

ETYMOLOGY

LECTURE 14

ETYMOLOGY -

the study of the historical relation between a word and the earlier form or forms from which it has, or has hypothetically, developed.

NATIVE WORDS

- The term *native* is conventionally used to denote words of Anglo-Saxon origin brought to the British Isles from the continent in the 5th century by the Germanic tribes — the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes.

2. WORDS OF NATIVE ORIGIN

Words of native origin consist for the most part of very ancient elements – Indo-European, Germanic and West Germanic cognates.

The bulk of the Old English word-stock has been preserved, although some words have passed out of existence.

To assign the native element its true place is to study their semantic and stylistic character, their word-building ability, frequency value, collocability.

2.1.WORDS OF THE INDO-EUROPEAN ORIGIN

These words have cognates in the vocabularies of different Indo-European languages and form the oldest layer.

They fall into different semantic groups and express the most vital, important and frequently used concepts:

WORDS OF THE INDO-EUROPEAN ORIGIN

1. **kinship terms:** *mother, father, son, daughter, brother...*;
2. **important objects and phenomena of nature:** *sun, moon, wind, water, stone, hill...*;
3. **animals and plants:** *goose, wolf, cow, tree, corn...*;
4. **parts of human body:** *ear, tooth, eye, foot, heart, lip...*;

WORDS OF THE INDO-EUROPEAN ORIGIN

4. **concrete physical properties and qualities:** *hard, quick, slow, red, white, new...;*
5. **numerals from 1 to a 100:** *one, two, twenty, eighty...;*
6. **pronouns (personal, demonstrative, interrogative):** *I, you, he, my, that, who;*
7. **some of the most frequent words:** *bear, do, be, sit, stand....*

2.1.WORDS OF THE COMMON GERMANIC ORIGIN

These words have parallels in German, Norwegian, Dutch, Icelandic.

They contain a great number of semantic groups of which are the same as in the Indo-European group of native words:

WORDS OF THE COMMON GERMANIC ORIGIN

1. **parts of the human body:** *head, arm, finger...;*
2. **periods of time:** *summer, winter, time, week...;*
3. **natural phenomena:** *storm, rain, flood, ice, ground, sea, earth...;*
4. **artefacts and materials:** *bridge, house, shop, room, coal, iron, lead, cloth...;*
5. **different kinds of garment:** *hat, shirt, shoe;*

WORDS OF THE COMMON GERMANIC ORIGIN

6. **abstract notions:** *care, evil, hope, life, need...;*
7. **animals, birds and plants:** *sheep, horse, fox, crow ворон, oak, grass...;*
8. **various notional verbs:** *bake, burn, drive, buy, hear, keep, learn, make, rise...;*
9. **adjectives of colour, size, etc:** *broad, dead, deaf, deep, grey, blue...;*
10. **adverbs:** *down, out, before....*

2.3. FEATURES OF THE ENGLISH WORDS *PROPER*

- These words do not have cognates in other languages:

bird, boy, girl, lord, lady, woman, daisy, always.

NATIVE WORDS ARE CHARACTERIZED BY:

1. a wide range of lexical and syntactic valency and high frequency value, e.g. *watch* (v) is used in different sentence patterns:

Do you mind if I watch?

Helen watched him with interest.

She's a student and has to watch her budget closely.

American companies are watching Japanese developments closely.

I feel like I'm being watched.

2. a developed polysemy, e.g. *watch* (n) has the following meanings:

- ❖ ***‘a small clock to be worn, esp. on the wrist, or carried’;***
- ❖ ***‘the act of watching’;***
- ❖ ***‘a person or people ordered to watch a place or a person’;***
- ❖ ***‘a fixed period of duty on a ship, usually lasting four hours’;***
- ❖ ***‘a film or programme considered in terms of its appeal to the public’, etc.;***

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3. a great word-building power, e.g. *watcher*, *watchful*, *watchword*, *watchable*, *watchfire*, *watch-out*, *watchdog*, etc.
 4. the capacity of forming phraseological units, e.g., *watch* enters the structure and forms the semantics of the following phraseological units: *to be on the watch*, *to keep watch*, *to watch one's back*, *to watch one's step*, etc.

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1. The native element comprises not only the ancient Anglo-Saxon core but also words which appeared later as a result of word-formation, split of polysemy and other processes operative in English.
 2. Though not numerous in Modern English, words of Anglo-Saxon origin must be considered very important due to their marked stability, specific semantic characteristics, wide collocability, great derivational potential, wide spheres of application and high frequency value.

3. BORROWED WORDS

- The term ***borrowing*** is used to denote the process of adopting words from other languages and also the result of this process, the language material itself.
- The English language happened to come in close contact with several other languages, mainly Latin, French and Old Norse (or Scandinavian).

HISTORICAL CAUSES OF GREAT INFLUX OF BORROWINGS:

1. Influence of the Roman civilisation → Latin was the language of learning and religion.
2. Scandinavian conquerors → Old Norse was the language of the people who were on the same level of social and cultural development and who merged rather easily with the local population in the 9th, 10th and the first half of the 11th century.
3. French conquerors → French was the language of people who brought new notion of a higher social system – developed feudalism, upper classes, of official documents and school instructions (middle of 11th – the end of 14th).

The main emphasis of the borrowed element in English placed on the Middle English period.

- The greatest number has come from French. They refer to various fields of social, political, scientific and cultural life.
- A large portion of borrowings (41%) is scientific and technical terms.
- Notions that came by the direct influence of certain historical conditions: *place, brave, gay, air* (from French).

THE NUMBER AND CHARACTER OF BORROWINGS DEPEND ON:

1. historical conditions;
2. the nature and length of the contacts;
3. the degree of the genetic and structural proximity of languages concerned.

The closer the languages, the deeper and more versatile is the influence.

1. Under the influence of the Scandinavian languages (closely related to Old English), some classes of words were borrowed that could not have been adopted from non-related or distantly related languages (e.g. the pronouns *they, their, them*).
2. A number of Scandinavian borrowings were felt as derived from native words (they were of the same root and the connection between them was easily seen), e.g. *drop* (AS.) — *drip* (Scand.), *true* (AS.)-*tryst* (Scand.);
3. The Scandinavian influence even accelerated to a certain degree the development of the grammatical structure of English.

A number of Scandinavian borrowings: *call* (v), *take* (v), *cast* (v), *die* (v), *law* (n), *husband* (n), *window* (n), *ill* (adj), *loose* (adj), *low* (adj), *weak* (adj).

Some of the words of this group are easily recognizable as Scandinavian borrowings by the initial *sk*- combination: *sky*, *skill*, *skin*, *ski*, *skirt*, etc.

WAYS OF BORROWINGS

Borrowings enter the language in 2 ways:

- 1) through *oral speech* (by immediate contact between the peoples).

They took place in the early periods of history.

They are usually short and undergo considerable changes in the act of adoption: L *inch, mill, street*.

2. through **written speech** (by indirect contact through books, etc.).

They gained importance in recent times.

They preserve their spelling and some peculiarities of their sound-form, their assimilation is long and laborious process.

TYPES OF BORROWED WORDS

1. **Translation borrowings** (калька) are words and expressions formed from the material already existing in the English language but according to patterns taken from another language, by way of literal morpheme-for-morpheme translation, e.g. ***mother tongue*** < ***L. lingua maternal;***
it goes without saying < ***Fr. Cela va sans dire;***
wall newspaper < ***Russ. Стенгазета.***

2. **Semantic borrowing** is understood as the development in an English word of a new meaning under the influence of a related word in another language, e.g. the English word *pioneer* means ‘explorer’ and ‘one who is among the first in new fields of activity’.

Under influence of the Russian word *пионер* it has come to mean ‘a member of the Young Pioneers’ Organization’.

CATEGORIES OF BORROWED WORDS

INTERNATIONAL WORDS -

words which are borrowed by several languages.

They convey concepts which are significant in the field of communication.

Many of them are Latin and Greek origin.

1. **Names of sciences:** *philosophy, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, medicine, linguistics, lexicology.*
2. **Terms of art:** *music, theatre, drama, tragedy, comedy, artist, primadonna.*
3. **Political terms:** *politics, policy, democracy, revolution, communism, progress.*
4. **The English language contributed a number of international words to world languages:** *football, volley-ball, baseball, hockey, cricket, rugby, tennis, golf, etc.*

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5. **Fruits and foodstuff imported from exotic countries:** *coffee, cocoa, chocolate, coca-cola, banana, mango, grapefruit.*
6. International words are often confused with other words which have the same origin but have diverged in meaning in different languages, e.g. ***extravagance***
- 1) нелепость, сумасбродство, вздор; блажь; причуды 2) расточительность; мотовство – расточительность;
- accurate*** – верный, правильный, точный

ETYMOLOGICAL DOUBLETS

- **Etymological Doublets** are the words originated from the same etymological source, but different in phonemic shape and in meaning.

The words *shirt* and *skirt* etymologically descend from the same root.

Shirt is a native word, and *skirt* is a Scandinavian borrowing. Their phonemic shape is different, but there is a certain resemblance which reflects their common origin. Their meanings are also different but easily associated: they both denote articles of clothing.

They may enter the vocabulary by different routes. Some of these pairs, like shirt and skirt, consist of a native word and a borrowed word: *shrew* (E.) and *screw* (Sc).

Others are represented by 2 borrowings from different languages which are historically descended from the same root: *senior* (L – *sir* (Fr)); *canal* (L) – *channel* (Fr); *captain* (L) – *chieftain* (Fr).

Words that were borrowed from the same language twice, but in different periods: *corpse* (Norm. Fr) and *corps* (Par. Fr), *travel* (Norm. Fr) and *travail* (Par. Fr), *cavalry* (Norm. Fr) and *chivalry* (Par. Fr), *goal* (Norm. Fr) and *jail* (Par. Fr).

ETYMOLOGICAL TRIPLETS

- group of words of common root:
- *hospital* (L) – *hostel* (Norm.Fr) – *hotel* (Par.Fr);
- *to capture* (L) – *to catch* (Norm. Fr) – *to chase* (Par. Fr).

THE ETYMOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY

The native element	The borrowed element
1. Indo-European element	1. Celtic (5-6 th c. A.D.)
2. Germanic element	2. Latin: 1 st group: 1 st c. B.C. 2 nd group: 7 th c. A.D. 3 rd group: Renaissance period
3. English Proper element (no earlier than 5 th c A.D.)	3. Scandinavian (8 th -11 th c.A.D.) 4. French Norman borrowing: (11 th -13 th c. A.D.) Parisian borrowings (Renaissance)
	5. Greek (Renaissance)
	6. Italian (Renaissance and later)
	7. Spanish (Renaissance and later)
	8. German

ASSIMILATION OF BORROWINGS

denotes a partial or total confrontation to the phonetical, graphical and morphological standards of the English language and its semantic system.

There are three degrees of assimilation:

1. **Completely assimilated borrowed words**

follow all morphological, phonetical and orthographic standards. They take part in word-formation. Their morphological structure and motivation is transparent.

They are found in all layers of older borrowings: *cheese* (L.), *husband* (Sc.), *animal* (L.)

A borrowed word never brings into the receiving language the whole of its semantic structure if it is polysemantic in the original language. The borrowed variants may change and become specialized in the new system: the word *sport* had a much wider scope in Old French denoting pleasures, making merry and entertainment in general. Being borrowed into Middle English in this character it gradually acquired the meaning of outdoor games and exercises.

PARTIALLY ASSIMILATED BORROWED WORDS ARE SUBDIVIDED INTO:

- a) borrowings not completely assimilated *graphically*.

These are words from French, in which the final consonant is not read: *ballet*, *buffet*; with a diacritic mark: *café*, *cliché*; diagraphs ch, qu, ou, etc.: *bouquet*, *banquet*.

b) borrowings not completely assimilated
phonetically.

e.g. from French with the stress on the
final syllable:

ma'chine, car'toon, police, 'bourgeois,
pres'tige, re'gime.

c) borrowings not completely assimilated
grammatically.

e.g., nouns from Latin and Greek keep
their original plural forms:

phenomenon – phenomena;

criterion – criteria;

d) borrowings **not completely assimilated semantically** because they denote objects and notions peculiar to the country from which they come, e.g.

sari, sombrero, rickshaw (Ch), 'sherbet (Arab), etc.

3) UNASSIMILATED BORROWINGS OR BARBARISMS

are words from other languages used by English people, e.g.

ciao – ‘good-bye’ or *tête-à-tête*.

INFLUENCE OF BORROWINGS

- The role of borrowings was so great that they exerted much influence on the development of English and brought about different changes or innovations practically on all the levels of the language system. Borrowed words have influenced:
 1. the phonetic structure of English words and the sound system;
 2. the word-structure and the system of word-building;
 3. the semantic structure of English words;
 4. the lexical territorial divergence.

The influence of borrowings on the phonetic structure of English words and the sound system.

1. The appearance of words of new phonetic structure with strange sounds in unusual positions, e.g. *waltz*, *psychology*, *'souffl *. The initial [ps], [pn], [pt] are used in English alongside the forms without the initial sound [p];
2. The appearance of a new diphthong [oi] which came with such French words as *point*, *joint*, *poise*;
3. The reappearance of the initial [sk] mostly due to Scandinavian borrowings;
4. The development of the Old English variant phonemes [f] and [v] into different phonemes: [v] came to be used initially (*vain*, *valley*) and [f] in the intervocal position (*effect*, *affair*);
5. The appearance of the affricate [dʒ] at the beginning of words, e.g. *jungle*, *journey*, *gesture*.

The influence of borrowings on the word-structure and the system of word-building resulted in:

1. The appearance of new structural types in which some highly-productive borrowed affixes (e.g. *re-*, *inter-*, *-er*, *-ism*) can combine with native and borrowed bases. Other borrowed affixes, not so productive (e.g. *co-*, *de-*, *-ant*, *-ic*), combine only with Latinate bases, i.e. bases of Latin, Greek or French origin, i.e. *inform-ant* (inform - < Old French < Latin).
2. The ousting of native affixes by borrowed ones, e.g. the prefix *pre-* has replaced the native prefix *fore-*;
3. The appearance of great number of words with bound morphemes, e.g. *tolerate*, *tolerable*, *tolerance*, *toleration*;
4. The change of the very nature of word-clusters which now unite not only words of the root-morphemes, but of different synonymous root-morphemes, e.g. *spring* – *vernal*; *sea* – *maritime*.

The influence of borrowings on the semantic structure of English words

resulted in:

1. The differentiation of borrowed words and synonymous native words in meaning and use of, cf: *fed* (native) – *nourish* (L);
2. The narrowing of meaning of native words due to the differentiation of synonyms: *stool* of native origin in OE denoted ‘any article of furniture designed for sitting on’. Under the influence of the French borrowing *chair* the word *stool* came to be used as ‘a set that has three or 4 legs, but no back or arms’.
3. The extension of meaning of native English words or the acquisition of additional or new meanings, e.g. the political meaning of *shock* and *deviation* have come from the Russian *ударный* and *уклон*.

THE INFLUENCE OF BORROWINGS ON THE LEXICAL TERRITORIAL DIVERGENCE:

1. The intensification of the difference between the word-stock of the literary national language and dialects owing to the borrowing of words into the literary national language which are not found in the dialects, and vice versa;
2. The enlargement of the word-stock of different dialects and national variants of English in the UK. E.G., Irish English has the following words of Celtic origin: *shamrock* – *трилистник*, *dun* – *холм*, *colleen* – *девушка*, etc. In the Northern and Eastern dialects there are many Scandinavian borrowings: *busk* – ‘get ready’; *mum* – ‘mouth’;
3. The acquisition by literary national words of status of dialectal words: *heal* – *скрывать, покрывать* (OE *helan*).

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

1. Due to “the specific historical development of English, it has adopted many words from other languages, especially from Latin, French and Old Scandinavian, though the number and importance of these borrowings are usually overestimated.
2. The number and character of borrowings in Modern English from various languages depend on the historical conditions and also on the degree of the genetic and structural proximity of the languages in question.

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3. Borrowings enter the language through oral speech (mainly in early periods of history) and through written speech (mostly in recent times).
 4. In the English language borrowings may be discovered through some peculiarities in pronunciation, spelling, morphological and semantic structures. Sometimes these peculiarities enable us even to discover the immediate source of borrowing.

5. All borrowed words undergo the process of assimilation, i.e. they adjust themselves to the phonetic and lexico-grammatical norms of the language. Phonetic assimilation comprises substitution of native sounds and sound combinations for strange ones and for familiar sounds used in a position strange to the English language, as well as shift of stress. Grammatical assimilation finds expression in the change of grammatical categories and paradigms of borrowed words, change of their morphological structure. Lexical assimilation includes changes in semantic structure and the formation of derivatives,

6. Substitution of sounds, formation of new grammatical categories and paradigms, morphological simplification and narrowing of meaning take place in the very act of borrowing. Some words however retain foreign sounds and inflexions for a long time. Shift of stress is a long and gradual process; the same is true of the development of new meanings in a borrowed word, while the formation of derivatives may occur soon after the adoption of the word.
7. The degree of assimilation depends on the time of borrowing, the extent to which the word is used in the language and the way of borrowing.

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