



# 英文词汇解析

## ENGLISH ETYMON ANALYSIS

■ 董会庆 编著



西北农林科技大学出版社

# 英文词汇解析

ENGLISH ETYMON ANALYSIS

董会庆 编著

江苏工业学院图书馆  
藏书章

西北农林科技大学出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英文词汇解析/董会庆编著. —杨凌:西北农林科技大学出版社, 2005

ISBN 7-81092-237-8

I. 英… II. 董… III. 农业技术—英语—词汇—研究生—自学参考资料 IV. H313

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2005) 第 114415 号

英文词汇解析

董会庆 编著

---

出版发行 西北农林科技大学出版社

地 址 陕西杨凌杨武路 3 号 邮 编:712100

电 话 总编室:029-87093105 发行部:87093302

电子邮箱 [press0809@163.com](mailto:press0809@163.com)

印 刷 西安华新彩印有限责任公司

版 次 2005 年 10 月第 1 版

印 次 2005 年 10 月第 1 次

开 本 787mm×1092mm 1/16

印 张 15

字 数 294 千字

ISBN 7-81092-237-8/H·9

---

定价: 22.50 元

本书如有印装质量问题,请与本社联系

## **FOREWORD**

English vocabulary is enormous and grows steadily with technological and cultural assimilations. The vast majority of the new words introduced, and a great percentage of the words used to express abstract ideas, are complex words that are made up of simple word parts and that have their own definitions, and when familiar to the English learner, can be understood in context without an exact definition. This is the reason why I have worked out of this book. By slowly and steadily studying the most prominent prefixes, roots, and suffixes, readers can acquire a vocabulary that is far greater than the sum of its parts.

The most crucial requirement in this study is a basic understanding of the most used prefixes, roots and suffixes in the English language. Words, like facts, are difficult to remember out of context. Remembering is greatly facilitated when you have a body of information with which to associate either a word or a fact. For words, interesting origins or histories will help provide a context. For example, a *hippopotamus* is a “river horse”, from the Greek *hippos*, meaning “horse”, and *potamos*, meaning “river”.

Disciplinarily speaking, etymology is the study of the origins of words. The English language is living and growing. Although many of English words have been part of English language for many years, new words are added all the time. Following are various ways English language is influenced:

\* Derived from Foreign Words: English, in many cases, has been commonly expanded by incorporating foreign words into it. Most of English lan-

guage has ancient Anglo-Saxon or Latin origins. Other languages have also added to the vocabularies.

\* Additions through Technology & Products: English words often reflect current interests, trends, and innovations. One of the most recent contributors to English language has been computer technology, which has created words such as *bytes*, *monitor*, and *disk*; another way new words come into English language is through the development of products. Some examples include: *Kleenex*, *Walkman*, *Scotch tape*, *Xerox*, and *Linoleum*.

\* People's Names: sometimes when a person invents or introduces something, that thing becomes associated with the person's name. The person, through time, is forgotten while the name lives on in English language. Examples include: *mesmerize* (F. A. Mesmer, an Austrian doctor and hypnotist) and *sideburns* (an American English alteration of burnside, Ambrose E. Burnside, a Union general).

\* Words from Letters: The initials for the names of things may actually come to replace the names. The initials become the words that represent the thing, concept, or group. The following are examples of words that have developed from initials: *DWI* (Driving While Intoxicated), *COD* (Cash On Delivery), and *ZIP* (Zone Improvement Plan).

\* Word Histories: Some words also have interesting histories. Learning the stories behind the meanings is a good way to learn those words. The following examples will give you an idea of how history can affect language:

*footman*—It was once thought to bring bad luck if a person stepped on the door threshold when entering a house. Rich people hired a servant to stand at their doors. His job was to guard against a guest's stepping on the threshold. The guard became known as a footman.

It has been estimated that 60 percent of the English words in common use

are made up partly or entirely of prefixes or roots derived from Latin and Greek. The Greeks and Romans came up with a system for creating words by putting together smaller word parts. They used three types of word parts: prefixes, suffixes, and roots. *Pre* means “before”, and so it makes sense that a prefix comes before the main part of a word. *Suf* means “after”, and so a suffix comes at the end of a word. A root word is the main part of a word, and usually comes in the middle. Many English words are composed of at least one root, and many have one or more prefixes and suffixes.

Word parts contribute to the total meaning of a word. Each part has its own meaning. The meaning of an unknown word often is a combination of its parts. Splitting words into parts to discover the meaning of unknown words is of vital significance to English learning. Parts of words provide the essential meanings. Studying the parts of words can tell you many things. The base of a word gives you an overall meaning for the unknown word. Affixes affect the base’s meaning. Some affixes provide general meanings. Others identify the subject area of the unknown word. Affixes also help determine the part of speech of the unknown word.

While using the dictionary is an excellent way to increase English vocabulary by one word at a time, if you would like to learn whole clusters of words in one stroke, you should get to know the most common roots and prefixes in English.

The value of learning prefixes and roots is that they illustrate the way much of English language is constructed. Once learned, they can help you recognize and understand many words without resorting to a dictionary. With one well-understood root word as the center, an entire “constellation” of words can be built up.

Although knowing the meanings of prefixes and roots can unlock the

meanings of unfamiliar words, this knowledge should supplement, not replace, English dictionary use. Over the centuries, many prefixes have changed in both meaning and spelling. While some prefixes have a single and fairly invariant meaning, most prefixes have more than one meaning each.

For example, the prefix *de-* means “of” or “from”; yet the dictionary lists English different meanings for it. So learn as many of the common prefixes and roots as you can, but learn them for better and more precise understanding of words you already know and words that you have yet to look up in the dictionary. When you go to the dictionary, make sure that you spend some time on the prefixes and roots that make up each word. You will soon become convinced that a word is not an assemblage of letters put together like an anagram, but the true and natural outcome of evolution.

The words you use in speaking and writing create a window through which others view your English knowledge. If this window is too small, others may never know your English abilities and potential and may never understand your English opinions and insights. The *English Etymon Analysis* will make this window much larger by allowing you to increase your English knowledge of word roots and furthermore, to constitute an easy process of vocabulary building. It is produced to meet the following, and previously unfulfilled, requirements of an effective vocabulary learning tool:

- \* Show the complete etymology for each word.
- \* Highlight the most important portion of the definition of each word in Chinese, so the user has a short and easy-to-learn method to grasp hard-to-learn words.
- \* Create an alphabetical list of the highlighted words from affixes to etymological origins that will assist the reader, step by step, to master formal words with comprehension.

Learning vocabulary through memorization is very difficult and often temporary. However, learning becomes more meaningful through the study of roots. Once you understand the roots, you can dissect a word and use the roots to learn the meaning of the word. For instance, *triskaidekaphobia* can be dissected as follows: *tris* means three, *kai* means and, *deka* means ten, and *phobia* means fear. Therefore, *triskaidekaphobia* means fear of the number 13.

Words that sound alike are often confused. For example, bisect and dissect are similar in sound and are often misused and misspelled. Bisect [*bi*-, two + *sect*, to cut] means “to cut into two equal parts”. Dissect [*dis*-, apart + *sect*, to cut] means “to cut apart”. The prefix *dis*- in dissect means apart, but is often confused with the prefix *bi*- which means two. Since dissect consists of two roots, the first ending in “s” and the second beginning with “s”, it must be spelled with two s’s. Once you understand the etymology you will never misuse or misspell bisect or dissect. This spelling rule also applies to many other words. In *interrupt*, *irrupt*, and *corrupt*, the first root ends with “r” and the following root begins with “r” so they must be spelled with two r’s. The roots tell you how to spell the word.

Another example of the power of etymology is in learning million, billion, trillion, etc. , which all contain the root *mill*, meaning 1,000. Most people know how to spell and use million, billion, and trillion, but what comes after trillion? The root for million is *mill*, which means 1,000. Since million doesn’t have a prefix a 1 is understood. So one million is written as one set of three zeros after 1,000 or 1,000,000. In billion and trillion the *m* for *mill* is understood and the prefix indicates how many sets of three zeros are to be written after 1,000. Thus the etymology for billion is [*bi*-, two + [*m*]ill, thousand + -ion] which is written as 1,000,000,000 or two sets of three zeros after



1,000. The etymology for trillion is [*tri-*, three + [*m*]*ill*, thousand + -ion] which is written as 1,000,000,000,000 or three sets of three zeros after 1,000. After trillion comes quadrillion [*quadr-*, four + [*m*]*ill*, thousand + -ion] which is four sets of three zeros after 1,000 or 1,000,000,000,000,000. These prefixes continue through *viginti* which in Latin means twenty. You simply write down 1,000 and then add as many sets of three zeros as the prefix indicates. Centillion is written as 100 sets of three zeros after 1,000 or 1 followed by 303 zeros.

Words such as pneumonia can be very annoying because the first letter is silent. However, when you understand the root it is easy to see why the *p* in pneumonia is silent. *Pneumo* and the suffix *-pnea* are forms of the same root. In cases like apnea, the *p* is necessary and is pronounced. Therefore the pronunciations for pneumonia and apnea are (nju(:)'məunjə) and (æp'nju:sis). The same is true for *pter*. The *p* is pronounced in helicopter and is silent in pterodactyl.

The roots *ann* meaning year and *enn* meaning years are an excellent example of how helpful roots can be in determining the correct word to use. For instance, if you are looking for a word that means "occurring once every two years" do you want to use biannual or biennial? *Bi-* means two and *enn* means years so the correct word is biennial. Biannual can't be correct because if the word contains the root *ann* it has to mean something that occurs within a one year period. Therefore, biannual means something that occurs twice a year. If the word contains the root *enn* it has to mean something that occurs once in two or more years. Once you understand that *ann* means year and *enn* means years, you will never confuse the annuals in English flower garden with the perennials. Since *ann* always pertains to something that occurs within a one year period, the annuals are the flowers that last only one season, while the

perennials bloom year after year.

Read through this *English Etymon Analysis*, you will be amazed at how many words can be learned together, and their etymology makes learning and remembering them almost effortless. This book contains 400 key roots in various forms. When a root is given, formal word that contains that root is listed so the user will know how many words contain the root and will have a complete definition for each word in Chinese. The etymology is listed immediately after each word so the roots and the definition can be seen together at a glance. The keywords in the definition that reflect the etymology are also highlighted so a direct connection can be made between the meaning and the etymology. This makes the meaning easy to understand and recall.

An impressive vocabulary will strengthen your English self-confidence and give you a distinct advantage in an increasingly competitive world. The vocabulary you build will improve English quality of life as it opens new doors and prepares you for future opportunities.

The root of a language is its vocabulary. If one understands the vocabulary of a language, he or she knows this language literarily, but not only literally.

Dong Huiqing

Aug. 2005

# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Chapter One</b>	
Etyma: ant~chrono .....	9
<b>Chapter Two</b>	
Etyma: dem~mania .....	17
<b>Chapter Three</b>	
Etyma: meter~panto .....	24
<b>Chapter Four</b>	
Etyma: ped~thet .....	30
<b>Chapter Five</b>	
Etyma: am~flux .....	36
<b>Chapter Six</b>	
Etyma: gen~lateral .....	40
<b>Chapter Seven</b>	
Etyma: litera~pens .....	44
<b>Chapter Eight</b>	
Etyma: pon~soli .....	48
<b>Chapter Nine</b>	
Etyma: solv~vis .....	52
<b>Chapter Ten</b>	
Etymon Analysis Review .....	56
<b>Chapter Eleven</b>	
Etyma: acid~centr .....	68

## **Chapter Twelve**

Etyma: cern~dorm .....	76
------------------------	----

## **Chapter Thirteen**

Etyma: dox~fund .....	84
-----------------------	----

## **Chapter Fourteen**

Etyma: fract~liber .....	92
--------------------------	----

## **Chapter Fifteen**

Etyma: libr~mur .....	100
-----------------------	-----

## **Chapter Sixteen**

Etyma: mut~patr .....	108
-----------------------	-----

## **Chapter Seventeen**

Etyma: ped~pur .....	116
----------------------	-----

## **Chapter Eighteen**

Etyma: purg~sinu .....	124
------------------------	-----

## **Chapter Nineteen**

Etyma: sist~test .....	132
------------------------	-----

## **Chapter Twenty**

Etyma: text~vulse .....	140
-------------------------	-----

## **Appendix**

Final Etymon Analysis Review .....	148
GMAT Technical Terminology .....	165
GRE Key Glossary .....	172
English Vocabulary Competence Worktable .....	189
Chinese-aided English Vocabulary List .....	198

## INTRODUCTION

This *English Etymon Analysis* is intended to help English language learners with the necessary tools to acquire an effective understanding of learned, specialized, and scientific vocabulary. It also helps develop familiarity with main Latin and Greek word elements in English and, by demonstrating the variety of word-building techniques, shows how these roots are reflected in thousands of different words. In their treatment of word formation, many of the fundamental concepts of linguistics, including phonetics, phonology, morphology, sociolinguistics, and historical linguistics are illustrated in order to offer a more thorough and principled approach to the expansion of one's vocabulary.

English is spoken by one out of every six people in the world. The English language belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European family of languages and the great number of words found in the English vocabulary is in large part due to extensive borrowings from other languages, mainly from Latin and Greek source. It is also spoken as a native language in the other home countries of the United Kingdom and also in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, South Africa, and numerous other countries. English is now the third most spoken native language worldwide with some 380 million speakers and making it second only to Mandarin Chinese in number of speakers. It has *lingua franca* status in many parts of the world, due to the military, economic, scientific, political and cultural influence of the British Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries and that of the United States from the mid 20th century to the present. Through the global influence of

native English speakers in cinema, broadcasting, science, and the Internet in recent decades, English is now the most widely learned second language in the world. Modern people worldwide are required to learn some English, and a working knowledge of English is required in many fields and occupations.

An English-speaker is often able to choose between Germanic and Latinate synonyms: “come” or “arrive”; “sight” or “vision”; “freedom” or “liberty”—and sometimes also between a word inherited through French and a borrowing direct from Latin of the same root word: “oversee”, “survey” or “supervise”. The richness of the language is that such synonyms have slightly different meanings, enabling the language to be used in a very flexible way to express fine variations or shades of thought. It’s also true that the majority of English’s word-stock — as glimpsed in any modern dictionary — derives from Greco-Latin sources, either directly from Greek and Latin or via the Romance languages (which evolved out of the street Latin spoken during the Roman Empire).

In everyday speech the majority of words will normally be Germanic. If one wishes to make a forceful point in an argument in a very blunt way, Germanic words will usually be chosen. A majority of Latinate words (or at least a majority of content words) will normally be used in more formal speech and writing, such as at academic occasions or in an encyclopedia article.

English is noted for the vast size of its active vocabulary and its fluidity. English easily accepts technical terms into common usage and imports new words which often come into common usage. In addition, slang provides new meanings for old words. In fact this fluidity is so pronounced that a distinction often needs to be made between formal forms of English and contemporary usage.

As the *General Explanations* at the beginning of the *Oxford English*

*Dictionary state:*

The Vocabulary of a widely diffused and highly cultivated living language is not a fixed quantity circumscribed by definite limits. . . . there is absolutely no defining line in any direction: the circle of the English language has a well-defined centre but no discernible circumference.

The vocabulary of English is undoubtedly vast, but assigning a specific number to its size is more a matter of definition than of calculation. Unlike other languages, there is no Academy to define officially accepted words. Neologisms are coined regularly in medicine, science and technology; some enter wide usage, others remain restricted to small circles. Foreign words used in immigrant communities often make their way into wider English usage. Archaic, dialectal, and regional words might be considered 'English' or not.

A computerized survey of about 80,000 words in the old *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* (3rd edition) was published estimated the origin of English words as follows:

- \* French, including Old French and early Anglo-French: 28.3%;
- \* Latin, including modern scientific and technical Latin: 28.24%;
- \* Old and Middle English, Old Norse, and Dutch: 25%;
- \* Greek: 5.32%;
- \* No etymology given: 4.03%;
- \* Derived from proper names: 3.28%;
- \* All other languages contributed less than 1%.

To more efficiently master a foreign language, in turn, it is essential that you better comprehend the one you use every day. In its unusual history, lexicon, and grammar, English may in some respects appear to be *sui generis*, but in fact English has close familial relationships with both the Germanic and Romance language families, which you can put to substantial practical advantage.

Moreover, even in the case of substantially different tongues, you can improve your grasp by better understanding the logic, construction, and history of English.

The indispensable detail that you must know about English, at the outset, is that it is practically a language put together by a committee. Not that it was planned that way, but history being what it is. English along with two other modern languages — Farsi Persian and Japanese — represents the native tongue of powerful latter-day nation-states, but one which sprang up in a region that, historically, was peripheral to the cultural centers in its continent. That is to say, for most of its history — until about the 18th century — England and its cultural vector, the English language, were net importers of the European “high culture” that sprang up in the Mediterranean region with classical Greek and Roman civilization, and diffused northward, residing (in the eyes of most Europeans) chiefly in the purported refinement of France. From the days of chivalry in the Middle Ages to the *avant garde* esprit of Parisian art, philosophy, and cuisine in the 19th century, French culture was regarded as the epicenter of Western Civilization and the French tongue was the second language of choice, with its vocabulary and subtle *bon mots* integrating their way into other idioms. Thus not only English but all other Germanic languages outside of Icelandic — Dutch, modern German, Swedish, Danish, and others have drawn heavily from the cultural and linguistic wellspring of medieval, Renaissance, and modern France. This common heritage is immensely useful for anyone learning another European tongue.

In the case of English, England remained a cultural protégé of France for centuries after William the Conqueror of Normandy, with the result being a sustained influx of French vocabulary with a (predominantly) Latin derivation. As a consequence, English in its written form — as applied to official,



legal, and technical documents — evinces 'the demonstrable peculiarity of appearing as much like a Romance language than a Germanic one.

English is a Germanic language at its core. You will never fully understand the language, or use its nature to grasp a foreign tongue, unless you thoroughly recognize and appreciate this fact.

In addition to its predominant Germanic and Latinate sources, English has imbibed helpings of vocabulary from other sources (both European and otherwise), though contrary to what is often assumed, it is not unique in this regard. A sort of “international vocabulary” has arisen in which words like “yogurt”, “coffee”, “sofa”, “tea”, “salad”, “hotel”, and “lemon” (many of them foodstuffs and many, for whatever reason, of Arabic or Persian derivation) are commonly present. Clothing like *pajamas* and *jeans* as well as terms that designate shared concepts in commerce or international relations tend to be imported, mostly from originally Greek and Latin sources, and used throughout many of the world’s languages. When composed in a European language, scientific and medical documents tend to be scribed in a sort of “common Greco-Latin” that is shared, with slight variations in vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation, across Western tongues. In this context, Germanic sources are detailed—including a surprisingly large and significant cohort of German vocabulary that streamed in with Norman French. Then the Latin-based contributions to English are explored, as well as those from Arabic (a major language of learning during the Middle Ages) and other tongues in more recent centuries.

One of the more common questions asks how many words there are in the English language. Almost as common are requests for the average size of a person’s vocabulary. These sound like easy questions; I have to tell you that they’re indeed easy to ask. But they’re almost impossible to answer