

Latin Influence in English

Latin is one of the most ancient languages and even now it is widely used almost in various fields such as: medicine, learning, science, technology, etc.

Latin has been influencing English throughout its history. Its authority on English was profound as the Roman army and merchants gave new names to local objects such as: pise 'pea', catte 'cat', cetel

'kettle', candel 'candle' and a numerous number of other common words.

The influence of Latin on Old English was profound because Latin was considered the language of a highly developed civilization. For several hundred years, while the Germanic Tribe who became the English were still occupying their home land, they had various relations with the Romans through which they acquired a considerable number of Latin words. Not only did Latin influence the vocabulary of the English language, but its syntactic style had an impact on the English of the 16th century. Marcus Tullius Cicero work was particularly imitated, as there was a search for an oratorical contrast and balance.

Latin's contribution to modern English has not been more than just derivatives. The concept of grammar also came from the artificial structure of Classical Latin which can be defined as the Latin used for poetry, oratory, and by the upper classes. Early English had no grammar, no rules. Latin provided an example of excellent grammatical structure and an oratory contrast that English eventually adopted.

Latin has probably impacted legal English the most, as it shares with science a concern for precision. The language used in the legal system is simple, universal and rhetoric. The word have made the statements to be phrased in such a way that we can see its applicability yet specific enough individual circumstances. The law has to remain constant so the language has to be precise enough so cases will be treated consistently and fairly. This is the reason why it has adopted such a complex grammatical structure.

Words from Latin roots have also entered Modern English through the modern Romance languages, especially French and Italian.

English-speakers assimilate a variety of foreign words. They dropped endings without much thought. As a result, we now retain foreign characters like the French c, and the German B.

The English language has drawn from Latin mainly in its vocabulary, but also in its grammar. These loans are grouped, by time and substance, into four periods -- the Zero, First, Second, Third, and Modern. Each of these has distinctive characteristics, both of the Latin words adopted and the process of assimilation undergone. Latin words have also been adopted to English through Modern French and Modern Italian (grouped under the Modern Period) and Norman French

(the Third Period).

The Zero Period

It includes all English words whose etymology traces back to Germanic tribes in contact with Romans on the continent. These are all short words, easily adaptable to the inflections of early Germanic languages. The tribes' dealings with the Romans were centered in military matters, cooking, trade, and commerce, especially with wine merchants. Words current in Modern English with recognizable forms include camp (L campus), kettle (OE cytel, L catillus, catinus), cheap (OE ceap), and wine (OE win, L vinum).

The First Period

This period includes words borrowed during Julius Caesar's English adventures (55 BC) and the Roman Conquest (43-449 AD), but almost none of these survived the Teutonic and Norman invasions. In fact, most Celtic words in Modern English either were borrowed recently (slogan, shillelagh) or continued as place names (Kent, Devon, Cumberland). The most interesting Latin-Celtic-Old English path is that of -chester, with its variants -cester and -caster, as found in Manchester, Gloucester, and Lancaster. In Celtic, it is ceaster, from the Latin castra (encampment). Many words (some originally from Greek) for common objects therefore entered the vocabulary of these Germanic people via Latin even before the tribes reached Britain: anchor, butter, camp, cheese, chest, cook, devil, dish, fork, gem, inch, kettle, kitchen, linen, mile, mill, mint (coin), noon, pillow, pin, pound, punt (boat), sack, street, wall, wine.

The Second Period

This period, dating from Augustine's mission of 597, is divided into two main sub-periods, the Early and the Benedictine. The Early Second Period includes words taken by the English to describe their new religion (mass, pope; from the Old English maesse, papa; and the Latin missa, papa), but also household words (cap, plant; from the Old English caeppa, plante; and the Latin cappa, planta) and those relating to education (Latin and school; from the Old English scol; and the Latin, schola). Christian missionaries coming to Britain in the 6th century and 7th century brought with them Latin religious terms which entered the English language: abbot, altar, apostle, bishop, church, clerk, disciple, mass, minister, monk, nun, pope, priest, school, shrive.

The amount and miscellany of the borrowings show the extent of Christianity's immediate impact on

seventh-century Britain. In this part of the Second Period, direct translation of Latin terms is characteristic. Thus, the Late Latin *trinitas* (three) is the Old English *þrines* (literally, three-ness), and the Late Latin *resurrectio* (resurrection) is the Old English *ærise*, from *ærisan* (to arise).

The Third Period

The Third Period begins in 1066 with William the Conqueror. With the Norman invasion came their language, Norman French, which was related more closely to Latin than was English. Because of this closeness, words adopted from French are considered along with those drawn from Latin itself. The dual sources of Middle English vocabulary are still apparent today: word pairs such as *example/exemplary* and *machine (sh)/machinate (k)* show the differences between words with Norman and Latin roots. This period is the first time that untranslated Latin words are introduced wholesale, in both prose and poetry

. Almost all of these aureate terms passed into general use only after being reintroduced. Others still current were from Wycliffe's Bible, and gained currency through constant use. From 1066 until Henry IV of England ascended to the throne in 1399, the royal court of England spoke a Norman that became progressively Gallicised through contact with French. Continued use of Latin by the Church and centres of learning brought new Latin influence.

The Modern Period

This period of Latin influence has two sub-periods – (1) Renaissance (2) Industrial Age
The Modern Period begins with the advent of Modern English, usually dated to 1500. By the time of Thomas Eliot, the classical languages were entering English mostly as compounds, either with English or previously-assimilated words, or with other classical roots. An incomplete list of widely used classical roots includes -ation, -ana, -ite, -ism, ex-, co-, -ist, and de-, while scientific English uses many more specialized ones : mille-, matri-, menti-, and reticul-, though these often come ultimately from the Greek. During the English Renaissance, from around 1500–1650, some 10,000 to 12,000 words entered the English lexicon, including *lexicon*. Some examples include: aberration, allusion, anachronism, democratic, dexterity, enthusiasm, imaginary, juvenile, pernicious, sophisticated. Many of these words were borrowed directly from Latin, both in its classical and medieval forms. In turn, Late Latin also included borrowings from Greek.

The dawn of the age of scientific discovery in the 17th and 18th centuries created the need for new words to describe newfound knowledge. Many words were borrowed from Latin, while others were coined from Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes, and Latin word

elements freely combine with elements from all other languages including native Anglo-Saxon words. Some of the words which entered English at this time are: apparatus, aqueous, carnivorous, component, corpuscle, data, experiment, formula, incubate, machinery, mechanics, molecule, nucleus, organic, ratio, structure, vertebra.

Classically derived names

seem to give credence to claims to knowledge and capability.

Latin's Impact on English Grammar

Latin's contribution to modern English has not been based solely on derivatives. The very ideas of grammar also came from the artificial structure of Classical Latin (the Latin used for poetry, oratory, and by the upper classes). Early English was in no way an artificial or learned language, and had no grammar, no rules, nothing but conflicting precedent in everything: spelling, word order, declension, and conjugation.

In this structural vacuum, those who wanted order were forced to create it, which they did by imposing classical grammar on the language. These early grammarians are the source of the stigma on ending a phrase with a preposition, of the choice we have today between 'who/which' (identified with the Latin *qui*) and 'that' as a relative pronoun whose first use in English was direct translation from the Latin.

Latin's Overall Impact

Latin's influence on English is considerable.

Even the grammar, which has been influenced less than vocabulary, would be amazingly different without its Latin base.,

English grammar has been turned on its head by classical scholars, and English vocabulary does not need the amount of words that it has. If one idea has just one word derived from each language contributing the most to Modern English (Greek, Latin, Saxon (Germanic), and Norman French), we would still have useless synonyms. Yet, it must be said that the words borrowed from Latin added not only richness and poetic superfluity to English but also contributed in making the language capable of expressing abstract, complicated ideas.