastical terms especially, like *priest*, *vicar*, and *mass*, were borrowed from Latin, the language of the Church. But words belonging to aspects of life other than the strictly religious, like *cap*, *inch*, *school*, and *noon*, also entered Old English from Latin. The Scandinavians, too, influenced the language of England during the Old English period. From the eighth century on, the Scandinavians raided and eventually settled in England, especially in the north and the east. This prolonged, if frequently unfriendly, contact had a considerable and varied influence on the English vocabulary. In a few instances the influence of a Scandinavian cognate gave an English word a new meaning. Thus our *dream*, which meant «joy» in Old English, probably took on the now familiar sense

«a series of thoughts, images, or emotions occurring during sleep» because its Scandinavian cognate *draumr* had that meaning. A considerable number of common words, like *cross*, *fellow*, *ball*, and *raise*, also became naturalized as a result of the Viking incursions over the years. The initial consonants *sk-* often reveal the Scandinavian ancestry of words like *sky*, *skin*, and *skirt*, the last of which has persisted side by side with its native English cognate *shirt* [2].

The Middle English period, from about 1100 to 1500, was marked by a great extension of foreign influence on English, principally as a result of the Norman Conquest of 1066, which brought England under the rule of French speakers. The English language, though it did not die, was for a long time of only secondary importance in political, social, and cultural matters. French became the language of the upper classes in England. The lower classes continued to speak English, but many French words were borrowed into English. To this circumstance we owe, for example, a number of distinctions between the words used for animals in the pasture and the words for those animals prepared to be eaten. Living animals were under the care of English-speaking peasants: cooked, the animals were served to the French-speaking nobility. *Swine* in the sty became *pork* on the table; *cow* and *calf* became *beef* and *veal*. English eventually re-established itself as the major language of England, but the language did not lose its habit of borrowing, and many foreign words became naturalized in Middle English, especially loanwords taken from Old French and Middle French (such as *date*, *escape*, *infant*, and *money*) or directly from Latin (such as *alibi*, *library*, and *pacify*).

Modern English, from about 1500 to the present, has been a period of even wider borrowing. English still derives much of its learned vocabulary from Latin and Greek. And it has also borrowed words from nearly all of the languages in Europe. From Modern French we have words like *bikini*, *cliché*, and *discotheque*, from Dutch, *easel*, *gin*, and *yacht*, from German, *delicatessen*, *pretzel*, and *swindler*, and from Swedish, *ombudsman* and *smorgasbord*. From Italian English has taken *carnival*, *fiasco*, and *pizza*, as well as many terms from music (including *piano*). Portuguese has given *cobra* and *molasses*, and the Spanish of Spain has yielded *sherry* and *mosquito*, while the Spanish of the New World has given *ranch* and *machismo*. From Russian, Czech, and Yiddish English has taken *tsar*, *robot* and *kibitz*.

And in the modern period the linguistic acquisitiveness of English has found opportunities even farther afield from the period of the Renaissance voyages of discovery and up to the present, a steady stream of new words has flowed into the language to match the new objects and experiences English speakers have encountered all over the globe. English has drawn words from India (*bandanna*), China (*gung ho*), and Japan (*tycoon*), as well as a number of smaller areas in the Pacific (*amok* and *orang-utan* from the Malay language and *ukulele* from Hawaiian). Arabic has been a prolific source of words over the centuries, giving such words as *hazard*, *lute*, *magazine*, and a host of words beginning with the letter a, from *algebra* to *azimuth* [2].

The reasons for borrowing are not always the same. Each time two nations come into close contact, certain borrowings are a natural consequence. The nature of the contact may be different. It may be wars, invasions or conquests when foreign words are in effect imposed upon the reluctant conquered nation. There are also periods of peace when the process of borrowing is due to trade and international cultural relations.

Sometimes the words are borrowed to fill a gap in vocabulary. But there is also a great number of words which are borrowed for other reasons. There may be a word (or even several words) which expresses some particular concept, so that there is no gap in the vocabulary and there does not seem to be any need for borrowing. Yet, one more word is borrowed which means almost the same, – almost, but not exactly. It is borrowed because it represents the same concept in some new aspect, supplies a new shade of meaning or a different emotional colouring. This type of borrowing enlarges groups of synonyms and greatly provides to enrich the expressive resources of the vocabulary.

Most of the borrowed words take the second way, that is, they adjust themselves to their new environment and get adapted to the norms of the recipient language. They undergo certain changes which gradually erase their foreign features, and, finally, they are assimilated. Sometimes the process of assimilation develops to the point when the foreign origin of a word is quite unrecognisable. Borrowed words are adjusted in the three main areas of the new language system: the phonetic, the grammatical and the semantic.

English has also added words to the vocabulary in a variety of ways apart from borrowing. Many new words are compounds of existing words (like *humble pie*) or coinages without reference to any word element in English or other languages (like *googol* and *quark*). Many words derive from literary characters (like *ignoramus* and *quixotic*), figures from mythology (like *hypnosis* and *panic*), the names of places (like *donnybrook* and *tuxedo*), or the names of people (like *boycott* and *silhouette*). The Roman emperor Julius Caesar has lent his name to a number of English words, including *caesarean*, *tsar*, *July*, and *Kaiser* [2].

Whether borrowed or created, a word generally begins its life in English with one meaning. Yet no living language is static, and in time words develop new meanings and lose old ones. There are several directions in which semantic development frequently moves. The common tendencies of language are generalization and specialization. A word used in a specific sense may be extended, or generalized, to cover a host of similar senses. Our *virtue* is derived from the Latin *virtus*, which originally meant «manliness». But we apply the term to any excellent quality possessed by man, woman, or beast; even inanimate objects have their virtues. In Latin, *decimare* meant «to select and kill a tenth part of» and described the Roman way of dealing with mutinous troops. Its English descendant, *decimate*, now simply means «to destroy a large part of». Perhaps more frequent in its operation than generalization is the phenomenon of specialization, or narrowing, in which a word of general application becomes limited to a small part of its former wide range. *Tailleur*, the Old French ancestor

of English *taylor*, first meant simply «one who cuts», whether the cutting was of stone, wood, or cloth. Gradually the meaning was restricted to cloth, and the word came into English with that sense. *Deer* once meant «animal». Now only the members of a single family of mammals are called deer.

In addition to what could be thought of as a horizontal dimension of change – the extension or contraction of meaning – words also may rise and fall along a vertical scale of value. Perfectly unobjectionable words are sometimes used disparagingly or sarcastically. If you say, «You are a fine one to talk», you are using *fine* in a sense quite different from its usual meaning. If a word is used often enough in negative contexts, the negative colouring may eventually become an integral part of the meaning of the word. A *villain* was once a peasant. His social standing was not high, perhaps, but he was certainly not necessarily a scoundrel. *Scavenger* originally designated the collector of a particular kind of tax in late medieval England. *Puny* first meant no more than «younger» when it passed from French into English and its spelling was transformed. Only later did it acquire the derogatory meaning more familiar to us now. Euphemism too, though very well-intentioned, has caused many a word to take on a pejorative meaning. People are often reluctant, from a sense of decency or prudery or even simple kindness, to use a word whose denotation is unpleasant. Eventually, however, the good new word may become as unloved as the old one, and a new euphemism must be found. *Cretin* originally meant «Christian» and was used charitably for a kind of mentally deficient person. The Modern English word retains to trace its etymological meaning [2].

The opposite process seems to take place somewhat less frequently, but amelioration of meaning does occasionally occur. In the fourteenth century *nice*, for example, meant «foolish». Its present meaning, of course, is quite different, and the attitude it conveys seems to have undergone a complete reversal from contempt to approval. *Pioneer* now has overwhelmingly favourable connotations. A pioneer leads ordinary people along the way to new territory or new realms of knowledge. When the word first appeared in English, however, a pioneer was only a common foot soldier who performed such unexalted tasks as digging trenches. Another word that has followed the course of amelioration is *urbane*. In its earliest recorded occurrences in English, its meaning was the same as that of its etymological twin *urban*, yet within a hundred years *urbane* had taken on the honorific sense of «smoothly courteous or polite» in which we know it today.

We must not suppose, however, that these processes of semantic development are mutually exclusive or that a word must move neatly and consistently along a single path. The history of a word like *yen*, which began as a «craving for opium or other narcotic» and later developed the sense «a strong desire or propensity», clearly shows the forces of generalization at work but could also be considered to exemplify amelioration and a general lessening of intensity as well. *Sad* is a word whose semantic history is rather complex and not easily classified. Its earliest sense is «sated». The development of the sense «firmly established or

settled» does not clearly exemplify any of the processes just discussed; yet, that sense was current for more than three centuries, only to yield finally to several meanings still in use, such as «mournful» and «deplorable». Whatever the history of their meanings, words are finally as individual – even sometimes eccentric – in their development as people.

The important objective of lexicological researches is the study of the vocabulary of a language as a system. We have considered two essential for linguistics problems – etymology of words in English vocabulary and changes in the meanings of words. The investigation of such problems proved to be very interesting, but difficult and time-consuming. English language has a great number of borrowed from many languages words and many words have changed their meanings by one of the ways mentioned above.

Any language is constantly changing due to close contacts between nations and technological development which leads to creating new objects, notions and, consequently, new words. The meanings of words also do not seem to be at rest because people who speak and write the language simply do not let them rest. People keep applying old words to new things and new situations. Sometimes a simple extension of meaning takes place, but sometimes the development of meaning takes so long and involves so many steps that the original meaning drops away. Etymology is the best method to investigate all these processes, improve vocabulary and enrich different types of vocabularies, especially etymological.

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