

李剑波 著

# 英语词汇的 发展与结构研究

STUDIES ON  
THE DEVELOPMENT  
AND  
STRUCTURE OF  
ENGLISH  
WORDS

 中国地质大学出版社

# 英语词汇的发展与结构研究

## *Studies on the Development and Structure of English Words*

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江苏工业学院图书馆  
藏书章

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## 内 容 简 介

本书从历史语言学的角度探讨了英语的产生、英语词汇与印欧语系中其他语言的关系,其中古拉丁语、希腊语、法语和斯堪地那语是重要的外来词源。从社会语言学的角度探讨了英国英语的发展与国际英语传播在词汇方面的相互影响。重点讨论了美国英语、加拿大英语、澳大利亚英语、新西兰英语、印度英语和中国英语的词汇特征。从结构语言学的角度探讨了英语构词的一般规律和特殊规律,尤其是以词为构词要素的词内构词规律和以词素为构词要素的词外构词规律,以及词条结构与词典结构的关系。这三个不同的语言学视角探讨了一个中心主题:英语词汇的发展与词汇的结构变化以及由此而产生的词义变化都是受社会与文化的影响。

## 图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英语词汇的发展与结构研究/李剑波著. —武汉:中国地质大学出版社,2007.3

ISBN 978-7-5625-2165-5

I. 英…

II. ①李…

III. 英语—词汇—研究

IV. H313

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2007)第 027188 号

英语词汇的发展与结构研究

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责任编辑: 谌福兴

责任校对: 张咏梅

出版发行: 中国地质大学出版社(武汉市洪山区鲁磨路 388 号) 邮编: 430074  
电话: (027) 67883511 传真: 67883580 E-mail: cbb@cug.edu.cn  
经 销: 全国新华书店 http://www.cugp.cn

开本: 850mm×1 168mm 1/32

字数: 180 千字 印张: 6.625

版次: 2007 年 3 月第 1 版

印次: 2007 年 3 月第 1 次印刷

印刷: 湖北地矿印业有限公司

印数: 1—800 册

ISBN 978-7-5625-2165-5

定价: 28.00 元

如有印装质量问题请与印刷厂联系调换

## Preface

Words are the typical symbols to better understanding of a language and the chains of the language history as well. It is well believed that over 80 percent of the total English vocabulary is borrowed from other languages. There does exist the trend that English has become into Englishes. Therefore it is necessary to explore the development and the structure of English words.

From the perspective of historical linguistics, the book explores the relation between the birth of English and the Indo-European languages, and discusses the historical factors for the development of English vocabulary. The historical loan words are mainly from Latin, Greek, French and the Scandinavian.

From the perspective of sociolinguistics, the book first analyses relation between the social changes and the development of British English, and the spread of English world wide. Then it discusses the varieties of English words. Finally it explores the social changes and the changing word meaning.

From the perspective of structural linguistics, the book discusses the systematic regulations of word formations. From the inner structure of words, it discusses the word origin. From the outer structure of words it discusses the word creation with morphemes. It also explores the re-

lation between word structure and changing pronunciation, as well as the relation between the lexical words and the dictionary structure.

The content of the book has been classified into eight chapters. The whole writing focuses on the sources of English words, the varieties of English words and the general word formations, which is just to state the idea that English has the features of World Englishes from its own origin to the wide spread now, and that English can be better understood through the word creations and the word structure.

Li Jianbo

## 前 言

英语作为当代最权威的国际语言,其词汇中有百分之八十以上源于其他语言的借词,而且每年有两万左右的新词产生。因此,对英语词汇的发展与结构进行研究是加深理解英语语言与英语文化的有效途径。

本研究从历史语言学的角度探讨了英语的产生,英语词汇与印欧语系中其他语言的关系,其中古拉丁语、希腊语、法语和斯堪地那语是重要的外来词源。从社会语言学的角度探讨了英国英语的发展与国际英语传播在词汇方面的相互影响。重点讨论了美国英语、加拿大英语、澳大利亚英语、新西兰英语、印度英语和中国英语的词汇特征。从结构语言学的角度探讨了英语构词的一般规律和特殊规律,尤其是以词为构词要素的词内构词规律和以词素为构词要素的词外构词规律,以及词条结构与词典结构的关系。这三个不同的语言学视角探讨了一个中心主题:英语词汇的发展与词汇的结构变化以及由此而产生的词义变化都是受社会与文化的影响。

《英语词汇的发展与结构研究》共分八章。第一章探讨英语的产生发展与当时社会变化的关系,英语词汇与印欧语系中其他语言的关系,英国英语的发展与国际英语传播在词汇方面的相互影响。第二章重点探讨英语词汇发展的历史原因与主要外来词源。第三章重点探讨以词为构词要素的词内构词规律。第四章

重点探讨以词素为构词要素的词外构词规律。第五章重点探讨词汇结构变化与词汇的读音变化规律。第六章重点探讨词汇变化发展与词义变化发展的关系。第七章重点探讨英语词汇发展的变体与词汇的国别特征。第八章重点探讨词汇与词典结构以及英美主要案头词典的分析。

本书的撰写历经四年,主要受益于词汇学课程教学与英国留学期间的孜孜探寻。在本书的撰写过程中曾得到导师的指教、同事和朋友帮助、家人的支持,特在此一并表示感谢。

作 者

2006年6月26日

于武昌鲁巷

## Acknowledgements

My work at the course of English Lexicology has been a stimulus to organize my own idea on the Development and Structure of English Words. The writing has been benefited from my MA study in UK and the eight-year lexical course teaching in China, especially the comments given by my teachers, students, colleagues and friends throughout.

It would never have been finished without the support of my wife and the help from S. Jean Parson, the English Language Teacher Developer of British Council. I am grateful to Dr. Tim Marr and Dr. Mary English. Many thanks should be given to the School of Foreign Languages and its leaders for their favor of academic works.



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## Chapter One Social Changes and the Word Development

The development of words and their meanings is just the typical symbol of the changing society. The historical social changing in a country, the changing in different social systems and the interaction between them are of great help to promote the development of words and their meanings. Territorial proximity and a shared social genetic source can partially account for the degree of closeness between English and its sister languages.

### 1.1 English and Indo-European Languages

The genetic and social links of English to the other languages is the strength for the development of English vocabulary. English is one of the member languages in the Indo-European language family. In terms of its ancestry, English comes from a large and mobile family whose daughter languages have developed independent languages.

Generally speaking, without knowing the relationship between English language and Indo-European languages understanding the structure of the present-day English vocabulary would be impossible. One way of establishing the historical social links between languages is by looking into their vocabularies. The English vocabulary today reveals layers of words that correspond to its family history. Some of these words are shared with languages from which

English has been separated for so many that we cannot easily detect their common traits. However, some genetic features are recognizable, either because of the 'sameness' they involves, or because genetic history has been enhanced by external history. Identifying the parent-family and the family branches and smaller groups from which English originates is the better way to know English words.

English belongs to Indo-European, which derives from the geographical range over which these languages were spoken before some of them spread to today's UK: roughly from India to Iceland. Here Indo refers to the fact that many of the daughter languages from earliest recorded times were spoken on the Indian subcontinent, and the European refers to the fact that from equally early times most of the languages of Europe are descended from that common ancestor. The term is strictly historical, and in the twenty-first century descendants of Indo-European languages are spoken all over the world: many countries in the continents of Africa, Australia, the America and Asia. Not all European languages are originally from Indo-European. Hungarian, Estonian, and Finnish belong to the language family called Finno-Ugric. Even in India, the southern one-third of the subcontinent is occupied by speakers of a family of Dravidian that is not related to Indo-European.

Indo-European is perhaps the only one of the language families which are not demonstrably related to one another. The indirect access to the earliest forms of Indo-European, through comparison of ancient recorded languages with each other, establish fairly reliable reconstruction of Indo-European as it existed, probably in an area north of the Caspian Sea, about 5 500 years ago. This date is 'the

latest possible date for the community of Proto-Indo-European proper'<sup>①</sup>.

The Indo-European family is among the most studied of all language families, though other families such as Semitic, to which Arabic and Hebrew belong, and Finno-Ugric, to which Hungarian, Finnish, and Estonian belong, have also been deeply studied, which has nothing in connection with ancient Chinese linguistic traditions<sup>②</sup>.

It is the British judge, Sir William Jones who made the discovery that some geographically distant languages, such as Hindi, Greek, and English, belong to the same family. He was stationed in India, and his interest and knowledge of many tongues led him to notice that words in Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin appeared similarities that could not be accidental. In 1786 he announced that these languages must have 'sprung from a common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists,' laying the foundations of a scientific field called Comparative Historical Indo-European. Intense research over the last 200 years has produced many important insights into the relationship, history, and structure of the Indo-European languages.

Among the branches of Indo-European, not all branches are equally important for English. The Celtic, Hellenic, and Italic have had the strongest influence on vocabulary, either because of terri-

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① as Calvert Watkins writes, who is the etymology editor of the Third Edition of the *American Heritage Dictionary*.

② This is one of the divisions from American scholar Walker. C. C. . Different scholars may have different views on it.



torial overlap or proximity, or for historical, social and cultural reasons. Occasional contacts with other languages such as Hindi, Persian, and Russian, have also left some traces, but their effect on English is not due to shared origin. The contribution of these languages to English vocabulary is similar to the contribution from unrelated languages like Chinese, Japanese and various American Indian languages. The study of English word development with some information on the branches of Indo-European is evident only in more recent borrowings.

### 1. 1. 1 Indo-European and Five Important Branches

#### (1) Indo-Iranian

Indic is the source of the languages spoken by the descendants of a huge migration into the Indian subcontinent from the Indo-European homeland. Most of the languages of northern and central India, among them Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, and Gujarati, are the hymns which form the basic part of the scriptures of the Brahmin religion, the compositions known as the Rig-Vedas, dating from about 1200 BC, and those are known through much later documents. Sanskrit is the classical language of the texts of the Brahmin religion as it was formalized and codified in the fourth century BC. The other branch of this family, the Iranian branch represented by Old Persian, is the ancestor of modern Kurdish and modern Persian, which is an Indo-European language even though. Under the influence of Islam, it is written in the Arabic alphabet.

#### (2) Balto-Slavic

Balto-Slavic includes the Baltic languages and the Slavic languages. The ancestor of all Slavic languages is Old Church Slavonic. The Cyrillic alphabet, now the most widely used non-Roman al-