

## The English Vocabulary Enrichment

Martha Betaubun

Lecturer on English Education of the State University of Musamus Merauke-Papua-Indonesia

Received: April 30, 2016

Accepted: July 2, 2016

### ABSTRACT

English vocabulary enrichment can occur through socio-culture contact. When two cultures meet and mix, then the two languages used will be mixed and a large group language usually will affect the language much smaller group. Recently, the English vocabulary is mixture of various languages in the world, related to the period when the English colonized by various European nations, such as Rome, Viking, Anglo-Saxon, and France. As a great nation, the British be a nation further colonial language that opens the door to take a different vocabulary of other languages. Socio-cultural developments in the part of religion, literature, politics, education, and technology also play a role as English vocabulary enrichment. This article is a qualitative using interpretative descriptive approach. The data sources obtained from reference books, research journals, research reports, such as the internet and electronic information related to information of the English vocabulary enrichment. Methods of data collection used several procedures including data collected, read, understood, analyzed, and then interpreted in accordance theoretical basis. The results of this paper are the English vocabulary enrichment has provided new words. The development of technology has provided so many new words, or the same words with very distinctive meanings based on their uses in different fields of study. The development of language is along with the socio-cultural contact and development.

**KEYWORDS:** English, vocabulary enrichment, socio-culture

### INTRODUCTION

Groups of people are different among others due to their ways of life, or culture. Culture is a way of life within which we exist, think, feel, and relate to others, and this is a “glue” that binds a group of people together [1].. What makes the groups different among others is that each group makes its norms or rules among the members to be approved, and the norms one group makes are not really similar with other groups as each group, consisting of unique members, has different agreements on many things. The agreement usually comes from individual experiences building background knowledge of other members.

What makes each member of the cultural group understands what she / he thinks or feels is that, generally, each uses a language. This means that “Language is the greatest achievement of culture”, (Vladimir Alexandrov in [2] because, as [3] states, “.... language is an essentially perfect means of expression and communication among every known people. Of all aspects of culture, it is a fair guess that language was the first to receive a highly developed form and that its essential perfection is a prerequisite to the development of culture as a whole” [4].

The needs that cultural groups have to meet lead to a contact between, or even among, groups. The contact of cultural groups creates a language contact, making borrowing in a group’s language as the influence of the socio-cultural setting toward the language, as what Sapir states that the simplest kind of influence that one language may exert on another is the “borrowing” of words. When there is cultural borrowing there is always the likelihood that the associated words may be borrowed, too, [5]. The cultural and language contacts have occurred in the English language for centuries, and enriched its vocabulary.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### Culture Contact and Language Contact

Culture has been defined in different statements among experts, but whatever they state, it is in relation with society [5], state culture guides the behavior of people in a community and is incubated in family life. It governs our behavior in groups, makes us sensitive to matters of status, and helps us know what others expect of us and what will happen if we do not live up to their expectations. Culture helps us to know how far we can go as individuals and what our responsibility is to the group, [1]

As culture is guides, it contains norms, customs, ideas, and many things that each member has to take due to other members’ acceptance in a society. The society’s culture, then, things deal with people’s knowledge about “know-how”, [6] in their living since “a society’s culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or

\*Corresponding Author: Martha Betaubun, Lecturer on English education of the State University of Musamus, Merauke, Papua-Indonesia. Email: [mrphilbet@gmail.com](mailto:mrphilbet@gmail.com)

believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves” [6].

There is always a relation between language and culture due to the fact that a language is a part of culture, and a culture is a part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture, [1]

Since culture deals with knowledge, belief, and value, language provides a means of encoding it. The example can be taken from Tahitians. The people do not have a distinction between “sadness” and “sickness”, so they use the same word for both. This happens because of their belief that sickness and sadness are the condition showing an attack of evil spirit. Such belief can be odd for other people from other cultures, [7]. It seems that different cultures lead to different languages. [6], states that “If language A has a word for a particular concept, then that word makes it easier for speakers of language A to refer to that concept than speakers of language B, who lack such a word and are forced to use a circumlocution. For example, the German word *Weltanschauung* has no exact equivalent in English (*ibid*, 216).

When a group of culture meets and mixes with another group of culture, meaning culture contact, it leads to “biculturalism (participation in two cultures) as well as bilingualism, diffusion of cultural traits as well as linguistic elements”, [8]. In such contact, one group learns from the other that the gap found in vocabulary of each group “may need filling by borrowing” (*ibid*) that is “The process whereby bilingual speakers introduce words from one language into another language, these loan words eventually becoming accepted as an integral part of the second language”, [9]. In this condition, a small group usually borrows many words from a large one as Linton (cited in Weinreich) states “.... when a large and a small group are brought into contact, the small group will borrow more extensively than the large one .... A hundred individuals can learn a new thing as readily as one”, [8].

This article is a qualitative using interpretative descriptive approach. The data sources obtained from reference books, research journals, research reports, such as the internet and electronic information related to information of the English vocabulary enrichment. Methods of data collection used several procedures including data collected, read, understood, analysed, and then interpreted in accordance theoretical basis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The real English people are hard to trace except the Celts, as the first tribe who probably came from central Europe, and southern Russia. These people were better than the local ones who were driven to Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, later controlled the areas of Britain, and were joined by the new arrivals from Europe. The last Celtic arrival was the Belgic tribes. The Celtic tribes are the ancestors of the people in Highland Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and Cornwall, and Celtic languages are still spoken in these areas, [10]

The coming of Roman gave the word “Britain” to the land which comes from “Pretani”, the Greco-Roman word for the inhabitants of Britain, but it was mispronounced to become “Britania”. The Romans brought Latin and Greek, and they were literate, while the Celtic were illiterate. The Roman culture left the names of areas. These areas were walled, and called *castra* the Latin word for camp which has remained today as the names of some cities with the ending chester, cester or cester: Gloucester, Leicester, Doncaster, Winchester, Chester, Lancaster, and many others.

The Anglo-Saxon invasion, the Germanic tribes, as the second colonizer brought another culture and language making contact with the Celts. These tribes gave the land a name “*Englaland*, the land of the Angles, and the language *Englisc*, because the Angles were the chief group at that time” [2]. The strong culture of the Anglo-Saxon influenced the death of the Celtic culture and language in England except the names of some rivers, Thames, Mersey, Severn and Avon, and two cities, London and Leeds, [10]. The influence of their culture is obvious today. The names of days of the week were taken from Germanic gods: Tig (Tuesday), Wodin (Wednesday), Thor (Thursday), Frei (Friday) (*ibid*), so when someone says “Wednesday”, it means “the day of Odin”, [11]. Another part of Saxon’s culture remaining today is names of some cities showing family villages. The ending – ing meant folk or family, thus “Reading” is the place of the family of Rada, “Hasting” is the family of Hasta. *Ham* means farm as in the place-name Birmingham, Nottingham, and *ton* for settlement as in Southampton. The Saxon government divided the land into areas administratively called “shire” or county (Norman word) under the king’s local administrator *shire reeve* shortened to “sheriff”, [10]. The Vikings of Norway and Denmark who invaded England and forced the Saxons to give some part of the land to the Viking made the Saxons build walled settlements called *burghs* later spelt *borough* such as cities: Irthlingborough, Wellingborough, Gainsborough, just to mention the names.

The coming of the Normans to claim the throne of England in 1066, as the fourth colonizer, brought also the culture and the language, French. French was used by the royal family and the French nobles as King William could not speak English or Old English spoken by ordinary people as “serfs” that was the lowest level of governmental hierarchy. The highest level was the King governing the country using a system called “feudalism” from a French word *feu*, [10]. The names of live animals that were bred by the ordinary people

were Old English such as *sheep, cow, ox, swine, calf, deer*, and *chicken*, but these animals brought to the castle for the noble feast had French names: *mutton, beef, pork, bacon, veal, venison*, and *pullet*, [2]. French was then considered to be better to cease Anglo-Saxon words to use, for example, *stool* the Anglo-Saxon word for a piece of furniture was replaced by the French word *chair*, and *stomach*, the French word, replaced the Anglo-Saxon word *belly*.

French words that were adopted by the ordinary people, and the changing language evolved was called Middle English. Latin words, meanwhile, had mingled with the English language since the beginning of the Roman conquest of England and the influence of the Roman church and missionaries. However, it was after the Norman conquest Latin influenced English more, though the use of Latin was rather for formality than everyday conversation. The result of this mingled history is that the vocabulary among Anglo-Saxon, French, and Latin has the meaning, as the following examples:

<b>Anglo-Saxon</b>	<b>French</b>	<b>Latin / Greek</b>
ask	question	interrogate
dead	deceased	defunct
end	finish	conclude
fair	beautiful	attractive
fear	terror	trepidation
help	aid	assist
rise	mount	ascend
thin	spare	emaciated, [2]

Leader also states that the single syllabic Anglo-Saxon words show directness, brevity, and plainness, and make the English people feel more deeply and see things more truly. French words show grandeur, sonority, courtliness, and more literary level of expression. The precision and learnedness of Latin and Greek vocabulary arouse the minds to more complex thinking and the making of fine distinctions (*ibid*).

The Middle Ages ended when there was a technical development: the first English printing press set up in 1476 by William Caxton after learning the skill of printing in Germany, [10]. With this printing press, books, previously written manually, became cheaper and plentiful. This led to standardization, and it was London English, a mixture of south Midland and south eastern English. “For the first time, people started to think of London pronunciation as “correct” pronunciation” (*ibid*: 85). The following quotations are the examples of English dialects taken from *Webster’s New International Dictionary* (1918: xxxiv-xxxvi, *passim*).

1. South English dialect taken from *Ancren Riwle*.

“Thet is the ende of the tale,” seith Seneke the wise, “Ichulle thet 3e speken selde and theonne buten lutel”. Auh moni punt hire norte leten mo ut, as me deth water et ter mulne cluse; . . .

*Translation.* – “That is the end of the tale”, “saith Seneca the wise”, “I will that ye speak seldom, and then but little”. However, many a one shuts up [impoundeth] her words for to let more out, as one does water at the milldam [close]; . . .

2. Northern dialect taken from *Cursor Mundi* (II 3,595-3,000)

Sua has eild now this Ysaac ledd	sua, so	eild, age
That he in languor lijs in bedd;		
Him wantes sight, als I said yow'		
And cald on his son Esau,		
“Esau, life son,” he said,	life, dear	

3. Southern dialect taken from Robert of Gloucester’s *Chronicle* (II. 7,537-7,542)

Thus com lo ! Engelond into Normandies hond'  
and the Normans ne couthe speke tho bote hor owe speche,  
and speke French as hii dude atom, and hor children dude also teche ;  
so that heiemen of this lond, that ofhor blod come,  
holdeth alle thulke speche that hii of hom nome;

*Translation.*—Thus come, lo! England into Normandy’s hand, and the Normans knew not *how to* speak then but their own speech, and spoke French as *they* did at home, and their children did so teach, so that the high-men of this land, that of their blood came, hold all the same [the-ilk] speech that they of them took;

4. Dialect of Kent taken from Dan Michel's *Ayenbite of Inwit*

Thyse byeth the tuelf articles of the cristene byleue, that each man christen seel yleue stedeuestliche, uor otherlaker he ne may by ybor3e, huanne he heth wyt and scele.

*Translation.*—These are the twelve articles of the Christian belief, that each Christian man must [shall] believe steadfastly, for otherwise he can not be saved when he hath understanding [wit] and reason [skill].

5. Midland dialect taken from *the Tale of Melibeus, in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*

A yong man called Melibeus, mighty and riche, bigat upon his wif, that called was Prudence, a daughter which that called was Sophie. Upon a day bifel, that he for his despote is went into the feedes hym to pleye. His wyf and eek his daughter hath he left inwith his hous, of which the dores weren fast y-shette.

Another example below is taken from Caxton's Prologue to Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*.

For it is notoyrly knownen thorugh the vnyuersal world that there been ix. Worthy and the best that euer wete, that is to wete, thre paynyme, thre Jewes, and thre crysten men. As for the paynyme, they were to fore the incarnacyon of Cryst, whiche were named, the first Hector of Troye, of whome thystorye is comen bothe in balade and in prose ; the second Alysaunder the grete ; and the third Julyus Cezar, emperour of Rome, of whome thystorye ben wel kno and had.

The dialects used in England at that time is the mirror of the spread of the Germanic tribes: the Jutes, the Angles, and the Saxon, mingling with French. The speech of the Jutes became the Kentish dialect of Old English; the principal dialect of the Saxons was known as the West Saxon; and the Anglian tongue split into two dialects, the Mercian in the Midland and the Northumbrian in the North. The later history of the dialects may be suggested: Kentish and West Saxon fell together as the Southern dialect of Middle English; the Mercian became the Midland, its principal subdivision (East Midland) being the ancestor of literary Modern English; The Northumbrian became the Northern, the popular tongue on both sides of the Scottish border [2].

### English Colonization

Under Henry VII, the Tudor, England avoided war, and built merchant ships as his policy to make England independent, strong and powerful was by making England have good business. This means that England began to trade with other countries, which later led England to be a colonizer because she needed market shares to sell her products. The invention England made gradually, especially the booming of industry that is Industrial Revolution, changed England from agricultural to industrial country or capitalism. The contact with other countries, cultures, and languages in parts of such four continents as Africa, America, Asia, and Australia has enriched its vocabulary as English has been open to accept words from many different languages, and "... has never rejected a word because of its race, creed, or national origin" [2]. The following list contains fifty familiar English words, along with the languages from which they descend:

aardvark: Afrikaans	polka: Czech
moose : Algonquin	teepee: Dakota
alcohol: Arabic	skill: Danish
poncho: Arauncanian	boss: Dutch
boomerang: Australian	oasis : Egyptian
zebra: Bantu	sauna: Finnish
anchovy: Basque	kindergarten: German
bungalow: Bengali	jaguar: Guarani
typhoon: Cantonese	jukebox: Gullah
hurricane: Carib	canoe: Haitian creole
Eskimo: Cree	ukulele: Hawaiian
camel: Hebrew	bazaar: Persian
saber: Hungarian	mazurka: Polish
whisk: Icelandic	molasses: Portuguese
banshi: Irish	pal: Romany
opera: Italian	vodka: Russian
tycoon: Japanese	sugar: Sanskrit
batik: Javanese	rodeo: Spanish
tundra: Lapp	smorgasbord: Swedish
bantam: Malagasi	boondocks: Tagalog

*ketchup*: Malay

*kiwi*: Maori

*coyote*: Mexican Indian

*shingle*: Norwegian

*wigwam*: Ojibwa

*tattoo*: Tahitian

*polo*: Tibetan

*jackal*: Turkish

*flannel*: Welsh

*kibitzer*: Yiddish (*ibid*: 25-6)

### English Socio-cultural Development and Its Vocabulary Enrichment

The coming of other peoples made the cultural development in such aspects as politics, economy, social, and religion. The spreading and teaching of Christianity, bringing words such as “*bishop* and *angel*” [5], through dramas in churches led to the development of English dramas especially under Elizabeth I period in which William Shakespeare created many poems and plays. Excluding the contact with other countries, Shakespeare influenced the native tongue with many words that he used in writing for the first time: *accommodation, amazement, apostrophe, assassination, bedroom, countless, dwindle, exposure, frugal, generous, hurry, impartial, laughable, monumental, obscene, pedant, radiance, road, sneak, useless, etc.* [2].

Some other literary men and women also created some words: Sir Thomas More’s *utopia* in 1516; William Tyndale’s *scapegoat* in 1530; Sir Thomas Elyot’s *irritate* in 1531; Ben Jonson’s *diary* in 1581; Sir Thomas Browne’s *hallucination* in 1629; Jonathan Swift’s *yahoo* 1726, and many others. On April 15, 1755, there was “a turning point in the history of our tongue” (*ibid*: 102) when Samuel Johnson produced *Dictionary of the English Language* with 43,000 words and 114,000 supporting quotations from every fields of study though there is subjectivity as it can be seen from the following examples dealing with the political aspect:

**Tory.** One who adheres to the ancient constitution of the state, and the apostolical Hierarchy of the church of England, opposed to a whig.

**Whig.** The name of faction. [Johnson, of course, belonged to the Tory party and despised the Whigs.] (*ibid*: 106)

From *Dictionary of the English Language* with 43,000 words, today’s dictionaries such as *Webster’s Third New International Dictionaries* lists 450,000 words, and *Oxford English Dictionary* lists 615,000 words excluding technical and scientific terms, family words slang and argot, and spanking-new creations that totally would be two million. Comparing to other languages, German has 185,000 words, and French fewer than 100,000 (*ibid*: 24). Despite the fewer-than 100,000 French words, “English borrowed an immense number of words from the French of the Norman invaders” [5]. The Napoleonic Wars led to words like *guillotine, tricolour, and epaullette*. Food and fashion introduced words like *café, menu, trousseau, lingerie, and chiffon*. Latin and Greek continue to supply words for the language, though they are increasingly technical, scientific and medical, [12].

The inventions of telephone by Alexander G. Bell of United States in 1876 , television by John L. Baird of Scotland and Charles F. Jenkins of United States in 1925, and telestar ( first television satellite) by U.S. scientists and industry (Edgar, 1963: 119) have made people leave “ postage system”, [10] invented in 1840. These inventions made developments in communication technology in the late twentieth century especially “for visual communication”, [13]. The computer functions much more than counting as ‘to compute means to count’. PC can means “politically correct” and “ personal computer”, [2] . In computers, the words “*back up, bit, boot, crash, disk, hacker, mail, memory, menu, mouse, park, scroll, virus, and windows*” (*ibid*) have different meanings with what can be found in dictionaries because these belong to “ a new user-friendly vocabulary” including other words like “*desktop, laptop, micro*” (*ibid*), and others. [14].

For Simeon Yates [13] , the rapid growth of communication technologies has created the new world with cable and satellite television, fax machine and multimedia computers, and the growing data network called the ‘information superhighway’. With this technology, come the words *internet, cyberspace, electronics mail, bulletin boards, ‘Usenet’ newsgroup, modem, World Wide Web*, and others. [15]

Rich Hall of the United States created the term a sniglet that is “any word that doesn’t appear in a dictionary but should”, [2] . The new words below will not be found in dictionary

*cryptocarnophobic* (adj.) How one feels when mystery meat is placed on the table at evening seated meal.

*postpost* (v.) To check your post office box five times a day even on Sunday when you know there can’t be anything there.

*SATarrhea* (n.) The urge to go to the bathroom while taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test. (*ibid*: 63).

as they are sniglets dealing with students' life. For Lederer, through sniglets, it seems that "No language has a net wide enough to throw over all of reality. There will be more things and ideas than there are words" (*ibid*: 62). [16]

## CONCLUSION

Language is an important part of culture, and culture contact always leads to language contact. English socio-culture has made contacts with other socio-cultures, whether due to being colonized or colonizer, and has enriched its vocabulary through borrowing. However, such socio-culture contact had also led to the death of a language, such as Celtic. In the time of colonization, English adopted so many words from the countries colonized. When the colonization era was over, the adoption of foreign words has never ended as English is open to accept any words needed. The development of English socio-culture has provided new words. The development of technology has provided so many new words, or the same words with very distinctive meanings based on their uses in different fields of study. The development of language is along with the socio-cultural contact and development.

The researcher made this research in order to it can be published in international journals, and the researcher wish to say thanks to the many parties in the Institute for Research and Community Service of the Musamus University of Merauke Indonesia especially related to those who have much assist, thus the research results may be useful.

## REFERENCES

1. Brown, H, Douglas. 2000. *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (Fourth Edition). New York: Pearson Education.
2. Lederer, Richard, 1991. *The Miracle of Language*. New York: Pocket Book.
3. Sapir, Edward. 1956. *Culture, Language, and Personality*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
4. Greenberg, Joseph H. (ed),. 1961. *Universals of Language*. Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press.
5. Sapir, Edward. 1949. *Language* (Renewed by Jean V. Sapir). London: A Harvest Book.
6. Wardhaugh, Ronald. 1988. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. (Third Edition). Oxford: Basic Blackwell.
7. Holmes, Janet. 2001. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistic* (Second Edition). Harlow: Pearson Education.
8. Weinreich, Uriel. 1968. *Language in Contact*. Paris: Mouton.
9. Trudgill, Peter. 2003. *A Glossary of Sociolinguistics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd.
10. McDowall, David. 1995. *An Illustrated History of Britain*. Harlow: Longman.
11. Brooks, Nelson. 1960. *Language and Language Learning: Theory and Practice*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.
12. Blake, N.F. 1996. *A History of The English Language*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.
13. Goodman, Sharon and Graddol, David. 1996. *Redesigning English: New Text, New Identities*. New York: Routledge.
14. Robertson, Stuart. 1954. *The Development of Modern English*. (Second Edition), revised by Frederic G. Cassidy. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
15. Tharp, Edgar. 1963. *Giants of Invention*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap.
16. Webster's New International Dictionary. 1918. Springfield, Mass. USA: G & C Meriam