

The Role of German Words in the English Language

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Abstract:

This paper aims to shed light on some of the most important borrowings in the English language from German. German words and expressions are encountered in everyday English and are used in different contexts. Having a basic understanding of these borrowings can help learners recognize similarities between English and German. The focus of this paper is on the history of the German language and its relationship with Old English, as well as on the influence of Germanic languages on the development of English vocabulary.

Several researchers have demonstrated that vocabulary plays a central role in language teaching and learning. English as a foreign language is no exception, as learners need to devote considerable time and effort to understanding, developing, and using vocabulary. Various techniques can be employed to help language learners deal with the difficulties involved in learning vocabulary.

In order to understand a language and its etymology more effectively, learners need to have a general understanding of its history. The history of the English language is generally associated with the Germanic invasion of Britain in the fifth century AD. English developed through several major periods: Old English (approximately 450–1150), Middle English (1150–1500), Early Modern English (1500–1800), and Late Modern English (after 1800).

Old English was spoken by Germanic tribes and was considerably different from present-day English. Nevertheless, a significant part of its vocabulary originated from Germanic roots. Later, Greek and Latin words were introduced into English, while the Norman Conquest brought a substantial number of French words into the language. During the period associated with Chaucer, French was widely used by the upper classes. These borrowings from Germanic languages, French, and Greek eventually became an important part of English vocabulary. Thousands of French words entered the English language.

The expansion of the British Empire also contributed to the incorporation of many foreign words into English, including words from Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, and other languages. This continuous process of borrowing contributed to the development of different varieties of English, including Commonwealth English, British English, and American English, which are now spoken by more than a billion people around the world.

المستخلص:

تهدف هذه الورقة إلى إلقاء الضوء على بعض أهم الكلمات الدخيلة في اللغة الإنجليزية من اللغة الألمانية. وتوجد الكلمات والتعبيرات الألمانية في اللغة الإنجليزية اليومية، وتستخدم في سياقات مختلفة. ويمكن أن يساعد الإلمام الأساسي بهذه الكلمات الدخيلة متعلمي اللغة على التعرف على أوجه التشابه بين اللغتين الإنجليزية والألمانية. وتركز هذه الورقة على تاريخ اللغة الألمانية وعلاقتها باللغة الإنجليزية القديمة، بالإضافة إلى تأثير اللغات الجرمانية في تطور مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية.

لقد أثبت العديد من الباحثين أن المفردات تؤدي دورًا محوريًا في تعليم اللغة وتعلمها. واللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية ليست استثناءً من ذلك، إذ يحتاج المتعلمون إلى تكريس قدر كبير من الوقت والجهد لفهم المفردات وتطويرها واستخدامها. ويمكن توظيف تقنيات مختلفة لمساعدة متعلمي اللغة على التعامل مع الصعوبات المرتبطة بتعلم المفردات.

ولفهم اللغة وأصل كلماتها بصورة أكثر فاعلية، يحتاج المتعلمون إلى معرفة عامة بتاريخ اللغة. ويرتبط تاريخ اللغة الإنجليزية، بصورة عامة، بالغزو الجرمني لبريطانيا في القرن الخامس الميلادي. وقد مرت اللغة الإنجليزية بعدة مراحل رئيسية، هي: الإنجليزية القديمة (نحو 450-1150م)، والإنجليزية الوسطى (1150-1500م)، والإنجليزية الحديثة المبكرة (1500-1800م)، والإنجليزية الحديثة المتأخرة (بعد عام 1800م).

كانت الإنجليزية القديمة تُحدث من قبل القبائل الجرمانية، وكانت مختلفة بدرجة كبيرة عن اللغة الإنجليزية المعاصرة. ومع ذلك، فإن جزءًا كبيرًا من مفرداتها كان ذا أصول جرمانية. وفي وقت لاحق، دخلت الكلمات اليونانية واللاتينية إلى اللغة الإنجليزية، في حين أدى الغزو النورماني إلى دخول عدد كبير من الكلمات الفرنسية إلى اللغة. وخلال الفترة المرتبطة بثشوسر، كانت الفرنسية مستخدمة على نطاق واسع من قبل الطبقات العليا. وأصبحت هذه الاقتراضات من اللغات الجرمانية والفرنسية واليونانية في نهاية المطاف جزءًا مهمًا من مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية. كما دخلت آلاف الكلمات الفرنسية إلى اللغة الإنجليزية.

وساهم توسع الإمبراطورية البريطانية أيضًا في إدخال العديد من الكلمات الأجنبية إلى اللغة الإنجليزية، بما في ذلك كلمات من السنسكريتية والهندية والأردية وغيرها من اللغات. وقد أسهمت عملية الاقتراض المستمرة هذه في تطور أنواع مختلفة من اللغة الإنجليزية، بما في ذلك الإنجليزية في دول الكومنولث، والإنجليزية البريطانية، والإنجليزية الأمريكية، التي يتحدث بها اليوم أكثر من مليار شخص حول العالم.

Introduction:

Languages such as Thinglish, Chinglish, Hinglish, and Singlish demonstrate how English interacts with local languages and dialects. Speakers of these varieties combine English with local linguistic features, resulting in new words, expressions, and meanings. This process continuously adds new dimensions and varieties to the English language.

English is fundamentally a Germanic language, although its vocabulary has been considerably influenced by Latin, Greek, French, and many other languages. As a result, many terms used in areas such as the arts, sciences, sports, psychology, philosophy, and other academic disciplines have origins in Greek and Latin.

English and German share a common Germanic background. Therefore, a number of English and German words are similar in form, pronunciation, or meaning. The following are some examples of words that demonstrate similarities between English and German:

English	German
Not	Nicht
Bread	Brot
Brother	Bruder
Book	Buch
Bed	Bett
Ball	Ball
At home	Zu Hause
Cook	Kochen
What	Was
Washing	Waschen
Make	Machen
Europe	Europa
English	Englisch
Egg	Ei
End	Ende
Good	Gut
Sugar	Zucker
Faculty	Fakultät
German-speaking	Deutschsprachig
Person	Person
Phonetics	Phonetik
Picnic	Picknick
Pizza	Pizza
Plural	Plural
Plus	Plus
Postcard	Postkarte
She	Sie
Sing	Singen
Singular	Singular
Situation	Situation
Sit	Sitzen
Net	Netto
Never	Nie
New	Neu
No	Nein
Nothing	Nichts
Often	Oft

English	German
Tea	Tee
Tablet	Tablette
Theory	Theorie
Spain	Spanien
Sports field	Sportplatz
Sports hall	Sporthalle
Thank you	Danke
Africa	Afrika
All	Alle
And	Und
Answer	Antwort
Learn	Lernen
Tomato	Tomate

Knowing the origin and historical development of English is valuable for language learners because it helps them understand the nature and development of the language. The relationship between English and German is particularly important because both belong to the Germanic language family.

English, like Danish, Dutch, and German, is a descendant of the common Germanic languages spoken approximately two thousand years ago. When German developed as an independent branch of the Indo-European language family, many new words emerged. A considerable number of these words referred to everyday life and the natural world, including terms associated with land, sea, stars, animals, food, weather, family, and other aspects of daily life.

Germanic influence can also be observed in English suffixes such as **-dom** in words such as *kingdom* and *freedom*, and **-ship** in words such as *friendship*, *hardship*, *lordship*, and *kingship*.

When English became increasingly separated from its continental Germanic relatives during the fifth century, some linguistic developments occurred independently in English. Nevertheless, many Germanic elements remained an important part of English vocabulary.

There are also English words whose historical roots are connected with Germanic forms and whose meanings or structures have changed over time. Examples include *feckless*, *reckless*, *ruthless*, *listless*, *uncouth*, and *unkempt*. In some cases, the original root word disappeared while a derivative form remained in use.

For example, *feckless* developed historically from an earlier form related to *effect*, while *ruthless* contains the element *ruth*, which was once an independent English word meaning pity or sorrow. Although *ruth* is no longer commonly used as an independent word in modern English, it survives in *ruthless*.

The similarities between German and English can therefore provide useful opportunities for language learners. Learners can adopt different strategies for comparing German and English vocabulary, depending on their purposes, ideas, and the contexts in which they intend to use the languages.

A basic knowledge of German-English similarities can also make vocabulary learning easier. Recognizing common roots, similar word forms, prefixes, and suffixes may help learners understand and remember unfamiliar vocabulary.

Conclusion

German has made an important contribution to the development of the English language because English itself belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family. Although English has borrowed extensively from French, Latin, Greek, and many other languages, its Germanic foundation remains clearly visible in its basic vocabulary and grammatical structure.

German speakers can communicate in English, but their pronunciation, pauses, intonation, and certain linguistic patterns may reflect the influence of German. In some cases, English and German words have the same or similar roots, while prefixes, suffixes, pronunciation, or meanings may differ.

Understanding the historical and linguistic relationship between English and German can therefore be useful for learners of both languages. Studying these similarities provides learners with a better understanding of vocabulary, word formation, and the historical development of English.

References:

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