WORD BUILDING FIELD OF BORROWED NOUNS OF THE LEXICAL CORE OF MODERN ENGLISH

Research article

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Abstract

The article covers the study of the word building field of borrowed nouns of American English lexical core. Modern English, with its specific features is the product of a number of eras. Because the development of the language - all aspects of it, including its vocabulary - is gradually taking place, we find in the vocabulary of Modern English words formed in different historical epochs, as a result of different ways of enriching it to different moments of English history. At the moment, the problem of describing the vocabulary composition of the language is in the focus of linguists’ attention. Of particular interest is the problem of identifying and describing the lexical core of modern English. The article focuses on the etymological and structural characteristics of the nouns borrowed into English from more than 38 languages The study’s relevance is due to the ambiguity of interpretation of the etymological composition of Modern English. The study of the etymological composition of the lexical nucleus may contribute to solving this problem. The author analyses the ways of word formation which comprise the core and periphery of the field. The special attention is given to the most productive word building patterns of each way of word formation by means of which the borrowed nouns were created.

Keywords: word building field, borrowed nouns, lexical core, the core and periphery of the field, word building pattern, affixation, conversion.

In the lexicon of each language, there is a considerable fund of words, the connection between the form and the meaning of which is incomprehensible to native speakers, because the structure of the word cannot be explained based on the models of word-formation acting in the language [7, P. 53]. Historical changes in words usually obscure the primary form and meaning of the word, while the sign nature of the word determines the complexity of reconstruction of primary motivation, i.e. the relationship of the primary form and meaning of the word [4, P. 64]. The purpose of etymological analysis of a word is to determine when, in what language, on what word-formation model, based on what language material, in what form and with what value the word has appeared, and also what historical changes of its primary form and value have caused the present form and value. Reconstruction of the primary form and meaning of the word is actually the subject of etymological analysis [1, P. 243].

It should be noted that particular difficulties at etymological analysis represent an explanation of meanings, their development and reconstruction of their primary semantics of a word. This is due to the diversity and significance of semantic changes [10, P. 596]. The basis for semantic analysis in etymological research is the method of semantic parallels: cases of similar development or combination of values are given as the proof of supposed development of values [3, P. 52]. To establish the original form and meaning of the word etymology uses other methods — typological, linguistic-geographical, modeling methods [9, P. 175].

It is known that at present the word building field approach to the description of word-formation processes attracts attention of many linguists. [2, P. 47]. However, there is no single definition of the word building field, as its definition is usually associated with a specific study [6, P. 213]. By word-building field of nouns of the lexical nucleus of the American
variant of the modern English language, we understand the summary of all methods of formation of nouns from native English and borrowed bases and word forms of different parts of speech, as well as phraseological units of the hold-up type. This word building field is complex [6, P. 43].

As a result of the analysis of The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology [3] we found 6363 borrowed nouns, which are the dictionary entries, which is 65.5% of the total number of the dictionary entries we found in the dictionary. 2081 borrowed nouns are represented by the root words (32.7% of the total number of borrowed nouns that are the dictionary entries). Derived nouns are 3321 words (52.2%). Complex capital nouns are 961 words (15.1%). Thus, 4282 nouns form the SP of borrowed nouns [6, P. 97]. During the study of the etymological composition of nouns in the lexical nucleus of the American variant of modern English, we found borrowed nouns from 38 languages. The main groups of borrowings are borrowings from Latin, French, and Scandinavian languages. The group of words borrowed from different other languages (German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, etc.) is also distinguished. In the lexical nucleus there are also words marked "of uncertain origin", i.e. "origin is unknown". The group of words which origin is unknown is about 1% of the total number of the dictionary entries.

World building field of borrowed nouns includes the following micro fields: conversions, word combinations, abbreviations, reversals [6, p. 78]. The affixation micro field includes 2822 nouns of the lexical nucleus (65.9%), the conversion micro field includes 835 nouns (19.5%), word combinations — 411 (9.6%), abbreviations — 197 (4.6%), reverse — 11 (0.3%), abbreviations — 6 (0.1%). Consequently, the nucleus of the world-building field of borrowed nouns includes a micro field of affixation, which includes more than half of the borrowed nouns (65.9%).

The micro field of affixation includes 2822 borrowed nouns formed by 27 suffixation models and 8 prefixation models. Let us consider nucleus and periphery models of this micro field. The core includes 3 suffixation models, according to which 1603 (56.8%) affixed nouns were formed. These are V+ +er /-or (720; 25.5%), V+ -tion/tion (621; 22%) and V+ -ment (262; 9.3%) models. The periphery of this micro field is formed by borrowed nouns formed by 24 suffixation models and 8 prefixation models, namely: N+ -ism, N+ -ist, N+ -er, N- + -ance, N+ -ion, N- + -ity, N+ -ure, N+ -ium, V+ -acy, N+ -in, V+ +ee, N+ +an, A+ +ist, V+ -age, A+ +ness, V+ -al, V+ +ance/-ence, N+ +age, N+ +ic, V+ +on, N+ +ee, A+ +y, counter+ +N, in+ +N, out+ +N, post+ +N, un+ +N, under+ +N, uni+ +N, up+ +N. The most capacious models of periphery located closer to the core of affixation are N+ +ist, V+ +ance/-ence.

The following microfields belong to the periphery of world building field of borrowed nouns: conversions, word combinations, abbreviations, reversals and abbreviations. To the near periphery belongs the conversion microfield. The core of the microfield of the converted borrowed nouns are models V→N, A→N, Interj→N, on which 835 nouns are formed, that makes 19.5% from total number of the borrowed nouns acting as the title articles. The core of the conversion microfield is formed by borrowed nouns derived from the model V→N (675; 80.8%). The periphery of this microfield is formed by borrowed nouns derived from models A→N and Interj→N, which form 160 nouns.

The core of complex borrowed nouns is represented by two basic models, on which 411 nouns (9.6%) were formed. These are models such as N+N and A+N. The nucleus of the model of the microfield of the word combination is the model N+N, which formed the absolute majority of complex nouns — 352, which is 85.6% of the total number of complex borrowed nouns. Words formed by the model N+N are characterized by subordinate and compositional links between CSS. The overwhelming majority of complex borrowed nouns are characterized by subordinate relations between CSS (304; 86.4%).

The micro field of abbreviations includes 197 borrowed nouns (4.6%). Most of the abbreviated nouns are formed by shortening of the final part (11; 5.6%): bus←omnibus (Fr< Lat). We have found only one noun formed by shortening of the beginning and the end of the word simultaneously: flu←influenza (Ital).

The micro field of abbreviation includes only 6 (0.1%) nouns, which we found as a result of the dictionary analysis. These are such nouns as A.D. — Anno Domini (Lat), B.C. — before Christ (Lat), LSD — L(yserg)-S(äure)-D(iäthylamid) (Germ), Mr. — messieurs (Fr), Mrs. — mesdames (Fr), X-mas — an abbreviation for Christ (Gr).

As a result of the analysis of The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology [8] we found 2733 words of different parts of speech formed from the dictionary entries of borrowed nouns of the lexical core, which is 49% of the total number of words formed from the dictionary entries of the nouns. However, the productivity of borrowed nouns is only 42.9%. [6, P. 178]

Let's consider briefly derivative words formed on the basis of borrowed nouns. We have found 763 nouns formed from the dictionary entries of borrowed nouns, which is 27.9% of the total number of words formed based on the dictionary entries of borrowed nouns. These nouns are mainly formed by the method of affixation (442; 58%). These nouns are: despotism (Fr), dignitary (Fr< Lat), financier (Fr), flutist (Fr), granger (Fr), grammarian (Fr< Lat), husbandry (Scand), idiocy (Fr< Lat< Gr), ideologist (Fr), infancy (Fr< Lat), prisoner (Fr), and others. The headings of the borrowed nouns are the productive basis for verb formation. We have found 1015 verb derivatives, which is 37.1% of the total number of words derived from the dictionary entries. These verbs are, in most cases, formed by conversion (730; 72%). For example: to mask ← mask (Fr< Ital< Lat< Arabic), to massage ← massage (Fr< Arabic), to prejudice ← prejudice (Fr< Lat), to premise ← premise (Fr< Lat), to reef ← reef (Fr (Scand), to reprimand ← reprimand (Fr< Lat), to scheme ← scheme (Fr< Lat< Gr), to scepter ← scepter (Fr< Lat), to schedule ← schedule (Fr< Lat) and others.

We have found 926 adjectives formed from the dictionary noun entries of the borrowed nouns, i.e. 33.9%. The main method of their formation is affixation (685; 74%). For example: (n) (Fr< Lat) → expensive (adj), equator (n) (Lat) → equatorial (adj), Jew (n) (Fr< Lat< Gr) → Jewish (adj), problem (n) (Fr< Lat< Gr) → problematic (adj), present (n) (Fr< Lat) → presentable (adj), prestige (n) (Fr< Lat) → prestigious (adj), margin (n) (Lat) → marginal (adj), etc. The adverbs formed from the dictionary entries of the borrowed nouns are 29 words, i.e. 1.1%. For example: cheer (n) (Fr< Lat< Gr) → cheerily (adv), plumb (n) (Fr< Lat) → plumb (adv) etc.
In conclusion, we would like to say that our research was based on The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology [3] which is dedicated to the lexical core of the American variant of the modern English language. From the dictionary noun entries of the borrowed nouns, the words of different parts of speech are formed, namely: nouns (27.9%), verbs (37.1%), adjectives (33.9%), adverbs (1.1%). However, the productivity of borrowed nouns is only 42.9%.

Конфликт интересов

Conflict of Interest

Не указан.

None declared.

Список литературы / References